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Brian Boylan
Denison University

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The ghost story, more than any other genre, relies on setting. The mere mention of ghosts raises visions of ancient castles and eerie mansions, for to haunt means to haunt a place. The specter of the haunted house—dark, ancient, and foreboding—has become a part of our cultural consciousness, full of hidden meanings as it is full of hidden ghosts. I hope to summon a few of these meanings into the light by exploring two of the most haunted houses in literature—Hill House of Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* and the Overlook Hotel of Stephen King's *The Shining*. I had originally planned to look at the houses as structures, to investigate the architectural and historical factors that made them haunted, but as I read, a more interesting and significant pattern occurred to me. I had been thinking of the houses as settings, but they are also characters; the ghosts of Hill House and the Overlook grant these structures a powerful, malevolent personality. As the novels develop, these personalities possess certain characters; the identities of Eleanor Vance and Jack Torrance are submerged in the personalities of the houses, and the characters effectually become the houses they occupy. "I am home," Eleanor thinks to herself (Jackson 232), and she is right in two ways: she is *at* home and she *is* home—she has become the home. The characters' loss of identity has important feminist implications in both novels, but it functions in very different ways. In *The Haunting of Hill House*, this blurring of identity represents the crushing roles placed on women; in *The Shining*, it offers an escape from these roles, however brief.

The idea of an individual becoming part of a house seems bizarre and supernatural, but it is not far from the role of women in many patriarchal societies, a role that went largely unchallenged until the women's rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Under this model, women are defined by their reproductive capacity: their purpose is to bear and rear children. Daughter, mother, wife, and housekeeper—the woman's role in society is defined by her home, just as the man's role is defined by his occupation outside the home. The woman has no identity outside of the home and family. The haunted house is an especially appropriate metaphor for the subjection of women: they are reduced to guardian spirits of the home, with no agency, no personality, and practically no body of their own. The idea of a woman merging into the house is merely an extension of this mindset, the concept made literal—and if the house is haunted, the grim irony of the situation only increases.

> No live organism can continue for long to exist sanely under conditions of absolute reality; even larks and katydids are supposed, by some, to dream. Hill House, not sane, stood by itself against its hills, holding darkness within; it had stood for eighty years and might stand for eighty more. Within, walls continued upright, bricks met neatly, floors were firm, and doors were sensibly shut; silence lay steadily against the wood and stone of Hill House, and whatever walked there, walked alone. (Jackson 3)

These lines begin Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*. In the novel, four characters come in contact with the "darkness within" Hill House: Dr. Montague, Luke Sanderson, Theodora, and Eleanor Vance. All four characters encounter strange noises and apparitions within the house, but as the story develops, the haunting focuses more and more on

Eleanor. When Eleanor finally loses touch with reality and nearly kills herself on a rusted metal staircase, Dr. Montague orders her to leave the house. Eleanor, refusing to leave, drives her car into a tree and dies. The novel ends as it began: "silence lay steadily against the wood and stone of Hill House, and whatever walked there, walked alone" (Jackson 246).

The narrative presents Hill House itself as clearly and unambiguously evil. When Eleanor first encounters it, she thinks, "The house was vile. She shivered and thought, the words coming freely into her mind, Hill House is vile, it is diseased; get away from here at once" (Jackson 33). Asked to describe the house, Dr. Montague calls it "disturbed, perhaps. Leprous. Sick. Any of the popular euphemisms for insanity; a deranged house is a petty conceit" (Jackson 70-71). However, the exact source of this disease is left unclear. Despite Hill House's macabre history, it is never clear what exactly haunts it; perhaps Dr. Montague comes the closest when he says, "the evil is the house itself" (Jackson 82). But if the identity of the haunter is unclear, its methods are not. It attacks each of the characters where they are weakest: "the haunting is personally designed for the haunted" (Lootens 167).

As Lootens suggests, Hill House locates and attacks the weak points of each of its guests. For Eleanor, this means her sense of self. Weak and repressed, her personality stifled by an oppressive mother and sister, Eleanor is the perfect target for the house to take over and make part of itself. Eleanor proclaims a strong sense of self at the beginning of her stay at Hill House: "what a complete and separate thing I am, she thought, going from my red toes to the top of my head, individually an I, possessed of attributes belonging only to me" (Jackson 83). Only a few pages later, however, she confuses herself and Theodora: when Theodora asks her to "tell me about yourself," Eleanor parrots Theodora's earlier statement, "I'm horrible and beastly and no one can stand me" (Jackson 86). At this point Eleanor is at least half-joking, but this joke becomes a serious problem as the house begins to claim her identity. Eleanor also begins to forget about the outside world; she asks the others, "Is there still a world somewhere?" (Jackson 150), and tells them, "I can't picture any world but Hill House" (Jackson 151).

These incidents are merely a prelude, however. Eleanor's last stand against the house occurs as the four guests huddle together in Dr. Montague's room, listening to the house banging and storming in the hallway outside. At first, Eleanor seems to hear the pounding "inside her head as much as in the hall" (Jackson 200); soon after, she thinks, "how can these others hear the noise when it is coming from inside my head? I am disappearing inch by inch into this house, I am going apart a little at a time because all this noise is breaking me" (Jackson 201-202). The banging intensifies, the house begins to shake itself apart, and Eleanor continues to lose track of where she ends and the house begins: "it's inside my head, Eleanor thought, putting her hands over her face, it's inside my head and it's getting out, getting out, getting out—" (Jackson 202). Finally, unable to continue her resistance, Eleanor thinks, "I will relinquish this self of mine, abdicate, give over willingly what I have never wanted at all; whatever it wants of me it can have" (Jackson 204). Hill House has won; Eleanor belongs to it now, and it only needs to make her transformation complete.

After Eleanor's resignation of self, she begins to become one with Hill House. The next morning, she can hear everything going on within it: "I can hear everything, all over the house, she wanted to tell them" (Jackson 206). In an eerie passage, Eleanor describes the way her senses have become specially attuned to the house: "She could even hear, with her new awareness of the house, the dust drifting gently in the attics, the wood aging" (Jackson 223). Eleanor becomes the haunter of the house, knocking on doors and shaking door handles just like the apparitions (Jackson 229): "Eleanor finally becomes herself the haunter, assuming the attenuated identity of the ghost" (Newman 132). She thinks she is acting on her own, but this illusion dissolves in her last moments alive. As she drives her car into a tree, she thinks, "I am really doing it, I am doing this all by myself, now, at last; this is me, I am really really really doing it by myself" (Jackson 245). At the last moment, however, the veil is ripped away,

and Eleanor realizes she has been deceived: "In the unending, crashing second before the car hurled into the tree she thought clearly, *Why* am I doing this? Why am I doing this? Why don't they stop me?" (Jackson 245-246). This is the first time Eleanor has thought "clearly" since she first entered the house, and now it is too late; the house gives Eleanor back her identity for just a moment, just to mock her.

Two important factors allow Hill House to take over Eleanor: the significance of naming and Eleanor's relationship with her mother. Both of these factors are closely tied to Eleanor's identity as a single woman in a patriarchal society, a point I will return to soon. Eleanor's fear of the power of names first emerges in a conversation with Theodora. Theodora repeatedly names the house, making Eleanor uncomfortable: "Her insistence on naming Hill House troubled Eleanor. It's as though she were saying it deliberately, Eleanor thought, calling the house to tell it where we are; is it bravado?" (Jackson 123). Eleanor seems to believe that naming the thing summons it, gives it power, and most importantly, establishes a bond between the named and the namer. Naming is more complex than a simple transfer of power, however: when the house names Eleanor, it gains power over her. When the four guests find the words "HELP ELEANOR COME HOME" scrawled on the walls in chalk, a hysterical Eleanor cries out, "It knows my name, doesn't it? It knows *my* name" (Jackson 146). Here, naming is a violation. It signifies a special bond between Hill House and Eleanor, a bond Eleanor did not ask for and does not want. Trying to explain this feeling of violation, Eleanor says, "Those letters spelled out *my* name, and none of you knows what that feels like—it's so *familiar*. . . . It's my own name, and it belongs to me, and something is using it and writing it and calling me with it and my own *name*. . ." (Jackson 160). Again, the name is used for summoning, but instead of Theodora summoning the house, the house is summoning Eleanor, preparing to take her into itself.

Eleanor's relationship with her mother provides another weak point for Hill House to exploit to gain control over Eleanor. Newman writes that "the source of both the pleasures and the terrors of the text springs from the dynamics of the mother-daughter relation" (Newman 123). This relationship is hinted at from the moment Eleanor enters the novel: "Eleanor Vance was thirty-two years old when she came to Hill House. The only person in the world she genuinely hated, now that her mother was dead, was her sister" (Jackson 6). We soon learn that Eleanor has spent the last eleven years caring for her cruel, bedridden mother, "lifting a cross old lady from her chair to her bed, setting out endless little trays of soup and oatmeal, steeling herself to the filthy laundry" (Jackson 7). The rest of the Eleanor's background is gradually revealed as the novel develops. On the night of the first haunting, Eleanor hears a knocking in the hallway outside her bedroom, and immediately thinks it is her mother; she must tell herself, "It is a noise down the hall, far down at the end, near the nursery door, and terribly cold, *not* my mother knocking on the wall" (Jackson 127). The memory the knocking raises in Eleanor disturbs her as much as the knocking itself: " 'Bang' is the best word for it; it sounds like something children do, not mothers knocking against the wall for help, and anyway Luke and the doctor are there, is this what they mean by cold chills going up and down your back?" (Jackson 128). Eleanor finally explains the significance of the knocking much later, in a conversation with Luke and Theodora. "It was my fault my mother died. . . . She knocked on the wall and called me and I never woke up. I ought to have brought her the medicine; I always did before. But this time she called me and I never woke up" (Jackson 212). Eleanor blames her mother's death on herself: she tells Theodora, " It was going to happen sooner or later, in any case. But of course no matter when it happened it was going to be my fault" (Jackson 212).

Hill House plays on Eleanor's repressed feelings of anger, guilt, and shame over her mother's death. It seduces Eleanor by taking the place of her mother, by offering Eleanor a second chance of saving her. Luke calls Hill House, "A mother house . . . a housemother, a headmistress, a housemistress" (Jackson 211). In another passage, he goes into more detail: "It's all so motherly. . . . everything so soft. Everything so padded. Great embracing chairs and sofas which turn out to

be hard and unwelcome once you sit down, and reject you at once" (Jackson 209). The house is "furnished with symbols of the destructive powers of motherhood" (Lootens 176). Like Luke, Eleanor senses the motherliness of the house; she describes one of the hauntings she alone experiences in clearly maternal terms: " 'Eleanor, Eleanor,' she heard through the rushing of air past her ears, 'Eleanor, Eleanor,' and she was held tight and safe" (Jackson 215). Here the house's strategies of naming and mothering come together. Calling out to Eleanor individually in a soft, maternal voice, it offers her safety and security, the loving mother she never had. This offer is a lie, however. In Lootens' words, "The house does not want her more than anyone else does; it wants her dead. After all, whatever walks in Hill House walks alone" (Lootens 189).

The ways the house entraps Eleanor are rooted in her role as a woman in patriarchal western society. Hill House's appropriation of Eleanor's name to control and dominate her is a distorted reflection of marriage, in which a woman gives up her name and accepts her husband's. In our society, as in the fictional world of Hill House, naming is important: it establishes power hierarchies and forms bonds that are difficult, if not impossible, to break. And in our society, as in Hill House, these bonds can be used to dominate and destroy. By taking the place of Eleanor's mother, Hill House exploits her roles as both daughter and mother. As a good daughter, Eleanor believes that she should stay with the house, that she belongs with the house. In her relationship with her own mother, however, she was a caring, self-sacrificing, maternal figure, taking care of all her mother's needs; this relationship continues into Hill House, as when Eleanor first hears the knocking and wakes up ready to help her mother. Hill House uses Eleanor's cultural position as cared-for and care-giver, as daughter and mother, to entrap her. Wife, daughter, mother: Hill House uses these traditional female roles to absorb Eleanor and engulf her identity.

According to Lootens, *The Haunting of Hill House* is a novel about "the ways in which people, especially women, are destroyed by the nuclear family, sexual repression, and romantic notions of feminine self-sacrifice" (Lootens 168). All of these factors are rooted in the cultural tradition that identifies women with the family and the home. Eleanor is destroyed because she puts her faith in this tradition, in "delusions of family" (Lootens 178). The specific method of her destruction exemplifies these delusions. Eleanor's fate is a cruel parody of the role of women in patriarchal society. Where women are identified with the home, Eleanor's identity becomes the home; where women are discouraged to leave the home, Eleanor dies to avoid leaving it. Perhaps the cruelest trick Hill House plays on Eleanor is giving her the illusion of self-control. Newman claims that "the degree of Eleanor's independent agency" is "the central question of the novel" (Newman 129). She argues that Eleanor controls her own actions, and that "Her last thoughts reveal a fatal connection between female self-assertion and annihilation" (Newman 133). Lootens takes a more complex approach, asking, "can a woman really sacrifice herself if she never really had, or perhaps even wanted, a self? Does Eleanor know she has a choice? Is her death suicide—or murder?" (Lootens 188). In my view, Eleanor gives up independent agency when she surrenders her identity to the house. Hill Houses causes her to drive her car into a tree, and the greatest tragedy is that she thinks, until the last moment, that she is acting on her own. Modern society functions in much the same way, offering the illusion of choice, but defining gender in ways that make true choice impossible.

> The Overlook was having one hell of a good time. There was a little boy to terrorize, a man and his woman to set against the other, and if it played its cards right they could end up flitting through the Overlook's halls like insubstantial shades in a Shirley Jackson novel, whatever walked in Hill House walked alone, but you wouldn't be alone in the Overlook, oh no, there would be plenty of company here. (King 424)

As the passage above suggests, the connection between *The Haunting of Hill House* and Stephen King's *The Shining* is in some ways an obvious one. Both novels focus on a small group of people isolated in a remote, sprawling, and haunted building. In both novels, a character loses her or his identity to the building, and eventually dies as a result. In fact, Stephen King has said that "*The Shining* was influenced by Shirley Jackson's marvelous novel *The Haunting of Hill House*" (Duvall 32). The two novels differ in several significant ways, however; one of the most significant differences is that in *The Shining*, it is a man who loses himself to the haunted house. That man, Jack Torrance, moves into the isolated Overlook Hotel as the winter caretaker. He plans to stay there through the winter alone with his wife, Wendy, and his young son, Danny, who possesses psychic powers. Danny's powers warn him of an evil force in the hotel, but the family goes anyway. Soon this force manifests itself in a series of apparitions. Jack is at first alarmed, then intrigued. After a long struggle, he loses his identity to the house entirely. Possessed by the house, he tries to kill his wife and son, but they escape with the help of the Overlook's psychically gifted cook, and a huge explosion destroys Jack and the hotel.

The Overlook itself is a menacing structure. Exploring its depths, Jack thinks, "if there was ever a place that should have ghosts, this was it" (King 36). Like Hill House, it can seem like a living organism, with thoughts and motivations of its own; as Jack looks up at its windows, "For the first time he noticed how much they seemed like eyes. They reflected away the sun and held their own darkness within. It was not Danny they were looking at. It was him" (King 421). The Overlook's primary motivation, however, is hunger: when the Torrance family enters the hotel, "It was as if the Overlook had swallowed them" (King 131), and "Inside its shell the three of them went about their early evening routine, like microbes trapped in the intestine of a monster" (King 317). Like Hill House, the Overlook Hotel has a long and violent history, but it is still unclear why exactly it is haunted. The cook, Hallorann, tells Danny, "I don't know why, but it seems that all the bad things that ever happened here, there's little pieces of those things still layin around like fingernail clippins or the boogers that somebody nasty just wiped under a chair" (King 128-29). When Wendy asks Jack if the hotel has ghosts, he answers, "I don't know. Not in the Algernon Blackwood sense, that's for sure. More like the residues of the feelings of the people who have stayed here. Good things and bad things" (King 397). King himself has described the Overlook as "a huge storage battery charged with an evil powerful enough to corrupt all those who come in contact with it" (Duvall 36). Perhaps the psychic Danny descries the haunting of the Overlook best when he calls it, "the sound of the hotel, the old monster, creaking steadily and ever more closely around them: halls that now stretched back through time as well as distance, hungry shadows, unquiet guests who did not rest easy" (King 495).

Whatever the source of the haunting, its effect on Jack is dramatic. Early in his stay at the Overlook, he begins to identify with the building, a feeling enhanced by his plans to write its history: "He promised he would take care of this place, very good care. It seemed that before today he had never really understood the breadth of his responsibility to the Overlook. It was almost like having a responsibility to history" (King 238). Jack describes his attraction to the hotel in mystical terms, thinking, "the Overlook had enchanted him—could any other explanation be so simple or so true?" (King 332). As the narrative progresses, the boundary between Jack and the Overlook begins to blur. Exploring a haunted room that has frightened his son, Jack thinks to himself, "Nothing in the Overlook frightened him. He felt that he and it were *simpatico*" (King 378). Jack can no longer tell the difference between what he wants and what the hotel wants: "The Overlook didn't want them to go and he didn't want them to go either" (King 425). And when he hears the house exhorting him to kill his family, Jack, like Eleanor, can no longer tell whether the voice is coming from inside or outside himself: "Then a voice, much deeper and much more powerful than Grady's, spoke from somewhere, everywhere . . . from inside him" (King 584).

It takes Wendy a long time to admit that her husband is changing, but when Jack

tries to strangle her, she finally realizes what has been happening to him. She tells her son, "The hotel has gotten into him, Danny. *The Overlook has gotten into your daddy*" (King 565-566). The merging of Jack and the Overlook is dramatically revealed in Jack's voice. The hotel screams for Jack: "She thought she had never heard such an awful sound in her whole life; it was as if the very boards and windows of the hotel had screamed" (King 607); and Jack screams for the hotel: "Jack wasn't out there anymore. She was hearing the lunatic, raving voice of the Overlook itself" (King 625). As Jack chases him through the hotel, Danny realizes that what is chasing him is not his father, but the hotel in the shape of his father: "It was hiding behind Daddy's face, it was imitating Daddy's voice, it was wearing Daddy's clothes. But it was not his daddy" (King 639); rather, it is "The controlling force of the Overlook, in the shape of his father" (King 641). In the final confrontation between Danny and Jack, the force that has consumed Jack's identity is finally revealed. Jack destroys what is left of his humanity, and all that remains is a conglomeration of the hotel's ghosts, superimposed over his ruined flesh: "What remained of the face became a strange, shifting composite, many faces mixed imperfectly into one. Danny saw the woman in 217; the dogman; the hungry boy-thing that had been in the concrete ring" (King 654). This is the spirit of the house, the entity that has devoured Jack and made him its own.

Interestingly, the Overlook uses many of the same factors to take over Jack that Hill House uses to take over Eleanor. In "What About Jack? Another Perspective on Family Relationships in Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*" Manchel convincingly argues that Jack, like Eleanor, is deluded by the ideals of patriarchal and capitalist culture, and that "By failing to scrutinize why Jack is seduced by false myths of success and patriarchal authoritarianism, we ignore the appeal of such seductions and focus only on the symptoms" (Manchel 70). Just as the cultural idea of the woman leads to Eleanor's destruction, the cultural idea of the man leads to Jack's destruction. The role of parental figures also contributes to the destruction of both Eleanor and Jack. Where Hill House attacks Eleanor through her relationship with her mother, the Overlook attacks Jack through his relationship with his father, an abusive tyrant whom Jack nevertheless loved. As the novel develops and the house asserts its control over Jack, he becomes more and more like his father. He hears his father's voice on the Overlook's CB radio, telling him to kill his family (King 341). He has a surreal nightmare in which the cane his father used to beat his mother becomes the roque mallet he will use to attack his wife and son (King 411). He begins to sympathize with his father (King 579). And finally, chasing his son through the halls of the Overlook, Jack uses the same phrase his father used when he beat his mother: "come and take your medicine" (King 635). The fact that the Overlook chooses to take over a man, and that it does so using the weaknesses of patriarchal society—idealized images of the father as breadwinner, strained father-son relations, and domestic abuse, among others—are fruitful avenues of investigation, but I wish to focus on the effects of Jack's metamorphosis on his wife, Wendy.

Jack's transformation forces Wendy to transform, as well, but as Jack loses his identity, Wendy gains one. At the beginning of the novel, Wendy is defined by her role in the house and family: "During the days Wendy would stay home and housewife, feeding Danny his bottles in the sunwashed kitchen of the four-room second-story apartment, playing her records on the battered portable stereo she had had since high school" (King 68). Wendy has her own thoughts and ideas, but she suppresses them; when Danny asks if she wants to move to the Overlook, she replies, "If it's what your father wants, it's what I want" (King 20). As Manchel writes, "Wendy portrays the suffering wife, homebound, caught in a loveless marriage, and ineptly trying to keep the family together by suppressing any doubts about Jack's or Danny's mental health. This is Wendy's seduction by patriarchal authoritarianism. In her mind, that is what a good wife is supposed to do: wash, weep, and wait patiently" (Manchel 74). Through the first half of the novel, Wendy is remarkable for her passivity. She watches, she thinks, and

occasionally she screams, but she does not really do anything. Wendy defines herself as "wife-mother" (King 286), and for her this means patience, passivity, and obedience to her husband.

When Wendy finally begins to take action, it is the result of her role as mother. Believing Jack has hurt Danny, she is spurred on by "the voice of her maternity, a cold and passionless voice once it was directed away from the closed circle of mother and child and out toward Jack. It was a voice that spoke of self-preservation only after son-preservation" (King 351). When Wendy finally does take action for herself and for her son, she realizes how weak and passive she has been until that point: "her whole life had been a long and easy dream to lull her helplessly into this waking nightmare. She was soft. When trouble came, she slept. Her past was unremarkable. She had never been tried in fire. Now the trial was upon her, not fire but ice, and she would not be allowed to sleep through this. Her son was waiting for her upstairs" (King 556). After having been passive for so long, Wendy flourishes with the ability to think and act for herself. Given her former weakness, she is surprised by how strong she can be: telling Danny that his father has been possessed by the hotel, she is "surprised at the calmness of her own voice" (King 573).

With her husband violent and deranged, Wendy takes his position as defender and protector of the family. The language of the novel clearly links this transition to a change in sexual role. As Wendy drags Jack into the pantry, having just knocked him unconscious, she unexpectedly thinks of sex: "She had been married to him for nearly seven years, he had lain on top of her countless times—in the thousands—but she had never realized how heavy he was" (King 568). Their roles have been reversed; this time, Jack lies prone, and Wendy is active. She slashes at Jack with a razor (King 626) and attacks him with a knife (King 607), two traditionally phallic objects. The imagery of the knife attack is especially sexualized: " '*Oh dear God!*' she screamed to the Overlook's shadowy lobby, and buried the kitchen knife in his lower back up to the handle. He stiffened beneath her and then shrieked" (King 607). This sexual role reversal is a key to the thematic significance of Wendy's transformation. When Jack becomes one with the house, he is symbolically feminized, allowing Wendy to take on the power and authority traditionally associated with the husband and father. At the same time, she remains a good mother: she does not lose her traditionally feminine traits as Jack loses his traditionally masculine traits. As a housewife, she was only a person in relation to her house and family. As a heroine, she becomes a full person, with her own fully formed identity within the novel. In a strange way, Jack's possession leads to Wendy's liberation. As Manchel argues, it would be unwise to treat Jack as a simple symbol of patriarchy, but his reaction to Wendy's seizure of his power illustrates the patriarchal response to powerful women well: "What it really came down to, he supposed, was their lack of trust in him. Their failure to believe that he knew what was best for them and how to get it. His wife had tried to usurp him, first by fair (sort of) means, then by foul" (King 578). Of course, Jack doesn't know what is best for his family. Wendy's power is legitimate, whereas his is based only on tradition and bullying. The idea that a woman as passive and subservient as Wendy could successfully and legitimately form an identity independent of her husband and her role in the home terrifies Jack.

Wendy's transition from housewife to heroine dramatically challenges the patriarchal system that grants all authority to the father and allows women no identity outside the home, but the narrative eventually reaffirms patriarchy. Wendy temporarily saves herself and her son from Jack, but another man must save her. Hallorann's rescue of Wendy and Danny is full of clichéd images of the gallant hero saving the damsel in distress: "He clapped an arm around Wendy and picked her up. He clapped his other arm around Danny. He ran for the stairs" (King 658). Wendy is "no more than semiconscious" and Hallorann treats her as he would a young child: "Hallorann sat the woman down on the passenger seat and put her coat on. He lifted her feet up—they were very cold but not frozen yet—and rubbed them briskly with Danny's jacket before putting on her boots" (King 664). Wendy, so powerful and assertive in her final

confrontations with Jack, is once again reduced to a passive object, unable even to move or put on her boots by herself. After they have escaped from the Overlook, Hallorann compliments Wendy, but his comments are patronizing, almost insulting. Looking at her, "Hallorann saw a grave sort of beauty there that had been missing the day he first met her, some nine months before" (King 676)—as if the purpose of her terrible experience has been simply to beautify her, as if her physical appearance is the only important part of her. Wendy plans to begin working outside the home, but she only found the job through the influence of a male patron, Jack's old drinking buddy Al Shockley (King 678). For a short time, Wendy had genuine power and self-control, though she had to go through hell to get it; now she is back in a world where men control her access to power and define her identity. Patriarchy appears inescapable, but the fact that Wendy has disrupted this power, however briefly, suggests that there is a viable alternative.

It is tempting to think of the haunted house as a fixed, unchanging cultural icon; but like ghosts, haunted houses are a reflection of the people and times that produce them. *The Haunting of Hill House*, published in 1959, expresses outrage and horror at the treatment of women, the way they are denied an identity and repressed by patriarchal society. In it, one can see the frustration and rage that would soon find a voice in the women's rights movement. It does not offer any real alternatives, however—the narrative recognizes the evils of patriarchal society, but at the time, an alternative social order seemed inconceivable. *The Shining*, published in 1977, examines the way both men and women are damaged by patriarchal culture. In Wendy, it expresses women's growing desire for liberation. The feminism of *The Shining* is not the futile rage of *The Haunting of Hill House* but a yearning for a new social order in which women would be free to define and express themselves however they wished, inside or outside the home. In the end, however, the novel reaffirms patriarchy, albeit a more gentle patriarchy represented by Hallorann. In *The Haunting of Hill House*, the house claims a woman; in *The Shining* the house claims a man, granting a woman power and agency. One cannot help but wonder whom the haunted house would claim today.

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Notes:

[1] This work, like Duvall's "Inner Demons: Flawed Protagonists and Haunted Houses in *The Haunting* and *The Shining*," addresses the film versions of the novels I discuss. The films are significantly different from the novels, but many of the arguments in these articles can be productively applied to the novels as well.