

THE MUTUAL INFLUENCES OF LAW, MEDICINE, AND FICTIONAL
LITERATURE REGARDING THE DISPOSITION OF
A SOMNAMBULIST IN EIGHTEENTH
AND NINETEENTH CENTURY
LITERATURE

by

MEGHAN SELF

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

MAY 2014

Copyright © by Meghan Self 2014

All Rights Reserved

Acknowledgements

The completion of my thesis would not have been possible without the encouragement and guidance of Dr. Neill Matheson, whose wisdom and forthrightness has helped me to focus my interests within the colossal field of American Literature and to unearth unique, enlivening ideas.

I also owe many thanks to both Dr. Tim Richardson and Dr. Jim Warren, both of whom offered exceptional support and advice to me during the writing process. The diverse responses of my thesis committee led me to compose an innovative piece and have inspired me to continue graduate study in the field of English Literature.

Additional gratitude goes out to my parents: Suellen and Fred, my family, and my friends. Thanks for all of the patience, curiosity, questions, suggestions and continual confidence you've provided. Most importantly, "thanks" cannot express the amount of appreciation I feel towards my husband, Josh, who spent many nights *trying* to help me sort through the copious amounts of research materials, sound boarding ideas and questions, and understanding my frustrations; but above all else who provided me with joy and laughter throughout this process. Without you, *none* of this would have been possible.

April 17, 2014

Abstract

THE MUTUAL INFLUENCES OF LAW, MEDICINE, AND FICTIONAL
LITERATURE REGARDING THE DISPOSITION OF
A SOMNAMBULIST IN EIGHTEENTH
AND NINETEENTH CENTURY
LITERATURE

Meghan Self M.A.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2014

Supervising Professor: Neill Matheson

Somnambulism derives from the Latin words *somnus*- sleep and *ambulare*- to walk around, meaning a person appears to conduct waking actions, but is actually asleep. Classified as a disease, somnambulism raises questions of its possible causes and cures, as well as what constitutes the difference between the conscious and unconscious mind. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, medical physicians were beginning to explore somnambulism as well as other mental disorders in more depth than in previous years. It is interesting to note that during the time of medical research on these diseases, fictional Gothic writers were also beginning to incorporate some of the new medical literature into their work. Through this exploration, many questions arose regarding a somnambulism, but one of the most intriguing, and still largely unanswered

questions pertains to homicidal somnambulism: if a person is unconscious during a somnambulistic episode, then is that person culpable for his or her actions that occur during the episode? Medical, legal, and fictional literatures explore these questions through several fascinating theories, diagnoses, and interpretations.

In this project I argue that the discourses of law, medicine, and fictional literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were not as separate as they are today, and that many ideas circulated between the different discourses. For example, reading a novel could influence a lawyer's defense strategy, and novelists could be influenced by an awareness of new legal precedents, or new medical theories. Additionally, because of the circular nature of these institutionalized discourses, and an alteration to the traditional Gothic genre, it is possible that the Gothic novelists influenced the public's perception of somnambulism, particularly criminal somnambulism through the interconnection of the legal, medical, and literary discourses.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Chapter I: The Sleepwalking Criminal: <i>Massachusetts v. Tirrell</i>	9
Chapter II: Diseases of Sleep and Somnambulism in Medicine, Jurisprudence, and Literature.....	42
Chapter III: Somnambulism as a Symptom in Charles Brockden Brown's <i>Edgar Huntly</i>	64
Chapter IV: Opium and Obsession: Alternative Causalities of Somnambulism.....	95
Conclusion.....	114
Notes.....	121
Bibliography.....	125
Biographical Information.....	130

Introduction

In an introduction to Gothic fiction, modern scholar Peter Otto writes, “Gothic fictions afford a retreat from the chaotic events of the real world”. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Gothic writers were transforming the styles and chimeras of the traditional Gothic genre. Authors such as Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Allan Poe, and Wilkie Collins altered their scheme of writing away from the common conventions of supernatural phenomena and subterranean passageways hidden deep within dreary castles—that traditional authors such as Horace Walpole used—and began using more realistic, albeit largely unexplainable and mysterious phenomena such as obscure medical conditions and mental illnesses in their works. Though the medical and mental oddities were only just coming into heart of the fields of medical and scientific study, there is one particular variance the unconventional Gothic writers provided their readers, an overwhelming sense of palpable horror. By shifting away from the traditional Gothic modes, these authors provided a more unnerving and nearly tangible fear within their readers by using medical and mental abnormalities that could seemingly strike anyone at any time. In the introduction to Charles Brockden Brown’s novel *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker*, scholars Philip Barnard and Stephen Shapiro assert, “that a modern-looking world struggling to achieve enlightenment neither needs to nor should continue the traditional narrative structures that hearken to its collective adolescence...Brown argues that because every period produces its ‘own

conceptions of truth and nature,' the tales of the ancient Greek and Romans and even those of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries can no longer motivate contemporary readers" (xxiv). Because, as Brown declares, the contemporary readers of his time needed and wanted to direct their attention to the modern occurrences they were experiencing, thus it seems that some Gothic writers were not only wanting to shift away from the traditional Gothic conventions, but it was almost a necessity to maintain readership.

It has been suggested by several literary scholars that American Gothic writers were more focused on portraying the events occurring in the newly established America. For example, Charles Brockden Brown admits in his preface to *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* that he would write about the "incidents of Indian hostility" and "the perils of the Western wilderness," but maintains the Gothic feel, but rather portray it through a new light (4).

Additionally, modern scholar Paul Downes writes,

Edgar Huntly cuts an ambiguous figure in the political landscape of post revolutionary America. As one who moves between the city and the Indian border country and as an educated artisan...Edgar exercises what he himself refers to as a "lawless curiosity" (229); his urgent return to the frontier, the scene of his friend's murder, coincides with a radical intuition that justice will be found where the Republic's "catechisms and codes" begin to lose ground. At the same time, Huntly demonstrates a capacity for impulsive violence that suggests the inquisitorial aggression of Enlightenment pursuit and that could be read to exemplify conservative xenophobia at its most frenzied (415).

It was through the vastly changing American frontier that many scholars argue that Brown's novel was intended to be a post-revolutionary political metaphor,

which very well may be the case, but his novel also highlights the importance of integrating other scholarly discourses into his work, such as the medical anomalies being discovered by science at the time. By including the influentially new medical research in his novel it allowed for the creation of a more realistic, reinvigorated Gothic fiction. Additionally, Brown's novels also feature other uncanny and frightening scientific phenomena such as ventriloquism, spontaneous combustion, hereditary insanity, and a portrayal of the epidemic of yellow fever. Among the vast array of medical conditions illustrated by these authors, one of the more profoundly captivating anomalies is that of somnambulism. From the Latin term *somnus* meaning sleep, and *ambulare* –to walk around, somnambulism was one of the most intriguing disorders that Gothic fiction borrowed from medical science.

One of the first instances of somnambulism being recorded and studied for medical purposes was in 1784 by The Marquis de Puysegur, a French psychiatrist and student of Franz Mesmer, interested in the study of animal magnetism in a semi-sleep-like trance; although, there is evidence that observances of somnambulism has occurred since the time of ancient Greek physician Hippocrates (406-370 BC). During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, studies of psychological and neurological diseases were becoming more common in the scientific and medical fields, but what is particularly interesting, and what is the basis for this project, is the exploration of the ways in which Gothic authors integrated the medical and scientific treatises on mental

disorders (as well as some legal concepts surrounding mental disorders in some cases), into their fictional literature. Moreover, it is especially important to show how there was a mutual influence and circular discussion occurring between these institutionalized bodies of knowledge in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, much more so than there is today.

Notable physicians Erasmus Darwin, Benjamin Rush, and John William Polidori studied somnambulism and similar sleep-disturbing diseases in an attempt to answer the plethora of psychological, medical and scientific questions raised by these disorders. Perhaps it was the ambiguous causes and the uncertain treatments of somnambulism that attracted fiction writers who were interested in presenting strange and mysterious, albeit intriguing phenomena to their readers. Additionally, I believe the legal questions surrounding somnambulism made it appealing to both medical physicians and fiction writers. One prominent legal and psychological quandary addressed in imaginative literature deals with presumption that the sleepwalker is unconscious, which calls into question criminal intent in the case of homicidal somnambulism. For Gothic writers these legal questions enabled them to explore some interestingly murky psychology. Furthermore, Darwin was also known to be a poetⁱ, and Polidori was a close friend and physician to Lord Byron and the Shelley's, and was present in Geneva when Mary Shelley concocted the tale of *Frankenstein*. Polidori "came from a distinguished literary family...young, and classically handsome, and possessed a gift for writing which surprises every modern reader;" he is also

known for his novel *The Vampyre* (Reiger 464). Scholar James Reiger believes that if it were not for his suicide he "might now hold a place in the nineteenth-century hierarchy slightly above Charlotte Bronte" (464).

Current scholarship looks at somnambulism and other sleep-related mental disorders in Gothic literature, but there appears to be a gap in the current treatment of why and how these disorders were used by Gothic novelists. This project will shed new light on the ways in which somnambulism was studied by physicians and utilized by writers to provide a new angle on the psychological, scientific, and legal issues discussed by previous scholars. My research will enhance modern scholarship by investigating several pieces of Gothic literature that uses somnambulism and mental disorders as a way to provoke a new sense of horror into the traditional Gothic chimera. Additionally, I will also address a famous legal case, *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* (1846) that included somnambulism as a primary defense technique, as well as texts by three famous physicians: Erasmus Darwin, Benjamin Rush, and John William Polidori to show the overlapping and circular influence between law, medicine, and fictional literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the probability of these texts having an influence on the public's perception of mental diseases. Furthermore, I will address many of the plaguing questions associated with somnambulism, particularly homicidal somnambulism that early scientists, legal professionals, authors, and even modern scholars studied and debated.

In the first chapter of this project I examine an unfinished fictional piece written at the end of the eighteenth century by American author, Charles Brockden Brown titled “Somnambulism: A Fragment,” as well as a lesser-known nineteenth century novel *Sylvester Sound: The Somnambulist* written by British author Henry Cockton. The two fictional texts explore both medical and legal issues raised by this disease, but more importantly, in this chapter I examine the *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* (1846) case, and I argue that this court case was influenced by the new medical and scientific research on somnambulism, but also influenced by Brown, Cockton, and other fiction writers. In my second chapter, I analyze the medical and scientific writings of three eminent eighteenth and nineteenth century physicians: Darwin, Rush, and Polidori, whose work served as an evident inspiration for many novelists intending to incorporate the obscurities of mental diseases in their fiction. The primary focus of this chapter is to familiarize readers with the research provided on somnambulism and mental diseases during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as to demonstrate the circular nature of the medical and scientific discourses and mutual influence between physicians that contributed to the shared knowledge between the fields of medicine, law, and literature.

Then in chapter three, I investigate the way Charles Brockden Brown utilized the psychological and legal implications surrounding a sleepwalker in his novel *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* (1798). Brown explored the possible causes of this disease, such as it being a “contagion” that can be caught

and transferred from person to person, as well as suggesting that somnambulism is a symptom of guilt and mental distress. In the introduction to Brown's novel, Barnard and Shapiro assert that his novel is "in accordance with the latest medical works of the period, [and that] Brown understood sleepwalking in terms of the associative physiology of sentiment and sensibility, and as a socially generate symptom of emotional damage" (xvii), which aligns with the theory provided by Darwin that somnambulism is a creation of over-excited internal stimuli in the brain (18.1). Moreover, Barnard and Shapiro also note that Brown read Darwin's *Zoonomia: or the Laws of Organic Life* (1794) because "it provide[d] Brown with his basic understanding of madness as a disorder of the sense[s]" (xviii). This continues to express the mutual influence of medicine in the realm of fictional literature. Finally in chapter four, I examine the ways in which later Gothic writers Edgar Allan Poe and Wilkie Collins focus on more unusual causes of sleepwalker. Poe utilizes the mental disorder of monomania to explore sleepwalking. Monomania causes the sufferer's attention to become overwhelmingly transfixed on a particular object for no apparent reason; and because that random object has become an unceasing desire, the monomaniac will obsess over the object of desire until he or she obtains the object. Which then, upon obtaining the object of desire, the monomaniac's obsession will turn almost automatically to another seemingly random object. In Poe's short story "Berenice," the monomaniac's obsession moves from the shadows on the tapestry, or upon the door, to the flames in a lamp, or embers within a fireplace,

but all of this occurs with no evident rationale. Egaeus, Poe's narrator, settles his fixation upon Berenice's teeth. Her teeth have become Egaeus' obsessive desire, causing him to dig up her grave and pry the teeth from her mouth in an unconscious fit of monomania. Moreover, Wilkie Collins uses a Hindu Indian myth, insomnia, and opium to induce the sleepwalker in his novel *The Moonstone*. Though Brown and Poe address legal issues called out by the events that occur during a somnambulistic episode, in Collins' novel, a Moonstone gem is stolen in the middle of the night by someone already inside the house. Collins' investigation of the sleepwalking thief creates a peculiar and fascinating exploration of legal questions relating to somnambulism, automatism, and the culpability of the sleepwalker.

It is through the several avenues of inquiry that I base my project, in hopes of shedding a new light on a literary genre so widely discussed in current scholarship. By exploring the circular discussions happening between medicine, law, and fictional literature, I hope to expose the mutual influences between these institutionalized discourses through just one of the many mental illnesses represented in eighteenth and nineteenth century Gothic fiction—criminal somnambulism.

Chapter I

The Sleepwalking Criminal: *Massachusetts v. Tirrell*

He seemed to be so strange, I thought he was crazy.

– Mary Head, Witness for M v. T Trial

In 1846 a Boston man, Albert J. Tirrell, was accused of murdering his mistress Maria Bickford, and simultaneously accused of arson for setting fire to the hotel/brothel where Maria was living at the time of her death. The evidence provided by the prosecution team for the state of Massachusetts was pertinent and seemingly obvious proving Tirrell was the murderer and arsonist. However, Tirrell's notorious criminal attorney, Rufus Choate, equipped with an unprecedented defense, managed to sway the jury to a not guilty verdict by use of a medical disorder called somnambulism (from the Latin *somnus*-sleep and *ambulare*-to walk around meaning a person appears to conduct waking actions but is actually asleep). "Murder," the court transcriber from the *Boston Daily Mail Report* wrote, "is the killing of a human being, done with malice aforethought, without authority, justification, or extenuation by law" (5). Before the trial began, there were two undeniable facts: Maria was dead, and Albert Tirrell was found a few days after her death in New Orleans, 1,500 miles from Boston. Tirrell was captured in a ship leaving New Orleans and brought back to Boston for trial. The obvious questions of the trial were why Maria was murdered and whether Tirrell actually did it. The state of Massachusetts was fairly certain their prosecutors had an easy case, but what the team was not prepared for was the defense from

Rufus Choate and the ways in which he framed his legal defense around her death.

After Rufus Choate's defense, the jury acquitted Albert Tirrell on charges of murder and arson, influenced by an unprecedented defense argument—somnambulism. What makes this particular case especially interesting is that Choate utilized literary fiction to frame his legal defense plea, indicating the plausibility that fictional texts can enhance legal arguments. Learning about the Tirrell case is important to this project because not only was it the first legal case where sleepwalking was used as a successful defense, but because the defense lawyer, Rufus Choate, used literary texts during his argument. Legal, medical, and fictional literature were more intricately connected in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than they are today, and Choate used these discourses in his defense allowing the jury to hear three different genres (medical, literary, and legal) to evaluate the questions and issues raised by a defense of somnambulism. In this chapter I address this case as well as some works of fiction to explore questions of legal responsibility, a sleepwalker's conscious versus unconscious states, and the possible causes of the sleepwalker's actions, which can give rise to criminal behavior. Moreover, it is important to note the influence that these literary texts had upon Rufus Choate. The *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* case, Henry Cockton's *Sylvester Sound: The Somnambulist* (1844) and Charles Brocken Brown's "Somnambulism: A Fragment" (1804) provide the foundation necessary for opening a discussion of the aforementioned legal and

philosophical questions, as well as other eclectic questions that are extensively addressed later, but that predominantly fall under the central question of the legal responsibility of a sleepwalker. Moreover, I argue that the discourses of law, medicine, and fictional literature were not as separate as they are now, and that ideas circulated between these different discourses. For example, a lawyer's defense strategy could be influenced by reading a novel, and novelists could be influenced by an awareness of new legal precedents, or new medical theories. Additionally, because of the circular nature of these institutionalized bodies of knowledge, and the "new" Gothic genre of writing, it is possible that the Gothic novelists influenced the public's perception of somnambulism, particularly criminal somnambulism through the interconnection of legal, medical, and literary discourses.

According to the *Boston Daily Mail Report's* transcription of the Tirrell case, Choate consulted copious literary texts with a central theme of somnambulism while preparing for the trial and also presented popular treatises during the trial.ⁱⁱ Although the actual list of texts Choate consulted was never published, in the spring of 2012 the Smithsonian Museum published an online article about the *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* case providing an interesting fact about Choate's defense: "The famous lawyer [Choate] noticed [Judge] Shute reading *Sylvester Sound, the Somnambulist* (1844), by the British novelist Henry Cockton. He asked to have a look. "Choate became interested, then absorbed,' Shute recalled. 'After reading intently a long time he excused himself'" (Abbott).

This excerpt strengthens the likelihood of literary influence on Choate for developing the somnambulism defense for Tirrell. Fortuitously stumbling upon *Sylvester Sound: The Somnambulist* enabled Choate to formulate the unprecedented defense plea. Choate crucially relied on literary texts such as Henry Cockton's *Sylvester Sound: The Somnambulist* and Charles Brockden Brown's "Somnambulism: A Fragment" to stress a more complex understanding of somnambulism found in fictional literature. With this, Choate could easily establish a more universal understanding of the effects of somnambulism by adding literary texts that members of the jury might have already read or at least had access to. Also, it is reasonable to believe because Choate had access to Cockton's novel, he would have had access to other, more popular, literary works and medical treatises centered on somnambulism. The connection between Choate and using literary fiction to enhance his defense is interesting because if we read the *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* case through a literary lens then the case can be read metaphorically by viewing the jury as a body of "readers" of Choate's defense "text," and it being Choate's intention to help the jury analyze the case before them through the different, yet coalescent avenues to medicine, law, and fictional literature.

Though it is impossible to know exactly which literary texts Choate reviewed for the case, the narrator of the Boston *Daily Mail Report's* transcript of the trial does include a small, yet crucial piece of information from the courtroom: "the counsel read to the Court a great variety of cases, illustrating his principles,

and ending to show the effect of somnambulism upon the physical, intellectual, and moral faculties” (20). Including the phrase “moral faculties” to the set of principles offered by Choate’s team implies that Choate was using questions of morality raised during a state of sleepwalking as a key point in his defense. With several questions arising regarding the psychological and medical fields, Choate’s defense brought up questions of moral responsibility and the jurisprudence of trying a person who unconsciously commits an illegal act. Using medical theories such as Dr. John Elliotson’s *Human Physiology* (1835) and Dr. Abercrombie’s “Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth” (1830), Choate declared, “*Spontaneous somnambulism*, or sleep walking, or sleep-waking [...] is a diseased state of the mind resulting from certain *nervous changes* [...] It is a mental disease – an unsoundness of mind – and however involved and difficult in theory, [it is] of great familiarity in fact” (*Daily Mail* 19). Choate then paraphrased Dr. Elliotson’s *Human Physiology* noting “persons in this state walk, and perform a variety of actions, without hearing, or seeing, or consciousness of their situation,” and concluded, “there is abundant reason to believe that a state of *somnambulism* is unnatural to the human constitution, a disease, an actual unsoundness of mind” (*Daily Mail* 19). By citing medical theories on somnambulism, Choate laid the basis for his defense, arguing that if a person suffers from the disease of somnambulism then it is quite obvious, and the medical professionals concur, that during this state a person is mentally unsound.ⁱⁱⁱ

Through this, Choate's team formulated a two-part defense for the case. The first argument given by Choate's assistant lawyer, Merrill, suggested that it was possible Maria committed suicide: "cutting the throat with a razor is a very common method of suicide—but this is very unlikely to be selected by another for the purposes of murder" (*Daily Mail* 16). Though this explanation seems plausible solely, the argument lacked an explanation for the witness testimonies of seeing Tirrell with Maria before her death, and seeing Tirrell shortly after in a confused state. As with many literary texts, the "author," Choate split his defense to present two possible theories. The first, presented by Merrill, asserted that Maria committed suicide. Many authors will present a false avenue for readers to get them to begin analyzing the multiple possibilities of the crime. Perhaps Choate intended to have the jury begin to believe the possibility of Maria's suicide, but because this avenue seemed unlikely, it actually strengthened his defense of somnambulism. After this possibility was laid in the minds of the jurors, Choate addressed the courtroom: "it is their [the jury's] duty to say, what amount of evidence they will require to satisfy them that a murder has been committed" (*Daily Mail* 21). But for the second defense argument Choate claimed not his client's innocence, but rather, that *if* Tirrell was the killer he should be found *not* guilty because he was merely sleepwalking. Choate adds: "you will pause and ponder deeply the *evidence*, and reject everything; every conclusion that is not forced upon the mind by all the light of moral demonstration, that is not proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt—before you render a verdict, that denounces

against the defendant the awful sentence of death” (*Daily Mail* 21). I believe Choate adds this piece directly to the jury—or the metaphorical readers—to urge them to be critical “readers” of his defense strategy and to take his approach seriously. Choate utilizes the rhetorical devices of logos to aid in his persuasiveness and guidance of the jury to form their conclusions based on his arguments, rather than on the circumstantial evidence provided by the prosecution team. Based on the two corresponding transcripts of the trial published by the *Boston Daily Mail Report* and the *Boston Times Report*, it appears that Rufus Choate believed Tirrell killed Maria. However, Choate’s defense team needed to establish alternative possibilities for Maria’s death such as suicide in order to make the final defense of somnambulism most effective. The prosecution team began: “I present these considerations to you, because this case is a case of circumstantial evidence as to the murderer. No human eye but the fierce blood-glutted eye of the slayer, saw the ghastly deed done” (*Daily Mail* 5-6). As the prosecution team began laying a foundation for a guilty verdict, they presented rudimentary theories and circumstantial evidence incriminating Tirrell; however, with a lack of substantial evidence, according to the information presented in the trial’s transcript, these elementary details made Choate’s defense possible.^{iv}

Choate did not want to leave any room for questions in the jurors’ minds in regards to Tirrell’s morality, so he called character witnesses to the stand. Character witnesses who knew Tirrell well testified that he was a decent and

well-liked man. Although Tirrell was considered by most to be a moral man, the questions of whether a sense of morality is maintained while asleep is an aspect Choate needed to consider when forming his defense. By including character witnesses Choate established an argument that Tirrell was a moral man while in a conscious state. Choate utilized the rhetorical devices of ethos, pathos, and logos to persuade the jury to see Tirrell's character as a good and moral man that could not possibly commit a crime this heinous in his "right mind."^v Choate also argued that only during an episode of mental derangement caused by somnambulism would it have been plausible for Tirrell to commit the immoral and illegal act of murder.

In regards to questions of morality, Tirrell and Maria were married to other people at the time of their love affair; yet, their affair was not kept particularly secret from anyone, not even their spouses. In *Pillars of Salt, Monuments of Grace*, Daniel A. Cohen writes that while Tirrell was imprisoned on adultery charges prior to Maria's murder,

A number of friends and relatives, including his young wife, wrote letters to Samuel D. Parker, the county prosecutor, requesting a stay of proceedings on the adultery indictment in the hope that Tirrell might be reformed. Parker presented those letters to the judges of the Municipal Court, who agreed to suspend prosecution for six months, with Tirrell paying court costs and posting bond as a guarantee of his good behavior (200).

During the six months, Maria was murdered. Maria and Tirrell were last seen together around nine o' clock the evening before Maria's death at the disreputable residence where Maria had been living. Around five-thirty the next

morning the owners of the dwelling awoke from “a rouse of commotion upstairs, followed by billows of smoke and fire” (Cohen 202). The family and fire department suppressed the fire and found articles of male clothing that witnesses identified as belonging to Tirrell. These facts alone pointed to Tirrell as the murderer, but this was only the beginning of many additional witness testimonies and Choate’s groundbreaking somnambulism defense.

The only feasible evidence the state of Massachusetts could muster was the coincidence of clothes identified as Tirrell’s being found in Maria’s room, as well as witness testimony that Tirrell was with her the night before her murder. The state’s prosecution implied that if Tirrell was capable of committing infidelity, then logically he could commit other odious crimes such as murder and arson. However, the state’s case was challenged by testimonies given during the trial about Tirrell’s devotion, kindness, and perpetual love for Maria. Even though Tirrell and Maria argued often,^{vi} neither this fact nor the awareness of his infidelity was evidence enough to indict Tirrell on murder charges. Therefore, it would seem the only plausible argument would be that Tirrell was of unsound mind when Maria was killed.

According to Tirrell’s family, he had a history of somnambulism. The testimony presented by Tirrell’s family, as witnesses during the trial, suggested that Tirrell began sleepwalking at a young age and had been known to engage in strange behavior during an episode. Choate’s defense team opened their case by “presenting to the consideration of the jury a few cases where innocent

persons have been condemned and put to death upon circumstantial evidence” (*Daily Mail* 17); for Choate these examples were key for building a strong defense for Tirrell. Because the prosecution team could only present circumstantial evidence based on witness testimonies before and after Maria’s death, the prosecution team, according to Choate, would condemn an innocent man. Unless Choate could prove Tirrell was not of sound mind, caused by somnambulism, if he was in fact the killer.

Even though the prosecution team had plausible, albeit circumstantial, evidence incriminating Tirrell, it was the testimonies of Mary and Samuel Head that provided the shift in the case Choate needed. Mary and Samuel Head testified Tirrell went to their house the same morning of Maria’s death inquiring about an order for clothes. “‘He seemed to be so strange I thought he was crazy’ Mary commented at her first encounter with Tirrell; then Samuel came downstairs to find Tirrell talking to Mrs. Head and reiterated, ‘he seemed to be crazy; acted very strange, did not know what to make of him’. Samuel Head then took hold of Tirrell and shook him, causing Tirrell to come to ‘as though he waked from a stupor [...] at the time he called he appeared as though he was asleep’ and asked Mr. Head: ‘Sam, how came I here?’” (*Daily Mail* 12-13). Though it cannot be proved that Tirrell was in a somnambulistic state when he allegedly committed these crimes, Choate’s witnesses provided convincing evidence for Tirrell’s somnambulism, implying that Tirrell was in fact sleepwalking *if* he was the one who killed Maria and set fire to the hotel/brothel. In the event that Tirrell was

sleepwalking, as Choate argued, he would have been completely unconscious of his actions; so could Tirrell then be held morally or legally responsible for arson and the death of Maria?

Choate delivered substantial evidence for his defense by making use of Tirrell's family offering testimonies on behalf of his moral character in addition to the fact that Tirrell had been plagued by somnambulism his whole life in order to give the jury an alternative explanation for the events. But, questions of the alleged sleepwalker's moral responsibility still remain unanswered. First, *if* Tirrell unconsciously killed Maria during a fit of somnambulism could he, or perhaps should he, be deemed legally responsible for her death; and secondly *if* Tirrell was sleepwalking during the act, was he at the very least morally responsible for his actions? These questions should evoke additional questions in the juror's minds regarding the moral and legal responsibility of a sleepwalker; it is these questions that Choate provided that demonstrate the connected discussion occurring between medicine and law. Choate provided the jury with a considerable amount of scientific evidence that suggests somnambulism is constituted by mental derangement as a result of a nervous disorder; therefore, somnambulism, from a legal perspective, is equivalent to mental derangement:

Persons in this state walk, perform a variety of actions, without hearing, or seeing, or consciousness of their situation [...] you may select any description of mental derangement from any competent medical authority, and we can show you that a state of mental derangement is precisely that [somnambulistic] state" (*Daily Mail* 19).

Legal tradition implies that someone of unsound mind is understood not to be legally responsible for his or her actions. Choate turned to medical literature to show that during a state of somnambulism a person is of unsound mind; thus, if Tirrell had been sleepwalking, he would not be legally responsible for his actions. But now Choate must demonstrate that sleepwalking should be included in the definition of “mental derangement”. Somnambulism is considered a neurological disorder, and Choate referenced medical literature during his defense to show that during the unconscious state of sleep a person experiences fits of mental derangement and performs inexplicable actions.^{vii} This reasoning indicates that a somnambulist could not be held legally or morally responsible for actions they commit during an episode. Therefore, since Albert Tirrell had a recorded medical history of somnambulism, the question of whether or not Tirrell killed Maria is less important than whether or not he was in a somnambulistic state when the event occurred. Choate believed that if he could prove or at least successfully convince the jury that Tirrell was asleep during the time of Maria’s murder then Tirrell should not be held legally or morally responsible for the act of killing Maria and setting the hotel/brothel on fire. But in order to do this, Choate needed support, which he found in medical treatises and literary fiction, illustrating the mutual influence of ideas taking place among these different disciplines in the mid-nineteenth century.

Choate established the foundation for his defense by utilizing popular treatises to ensure that the jury was fully cognizant of what the disease of

somnambulism entailed. Choate exclaimed to the jury: “I say, should any of the jury be unfamiliar with the meaning of *somnambulism*—it will only be necessary to show that this state is like any other *mental condition* with which you are familiar” (*Daily Mail* 19). Choate presented texts involving persons with certain mental conditions relative to somnambulism and its effects thereof. He presented the jury not just with medical texts, but literary fiction as well. In addition to the Smithsonian Museum’s claim that Choate read Henry Cockton’s novel, the *Daily Mail* transcript noted: “the counsel was reading the grounds of defence and giving the opinions of various authors upon the nature and philosophy of somnambulism” (21). This suggests that Choate utilized the information gained from reading Cockton’s novel, and also that Choate conducted research on “various authors” in the medical, philosophical, and literary fields in order to shape his defense.

For example, Henry Cockton’s novel *Sylvester Sound: The Somnambulist* is concerned with the disease of somnambulism that affects a father and then a son; in the novel it is believed to be a hereditary disorder. Cockton’s novel provides a rudimentary account of possible causes for somnambulism that shadow the broader outlines of the many respected physicians such as Erasmus Darwin, who provided a more philosophical hypothesis that suggested somnambulism stems from inner feelings of mental distress such as guilt. Reading Cockton’s novel enables a better understanding of where Choate’s influence for his defense derived from, and why he decided to use

somnambulism as the primary defense. There are many parallels that can be identified between the Tirrell case and fictional depictions of somnambulism available at the time of the trial. In *Sylvester Sound: The Somnambulist*, medical assistant Sylvester Sound is accused of adultery with a female patient, Mrs. Julian. Her husband files sexual assault charges against him and banishes his wife from their home, despite the fact that Sylvester was a known sleepwalker. Cockton insinuates that somnambulism can be a useful defense as long as there is substantial proof that the accused is in fact a sleepwalker. Sylvester Sound's lawyer, Mr. Slashing, began his defense with a brief review of Sound's somnambulist disease. But for Sound, unlike Tirrell, there was no other plausible defense than somnambulism. Slashing begins, "if he *were* there, he was there while in a state of somnambulism!" Slashing then offers an explanation for Sylvester's sleepwalking into Mrs. Julian's bedchamber:

The defendant Mr. Sound had for the period of five years [been] Lady Julian's medical attendant. During this period, as the witness has told us, he was frequently—very frequently—at the house of Sir Charles. Now, gentlemen, may I not venture to say, that on the morning in question, he dreamt that Lady Julian required his professional attendance, and that *acting on that dream*, he rose and went to the house? (165, emphasis mine).

Cockton seems to suggest that Sylvester's dream was so vivid, that it caused him to rise in his sleep believing he must fulfill his professional obligations as a physician, and respond to his patient's needs immediately. He thus implies Sound's dream evinces mental distress. Even though Sound's lawyer does not explicitly reference any medical text, it is obvious that Cockton agrees with the

proposed medical theory presented by Darwin and other physicians that one of the root causes of somnambulism is from some type of internal mental anguish. For Sylvester, his mental anguish is induced by his responsibility as a doctor to provide his patients with immediate care. The parallel between Sound and Tirrell makes the influence of Cockton's novel on Choate's defense quite transparent. The claim that Cockton influenced Choate may appear reasonable and uninteresting at first, because it is not all that uncommon for one field to draw from another, as with the literary borrowing from the medical, but what is interesting and unique is how these authors seamlessly weave the medical literature so inherently into their stories that it is quite possible for the reader to wholly miss them. For Choate to borrow from the medical is unsurprising, but for Choate isn't relying on a medical theory that is widely established—he's borrowing a speculative theory that is still very much in doubt, and using a fictional text as support. Perhaps the most fascinating element is the distinctive connection between Sylvester going trial and Albert Tirrell in a similar situation, and also because each story involves similar elements: a sleepwalking man, and a helpless woman.

Regardless of why Choate decided to use somnambulism as his defense, it is important to note *how* he did it so successfully. It could be because of his reputation as a renowned orator, or his crafty skills in persuasion; or because was able to utilize several different institutionalized discourses during his research, and defense. Because of the cohesive nature of these fields during the

mid-nineteenth century, Choate seemed to have a stronger foundation for his plea of somnambulism. It appears that Choate had already figured out how the jury would respond to his claim of somnambulism, likely from the response of the prosecution team in Henry Cockton's *Sylvester Sound: The Somnambulist*, so he was able to persuade the jury to a not guilty verdict. In other words, he appeared to work backwards: he knew what the jury needed to believe to grant a not guilty verdict, and he determined what elements he needed to employ to have his audience understand and interpret his defense in a particular manner. He did this by incorporating new and exciting medical literature, but he also likely chose to reference fictional literature because he believed literature had persuasive powers and perhaps even added evidentiary value to his defense.

Sylvester Sound was an evident inspiration on Choate as he accepted Tirrell's request for a defense lawyer. Rufus Choate's personality and character may have been a contributing factor for accepting the case too. He was a valued member of Congress, a renowned orator, and a distinguished criminal attorney. Naturally, as a successful and ambitious political figure, Choate would eagerly accept the challenge to employ such a groundbreaking legal defense in a trial. Concurrently, the defense would be an even greater challenge because of its apparent implausibility, as Cockton's novel implies. The prosecutor in *Sylvester Sound* argues that a somnambulist defense is ludicrous, which increases the level of difficulty the defense team faced. Such a difficult defense likely appealed to Choate because not only would he perform the first successful somnambulist

defense plea, but he likely wanted to prove his ability to perform successfully what most thought was a ridiculous and impossible defense argument. In *Sylvester Sound* the prosecutor mocks the proposal of a somnambulistic defense; likely much in the same way the prosecutors for the state of Massachusetts felt when Choate presented his argument. Sound's prosecutor exclaims:

In all my experience, gentlemen, [...] I've never met with anything more absurd than this defense. It is the most ridiculous on record. Somnambulism! Let us but one admit this plea and we may shut up every court of justice in the Empire. A man may seduce your wife, and plead somnambulism. He may ruin your daughters and plead somnambulism. He may pick your pocket and plead somnambulism. He may knock you down, and plead somnambulism. He may even murder you, and plead somnambulism [...] Somnambulism, indeed. The idea is preposterous! [...] Why, there isn't a crime under heaven that might not be committed with absolute impunity, if once we admitted, in justification, the monstrous plea of somnambulism [...] I am amazed that in this enlightened age—in the middle of the nineteenth century—such an absurd, such a perfectly ridiculous plea as that of somnambulism should have been entered (Cockton 167).

The absurdity of this defense plea is what may have compelled Choate to accept the challenge of Tirrell's case. Though Cockton's novel addresses one hostile viewpoint towards a defense as somnambulism, for Choate the argument apparently seemed logical and plausible in the case of Tirrell. But the importance here is that this argument provides evidence that the opinion is divided about medical theories of somnambulism. Though there was discrepancy regarding the veracity and reputability of a defense of somnambulism, the way in which Choate used the different mediums of discourses to prepare for his defense illustrates

the evidence of a mutual influence between law, medicine, and fictional literature, and the possible influence these bodies of knowledge had upon the public's perception of somnambulism as a mental disease.

If Cockton aided Choate by giving Choate the idea for using somnambulism as a defense, then it can be argued that an even earlier author, Charles Brockden Brown, may have also had an extraordinary influence on both Cockton and Choate. Much of Cockton's work parallels Charles Brockden Brown's. For example, Cockton's *The Adventures of Valentine Vaux: The Ventriloquist* (1840) echoes Brown's *Wieland* (1798): both novels are based on the life, skills, and mischief of a ventriloquist creating conflict between family members, and even destroying relationships between friends and lovers. Furthermore, *Sylvester Sound* mirrors Brown's "Somnambulism: A Fragment," by creating a caring and sincere somnambulist who appears to have good intentions but who ultimately fails and wreaks chaos on those for whom he cares most. Though Brown was not and still is not immensely popular in American literature, scholar Bridget Marshall notes that Brown was a widely read author in England, particularly by William Godwin and Mary Shelley, increasing the likelihood that Brown's novels were an influential source for Cockton, which may have also been an influential source for Rufus Choate as well (91). And also further suggests the circular influence between law, medicine, and fictional literature.

Brown's fragment begins with a fictional news report in the *Vienna Gazette*: "a young lady, travelling with her father by night, was shot dead upon

the road, by some person unknown” (“Somnambulism: A Fragment” 1). The excerpt places blame on a young man “whose behaviour indicates perfect health in all respects but one. He has a habit of rising in his sleep, and performing a great many actions with as much order and exactness as when awake” (1). Brown had a fascination with ensuring the accuracy of his descriptions relating to the science and medical fields. This is interesting because Brown’s “Somnambulism” is presented as a news report, rather than a fictional work implying beyond mere influence by medical studies, Brown actually integrated the fields to create a textual hybridity between the medical studies of somnambulism, journalism, and fictional literature. As Michael Cody mentions in his article on Brown’s fragment: “Brown indicates that more of the story exists beyond the confines of the printed text of the fragment” (2); Cody appears to suggest that Brown had the intention of hybridizing the science and literary fields, but he also may have intended for the reader to create their own distinction between facts and fiction. It is the shift from opening with the *Vienna Gazette* news report to a fictional story of the narrator, Althorpe, retelling the events of the night Miss Constantia Davis was murdered that suggests this idea. Alan Gardner Smith comments that the “scientific progress was intensely interesting to men of this time” and that if a man could not successfully contribute to the scientific field, then “he might at least hope to understand and share in the excitement of new developments” (2). Smith also notes “Brown’s preference for the peculiar and bizarre in human experience and the dry rationalism which underlies its

presentation” (3). Opening with the *Vienna Gazette* story of a somnambulist murdering a young woman provides insight into Brown’s preference for the obscure scientific and medical studies of the time, as Smith suggests.^{viii} Composing a story utilizing the deranged mental faculties allowed Brown to not only contribute to the literary field, but also—in his own way—to the scientific. Brown is demonstrating how imaginative literature has the capacity to bring non-fictional stories, as well as medical and scientific texts to life. Fiction has the power to dramatize what would otherwise be an abstract theory, and medical theorists themselves often rely on case histories to narrativize their ideas. This may be one reason why literary texts are especially persuasive, and useful for a defense strategy in law. Due to the hybrid nature of Brown’s work, he reveals that it is not only possible to guide the public perception of somnambulism through a multitude of textual avenues, but also that the different institutions of law, medicine, and fictional texts were not as autonomous in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as they are today.

In Brown’s fragment, Althorpe has deep admiration for Miss Davis and cares greatly, almost obsessively, for her safety as she and her father propose to journey home by horse-drawn carriage in the middle of the night. Althorpe attempts to dissuade them but fails. He then comments,

The family retired to sleep. My mind had been too powerfully excited to permit me to imitate their example. The incidents of the last two days passed over my fancy like a vision. The revolution was almost incredible which my mind had undergone, in consequence of these incidents. It was so abrupt and entire that my soul seemed to have passed into a new form. I pondered on every

incident till the surrounding scenes disappeared, and I forgot my real situation. I mused upon the image of Miss Davis ill my whole soul was dissolved in tenderness, and my eyes overflowed with tears. There insensible arose a sort of persuasion that destiny had irreversibly decreed that I should never see her more. While engaged in this melancholy occupation, of which I cannot say how long it lasted, sleep over took me as I sat ("Somnambulism" 4).

Althorpe's mental distress is quite several and very apparent as Althorpe's "emotions arose to terror" (3) about his love's journey at night and the thought of never seeing her again. The evidently distraught narrator overcome by mental anguish finally sleeps.

But because the severity of his concern for the Davises is so great, he cannot alleviate it consciously. As he transitions into the unconscious state of sleep his mental anguish does not disappear. He dreams of a man murdering Miss Davis, and in his dream Althorpe pursues the murderer and kills him. It is possible, Cody writes that "in the dream which naturally follows the ideas and desires that consumed his conscious mind," Althorpe mistakes Miss Davis for the murderer, and kills her instead of the imagined other. Cody then continues, "Althorpe finds his thoughts 'full of confusion and inaccuracy' (3: 340). This confused state reflects early psychology's understanding of dreams" (Cody 3). The fascinating and odd part is that according to the witness testimonies gathered, Althorpe's dream holds a "mysterious connection to the truth" ("Somnambulism" 6). Through this, Brown crosses the boundaries from literary to the scientific by posing a question about dream psychology: at what point do our dreams become reality, or cause us to participate in a distorted sense of reality? I

use the phrase “distorted reality” to describe his dream because Althorpe was in love with Miss Davis, but she was already betrothed to another man. Due to his distorted reality, or fantasy of his and Miss Davis’ potential love, and I suggest that because of it, he demands to accompany them on their night journey for protection. Because of this, I question where the boundary is between dream and action, or better yet, between wishful thinking and guilty intentions? Could Althorpe’s dream of a murderer killing Miss Davis be interpreted as a distorted “wish-fulfillment dream”? In *The Interpretation of Dreams* Sigmund Freud asks, “how dreams with a disagreeable content can be analysed as wish-fulfillments. We see now that this is possible where a dream-distortion has occurred, when the disagreeable content serves only to disguise the thing wished for” (293). An interpretation of Althorpe’s dream suggests the distortion began when he kills the assassin dressed in an “artful disguise,” in order to protect Miss Davis from being murdered. Moreover, Alfred Weber notes “Somnambulism was to Darwin's *Zoonomia* another disease of the mind, beside that of extreme love. Althorpe's case may seem to us today a very extraordinary one, but for Brown, who had studied Darwin's book and had read the report in the Vienna Gazette of June 14, 1784, it was a realistic case which could claim a high degree of probability” (26). This dream is a distortion of Althorpe’s desire for wish-fulfillment given by the clues of his passionate love for Miss Davis which fit the interpretation of a possessive obsession or as Weber defines it “extreme love”: if I cannot have her, then no one can have her.^{ix} Additionally, Brown also incorporates the literary

elements of narrative voice, characterization, and diction to assist his readers in a better understanding of how somnambulism affects a person, meaning when somnambulism occurs there are moments of unconsciousness that cannot be explained by the sleepwalker himself and must be explained by an omniscient third person narrator. It is interesting that Brown's narrative voice shifts throughout the fragment. At the beginning of the fragment, Brown uses first person from Althorpe's perspective in the piece, but once Althorpe falls asleep in the climax of the fragment, the narrative voice becomes inconsistent. Althorpe falls asleep, dreams of Miss Davis being murdered, then upon waking and beginning work as usual hears the news of Miss Davis' death from a man at the Inglefield house: "The circumstances of this mournful events, as I was able to collect them at different times, from the witnesses, were these" ("Somnambulism" 6). Following this statement, the first narrative shift occurs; Althorpe's character develops further as he begins telling the accounts Miss Davis' death as he could piece them together from witnesses, but in the third person, which is an interesting and unusual way to frame a character within a novel, but that Brown pulls off successfully. Once the Davises experience their first encounter with a man near them on the road, they stop to ask a farmer about this unknown man, who tells them it is likely the local idiot Nick Handyside. Upon revealing this information the narrative voice shifts back to Althorpe in first person:

When this circumstance was mentioned, my uncle, as well as myself, was astonished at our own negligence. While enumerating, on the preceding evening, the obstacles and inconveniences which the travellers [sic] were likely to encounter, we entirely and

unaccountably overlooked one circumstance, from which inquietude might reasonable have been expected (“Somnambulism: a fragment” 9).

But soon after this statement is made, the voice shifts again, and concludes as a third person narrative. It is also compelling to note how Brown utilizes diction throughout his story to help develop the sleepwalker. The language and word choice Brown uses reveals that Althorpe has distanced himself from the emotional state of being in love with a woman who was just murdered. Rather than allowing Althorpe to become confused, distressed and even panicked, which would seem to be a natural reaction to the circumstances, Althorpe exhibits a more placid and composed persona when he hears the news of Miss Davis’ death, as well as when he retells the events of the murder. Brown may have been purposefully shifting to an objective view, so that his readers could understand the probability of a disconnect between the unconscious mind of a sleepwalker and the mind of a conscious person, since Althorpe cannot narrate the events in first person because he was sleepwalking.

Brown crosses between several scholarly fields as he maneuvers between fiction, scientific, and law by posing questions about consciousness and the mental state of a sleepwalker. Through this Brown illustrates the discursive practices between law, medicine, and fictional literature. In his fragment, Brown implicitly raises questions of criminal intent in somnambulism, and though he does not explicitly mention these concepts, they are clearly implied throughout his text. Brown addresses the questions surrounding the sleepwalker’s guilty act

and questions whether the sleepwalker possessed guilty intentions. These legal concepts were derived from English common law and though these ideas were around when Brown was writing his fragment, he does not attempt to answer questions raised by these concepts, but rather, he provides valuable insight to the questions surrounding criminal somnambulism found within the different scholarly fields.

Modern legal scholar Steve Fleming explains the concept of *mens rea*, the guilty mind and *actus reus*, the guilt act. Distinguishing between the act and the intention is crucial for understanding the distinction between acts committed consciously and unconsciously, and what the implications are if the person is unconscious. Fleming's article is uniquely relevant to the Tirrell case and Brown's and Cockton's texts in regards to questioning the sleepwalker's mental state and their responsibility for criminal behaviors:

Our sympathy can be understood with reference to laws that demarcate a separation between mind and body. A central tenet of the Western legal system is the concept of *mens rea*, or guilty mind. A necessary element to criminal responsibility is the guilty act — the *actus reus*. However, it is not enough simply to act: one must also be mentally responsible for acting in a particular way. The common law allows for those who are unable to conform to its requirements due to mental illness: the defence of insanity. It also allows for 'diminished capacity' in situations where the individual is deemed unable to form the required intent, or *mens rea*. Those people are understood to have control of their actions, without intending the criminal outcome. In these cases, the defendant may be found guilty of a lesser crime than murder, such as manslaughter (Fleming).

To read Brown's fragment in legal terms, Althorpe may have committed an *actus reus*, but the legal quandary is whether he had guilty intentions or not. If Althorpe

did *not* possess *mens rea*, then it would be unreasonable to convict him of criminal actions. However, the legal notion of *actus reus* maintains that the act must be *voluntary*, and does not address *involuntary* actions, such as in the case of somnambulism. Because the definition of *actus reus* and *mens rea* focus on voluntary actions, from the legal definition, in order to be convicted of a crime a person must possess both *mens rea* and *actus reus*; but Althorpe's dream and sleepwalking episode complicate the legal notions of *mens rea* and *actus reus*. Althorpe's intentions are suspicious—whether it was to perversely protect her from a murderer or to fulfill a possessive obsession—but his actions were not voluntary, therefore, homicidal somnambulism does not necessarily apply to the concept of *actus reus* and *mens rea*, but instead it would more appropriately apply to the defense of automatism, which will be discussed in further chapters even though *actus reus* and *mens rea* do not apply in this particular case, these legal concepts will always at least be considered before diverging to a defense of insanity or automatism.^x

More importantly though is the exploration of how Brown incorporated the interdependent disciplines of law and medicine into his fiction and how he raises the psychological questions surrounding criminal intent in somnambulism. First, it is necessary to address the way in which Brown frames Althorpe's dream through the idea of distorted "wish-fulfilling" intentions to kill Miss Davis. Though it was a dream that Althorpe had, and therefore discernably unconscious intentions, I am skeptical of his conscious thoughts as the Davises leave his

home to begin their journey. Althorpe declares, “I was breathless with fear of some unknown and terrible disaster that awaited them. A hundred times I resolved to disregard their remonstrances, and hover near them till the morning. This might be done without exciting their displeasure. It was easy to keep aloof and be unseen by them” (“Somnambulism” 4). Additionally, because there were no actual witnesses of Miss Davis’ death, and it was only speculated that Mr. Davis saw Althorpe upon the road, and he admitted to having poor eyesight, this does not prove that Althorpe killed Miss Davis, but rather it is just implied. Even if the legal concept of *actus reus* can be circumstantially proved, it is infinitely more difficult to convict Althorpe of having guilty intentions prior to falling asleep and during his dream since he claims he was in pursuit of a murderer, and not Miss Davis. So then, if Althorpe committed the act, but there is speculation about criminal intent then is he legally responsible for Miss Davis’ death? This is where Brown blurs the legal notion of *actus reus* and *mens rea* because sleepwalking is not considered a voluntary action. Brown’s treatment of somnambulism raises questions—especially about the relationship of conscious intention to acts—that would become crucial for the Tirrell case. The case hinges on these questions, which Brown has already explored in fiction. Furthermore, though Brown implies the legal notions of *mens rea* and *actus reus*, and complicates the interpretation of Althorpe’s “wish-dream,” these concepts may be too narrow to measure the human psychology, or what constitutes a “guilty mind” in relation to guilty actions; even though Althorpe does not have conscious intentions to murder Miss Davis,

Brown does convey that Althorpe may have intense unconscious guilty intentions or motives. Perhaps Brown believed that the scientific research on human psychology, during his time, was not progressive enough to fully explore the depths of an unconscious guilty mind of a sleepwalker; or, perhaps Brown wanted to propose a new way of thinking about somnambulism—that the though a person may not have conscious intentions to harm another, underlying conscious intentions might be present. Brown was attracted to scientific and medical studies of somnambulism, and the ways in which the body and mind are disconnected during the unconscious state of sleep. So it is interesting to propose that Brown's diction and narrative shifts portray this disconnected concept, perhaps so his readers might make their own assumptions about a sleepwalker's culpability and responsibility for his or her actions.

If the readers of Brown's text can make assumptions and draw conclusions about Althorpe—the somnambulist—then it would be logical to assume that the jury of the Tirrell case could also make appropriate assumptions and conclusion about Tirrell's somnambulism. Meanwhile, there is another relationship between Brown's piece, Cockton's *Sylvester Sound*, and the Albert Tirrell case: Althorpe, Sylvester, and Tirrell had a history of sleepwalking. Cockton encourages the reader to believe in Sylvester's innocence because of his disease; whereas Brown's fragment leaves the reader disengaged by ending abruptly causing the reader to have difficulty deciding Althorpe's innocence. Nevertheless, Henry Cockton's novel echoes Brown's fragment by allowing a

crime to be committed through somnambulism, which ultimately offered Choate a revolutionary and successful defense argument for Tirrell.

During the trial, Choate provided statements that could be identified in relation to the legal concepts of *mens rea* and *actus reus*:

The philosophy of mind is often to them [the jury] an unfamiliar science—and yet in almost every question presented for the determination of Jurors, their verdict involves mental conditions—affirms or denies the existence of certain mental states, upon which the merit or demerit of human action depend (*Daily Mail* 18).

Choate argued that the prosecution lacked solid evidence to convict Tirrell of murder and arson, claiming instead that there was substantial evidence provided by witness testimonies absolving Tirrell of any guilty action, *actus reus*.

Additionally, Choate cleared Tirrell of *mens rea* by putting forth the claim of somnambulism, describing it as a “mental condition” that causes an unsoundness of mind. Therefore, with an unsound mind, lacking *mens rea*, or criminal intent, Tirrell “never had any disposition to injure her” (*Daily Mail* 18).

Moreover, it is also important to examine how novelists Cockton and Brown utilized the distinction between *mens rea* and *actus reus* in order to explore questions of the sleepwalker’s consciousness and whether the sleepwalker had guilty intentions. The distinction between the two concepts serves to separate the guilty mind from the guilty act in order to exonerate the sleepwalker of guilty intentions. As Fleming contends, it is not enough for the person to commit a guilty act: they must also be understood to have guilty intentions in order to be held responsible for the act.^{xi} Cockton’s novel emphasizes the improbability of

mens rea for Sylvester Sound: He was a known somnambulist, he was Mrs. Julian's care-taker for many years, and Cockton presents Sound as genuinely caring for Mrs. Julian's health and well-being. There is no evidence in the novel supporting any ill intention toward the Julian house, so an argument of guilty intentions is not relevant. With no guilty intentions, there cannot be a guilty mind. Therefore, Cockton's novel supports Choate's belief that a sleepwalker is fully unconscious of his or her actions, and by lacking conscious criminal intentions a sleepwalker cannot be guilty. However, Brown's fragment suggests that conscious guilty intentions, or the probability of, may result in a guilty verdict even if the crime was committed during sleep. The fragment implies that Brown may have wanted to propose a new concept for analyzing the sleepwalker's mind in relation to conscious and unconscious guilty intentions (that may have been present while awake).

Additionally, Charles Brockden Brown's fragment tends to complicate the notion of *mens rea* because it is difficult to interpret Althorpe's unconscious wishes proposed by his sleepwalking dream. Presumably Althorpe killed Miss Davis, but the real psychological quandary is whether or not he possessed guilty intentions to hurt Miss Davis. Brown's narrator reveals the possibility of a guilty mind or intentions: "A hundred times I resolved to disregard their remonstrations and hover near them till morning [...] it was easy to keep aloof and be unseen by them" ("Somnambulism" 4) but Mr. Davis declined the offer. So Althorpe contemplates whether he should secretly follow the Davises on their journey for

protection. Althorpe's internal conflict exposes the possibility of a guilty mind, as well as when he admits, "I should doubtless have pursued this method if my fears ha[d] assumed any definite and consistent form; if, in reality, I had been able distinctly to tell what it was that I feared" ("Somnambulism" 4). From a legal standpoint Brown's fragment complicates the elements of *mens rea* because by definition, Althorpe lacks *mens rea* because he does not consciously intend to kill Miss Davis, but Brown hints that Althorpe may have strong unconscious guilty motives while awake, even though Althorpe is unable to explain exactly what it is he is guilty of, which could suggest the legal definition of *mens rea* is too narrow, allowing Brown to complicate this concept.

If Brown's fragment complicates the legal notion of *mens rea* and *actus reus*, and Choate had access to Brown's text, then it is possible that Choate used this complication to aid his defense. According to the *Daily Mail Report*, Choate commented on this subject stating that Tirrell's actions alone do not determine whether a crime was committed, but that Tirrell must have possessed criminal intentions as well if he were to be held legally responsible:

Indeed, that law regards the state of mind at the moment of the performance of a given action, as the first and last thing to be determined upon. An act done in one state of mind is said to be right; or, at least, not punishable: while the same act, done in another state or condition, becomes a crime punishable by law. The law, therefore, regards the state of mind as a question of *fact*, for the determination of the jury upon the evidence presented before them (*Daily Mail* 19).

Choate was able to strengthen his case for Tirrell by preparing for complicated questions raised by the prosecutor in regards to *mens rea* and *actus reus*. If

Tirrell had no intent to kill or harm Maria, he could not be held responsible.

Because Tirrell was in a state of mental derangement as a result of sleepwalking, he could only be accused of performing the acts in question, but not accused of committing them with conscious aforethought, which according to Choate does not provide substantial grounds to convict Tirrell on murder and arson charges.

Choate concluded his argument with a discussion of morality of a person while in an unconscious disease-driven state. The *Boston Daily Mail Report* transcriber stated that Choate “enlarged the effect of this malady on the moral feeling of persons in this state and showed how the moral faculty was disordered, and that men may do a thing in this state which they would shudder at when awake” (20), thus cogently stating that a person could lack any sense conscious of morality during an episode of somnambulism. Choate also argued that even a sane man could sometimes get lost in the confusion of his own mind, particularly during sleep: “how difficult is it, sometimes, for the mind to become conscious of its condition, or even the location or condition of the body?” (*Daily Mail* 20).

Choate believed this moment of confusion could arise both by mental derangement as well as “every time they [sleepwalkers] pass from the natural sleeping state to that of waking” (*Daily Mail* 20). Tirrell’s confusion was evident as he claimed to remember nothing of that evening or the events described. Tirrell’s brother even testified that when he told Tirrell of Maria’s death, Tirrell seemed “genuinely shocked” (*Daily Mail* 13).

Choate's defense relied on the presumption that a person is unaware of their actions during a state of somnambulism; even Cockton's novel suggests this idea. With the abundant resources Choate had access to the traceable connection from Brown to Cockton to Choate is evident. Rufus Choate took full advantage of the parallels between literary and medical cultures regarding somnambulism. And with the obvious parallels and circulation of ideas between the different disciplines of law, medicine, and fictional literature surrounding somnambulism and crime, these texts illustrate a mutual influence in shaping the ideas about somnambulism and the figure of the somnambulist. Convinced by the compelling and revolutionary defense performed by the notorious criminal attorney, the *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* jury required only two hours to decide upon a verdict of not guilty. Drawing on literary fiction and medical treatises to emphasize the lack of legal and moral responsibility of a sleepwalker, Choate's defense proved victorious.

Chapter II

Diseases of Sleep and Somnambulism in Medicine, Jurisprudence, and Literature

No one in perfect sanity walks about in his sleep.

– Darwin, *Zoonomia*

Modern scholarship on somnambulism suggests that persons prone to sleepwalking have a “disordered arousal mechanism” that does not allow the brain to fully awaken from sleep (Montagna 194). This unbalance in the brain can cause “potentially injurious behavioural manifestations” in the sleepwalker; and these studies have also shown that attempting to wake sleepwalkers “may induce resistance and violence” (Montagna 194). This theory is not a newly developed idea; in fact, in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, physicians claimed that some form of internal stimuli directly affects the way a person dreams and responds to dreams during the unconscious state of sleep, which can lead to sleepwalking. Eighteenth century medical scientists and physicians, such as Erasmus Darwin and Benjamin Rush believed somnambulism had a direct relation to dreaming; even Sigmund Freud spent time examining somnambulism and its connection to dreams in his essay, "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams" (1916-17).^{xii} During their research, eighteenth century physicians questioned the responsibility of a sleepwalker who engages in violent behaviors. These scientists and physicians provide enough evidence to argue that it is reasonable to relinquish the sleepwalker of

responsibility, particularly for criminal acts such as homicide, as long as it can be proved, or at least suggested, that the person suffers from some form of overactive or overly excited internal stimulus while asleep. Just as a person cannot control a dream, a person too lacks control over their body while in the dreaming state.^{xiii}

Sleep disorder histories have reached many different conclusions on the etiology of somnambulism; the most relevant studies on sleep and somnambulism stress the idea that sleepwalking is a disorder of the nervous system. I will focus on three eminent physicians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and explore their views, opinions, and research on somnambulism: Erasmus Darwin's *Zoonomia, The Laws or Organic Life* (1794-1796), section 18 of this text is dedicated to the "irrational situation" of sleep. This section provides an account of how the nervous system and the brain respond to internal and external stimuli while a person is sleeping (18.1). Physician Benjamin Rush gave a lecture on somnambulism during his series *Lectures on the Mind* given in 1796, and Dr. John William Polidori composed *A Medical Inaugural Dissertation which deals with the disease called Oneirodynia* to fulfill the requirements to obtain his medical license in 1815. My goal in this chapter is to emphasize the intense interest in diseases of the mind present in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and show how these three physicians contributed to the wealth of knowledge on somnambulism; and more importantly how their medical literature influenced imaginative literature, which in turn influenced the public perception of

this disorder. These three physicians are largely responsible for the accumulation of medical and scientific research on somnambulism, but what is most intriguing is how several literary authors adopted Darwin, Rush, and Polidori's theories to be used in their fictional work, likely to maintain the accuracy of the behaviors and possible causes of somnambulism. Additionally, Darwin and Polidori also wrote literary texts as well. Darwin wrote poetry and Polidori later became a fiction writer composing *The Vampyre* along with other works too. Polidori was also physician and friend to much more well-known literary figures such as Lord Byron and the Shelley's. This illustrates the relatively permeable boundaries between medical science and literature. In this chapter, I explore the theories presented by Darwin, Rush, and Polidori, but will also include examples of literary work influenced by their ideas to show the circular relationship between these institutionalized discourses. Additionally, because this project is especially concerned with the sleepwalking criminal, I will explore the legal and psychological questions these physicians in their work—particularly the imperious question of criminal somnambulism and responsibility. It was a question asked by modern scientist and researcher Ken Weiss, et al. that helped define the outlines of this chapter:

Acts that are generally considered criminal in nature, but have occurred in the context of somnambulism, have challenged traditionally accepted legal theories of culpability globally. How should a person who engages in a seemingly criminal act during sleep be held responsible for these actions? (Weiss et al. 250-251)

Weiss' article considers the medical elements required to understand the process of the sleepwalker's brain, as well as the relationship between criminal acts and somnambulism. The recurrence of such questions, particularly in recently published articles, suggests that the question of a sleepwalker's culpability has been important historically in shaping legal theories about criminal responsibility, and that this legal and scientific quandary has influenced literary writing. Although contemporary medical literature might disprove or alter Darwin's theories on somnambulism, it is important to understand Darwin's concepts because it demonstrates what the eighteenth and nineteenth contemporary science was that literary authors and the public were reading, and were influenced by.

Erasmus Darwin describes the internal stimuli in the beginning of Section 18 of *Zoonomia, The Laws or Organic Life* (1794-1796) as "the perpetual flow of the train of ideas, which constitute our dreams, and which are caused by painful or pleasurable sensations" (18.2). It is the "painful sensations" as a form of mental distress that are acted out in our dreams and, if powerful enough, acted out by the body as in sleepwalking. Though somnambulism does not always expose the direct reason or cause of such mental distress, it does at least confirm that internal mental distress or anguish is present. Darwin states in his opening paragraph that a person spends more than one third of their life in the "irrational situation" of sleep (18.1). Darwin continues:

No one in perfect sanity walks about in his sleep, or performs any domestic offices; and in respect to the mind, we never exercise our

reason or recollection in dreams [...] and though many synchronous tribes or trains of ideas may represent the houses or walks, which have real existence, yet are they here introduced by their connection with our sensations, and are in truth ideas of imagination, not of recollection (18.1).

As Darwin claims our dreams never emphasize “reason or recollection” while we are in a sleeping state, he is suggesting that because rationality only exists while conscious, in a sleeping state all sense of rationality is lost; so consequently, we lack any conscious control of our bodily movements when asleep. This suggests that rationality and what the mind experiences while awake (external stimuli), does not necessarily dictate the content of our dreams, meaning that dreams are not created by use of memory. Rather, Darwin argues that our dreams stem from the imagination, which is created by the sensations (internal stimuli) we experience while awake (18.1). The “painful or pleasurable” sensations we experience filter into our unconscious, and if these sensations are vibrant enough, our unconscious body will respond to these imagined sensations through physical movement. However, the key element of Darwin’s proposition is that it is some form of mental distress that creates the internal sensations that cause sleepwalking. An example of a negative internal stimulus is “painful imagery in our sleep; for we recal[[]] the figure and the features of a long lost friend, whom we loved.” He also describes the influence of an external stimulus on the mind: “when we are accidentally awakened by the jarring door, which is opened into our bed-chamber, we sometimes dream a whole history of thieves or fire [...]” (18.10-11). Therefore, Darwin maintains that when mental anxiety is

present, the internal stimulus causes a negative overreaction producing a sleepwalking episode. Although, this factor alone does not determine whether a sleepwalker should be held responsible for their actions; it is only one part of the equation. The second part is whether or not a sleepwalker exerts volition.

Darwin shifts from exploring internal and external stimuli to exploring the absence of volition during a state of sleepwalking. Darwin asserts, “the ideas of the mind are by habit much more frequently connected with sensation than with volition” (18.4). He is suggesting that the mind and body move (sleepwalk) as a result of the response to sensations (internal stimuli) rather than by memory, as stated previously, or by volition—a person’s will. Interestingly, the question of whether a sleepwalker exerts volition can be found in several literary texts; it is most substantially explored by Charles Brockden Brown, as I will discuss in the following chapter on *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker*. However, in *Sleepwalking through History: Medicine, Arts, and Courts of Law*, researchers Stanley Finger, Daniel Sarezky, and Sharma Umanath suggest that Darwin “argues that *Somnambulismus* is not madness, because the train of ideas is kept constant by the power of volition. On a functional level, he views somnambulism as a reverie with voluntary exertions that serve to ‘relieve pain’ connected with one’s ideas” (Finger et al. 256). Although I agree that Darwin believes sleepwalking is an “exertion” to ‘relieve pain,’ I disagree with the suggestion that volition exists within the mind of a sleepwalker.^{xiv} Additionally, Sasha Handley also believes that some degree of volition is still present:

Erasmus Darwin conceded that somnambulism did not denote a total absence of volition and that sufferers often displayed a strong degree of coherence in their actions that tied them to the routines of everyday life. This model presented few problems when somnambulists performed exceptional feats of physical and intellectual strength, but it was highly problematic when that behaviour was violent or immoral (Handley 318).

Handley seems to believe that at least some volition, although not all, is lost during a sleepwalking episode, which would have serious implications for legal debates about criminal responsibility. Handley proposes the idea of volition being present in a sleepwalker based on the sleepwalker's ability to perform the "routines of everyday life" during an episode. Though these researcher's arguments are quite valid, I contend they might have misapprehended an important element of Darwin's argument—unconscious movements—one that again Charles Brockden Brown also addresses in his novel. Unconscious movements, Darwin claims, are irrational because thoughts and ideas generated while asleep are *without* reason or recollection (18.1). Therefore, if a person is moving irrationally in a sleepwalking state, the body is moving without conscious volition, in pure response to sensations. This is where Handley misconstrued Darwin's exploration of volition and somnambulism. Darwin claims that the "routines of everyday life" that Handley mentions are not instituted by volition, but rather by muscle reflex and sensations. Although as Handley contends, the sufferer does "display" strong coherence, it does not necessarily constitute actual coherence, but rather an outwardly appearance of coherence, which is how Darwin, Polidori, and Brown portray their somnambulists—through what *appears* to be some degree of cognizance. It is the differing opinions on the sleepwalker's

appearance and volition that makes the exploration of criminal somnambulism so fascinating; Darwin claims it is “the ideas of the mind [that] are by habit much more frequently connected with sensation than with volition,” where as the larger muscles of the body are “much more frequently excited by volition than by sensation” (18.4), subsequently, it seems that the sleepwalker’s coherence is merely the *appearance* of volition. Moreover, the most useful piece of Handley’s text is her reference to the “violent and immoral” behaviors of the somnambulist because even if some degree of volition is present as she claims, the criminal intent of the somnambulist is still very much at stake.

Additionally, Darwin contrasts the difference between using volition while awake, and the lack of volition while asleep: “in our waking hours, we frequently exert our volition in comparing present appearances with such, as we have usually observed,” meaning that volition is driven by the external and internal stimuli we produce only insofar as we are awake. But, “whereas in dreams the power of volition is suspended, we can recollect and compare our present ideas with none of our acquired knowledge, and are hence incapable of observing any absurdities in them” (18.7). Thus, while asleep, our minds are incapable of maintaining rationality—by an inability to recognize any absurd thought, idea, emotion, or sensation experienced. While asleep our mind and body often respond to the experience in an irrational manner—without volition, and without conscious control—through sleepwalking. Thus, Darwin acknowledges the question of responsibility by removing volition from the unconscious state. If

volition implies responsibility, then the absence of volition must mean the absence of responsibility for the sleepwalker as well. For example, in the *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* case, Tirrell claims he was completely unaware of his actions. His brother testified that Tirrell seemed “genuinely shocked” at news of Maria’s death (*Daily Mail* 13). Also, in the case of Henry Cockton’s fictional work *Sylvester Sound*, upon learning of his somnambulistic visit to Mrs. Julian’s bedchamber, Sylvester exclaims, “It is false! every word of it! utterly false!” (Cockton 116). Sylvester’s portrayal of complete distress by the accusations indicates that he too was unaware of his actions. By lacking memory of the somnambulistic events, Tirrell and Sound follow the circulation of ideas found in Darwin’s argument that had volition been present within the unconscious mind of a sleepwalker, then their actions likely would not have occurred, this provides another route of inquiry and exploration of the legal conundrum of criminal intent in somnambulism.

Benjamin Rush was an influential physician in Philadelphia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; he was also a prominent political figure, and signer of the US Constitution. In 1796, Benjamin Rush delivered a series, *Lectures on the Mind*, that included a lecture centered on sleep and somnambulism that developed Darwin’s internal and external stimuli argument further. During the lecture on sleep, he provided material examples of external stimuli such as opium as a cause of sleepwalking. He explains:

The excitability is only suffocated in these cases, with the sudden reduction of the excitement; hence we find, when the sleep goes off

which is thus forced, it leaves the system in a highly excitable state, and disposed to take on morbid action from the slightest irritant. It is by forcing sleep in this manner by means of opium, that mischief is so often done by that noble remedy. This is never the case, when it is given gradually, or in such doses as to expend the excitability, of the system (633).

Rush contends that if small and gradual doses of opium are given, the person will experience a decrease in excitability and a lessening of the chaotic internal stimuli, reducing the person to a calmer state. But if large doses of opium are taken the opposite occurs: the person will still sleep, but it will be an agitated and restless sleep; the excitability produced by the effects of the large amounts of opium will likely produce a somnambulistic effect. If sleep is forced by the suffocation of the internal stimulus then the body cannot respond appropriately. The suffocation of internal stimuli is described by Rush as “the effect of unsound or imperfect sleep...induced by morbid or irregular action in the blood-vessels of the brain” (Manning 43). This particular section of Rush’s lecture is echoed in British author Wilkie Collins’ *The Moonstone*, a novel whose plot revolves around a case of opium-inspired sleepwalking. This theory then allowed Rush to discuss the senses and muscles of the body and the particular pattern by which the body should fall asleep. This is vital for understanding the biological elements, associated with the internal stimuli affecting somnambulism.

Beginning with the eyes, sight falls asleep first, then taste, then smell; the extremities of the arms and legs fall asleep next, then the neck and lastly the back (Rush 634-35). However, at times there is an inversion of this pattern that causes people to fall asleep in upright postures, or awaken due to the slightest

noise. When the usual pattern is disrupted by any external means, a person may rise and walk about in their sleep in response to the external influence. Rush gives an example of soldiers who walk or ride in their sleep, and also provides a footnote on Galen, who walked in his sleep and was only awakened by “striking his feet against a stone” (635). Rush’s purpose in surveying the pattern of falling asleep highlights how somnambulism can occur from the slightest irritants such as poor sleep patterns or posture. Furthermore, Rush provided a two-fold explanation of somnambulism by examining the biological aspects as well as the psychological characteristics of a sleepwalker. Rush moves on to examine the psychology of a sleepwalker stating that it is as if the sleepwalker relies upon two minds: “[it is] indeed as if they depend upon two minds; but they may be explained, by supposing they were derived from preternatural or excessive motions in different parts of the brain, inhabited by one and the same mind” (670). Rush asserts that if the sleepwalker occupies “two minds” inside one brain then it is as if the somnambulist partly relies on one side of the brain for basic movement, and the other side as a response to the stimulus. My understanding of Rush’s theory coincides with a 2011 article in which scientist and researcher Ken Weiss, along with several other medical scientists, aptly explain Rush’s “divided mind” concept:

The disconnection between body and mind found support in the theory of phrenology, which held that “organs” of the brain could sometimes function independently and inharmoniously: “The internal faculties do not always act together; that there is often a very great activity of one, while the rest are not sensible” (Anonymous, 1804). Though the blood-vessel and phrenological

theories were false, they were the forerunners of physiological inquiry into sleep pathology (Weiss et al. 251).

Rush implies that while a person is sleepwalking, the mind is not conscious, but is only partially functioning, as if the unconscious mind—the mind that lacks volition and memory—is the driving force of the sleepwalker. But coincidentally the actions performed by the sleepwalker are actions that the body could and often does perform while awake with the use of volition and memory.^{xv} Therefore, it appears that the mind is responding to the stimulus simply by becoming activated by a dream, and the “other” mind is responding to the mind responding to the stimulus by generating physical movement. This divided mind concept is quite evident in several famous literary works that not only deal with somnambulism, but that also focus on other mental illnesses as well. Edgar Allan Poe is a perfect example of an author who integrated similar ideas about the divided mind into a number of his works such as: “William Wilson,” “Ligeia,” *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, and a text I explore in a following chapter, “Berenice.” Susan L. Manning quotes nineteenth-century author Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose ideas resemble observations made by Rush: “my dreams are not me; they are not Nature, or the Not-me: they are both. They have a double consciousness, at once sub- and ob-jective... We call the phantoms that rise [in dreams], the creation of our fancy, but they act like mutineers, and fire on their commander; showing that every act, every thought, every cause, is bipolar, and in the act is contained the counteraction” (Manning 47-48). Although Manning’s discussion is focused on Enlightenment scientific research into illusions and its

influence on French and American literary authors, it introduced an interesting perspective on Rush's "divided mind." Emerson calls his dream state "bipolar," which could be considered as another way to define Rush's two minds. If bipolarity is defined as the psychological manifestation of two extremes or two poles, then the term seems to fit appropriately to somnambulism, and Rush's divided mind concept as Emerson describes the two distinct states of wakefulness and dreams. Barry Tharaud explores this idea by Emerson as well in relation to Emerson's view of "demonologically divided world" and states that for Emerson, "dreams are fragments" where there is a negation of the individuality of the sleeper" (257-259). This idea brought forth by Emerson seems to at the very least echo some aspects of the medical and philosophical writings of the time, which further suggest a mutual and circular influence between discourses during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, The circulation of scholarly discussion was also prevalent in Europe as shown in Jane Austen's *Persuasion*. In his essay "Of Heartache and Head Injury: Reading Minds in *Persuasion*" Alan Richardson asserts Rush's concept of a divided mind through a psychological analysis of Jane Austen's *Persuasion*: "The intimation of a divided subject ('scolded back her senses') builds to the acknowledgment of a fundamental split between a superintending conscious self and a potentially unruly, desiring, unconscious other: "Why was she to suspect herself of another motive? ... One half of her should not always be so much wiser than the other half" (Richardson). Thus, Richardson and Manning both utilize Rush's theory to

investigate other literary works, which suggests Rush's medical studies, particularly that of the divided mind, were influential. The influence of Rush and his contemporaries on literary authors is evident when examining their work alongside prominent writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is important to understand how medical and scientific research shaped literary fiction to help scholars better investigate how these theories shaped the views of a broader audience, but it also helps prove the significant exchanges of ideas between the medical and literature fields.

Rush also brings forth the question of volition during a somnambulistic episode: "the whole body is reduced into the scale of existence [...but] where is that will? They [sleepwalkers] are all in a state of complete annihilation, as if they had never existed, or were never to exist again" (673). Rush proposed that during an episode a person's consciousness is wholly nonexistent, they abandon all volition during an unconscious state, which suggests that actions taken up during a sleepwalking episode are without volition, and subsequently lack responsibility as well. Moreover, Rush does not explicitly state that mental distress is a component of sleepwalking, but he does imply this notion by referencing Darwin's theory that dreams serve to "dissipate an undue portion of excitability, which is sometimes accumulated during sleep" (Rush 680), and then he claims: "[a dream's] specific nature is much influenced by the nature of the impressions that are made upon the body during sleep" (Rush 681). Again, Rush is referencing Darwin's internal stimulus caused by "painful sensation," (18.1)

where the mind accumulates a greater degree of excitability caused by the negative sensation of mental distress, and so the body attempts to appease the painful sensations through unconscious movements during sleep. It is valuable to note how Rush utilized theories introduced by Darwin to demonstrate the dissemination of ideas between physicians and other researchers before and during his time.

Another physician who spent significant time researching sleep disorders is Dr. John William Polidori. In 1815, Polidori explored a disease called Oneirodynia—intense mental disturbance or distress associated with dreaming. Moreover, the modern term “oneirodynia” is used to describe a host of sleep disorders, not just sleepwalking as portrayed by Polidori in the nineteenth century. What is particularly interesting about Polidori’s medical thesis is that his research mimics one portion of Darwin’s and one portion of Rush’s theories emphasizing a similar another acute reason for a person walking in their sleep, but one that is still dictated by mental distress and overactive sensations. Polidori’s primary focus is on the mental distress that causes these sleep-driven disorders, but he does not spend significant time describing the potential causes of the mental distress , but rather instead analyzes the cognitive differences, such as the use of the five senses, between a person who is awake and a person who is sleepwalking. For instance, a 10-year old boy

‘performed strange acts, such as taking a picture off the wall and tucking it into bed with him and ‘hitting everyone he came across with his pillow and his fists’ [...] ‘Although his eyes were open, he did not have normal use of his sight, because when tapped by a

servant, who then stood perfectly still, the boy threw wild punches into the air' (p. 779-80) (qtd. in Finger et al. 259).

Differing from Darwin and Rush, Polidori relies heavily on anecdotal investigations rather than a scientific analysis of sleepwalkers. This provides an alternative holistic view of what cognitively occurs during a sleepwalking episode, which ultimately validates Darwin and Rush's treatises by proving through case histories that the sleepwalker is unconscious during an episode. By examining a sleepwalker, Polidori appears to be interested in how the sleepwalker makes use of the five senses; and through this, Polidori questioned the responsibility of the sleepwalker.

Polidori narrates two case histories from men of "great authority" who told only the facts they witnessed (778). The first case history supplied by Polidori's paternal uncle, Aloysius Eustachius Polydorus, is that of the aforementioned analysis of the 10-year old boy suffering from the disease of oneirodynia.

Polydorus provided an account of the different sensory tests performed on the sleepwalking boy. To find out if the boy had use of the sense of smell, he set a piece of paper on fire and quickly extinguished it and wafted the smell of burning paper towards the boy's face. The boy called out "Daddy the house is burning!" (780). Though the boy's eyes were open, he did not see the burnt paper in front of him; Polydorus even waved a torch in front of the boy's face and he did not flinch. But, the boy knew exactly where his mother was standing in his bedroom at all times, and exactly where each picture hanging on the wall was located.

This confused Polydorus and Polidori because it seemed that the boy could

make use of his sight, but only insofar as he wanted to, which raised questions of volition. Polydorus then tried to check the boy's pulse; the boy pulled away and yelled that if Polydorus could be stopped yesterday then he most certainly could be stopped again, but this time the boy would use his fists to fight back. The boy's statement verifies two things: the sense of touch, and memory, which seemingly contradicts Darwin's theory. It appeared that the boy could remember the events that occurred during a previous somnambulistic episode, but upon interrogation when awake, the boy claimed to have no memory of the events. This occurrence absolutely justifies Rush's statement that the sleepwalker seems to depend upon two minds. Rush claimed that it is as if the mind of the sleepwalker holds memories that are repressed upon waking, but which are able to resurface during another sleepwalking episode.^{xvi} Utilizing the suppressed memory during a sleepwalking episode could explain why it appeared the boy was capable of using his sight. If the boy was capable of "switching" between using and not using sight, volition appears to be present. But actually, during an episode a "hidden" memory surfaces to respond to his environment that imitates volition. In contrast to Darwin, Polidori suggests that the boy was not actually able to use his vision, but rather that his memory served him unerringly, so it only appeared to his observers that he was able to make use of his sight. Although Polidori is unable to prove whether or not the boy had use of his vision, he slyly circumvents this question with an anecdote:

It will be apparent that his inability to see has not in fact been demonstrated in any way. For that he now and then could not see

can be explained in the following way, from the fact that in his imagination there was nothing pertaining to this action. I would explain his searching for the picture in the following way: the impressions caused by imagination and memory were stronger than those reaching him through his eyes, just as when sometimes, through a sort of alienation of the intellect, we search for a book in the place where it usually was, whether on the table or on a shelf, by a kind of mechanical habit, even though we know the book is not there (781).

It seems that Polidori believed the sleepwalker relied on memory to navigate a sleepwalking episode, and that even when it appeared that the sleepwalker could see, the actions are a result not of vision, but of memory as in the case of searching for a book by memory rather than by sight. Darwin made a similar claim of utilizing the “mind’s eye” (18.5) by way of associations. Darwin seems to hesitate to use the word “memory” in this section because he previously suggested that memory implies volition, which he claimed to be absent (18.1). By using the word “association” instead of memory, he references the mind’s familiarity with certain objects: “the absence of the stimuli of external bodies, and of volition, in our dreams renders the organs of sense liable to be more strongly affected by the powers of sensation, and of association” (18.10). Thus Darwin claims that during sleep the senses are heightened to a greater degree by imagination and associations; and therefore, it would appear that vision is possible; but actually it is the “mind’s eye” guiding the body through the sleepwalking movements. In *Sleepwalking through History* Finger et al. discuss ethnologist and physician James Prichard’s medical theories proposed in his

“Somnambulism and Animal Magnetism” (1835) that were influenced by Darwin, Rush, and Polidori:

“while the senses are in general obscured, as in sleep, and all other objects are unperceived, the somnambulator manifests a faculty of seeing, feeling, or otherwise discovering those particular objects of which he is in pursuit, toward which his attention is by inward movement directed' (Prichard 1845, p. 194). Thus he is in agreement with what Darwin, Polidori, and many other medical writers had been emphasizing” (Finger et al. 261)

Prichard then explained: "it is not exactly sight or hearing, but fulfills all the functions of both these modes of sensations" (Finger et al. 261). Prichard's claim furthers Polidori's proposition that the sleepwalker uses the “mind's eye” to navigate through unconscious night wanderings that are directed by Polidori's theory of memory and Darwin's theory of “associations.”

Polidori seems to agree with Darwin in regards to how somnambulism occurs within a person. He comments: “the disease arose not from an organic affliction of the brain, but from hyperexcitability of the brain and nerves” (781); But Polidori falls short of providing any real diagnosis or cure for somnambulism or oneirodynia. Additionally, Polidori only briefly touches on the mental distress or disturbance of the sleepwalker's mind; however, what he says is so intrinsically powerful that he does not need much more explanation than this:

And if one may put it this way, oneirodynia is to sleep [as a] state [of] anger or some other disturbance is to a person who is awake, for in both conditions the mind and the body are so focused on one matter that the external factors do not provide a sense of impression. *We may easily explain how it happens that the mind is affected only by those things that pertain to the matter it is thinking about* (784; emphasis mine).

Polidori says that regardless of the particular thought, emotion, or sensation in the mind of the sleeper, the mind is affected one way or another—typically in the case of an internal crisis or agitation—thus producing a body acting out their mental distress through sleepwalking. It is with John William Polidori that the most obvious influence of medical literature on imaginative literature arises. Polidori was a close friend, and personal physician to the famous poet Lord Byron. During a trip to Geneva, Polidori, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, and Mary Shelley had a ghost-story competition; this is when Mary Shelley drafted her famous novel *Frankenstein*. The influence of science and medical literature is very apparent in *Frankenstein*. Though Shelley's novel employs many of the "old world" Gothic techniques, it does show elements of the "new" Gothic genre, dealing with the relationship of consciousness and unconsciousness in dreams. The first line of Shelley's preface acknowledges the influence of "Dr. Darwin and some of the physiological writers of Germany" (3) in her conception of Victor Frankenstein's scientific experiments. According to Polidori's diary, many conversations took place between Lord Byron and Percy Shelley regarding "the nature of the principle of life," and during these discussions topics from Darwin were introduced as well as one that sparked the influence for *Frankenstein*, "the reconstruction of a body which would then be reanimated." Allegedly these discussions caused "sleepless nights and waking nightmares" (xxi). Although Polidori's diary does not explain where Byron and Shelley learned of such ideas, it is not outlandish to claim that Polidori's medical knowledge contributed to Mary

Shelley's "hideous, transgressive experiments" (xxi). Though Shelley's novel does not depict the mental disease of somnambulism, she does explore other related medical and scientific based questions many scholars are interested in such as viewing *Frankenstein's* monster as an automaton, which is a concept related to somnambulism and will be discussed further in chapter four. Although the monster is more a thinking, speaking, intelligent being than a real automaton, in a larger sense it appears that making a human-like being implies a sense of automation. Moreover, Shelley also includes elements of troubled dreams and questions of unconscious agency that many other Gothic writers and medical scientists address, suggesting again the comparative associations of ideas between medical science and imaginative literature.

Despite the fact that Darwin, Rush, and Polidori do not establish identical claims regarding the causes and effects of somnambulism, their treatises do have very apparent overlapping elements. Each treatise explores the multiple causes of somnambulism; particularly the effect mental distress has upon the mind of a sleepwalker. The influences of negative inner feelings and sensations upon the mind address the question of a sleepwalker's responsibility. It appears the three physicians agree that the sleepwalker is in fact unconscious of their actions during an episode, and arguably that because they are unconscious, they lack volition; and because the sleepwalker lacks conscious volition, they too lack a sense of responsibility. Additionally, several literary authors took notice of these medical studies of the sleepwalker's absence of responsibility during a

sleepwalking episode, and utilized the theory within their fiction that I will discuss in the following chapters. These pieces make use of somnambulism as a theme to address the complex issue of dealing with internal struggles of the mind, as well as to explore how the mind and body respond and attempt to remedy the impact of internal crises.

Chapter III

Somnambulism as a Symptom in Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly*

The incapacity of sound sleep denotes a mind sorely wounded.

— Brown, *Edgar Huntly*

As the sleepwalker wanders aimlessly through the night performing unexplainable acts, it appears as if there is a sort of glitch in the nervous system. Benjamin Rush observed that the nervous system allows a person's body to function normally, but only insofar as it stays in proper order. So if the nervous system is disturbed, then the body will begin to act inexplicably, as in the case of sleepwalking. Benjamin Rush observed, "none of the actions performed by the somnambulist during sleep fatigue them. This shows that they depend upon preternatural excitement in the brain and muscles" (672). Interestingly, Rush notes that a sleepwalker can perform acts that are often unexplainable and irrational, but they are capable of performing regular acts as well; but really, how *regular* is walking in one's sleep? Through the confusion of experiencing the effects of overactive stimuli in the brain while asleep, ultimately leading to somnambulism, one of Rush's Philadelphian contemporaries, novelist Charles Brockden Brown explored the notion of traversing boundaries, both physically and psychologically, in *Edgar Huntly: or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* (1789). Debates on *Edgar Huntly* tend to focus on the swiftly developing American lands and political commentary on Americans forcing out the Indians from their native

lands. But these debates obscure another important issue that Brown addresses: questions of responsibility and culpability in the sleepwalker. These issues emerge as Brown attempts to sort through the relationship of boundary crossings between the new American lands and the Indian frontier, as well as the boundary crossings that occur between states of sleep and wakefulness. I believe that it is worth taking a closer look at the causes of somnambulism as they are portrayed in *Edgar Huntly*, and at Brown's use of medical treatises, particularly those of Darwin and Rush, that suggest somnambulism is a symptom of underlying mental distress or agitation; and more importantly the idea that Brown analogizes somnambulism as a metaphor for blindness of the public's perception of mental diseases. Additionally, I will focus on Brown's examination of the sleepwalker's moral responsibility and culpability for their peculiar behaviors that arise throughout the novel. Physicians Darwin, Rush, and Polidori helped unite the discursive practices reflecting on the public's perception of mental diseases, Brown noticeably took hold of these ideas to help shape the public's sense of understanding of somnambulism, and the obscurity of the legal repercussions of the sleepwalker's actions. Brown seems interested in exploring both the medical and legal perspective and the perception of mental disorders. I intend to explore how Brown facilitates and presents these influential medical and legal questions throughout his text.

In 1799, Charles Brockden Brown published *Edgar Huntly: or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker*, an epistolary novel of letters composed by Edgar Huntly to his

fiancée Mary Waldegrave. This novel recounts the story of two men plagued by the disease of somnambulism: Clithero Edny, an Irish immigrant running from his past, and American frontiersman Edgar Huntly, whose best friend and fiancée's brother, known only by his last name Waldegrave, was recently murdered. The novel's opening scene relates Edgar's walk home to his uncle's house late one evening; he is lost in a reverie of speculation about Waldegrave's unsolved murder. Edgar stumbles upon a man half-naked, weeping and burying something in the ground—coincidentally at the exact location where Waldegrave was found murdered. In this opening scene and throughout the novel, Brown demonstrates his knowledge of the medical literature published in the eighteenth century on somnambulism. In the introduction to a recently published edition of *Edgar Huntly*, Philip Barnard and Stephen Shapiro note that Brown was actively hunting down references to somnambulism, and enlisting the help of his friend Elihu Hubbard Smith to do the same. "In the moral and psychological theories of the Enlightenment, physical responsiveness to external stimuli is a basic link in the associative chain of sentiments and emotions that drives human interaction" (Barnard and Shapiro xvii). Barnard and Shapiro make Brown's reference to Erasmus Darwin evident by mentioning the link between somnambulism and the "external stimuli" as well as the "associations" to human emotion and volition. Additionally, Michael Cody states that Brown "made use of contemporary scientific ideas about sleep and dreams, especially as these ideas appear in Erasmus Darwin's *Zoonomia*" (3). Darwin was not the only medical scholar that

Brown consulted for this work; Justine Murison points out that *Edgar Huntly* references Benjamin Rush as well. She discusses the idea of citizenship as a “state of mind” for the American people: “Best exemplified by the writing of Benjamin Rush, the foremost American medical expert of the era, medical conceptions of the mind popular in the late eighteenth century explain how the status of citizenship fused morality, memory, and residency” (244).^{xvii} Much of the scholarship on Brown’s work focuses on the coherence of the developing American country, arguing that Brown uses somnambulism allegorically to implement his views on the political agenda developing in America.

Although there is ample scholarship dedicated to the political metaphors found in Brown’s work, the issues surrounding Brown’s sleepwalker is more complex than just focusing on the repercussions of American politics. Brown’s text can be viewed as rife with political metaphor; I contend that Brown was also interested in the ways in which the medical and legal practices were perceived in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Chad Luck’s article “Re-Walking the Purchase” focuses on the effects of the Walking Purchase of 1737 on Brown, emphasizing the philosophical aspect of somnambulism through the philosophies of John Locke and David Hume. Luck addresses the philosophical question of boundaries: “[T]he novel’s philosophical work persistently calls attention to the role of the sensate body, the phenomenological body, in defining spaces and properties on the Pennsylvania frontier” (274). Luck is calling attention not just to the physical body, but also the embodied mental states in sleep and in

wakefulness; additionally, Luck is also calling attention to the sensations of the body and mind that were seen in Darwin and Polidori's work. Just as Luck traces the boundaries around the body and the mind, Beverly Voloshin uses a quotation from Brown's *The Rhapsodist* to address the way in which the mind creates the boundaries of consciousness and unconsciousness:

Brown treats sleep in the terms of eighteenth century sensational psychology and what he says will represent the empiricist position. In sleep, 'the inlets of knowledge are shut up,' Brown writes. He goes on, 'There is an absolute cessation of all pleasure, whether of sensation or reflection. We are able to neither ruminate on the past, contemplate the present, nor anticipate the future. We are insensible to all around us. The very consciousness of existence is suspended. We are deprived of all that distinguishes us from stocks and stones. The faculty that assures us of our being undergoes a temporary annihilation' (*The Rhapsodist* 87) (264-5).

Voloshin acknowledges Brown's use of medical syncope in Edgar's narrative in order to suggest a lapse in memory between states of consciousness and unconsciousness, as in a sense of "temporary annihilation" from all that exists in our conscious mind. Luck and Voloshin shed light on the difficulties of determining the philosophical and psychological boundaries presented in Brown's novel.

But Julie Phelen proposes the most intriguing psychological argument for Brown's use of somnambulism—as a metaphor for blindness. Phelen asks: "how little cognizance [do] men have over their actions and motives?" (1). Phelen sets up a combination of ideas including Brown's somnambulism in *Edgar Huntly* to describe the changing landscapes of the American and Indian frontiers. She also addresses the possibility of moral responsibility for the actions and motives of a

man driven by his political agenda. There is an abundance of scholarship on Brown's novel focusing on the allegorical tale of a somnambulist, but only a few studies on Brown's fascination with the psychological elements of the sleepwalker's mind, as well as a scant amount of research on the influences of medical science on Brown and in turn the influence of Brown on the public.

The most widely discussed quote from Brown's novel is when Clithero patronizes Edgar in response to the accusations of Waldegrave's murder: "You, like others, are blind to the most momentous consequences of your own actions" (25). This line is used in nearly every published exegesis of Brown's novel because it has the ability to be interpreted in a variety of ways. In regards to this research, I believe the irony of Clithero's statement proposes that even as the somnambulist is apparently blind to their behavior, so too can a conscious person be blind to the consequences of their actions. This statement from Clithero again foreshadows the fateful events that will soon befall Edgar. Brown utilizes somnambulism to explore the question of a person's responsibility for his or her actions. Brown may use the analogy of a sleepwalker to express feelings of mental distress, or guilt. As stated previously many scholars argue that the sleepwalker is a metaphor for the political plight occurring between the Native Americans and the European "immigrants." But, I suggest Brown could be analogizing the sleepwalker as a way to express the public's fear and anxiety of mental disorders. Because the sleepwalker is undeniably blind to their actions, and sleepwalking can be viewed as a metaphor for blindness—not a blindness of

the politics as many scholars such as Julie Phelen suggest—but rather as the public’s blindness to the mental diseases present in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I contend that my interpretation of Brown’s work is analyzing how Brown submerges the non-fictional world of science, medicine, and law into the imagination of fictional literature to highlight the multiple avenues available for exposing mental issues to the public. Brown uses literary techniques to express the ways in which somnambulism can and does affect the sleepwalker and those involved in their lives. This is important and interesting because during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries medical studies on the conscious mind were new and innovative, and Brown obviously intended to incorporate new scientific research into his fictional literature. This relates back to Brown’s textual hybridity found in his fragment. As many modern scholars interpret this line spoken by Clithero to Edgar as a political metaphor, I believe Brown uses irony of the situation to expose the unsure fate of the sleepwalker.

In addition, I also propose Brown agreed with Darwin’s theory that there is a suspension of volition during a sleepwalking episode. Little scholarship on volition in *Edgar Huntly* has been published, but Barnard and Shapiro briefly mention the topic of volition while discussing Brown’s use of Darwin’s *Zoonomia*:

This medical-biological study is important for *Edgar Huntly* because it provided Brown with his basic understanding of madness as a disorder of the senses and, more particularly, because it provides the novel’s understanding of sleep-walking, *Somnambulismus*, as a disease “of volition” that is one example of this disorder (xxviii).

The idea of volition—the power of will—carries a heavy weight throughout Brown’s novel as he investigates the sleepwalker’s state of unconsciousness and lack of memory during an episode. Though volition is a key element in defining the somnambulist’s mental characteristics, it is important to begin by addressing what state the mind is in while asleep and the potential causes and symptoms of somnambulism.

The half-naked man Edgar finds, identified as the Irish immigrant Clithero Edny, opens the novel for speculation about culpability and its relationship to somnambulism. Edgar yells to Clithero for his attention, but receives no response, and Clithero walks by Edgar without the slightest awareness of Edgar’s presence. Because of this, Edgar diagnoses Clithero as a sleepwalker; but still Edgar can only rationalize Clithero’s behavior as that of a man returning to the scene of his crime filled with guilt and a desire for self-exoneration. Justine Murison refers to Edgar as a “physician observing Clithero, the diseased patient” (256). She also comments, “in this scene, sleepwalking has, as Rush warns in his lectures, eluded a coherent diagnosis;” Murison is comparing Edgar’s behavior to that of a physician, attempting to diagnose a patient based solely on observation, which I agree with. I think Brown was using Edgar to emphasize the public’s curiosity and lack of understanding of somnambulism, as well as to suggest that medical studies on this disease were not advanced enough to consistently provide an accurate diagnosis, but the only available study for physicians at the time were through the “impotence of empirical observation”

(256). Murison adds that Edgar reads Clithero's behavior as "reveal[ing] guilt," which could be another indication of Edgar acting as the "speculating" physician.

Although Brown later establishes evidence for Clithero's overwhelming sense of guilt, during this scene Brown does not expose the reasons for Clithero's guilt, but rather allows Edgar to come to the mistaken conclusion that Clithero murdered Waldegrave.^{xviii} Through this scene Brown utilizes the medical literature available on sleep and somnambulism to begin framing his novel and his characters.

Recall that Darwin emphasized the "irrational situation" of sleep, and provided a psychological insight to how the nervous system and brain respond to internal and external stimuli, both in wakefulness and in sleep. Brown used this medical explanation to allow his characters, Clithero and Edgar, to vary between states of consciousness and unconsciousness. But why these irrational transferences occur? Darwin claims it is the sensations experienced while awake that cause the imagination to overreact during a dream state that is produced by and creates internal feelings of pain or pleasure. For somnambulism, it is the painful feelings, such as guilt, that establish the internal crisis, which carries over into the unconscious state of sleep. Thus, it appears that sleepwalking is a symptom of the over reactive painful sensations created in the mind. Brown has already established through Edgar's observation that Clithero experiences some form of mental distress implying that guilt is a cause of somnambulism. As Clithero returns to the scene of the crime, Brown alludes to the sleepwalker's

responsibility and culpability, dictated by their state of mental distress, to create a relationship between mental distress, sleepwalking, and responsibility.

As the novel progresses, the relationship of mental distress and responsibility resulting in sleepwalking becomes definitively clearer. Edgar confronts Clithero about his disease and demands a confession for his crime of murdering Waldegrave. But Clithero only gives Edgar a promise to eventually disclose his secrets to him. As a result Edgar follows the sleepwalking Clithero for two consecutive nights speculating that “This is the perpetrator of some nefarious deed. What but the murder of Waldegrave could direct his steps hither? His employment was part of some fantastic drama in which his mind was busy” (11). In order to comprehend Clithero’s inexplicable behavior he must “penetrat[e] into the recesses of his soul” (11). But as Scott Bradfield writes in *Dreaming Revolution*, “Edgar never really solves anything or gets anywhere—at least not through his own conscious volition. In fact, Edgar rarely knows where he is or what he is doing” (22). Edgar’s conscious wanderings mimic those of an unconscious sleepwalker. In fact, for most of the first sixteen chapters of *Edgar Huntly*, he is only following the disordered path of the sleepwalking Clithero over cliffs and chasms as if foreshadowing the dramatic changes in the narrative once Edgar falls victim to somnambulism. Edgar is literally invading the margins existing between the unchartered and “un-American” lands of the Lenni Lanape Indians. However, I contend that this game of cat and mouse is also encroaching upon the boundaries between the conscious and the unconscious mind.

Additionally, I argue Brown was also interested in the psychological questions raised by this mental disorder and through this Brown seems to uncover a bifurcated mind within the sleepwalker (a topic that Benjamin Rush addressed in his *Lectures on the Mind* series). Lacanian scholar Bruce Fink offers an interesting perspective to the bifurcated mind: that the conscious and unconscious “brings into being a surface, in a sense, with two sides: one that is exposed and one that is hidden” (45). Brown exposes a divided self through Edgar and Clithero: He proves the existence of the conscious by showing Edgar and Clithero’s internal thoughts and motives, but Brown also suggests the existence of the unconscious by showing the actions of a sleepwalker through the perception of others. This shows that Brown intended to influence the public by providing a scientific explanation for involuntary actions that are not remembered by the sleepwalker. But Brown still poses the question of whether the sleepwalker should be held accountable for their actions. Modern psychology would argue that the subject of the unconscious mind (the conscious) is responsible for the actions and thoughts of the unconscious mind. This mimics Rush’s observation of the “two minds housed within one,” and Brown maintains that a division of the mind does occur. However, if the subject of the unconscious mind exists, then the psychological and philosophical inquiries and theories proposed by eighteenth and nineteenth century physicians might be too narrow to fully analyze and answer Brown’s questions of a sleepwalker’s culpability.

Moreover, Brown once again incorporates basic literary techniques by the way in which Edgar describes the scene of Clithero's reaction to his demanding questions for an explanation of Clithero's unconscious behaviors during a sleepwalking episode. Clithero reacts contritely to Edgar's as he questions. As Edgar observes,

From this time there was a visible augmentation of his sadness. His fits of taciturnity became more obstinate, and a deeper gloom sat upon his brow [...] He listened with the deepest silence. From every incident, he gathered new cause of alarm. Repeatedly he wiped his face with his handkerchief, and sighed deeply [...] the sound of my voice startled him. He broke from me, looked up, and fixed his eyes upon me with an expression of affright. He shuddered and recoiled as from a spectre (20-23).

This scene emits a sense of confusion that likely radiated within the mind of the public during the time the new medical and scientific literature was being published. Brown echoes Darwin's theories of expressing the external and internal stimuli, and how they are exposed through Clithero's surrender to his disease. Yet as the bifurcation of self is established through Rush and more modern scholars such as Lacan, questions of responsibility still remain unanswered.

The alterity of the sleepwalker described by the divided self concept raises questions of responsibility for actions: should the (conscious) self endure the repercussions of responsibility for the (unconscious) sleepwalking self? Because Brown emits the possibility of a separation between the conscious and unconscious mind, as Rush argues, then Brown helps expose the possibility of crossing boundaries both externally and internally. If there is an existence of

separation between the conscious and unconscious, then Brown must question the responsibility of a sleepwalker. By invoking the element of responsibility, Brown brings in legal debates of guilty actions and guilty thoughts. But in regards to the legality surrounding the sleepwalker Darwin addresses the “irrational situation” of sleep by proposing, the unconscious self can never be within the boundaries of rationality, therefore, the sleepwalker would be devoid of any logic or reason. This is important because if the sleepwalker is devoid of any logic or reason, then the possibility of a division of conscious and unconscious mind is reasonable. That is to say, that in the legal realm of conscious culpability, the sleepwalker should not be held responsible for his or her guilty actions. Edgar then comments, “How imperfect are the grounds of all our decisions,” (64) suggesting that we are often mistaken in our understanding, that we jump to conclusions and make mistakes, this then shows that Brown used sleepwalking to express that sometimes our consciousness can be a malady and that certain issues or mental distress can only be directed by our unconscious. Or that sometimes our mental distress is too great for the rational mind to comprehend so we are forced to act out these “painful sensations” through unconscious actions such as sleepwalking.

By addressing such questions of legality, Brown is showing his interest in several different fields of discourse. I believe it was Brown’s intention to not only aid in the creation of a non-traditional Gothic genre of literature, but also to contribute—in his own way—to the medical and legal fields as well. And by doing

so, Brown likely had a much more effective influence of the public's perception of somnambulism than others coming from just one distinctive field of study such as Darwin or Rush. But the importance is interpreting *how* Brown used the medical literature of these physicians throughout his novel.

Darwin believes that our body when asleep is responding to

sensations of pleasure and pain [which] are experienced with great vivacity in our dreams; and hence all that motley group of ideas, which are caused by them, called the ideas of imagination, with their various associated trains, are in a very vivid manner acted over in sensorium: and these sometimes call into action our larger muscles, which have been much associated with them (18.2).

That is to say, when a person experiences an overexcitability of stimuli the muscles of the body do not rest, but rather vividly act out the dreams, perhaps in an attempt to remedy or pacify their mental distress or guilt; which consequently produces a sleepwalker driven solely by the unconscious, or *ulterior other*, engaging in behaviors they might otherwise consciously avoid, thus suggesting that sleepwalking is a symptom of mental distress, which would accurately describe the characters in Brown's novel.^{xix}

In order to comprehend the irrational behavior of a sleepwalker there must be, as the eighteenth and nineteenth century physicians attest, some form of mental distress, anguish or derangement present, arguably caused by inner feelings of guilt or "painful sensations." When Edgar first observed the half-naked Clithero crying and burying something beneath the elm tree, where Waldegrave was murdered, he finds the scene:

environed with all that could give edge to suspicion, and vigour to

inquiry [...] But what was the cause of this morbid activity? What was the mournful vision that dissolved him in tears and extorted from him tokens of inconsolable distress? What did he seek, or what endeavour to conceal in this fatal spot? The incapacity of sound sleep denotes a mind sorely wounded. It is thus that atrocious criminals denote the possession of some dreadful secret. The thoughts, which considerations of safety enables them to suppress or disguise during wakefulness, operate without impediment, and exhibit their genuine effects, when the notice of senses are partly excluded, and they are shut out from a knowledge of their intire condition (10-11).

This scene is the embodiment of how Brown and some of the medical literature perceived somnambulism. First, Brown expresses the curiosity and fascination with such a strange disorder as Edgar questions the causes of Clithero's "morbid activity." By defining the somnambulist's actions as "morbid," Brown reveals that there is an abnormality in the mind of the sleepwalker, he is juxtaposing it with the mind of a sane man, who would not engage in such actions. Then, Brown provided the quintessential definition of what the eighteenth century physicians deduced as the primary cause of somnambulism: "the incapacity of sound sleep denotes a mind sorely wounded" (13). This phrase epitomizes the conclusions provided by Darwin and Rush, and later by Polidori. The wounded mind disables sound sleep, but it is the causes of the wounded mind that the physicians are interested in, and that Brown exposes as a "dreadful secret." Edgar declares that the thoughts pertaining to the "dreadful secret" are suppressed during wakefulness; yet during the unconscious state of sleep these thoughts will operate without obstruction from consciousness to exhibit the sleepwalker's "genuine effects," meaning the "dreadful secret" will be revealed during a

sleepwalking episode because there is not a barrier provided by consciousness to bar the secret from being exposed. The exposure of the peculiar activities suggest that the sleepwalker is to an extent acting out, or exposing in some way, the “genuine effects” of their “dreadful secret,” or more simply, revealing the sleepwalker’s suppressed mental anguish.

If internal stimuli, as Darwin suggests, creates a “great accumulation of sensory power” (18.2), thus prompting involuntary muscle movement, the stimuli will then cause a person to move about in their sleep. Additionally, Darwin observed it is the “ideas excited by irritation” or mental distress that cause a person to sleepwalk; and because the person is asleep and therefore unconscious, their power of volition is suspended and they cannot justify or rationalize any action they perform in this state. This, however, is only one side of the dichotomy of sleep analysis for Darwin. The other part poses an inquiry of whether the unconscious agent is acting out mental distress through sleepwalking. Though Darwin makes a brief reference to this notion, it can be argued that sleepwalking is not only caused by mental distress, but also it is a depiction of the mental distress. In the case of Edgar’s sleepwalking, not only is he already distressed about the unsolved murder of his best friend Waldegrave, but he is also trying to understand the motives for Clithero’s sleepwalking. Brown provides an explanation for Edgar’s initial distress, the loss of Waldegrave, through an oddly placed chapter introducing Waldegrave and Edgar’s personal letters. It was a dream that sparked his interest in the correspondence that he

would spend time transcribing for his own keepsake because Waldegrave had asked him to destroy the original copies in fear of the letters falling into the wrong hands.^{xx} Edgar implies that the letters include blasphemous statements. But more importantly, he reveals where the letters are hidden: under lock and key in a “drawer that would not have been detected by common eyes” (90). Soon after assuring the letters were safe, Edgar falls asleep. When he awakens a few hours later, he, for reasons Brown does not explain, returns to the secret drawer only to find the letters missing. His uncle then knocks at his door convinced he heard someone walking the halls and upper chamber earlier in the night. He believed it to be Edgar, but Edgar claims he had not left his room all night. The mysterious footsteps his uncle heard could not be explained.

Later, Brown reveals that it was in fact Edgar in a somnambulist trance who took his own letters from the secret drawer and hid them some place else. Edgar’s peculiar behavior indicates that somnambulism is or at least can be a portrayal or a symptom of mental distress. Edgar is acting out his mental distress by moving the letters. Why he moves them is never explained, but it is reasonable to believe that he moved them because he tells how well the letters are hidden. Perhaps unconsciously Edgar does not think they are hidden well enough, or he could be hiding them from himself since Waldegrave asked that they be destroyed. Therefore, if the letters are hidden from the one person who knows they exist then the letters could be perceived as destroyed, ultimately appeasing his guilt about not following through with Waldegrave’s request. In the

case of Edgar's second cause of mental anguish—finding the motives of Clithero's distress—Edgar seems to “catch” Clithero's sleepwalking. This is a valid explanation for why Edgar wakes up in a cave soon after following Clithero to a similar cave. Edgar is so enthralled with Clithero's behavior that he does not even realize the influence Clithero had upon him. Recall the moment when Edgar finds Clithero sleepwalking; Edgar questions Clithero's behavior and demands a confession to Waldegrave's murder. Edgar still does not comprehend why Clithero sleepwalks (Clithero is obviously acting out his mental distress through sleepwalking), so Edgar follows him during the night. As Scott Bradfield writes, “Edgar never really learns anything substantial so much as he realizes how complicated and inconclusive knowing can be” (24), and as a result he ultimately “catches” the somnambulistic disease from Clithero. Benjamin Rush declares that too much study on one topic will often lead to somnambulism.^{xxi} In “Fictional Feeling: Philosophy, Cognitive Science, and the American Gothic” James Dawes writes, “we become sleepwalkers, actors without will like Edgar Huntly, who ‘catches’ the disease of sleepwalking from his too-close-reading of the somnambulist Clithero” (458). Dawes' theory is extremely useful for providing insight on how Edgar's mental distress eventually results in his own sleepwalking. Because Edgar is determined to understand Clithero's behavior through a “too-close-reading” of his disease, Edgar's desire to help Clithero overcome it indirectly ignites the disease within Edgar, but only once Edgar discusses Waldegrave's letters does the disease attack with full force. Further,

Sydney Krause adds to Dawes' idea: "While Huntly was engaging himself in the nightmare of another he was evading his own" (299). Dawes and Krause contribute to a new way of thinking about the disease of somnambulism and its relationship to mental distress; that somnambulism is not just caused by mental distress but that it is also a depiction of mental distress. Edgar's sleepwalking episode of hiding the letters and waking up in the cave illustrate the physical side effects of mental distress. When Edgar finds Clithero burying a box under the elm tree, Brown provides the ideal scene of sleepwalking as a depiction of mental distress. Clithero admits it is a manuscript sealed in a box belonging to his caretaker in Ireland, Mrs. Lorimer that must be hidden. Brown never reveals why Clithero was trying to bury the box containing the manuscript, but then again Clithero did not even know that he was doing it. This scene demonstrates that somnambulism is a physical response to the internal feelings of guilt and mental anguish. Brown portrays these defining characteristics of a somnambulist through both Edgar and Clithero, but they do not overlap each other; he allows each character to reveal only a portion of the somnambulist's disposition, which adheres to the medical literature proposing that there is not a specific set of reasons why a person suffers from somnambulism, but rather there are a multitude of reasons that create a hyperexcited state of the internal stimuli in the sleeper's mind.

Clithero begins his dismal confession: "Even now I drink the cup of retribution. A change of being cannot aggravate my woe. Till consciousness itself

be extinct, the worm that gnaws me will never perish” (25). Much like the preceding scenes of Edgar following him across cliffs and chasms, Clithero’s burden of guilt crosses between his states of consciousness and unconsciousness. Clithero knows he cannot escape his guilt while conscious, but what he does not know is that even when unconscious, he still cannot escape. Even if, as Rush and Lacan proposed, consciousness and unconsciousness are housed within one mind, they are still radically separated from each other, meaning the two states do not typically interact with each other; however, because Clithero’s guilt is so extensive while awake, the guilt essentially overflows into his unconscious, which then causes him to act out through sleepwalking.

Brown also comments on the fact that the “senses are partly excluded” during a sleepwalking episode, which indicates Brown’s reference to Darwin’s *Zoonomia*. Darwin characterizes the somnambulist as unconsciously motivated to act out the sensations created by the imagination through sleepwalking. This clarifies that the sleepwalker performs involuntary actions driven by the imagined thoughts created in the unconscious mind while asleep. Furthermore, because Darwin has already determined that a sleepwalker’s actions are dictated by internal stimuli overreacting through a “great accumulation of sensorial power” (18.1), Clithero would then represent the prime model of Darwin’s theory.

Clithero finally exposes his “dreadful secret” to Edgar: Clithero killed Mrs. Lorimer’s brother, Wiatte, in an act of self-defense, but he also believes he killed

Mrs. Lorimer—who actually just swooned at the news of her brother’s death. Clithero attempts to escape his guilty conscience by fleeing to America to start a new life. Nevertheless though, he fails to abate his guilt even in a new country. Because Clithero is a prisoner to his own guilt, the consequences of his inability to escape the disturbing mental anguish causes him to unconsciously perform actions by way of somnambulism, in an attempt to appease his guilt. For Barnard and Shapiro also state: “this language implies that Clithero’s (and Edgar’s) sleepwalking and physical discomposure in Norwalk are resolvable errors, not permanent, intrinsic faults” (19). Barnard and Shapiro suggest that mental distress is temporary rather than indefinite, suggesting that mental distress can eventually be appeased. However, Clithero states that his guilty conscience is the “worm that gnaws” him, and therefore the only way to relieve his guilt is through the extinction of consciousness, meaning death. Additionally, this scene invokes questions of responsibility. If the mental distress that causes sleepwalking is not permanent as Barnard and Shapiro propose, then should the conscious person take responsibility for a temporary moment of unconscious insane action that is apparently resolvable? Although Brown uses Clithero as the primary sleepwalker experiencing effects of mental distress, this convoluted scene awakens an even more impending distress in Edgar’s mind after hearing Clithero’s confession to the wrong murder. Syndey Krause writes, “for all he attributes to Edny, Huntly cannot perceive that the enigma is his own [...] motivated by a need to alleviate Edny’s madness, not his own” (299). Suggesting

Edgar has an inherent desire to free Clithero from his retribution for a guilty conscience, Krause provides insight into how Edgar's mental distress begins to accumulate. But it is through Edgar's attempt to absolve Clithero that Edgar's own mental anguish is exacerbated. This scene calls for another question of responsibility: Edgar attempts to aid Clithero in resolving his temporary mental distress, and through this Edgar's own distress is worsened (with or without consciousness). Should Edgar be held responsible for any unconscious actions he performs, or do Edgar's unconscious actions still remain wholly under the influence of the unconscious mind?

The duality of the conscious and unconscious mind is frequently expressed throughout Brown's text. Another event exhibiting the polarity of the two states of mind occurs when Edgar tries to understand how he ended up in a cave: "I had no memory of the circumstance that preceded my awaking in the pit" (124). Recognizing only that the surface is different than the one in which he originally fell asleep upon Edgar begins his monologue:

I have said I have slept. My memory assures me of this: it informs of the previous circumstances of my laying aside my clothes, of placing the light upon my chair within reach of my pillow, of throwing myself upon the bed [...] I remember, as it were, the instant when my thoughts ceased to flow, and my senses were arrested by the leaden wand of forgetfulness (106-7).

Edgar does not understand how he was transported to the dark pit, and here Brown emphasizes the necessity of using the senses to help understand this strange occurrence and invokes questions from both the reader and Edgar regarding Edgar's sanity. But if Edgar is quite right in all of his senses, as he

appears to be, then can he trust that his memory serves him unerringly? Edgar continues, “my return to sensation and consciousness took place in no such tranquil scene. I emerged from oblivion by degrees so slow and so faint, that their succession cannot be marked. When enabled at length to attend to the information which my senses afforded, I was conscious, for the time, of nothing but existence” (107). By attending to his slow and faint recovery of his senses and grasping consciousness, Edgar loses his own identity, but at the very least he knows he is alive.^{xxii} Darwin explains, “we gain our identity by comparing our present consciousness with our past consciousness” (18.3-4), which is exactly what Edgar is attempting to do. As Beverly Voloshin writes, “In the middle of his narrative, Huntly awakens to find himself inhabiting a total, almost metaphysical blackness, prompting the beginning of a series of doubts about his own sanity and identity and about the orderly functioning and knowability of the external world” (263). He is searching for his “identity” by piecing together a rational explanation for having moved from his bed to the cave, but failing to do so, he now can only retain his sense of existence. Edgar comments, “All remembrance of my journey hither was lost. I had determined to explore this cave on the ensuing day, but my memory informed me not that this intention has been carried into effect” (109). Because Edgar has momentarily lost his sense of identity due to his somnambulistic episode, he must also question his sanity because he cannot formulate a rational explanation for the events.

Brown exposes the transition between states of consciousness and

unconsciousness through Edgar's lack of memory. Edgar's unconscious manipulates his body during sleep causing him to travel from his bed into the cave, and wake with no memory of events. Because Edgar fails to rationally explain how he ended up in the cave, his mental distress increases. Once Edgar's somnambulism is exposed, his opinion about curing the mental anguish aligns with Clithero's belief that only once consciousness is extinct can he be relinquished from his internal crisis. Edgar claims later in the novel that, "consciousness itself is the malady; the pest; of which he only is cured who ceases to think" (184). However, what Edgar has yet to understand is that his somnambulism is a mere symptom of his mental distress. Edgar believes that if he can overcome the boundary of rational thinking, then he can escape his ever-present mental anguish; however, Brown reveals that this is not actually the case, because the guilt can overflow into the unconscious state of mind leading to the behavior of the somnambulist. If the guilt accidentally, or by happenstance, overflows into the unconscious mind leading to peculiar or perhaps illicit behaviors, where does the sleepwalker's responsibility fall? It is important to analyze the responsibility of the sleepwalker because Brown is attempting to evoke a sense of awareness in the public about somnambulism. By incorporated several different institutionalized discourses into his novel, Brown is addressing many of the same questions the public likely had about somnambulism; such as if the sleepwalker commits a crime, is he responsible? Brown may not fully answer the questions he raises, but he at least addresses them to show how the

public might interpret the new research being published on mental diseases, and the questions raised about crossing the boundary between consciousness and unconsciousness, or more simply the boundary between sleep and wakefulness.

Upon finally accepting his situation and determining that his sanity remains intact, Edgar is now forced to take responsibility for his unconscious wanderings and extricate himself from the cave because this is his only means of survival. Over the next eight chapters, Brown emphasizes the power of conscious volition. Reaching the mouth of the cave, Edgar finds himself surrounded by sleeping Leni Lanape Indians. One is awake but with his back to Edgar unaware of Edgar's existence. Edgar is now faced with two options: either to act immorally by killing the Indian and ensuring his escape, or act morally by sparing the Indian and be left unsure of his fate. Lacanian scholar Slavoj Zizek asserts "the gap between the act and Will: the act occurs as a 'crazy', unaccountable event which, precisely, is not 'willed'. The subject's will is, by definition, split with regard to an act: since attraction to and repulsion against the act are inextricably mixed in it" (288). Brown explores the power of volition by presenting Edgar with a choice: "How could I hesitate? Yet I did hesitate, my aversion to bloodshed was not to be subdued by the direst necessity" (119). At this moment the question of morality is very much at stake. Edgar must make a choice, a choice between the maladies of consciousness leading to a potential act of immorality driven by his survival instinct, or to rely on morality hoping to escape unnoticed by the Indians and without bloodshed. Brown does not answer

the question of whether an action based solely on the survival instinct should be considered immoral or not, but he certainly poses it. So, Edgar determines: “How otherwise could I act? The danger that impended aimed at nothing less than my life. To take the life of another was the only method of averting it” (120).^{xxiii} This is where Brown is able to blur the boundaries of conscious and unconscious actions. It seems Brown strays from the notion that unconscious behaviors are without volition. But even though Edgar acts without much thought, seemingly in an “unconscious” manner, this type of unconsciousness differs from that of a sleepwalker because the power of the survival instinct is consciously perpetuated. Though Brown has deviated from his primary motif of somnambulism, he is using a different method to express the power of volition, through self-preservation (I *will* kill, I *will* survive). Brown poses the question: if Edgar kills the Indian as an act of self-preservation, should he be exonerated? In *The Symbolic, the Sublime, and Slavoj Zizek’s Theory of Film*, Mathew Flisfeder writes, “Lacan contends that the subject is forced to choose between thought and being (existence). In order to exist, within the confines of the Symbolic that is, the subject is *condemned* to the choice of being, and thought is relegated to the unconscious” (140-1, emphasis mine). Essentially, Edgar has a choice to make, but he must make the “right choice,” which is really his only choice to maintain his existence. By using the word “condemned” Flisfeder is arguing that we are sentenced to the punishment of having to make the “right choice,” this diction adheres to Lacan’s logic of the forced choice, because there really is not a

choice to make. The Will will supersede any “wrong choice” so that we make the “right choice” in order to continue our existence. Coincidentally, Edgar has already come to this conclusion, as he lay awake in the cave, that all he knew for that moment was his existence; therefore, Edgar is forced, again, through the reality of self-preservation to continue his being (his existence) by acting out Lacan’s “forced choice” to kill the Indian and escape. Furthermore, in this situation, Edgar does not have a choice *not* to kill the Indian, but rather a choice of *how* to (rightly) kill the Indian. In his lecture, *The Superego and The Act* (1999), Žižek discusses situations where volition appears to be present, where a person seems to have the option to make a choice of whether to do something or not. But, Žižek explains that a person does not actually have a choice whether to do the act or not, but rather the choice is actually about how to do the act correctly. Similar to Edgar’s current predicament, Žižek explains that even though volition may be present, it is a paradox: if a person appears to have a choice then the person *must* choose (this act, which will always be the “right” act), thus not actually having a choice at all. Žižek argues that if volition is present, then an act must be done—meaning that even though it appears that volition, the option to choose to do or not to do an act, is available the person does not actually have the option to retreat from the situation altogether, but that either way, an act *must* be done, suggesting a false understanding of volition. Huntly cannot simply disappear from his present situation, but rather *something* must be done. He must act, one way or another, but he does not have the option *not* to act at all.

Zizek is saying that even though it appears that volition is present, to do one thing or to do another, the power of volition is actually a futile point because *something* must be done; thus the person does not really have a choice *not* to act at all, seemingly erasing volition all together. Bruce Fink expands on this idea by offering an explanation of Lacan's split subject; the subject must take "the path of least resistance, so to speak, to refuse the unconscious (to refuse to pay attention to the thoughts unfolding in the unconscious), a sort of indulgence in false being" (45). This is exactly why Edgar does not have a choice *not* to do something, he must act, and he *must* do the "right" act. Flisfeder asserts that 'thought' must be suppressed into the unconscious, so that the 'being' (the subject) may exist in the 'Symbolic', meaning this world. For much of this scene Edgar debates whether or not to kill the Indian, showing there is an excess of thought; however, all rationality, or thought as Flisfeder remarks, is suppressed into the unconscious when Edgar finally decides to act solely to maintain his existence. At first glance, this episode does not seem relevant to the argument of exonerating illicit or immoral behaviors of a somnambulist, but it involves questions of moral versus immoral acts being justified and exonerated, particularly when the choice of existence is a "forced choice." In addition to questions of absolving an immoral act based on self-preservation, this scene also exposes how Edgar is able to suppress his consciousness for the sake of self-preservation, or relegate thought into his unconscious as Flisfeder proposes. Echoing Clithero's statement that he cannot escape the conscious distress of his

current situation, Edgar must act quickly. Because there is a sense of urgency about making a decision to ensure his escape, Edgar must decide between his only two options—kill or be killed.

As he leaps for the Indian with a tomahawk, Edgar confesses, “in an extremity like this, my muscles would have acted almost in defiance to my will” (179).^{xxiv} This line is so brief, yet so powerful in exposing Lacan’s “forced choice,” apparent volition, and his ultimate inability *not* to make the “right” choice. This moment of pure muscle reflex demonstrates Brown and Žižek’s understanding of how a conscious mind can react unconsciously. Bruce Fink describes this evanescent moment as a “subject of the unconscious” that “comes into being, so to speak only momentarily, as a sort of pulselike movement” (46). Although Edgar was awake during this episode, the moment of muscle reflex serves as an example of how a pure lack of volition echoes the somnambulist’s unconscious acts. Somnambulists, in a state of unconsciousness, cannot suppress the Lacanian “thought” because they are *in* the “thought,” they are without knowledge of being, and therefore, the sleepwalker is “forced” actions driven by their unconscious state. The Lacanian notion of the “forced choice” makes sense for the unconscious subject because it validates how the unconscious mind works. Driven solely by id—the basic human natural desires—the unconscious person acts without volition, and is “forced” by their unconscious mind, or the sensations created in the imagination as Darwin proposed, to act in the “right” way. There is only one way, the “right” way, to cure the mental anguish of the unconscious

mind; therefore, the unconscious person must act accordingly by a “forced choice,” to attempt to cure the anguish because the mental distress cannot simply disappear.

Edgar Huntly provides a more ambiguous reading of the responsibility of the sleepwalker. Because sleepwalking reveals there is excess of mental distress, this disorder represents that the disease is not only caused by some form of mental distress, but it also illustrates how the body physically responds to mental distress. Sleepwalking is reliable evidence of some kind of mental distress. Brown demonstrates that a person can cross the boundary between the conscious and unconscious mind in terms of sleepwalking; the psychological theory of division of the mind substantiates this idea. But for as much as Brown’s novel attempts to elucidate the causes of somnambulism, it only further complicates the theories of how and why somnambulism occurs. If Brown never explicitly answers the question of responsibility or culpability of guilty actions, at least he comes to the conclusion that the conscious mind does not dictate what the unconscious mind reveals, and is therefore, blind to the consequences of the unconscious. This interpretation of Brown’s work is important because it fills the gap left by other scholars who focused more on Brown’s political opinions and analogies expressed through the sleepwalker. However, I argue that Brown was more interested in the disease of somnambulism itself, and the mental and moral faculties associated with this disorder in an attempt to reveal the blindness of the public to the public. Brown adds in the concluding chapter of his novel “time and

reflection...might introduce different sentiments and feelings” of mental distress (185). Not only does my reading of Brown’s text highlight the importance of examining *Edgar Huntly* through a more literary lens, but it also demonstrates the influential relationship between medicine, law, and fictional literature in the eighteenth century.

Chapter IV

Opium and Obsession: Alternative Causalities of Somnambulism

It is by forcing sleep in this manner by means of opium,
that mischief is so often done...

– Benjamin Rush, *Lectures on the Mind*

In the mid-eighteenth century, physicians, phrenologists, and philosophers drew upon the influential works of John Locke, David Hume, and Thomas Reid attempting to create a classification system for the mental and moral faculties of the mind. Historian Robert M. Young notes the brain could not be fully appreciated until it was understood as an “organ of the mind;” but as the physicians attempted to categorize certain mental and moral faculties of human behavior, they were “confusing classification with explanation” (21). Physicians such as Joseph Gall and Benjamin Rush provided the medical field with a categorical explanation of differing mental diseases, but, what they were actually doing was providing evidence that once afflicted by a disease, it would affect “what role [the affected mind] plays in the economy of the organism and its interaction with the environment” (Young 21). In an attempt to examine and classify the differing mental and moral faculties of the mind, the evolution of self-identity became more apparent, which then later turned to an exploration of human agency.

During the mid-eighteenth century physicians such as Benjamin Rush and Joseph Gall argued against the common belief that the mind, body, and soul are inseparable. Scholar Ann Stiles comments on this topic: “by suggesting that certain parts of the brain controlled specific emotions and behaviors, localizationists contradicted the popular belief in a unified soul or mind governing human action, thus narrowing the possibility for human agency” (10).

Localizationism refers to a view popularized by John Hughlings Jackson that only certain parts of the brain are affected by a particular disorder, and that specific muscle movements were localized in a specific part of the brain. Jackson’s theory was critical to further studies of the brain lobes; yet, the question of the possibility of human agency remained largely ignored. Though learning about how the Localizationists and other physicians were successful in their explanations of the ways in which the mind functions during conscious and unconscious moments is intriguing; it is more remarkable to explore how literary authors interpreted these new medical findings, particularly over the course of fifty years between when Charles Brockden Brown published *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker*, and when Edgar Allan Poe and Wilkie Collins began publishing their work and gaining eminence within the literary field. It is interesting and worth analyzing how the growth in the non-traditional Gothic genre of literature parallels the maturation of the scientific field concerning studies of the mind. As Brown was writing along side the adolescent phase of scientific studies, later authors Edgar Allan Poe and Wilkie Collins had

significantly more medical research to work with, which is why I believe they chose to alter the ways in which mental diseases were portrayed in their genre of writing.

Poe and Collins address similar questions and issues that Brown and earlier authors address, but it appears that much of Poe and Collins' work focus more on issues of human agency and identity than the earlier authors, perhaps this is because there was more published scientific research regarding these issues. Moreover, Poe and Collins ask: What happens to identity when a disease affects a person's mind? More specifically, is a person still himself or herself during an episode of mental derangement? These questions lead to the exploration of identity, but they also raised questions regarding automatism, which became a new area of study after the initial research on studies of somnambulism. In this chapter I will explore the ways in which Poe and Collins reveal their interpretations of these questions of human agency and automatism when dealing with the mental disease of somnambulism. Rather than approaching this topic from a scientific viewpoint, I intend to explore these questions through the literary lens of two famous works: Edgar Allan Poe's short story "Berenice" (1835) and Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* (1868). In relation to the preceding chapters I will investigate the criminal behavior invoked during a somnambulist episode and shed light on other, perhaps even alternative, causes of somnambulism. Through this investigation I will explore questions of motivation for criminal acts performed during an episode, as well as an inquiry

into understanding human agency and viewing the body and mind of a sleepwalker as an automaton. I intend to continue with the discussion in order to help fill the present gap of investigating the influence of both medical and literary texts on the public regarding the public's understanding and perception of mental diseases, specifically somnambulism. Collins and Poe complicate these questions and thus suggest a new perspective on a sleepwalker's culpability for criminal behavior. Unlike Henry Cockton and Charles Brockden Brown's sleepwalkers who seemingly lack conscious motivation for their actions, Collins and Poe's sleepwalkers appear to exhibit a particular motivation prior to their episode that may explain their actions while sleepwalking. I believe this particular angle of somnambulism deserves an in-depth exploration; mostly because the reasoning and explanations Poe and Collins provide reflect modern perceptions of mental diseases and somnambulism, which likely contributed to the creation of the insanity defense plea.

The insanity defense plea was established in 1843 based on the acquittal of Daniel M'Naughten, who based on a case of mistaken identity, shot and killed the British Prime Minister's secretary, Edward Drummond. Nine witnesses testified that M'Naughten was insane—leading to an acquittal, creating the “not guilty by reason of insanity” plea. Because M'Naughten could not tell the difference between right and wrong at the time he committed the murder, he was believe to be “insane.” However, what is interesting is the way in which Poe and Collins set up and frame the situation surrounding the sleepwalker, and the

sleepwalker himself, establishing the possibility of motivation for committing a crime prior their episode of somnambulism. This relates to the M'Naughten case because questions of prior motivation were brought up during the trial, and the prosecution team question whether Daniel M'Naughten was clinically insane before he committed the murder, or if M'Naughten was experience a more "temporary moment of insanity," which Poe describes in "Berenice," and which can epitomize crimes committed be a sleepwalker, who otherwise, when awake exhibits "natural and normal" behaviors. Collins and Poe's sleepwalkers are stimulated by underlying neurological disorders, but it is the way in which these underlying diseases are expressed through ancillary means of opium and monomania that sheds insight on the difficulties that arise when determining the sleepwalker's responsibility.

In 1868 Wilkie Collins published *The Moonstone*, a detective novel that receive much praise for its extensive and exceptional research into the scientific field of neurological diseases. Collins' novel retells the events of a precious gem, a moonstone, that is stolen from Hindu monks, gifted to a young woman for her birthday, and then suddenly goes missing. The way in which Collins frames the scene of the missing gem is crucial for investigating the criminal behavior of somnambulists, which lend itself to a new public perception of somnambulistic behaviors and motivation. Additionally, Collins provides a new way to think about the influences of neurological diseases on sleepwalkers and their possible cures. Ruth Harris states, "manifestations of the 'unconscious' were regarded as mere

symptoms of the larger psychological malady” (47). The word ‘symptom’ corresponds to the behaviors of Collins’ somnambulist, Franklin Blake. Blake’s somnambulistic episode is actually more a symptom of a symptom. Blake decides to quit smoking tobacco, and because of this, he suffers from insomnia. During Rachel’s birthday dinner, a physician, Dr. Candy, and Blake debate over the medicinal quality of opium to cure his insomnia. Candy, determined to prove Blake wrong, secretly laces Blake’s whiskey with drops of opium. Remember that Benjamin Rush observed, “It is by forcing sleep in this manner by means of opium, that mischief is so often done by that noble remedy” (633). Rush claimed that giving opium “forces” sleep upon the patient, and so the patient’s neurological system overreacts, as Darwin also explained, causing the patient to move about in a state of somnambulism. Because Candy gives Blake the opium, Blake sleepwalks and steals the moonstone. Thus, Blake’s sleepwalking is a mere symptom of the opium, given to reduce or appease his insomnia, itself a symptom of his quitting tobacco. However, this is not the only mental instability that causes Blake to sleepwalk. The moonstone is allegedly cursed, bringing ill fortune to whoever possesses the gem, but is not the rightful owner; Blake believes this. Rachel is the intended recipient of the gem but is unaware of the alleged curse, but Blake is bound by law to deliver the gem to his beloved Rachel. Blake’s awareness of the curse on the moonstone is, in Rush’s terminology, an “irritant.” Blake’s symptoms from quitting tobacco are heightened further by addressing Blake’s underlying mental distress—guilt for having to gift

the gem to Rachel. This leads into a discussion of motivation that I will address later in this chapter. But first, the underlying neurological disorders found within Poe's short story "Berenice" need exploring.

Edgar Allan Poe's "Berenice" was published in *The Southern Literary Messenger* in 1835. This grotesque short story was allegedly written, Poe claimed, on a "bet that I could produce nothing effective on a subject so singular, provided I treat it seriously" (Poe Museum). In this tale, the narrator Egaeus suffers from a mental disorder, monomania. And it is because of his disorder that Berenice, his cousin and bride-to-be, is violated and mutilated, but not until after being prematurely buried following a severe epileptic seizure. In 1810 French psychiatrist Jean Esquirol defined monomania as an "idée fixe," which Jan Goldstein explains as "a single pathological preoccupation in an otherwise sound mind" (155), thus suggesting that Egaeus was sane except during sudden onsets of these manic fits, which may have had an influence on the M'Naughten case. Jonathan Elmer proposes an interesting perspective for examining "Berenice" through a linguistic reading of Egaeus and Berenice as texts. Elmer explains Poe's use of syncope as:

[T]he act of condensing a word by dropping or eliding certain letters or sounds from its interior. Entailed by sentimentalism's move from affect to meaning, from word to idea, from narrative to norm, is a kind of ceaseless dropping-out of the materiality of discourse. Poe's text suggests that what seems to drop out here necessarily returns from elsewhere (107).

Though Elmer provides a significant account of the linguistic meaning of syncope, he does not address the psychological meaning of syncope invoked by

mental disorders directly. Poe uses linguistic play throughout "Berenice," and much criticism is dedicated to the reading of Egaeus as a text, but misses out on the neurological explanations of his mental disorder. Egaeus blacks out; he sleepwalks and commits a crime. Dayan proposes a feminist reading by stating Poe's story is "a tale about thirty-two small, white, incredibly cathected teeth, Poe takes the mouth of a lady and turns it into the mind of a man. Her smile impresses itself on his brain, and his final pulling out of her teeth—the source of his anguish and adoration—is an extraction of identity so total and so purified of separateness that the final irradiation of teeth rattling across the floor writes out the derangement of a brain" (492). Though both Elmer and Dayan provide interesting perspectives to consider for ways to read "Berenice," I contend that this story deserves a deeper psychological reading of the manifestations of the neurological disorder of monomania. This investigation will show that the monomaniac can behave "normally"—similar to a somnambulist as Benjamin Rush states in his lectures—and that Poe uses this disease to magnify, or at least expose the fear in the public that anything can happen to anyone at anytime, because there is not an explainable nor direct cause for mental diseases such as monomania or somnambulism. Though Eigen and Dayan provide excellent interpretations of Poe, analyzing how Poe utilizes the psychological and medical research is worth investigating to shed light on the influence to medical field had on the literary, and in turn the possible reflecting influence on the public thereafter. Moreover, Joel Eigen also suggests a way to

examine “Berenice” as portraying a psychological disorder lending itself to criminal behavior: “If the events surrounding the crime cannot sustain a defense based on either compulsion or error, the unfortunate accused must rely on a more drastic option; some form of mental distress propelled his hand or clouded his consciousness” (ix). Eigen sheds insight on the difficulties of indicting the criminal behavior of somnambulists under the law. I believe Eigen is correct, but he does not analyze deep enough to say that Poe may have been intending to make Egaeus’ “clouded consciousness,” an assertion so the public might have a better understanding of monomania and somnambulism.

When determining the motivation of a sleepwalker, we must revert back to the discussion from Chapter One regarding *mens rea*—the guilty mind or intentions—and *actus reus*—the guilty act. The ‘act’ committed is evident; however, the question of *mens rea* remains. Did the sleepwalker have a guilty mind or intention while awake? R.D. Mackay explains, “it is the perennial problem of trying to decide what the state of a person’s mind was at the time he performed the ‘act’ in question. As with the question of *mens rea*, we can never know exactly what an individual’s mental state was at any given time” (29). Because we cannot know what the sleepwalker’s state of mind during sleep or wakefulness, we must rely on other possible sources that expose motivation and that could shed light on the public’s understanding of mental diseases. Moreover, motivation while awake is a necessary issue to address when questioning the sleepwalker’s responsibility because it offers a clue into the possibility of the

sleepwalker possessing guilty intentions. Franklin Blake knew that the moonstone was gifted to Rachel from her uncle out of spite for her mother, and he feels guilty giving her the gem. So, for Blake not only was he already mentally distressed about suffering withdrawals from quitting tobacco, but he also was guilty of knowing about the curse and still giving the diamond to Rachel. As stated previously, his distress and guilt are the underlying neurological symptoms that prompted Dr. Candy to give him the opium, which then led to his somnambulistic episode causing him to steal the diamond. Of course the problem of this episode is more complicated than just an accidental theft. Much like Althorpe in Brown's "Somnambulist: A Fragment," Blake wanted to protect his beloved; he stole the diamond during his somnambulistic trance ultimately, albeit perversely, to protect her from the curse. Joel Eigen insists "...the sleepwalker is pursuing objects to which his mind had been directed in waking moments" (132), so because Blake's mind was directed toward the curse of the diamond while awake, as Eigen suggests, Blake pursued the moonstone in a sleepwalking trance, establishing motivation and *mens rea*—his guilty mind. By integrating motivation and *mens rea* in his story, Poe demonstrates the new non-traditional Gothic elements by including genuine mental diseases to solicit an authentic sense of fear in his readers.

However, determining motivation in the case of Poe's narrator, Egaeus, is a bit more complicated because we are dealing with an established mental disorder. Egaeus suffers from monomania, and it is because of this disease he

engages in criminal and morbid actions. Victoria Ryan states: “In dreams and in other altered states of mind, whether induced by drugs or hypnosis, conscious control seems to be relinquished, and yet the mind continues to operate” (48). Poe also provides insight into Egaeus’ mind, which moves from the shadows on the tapestry, or upon the door; to the flames in a lamp and embers within the fireplace, or the perfume of a flower near by or to monotonously repeating “some common word, until the sound, by dint of frequent repetition, ceased to convey any idea whatever to the mind” (167). As Egaeus’ monomaniacal mind shifts from one object of obsession to another, Poe emphasizes that the object itself is not of particular importance, but rather it is the desire to be obsessed with something, anything. This is how Egaeus becomes obsessed with Berenice’s teeth. To further suggest that the teeth are not necessarily the objects of his desire, but rather her teeth are just another obsessive fixation he cannot alleviate, the last sentence of the story emphasizes: “thirty-two small, white and ivory *substances* [...] scattered to and fro about the floor” (171, emphasis mine). The term “substances” suggests the teeth were merely *objects* of obsession during his monomaniacal fit. Additionally, as Jonathan Elmer suggests, “ideas return as substances, teeth become ideas, because words themselves are inextricably sound and sense, sentiment and substance” (107). Elmer points out that it is the *ideas* that are repeated in the monomaniac’s mind, it is the *ideas* that the monomaniac is obsessed with; it is the *ideas* that evoke sentiment, not the teeth themselves, but rather the *idea* of her teeth. Joan Dayan suitably describes

them as “his source of anguish and adoration” (492). Because his obsession with her teeth is so momentous that it results in mental anguish, and because Egaeus cannot control his fixation, he simply blacks out. During this unconscious state, Egaeus mutilates Berenice’s grave and her body to obtain his object of obsession. Because Egaeus is unconscious, yet performing acts that could be deemed purposeful actions, his behavior could be viewed as a state of somnambulism. Henry Maudsey explains: “there is a purpose and there is a coordination of acts for its accomplishments but the consciousness is still asleep” (qtd. in Eigen 132). This suggests that Egaeus had a purpose, and enough coordination to dig up a grave and pull out Berenice’s teeth, while in an unconscious state. So as it seems, if the monomaniac is obsessed with a particular object of desire, then it is evident that the monomaniac would perform actions, regardless of the consequences, to obtain their fixation, which I believe irrefutably proves that Egaeus’ motivation, caused by pure obsession, was present prior to his somnambulistic trance. Even though Blake and Egaeus’ motivations are quite conclusive, this does not necessarily make them legally culpable for their actions.

R.D. Mackay opens a discussion of voluntary versus involuntary actions, which he says, “is the root of the legal notion of automatism” (22). During the early to mid-eighteenth century, physicians began investigating the cerebro-spinal axis and cerebral hemispheres in an attempt to understand how the mind developed and caused certain behavior. As stated earlier in the chapter, it was a

common belief in the scientific community of localizationists that mental illnesses were located in a specific part of the brain and if that part of the brain was removed or manipulated to stop functioning, then the illness would be cured. However, this hypothesis was not easy to put into practice. Ruth Harris explains the eighteenth century's belief of mental illness as a "disarray' of the system" where particular symptoms such as "uncontrollability, 'disinhibition', and automatism [...] were characteristics of the mentally ill" (37-38). Although Harris' treatment of automatism viewed as a symptom is useful, Victoria Ryan's research on automatism convinces me that automatism is more than just a mere symptom of mental illness, but more so that automatism deals with deeper philosophical questions of consciousness and human agency. Ryan poses the following questions: "is the self unified or multiple? What are the limits of self-control and individual volition?" (3). These are extremely useful questions for investigating automatism and particularly the behavior of those affected by somnambulism. Ryan adds that "a potent mixture of the attempted scientific explanation for involuntary behavior and the questioning of standard notions of individual responsibility and free will contributed to the wide fascination with physiological psychology" (3). Ryan investigates questions of behavior and responsibility later in her novel when she explores the topic of automatism in the Victorian novel.

William Carpenter proposed the term 'unconscious automatism' in 1850 and "applied it to such things as dreaming, reverie, and hallucinations" (Harris

38); however, the theory of automatism was studied long before Carpenter coined the phrase. In the 1830's scientists such as Marshall Hall and Johannes Muller studied the "fundamental nervous functions, with organisms reacting purposefully, although automatically, to their internal and external works" (Harris 38). For decades scholars have been grappling with the integration of science in the Victorian novel, searching for answers to questions of self-identity, responsibility, and consciousness, I intend to join this discussion by observing and investigating the different avenues that Gothic authors manipulated to integrate science into their fictional stories in a possible attempt to influence the public perception of somnambulism and other mental diseases. Ann Stiles claims that, "Cerebral localization trailed an odor of Gothic mystery left over from its pseudoscientific predecessor. Perhaps this is because late-Victorian cerebral localization theories, like phrenological discourse, challenged revered assumptions about the soul, the will and the nature of God" (12). It is possible that Wilkie Collins and Edgar Allan Poe intended to invoke a sense of fear into readers by using scientific theories because the mental illness they were describing are very real and very possible to affect anyone. The most obvious question to propose when discussing Collins and Poe is: Are sleepwalkers automatons? I will explore this possibility. In the eighteenth-century, the theory of automatism was defined as an unconscious person performing actions, much like sleepwalking. I believe it is necessary to explore with sufficient depth the parallels between or overlapping of automatism and somnambulism; but these

parallels complicate the problems associated with these texts when determining a sleepwalker's, or automaton's, responsibility.

Contemporary legal defense arguments categorize automatism as producing involuntary acts through various states of unconsciousness, particularly sleepwalking. Legal scholar Emily Grant argues, "Since Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*, sleepwalking has become a part of criminal law jurisprudence as a defense for various crimes. It is commonly regarded as a subset of the automatism defense based on the theory that a sleepwalker performs the criminal act involuntarily and, therefore, cannot be held liable" (998). Grant argues that a person can only be held criminally responsible only if they induce automatism, such as through willing ingestion of drugs or alcohol. Grant's example is that if a person is cognitively aware they are susceptible to seizures, and chooses to drive a vehicle, and while driving, suffers a seizure causing an accident, the courts would find the defendant guilty. Grant's extensive research on the topic of criminal liability and automatism expounds the same argument I propose that sleepwalking is a form of automatism. In Collins' novel, Blake is the criminal sleepwalker. However, during his state of somnambulism, or automatism—performing unconscious and involuntary actions—his actions are guilty. He also possessed a perverse motivation for stealing the diamond, but it does not necessarily mean that he should be indicted on charges of theft. Though Blake was consciously aware of his insomnia, and his guilt about giving the moonstone to Rachel, this condition does not qualify him as a guilty

sleepwalker. Blake was unaware of the opium he was given, and was unaware that sleepwalking might result. During Blake's somnambulistic trance, he can be considered an automaton, in the sense that he was unconscious of his involuntary actions.

Alternatively, in Poe's short story, Egaeus was consciously aware of his mental disorder, but the question is whether he has control over which objects become his obsession during a fit of monomania. Joel Eigen argues, and I agree, that Poe implies that a monomaniac does not have control over their objects of fixation; in fact, he calls a monomaniac's behavior "blind impulse and impaired self-control" (31). This is where the complications arise in regards to responsibility. If during Egaeus' monomaniacal fit he is acting involuntarily on "blind impulses," but is consciously aware of his mental disorder, is he culpable for criminal actions? Is suffering from monomania the same as suffering from automatism? Ruth Harris provides an interesting simile to define automatism: "in this state subjects seem like human marionettes, dancing to the strings of the operator" (167). But who is the operator? Our unconscious desires? Perhaps. Victoria Ryan quotes Frances Power Cobbe: "is this instrument *ourselves*? Are we quite inseparable from this machinery of thoughts?" (48, original emphasis). Ryan argues that during a state of automatism, we are not ourselves; we are not dictated by conscious thought, but rather by some inner unconscious, perhaps ulterior motivation. The automaton is capable of "convers[ing] with others, operat[ing] machinery, and perform[ing] complex tasks among other things"

(Sarantis 1), but the most important factor is that even though the person—in a state of automatism—is capable of performing regular and habitual actions, and is doing so without conscious thought, the person is still driven by some sort of motivation.

So it seems both Blake and Egaeus can be classified as automatons, engaging in legal or illegal actions because they are without conscious thought and performing involuntary actions. This suggests there is a parallel between automatism and somnambulism, as well as overlapping characteristics. For example, in the case of Egaeus, he may have either blacked out or fallen asleep, but Poe leaves it unclear. According to Joel Eigen the only difference between automatism and somnambulism is that automatism does not always occurring during sleep, it can occur during episode of hypnosis or “menstrual distress” (132). However, because the similarity between automatism and somnambulism is so great, the two states can be interpreted as one in the same during sleep: “as evidence of man’s strictly earthbound nature, determining that people are mere machines” (Stiles 78). The scientific and medical communities provide a thorough exploration of the automaton’s responsibility and human agency, which mirror that of somnambulism; however, in the legal realm the defense of automatism or somnambulism is more complicated due to the need to establish a prior motivation for the criminal behavior.

Each portion of the legal defense of somnambulism or automatism requires an in-depth analysis of every crucial detail from the events that occurred

before the alleged criminal fell asleep to the alleged criminal's medical history (as seen in Cockton's *Sylvester Sound*). For Blake and Egaeus, the question of whether they should be held responsible for their criminal behavior is not simple. Yes, each had a prior motivation before falling asleep, but they were also unconscious and performing involuntary actions during their trances. And then, does the fact that Egaeus knew he suffered from monomania, make him culpable as it would make an epileptic who suffers a seizure while driving as Grant suggests? It is difficult to answer such questions in a general sense: each individual criminal case is unique; therefore, questions of criminal responsibility, human agency, and automatism depend on a case-by-case basis and the contributing factors. In closing, I contend that Blake should not be held responsible for stealing the moonstone simply because without the opium given to him by Candy, he would have suffered another night of insomnia. As for Egaeus, he should be held legally responsible for the mutilation of Berenice because he was consciously aware of his monomania and his obsession with her teeth prior to falling asleep, suggesting he possessed guilty intentions and motivation for causing Berenice harm. By investigating Poe and Collins' sleepwalkers and the crimes they committed, I believe that these authors included the circular discussion of scientific research on mental disorders—particularly that of somnambulism—to aid in the public's understanding of the medical, legal and psychological issues that a sleepwalker can face when a crime is committed by a person in an unconscious state, as well as adding to the

new non-traditional Gothic genre of writing that lends itself more towards the influential discourses of medicine and law in order to evoke a more realistic horror in their readers.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that medical science has never established an exact single cause for somnambulism, the differing array of causes proposed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and even into the twenty-first century revolve around discovering and exploring the boundaries between the conscious and unconscious mind. Though more recent medical investigations shed new light on the effects of somnambulism, whom it will affect still remains a mystery. There has never been a discovery of a pattern suggesting that somnambulism stems from other physical or mental disorders or ailments, or that it is passed down through genetics. One aspect of somnambulism that I have discussed is how somnambulism can be viewed as a type of contagion—that it can be “caught” and transferred from one person to another. Though there is no medical explanation for this phenomenon, the belief that somnambulism can be transferred from person to person is quite intriguing. Authors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries imposed the new medical discoveries to enhance their novels by adding to the excitement of their changing world, and ultimately creating a sub-genre to the Gothic genre already popular in Europe. Charles Brockden Brown notes in the preface to *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleepwalker* that he does not intent to use the “old world” themes and characterizations of the European Gothic genre, but rather he intends to use modern and more “realistic” characterizations, such as making use of medical mysteries such as somnambulism to entice his readers. The important component to analyzing

somnambulism in fictional literature from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is to propose questions of responsibility, particularly criminal responsibility from both a legal and moral standpoint.

The disease of somnambulism has been a focus of study for over three centuries, and it is clear that the scientific and medical fascination with mental diseases and sleep disorders was widely dispersed throughout fictional literature primarily during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During this time, these diseases were discussed publicly, but more importantly they were also seen as a cultural fascination used for entertainment purposes in fictional literature.^{xv} As the American Gothic literary genre became more prevalent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, use of mental and sleep disorders, particularly somnambulism, initiated the interest in the scientifically abnormal and medical anomalies of the human mind. This fascination thrust these diseases into the public view, causing society to become captivated by the obscure medical findings. Authors such as Charles Brockden Brown and Edgar Allan Poe illustrated these diseases in their literature to create a sense of horror to allure their readers.

The *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* murder case in 1846 created a precedent for using somnambulism as a defense plea. It is believed that Tirrell's lawyer Rufus Choate utilized several of these literary texts and medical treatises that explored somnambulism to frame his defense for Tirrell. Choate proved even though it is likely that Tirrell killed Maria Bickford Tirrell could not be held responsible for his

actions based purely on the fact that he was asleep and therefore unconscious. Choate contended that if a person was unconscious and committed an act, whether lawful or unlawful, the person is nonetheless considered to be of an unsound mind and cannot justifiably be held legally responsible for their actions. Though previously, Tirrell was held legally and morally responsible for his actions of committing adultery, Choate proved that Tirrell could not be held accountable for the murder of Maria because he was sleepwalking. However, it is inconclusive to argue whether or not he should have been held morally responsible for his actions.

Moreover, in the nineteenth century somnambulism was an innovative medical study that fascinated both physicians and philosophers. Many of the studies reported were based on scientific experiments with sleepwalkers conducted through observation, and trial and error tests such as those that Polidori used in his medical dissertation. The purpose of these medical studies was to emphasize that there are boundaries and limits set forth between the conscious and unconscious mind, and that sleepwalking arises primarily from an overactive unconscious mind caused by external and internal stimuli as Darwin suggested. Benjamin Rush expressed that sleepwalking has multiple causes including: alcohol, lack of exercise, too much study on one topic, opium and tobacco use or sudden stopping of such inhibitors, as well as anxiety and guilt. All of the factors Rush observed gave validation to Darwin's conclusion of a ceaseless hyperexcitability found within the mind.

Because the medical treatises of the time focused on a variety of possible reasons for somnambulism it is plausible to suggest that Charles Brockden Brown made use of these medical findings to compose *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleepwalker*. Brown's novel was one of the first fictional novels to shed new light on the American Gothic genre by incorporating the recent medical findings on somnambulism. Brown grasped the medical literature to demonstrate how guilt could be a root cause for sleepwalking, and that much like a contagion, this disease could be "caught" and transferred to another person who also is enduring some form of guilt. However, even though the sleepwalker is suffering paroxysms of guilt, they nonetheless should not be held legally liable for their actions so long as their actions were performed unconsciously. More broadly, Brown complicates questions of responsibility by introducing the notion of self-preservation and insanity as possible justifications.

In an alternative view, Wilkie Collins and Edgar Allan Poe addressed the somnambulist through other possible causes for this disease—opium and monomania. The most essential factor given in *The Moonstone* was to emphasize that a person other than a sleepwalker could be a person held responsible for the sleepwalker's actions, particularly if that person helped to cause the diseased person's behaviors. Again, in Collins' novel the sleepwalker cannot be held legally responsible so long as the sleepwalker had not voluntarily accepted the drugs that induced the unconscious behavior. However, the person who voluntarily gave the dose of opium, in this case a deceitful physician should

be held morally responsible. Even though the physician was not aware of the resulting effects the opium would cause, he still voluntarily provided the drugs that elicited involuntary actions, thus making the physician indirectly morally responsible for the theft of the moonstone. However, the question remains unresolved as to whether or not the voluntary actions should be seen as legally responsible. In Edgar Allan Poe's "Berenice," Egaeus battles fits of monomania; he is undeniably already of an unsound mind, and therefore, without question should not be held responsible for his actions. Moreover, the use of somnambulism as a literary element in these works emphasizes the author's preference for using scientific and medical investigations of mental disorders and somnambulism in their work to address and explore the psychological questions pertaining to the conscious and unconscious mind.

Now mirroring the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, our culture remains fascinated with the obscure and abnormal behaviors of the mentally unstable mind. Medical studies of mental diseases and sleep disorders have made enormous strides. As psychiatrists dole out prescription medication to make us feel "normal," twenty-first century America is becoming known as the "Prozac Nation" (Wutrzel). However, these remedies come with a small black label warning, advising us that these medication may cause side effects associated with sleepwalking: "some users of the most widely prescribed drug, Ambien, started complaining online and to their doctors about unusual reactions ranging from fairly benign sleepwalking episodes to hallucinations, violent

outbursts, nocturnal binge eating and — most troubling of all — driving while asleep” (Saul). This vague warning statement can be found on a wide variety of medications. The Department of Medicine at NYU states, “certain medications such as antidepressants, tranquilizers, anticonvulsants, and antihistamines” and even seemingly unrelated illnesses such as asthma, hyperthyroidism, migraines, and heartburn are associated with sleepwalking. (McCoy). Dr. Mahowald, a sleep expert comments in a New York Times article: “Ambien had received the most publicity because it was the most widely used. But ‘there's no question that any of the sedative hypnotics can do this’” (Saul). But what is important to realize is just how much of an impact these disorders have on the American public.

In terms of psychology, we want to feel “normal,” we want to feel as if we are not aberrant, or an outcast in society because of our mental instabilities, so our society has created a plethora of popular culture texts that dramatize our interest with mental and sleep issues. In 2012, Steven Soderberg produced “Side Effects,” a film that epitomizes our cultural obsession with mental diseases and sleep disorders. Soderberg’s film makes the public feel “normal” compared to the female protagonist suffering from a host of mental disorders. In the film, a young successful woman suffering from depression, anxiety, and other disorders is prescribed several medications to help her “not feel so sad.” While on these medications, she apparently sleepwalks and murders her husband. However, her sleepwalking is a ruse, pulled off with her psychiatrist, used as a cover for premeditated murder, with full criminal intent. She takes advantage of the

notoriety of Ambien and related drugs to commit murder. This film echoes the events that occurred during the *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* case, and Collins' novel, *The Moonstone*. However, in the film the female protagonist used her prescribed medication as her legal basis for evading her culpability and responsibility of murder. Soderberg's film, along with several other films, television shows, and books emphasize our lingering cultural fascination with mental and sleep disorders, mirroring the same interest in these diseases portrayed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although these diseases have been studied and discussed for hundreds of years, we continue to be intrigued by somnambulism and other sleep disorders, which as much as ever raise troubling questions about agency and culpability, and about the uncertain boundary between the conscious and unconscious mind.

Notes

ⁱ Darwin, Erasmus. *The Botanic Garden*. London: Jones & Company, 1825. Print.

ⁱⁱ “According to received notions of learned and approved authors upon the subject...you may select any description of mental derangement from any competent authority...” (Daily Mail 19) and “the learned counsel here read from authorities some of the principle evidence” (Daily Mail 29).

ⁱⁱⁱ “He referred to Dr. Elliotson, Dr. Ray on Insanity, and Dr. Guy’s Medical Jurisprudence, and submitted to the jury that the doctrine he had advocated would be sustained by some of the most distinguished medical men in the country who have treated persons in this state, and who will speak from experience as well as theory” (Daily Mail 20).

^{iv} “Most crimes, as they are infamous or dangerous, are proved rather by circumstantial evidence than by positive evidence” (Daily Mail 5).

^v Choate uses ethos by exploiting the jury’s knowledge of his prominent status as a successful lawyer; he also uses pathos in his diction, calling Tirrell a “moral man,” and even having witnesses testify that they too believed Tirrell to be a “good and moral man.” Additionally, Choate uses a blended pathos and logos to persuade the jury to be reasonable in their conclusions about Tirrell, and to use their logic to determine what is right in this case. Choate also claims that only a person not in their “right mind” would commit such a “heinous crime” as murder, especially the murder of a beloved mistress.

^{vi} A housemate of Maria’s, Priscilla Blood, retold a conversation she and Maria had a few days before the murder. Priscilla asked Maria why she and Tirrell quarreled so often. Maria responded because ““they had such a good time making up”” (Cohen 201).

^{vii} See *Daily Mail* 19

^{viii} In *The Analysis of Motives: Early American Psychology and Fiction*, Allan Gardner Smith writes “Brown’s enthusiasm for science is indicated by his address to the newly formed Bells Lettres Club in 1789 when he enjoined the group to comprehend ‘science and art within the same circle’” (2).

^{ix} In *Edgar Huntly and The American Nightmare* Sydney Krauss proposed: “To assess the contradictoriness of Huntly’s nightmare experience—climaxed by an unwilling, but transcendent, liberation of the instinctual self, and subsequent

reversion to his previously failed moralism" (Krauss 296). However, I feel it is more aptly suited for Althorpe's obsession with Miss Davis, meaning that even though Althorpe is still immersed in fear by the Davises night journey, he manages to fall asleep, albeit still excited by his overwhelming state of ambivalence of following the Davises. During his sleep, he unwillingly diverts from his consciousness and morality by sleepwalking and following the Davises, thus liberating his unconscious inclination to protect Miss Davis (perhaps from being with another man), and liberate himself from the woes of not having his object of desire fulfilled.

^x Nathan Miller (Criminal Defense Attorney), in discussion with the author, March 2014.

^{xi} Legal scholar Emily Grant writes, "The criminal justice system does not punish an actor who 'is not a free agent, or is unable to choose or to act voluntarily, or to avoid the conduct which constitutes the crime,'" which derived from *United States v. Moore*, 486 F.2d 1139, 1241 (D.C. Cir. 1973).

^{xii} In "The Metapsychological Supplement of to the Theory of Dreams" Freud notes "A dream is, therefore, among other things, a *projection*: an externalization of an internal process" (223).

^{xiii} There are instances where scientists believe in a process where a person has such vivid dreams it appears to the dreamer they are awake, or at least in control of their dream, this is called "lucid dreaming." This concept derives from Freudian and Jungian "depth psychology," where a person is in a semi-conscious state (Chalquist).

^{xiv} Darwin claims: "this perpetual mistake in dreams and reveries, where our ideal of imagination are attended with a belief of the presence of external objects, evinces beyond a doubt, that all our idea are repetitions of the motions of the nerves of sense, by which they were acquired, and that this belief is not, as some late philosophers contend, an instinct necessarily connected only with our perceptions" (18.6).

^{xv} This coincides with Darwin's theory presented in *Zoonomia* Sect. 18.

^{xvi} Rush observed "that somnambulists never remember a single thing they do in their sleep, after they awake; but what is still more remarkable, they remember in each fit of night walking, everything they did in the walk of the night before" (668).

^{xvii} In her essay, Murison emphasizes two different readings of *Edgar Huntly*, the first as a psychoanalytical reading of savagery and the more recent political

reading regarding the “dispossession of the Delaware Indians.” She continues, “In the eruption of “nation” and “empire” as the preeminent terms of analysis in the 1990s, recent critical readings of *Edgar Huntly* emphasize Brown’s participation in the construction of American identity and its relationship to America’s internal colonialism. This is the explicit argument of Jared Gardner in *Master Plots*, which stands as one of the most thoroughly persuasive readings about American identity in *Edgar Huntly*. The terms of American identity in *Edgar Huntly* and other Brown novels guide other recent studies: Rowe, Krause, Smith-Rosenberg, Downes, and Hinds” (266).

^{xviii} When Edgar first finds Clithero under the elm tree, he exclaims, “Never did I witness a scene of such mighty anguish, such heart-bursting grief” (9).

^{xix} This idea is also expressed by Rufus Choate during the *Massachusetts v. Tirrell* trial when Choate comments, “[the] malady on the moral feeling of persons in this state and showed how the moral faculty was disordered, and that men may do a thing in this state which they would shudder at when awake” (20).

^{xx} Barnard and Shapiro provide an interesting connection between the relationship of Edgar and Waldegrave and the relationship between Brown and Elihu Hubbard Smith. Barnard and Shapiro write in a footnote of Chapter XIII, “Waldegrave was a materialist and a deist, and in his letters he developed late Enlightenment arguments against religion and superstition...Brown’s close friend and roommate Elihu Hubbard Smith left behind deist writings that scandalized his family when he died in 1789” (89). It is interesting that Brown would include such scene in *Edgar Huntly*, because of the research and writings produced by Brown and Smith on somnambulism and other mental disorders. Perhaps, Brown included this detailed information as a peculiar way to eulogize his recently deceased friend.

^{xxi} See Rush’s *Lectures on the Mind*, “Of Somnambulism”.

^{xxii} During the first few moments after Edgar awakens in the cave, he comments, “My thoughts were wildering and mazy, and though consciousness were present, it as disconnected with the loco-motive or voluntary power” (107). Barnard and Shapiro make note of Brown’s use of language through this novel that recalls Darwin’s discourse on somnambulism in *Zoonomia*. This suggests that not only was Brown immensely familiar with Darwin’s work, but also that he agreed with it Darwin’s findings too.

^{xxiii} This particular scene is intriguing because Brown and Edgar are both Quakers and according to Benjamin Franklin in Barnard and Shapiro’s *Related Texts* section of *Edgar Huntly*, the Quakers are incorrectly known for their

“benevolence and pastoral harmony” towards the Indians. However, Franklin “acknowledges wrongful violence against native peoples and recognizes that the ‘barbarity’ of dispossession sets off vicious cycles of revenge killings” (205).

^{xxiv} Agreeing with Barnard and Shapiro, the tomahawk symbolizes the “‘unconscious’ lapse into automatized revenge violence” (108). What is particularly interesting is how it relates to the previous comment about the Quaker violence against the Indians. This further emphasizes Franklin’s view that the Quakers were killing the Indians in “cold blood” for the expansion of Christianity, and the new American lands. Franklin writes, “these [Indians] were not Enemies; they were bon among us, and yet we have killed them all” (206).

^{xxv} In the first chapter of *Edgar Huntly*, Edgar watched Clithero walk past him without the slightest inclination that Edgar was in front of him. Edgar comments, “It could not fail to terminate in one conjecture, that this person was *asleep*. Such instances were not unknown to me, through the medium of conversation and books” (10). Brown’s fascination with and knowledge of the anomalies of somnambulism and other mental disorders is revealed through *Edgar Huntly*, as well as his other works such as *Wieland*, and “Somnambulism: A Fragment.” According to the Charles Brockden Brown Society, Brown and a close friend Elihu Hubbard Smith spent time researching and recording a variety of published medical studies regards research analysis on the mental abnormalities focusing on somnambulism and other mental disorders.

Bibliography

- Abbott, Karen. "The Case of the Sleepwalking Killer." *Past Imperfections*. Smithsonian Museum. 30Apr. 2012. Web.20 Oct. 2012.
- "Albert J. Tirrell" *Boston Daily Mail Report* (1846): 3-32. Harvard Law School Library. Web. 11 Nov. 2012.
- Barnard, Phillip, Stephen Shapiro. Introduction. *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleep-walker*. By Charles Brockden Brown. 1799. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2006. ix-xlii. Print.
- Bradfield, Scott. *Dreaming Revolution: Transgression in the Development of AmericanRomance*. Iowa City: Iowa UP, 1993. Print.
- Brown, Charles Brockden. *Edgar Huntly: Memoirs of a Sleep-walker*. Indianapolis: Hackett,2006. Print.
- Brown, Charles Brockden. "Somnambulism: A Fragment." *The Literary Magazine and American Register* 3 (May 1805): 335-347. Print.
- Chalquist, Craig. "What is Depth Psychology?" *Terrapsych.com*. Re-engaging the Soul of Place (Spring 2007). Web. 03 Oct. 2013
- Cockton, Henry. *Sylvester Sound: The Somnambulist*. London: W.M. Clark, 1844. Print.
- Cody, Michael. "Sleepwalking into the Nineteenth Century: Charles Brockden Brown's "Somnambulism." *Journal of the Short Story in English* 39 (2002): 2-10. Web. 6 Nov. 2012.
- Cohen, Daniel A. *Pillars of Salt: Monuments of Grace*. Massachusetts: Oxford UP, 1993. Print.
- Collins, Wilkie. *The Moonstone*. New York: Random House Publishing, 1973. Print.
- Darwin, Erasmus. *Zoonomia: The Laws of Organic Life*. London, 1796. *Project Gutenberg*. 25 Apr. 2005. Web. 10 Oct. 2012.
- Dayan, Joan. "The Identity of Berenice, Poe's Idol of the Mind." *Studies in Romanticism* 23(1984): 491-513. Web. 07 Feb. 2013.

- Del Busto, Elena, Karl Doghramji, Nicole Foubister, Dimitri Markov, Clarence Watson, and Kenneth Weiss. "Parasomnias, Violence, and the Law." *Journal of Psychiatry & Law* 39 (summer 2011): 249-286. Web. 8 Sept. 2013.
- Denno, Deborah. "Crime and Consciousness: Science and Involuntary Acts." *Minnesota Law Review* 87 (2002). 269-399. Web. 09 May 2013.
- Downes, Paul. "Sleep-Walking out of the Revolution: Brown's "Edgar Huntly"." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*. 29.4 (1996): 413-431. Print.
- Eigen, Joel. *Unconscious Crime*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2003. Print.
- Fink, Bruce. *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1995. Print.
- Finger, Stanley, Daniel Sarezky, Sharda Umanath. "Sleepwalking Through History: Medicine, Arts, and Courts of Law." *Journal of the History of Neuroscience: Basic and Clinical Perspectives* 20.4 (2011): 253-276. Web. 01 Oct. 2012.
- Fleming, Steve. "Was it Really Me?" *Aeon*, Aeon Magazine Online LTD, 26 Sept. 2012. Web. 10 Oct. 2012.
- Flisfeder, Mathew. *The Symbolic, The Sublime, and Slavoj Zizek's Theory of Film*. New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2012. Print.
- Freud, Sigmund. "The Metapsychological Supplement To The Theory of Dreams." Trans. C.M. Baines. 1925. Web. 25 Nov. 2012.
- . *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Trans. Joyce Crick. 1899. New York: Oxford UP, 1999. Print.
- Goldstein, Jan. *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. Print.
- Grant, Emily. "While You Were Sleeping or Addicted: Expansion of the Automatism Doctrine to Induce Addiction Defense." *U. Illinois Law Review* 997 (2002): 1-27. Web. 09 May 2013.
- Hauttunen, Karen. *Murder Most Foul: The Killer and the American Gothic Imagination*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1998. Print.
- Handley, Sasha. "Sleepwalking, Subjectivity and the Nervous Body in

- Eighteenth- Century Britain." *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35.3 (2011): 305-323. Web. 02 Sept. 2013.
- Hedges, William L. "Benjamin Rush, Charles Brockden Brown, and the American Plague Year." *Early American Literature* 7:3 (winter 1973): 295-311. Web. 28 Sept 2013.
- "Insane Delusions as Invalidating a Will." *American Law Reports* 882.175 (1948): n.p. Web. 09 May 2013.
- Jung, Carl Gustav. *Archetypes and Collective Unconscious*. New York: P. Lang, 1987. Print.
- Krause, Sydney. "Edgar Huntly and the American Nightmare." *Studies in the Novel* 13.3 (fall 2001): 294-302. Web. 17 Nov. 2012.
- Luck, Chad. "The Re-Walking Purchase." *Early American Literature* 44.2 (2009): 271-306. Web. 30 June 2012.
- MacKay, R.D. *Mental Condition Defenses in the Criminal Law*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995. Print.
- Manning, Susan L. "Enlightenment's Dark Dreams: Two Fictions of Henry Mackenzie and Charles Brockden Brown" *Eighteenth-Century Life* 21.3 (1997): 39-56. Web. 29 Sept. 2013.
- Marshall, Bridget. *The Transatlantic Gothic Novel and the Law 1790-1860*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2011. Print.
- Montagna, P., G. Plazzi, F. Provini, R. Vetrugno. "Sleepwalking and Other Ambulatory Behaviors During Sleep." *Neurological Science* 26 (2005): 193-198. Web. 16 Apr. 2013.
- Murison, Justine. "The Tyranny of Sleep: Somnambulism, Moral Citizenship, and Charles Brockden Brown's Edgar Huntly." *Early American Literature* 44.2 (2009): 243-270. Web. 30 Apr. 2013.
- Otto, Peter. "Gothic Fiction: Gothic Revolutions." *Adam Matthew Publication: Imaginative Publishers of Research Collections*. (2014): n. page. Web. 30 Mar. 2014.
- Phelen, Julie. "Destiny is Blind." *Classic Literature and Poetry*. Blogspot. 18 Apr. 2012. Web. 17 Nov. 2012.

- Pocock, Douglas. "The Senses in Focus." *Area* 25.1 (Mar 1993): 11-16. Web. 17 May 2013.
- Poe, Edgar Allan. "Berenice." *The Collected Works of Edgar Allen Poe*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 2004. Print.
- Polidori, John William. *A Medical Inaugural Dissertation which deals with the disease called Oneirodynia*. Trans. David Petrain. *English Romantic Review* 21.6 (2010): 775-788. Web. 09 Sept. 2012.
- Quimby, Dr. Phineas Parkhurst. "Marquis de Puysegur (1751-1825)." *Phineas Parkhurst Quimby*. Phineas Parkhurst Quimby Philosophical Society of New England, n.d. Web. 30 Mar 2014.
- Reiger, James. "Dr. Polidori and the Genesis of Frankenstein." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. 3.4 (1963): 461-472. Web. 30 Mar. 2014.
- Richardson, Alan. "Of Heartache and Head Injury: Reading Minds in *Persuasion*." *Poetics Today* 23.1 (2002): 141-160. Web. 04 Oct. 2013.
- Rodensky, Lisa. *The Crime in Mind: Criminal Responsibility and The Victorian Novel*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003. Print.
- Rush, Benjamin. "Lectures on the Mind." *American Philosophical Society* 144 (1981): 624-683. Print.
- Ryan, Victoria. *Thinking Without Thinking in the Victorian Novel*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2012. Print.
- Smith, Alan Gardner. *The Analysis of Motives: Early American Psychology and Fiction*. Amsterdam: Rodopi N.V., 1980. Print.
- Stiles, Anne. *Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012. Print.
- Talairach-Vielmas, Laurence. *Wilkie Collins, Medicine and The Gothic*. Cardiff: U. of Wales Press, 2009. Print.
- Voloshin, Beverly. "Edgar Huntly and The Coherence of Self." *Early American Literature* 23 (1988): 262-280. Web. 1 Nov. 2012.
- Weber, Alfred. "The Uncollected Writings of Charles Brockden Brown." *The Charles Brockden Brown Electronic Archive and Scholarly Edition*. Center

for Humanities and Digital Research at the University of Central Florida,
03 Oct 2013. Web. 6 Oct 2013.

Young, Robert M. *Mind Brain and Adaptation in the Nineteenth Century*. Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1970. Print.

Zizek, Slavoj. "The Superego and The Act." *The European Graduate School*. Aug
1999. Web. 15 Nov. 2012.

Biographical Information

Meghan Leigh Self earned a Bachelor's of Arts Degree in English with a concentration in Technical Communications from the University of North Texas in 2009. She then enrolled in the University of Texas at Arlington, earning her Master's of Arts Degree in English Literature in Spring 2014. Meghan plans on continuing her studies to pursue a doctorate degree. Meghan's primary fields of interest are in Gothic Literature and Psychoanalytical theory, which overlap each other quite seamlessly. Meghan is also fascinated by the investigation of the supernatural and paranormal anomalies. With this, Meghan seeks to critique and compose creative and innovative works.