The Cognitive Poetics of Horror Fiction

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Abstract

This thesis explores the emotional experience of reading horror fiction from a cognitive-poetic perspective. The approach adopted in this thesis combines thorough consideration of Text World Theory, attention and resonance, emotion studies, and online reader responses to provide a detailed analysis of the texture of the horror-reading experience. Three classic contemporary horror novels are the analytical focus of this investigation: Ira Levin's (1967) *Rosemary's Baby*, Stephen King's (1986) *IT*, and William Peter Blatty's (1971*) The Exorcist*. These popular novels were chosen for their ability to evoke anxiety, fear, and disgust in readers, respectively. The primary intention of this thesis is to be an original contribution to the fields of stylistics, cognitive poetics, and the literary critical understanding of horror fiction.

This thesis argues for a multifaceted approach to understanding the emotional experience of horror fiction, which is considered in terms of movement. As the conceptual metaphor EMOTION IS MOVEMENT recurs as an experiential effect of the horror-reading process throughout the reader-response data in this thesis, the frameworks applied aim to give insight to the readerly experience of conceptual movement. This thesis proposes that negation and other negatively oriented lexis establish the macabre ambience of the text-world space and that manipulation of movement through world-switching contributes to negative emotions evoked through the experience of these horror text-worlds.

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To my mom, who let me watch *IT* all those years ago and sparked my interest in the supernatural. To my dad, who stayed awake with me for two weeks after that. And to Alistair, who keeps the monsters at bay now.

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Contents

Table of Contents

Abstract ..... **ii**

Acknowledgements ..... **iv-v**

List of figures ..... **xi**

List of tables ..... **xii**

Chapter 1: Introduction: *Danse Macabre*

1.0 Preview **1**

1.1 Theoretical Approach **2**

1.1.1 Texture 2

1.1.2 Text World Theory 3

1.1.3 Attention and Resonance 6

1.2 The Experience of Horror **8**

1.2.1 *Danse Macabre* 9

1.2.2 The Appeal of Horror 12

1.2.3 Anxiety, Fear, and Disgust 17

1.3 Methodology – Readers in the Wild **20**

1.3.1 A Mixed-Methods Approach 20

1.3.1.1 Goodreaders 24

1.4 Structure of the Thesis **25**

Chapter 2: A Cognitive Poetics of Horror

2.0 Preview **27**

2.1 Before Reading – Knowledge-Base **28**

2.1.1 Primal Emotions in Horror 30

2.1.1.1 Emotion vs. Cognition....30
2.1.1.2 A Neurobiological Perspective – Category Jamming....32
2.1.1.3 Fascinating Fear....36
2.1.1.4 Conditioned Learning....38
2.2 During Reading – Text-Drivenness....41
2.2.1 Emotion as Movement....42
2.2.2 Building Horrible Worlds....44
2.2.2.1 Atmosphere, Tone, and Ambience....44
2.2.2.2 Negatively Oriented Lexis in Horror....50
2.2.3 Experiencing Horrible Worlds....55
2.2.3.1 Attention....55
2.2.3.2 Projection....58
2.3 After Reading – Resonance....59
2.4 Review....61

Chapter 3 'Hail Satan!': Anxiety, Atmosphere and Tone in *Rosemary's Baby*

3.0 Preview....62
3.1 Anxiety: *Pulvis et umbra sumus*/We are but dust and shadow....62
3.2 *Rosemary's Baby*: The beginning of an era....66
3.3 Reader Experiences of Anxiety in *Rosemary's Baby*....69
3.3.1 Creepiness....72
3.3.1.1 Direct Negative Emotion....73
3.3.1.2 Indirect Negative Emotion....75
3.3.2 Suspense....77
3.4 Analysis Part I – Creepiness....79
3.5 Analysis Part II – '*This is no dream*': Suspense and Rosemary's Nightmare....81
3.6 Review....91

Chapter 4: Fuck Everything and Run: FEAR and Attention in *IT*

4.0 Preview 92

4.1 Fear and Attention 92

4.2 '...you'll float too' IT and the destruction of childhood sleep 94

4.3 Reader Experiences of Fear in *IT* 95

4.3.1 Direct Negative Emotion 97

4.3.2 Indirect Negative Emotion 99

4.4 Analysis Part I: Movement 102

4.4.1 Macroanalysis 102

4.4.2 Microanalysis 106

4.4.2.1 Scale of empathetic recognisability 110

4.4.2.2 Foreshadowing 113

4.4.2.3 Types of edges 117

4.5 Analysis Part II: Negation 119

4.5.1 Using Negation for Shock 121

4.6 Review 128

Chapter 5: '…what an excellent day for an exorcism': Disgust and Projection in *The Exorcist*

5.0 Preview 129

5.1 Disgust 129

5.2 *The Exorcist*: 'The most terrifying book ever written' 133

5.2.1 Category Jamming 135

5.3 Analysis Part I 136

5.3.1 Narrative Urgency 139

5.3.2 Levels of Projection 140

5.4 Analysis Part II 142

5.4.1 Direct-speech World-switches 144

5.4.2 Disgust in the Masturbation/Rape Scene 146

5.5 – 40th Anniversary Edition 149

5.6 Reader Experiences of Disgust in *The Exorcist* 152

5.6.1 Direct and Indirect Negative Emotion 152

5.6.1.1 Elicitors of disgust 153

5.6.1.2 Self-implication 154

5.6.1.3 Sociomoral disgust 155

5.7 Review 155

Chapter 6: *Goodreads* and Emotion in the Horror-reading Experience

6.0 Preview 157

6.1 Knowledge Base 157

6.1.1 Horror Schema 158

6.1.1.1 Film version 158

6.1.1.2 Author 164

6.2 Negative Emotion 167

6.2.1 Exclamations/Interjections 167

6.3 Mixed Emotions 169

6.3.1 Direct and Indirect Positive Emotion 169

6.3.2 Mixed Positive and Negative Emotion 169

6.4 Resonance/ Discourse-world affected 171

6.4.1 Intensity 171

6.4.2 Resonance 173

6.4.2.1 Sleep disturbance 173

6.4.2.2 Resonance over time 175

6.4.2.3 Schema updating 176

6.4.2.4 Self-modifying effects/behaviour and personality changes 177

6.5 Review 179

Chapter 7: Conclusion: The Dance Has Ended

7.0 Preview 181

7.1 Points of Innovation 181

7.1.1 Cognitive Poetics 182

7.1.1.1 Texture 183

7.1.1.2 Building Horrible Worlds 184

7.1.1.3 Experiencing Horrible Worlds 186

7.1.1.4 Reader response 187

7.1.2 Horror 188

7.2 Emotional Approach Advantages 190

7.3 Thesis Review 192

References 193

List of Figures

Chapter 2: A Cognitive Poetics of Horror

Figure 2.1: Dimensions of the horror-reading experience 27

Figure 2.2: Negatively oriented lexis 54

Chapter 3: 'Hail Satan!': Anxiety, Atmosphere and Tone in *Rosemary's Baby*

Figure 3.1: Text-worlds of dream/nightmare scene 83

Chapter 4: Fuck Everything and Run: FEAR and Attention in *IT*

Figure 4.1: Perspective changes by year 104

Figure 4.2: *Perspective changes by character* 105

Figure 4.3: Text-worlds of opening line of IT 107

Figure 4.4: World-switching in IT 124

List of Tables

Chapter 3: 'Hail Satan!': Anxiety, Atmosphere and Tone in *Rosemary's Baby*

Table 3.1: Nodes tagged in Rosemary's Baby 69–70

Table 3.2: Breakdown of anxiety-related responses to Rosemary's Baby 70–1

Chapter 4: Fuck Everything and Run: FEAR and Attention in *IT*

Table 4.1: Nodes tagged in IT 95

Table 4.2: Breakdown of fear-related responses to IT 96–7

Table 4.3: Subtle and overt foreshadowing in IT 114–115

Chapter 6: Goodreads and Emotion in the Horror-reading Experience

Table 6.1: Positive emotions 169

Chapter 1

Introduction: *Danse Macabre*

1.0 Preview

Horror fiction is a genre defined by the very emotion it seeks to evoke – horror. By placing readers in a dark, threatening world, the text manipulates readers' emotions and provokes fear. This equivalence between the genre's definition and the experience of reading it makes it emotionally driven. It is the requirement of the genre to provoke such emotion that interests me. In his treatise on the horror genre, *Danse Macabre*, Stephen King (1981: 10) asks, 'why are people willing to pay good money to be made extremely uncomfortable?' How does horror writing create these emotions – fear, anxiety, and disgust, to name a few – in the reader? What is it about horror that makes it compelling enough for people to put themselves into this emotionally vulnerable position? These are the questions I aim to answer through cognitive-poetic analysis.

I draw my analysis from popular horror texts and investigate the ways in which these texts trigger fear in readers. I argue that fear and its related emotions, such as anxiety and disgust, are evoked through fictional worlds built and populated through linguistic and psychological cues. Stockwell's (2009) notion of texture is useful for discussing the aesthetic experience of literary reading; I claim that this aesthetic experience is the key to understanding what compels readers to read horror fiction. To explore this phenomenon, I primarily employ Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007), a cognitive model of discourse processing, and the attention and resonance model (Stockwell 2009), but I also draw widely on other stylistic and cognitive-poetic approaches. Text World Theory is an ideal framework for this study because it has been shown to account for readerly emotional experience in literary discourse (Lahey 2005; Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2005, 2009; Whiteley 2010, 2011). The attentional model complements Text World Theory by elucidating how fictional worlds are built and experienced by readers. This study aims to use these frameworks to investigate the texture, in particular related to the emotions evoked, of reading horror fiction.

In this chapter, in 1.1, I introduce the concept of texture (Stockwell 2009) and explain how Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) and the attentional system (Stockwell 2009) can be used to account for emotional texture in discourse. In section 1.2, I give an overview of the general and textual appeal of horror, and consider how this links to its textural

appeal. I also introduce the three negative emotions that I will be considering throughout the thesis – anxiety, fear, and disgust – and which case-study texts they will be paired with. Section 1.3 outlines my mixed methodology for exploring how readerly emotions are evoked through the interaction of textual features and readers' personal experiences. Finally, in 1.4, I introduce the structure of the thesis and state its principal aims.

1.1 Theoretical Approach

In this section, I introduce the concept of texture, then summarize and discuss the two cognitive-poetic models that I will use to explore the texture of horror fiction, Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) and attention and resonance (Stockwell 2009).

1.1.1 Texture

One specific cognitive-poetic phenomenon that has been investigated by those interested in the aesthetic experience of reading is called *texture*. Many researchers aim to account for this experience of the text. Indeed, anyone studying readerly effects is in effect studying texture, but Stockwell (2009) is the first to label the wider aesthetic experience as such. Before considering how texture is a useful concept to apply in terms of horror fiction, let us first consider the definition of texture as offered by Stockwell (2009):

> The proper business of literary criticism is the description of readings. Readings consist of the interaction of texts and humans. Humans are comprised of minds, bodies and shared experiences. Texts are the objects produced by people drawing on these resources. Textuality is the outcome of the workings of shared cognitive mechanics, evident in texts and readings. Texture is the experienced quality of textuality.
>
> (Stockwell 2009: 1)

This definition neatly sums up major concerns of my own research: readings grounded in embodied cognition, *textuality* – which is the sum of lexico-grammatical features found in texts, and the texture – in particular, emotional reactions – experienced through reading these texts. Stockwell outlines how the haptically experienced quality of texture mirrors the conceptually experienced quality which takes place during reading:

> Texture is felt when the mind is aware of the body moving from one medium to another (sand to water, grass to gravel, novel to newspaper, sans serif to italics), or from one quality of ground to another (smooth to fractured, granulated to liquid, narrator's voice to character's voice) or when the ground changes its reference points (ascending in a lift, sliding down ice, jumping in a flashback, unmasking the monster as the villain). These senses are all to a greater or lesser extent physically-focused

> conceptualisations or conceptually-focused physical analogues, along a scale of sensation. What they all have in common is the flow of experience across a transitional moment. The essence of texture, then, is in edges.
>
> (Stockwell 2009: 107)

Although broadly speaking, texture is related to any aesthetic effect experienced while reading, in Stockwell's notion of texture described above, it generally correlates with movement, specifically from one medium to another. It is this moment of transition from one edge to another that constitutes a change in texture. This awareness of shifting from one boundary to another is called *edgework*. This term was first coined by Young (1987) to 'refer to the textual markers of the real-fictional world boundaries' (Stockwell 2009: 131). While Young emphasizes the textual indications of edges, Segal (1995) focuses on the reader's process of identifying these boundaries. McIntyre (2006: 105–6) takes issue with this discrepancy in defining edgework; Stockwell (2009: 131, 2002: 49) advocates for addressing both the textual markers as well as reader's identification of those boundary markers. He claims, 'Edgework is work at the edge, which can only be discussed by describing the actual nature of the edge-boundary in textural terms' (Stockwell 2009: 131). It is through detailed stylistic analysis that this nature of the edge-boundary can be discussed. I am interested in how this edgework can be related to a reader's emotional experience of the text. To address this relationship between readerly emotion and edgework, throughout the thesis I draw upon Stockwell's model of attention and resonance, which aims to account for how readers' attention is guided by the text and what sort of effects this might have on the reader. Next, I introduce Text World Theory, a model which can map out a work's texture by tracking readerly movement throughout the text.

1.1.2 Text World Theory

Cognitive poetics offers appropriate approaches to deciphering the horror-reading experience because its frameworks take into account the text and the context, including the reader's and potentially the author's context. Cognitive poetics also offers a cognitive dimension to the analysis of the psychological and emotional aspects of the horror-reading experience that traditional stylistic approaches do not. Out of cognitive-poetic approaches, Text World Theory is the most suitable for looking at the experience of reading in general because it offers a means 'to track the process of human communication from the initial production and reception of discourse, through its mental representation, to the complex management of multitudinous conceptual structures in the human mind' (Gavins 2007: 13). Because cognitive poetics draws upon psychological and other cognitive-scientific disciplines, it is suitable for considering the

emotional reactions that occur when reading, and in particular the 'primal' emotions common to the horror experience.

Following the cognitive turn in the humanities, Text World Theory is a cognitive model of human discourse processing originally developed by Werth (1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1997, 1999) that rests on three interrelated claims: that language is cognitive and based on human experience, that knowledge is vital to language, and that text-drivenness is essential for knowledge-retrieval (Werth 1999: 356–8). These claims distinguish Text World Theory as a cognitive discourse model, dependent upon the context as well as the text, as opposed to a purely text-based model like those of Generative Linguistics (see Werth 1999:18–23; for more on the 'cognitive turn' in linguistics, see Stockwell 2002: Chapter 1). According to Werth (1999: 356): 'Since cognition is a human system, it must be intimately based on human experience'. Therefore, the conceptual representation of language is also grounded in that experience; this is embodiment (Lakoff 1987). The second claim shows the importance of personal knowledge, which Werth (1999: 357) calls 'the residue of the experience of the individual', to processing discourse. An individual's combined knowledge makes up his or her information-store, context which facilitates the cognitive process of understanding discourse. There are two types of shared knowledge: general knowledge which includes cultural and linguistic knowledge, and mutual knowledge which includes perceptual and experiential knowledge (Werth 1999: 96–101). Since what Werth (1999: 94) terms the individual's '*knowledge base*' – a borrowed computer term for an individual's information-store – consists of all that individual's background information, a problem of knowledge-retrieval ensues. The solution to this issue is the notion of *text-drivenness*, where the text indicates which areas of the individual's knowledge base are activated in order to understand the discourse (Werth 1999: 149–53). Together, these claims stress the importance of Text World Theory being a cognitive model of human discourse processing, with interdependence on text, context, and user; it is not a mathematic model devoid of human meaning.

Text World Theory commits itself to this human experientialism through its three-tier conceptual framework, which allows for a consideration of the text, the individual's knowledge base, and the surroundings of the individual at the time of communication. This model is unique in that it can be applied to oral or written communication, and works equally well for analysing a sugar packet, a Shakespearian sonnet, or a Stephen King novel. The first level is the *discourse-world*, which includes at least two discourse participants. In written communication, the discourse participants are the author and the reader. This level deals with the immediate situation of the discourse participants and all their personal and cultural knowledge pertinent

to the language situation. As the discourse participants engage in communication, they create mental representations of the discourse in their minds, 'in which the language being produced can be conceptualised and understood' (Gavins 2007: 10). These mental representations constitute the second level, which is the *text-world*. The text-world represents the process by which the text is read and experienced; it is not an objective thing, but rather a subjective experience. Werth (1999) calls the third level the sub-world, which is a world triggered by any changes to the spatial or temporal parameters of the initial text-world (Gavins 2007: 52). Gavins (2005, 2007) claims that sub-worlds are better-named as *world-switches*, as the prefix 'sub' negatively suggests an inferior text-world whereas world-switch merely indicates a text-world distinct from the initial one. These three interrelated levels allow for a holistic consideration of a discourse; the discourse-world contributes contextual information to the analysis while the text-worlds and world-switches provide a framework 'through which the precise structure and cognitive effects of individual mental representations can be examined' (Gavins 2007: 10).

All of these levels are populated with world-building elements (hereafter *world-builders*) and function-advancing propositions (hereafter *function-advancers*). World-builders broadly include time, place, and entities (characters and their enactors (Emmott 1992, 1997) and objects) (Werth 1999: 187). Together, these deictic and referential elements create the backdrop of the text. Function-advancers make up what the text is 'about' and drive the discourse's action across the established backdrop and can be either material processes (for example, physical actions) or relational/mental processes (for example, the relational verb 'to be' and the mental verb 'to think') (see Halliday 1985). Together, world-builders and function-advancers are the 'nuts and bolts of building text-worlds' (Werth 1999: 180).

Text World Theory is suitable to explore horror fiction because this framework can systematically investigate the pragmatic, textual, and cognitive intricacies of human discourse processing. Werth's (1999: 17) goal for his comprehensive framework was to account for 'all the furniture of the earth and heavens'. Therefore, it can usefully be applied to any genre of prose, poetry, drama, film studies, etc. Indeed, Text World Theory has been successfully applied in genre-related studies. For example, Gibbons' (2010, 2011, 2012) multimodal textural work on the horror novel Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves* (2000), Gavins' (2013) stylistics of the absurd, Nuttall's (2015a, forthcoming) cognitive grammar of speculative fiction, Hasan's (2016) dispreferred readings of dystopia, and Norledge's (2016) cognitive poetics of dystopia. Text World Theory is suitable for my specific exploration of *emotion* in horror fiction because of its holistic nature and its stress on the co-operation between writer and reader, text and context. Its ability to map the reader's conceptual movement throughout the text-worlds

allows me to account for the sensation of movement potentially felt while reading, which arguably is key to the emotional experience of horror reading. Its dual focus on the text and the knowledge base of the reader, which includes emotional experiences, dreams, hopes, beliefs, knowledge, memories, imagination, and intentions of each reader, can account for how this experiential information is activated by the text and how emotional reactions are triggered during the discourse. Notable studies of emotions and Text World Theory have been undertaken by Lahey (2005), Gavins (2007), Stockwell (2005, 2009), and Whiteley (2010, 2011). A complementary model to Text World Theory, which also deals with the feeling of movement while reading, is the attention and resonance model (Stockwell 2009); this approach will be briefly summarized in the following section.

1.1.3 Attention and Resonance

Textural analysis can be put into practice with the attention and resonance model (Stockwell 2009), which can also explain how readerly attention works to build and experience text-worlds. Backed by drawing on already empirically validated domains like cognitive psychology, this model uses existing psychological notions of attention to account for the ways texts draw readers' attention to certain textual features called *attractors* (Stockwell 2009: 25) and how the feelings elicited from such attention remain with the reader. Stockwell (2009: 18) aims to account for the feeling of literary *resonance*, which is characterized by a 'prolonged response' and an 'aura of significance' to the reading. Broadly speaking, resonance is the after-effect of the reading experience and can last from hours after reading to years after. The more emotionally engaging the reading, the stronger the resonant effects for the reader (This will be discussed in more detail in 2.3). Stockwell suggests drawing on the cognitive-scientific concept of *attention* to account for the concept of literary resonance. Previously in cognitive poetics, attention was used to account for meaningfulness rather than an aesthetic experience, but Stockwell seeks to employ readerly attention to explain the texture of a reading.

Similarly to most visual experiences, literary space is an amalgamation of:

> colours, edges, forms and surface textures that are available for processing into recognisable and attended objects: more objects vying for attention than be assimilated in totality, so that one interpretative configuration or another must be imposed to make sense of what is being experienced.
>
> (Stockwell 2009: 20)

Figure and ground (see Ungerer and Schmid 2006) are crucial to attention. The elements that are given attentional priority at any one moment are the figure, while the remainder of the

'cluttered array' (Spelke 1990) is the ground. The literary objects that occupy the literary space are called attractors, or elements that attract the reader's attention. As mentioned above, when the attractor is held in the viewer's attention, it is a figure. When the attention changes to another attractor, then the past attractor becomes the ground and the new attractor is the figure. The three main types of attentional change are shifts (apparent motion for the viewer), zooms (change in size), or state changes (sudden appearance or newness) (Carstensen 2007: 8, described in Stockwell 2009: 25). Drawing on these categories and other research on attention and narrative (see Emmott et al. 2006, 2007; Sanford et al. 2006; Stockwell 2003), Stockwell compiles a list of common textual attractors, which is reproduced below, and discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

- Newness (currency: the present moment of reading is more attractive than the previous moment)
- Agency (noun phrases in active position are better attractors than in passive position)
- Topicality (subject position confers attraction over object position)
- Empathetic recognisability (human speaker > human hearer > animal > object > abstraction)
- Definiteness (definitive ('the man') > specific indefinite ('a certain man') > non-specific indefinite ('any man'))
- Activeness (verbs denoting action, violence, passion, wilfulness, motivation or strength)
- Brightness (lightness or vivid colours being denoted over dimness or drabness)
- Fullness (richness, density, intensity or nutrition being denoted)
- Largeness (large objects being denoted, or a very long elaborated noun phrase used to denote)
- Height (objects that are above others, are higher than the perceiver, or which dominate)
- Noisiness (denoted phenomena which are audibly voluminous)
- Aesthetic distance from the norm (beautiful or ugly referents, dangerous referents, alien objects denoted, dissonance)

(reproduced from Stockwell 2009: 25)

The above list represents common textual attractors; this is not to say that every instance of each item on the list will necessarily act as an attractor. Indeed, many of the attractors function relationally in that they require a figure/ground contrast to attract attention. Several of the above textual attractors are related to motion: 'active verb forms, topical and subjective action, wilful action in a scene, and even fullness, proximity and noisiness are often consequences of the relative motion of the observer and the figure against a ground' (Stockwell 2009: 40). The process of reading itself deals with perceptual movement as the eye goes across the page. There

are therefore many forms of attentional conceptual movement involved throughout the reading process.

The analyses in my thesis are rooted in the idea that attention and emotion are linked. There is research on the correlation between invoking attractors and the left hemisphere of the brain and sustaining those attractors and the right hemisphere (see Robertson and Manly 1999; Styles 2006: 67–8). The left side of the brain 'tends to control local and specific interpretations, while the right controls global configurations' (Stockwell 2009: 21). While the precise nature of the lateralization of the brain into linguistic function on the left side and emotional function on the right is a contentious topic (see Demaree et al. 2005; Harmon-Jones et al. 2010; Rutherford and Lindell 2011) and perhaps too simplistic a division, research does suggest that the left side tends to play a dominant role in linguistic processing while the right is dominant in emotion processing (see, e.g., Purves et al. 2013). Stockwell (2009: 21) suggests that, due to the rough division of linguistic left and emotional right, 'attention is the right place to look not just for matters of informativity but also and perhaps primarily for emotional experiential matters of literary resonance'. This suggests to me that attention and literary resonance, in particular, are linked to emotion. I suggest more generally that texture is also linked to emotion, not just aesthetics. Indeed, many accounts of the subtle emotional effects of texture have been conducted – for example, Stockwell (2005, 2009, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c); Gibbons (2011); Gavins and Stockwell (2012); Giovanelli (2013, 2016); McLoughlin (2013); Gavins (2016). Attention and emotion will be discussed in more depth in 2.2.3 and 2.3. In the following section, I will consider how the emotional experience of horror is linked to its attraction for readers.

1.2 The Experience of Horror

This section begins by summarizing the textural experience of horror as a dance, considering how feelings of conceptual movement are felt in horror. I then go on to outline the various appeals of the horror genre, focusing in on how the textual appeal of horror can elucidate the textural appeal of horror, that is, how specific textual features of horror are linked to readers' enjoyment of, and aesthetic experience of horror. Finally, I explain my choice of emotions which I investigate in my case studies of the emotional texture of horror: anxiety, fear, and disgust.

1.2.1 *Danse Macabre*

Stephen King, arguably the master of modern horror, describes the experience of horror as a *danse macabre*, or 'dance of death'. King claims that experiencing horror works on two levels. The first is the 'gross-out' level. This aligns with disgust; it can be felt, for example, when 'Regan vomits in the priest's face or masturbates with the crucifix in *The Exorcist*' (King 1981: 17). King claims that 'on another, more potent level, the work of horror really is a dance – a moving, rhythmic search. And what it's looking for is the place where you, the viewer or the reader, live at your most primitive level' (King 1981: 18). I argue that this primitive level is where your most primal emotions come from; these emotions – such as fear, anxiety, and disgust – are often triggered by horror fiction. This thesis is concerned with how horror affects you at this primitive level.

King (1981: 18) goes on to describe this primitive level, which is occupied by 'the secret door to the room you thought nobody knew of', or the 'phobic pressure points'. These phobic pressure points can include spiders, rats, snakes, or whatever you fear deeply. Horror can also play on national phobic pressure points, or 'fears which exist across a wide spectrum of people' (King 1981: 19):

> …although the uneasy dreams of the mass subconscious may change from decade to decade, the pipeline into that well of dreams remains constant and vital.
>
> This is the real *danse macabre*, I suspect: those remarkable moments where the creator of a horror story is able to unite the conscious and subconscious mind with one potent idea.
>
> (King 1981: 20–1)

How is it that readers are able to have both a conscious interpretation (in horror, often a historically driven interpretation (see Skal 1993)) as well as a profound subconscious emotional reaction (horror often taps into our more primal fears, such as fear of evil, invasion, etc.)? I think the link between the two 'minds', 'the pipeline into that well of dreams' that King mentions, is the text, including the sum of its lexico-grammatical features. Considering together the text and the reader's background knowledge and emotions (including these primal emotions), a cognitive-poetic approach enables us to explain this *danse macabre*, or dance of death, that readers experience when reading horror fiction. King's metaphor of *danse macabre* to explain the horror-reading experience is an apt one; it accounts for the feeling of readerly movement through the text, as well as the general tone of the horror genre: macabre. This readerly dance is texture, experienced as psychological movement from the edges of one textual feature to another, whether it be a camera-like panning description of the setting, a

change in character perspective, or a sudden twist in the tale. Furthermore, it implies readerly interaction with the text: readers are not passive vessels into which the text is delivered; reading is a negotiative process.

King's metaphor of moving through a horror text as a dance aligns with the notion of embodiment (see Johnson 1987, 2007; Turner 1991, 1996; Lakoff and Johnson 1999), one of the key principles underlying cognitive poetics, along with experientiality. Explicitly, cognitive poetics is committed to research grounded in experiential realism, which is the understanding that 'there is a world outside the body that exists objectively (realism), but our only access to it is through our perceptual and cognitive experience of it' (Stockwell 2009: 2). Our experience of the world occurs through our embodied minds. The theory of embodiment posits that our bodies and our minds are inextricably linked; that is, our physical senses cannot be separated from our conceptual faculties. As Stockwell (2009: 57) explains, '[c]ognizance of the world is our only access to the world, and so our habits of thought and our human condition are partly constitutive of that world'. Our embodied minds enable us to experience literature in the world as an extension of our human senses. Therefore, our physical feelings and emotions experienced while reading literature are felt genuinely. This authentic connection with literature is what enables us to emotionally connect with characters in the same way we would do so with physically 'real' people; this is because our methods of accessing physically 'real' people's minds in the world are the same as those employed to access minds of fictional characters.

Embodiment accounts for our experiential metaphors of reading. Stockwell (2009: 80–1) indicates that amongst readers, 'reading as transportation' is the most popular metaphor, which is part of the larger conceptual metaphor READING IS A JOURNEY. I suggest that the metaphor 'reading horror is a dance' is related to READING IS A JOURNEY because they both have a beginning and an end, but the most important part of each is the movement. 'Horror reading is a dance' suggests that both the reader and the text have an active role. The sense of movement when reading is genuine due to embodied cognition. Although I think the metaphor 'reading is a dance' could be applied to most genres of reading, I think it is especially apt for horror, as it is one of the 'emotions' genres in that it is defined by the emotion it evokes (see Spratford 2012). Because of this necessity for horror-related emotions to be evoked, I think a great deal of reader involvement is required for emotion to be truly felt. This involvement mirrors the negotiative process of dancing: all partners have to work, but one in particular is leading – in the case of horror, the text itself is leading the reader to move.

In addition to the horror experience, and reading in general, being conceived in terms of perceptual movement, some see emotion as movement as well (see for instance Gibbs 2002,

2006; this will be explored further in 2.2.1). In addition, Maiese (2011: 3) argues that emotion is embodied, and therefore sees the cognitive and bodily aspects of emotion as inseparable. Maiese (2011: 5) claims that 'understanding other people's minds and behaviour relies primarily on the desire-based, emotive, essentially embodied dynamics of second-person face-to-face interaction, and is best understood not as "mind-reading" or as "body reading", but instead as a sort of shared dance'. I posit that Maiese's embodied dynamics of face-to-face interaction can similarly be applied to the reading process, where our experience with the text is metaphorical, but still can be felt psychologically and physiologically. I agree with her use of the dance metaphor for empathizing with people, and argue that it can be applied to fictional characters as well (for more on narrative empathy, see Keen 2006, 2007, 2013; Vermeule 2010), because it highlights the importance of the bodily influences on emotion. Gee (2005) also views discourse as a 'dance' that:

> exists in the abstract as a coordinated pattern of words, deeds, values, beliefs, symbols, tools, objects, times, and places and in the here-and-now as a performance that is recognizable as just such a coordination. Like a dance, the performance here-and-now is never exactly the same. It all comes down, often, to what the 'masters of the dance' (the people who inhabit the Discourse) will allow to be recognized or will be forced to recognize as a possible instantiation of the dance.
>
> (Gee 2005: 28)

Like Maiese, Gee seems to consider discourse as a dance in terms of here-and-now, face-to-face interaction. Again, I claim that the mechanics of face-to-face discourse are mirrored in those of the reading experience; therefore, the dance metaphor can be arguably applied to the reading process as well, as it is still a form of discourse. Gee's list of the patterns found in the 'discourse dance' reflect the sum of discourse knowledge and context that every reader brings to each reading experience, and the potential knowledge triggers that are encoded in the text. As Gee indicates that the here-and-now discourse is never exactly the same, so it is the same with readings: while the text itself generally stays the same (unless the text being read is made to be different for each reading, for example, like some digital fiction or multimodal texts like B.S. Johnson's *The Unfortunates* (1969), which can be reshuffled), the way that the text is interpreted by the reader may change with each reading experience. For instance, if one part of the text is read quietly in bed at home, a reader may have a different emotional reaction to the text than if they read another part in a crowded train while standing. In addition, for each subsequent re-reading of a text, a reader will have slightly different background knowledge (e.g. previous knowledge of the text; additional memories simply through existing longer than

the last time they read the text) which may affect their interpretation and feelings towards the text (for more on re-reading practices, see Harrison and Nuttall forthcoming).

In the reading scenario, the 'masters of the dance' are the reader, the text, and arguably the author. King (1981: 20–1) furthers his *danse macabre* metaphor by claiming that it is 'those remarkable moments where the creator of a horror story is able to unite the conscious and subconscious mind with one potent idea'. This suggests that the author does indeed have a part in this dance. I argue that this is true insofar as the author is the person who created the text which is triggering reactions in the reader. Whether the author intended for certain reactions to occur is irrelevant – I claim that only the response of the reader is important. That being said, many readers do feel a strong connection to the author and therefore may metaphorically give the author a more prominent role in the dance. Therefore, it is important not to discount the author entirely. Authorial tone and background knowledge of the author and how they may affect readers are discussed throughout this thesis.

Shared movement in the form of a dance works as an overarching metaphor for the emotional texture of the horror-reading experience. Cognitive-poetic theories are useful to investigate these phenomena because cognitive-poetic frameworks are grounded in embodiment. While this thesis draws on several cognitive-poetic and stylistic approaches to explain the texture of the horror-reading experience, it particularly uses Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) and the attention and resonance model (Stockwell 2009), as these are the most suitable frameworks to deal with emotion and movement due to their ability to track the reader's conceptual movement, and subsequent emotional reactions, throughout the text-worlds. Both models have been briefly explained above, but I go on to engage with them in more detail in Chapter 2. Next, I go on to consider the general appeal of horror, and specifically the textual appeal of horror fiction.

1.2.2 The Appeal of Horror

There are two aspects to the question of horror's appeal – 'What is it about people who like horror?' and 'What is it about horror that people like?' (Tudor 1997). Both questions are important, but this thesis does not aim to answer the first question, apart from acknowledging that people who like horror (and even some who don't) can have significant emotional responses to it. Although essential work on reader traits is being done in stylistics (see Hasan 2016), for the purposes of this research, the latter question is more important. While this research necessarily takes readers into account in its exploration of the cognitive-poetic appeal of horror, it does so in conjunction with close stylistic analysis of the horror texts in question. This section gives an overview of the scholarly approaches to deciphering the appeal of horror

before going on to focus in particular on the textual appeal, which I propose can be useful in exploring horror's *textural* appeal.

Horror is undoubtedly appealing to many people, as evidenced by the popular success of horror novels and films alike. But why would people (most of whom do not appear to be mentally unstable or weird) want to read things which they find frightening or disgusting? In horror scholarship, the allure of horror to readers is often described in terms of catharsis, or experiencing emotion 'at a safe aesthetic distance' (Scheff 1979: 13). Defining horror as part of the 'Emotions' genre, Saricks (2009) claims:

> Horror in literature has been termed mankind's effort to invoke and subdue the demonic. There is a certain pleasure to be derived from the chill that Horror creates, as well as from the relief at being able to close a book to escape its thrall – temporarily at least, as the best of the genre tends to stay with its fans.
>
> (Saricks 2009: 112)

This explanation relies on emotions – pleasure derived from the 'chill', which is the physiological response to horror, and the relief at being able to leave the horror behind. Jancovich (1992: 9) similarly argues that the pleasure of horror centres on narrative closure, where the horrific element is destroyed or contained. Related to Saricks' and Jancovich's idea of the cathartic 'chill' that can be left upon closing the book, Fonseca and Pulliam (2003: xv) claim that 'life is scary and uncertain, and horror at least allows us to experience the emotion of fear in a controlled setting'. The idea of experiencing an emotion in the controlled setting of literature is not new: Hakemulder (2000: 150) suggests that literature is like a 'Moral Laboratory', where the implications of human behaviour can be considered in a safe and controlled manner. Saricks' (2009) state that 'the best of the genre tends to stay with its fans' suggests that the emotion felt during reading may have a residual effect, even after narrative closure; this is literary resonance (Stockwell 2009) and will be discussed in Chapter 6.

There are two approaches to understanding horror's cathartic appeal. One is that catharsis can help the perceiver learn about mistakes and how to avoid them, and the other is psychoanalytic. Speaking of catharsis, Holman claims:

> Two widely differing interpretations are customary today: one is that the spectator by vicariously participating in the actions of the hero, learns through the effects upon him of fear and pity that the evil effects or 'mistakes' of the hero are destructive and thereby learns to avoid them in his own life; the other is that the spectator's emotional conflicts are temporarily resolved and his inner agitation stilled by having an opportunity vicariously to expend fear and pity upon the tragic hero.
>
> (Holman 1986: 84–5)

A common approach to explaining the appeal of horror is psychoanalytical, an approach which aligns with Holman's latter interpretation of catharsis. Two main Freudian approaches to horror are the 'return of the repressed' and 'the uncanny' (1955). According to Freud (1955: 224), 'the uncanny', or "'Unheimlich" is the name for everything that ought to have remained […] secret and hidden but has come to light'. One such pseudo-Freudian method is adopted by Grixti (1989), who puts forth 'the beast within' approach to the horror experience. This approach assumes that every human being has a 'beast within', that is, 'that human beings are rotten at the core' (Grixti 1989: 86) – through nature or nurture is not important – and therefore reading about horrific acts somehow assuages this 'beast within'. From a Freudian perspective, we all repress this inner demon generally but it 'comes to light' when reading horror. Grixti claims:

> [horror stories are] exercises in the discovery and exploration of map-territory relations, in that they provide a safely distanced and stylised means of making sense of and coming to terms with phenomena and potentialities of experience which under normal (i.e. functional) conditions would be found too threatening and disturbing.
> (Grixti 1989: 164)

This model is related to catharsis, and is therefore construed as beneficial – by reading about material which triggers these psychologically repressed desires, those desires are brought up, dealt with, and subsequently purged. Tudor (1997: 445) sees this sort of catharsis as a 'safety valve'. As Tudor points out, however, if we assume (not taking into account lack of empirical evidence) that there is indeed a 'beast within' every person, this does not actually account for why horror is appealing, as horror definitely does not appeal to every person. In addition, assuming for the sake of argument that every person has a 'beast within', but many do not 'purge' it through horror fiction, how are they dealing with their repressed aggression? This therefore puts forth the possibility that those who do not read horror must take out their aggression on something (or someone) else, perhaps in an unhealthy way.

Such psychoanalytic approaches are popular amongst horror scholars because 'the genre itself invokes psychoanalytic considerations, at times borrowing its imagery from the symbolic apparatus of dream interpretation as well as allowing fictional characters to advance pseudo-Freudian accounts of their own and others' motivations' (Tudor 1997: 446). Tudor (1997: 446) also aptly suggests that 'psychoanalytic theories of horror gain credibility from the widespread belief that horror fans are a peculiar bunch who share a perverse predilection'. I think that it is not beyond the realm of possibility that some horror authors purposefully draw

upon psychoanalysis when writing; however, I doubt that devising content from psychoanalysis necessitates using psychoanalysis to discover why those people with a so-called 'perverse predilection' read horror fiction.

The unfounded idea that people who read horror have a 'perverse predilection' focuses on the question of 'What is it about people who like horror?' As aforementioned, this thesis does not seek to generalize about the psychological traits of people who enjoy horror. It is, however, useful to consider what it is about horror that these readers like. As a library scientist, Saricks (2009) places the focus on the needs of the reader. Considering what a librarian knows and would need to know about fans of horror fiction, she says:

> We know that they expect the unexpected. They demand characters, events, and situations that surprise them. They read Horror because they enjoy being frightened. Atmospheric stories appeal to them; authors need not necessarily be literary stylists, but they must tell a story infused with a creepiness, a growing dread of the outcome. How much blood and guts they can tolerate varies, as discussed below. However, fans of the Horror genre read to be frightened, to confront their personal nightmares, or to experience the terror they had not even imagined before. Their favorite writers are those who meet these expectations.
>
> (Saricks 2009: 121)

In this description, again, the focus is placed on the emotions of the reader: they want to be surprised; they want atmospheric stories (atmosphere and tone will be discussed in Chapters 2 and 3), with creepiness and dread; they want to be frightened, and to experience terror. We have therefore established that the goal of horror is to evoke emotion in the reader, that the reader wants to feel this emotion, and that this desire to be scared may be related to experiencing emotions in a controlled setting.

Several scholars from different disciplines have attempted to explain horror's appeal (e.g. King 1981; Twitchell 1985; Grixti 1989; Tudor 1989, 1997; Carroll 1990; Dika 1990; Clover 1992; Jancovich 1992; Creed 1993; Crane 1994; Spratford and Clausen 2004; Hills 2005; Wisker 2005; Fahy 2010; Spratford 2012). Although each researcher highlights different important aspects of the attraction of horror, their individual investigations are insufficient to explain the diverse reasons horror fans derive enjoyment from their experience of the horror genre. I do acknowledge that the pleasures of the genre are varied and differ from person to person, but it is evident that many readers have an emotional connection with horror. As Fahy (2010: 4) indicates, however, the horror genre has become 'too expansive and diversified' to make claims about the genre as a whole. Therefore, I do not aim to account for the emotional effects of the horror genre in all their richness, but rather intend to highlight how certain textual features

can evoke emotions in my chosen horror texts. As the goal of this thesis is to account for how these emotions are triggered through the text, my focus will now move to the textual appeal of horror.

Reader guides to horror fiction tend to acknowledge the philosophical appeal of horror, but focus on how the text itself triggers this response. Wisker (2005), Saricks (2009), and Spratford (2012) all point to writing strategies such as characterization, pace, narrative, and setting as eliciting horror's effects on readers. The focus on the textual is more in line with my own stylistic approach. Spratford (2012: 19) suggests that the factors of horror texts' appeal are as follows:

> **Tone and mood**
> • Provoke terror
> • Give voice to our fears
> • Create uneasy atmosphere
>
> **Characters:** Sympathetic; we care about them.
>
> **Pacing:** Builds steadily to frantic conclusion
>
> **Language and style**
> • Lots of adjectives but still frank and colloquial
> • Can be quirky to build unease
> • Flashbacks common
>
> **Story line:** Common themes and issues
> • Unexplainable phenomena and unearthly creatures threaten
> • Coming-of-age
> • Safe exploration of the dark side of humanity
> • Place where readers can face own fears
> • Escape from life's real horrors
> • Validation of belief in the supernatural
>
> **Frame and setting:** Vary, but authors will often use a specific frame or setting and focus on it in detail in order to enhance the tone and mood of the story.
>
> (reproduced from Spratford 2012: 19)

Considering Spratford's list of horror's appeal factors, almost every category in some way deals with emotion: tone and mood are obviously used to evoke emotion, whether directly (e.g. provoke terror') or indirectly (e.g. 'uneasy atmosphere'); characters evoke sympathy; pacing makes readers feel indirectly panicked/frantic; language is used to build unease; storylines enable readers to face their fears, or escape from the horrors of real life; and frame and setting can enhance tone and mood, which loops back to the beginning of this list. The items of this

list can be thought of in terms of conceptual motion. Tone and mood establish 'uneasy atmosphere' as a space for readers to move through throughout the story. Pacing directly refers to the apparent speed of the story's action, with 'building' suggesting upward movement and 'frantic' suggesting rapid and jerky movement. In 'language and style', 'building unease' metaphorically suggests upward movement of the emotion anxiety and flashbacks are world-switches. 'Storyline' includes many metaphorical terms for characters' and readers' movement through space – coming-of-age, exploring the dark side, a place to face fears, and escaping from life's horrors. Finally, returning yet again to the beginning, setting refers again to the place where readers and characters move throughout the story, with specific reference to the focusing or zooming motion on certain details. The space and movement metaphors used by Spratford in her list align with the conceptual movement found in the list of textual attractors. Therefore, I argue that there is a relationship between the textual appeal factors listed, their potential emotional effects, and the texture of horror. While Spratford's list offers possible avenues to explore in terms of how horror appeals to readers through literary devices, her linguistic description of how these devices work is lacking. Therefore, I use my cognitive poetics 'toolkit' to explain the mechanics of the literary devices of horror, in particular tone and mood, pacing, and language and style. To achieve the aim of showing how textual devices can evoke textural emotion in readers, I use a mixture of stylistic introspection as well as online reader reviews. Before discussing my methodology, however, I will give a brief overview of how I chose the emotions which are the focus of my investigation: anxiety, fear, and disgust.

1.2.3 Anxiety, Fear, and Disgust

There is a link between the cognitive aesthetic experience of reading, or texture, and emotion. Silvia (2009: 48) notes: 'The psychology of aesthetic experience is eerily close to the psychology of how much novices say they like something'. Silvia aims to bridge the gap between the commonly explored experiences of liking, preference, and pleasure and the more unusual emotions such as interest, disgust, anger, etc. In a similar vein, Stockwell's definition does not specify that texture pertains to liking (or not liking) a text; the aesthetic experience of reading deals with a range of different emotions, of both positive and negative valence. Following this research, I aim to take my exploration of the aesthetic experience further than merely enjoyment of the text. While I do consider enjoyment of horror in Chapter 6, I focus particularly on the negatively valenced emotions common to horror, as this genre necessarily aims to evoke such emotions in readers.

Extrapolating from research on horror fiction – be it literary critical, philosophical, or psychological – there is one overarching emotion which is discussed throughout: *fear*. The lexis

used to discuss this emotion is varied – terror, horror, fright, etc.; while each term has its own specific features, namely degree of intensity and duration, each definition has fear as its underlying emotion. Therefore, when discussing emotional reactions to horror in this thesis, I will assume that fear of some description might be evoked from all texts that I analyze. I will also consider in depth two other notable fear-related emotions that arise in discussions of horror fiction: *anxiety* and *disgust*. Both anxiety and disgust undoubtedly stand alone as emotions in certain ways distinct from fear, but I argue that they are interrelated as well, especially in terms of emotional reactions to horror fiction. Anxiety is arguably an aspect of fear (and fear is an aspect of anxiety); however, I find that anxiety is a more subtle effect and is often spoken of separately (see Lazarus 1991: 234–40). Although anxiety can also be a psychological trait that is long-lasting and sometimes manifests as a mental disorder, in this thesis I will be focusing on anxiety as a state which has the same effects, though they are not as long-lasting and unrelated to health (see Spielberger 2010). Oatley and Johnson-Laird (2011: 425) call anxiety a 'prolongation' of fear's mode. This aligns with Asma's (2014) discussion of anxiety as a meta version of fear, more existential in nature, as well as King's (1981: 18) second level of the horror experience – 'the place where you, the viewer or the reader, live at your most primitive level'. Disgust is a strong reaction to real or imagined harm, and is physically related or sociomorally related (Rozin et al. 2008), but also Douglas (1966) argues that disgust is related to fear of impurity, such as that triggered at seeing rotting flesh. Similarly, Lazarus (1991: 238) claims that 'Horror may combine fright with loathing or disgust, as when we react to a decayed body or a threatening supernatural image'. This fear of harm or impurity allows me to categorize disgust under fear as well, and arguably also under King's 'primitive' level; however, I also look at disgust separately, as it aligns with King's (1981: 17) first level of the horror experience, the 'gross-out' level. All three of these – fear, anxiety, and disgust – are visceral reactions and fear and disgust are thought to be primal, or basic emotions (Oatley and Johnson-Laird 1987, 1996, 2011, 2014).

Lazarus (1991) argues for two types of appraisal when dealing with an emotional stressor. Primary appraisal involves a person identifying a potential threat in that stressor, while the secondary appraisal stage deals with determining effective solutions to that potential threat. He calls the result of this process the core relational theme of the emotion, which Oatley et al. (2006: 175) suggest captures the 'issues that organize our emotional experience'. The core relational theme for anxiety is 'facing uncertain, existential threat', fear/fright is 'facing an immediate, concrete, and overwhelming physical danger', and disgust is 'taking in or being too close to an indigestible object or idea' (Lazarus 1991: 122). The core relational themes that

correspond with each emotion will be considered in each of my case studies: anxiety for Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (1967), fright for King's *IT* (1986), and disgust for Blatty's *The Exorcist* (1971). Below, I expand on how I chose these texts.

As preferences for superlatives in literature are very personal, it is difficult to name the best scary/anxiety-inducing/disgusting horror novels. Looking to resources such as *Goodreads.com* top lists for horror fiction, in addition to Google results for 'best horror novels', I have chosen some of the top contemporary choices that have appeared across multiple websites (e.g. horrornovelreviews.com). *Goodreads.com* had two horror-related lists: 'The Definitive Horror Book List' and 'Best Horror Novels'. These lists both had Stephen King's *The Shining* (1977) in the number one place and the same author's *IT* (1986) in the second slot. Indeed, both lists had six King titles in the top ten. (To avoid this thesis becoming solely King-based, I have chosen to only look at only the number two King pick – *IT*, because it has personally resonated with me since I was a child; in addition, choosing *IT* allowed me to have three texts over three different decades.) Other favourites that showed up across lists were William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* (1971) (#2 on *Goodreads* 'Best Horror Books by People Other Than Stephen King'; #7 on both Goodreads 'Best Horror Novels' and on *Goodreads* 'The Definitive Horror Book List') and *Rosemary's Baby* (1967) (#13 on *Goodreads* 'Best Horror Novels' and 'The Definitive Horror Book List'; #7 on *Goodreads* 'Best Horror Books by People Other Than Stephen King). *The Exorcist* was chosen over the #1 slot of Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) because I wanted to limit my study to contemporary novels. Although *Rosemary's Baby* is not higher on the list of top horror novels, I have chosen to look at it because of its 'classic' status – it is often referred to as one of the defining books of the modern horror genre (e.g. Collins 1996), presaged the horror cycle that included *The Exorcist* and Stephen King in general (Carroll 1990: 2), and it almost always appears in the top 100 horror titles in top lists. It also started the trend in demonic-related fiction (Penzler 2010: vii–x); arguably it has influenced *The Exorcist* as well. Although *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* are thematically related, Cardin (2007:48) claims that while the former focuses on the devil, the latter focuses on the demon – two distinct concepts. Together, my choices include one supernatural bestseller from three decades of the horror boom triggered by *Rosemary's Baby* in 1967 (see King 1981), firmly established by *The Exorcist's* influential success in 1971, and which reached its zenith in the works of King in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Cardin 2007: 48).

While all three novels have elements that may induce anxiety, fear, and disgust, I found that each novel had a central feeling that aligned with one of these emotions in relation to Lazarus' (1991) core relational themes. *Rosemary's Baby* was paired with anxiety because of its

uneasy atmosphere and ambiguous antagonists. *IT* was paired with fear/fright for its constant depictions of the antagonist and the immediate danger it poses to the characters. *The Exorcist* was paired with disgust because of its grotesque portrayal of a young girl being possessed by an evil entity and inclusion of several scenes depicting unnatural and impure acts being done to and by the girl. The relation between the reader's context and the textual triggers for these specific emotions will be considered in depth throughout the thesis. Below, I explain what methodological means I employed to account for the connection between these texts and their primal emotional effects.

1.3 Methodology – Readers in the Wild

As horror fiction is truly a 'pop fiction' genre, I am interested in accounting for 'real' readers' responses to it. In order to explore the emotional experience of reading horror fiction, I use a mixed methodology of online reader response and steam-stylistic introspection. This section outlines the pros and cons of each method and explains how I will use them together to decipher the textual triggers of emotional responses in my chosen texts.

1.3.1 A Mixed-Methods Approach

As stylistics necessarily must be textually grounded, and Text World Theory in particular is committed to text-drivenness, it is necessary to ground my analyses in linguistic evidence. Following Gavins and Stockwell's (2012) call for textuality and texture to not be neglected in literary analysis, I based my methodology on a cognitive-poetic approach in which a 'steam stylistic' approach is embedded. Carter (2010) defends the most basic form of stylistic analysis, which he playfully calls 'steam stylistics' (see also Carter 2007):

> It is a basic form of stylistic analysis. It is steam stylistics; stylistics by candle-light, stylistics before the age of electricity. It is an improvement on horse power but exists in a world relatively untroubled by subsequent developments in literary theory, before the advent of computer power and corpus stylistics or the subtleties of cognitive poetics. It is a naive practice. It requires, in pedagogic terms, quite a bit of practice to gain confidence in. It is not easy, especially for native speakers of a language to convert knowledge of the language into knowledge about the language. It is, however, a practice without the mastery of which no subsequent stylistic analysis can easily take place.
>
> (Carter 2010: 38)

Considering Carter's declaration that no subsequent stylistic analysis can happen without mastery of steam stylistics, beginning my own exploration of horror texts with steam-stylistic analysis is a suitable approach. Although I think it is important to focus on the responses of

non-academic readers, I argue that it would be impossible to properly stylistically assess a text without some level of linguistic knowledge. Carter's (2010: 38) 'steam stylistic' approach, 'the cornerstone of close reading', is subjective and largely based on the analyst's intuition. While this is a suitable starting point, as Carter (2005: 64) claims, 'Inter-subjective intuitions are more reliable than purely subjective ones'. Therefore, my methodology mixes my own steam-stylistic, introspective account – informed by my linguistic and literary background – of horror texts with a cognitive-poetic account of my own experience of the text coupled with the responses of 'real' readers. I aim to draw on patterns found in *Goodreads* responses to drive my own stylistic exploration of the horror texts.

The goal of this mixed methodology is to avoid the issue with cognitive poetics of how to address cognitive-scientific underpinnings of the subjective-cultural reading experience, as outlined by Vandaele and Brône (2009: 6). To deal with this matter, they suggest a 'middle ground between rich first-person phenomenology and third-person observation' (Vandaele and Brône 2009: 6) whereby cognitive poetics joins forces with cognitive linguistics in specific areas. By applying current cognitive findings on the workings of the mind to stylistic frameworks, cognitive poetics can be 'indirectly empirical' (Vandaele and Brône 2009: 7). This sort of indirect empiricism was already being used by many cognitive stylisticians (e.g. Semino and Culpeper 2002; Stockwell 2002; Gavins and Steen 2003, etc.) and continues to be used by many today, although some researchers still prefer stricter forms of empiricism (e.g. Giora et al. 2009; Louwerse and van Peer 2009; Hakemulder and van Peer 2016).

Previous work in cognitive stylistics involves a theoretical 'reader' concept (see Allington and Swann 2009; Miall 2005, 2006; Steen and Gavins 2003; Stockwell 2005). More recently, however, more focus is being placed on 'real' readers – that is, actual flesh-and-blood readers – through what Swann and Allington (2009) call 'extra-textual research'. They divide this research into categories of 'experimental studies' and 'naturalistic studies', where the former focuses on contextualized and isolated aspects of reading atypically presented texts in an artificial environment with the researcher and the latter focuses on broadly contextualized texts presented in their entirety, with readers in their usual environment and able to interact freely with other readers (Swann and Allington 2009: 248). Both approaches can provide important information on reader interpretations of texts.

I opted for an indirectly empirical, naturalistic methodology because strictly empirical studies do not satisfactorily access the intricacies of the naturalistic reading experience. While fruitful experimental work has been done on possible effects of specific textual features (e.g. work on foregrounding (van Peer 1986; Miall and Kuiken 1994, 2001, 2002; Fialho 2007;

Sopčák 2007); free indirect discourse (Sotirova 2006); and narrative perspective (van Peer and Pander Maat 2001)), these studies focus on real readers, but not 'real *reading[s]'* (Peplow et al. 2016: 5). In other words, while the aforementioned studies do indeed focus on real flesh-and-blood readers, and arguably the readings they produce are still 'real' in that they do shed light on the reading experience, the textual manipulations necessary for the experiments do not allow the researchers to comment on reading effects in 'naturalistic', non-experimental settings. With the object of investigating more natural readings of texts, following similar studies by Hasan (2016) and Nuttall (2015a, 2015b, 2017), I drew from online reader responses on *Goodreads.com*, a website for book reviews, recommendation, and discussion. *Goodreads* is a user-populated database of books, reviews, discussions, recommendations, and polls. It is free to use and reading reviews does not require a login, but the website requires an account to complete reviews and participate in discussions. *Goodreads* users are made aware of and must agree to the site's privacy policy upon registering; therefore, they should be aware that their reviews and comments are available to the public (see Goodreads.com/about/privacy). I therefore argue that it is not unethical to analyze this public data. In addition, many other researchers have used *Goodreads* and other online reviews and forums as a data source (see, for example, Allington 2007; Whiteley 2010; Gregoriou 2012; Nuttall 2015a, 2015b, 2017; Gavins 2013; Harrison 2013, 2017; Hasan 2016; Norledge 2016; Stockwell forthcoming).

This approach meets Swann and Allington's (2009) requirements for 'naturalistic' studies, in that the readers read the text, in its entirety, in their natural reading habitat and in their own time. In their reviews, the readers are able to bring up their own interests in and interpretations of the text; they are not led to answer in any specific way. Finally, readers can interact with other *Goodreads* members through posts if they so choose. Online reader discussions are not as naturalistic in their interactions in same way that reading groups are, as *Goodreads* members can plan out responses in their own time, however they do offer an easily accessible and large-scale data source to draw from for analysis.

However, there are some disadvantages to using *Goodreads* as a data source. There will likely be a certain amount of planning involved on the part of reviewers, which does not make their responses as natural and spontaneous as if they were describing them 'online' while reading or in a reading group, but these planned responses showcase the readers' personal interests and the parts which resonated with them most. In addition, as I cannot ask the *Goodreads* users specific questions about textual features and their emotional response to them, I will not necessarily be able to ascertain which textual features, if any, caused the readers' reactions unless they specify this information in their review. This shortcoming is certainly also

an advantage – I can avoid leading readers into giving me the information that I want and the information that does become apparent through their reviews is more naturally occurring. Another disadvantage to online reviews is that various factors (time, level of comfort sharing feelings, writing ability, etc.) may keep reviewers from disclosing all of their thoughts and feelings about the novel they are reviewing. I claim that the information that is chosen to be in the review is likely to be the most important information about the book in the eyes of the reviewer, which makes it worth investigating. Although I cannot totally avoid the 'observer's paradox' (see Labov 1972: 209) in the sense that reviewers are aware that there is an audience who will be reading their reviews and may adjust them according to the imagined preferences of the audience, the reviewers are likely not aware that I plan to analyze their emotional reactions from their online reviews.

One final potential weakness of *Goodreads* is that there is no specific background information on the reviewers, unless they explicitly provide this information. Therefore, it is impossible to generalize responses based on reader demographics, as is possible in other reader-response studies. As aforementioned, however, I am less concerned with generalizing readers of horror and more interested in their individual responses. In her book on the readerly experience of the absurd, Gavins (2013: 8) distinguishes between 'reading contexts' and 'readers' when speaking of literary interaction. This is an important distinction to make in terms of the contexts of academic and non-academic readings. She points out that online respondents on *Goodreads* and similar websites may be academics – it is difficult to know anything about reviewers unless they specify this information – but it is not relevant in the online review context, which is important because it is 'informal and dynamic', as opposed to peer-reviewed academic publications which are very formal and highlight the academic profiles of their contributors (Gavins 2013: 8). Even if there are academics on *Goodreads*, they are operating 'outside the usual highly formalised expectations of literary criticism and pedagogical practice' (Gavins 2013: 8). The intersubjective responses to the texts in question will enable me to validate my own stylistic introspection. A common criticism of such introspection is that 'real' readers would not notice all the intricate linguistic patterns identified in cognitive-stylistic analysis. This is true, but the felt effects of these stylistic patterns may be experienced nevertheless and these feelings towards the text may be encoded in their reviews. Therefore, I do not claim in my analysis that most readers would identify any of the linguistic features that I analyze, or that even I myself notice them upon first reading. I am interested in how I can explore in what way the effects of these features unconsciously affect readers. My analysis therefore includes an intersubjective mixture of emotional responses from 'the *Goodreads*

context', my own formal and informal interpretations and objective linguistic analysis, and formalised academic responses where possible.

Emotional responses to horror fiction occur on a cline. As is evident from *Goodreads* responses, as well as literature on horror (Tudor 1997), many people don't like horror at all, and those that do like different types of horror, and for different reasons. Therefore, it is impossible to claim that my introspective analysis of horror, or emotional responses from *Goodreads*, are generalizable to all readers of horror. This thesis aims to show what horror *can* possibly do to some readers, not what it categorically does to everyone. Furthermore, a reader's reaction to a horror novel may change over time and can be influenced by many outside factors such as noise levels, concentration, and sleepiness. It is also possible that what a reader might have found scary at the age of eight is no longer scary at the age of twenty-eight.

1.3.1.1 Goodreaders

Following the methodology of Hasan (2016) and Nuttall (2015a, 2015b, 2017), I collected and tagged 100 each of the most recent *Goodread*s reader responses that meet my requirements for each novel that I investigate. These requirements included that the review was written in English and that the version reviewed was read in English. I did not eliminate responses based on length as Nuttall (2015a: 18) does because I argue that even very short responses can encode emotional reactions. I used the program NVivo to tag these responses. I started tagging by patterns of responses, paying particular attention to emotive commentary. From this wide range of nodes, I grouped them into various larger categories (e.g. 'character', 'plot and narrative', etc.). Some tags overlapped and were therefore grouped into nodes as many times as necessary. From this data, I aimed to decipher the emotional reactions of the reviewers. Textual features can trigger direct and indirect emotions, both authentic and meaningful emotional reactions, but there is a slight difference in how they are evoked. I propose that 'direct' negative emotional responses are those in which the reviewer expresses negative feelings using first-person pronouns (e.g. 'I was terrified.' or 'This book terrified me.'). Those which are labelled as 'indirect' involve responses where the reviewer encodes emotion through indirect means which do not include first-person reference and use emotive adjectives and nouns (e.g. 'This book was terrifying.'). Although both types deal with readerly emotion, I posit that direct emotional responses may suggest a stronger emotional reaction than indirect ones, as readers place more emphasis on themselves, the experiencers of the emotion. The degrees of direct and indirect emotion will be discussed in depth throughout each analysis chapter.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

In this thesis, I primarily aim to use cognitive-poetic analysis to stylistically decode the readerly experience of horror fiction, focusing in particular on how emotional reactions are evoked through the text. Through theoretical discussion and meticulous textual analysis, I show how Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) and the attention and resonance model (Stockwell 2009) can be used to account for readers' textual experiences of horror texts, in particular their negative emotional reactions such as anxiety, fear, and disgust.

Chapter 2 offers an overview of the three interrelated dimensions of the horror-reading experience, which are drawn from the main focuses of Text World Theory and the attention and resonance model: before reading/knowledge base, during reading/text-drivenness, and after reading/resonance. Under the headings of each of these dimensions, I critically introduce which psychological and cognitive-poetic phenomena are important to each element of the discourse experience. I particularly focus on readers' emotional schematic knowledge of horror, how text-worlds of horror are built through negatively oriented lexis and subsequently experienced by readers, and the residual emotion, or resonance, that readers feel after the discourse has been completed. I argue that each interconnected dimension has parallels with feelings of conceptual movement, which can cause emotional reactions to the horror texts in question.

Chapters 3 to 5 develop this framework through detailed textual analyses of three classic horror novels, with each chapter focusing upon a certain negative emotion – anxiety, fear, or disgust. In each chapter, I consider 100 reader reviews of each novel from *Goodreads.com*. I draw upon common readerly emotional reactions to these texts which I then use to inform my own introspective cognitive-poetic analysis of each text, using Text World Theory and attention throughout.

Chapter 3 focuses on the emotion anxiety and how this is evoked through the ambience of Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (1967). Using the notions of atmosphere and tone (Stockwell 2009, 2014a, 2014b), I conduct a close stylistic analysis of negatively oriented lexis in this novel and consider how it creates anxious feelings of creepiness and suspense. I also draw upon Giovanelli's (2013) dream/nightmare worlds additions to Text World Theory to exemplify how such negatively oriented lexis and multiple world-switches can be used to create uneasy emotion in the reader.

In Chapter 4, the analysis centres on how fear is triggered through attentional manipulation in Stephen King's *IT* (1986). Building upon Chapter 3's discussion of negatively oriented lexis and world-building, my analysis of *IT* focuses on how conceptual movement,

through textual attractors and world-switching, can direct the reader's attention in such a way as to cause fright. Particular emphasis is given to negation and its role in readerly emotional manipulation.

Chapter 5 links the phenomenon of readerly projection with the emotional experience of disgust. Focusing on an iconic scene from William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* (1971), I give a detailed steam-stylistic analysis of various textual features which may trigger disgust in the reader. I draw upon Simpson's (2014) model of narrative urgency to consider how the frantic pacing of this scene leads to deeper projection, deeper immersion, and subsequent deeper disgust. I compare the original 1971 version of this extract with its 40th-anniversary counterpart and discuss how stylistic editing has subtly changed the urgency of this iconic scene. Various elicitors of disgust (Rozin et al. 2008) are considered in relation to *Goodreads* responses to the novel.

In Chapter 6, I approach my three *Goodreads* datasets as a whole. I focus on common emotional responses across the three sets of reviews, paying particular attention to knowledge-base elements such as commentary on the author and film versions of the texts, mixed emotional responses, and levels of resonance after reading. Resonating effects to the readers' discourse-worlds are characteristic of the best horror fiction. I give examples of reader responses from each category and discuss in detail how emotional reactions are encoded within these reviews.

Finally, Chapter 7 reviews the original contributions of this thesis to the fields of cognitive poetics, in particular Text World Theory, and the literary study of horror fiction. I also consider the broader significance of my work and potential future directions for my research.

Chapter 2

A Cognitive Poetics of Horror

2.0 Preview

Emotions are key to experiencing narrative fiction in general (Mar et al. 2011; Oatley 1994, 2002), and particularly in the case of 'emotions' genres such as horror. Mar et al. (2011) give an overview of how emotions are evoked through narrative fiction before, during, and after reading. I propose that the 'before, during, and after' distinction can serve as useful organization for beginning to explore the experience of horror – three interrelated dimensions of horror which interact to create the experience. These dimensions align with the key concerns of Text World Theory and with Stockwell's resonance and attention model, with the important aspect of 'before reading' being the knowledge base, 'during reading' being text-drivenness, and 'after reading' being resonance.

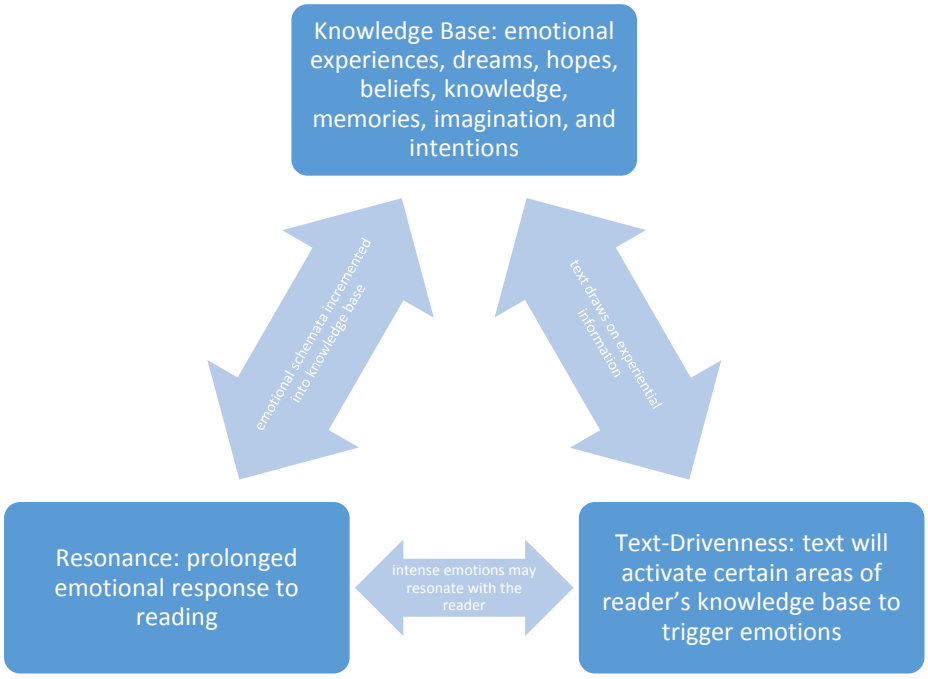


Figure 2.1: Dimensions of the horror-reading experience

The dimensions I outline are overlapping and interdependent. The knowledge base and text-drivenness go hand in hand, as the text will call up items from the knowledge base. If the effects created by the interaction of the text and the knowledge base are significant and persist

with the reader, then resonance has been achieved. The resonating elements of the text are incremented into the reader's knowledge base and may be primed for retrieval when the reader next encounters a similar text.

This chapter seeks to develop a cognitive poetics of horror, explaining how cognitive-poetic tools can be used to decipher how horror texts trigger emotions in readers. I aim to organize the relevant cognitive-poetic and emotion-based research according to the three interrelated dimensions of the horror-reading experience outlined above – before reading/knowledge base, during reading/text-drivenness, and after reading/resonance.

2.1 Before Reading – Knowledge-Base

This section focuses on the reader's immediate situation, or discourse-world in Text-World-Theory terms. Returning to Text World Theory's basic claims, let us consider knowledge and its application to discourse. The reader's knowledge base is contained within her discourse-world, and is activated by textual cues. In order to utilize this property theoretically, it is necessary to decipher how knowledge is stored in the discourse-world and deployed during the reading experience. One suggestion for explaining the storage and use of knowledge has been the conceptual structures called frames. Fillmore (1982: 111) loosely defines a frame as 'any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits'; when one of these concepts shows up in a text or conversation, it activates all the others. Also, he understands the notion of frame to be a blanket term for the concepts 'schema', 'script', 'scenario', 'ideational scaffolding', 'cognitive model', or 'folk theory' (Fillmore 1982: 111). Although Fillmore's vague examples do not give a clear idea of what actually constitutes a frame, according to Werth (1999: 107), he does 'permit us to achieve some sort of intuitive comprehension of the notion'. Werth (1999: 106) suggests that a frame is 'a cognitive space, mapping out an experiential category'. What constitutes a frame, then, is decided by human experience; essentially, frames are created when multiple similar experiences are consolidated into one collection. A collection of separate instances establishes a schema, which 'encapsulates…expectations of how particular situation-types turn out' (Werth 1999: 104; see also Bartlett 1932; Schank and Abelson 1977). For example, multiple instances of reading Stephen King novels or short stories may constitute similar experiences for a reader. For instance, a reader may find many of the protagonists' voices, supernatural plotlines, and Maine-settings similar, and thus amalgamate them into a frame denoting the essence of Stephen King's writing. Therefore, when sitting down to read a Stephen King novel, a reader will activate her 'Stephen King' frame, if one is present, which

holds previous pertinent knowledge of Stephen King specific to that reader; perhaps it will include information regarding his biographical self, his writing style, or his previous works. Not many people in the Western world can say that they have not heard of Stephen King; even if the reader has no experience of reading King's work, she should have an idea that she is in for a horror-related story simply by seeing his name on the cover. Although generally readers may share a good deal of frame knowledge in the form of cultural frames (see Werth 1999: 97), there is a certain degree of idiosyncrasy inherent in individual knowledge bases. As Werth (1999: 106) indicates, frames can be a bit fuzzy-edged and may overlap with each other. Therefore, a reader's 'Stephen King' frame may overlap with his or her 'horror novel' frame.

Werth's (1995a: 52) discourse-world includes the reader's dreams, hopes, beliefs, knowledge, memories, imagination, and intentions. Although Werth (1999) notes that emotion is an important part of Text World Theory's experiential focus, he does not develop this claim. Recent work in Text World Theory has sought to remedy this by developing the role of emotion in the reading experience (Lahey 2005; Stockwell 2005, 2009; Gavins 2007; Whiteley 2010, 2011). Lahey (2005: 277) claims that readers will draw on their 'emotion schemata' that is contained within their knowledge frames when constructing text-worlds. In this way, emotion can be seen as part of the knowledge-base. Returning to the Stephen King example, a reader's 'Stephen King' frame may include emotional schemata relevant to his work – if the reader has experienced particularly resonant emotions like fear when reading King previously, these emotional memories will be primed upon starting a new King book. These emotional memories could affect the reader's decision to read a new horror book or not. According to Mar et al. (2011: 819), before reading, a reader's choice of which book to read is resultant of their '(1) current emotional state or mood; (2) an appraisal of what emotions will result from reading a particular text; and (3) personal goals with respect to felt emotion'. It has been suggested that readers might choose horror because the negative emotions felt magnify the relief experienced upon narrative closure (Zillmann 1998). This supports the cathartic argument discussed in the previous chapter. There can however be various motivations for choosing narrative fiction (see Bartsch et al. 2006), and the choice of horror in particular is related to its various appeals for readers, as discussed in Chapter 1. I suggest that the reader's knowledge frames for horror fiction generally, or an author specifically, will come into play with Mar et al.'s reasons 2 (deciding which emotions are likely to be felt based on previous knowledge of similar texts) and 3 (whether the reader wishes to feel that emotion again). Before further considering how emotion is evoked before the horror-reading experience, I will summarize some interdisciplinary work on emotion to theoretically ground the discussion.

2.1.1 Primal Emotions in Horror

As discussed in 1.2.3, I take as my focus three basic emotions that are common to the horror-reading experience: anxiety, fear, and disgust. To account for these primal, negatively connoted emotions evoked through horror fiction, I will consider various theoretical frameworks. Emotion is a multivalent and nuanced concept and it is outside the scope of this section to consider all aspects of it. For the purposes of investigating horror fiction, however, I do not feel that it is appropriate to choose one theory of emotion and try to fit horror fiction into that theory. Therefore, I will draw from various approaches to emotion to try to account for emotional responses in horror fiction in a holistic way, at least insofar as I can within the confines of this thesis. Considering a holistic approach to emotion research, Parrot claims:

> Although some researchers focus on biology, others on cognition, and still others on social and cultural aspects of emotion, theorists generally recognise that these approaches are interrelated and the complete understanding of emotions requires knowledge of all the levels of analysis.
>
> (Parrot 2001: 7)

Similarly to Parrot, Whiteley (2010) and others (e.g. Griffiths 1997, 1998: 2) contend that emotion cannot be explored under one unified theory, but rather separate theories should be developed to investigate each individual aspect of the phenomenon, be it biological, cognitive, or socio-cultural. Because I aim to explore what are considered more primal emotions evoked during reading horror fiction, I must consider the neurobiological aspect of emotion to account for the primitive emotions (fear, anxiety, disgust) in conjunction with socio-cultural and cognitive aspects of emotion to account for the experience of reading itself. I therefore aim to put forward a collective approach to the horror-reading experience – one which will account individually for specific features of the emotional process, but will also consider how these various elements may interact to explain how, and why, people read horror.

2.1.1.1 Emotion vs. Cognition

Before I begin discussing my specific approach to the emotions of horror fiction, it is important to consider an important debate in emotional research: emotion versus cognition. Inarguably, understanding the connections between emotion and cognition is complicated from any perspective – be it neurological, biological, or sociological. There is a longstanding debate in emotion studies as to whether emotion and cognition are distinct, independent systems or not. Zajonc (1980, 1984) puts forth the 'separate' viewpoint, claiming that research on preferences, attitudes, and decision-making suggests that emotion can precede thought, and that emotion can be at least partially independent of cognition. Lazarus (1982, 1984),

conversely, argues for the 'intertwined' viewpoint, with emotion being secondary to and always interwoven with cognition. While the particulars of this debate could occupy an entire thesis, I will only briefly touch on the 'middle-ground' approach proposed by Leventhal and Scherer:

> the mechanisms underlying emotion may indeed be partially independent and separate from those underlying cognition as Zajonc suggests, while cognitive and emotional reactions may be complexly, if not completely, interwoven in virtually all episodes of emotional behaviour, as Lazarus suggests.
>
> (Leventhal and Scherer 1987: 4)

This 'middle-ground' approach allows me to discuss cognition and emotion together, as well as separately, depending on which emotional aspect is being considered, which is important for understanding the horror-reading experience. Following Whiteley (2010) and other emotion researchers (e.g. Stich 1983; Oatley 1992: 132; Oakley 1993; Eysenk and Keane 1995: 435; Parkinson 1995: 293; Frijda 2009: 265), in this thesis, I generally view emotion and cognition as intricately intertwined, especially during the reading process, but will also consider the distinctions between the two when discussing more primal emotions (e.g. fear) which some researchers view as occurring independently of cognition or at least before cognition comes into play. Asma's (2014) neurobiological approach, as well as Oatley and Johnson-Laird's (2011, 2014) communicative approach, view basic/primal emotions as at least in part occurring outside of cognition. As this is not an empirical study of emotions evoked through reading, I do not make any claims about emotions being triggered without cognition, but rather will consider research on the distinction between emotion and cognition as a means to illustrate how certain emotions appear to occur without conscious thought.

Returning to the literature-specific account of emotion, Whiteley (2010, 2011) finds that cognitive and social accounts of emotion are the most appropriate for investigating emotional responses in literary reading, and these accounts are drawn upon to develop a Text-World-Theory account of emotion in reading. She notes:

> This is because literary reading, as modelled by Text World Theory, is a cognitive process involving perception, memory and imagination. It is also a social process: involving discursive interaction between people within a particular cultural and spatio-temporal context.
>
> (Whiteley 2010: 46)

Following Whiteley (2010), I also do not claim to present a unified, general theory that can be applied to the emotional experience of reading. I aim to draw on Whiteley's Text-World-Theory account of emotion in reading, but feel that it is necessary to include aspects of

neurobiological and communicative frameworks to satisfactorily account for the unique horror-reading experience. While I do not deny that the negative emotional responses commonly linked to horror could be experienced in almost any genre, it is important to note that the horror genre is defined by the negative emotion that it is supposed to evoke – horror. Therefore, I feel that it is necessary to explore some of the underlying processes of the common 'horror' emotions – fear, anxiety, and disgust. By investigating these more primal, basic emotions, it is essential to consider neurological, biological, and evolutionary aspects to ground the theory.

Whiteley minimally uses neuroscientific approaches to emotion in her analysis because they do not deal with language well. She (2010: 47) points out LeDoux's (1998) commentary on the difficulty of empirically testing fear in the reading context:

> [W]hile it is possible to use either a simple tone or a spoken sentence as a conditional stimuli, it will be much more difficult to trace pathways involved in fear conditioning to the sentence, since the processing of the sentence is a much more complex and less well understood brain operation.
>
> (LeDoux 1998: 148)

As Text World Theory is text-driven, an approach which does not satisfactorily deal with language is not compatible (see Whiteley 2010: 47; Stockwell 2008: 591; 2009: 3; Tallis 2008). While I understand that neurological approaches to emotion may draw focus away from linguistic features and I do not intend to be reductionist, I still feel that it is important to draw on them in regards to possible triggers of primal emotions and each reader's knowledge base, which includes primitive fears. I acknowledge that testing fear in the reading context is problematic. Therefore, I do not intend to illustrate how fear is processed by the brain during reading. Rather, I hope to use neurobiological accounts of fear to account for what people find scary and why. Using this information, I consider how these neurobiological aspects can serve as tool for thinking about readers' experiences with fear, but not claim correlation between the neurobiological processes of fear being evoked in a real-world setting and fear evoked during reading. I will use Asma's (2014) neurobiological framework only to enable me to talk about certain aspects of the horror experience that I do not believe could otherwise be explained by social and cognitive theories of emotion. In addition, Asma deals with the cognitive level of emotion as well as the more primal affect level.

2.1.1.2 A Neurobiological Perspective – Category Jamming

This section offers an overview of Asma's (2009, 2014) neurobiological approach to horror and considers how this approach is a useful one to follow in my own exploration of the

emotional effects of horror fiction. Asma (2014) discusses two aspects of the mammal's emotional experience: one feature is the automatic/instinctual while the other is modifiable/learnable. The former aspect – the instinctual flight or fight reaction that all mammals share – relates to the old brain system, found primarily in the brain stem, which controls breathing, heartbeat, and blood pressure. The limbic emotional circuits are found on top of these midbrain systems. Emotional neuroscientist Panksepp (1998: 1) has identified seven major emotional systems shared by mammals: fear, care, lust, rage, panic, seeking, and play. Other researchers argue over the specifics of this list. Panksepp, Ekman, and Davidson (1994; see also Ekman 1992, 1994), however, agree that emotional reactions are shaped by bio-social factors, which account for the latter aspect of the mammal's emotional experience – that it is modifiable/learnable.

Before exploring the learnable aspects of emotion, let us consider its instinctual side. Asma claims that, like any other biological trait, fear is subject to evolution (2014: 943). For example, Konner (2002: 216) notes that rats can be bred to be very fearful. Asma (2014: 943) then asks the question: 'Is it possible, then, that some of our own deep-seated monster fears may be rooted in real predators or environmental threats from our prehistory?' While some evolutionary psychologists suggest that we inherit phobias (why we know to avoid snakes and spiders), 'there is no biological mechanism by which cognitive content can be replicated by the next generation of brains – but this can be done culturally' (2014: 944). As Asma points out, many have searched for innate triggers to fear because of its deeply primitive and automatic aspects. He suggests that there is an alternative model which can account for both automatic and learnable aspects of fear.

Hebb (1949) (see Schleidt et. al 2011 for similar research on birds) found that baby chimps who had never seen snakes were still afraid of them, but were also afraid of other new stimuli. He found that chimps from infancy to six months are attentive to new stimuli, but have not yet learned to be afraid of it. During this stage of life, he argues, mammals are learning categories, or building schemas, of the common things around them. Later in life, once these categories have been established, if a stimulus that cannot fit into an existing category is introduced, the mammal may be afraid of it. Similarly, psychologist Ainsworth found in her 'strange situation' experiments that human infants' fear raised dramatically after six months of age, which illustrates the timeframe for babies to build up schematic categories of the stimuli they encounter. Anything encountered during this window is treated as normal and is organized into templates (see Ainsworth and Bell 1970). Konner accounts for this phenomenon in chimpanzees:

> Against the background of knowledge already accumulated by the infant chimps, the new objects were different; they aroused many perceptual schemas or patterns stored in the brain but fitted into none, causing arousal and then fear. The brain was somehow designed to generate fear as the result of such a cognitive mismatch.
>
> (Konner 2012: 219)

Hebb concludes that the discrepancy between a new perception and previously stored background experience causes the fearful response. This offers a different explanation to Darwin's snake-fearing chimps, which is anecdotal evidence often cited in literature on emotions. Instead of Darwin's suggestion of a predetermined snake phobia, there is a 'generic pattern recognition system at work' (Asma 2014: 945). Asma suggests that this fits even better with Darwin's theory of natural selection because:

> a general mechanism for 'fearful reaction to categorial mismatch' could be serviceable for any animal born into its native habitat, where friends will be ubiquitous and foes will be atypical. So such a general mechanism would be highly favored by selection.
>
> (Asma 2014: 945)

It is important to note that infants are not constantly frightened – they take the first six months of life to build up typical categories (or schematic information, or background). Infants can peacefully absorb almost any stimuli during these six months (Ainsworth and Bell 1970; see also Izard 1978). It is not until after this time period that fear from categorial mismatches occur. While this research focuses on infants of the species, Asma and Carroll (1990) consider how this 'cognitive mismatch' (Konner 2012), 'categorial mismatch' (Asma 2014), or 'category jamming' according to Carroll, might affect adult readers of horror fiction.

Carroll's (1990) research into the appeal of horror fiction draws on Douglas' study, *Purity and Danger* (1966). Carroll (1990: 31) claims that Douglas 'correlates reactions of impurity with the transgression or violation of schemes of cultural categorization'. Douglas argues that things which are interstitial, or cross the boundaries of a culture's conceptual schema, are impure. For example, in her analysis of the abominations detailed in the Biblical book Leviticus, Douglas posits that the reason things like lobsters, or other creatures crawling from the sea, are considered detestable and impure is that creatures that crawl generally fit into the category of land-dwelling animals. Because lobsters crawl under the water and not on land, they break this categorial boundary and are therefore considered abnormal and disgusting (see Douglas 1966: chapter 3). Douglas also outlines impurities relating to humans:

> Feces, insofar as they figure ambiguously in terms of categorical oppositions such as me/not me, inside/outside, and living/dead, serve as ready candidates for abhorrence as impure, as do spittle, blood, tears, sweat, hair clippings, vomit, nail clippings, pieces of flesh, and so on.
>
> (Carroll 1990: 32)

Douglas also notes that objects which are 'incomplete representatives of their class' can cause categorial confusion. For example, things which are rotting or crumbling, or formless things like dirt. Carroll (1990) follows Douglas' idea of impurity based on categorial contradiction and applies it to monsters found in horror fiction. For example, many types of horror monsters are interstitial in that they are dead but also somehow living: vampires, zombies, ghosts, mummies, Frankenstein's monster, etc. There are also monsters which are animate and inanimate, and may seemingly have minds of their own: robots, haunted houses, etc., as well as monsters which cross the species boundaries: werewolves, the Creature from the Black Lagoon, etc.

Carroll (1990: 34–5) points out: 'Indeed, the frequent resort to referring to monsters by means of pronouns like "It" and "Them" suggests that these creatures are not classifiable according to our standing categories'; additionally, many monsters are paradoxically described as indescribable or unthinkable, which highlights how the monsters do not fit neatly into one category. (The use of the pronoun 'It' is discussed in Chapter 4's analysis of the creature *IT* in the eponymous novel by Stephen King.) While I agree with Carroll's argument that monsters do not necessarily fit into the conceptual schema of the characters, I do not agree that this means that the reader also lacks a conceptual schema to categorize horror monsters found in fiction. I argue that upon sitting down to read horror fiction, that a reader's 'horror fiction' schema is activated. This schema may contain an outline of all the aforementioned horror monsters as possibilities. Therefore, it is not as easy as saying that if the character is afraid due to category jamming, the reader will be scared as well, unless the reader's empathetic feelings for that character are strong enough. If the reader is particularly creeped out by an existing horror monster, however, I do not doubt that this emotion is also contained within their horror monster schema. Therefore, I think it is necessary to consider the different layers of the horror-reading experience. I argue that differing levels of emotion can be experienced based on several factors – whether category jamming is taking place, whether the reader already has an established horror fiction schema, and the degree of immersion the reader is experiencing (I argue that at this level the line between character emotions and readerly emotions is more blurred.)

2.1.1.3 Fascinating Fear

Carroll and Asma believe that the cognitive jamming triggered by horror monsters offers an explanation for why readers are both repelled by and drawn to horror films and novels. Asma (2014: 949) argues, however, that Carroll's account is too intellectual and lacks attention to unconscious non-cognitive aspects of horror appreciation. Asma therefore outlines a case for horror-monster fascination: in a well-known case in neuroscientific literature, a woman known as SM has suffered amygdala damage (see Feinstein et al. 2011). She is considered fearless because she does not get scared by experiences that usually frighten typical (i.e., non-amygdala-damaged) mammals. Researchers have exposed her to potentially fear-inducing things such as horror films, haunted houses, real snakes and spiders, etc. While SM does not show traditional physiological responses that accompany fear, she does exhibit attention, arousal, and cognitive excitement. The researchers even reported that SM often attempted to interact with the fear-inducing stimuli and had to be restrained from putting herself in danger due to her seeming lack of an instinctual ability to act in her own self-interest. This cognitive excitement points to horror not only being terrifying, but also captivating (Clasen 2012: 224). Asma and Clasen posit that cases like that of SM suggest 'horror has a finite set of triggers/responses that were built during our hominid past' (Asma 2014: 949). In Carroll's terminology, SM is experiencing category jamming without the affective feelings (fear, avoidance, etc.) that generally accompany it. It also appears to match with Hebb's and Schleidt's experiments on fear acquisition in the infancy of chimps and birds, respectively. SM may be responding to schemas built in early infancy, which triggers her arousal, but the damage to her amygdala stops her affective system (based in lateral amygdala) from being triggered. Asma notes that the SM case seems to fit with the theory of category jamming, but does not suggest one way or the other that the category jamming is actually the *cause* of affective fear. Asma outlines the problem:

> It is possible that normal amygdalae are programed to respond with fear to the kind of mismatches that occur in the prefrontal cortex, and SM simply has a broken link in this causal chain. But alternatively, it is also possible that fear precedes all this cognitive machinery and triggers more directly from perceptual data. Fear, in this view, is not a result of cognitive confusion, but runs on a different physiological pathway altogether. Placing fear before cognition (rather than as a consequence) is more consistent with our understanding of evolution. Mammal emotional adaptations (like fear) were under construction for hundreds of millions of years before symbolic cognition arose in *Homo*.
>
> (Asma 2014: 951)

This problem of emotion/cognition in horror is a 'Janus-faced experience' – it is 'partly *imperative* (I should run away) and partly *indicative* (that creature is part-man and part-snake)'

(Asma 2014: 951). This emotion/cognition experience is found as a unified one in animals like mice, which for example view cats at once as a thing in a category (schema) and as a danger (fear affect) (see Millikan 2004). Inversely, humans can:

> decouple these two pathways (indicative and imperative) and fear can be reattached to alternative kinds of creatures/perceptions. We may need to distil the horror experience, and other emotionally charged judgments, into a parallel process of affect and cognition, a process usually so interwoven that it appears as one unified experience (and in animals always remains so).
>
> (Asma 2014: 951)

It is interesting to consider whether in the reading process these two pathways are decoupled. For example, if you know that a monster isn't really a threat to you on the page, is your body really telling you to run away? On the other hand, you can still experience physiological effects of fear, which I argue is linked to this imperative pathway. Arguably, simulation during reading can lead to a lesser degree of the imperative pathway, as embodied cognition enables readers to experience physiological effects of characters' fear. Suffice it to say that emotion and cognition are separate, but related. Although we may not completely understand how these two phenomena work together, it is evident that they *do* work together. Therefore, it is important to consider them both.

To illustrate category jamming in horror fiction, Asma considers the example of Ichabod Crane from *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. He analyzes Ichabod's fear of the headless horseman in terms of category jamming, or categorial mismatch. The combination of a normal schematic element (human) with an abnormal one (headless) could lead to confusion, and Asma (2014: 948) posits that this confusion could lead to fear. As Asma points out, however, Ichabod isn't afraid because he's experiencing category jamming, but rather is fearful because his life is being threatened by the headless horseman riding towards him. Returning to the research of Hebb and Schleidt, Asma wonders why fears are associated with certain experiences but not others:

> Is the headless man particularly scary (when compared with the moustache less man or the hatless man) because we've never experienced such an anomaly, or because we have some deep conceptual understanding that heads are essential for human life? And therefore, is the headless monster a multiple piece of 'category jamming' – both morphologically incoherent and also transgressing the categories of animate and inanimate?
>
> (Asma 2014: 948)

Considering this example in terms of the Janus-faced experience Asma describes, the categorial mismatch of the headless human is indicative and causes arousal while the fear for Ichabod's life is imperative and causes the fear affect and instinct to flee. It is the addition of the imperative aspect of the headless horseman (the danger) that makes it scary, as opposed to encountering another schematic irregularity that is not threatening – perhaps a dog walking down the street with a hat on its head – which merely causes fascination/cognitive arousal. The anomalies encountered in horror fiction will likely have negative affect attached to the indicative aspect of schematic mismatch, of course depending on the personal fears of the reader, which are soft-wired, so they can evolve and can differ from person to person.

2.1.1.4 Conditioned Learning

Fear is triggered in the limbic system, often referred to as the 'emotional brain'. Within the limbic system are the amygdala and the hippocampus, both of which contribute to fear. Mammalian fear is largely controlled in the amygdala. LeDoux (1996, 2002) has described how fear and memory work together to produce conditioned learning. Take, for example, a person who associates dogs with aggression and biting: when this association is present, and the person crosses the street upon seeing an approaching dog, then this person's brain is exhibiting a similar pattern that directs rodent lab learning (shocks and related images or smells) (Asma 2014: 953). Damasio et al. (1991) claim that 'somatic markers', or emotional pathways, assist us in making decisions, in particular automatic judgments. The amygdala governs emotions while the neighbouring hippocampus controls memory; these two parts of the brain are in direct communication with the ventromedial prefrontal cortex, which is the new brain (i.e. the neocortex, or part of the brain which is more analytic) area of decision-making and executive control. This direct communication creates somatic markers, which generate weighted behavioural options for us, according to Damasio et al. (1991). In the above example, a negative somatic marker (fear) is attached to dogs, which causes the person to make a behavioural judgment (i.e. cross the street).

These emotional responses are not instinctual or genetically determined: 'The affective systems are ancient in the sense that they have many homologies with nonhuman animals, but in our individual lives they are idiosyncratically assigned and have significant plasticity' (Asma 2014: 953). These emotional tendencies can be useful in making quick and appropriate responses in the face of environmental challenges and they can also be retrained (e.g. it is possible to get over a phobia of dogs). In this way, Asma (2014: 955) argues, certain fear instincts can be 'soft-wired rather than hard-wired'. The 'soft-wiring' accounts for the sort of idiosyncratic responses to horror that I am investigating – I do not claim that everyone will

find horror to be scary (i.e. it is not hard-wired into humans to be afraid of any one thing, not to mention that readerly disposition has a lot to do with whether immersion and emotional reactions take place) and each person has their own idiosyncratic fearful tendencies.

Oatley and Johnson-Laird (2011) claim that human emotion has evolutionary roots in social animals through basic emotions which they argue are still valuable to us, as they enable us to unconsciously respond quickly to important events, such as the threatening stimuli discussed by Asma above. They state:

> The human system of emotions, however, has grafted onto the system of basic emotions the propensity to combine them with propositional content, so that cognitive evaluations of which we are aware can elicit an emotion and a knowledge of the object as well as propositional content of causes and implications of the emotion. This component of the system is susceptible to all the influences of culture and society. In our culture, we can experience an emotion at events that would leave members of other cultures quite unmoved, and vice versa.
>
> (Oatley and Johnson-Laird 2011: 431)

Oatley and Johnson-Laird's communicative account of emotions highlights the importance of cultural and social factors on emotions, which account for certain anxieties, fears, and disgusts that are prevalent in certain societies. Furthermore, this combination of emotions and propositional content can account for why not everyone finds the same things scary. Oatley and Johnson-Laird (2011: 431) also point out the lack of control we have over our unconscious emotional reactions; it is not possible to willfully and immediately experience a basic emotion like fear. It is possible, however, to place yourself into a position that might trigger fear, for example, watching a horror movie alone with the lights off or choosing to read a novel about a killer clown when you have coulrophobia.

Evolutionarily, our bodies do not need to directly undergo a life-threatening experience to understand what it would do to us if we were experiencing it firsthand. To use Asma's example, if a person living on the ancient Serengeti sees another human being attacked by a crocodile, then his brain attaches a negative somatic marker (terror) to that predator schema. The next time a crocodile is encountered by that person, he does not need to stop and think about it – he will just avoid that predator. This ability to assign somatic markers to new stimuli enables mammals to develop fear instincts to respond quickly to threats. In a similar way, because of embodied cognition, Asma (2014: 953) claims that horror fiction, being an emotionally charged aesthetic experience, can develop somatic markers in the reader. For example, my early experiences with clowns (in real life, film, and fiction) caused me to attach

a negative somatic marker (fear) to my clown schema. This causes me to avoid clowns when I see them.

> We use the imagination in order to establish and guide our own agency in chaotic and uncontrollable situations. The horror story is probably a permanent player in the moral imagination because human vulnerability is permanent. The monster is a beneficial foe, helping us to virtually represent the obstacles that real life will surely send our way. As long as there are real enemies in the world, there will be useful dramatic versions of them in our heads. And these rehearsals are voluntary sketches that both compose and employ our somatic markers.
>
> (Asma 2014: 954)

Asma's claims for experiencing horror as a useful tool is backed by several other researchers who argue that people want to feel beneficial emotions, regardless of whether they are pleasant (see Erber et al. 1996; Tamir 2005; Tamir et al. 2007; Tamir et al. 2008; Tamir and Ford 2009). Asma (2014: 952) claims that horror can be a double-edged sword in terms of its ability to shape our somatic markers – while they can help protect us from enemies, real and imagined, they can create new 'enemies' out of xenotypical individuals and groups. To return to Asma's crocodile example, one might argue that physically seeing someone being attacked by a predator has a different effect than reading about a predator attack, real-life or fictional. As Stockwell (2009) and several others (e.g. Gerrig 1993; Oatley and Johnson-Laird 1996: 385; Hogan 2003; Keen 2006, 2007, 2013) argue, the emotions we experience when reading are authentic, and differ only in degree not kind. For example, watching someone getting eaten by a crocodile in real life will leave you with a stronger negative somatic marker than reading about it, but that does not mean that the emotions you experience when reading it are not genuine. Asma highlights the neurological reasons that these emotions are authentic:

> Horror genres, along with the more ethical genres, have unique powers to sculpt our somatic markers. Why does art communicate, explore, and even reprogram values better than science? Because art is a secret language that speaks directly to the limbic system. Art doesn't just tell us about emotional conflicts or clashes of values, it actually speaks directly to our affective system – bypassing the discursive (syllogistic) rationality. Art triggers the emotions in us directly, it doesn't represent them to us. The story of a novel or a film may be a representation of another place and time, but the emotional content is a direct infection in Tolstoy's sense. It is not a representation of a feeling of horror, but a contagion of horror.
>
> (Asma 2014: 955)

Tolstoy (1966) argued that art should infect the audience with a particular emotion. I enthusiastically agree with Asma that horror fiction is not a representation of a feeling, but

rather a direct trigger of horror within the reader. In addition, this trigger of horror within the reader is not a different type of emotion, 'art-horror', as Carroll (1990) argues; it can differ in degree but not kind.

This section considered how readers' individual knowledge bases affect the experience of emotions before reading horror fiction. Indeed, the knowledge base is necessary for all levels of the horror experience, as readers will draw upon it to understand the discourse as well as feel its effects. To discuss how these effects occur, I first gave an overview of the complicated relationship between emotion and cognition and how certain primal emotions appear to occur without cognition. I also focused on the neurobiological aspects of fear, in particular how mismatch between schematic categories is related to this emotion and why that potentially makes fear fascinating. I then outlined how the experience of such a primal emotion can be soft-wired into our emotional schemata, and how this can be incremented into our knowledge bases to be drawn upon throughout life and particularly for the process of reading horror fiction.

The knowledge base, being the source of previous emotional experiences, memories, and reading preferences, is used to prime the reader's experience of a horror novel. It will affect whether a reader wishes to read a horror text at all; if so, that reader's past experiences, including phobias and preferences, will affect the choice of text. Any previous knowledge of this text will also come into play, for example, whether the reader is familiar with the author, has read a review of the novel, seen the film version, etc. When the reader buys or borrows the novel, the cover art or story blurb might also prime her emotional knowledge going into the reading experience. The knowledge base is also important during and after the reading process. The following section considers how the knowledge base and the notion of text-drivenness are pertinent during the actual reading of a horror text.

2.2 During Reading – Text-Drivenness

During reading, evocation of various types of emotions (e.g. sympathy, identification, empathy, remembered emotions, etc. (see Mar et al. 2011: 822–8 for summary)) can cause readers to stop reading, affect the interpretation of consequent narrative events, and slow or increase the pace of reading depending on emotions induced and the reader's characteristics (see Cupchik et al. 1998; László and Cupchik 1995). I am interested in how the interaction of the text, the reader's personal background knowledge, and their discourse-world situation evoke such emotions that may have an effect during the reading process as outlined by Mar et al. (2011)

above. I will focus on how text-drivenness is 'the pipeline into that well of dreams' (King 1981: 20), or the link between the words on the page, the reader's knowledge, and the reader's emotional reaction. This dimension of the horror-reading experience is especially important to my study, as any exploration of horror fiction that does not account for the text itself is partial and improper (see Carter and Stockwell 2008; Stockwell and Whiteley 2014). Cognitive poetics depends upon the text itself to account for how the words on the page can create various effects in the reader. Text-drivenness is one of the main principles of Text World Theory. This concept is also prevalent in other cognitive discourse frameworks (e.g. Evans 2006; Langacker 2008). Text World Theory posits that the text itself must dictate how the discourse is interpreted. Although there is the possibility for idiosyncratic interpretation of a text based on a loose association triggered from the text, most readers will agree on a few different interpretations (Stockwell 2013: 268–71). Regardless, the text itself is a necessary starting point for the reader's interpretation. The text will activate schemas which in turn shape the reader's interpretation. This section considers how the text will initiate the many cognitive-poetic phenomena that are at work during the reading process, and which can in turn trigger emotional responses in readers, some of which will continue to affect those readers long after the discourse has ended – this is resonance and will be discussed in section 2.3. In particular, I will consider how emotion is experienced as movement during the reading process.

2.2.1 Emotion as Movement

As discussed in Chapter 1, the experience of reading horror can be considered a *danse macabre*, or dance of death. This represents the feelings of emotion through movement and the negotiative process of reading. Gibbs (2002, 2006) puts forth an argument for experiencing emotion as an 'affective space', or the felt dimension of moving through space while feeling distinct emotions. He claims:

> This idea of affective space is nicely illustrated by considering how we hesitate in advancing when worried, gently blossom when in love, distinctly loiter about when sad or depressed, or suddenly burst forward when feeling outraged. Affective space has a sensuous feel to it, a texture that makes it neither purely mental, nor reducible to the physiological body.
>
> (Gibbs 2002: 20)

Not only does Gibbs' description summarize how certain emotions are experienced through certain bodily movements, it also encapsulates the interconnected nature of the mind and body in embodiment – both mental and physiological processes being inseparable; the interplay between the two creates a rich textural experience. While this embodied emotional process

may seem counterintuitive to the primal emotion argument (where physiological processes are thought to occur before cognition), I claim that mental processes here also includes the cognitive unconscious. While readers may be unaware of the mental processes occurring, they nevertheless are taking place. I propose that they occur especially in the horror-reading experience, where many emotions are evoked through simulation.

Gibbs' 'affective space' extends to metaphorical language and literary and other artistic experiences as well. He argues that the textured sensation of feeling 'moved' when reading or viewing art is also embodied, although actual physical movement does not need to occur:

> We may actually move our bodies at times when experiencing different emotions (e.g. our facial displays, our gestures, our entire bodies). Yet even when our bodies are still, we may nonetheless experience simulation action as an essential part of the emotional process.
>
> (Gibbs 2002: 27)

It is during the aesthetic experience of art that we are likely to simulate actions and feel emotional responses. In horror-reading, simulation may trigger physiological responses such increased heart rate, even though the body isn't physically moving. Arguably, a powerful work of horror fiction will also trigger actual movement during emotion (e.g. widened eyes and open mouth for fear, wrinkled lip for disgust, covering up a page or closing the book during a particularly harrowing scene, etc.). These varied experiences show how feeling moved by literature does involve interaction between mental and physiological processes.

Within cognitive poetics, two models are particularly well-suited for accounting for the experience of emotion as movement in discourse due to their ability to map readerly attention throughout discourse and to consider the emotional effects of such attentional movement – Text World Theory and the attention and resonance model (see Lahey 2005; Gavins 2007; Whiteley 2010, 2011; Giovanelli 2013, 2016; McLoughlin 2013). The aforementioned studies draw on the connections between Text World Theory's model of conceptual space and the pervasive metaphorical expression of emotion and human relationships in terms of space (see Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Kövecses 2000). Experiencing emotion in terms of space includes the feeling of movement through this conceptual space. The following sections consider how this space is built during the discourse of horror fiction and how the experience of the horrible worlds or horror is felt as movement through those spaces, or text-worlds.

2.2.2 Building Horrible Worlds

This section gives an overview of cognitive-poetic phenomena that can be usefully applied to the analysis of horror text-worlds. It introduces ambience, or the sum of atmosphere and tone, and specifically considers how negatively oriented lexis such as inherent negation, and negatively connoted and associated lexis can be used to craft the horror atmosphere experienced in the text-worlds of horror.

2.2.2.1 Atmosphere, Tone, and Ambience

As outlined in Section 1.2.2, atmosphere and tone are some of the most important appeal factors for readers of horror. Indeed, Saricks claims that:

> The atmosphere in Horror novels must, the fans tell us, evoke an emotional response: a chill, a sense of menace, a feeling of supernatural terror. This special atmosphere or setting pervades the novel, and it is what readers are expecting and looking for when they ask us for Horror fiction.
>
> (Saricks 2009: 113)

Both Saricks (2009) and Spratford (2012) claim that 'tone and mood' are the primary draws for readers to horror fiction. Both authors also highlight additional, secondary horror appeal factors (see Section 1.2.2 for an overview). Spratford (2012: 19) indicates that the order of the rest of the appeal factors will vary from reader to reader, but 'the atmosphere of horror is the key appeal to the genre's readers'. Therefore, it is imperative to explore these phenomena. In both works, the authors seemingly interchange the term 'mood' with that of 'atmosphere'. It is also suggested that tone creates atmosphere. Saricks (2009: 114) claims that 'In Horror all elements (story line, characterization, pacing) help create this sense of menace and contribute to this emotional impact. These novels are infused with this mood. Readers never escape this feeling, at least not for long'. Given the multitude of ways atmosphere, tone, mood, etc. are used in Saricks (2009) and Spratford (2012) – with all terms being seemingly interconnected and interdependent, not to mention also strengthened by the remaining horror appeal factors such as characterization and story line – it seems apparent to me that these concepts are very important to consider in terms of the experience of reading horror fiction. In addition, I argue that it is imperative to approach these essential concepts in a more systematic manner. This section aims to elucidate these terms from a cognitive-poetic perspective and to consider how they can be usefully applied to understanding readers' emotional responses to horror fiction.

A useful starting point for clarifying the terms *atmospher*e and *tone* is Stockwell's (2009, 2014a, 2014b) work on the topic. I have specifically chosen to engage with the concepts of atmosphere and tone because those terms are more prevalent in cognitive-poetic research than

that of mood, in the literary sense of the term. Besides, Saricks and Spratford's use of the term *mood* is in line with the more strictly literary definition of the term, not the literary-linguistic definition. As a literary device, mood is the atmosphere that permeates a literary text in order to evoke a specific emotion from the reader. In traditional grammar, the term mood is 'a category largely signalled by differences in verb forms which gives rise to different sentence types, and basic semantic contrasts of modality' (Wales 2011: 276). In narratology, mood was metaphorically applied to the study of narrative. Proposed by Todorov (1966), mood 'is generally concerned with the type of discourse used by a narrator, modes of speech representation, and degrees of explicitness of narrator and "reader" presence'; Todorov later replaced mood with the term *register* (1967) (Wales 2011: 276). Considering the discrepancy in terms, I have therefore decided to engage primarily with the terms atmosphere and tone, as mood is equivalent to atmosphere for my purposes.

The terms atmosphere and tone are often used in literary criticism without any explanation of what they are exactly. Intuitively, we know what these terms mean, but it is important to discuss these concepts in a systematic manner, especially considering their usage in describing an entire genre. Stockwell (2014a) discusses the prevalence of the terms *atmosphere* and *tone* by readers:

> From professional academic discourse to everyday commentary, both terms tend to be used in an equally vague, impressionistic sense, roughly covering the notion that a particular passage of a literary work has a discernible ambience, a quality that is often qualified by an emotional effect: sinister, positive, melancholy, playful, elegiac, sunny and so on. Such usages are of interest to the stylistician, firstly because their widespread adoption suggests a sociotextual reality that is significant for readers, and secondly because the specification of vagueness and the establishment of descriptive precision are the stock-in-trade for stylistics.
>
> (Stockwell 2014a: 360)

Stockwell's comments on the readerly use of this terminology align with Saricks' (2009) and Spratford's (2012) application of the terms in their reader's advisory guides, specifically their connection between atmosphere and tone and emotional effects. This thesis aims to analyze stylistically this connection, aiming in particular to explore which textual features trigger which emotions, and how. To begin this discussion, I will first turn to the cognitive-poetic definitions of these terms.

As Stockwell (2014a: 360) points out, the term atmosphere 'invokes a sense that is relatively semantically empty or vacuous, denoting an emotional or ambient space that requires specification or filling in with the intended ambient quality'. There is a strong spatial element

associated with the term atmosphere, as shown by non-literal examples of atmosphere in the British National Corpus (BNC) (2014a: 360) (e.g. 'spooky atmosphere'). This relates to my claim that emotion is felt as movement through fictive space, as *atmosphere* tends to correlate with emotional terms and spatial orientation. Drawing on Bohme's (2002: 7) view that a text's aesthetic atmosphere features 'the intertwinement of representational spaces with the spaces of bodily presence', Deggan (2013) aims to show how psychosomatic interior states are blended with aesthetically meaningful sensory environments. Deggan's account of the connection between literary atmosphere and fictive and scenic motion further illustrates how atmosphere is often related to emotional reactions and specific settings. Again, drawing from Stockwell (2014a: 361), 'The atmosphere of a place is a quality not only inherent in the place itself, but is an experiential quality that strongly presupposes the presence of the experiencing consciousness'. Therefore, it is important to consider atmosphere in relation to the reader experiencing said atmosphere in a text.

Atmosphere illustrates the world-focused content of the text and indicates 'a direct and integrated relationship between the reader and that world' (Stockwell 2014a: 361). In contrast, *tone* refers less to the literary text-world and more to the medium of writing itself. In this way, the 'compositional function of the writing' is foregrounded, and tone appears to be attached to the authorial or narrative voice (Stockwell 2014a: 361). (The tendency of *Goodreads* respondents to refer to tone and the author is discussed further in Section 6.1.1.) 'Tone stands as a quality of the voice of the writing, and strongly indexes a mood, characteristic or trait of the writer's personality' (Stockwell 2014a: 361). The difference between the two terms, therefore, is that atmosphere relates to the perceived quality of the text-world from the reader's perspective, while tone relates to the perceived quality of the authorial or narratorial voice. Stockwell claims that while tone is an autonomous object (in Ingarden's 1973 terms), in that we can discuss tone without discussing the experiencing consciousness of the reader,

> we would not tend to talk of the atmosphere of a passage of text but rather of a scene or episode, and so the atmosphere of a literary work is more like what Ingarden would call a heteronomous object – one that exists principally by the interaction of the phenomenon with an observing reading consciousness. In this respect, tone can be described in more text-stylistic terms than atmosphere, which requires a more cognitive poetic account.
>
> (Stockwell 2014a: 361)

This thesis aims to account stylistically for the authorial or narratorial tone of horror texts, as well as cognitive-poetically account for the readerly perceived atmosphere effects of those same texts. Both atmosphere and tone have to do with diction, or lexical choice, and register;

atmosphere in particular has to do with semantic priming. When discussing lexico-grammar and atmosphere and tone, it is important to distinguish between denotation, connotation, and loose association. Lexical items will have a literal, dictionary definition (denotation), but will also have a cultural or emotional meaning attached to it (connotation); even more idiosyncratic, the lexical item may also have loose associations that are more specific to the reader's personal emotions, memories, experiences, etc. (loose association). Take, for example, this article from the prologue of Stephen King's *'Salem's Lot* (1975):

GHOST TOWN IN MAINE?
By John Lewis
Press-Herald Features Editor

> JERUSALEM'S LOT – Jerusalem's Lot is a small town east of Cumberland and twenty miles north of Portland. It is not the first town in American history to just dry up and blow away, and will probably not be the last, but it is one of the strangest. Ghost towns are common in the American Southwest, where communities grew up almost overnight around rich gold and silver lodes and then disappeared almost as rapidly when the veins of ore played out, leaving empty stores and hotels and saloons to rot emptily in desert silence.
>
> In New England the only counterpart to the mysterious emptying of Jerusalem's Lot, or 'salem's Lot as the natives often refer to it, seems to be a small town in Vermont called Momson. During the summer of 1923, Momson apparently just dried up and blew away, and all 312 residents went with it. The houses and few small business buildings in the town's center still stand, but since that summer fifty-two years ago, they have been uninhabited. In some cases the furnishings had been removed, but in most the houses were still furnished, as if in the middle of daily life some great wind had blown all the people away. In one house the table had been set for the evening meal, complete with a centerpiece of long-wilted flowers. In another the covers had been turned down neatly in an upstairs bedroom as if for sleep. In the local mercantile store, a rotted bolt of cotton cloth was found on the counter and a price of $1.22 rung up on the cash register. Investigators found almost $50.00 in the cash drawer, untouched.
>
> (King 1975: 9–10)

Denotationally, this extract more or less says: *Sometimes American towns are deserted. In 1923, a town in Vermont called Momson was abandoned by all of its 312 residents. The houses were mostly left furnished, with evidence of daily routines having stopped suddenly. One store still had cash in the register. Something similar happened in Jerusalem's Lot.* There is much more taking place in this scene, however, than the literal meaning. In terms of tone, the narratorial voice here (which comes from a features editor for a local newspaper in the story) relies on a plant death metaphor to describe the abandonment of Momson, which mirrors the desertion of 'Salem's Lot. Phrases such as 'dry up and blow away', 'dried up and blew away' and 'some great wind had blown all the people away' suggest the metaphors TOWNS/PEOPLE ARE PLANTS and TOWNS/PEOPLE

ARE DELICATE THINGS, where the towns/plants can dry up/die and blow away/disappear. The mention of 'Ghost towns', 'the American Southwest', and 'gold' suggest an old-time American West schema; this, coupled with the plant metaphor, calls to mind tumbleweeds, which are dead thistle plants. (I also personally think of dried-up dandelions, a looser association.) The plant-death metaphor is strengthened with the images of 'a centerpiece of long-wilted flowers' and 'a rotted bolt of cotton cloth'. The juxtaposition of the dead plant images, and the morbid connotations they trigger, with descriptions of everyday life creates an unsettling atmosphere – one where in one moment the entire town was going about its usual business (eating, getting ready for bed, shopping) and the next the scene is exactly the same, minus all of the people. Some of the most haunting images for me were the rotted bolt of cloth, suggesting that the empty town wasn't found for a very long time after the people disappeared, and the cash drawer with $50.00 still inside (a great deal of money in that time to be left), suggesting that the people did literally disappear (because who would leave the equivalent of nearly $600 if they left by choice) or the people were so scared by whatever this 'great wind' was that they left *everything* behind. I find the latter hypothesis unlikely because no sign of struggle is mentioned in the article. The article's fictional author John Lewis invites the reader to take the details of the situation in Momson, and to apply them to the desertion of 'Salem's Lot. Lewis also mentions that the case of 'Salem's Lot is 'one of the strangest', thereby implying to the reader that what happened at 'Salem's Lot is even worse than what happened in Momson. This indirect invitation to hypothetical imaginings helps establish a creepy atmosphere at the beginning of the novel and primes the readers to expect similarly creepy things to happen throughout the story.

Returning to the concept of tone, the diction of the article's narrator helps to set the tone of the piece and also the novel as a whole. There is arguably a distinct authorial tone to this extract as well. For those familiar with King's work, he often uses features that are found in this prologue: repeated metaphorical language, several viewpoints to tell the story (whether through different character focalization or compositional deixis variation such as newspaper articles, journal entries, etc.), similar settings (New England primarily), and revealing part of the story's end at its beginning (i.e. something mysterious happened and 'Salem's Lot is a ghost town). While these elements qualify as being part of the authorial tone, I argue that they also contribute to the atmosphere, as a reader's conscious awareness of King's style is necessary for them to have the added effect of authorial familiarity. Very often, atmosphere and tone are interrelated and have unclear boundaries. Therefore, it is useful to discuss the combined atmospheric and tonal effects, or *ambience*.

In later developments on atmosphere and tone (2014a, 2014b), Stockwell (2014a: 366) suggests that atmosphere and tone cumulatively are 'the global effects of ambience', which is

> the delicate sense of a halo of associations, some barely conscious, some subliminal but coalescing cumulatively across a stretch of discourse. A word, phrase, syntactic sequence, verse placement, poetic form, rhyme or extended varied metaphor (and so on) might all contribute to a sense of ambience.
>
> (Stockwell 2014a: 366–7)

Ambience, too, is difficult to pin down, as so many textual features can factor into it. Stockwell (2014a: 368) notes that investigating lexico-grammar as a source of ambience by itself is not enough to account for the 'cognitive effect of cumulative but diffused associations across discourse'. To be more precise in describing ambience, Stockwell uses Langacker's (2008: 83–4) model of reference points and the concept of dominion, which allows him to talk about the 'cloud of possibilities' offered from one reference point. For example, in the *'Salem's Lot* extract, the reference point 'ghost town' will trigger a set of possible associations, primarily abandoned gold towns in American southwest with saloon doors falling off the building. A looser association for me with 'ghost town' is the case of the Roanoke colony disappearance, which I've always found particularly creepy. More peripheral associations will vary from reader to reader; some may even trigger targets such as the movie *Ghost Town* (2008), which is actually a comedy, or the song of the same name by The Specials. The target 'ghost' within 'ghost town' will likely call up associations with death and spirits first and foremost. Based on the context the reference point is encountered, one possibility will be decided upon – in this case, the more spectral macabre elements should be targeted – but it is argued that the remaining possibilities remain in a sort of aura of faint associations that contribute to a work's particular ambience. There is support for this notion from research in corpus linguistics, semantic prosody (e.g. Louw 1993; Louw and Milojkovic 2014) and lexical priming (e.g. Hoey 2005, 2013), as well as work in cognitive psychology, the predictive coding solution (Clark 2011, 2013) to the occurrence of spreading activation (e.g. Sternberg and Sternberg 2011: 185–227). Stockwell (2014a, 2014b) and Stockwell and Mahlberg (2016) investigate how corpus tools can be used to show the typical and peripheral uses of a term in its domain. For example, Stockwell also considers the target 'ghost' and identifies its common usage through corpus:

> The most typical usages of 'ghost' in the 1300 occurrences in the 100 million word British National Corpus (BNC) appear in contexts in which it is clear that the overall sense is fearful and supernatural, secondly religious and old-fashioned in flavour, and

> thirdly comical and spooky. The comical uses are generally spoken forms, whereas the fearful usages tend to be in written contexts. All things being equal, this means that it is most likely that for any given situation, a reader will be primed for the fearful targets of the reference point 'ghost', while comical or cartoonish targets will be only secondarily available.
>
> (Stockwell 2014b: 31)

The description of typical uses of 'ghost' above aligns with my own intuitions that 'ghost town' will be interpreted in its creepy and supernatural sense, especially considering the horror context in which it appears and the use of the plant death metaphor across the extract. While a corpus investigation of horror is outside the scope of this thesis, I aim to provide a cognitive-poetic account of ambience and negation in *Rosemary's Baby*, and will also consider it across my other texts as well.

As I am attempting to account for the feelings of ambience across horror texts in particular, I posit that semantically negative lexis, including inherent negation and negatively connoted and associated words, are central to creating the ambience of horror. I will discuss the use of negatively oriented lexis below.

2.2.2.2 Negatively Oriented Lexis in Horror

As Allan (2009: 627) claims, 'Negative lexical items represent negative events'. It stands to reason, then, that these negative lexical items are prevalent in horror texts, which by definition focus on horrible events. In his exploration of literary depictions of nightmares, Giovanelli (2013) indicates that real and fictional accounts of nightmares extensively utilize lexical and syntactic negation (Belicki and Cuddy 1996; Garfield 1996). Although many of the nightmarish events that take place in horror do not meet all of Giovanelli's (2013: 111–119) requirements for a *nightmare world* in Text-World-Theory terms, namely in terms of having a 'waking moment', they do depend on distinct and intense negative emotions that are triggered through various forms of negation. Djikic et al. (2006) found evidence that writers of fiction particularly used more negative emotive words in interviews than physicists, suggesting that writers themselves explore their own emotion in their writing, thus encoding the process of emotional exploration that is explored, in turn, by their readers (Mar et al. 2011: 830). If writers really are prone to use more negative language to begin with, I would imagine that writers of horror would use more negative emotive language than other types of writing. As discussed in section 1.2.2, Spratford's (2012: 19) list of horror appeal factors mainly deals with the evocation of negative emotions through literary devices. Considering all these factors pointing towards negative lexis representing negative emotions in horror, I aim to explore how various types of

negatively oriented lexis affect the horror-reading experience. I propose that this can be accounted for in terms of a negative ambience, where inherent negation, negative connotations, and negative associations are layered into the horror text to bring about negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, and disgust.

Negation

Although several aspects of negation have been researched in several different disciplines, for example its logic (Aristotle; Wansing 1999; Sylvan 1999), its grammatical properties (e.g. Lyons 1977; Givón 1979, 2001; Quirk et al. 1985; Huddleston and Pullum 2002) and its pragmatic aspects (e.g. Leech 1983; Horn 1985; Givón 1979, 2001; Tottie 1991), I will focus in particular on the cognitive account of negation (see Werth 1995a, 1995b, 1999; Jordan 1998; Hidalgo-Downing 2000a, 2000b; Giora et al. 2004; Giora 2006; Hassan and Glucksberg 2006; Kaup et al. 2006; Nørgaard 2007; Nahajec 2009; Stockwell 2009; Giovanelli 2013; McLoughlin 2013). From a cognitive perspective, negation can be thought of in terms of a figure/ground relationship (Givón 1979, 1993; Werth 1999: 250). In cognitive terms, then, negation is a conceptual contrast between what is being negated (figure) and its positive counterpart (ground) which is necessarily evoked to then be denied (see Langacker 2008: 59; Lawler 2010). For example, the sentence 'Don't think of a killer clown' first makes you conceptualize a killer clown before you can negate this image. Indeed, this example is more complicated than it appears because it contains two types of negation. Givón (1992: 202) identifies three types of negation: *syntactic negation* (e.g. not, never), *morphological negation* (e.g. adding prefixes un-, im-, etc.), and *inherent negation* (e.g. bad, sad, any word 'with inherent negative meaning though positive in form' (Jespersen 1917: 42)). This example includes syntactic negation ('Don't think…') as well as inherent negation ('killer'). Indeed, it even includes negatively associated lexis for me, heightening its negative semantic content ('clown'; see following section). Together, these negative elements overlap to create an emotional reaction. Negation is 'literally false but psychologically true' (Horn 1989: 203), which suggests that having imagined the clown, especially one that is murderous, before negating it will leave a residual emotional effect, which Stockwell (2009) calls a 'felt absence'. Researchers of negation have found that negated constructions are more difficult to process than their positive counterparts (Wason 1961; Trabasso et al. 1971; Clark 1976; Clark and Clark 1977; Carpenter et al. 1999). Therefore, negative constructions attract more cognitive attention than their positive counterparts. As horror depends on negatively oriented lexis to set the macabre ambience of the story, negation which also has negative semantic connotations, as the killer clown example above does, is a useful tool to direct the reader's attention to these textual elements.

In Text-World-Theory terms, negation is realized as a type of epistemic world-switch which can change the text-world parameters as a type of incrementation (Werth 1999: 253–4; Hidalgo-Downing 2000a: 87; Gavins 2007: 102; Giovanelli 2013: 27). Hidalgo-Downing (2000a: 147) argues that the notion of semantic prosody, or 'a consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates' (Louw 1993: 157), can be applied to negated text-worlds in that their semantic influence 'can go beyond the boundaries of a clause and stretch over a piece of discourse' (Hidalgo-Downing 2000a: 198). Because negated information is incremented into the reader's text-world, this idea of semantic prosody aligns with negation creating a sense of felt absence which potentially permeates throughout a discourse. It also aligns with Stockwell's discussion of dominion and ambience, where the negative connotations of a lexical item and its collocates may linger with an aura of significance in the text, causing delicate emotional reactions in readers. The subtle effects of negation are meaningful in the horror discourse, but a specific type of negation, inherent, is somewhat difficult to systematically identify.

While syntactic and morphological negation are easy to detect, inherent negation is more difficult and 'practically unthinkable' to identify in a corpus (Tottie 1991: 7). As Giovanelli (2013: 133) indicates, there has been a relative lack of attention on inherent negation in stylistics. Nahajec (2012: 120) points out how inherent negation is often left out of typologies of negation because of its inability to fit in neatly with explicit negators, and how when inherent negation is considered in a typology it is often without a great deal of consideration for how they relate to negation as a whole (e.g. Huddleston and Pullum 2002). In her analysis of negative polarity in James Joyce's 'Two Gallants', Nørgaard (2007: 133) claims that inherent negation is 'a fuzzy area of semantically determined categorisation'. Therefore, she sticks with morphological and syntactic negation since they are most formally and clearly marked for negative polarity. Inherent negation is difficult to systemically identify and it is often argued to be pragmatically weaker than syntactic negation (Bolinger 1968; Horn 1978; Hidalgo-Downing 2000a). I suggest that the relative 'weakness' of inherent negation may explain why it has such a subtle ambient effect in literature and although it is difficult to talk about, I think that it is still important to talk about in order to account for the creation of a delicate negative ambience in horror.

A solution is offered by Nahajec (2012: 127), who claims that the basic function of negation is the 'linguistic realisation of an absence', which can be achieved through various linguistic forms 'that can function as the textual vehicle for the conceptual practice of realising an absence' (see also Jeffries 2010). She suggests that with inherent negation, 'rather than

simply being grammaticalised lexical items as Givón suggests, there is a synthesis of grammatical function and semantic content' (Nahajec 2012: 151). As Nahajec points out (2012: 151), the task of identifying all potential inherently negative words is daunting and not particularly fruitful; she instead presents a typology of implicit negation ranging from semantic (inherent negation), including prototypical (e.g. absent, lack, avoid) to peripheral semantic forms (e.g. barely, scarcely, few, etc.), to pragmatic, including conditional constructions (e.g. If you had x, then y), modals (e.g. You should have, I wish you had), grammaticalised metaphors (e.g. out of, ruled out, left out, etc.), expletive forms (e.g. fuck all, jack shit, etc.), and structural forms (e.g. too x to y) (Nahajec 2012: 128). This list of the main implicit categories of negating is useful in identifying textual vehicles which create the 'felt absence' of negation. Drawing on Givón's (1992) terminology of syntactic and morphological negation, as well as Nahajec's (2012) implicit negation typology where necessary, this thesis aims to follow intriguing research on inherent negation by Giovanelli (2013, 2016), particularly in relation to nightmare worlds in horror, Nahajec (2009), Stockwell (2009), and McLoughlin (2013) with the goal of more systematically describing the phenomena of inherent negation in horror fiction.

Negatively Connoted and Associated Lexis

It is obvious that language has an emotive use and that individual lexical items have affective connotations (Ogden and Richards 1923). Downes (2000: 109) claims that each lexical entry possesses a 'context-sensitive evaluative layer with respect to its sense. This would be the result of its history. It would determine its appropriateness for selection within a given genre, in a given register…' I posit that negatively connoted lexis is common to the horror genre because it is the vehicle by which negative emotions are evoked. I feel that it is necessary to outline the differences, and similarities, between inherent negation and lexis that is semantically negatively connoted, but which does not obviously create an absence. I argue that inherent negation and semantically negative lexis occur on a sliding scale (see Figure 2.2). While certain lexical items are always inherently negative because their definition implies the absence of something (e.g. bald ≠ hair), whether they are also semantically negative depends on context. To return to the 'bald' example, baldness is not always used pejoratively – it could be used as a neutral descriptor, but very often still has a negative connotation (e.g. prevalence of hair loss remedies on TV). Some lexical items are both inherently and semantically negative: for example, 'bad' is the opposite of 'good', and also generally (almost always) means something semantically negative. This is still a tricky example, though, as in one instance 'bad' is North American slang for 'good, excellent' (e.g. 'He was the baddest, most talented author in the city.') Therefore,

accounting for context, especially sociocultural context, is of utmost importance when trying to differentiate between semantic and inherent negatives.

On the other end of the scale, negative lexis can slide from semantically negative and potentially creating an absence but in a weaker sense than prototypical semantic negation (e.g. 'absent', which literally means something is not there vs. 'murder', which can be understood to imply an absence because someone is dead and must first be imaged alive to be conceptualized as murdered) to negative connotations but no absence implied (e.g. 'tornado') to more idiosyncratic, negative loose associations (e.g. 'clown' is personally negative for me). It appears, then, that to do a systematic, generalized analysis of negative lexis is nearly impossible, as certain lexical items will have different connotations and associations for each individual reader. While I acknowledge that this sort of analysis would be difficult without interviewing each reader and going through the text word by word, I argue that it is possible to begin to account for how lexical and semantic negation contribute to a sense of ambience through cognitive-poetic analysis. While not all negatively connoted lexical items will create a sense of absence in the same way negation does, thus perhaps being less cognitively taxing than negation, I claim that the negative associations of this lexis still trigger meaningful emotive response which may permeate throughout the discourse. My own introspective analysis, coupled with general emotional reactions of *Goodreads* reviewers, will enable me to give examples of what various types of negatively oriented lexis in horror fiction *can* do, although I acknowledge that the subtleties of emotion will vary from reader to reader based on sociocultural and idiosyncratic understanding of this lexis.

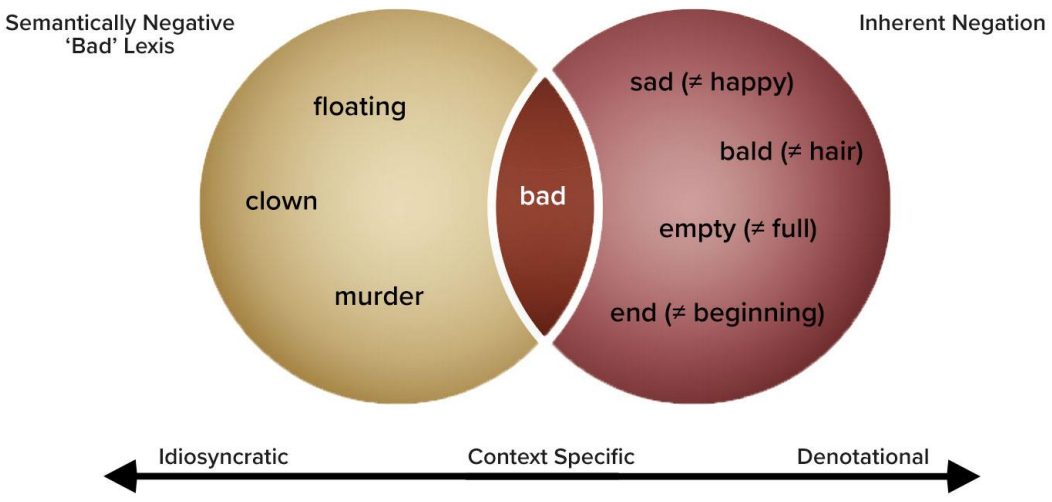


Figure 2.2: Negatively oriented lexis

2.2.3 Experiencing Horrible Worlds

This section highlights attention and the concept of projection, focusing in particular on how these frameworks can be used to account for readerly feelings of movement and their relation to readerly emotional reactions in the text-worlds of horror.

2.2.3.1 Attention

As briefly outlined in Chapter 1, attention is key to the aesthetic experience of reading. I argue that the feeling of attentional movement through 'affective space' (see Gibbs 2002) experienced when reading is linked to the emotional experience of a text. The triggers of and trajectory of this attentional movement can be investigated by analysing different types of attentional movement encountered in texts. First I will outline how attention, arousal, emotion, and motivational intensity are linked and their implications for literary reading. Then, I will focus on attentional movement in literature. Although there are many types of attentional movement (e.g. attractors, world-switches, fictive motion, scenic motion (see Deggan 2013), etc.), I will be focusing in particular on different attractors commonly found in horror fiction.

Attention and Emotion

It has been generally argued that positive emotions broaden the scope of attention (e.g. seeing the forest), while negative emotions narrow it (e.g. seeing the trees) (Derryberry and Tucker 1994; Fredrickson 2004; Schwarz and Clore 2007; Isen 2008; Friedman and Förster 2010). For example, anxiety narrows attention while happiness broadens it (Huntsinger 2013; Oatley and Johnson-Laird 2014). Huntsinger (2013; see also Harmon-Jones et al. 2013a), however, claims that attentional scope is more flexible than that, and that more recent work has confirmed that any emotion, positive or negative, can narrow attention if the motivational intensity, which is 'the strength of urge to move toward/away from a stimulus' (Harmon-Jones et al. 2013a: 301; Harmon-Jones et al. 2013b; Gable et al. 2015), is strong enough. For example, Gable and Harmon-Jones (2010) found that disgust and sadness, both negative emotions, had different effects on attentional scope – disgust, high in motivational intensity, caused a narrowing of attention while sadness, low in motivational intensity, caused a broadening of attention. Arousal is a proxy for motivational intensity (Bradley and Lang 2007), but is not exactly the same. Arousal 'can be measured subjectively and by activation of the sympathetic nervous system', but does not necessarily drive a person to engage in action as motivational intensity does; in this way arousal and motivational intensity can be separated (Harmon-Jones et al. 2013a: 301). For example, humour, amusement, and excess caffeine can trigger arousal, but

they do not necessarily urge action towards something in the same way that fear and disgust do. Instances like fear and disgust, however, appear to be high in both arousal and motivational intensity.

Stockwell (forthcoming: np) claims: 'It is clear, from a cognitive poetic perspective, that immersion is a matter of the textual manipulation of readerly attention'. In terms of literature, then, I argue that such narrowed attention due to motivational intensity as discussed above could be related to readerly immersion: the more involved in a story a reader feels, the more inclined she is to want to continue reading. According to Oatley and Johnson-Laird's (1987) theory of emotions, a conflict of goals causes anxiety (see also Lazarus 1991). Many readers from *Goodreads* reported feeling negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, or disgust while reading the texts I am investigating, but also reported enjoying reading the story despite those feelings, or needing to continue reading to know what happens despite feeling uncomfortable (see Chapter 6 for further consideration of this). I suggest that this readerly conflict between feeling a negative emotion while also enjoying feeling it could be thought of in terms of a conflict of goals, and one that may indeed cause some sort of anxiety in the reader. In his account of immersion, Stockwell (forthcoming) draws on Csikszentmihalyi's (1990, 1996) concept of 'flow', or the state of being effortlessly and completely involved in an activity. Speaking of flow, Csikszentmihalyi (2014: 273) states 'So it's a paradoxical kind of condition where you feel that you are on a nice edge, between anxiety on the one hand and boredom on the other'. I posit that immersion in a horror text is also paradoxical. Readers may want to stay immersed because they're enjoying the negative feelings (perhaps because of adrenaline); they may want to hurry up and finish and experience the catharsis of narrative closure; or they may enjoy the 'nice edge' between anxiety and the enjoyment of flow. Whatever the reasoning, while it does seem contradictory to enjoy the immersion in the worlds of horror, many readers do just that.

Attractors

For ease of reference, Stockwell's list of textual attractors is reproduced below:

- Newness (currency: the present moment of reading is more attractive than the previous moment)
- Agency (noun phrases in active position are better attractors than in passive position)
- Topicality (subject position confers attraction over object position)
- Empathetic recognisability (human speaker > human hearer > animal > object > abstraction)
- Definiteness (definitive ('the man') > specific indefinite ('a certain man') > non-specific indefinite ('any man'))

- Activeness (verbs denoting action, violence, passion, willfulness, motivation or strength)
- Brightness (lightness or vivid colours being denoted over dimness or drabness)
- Fullness (richness, density, intensity or nutrition being denoted)
- Largeness (large objects being denoted, or a very long elaborated noun phrase used to denote)
- Height (objects that are above others, are higher than the perceiver, or which dominate)
- Noisiness (denoted phenomena which are audibly voluminous)
- Aesthetic distance from the norm (beautiful or ugly referents, dangerous referents, alien objects denoted, dissonance)

(reproduced from Stockwell 2009: 25)

Grammatical concepts occupy the top portion of the list while experiential concepts occupy the bottom. These categories are not separate, but occur on a cline. Arguably, all grammatical concepts also have an experiential element to them. Following Giovanelli (2013) and McLoughlin (2013), I posit that negation should also be considered a textual attractor. McLoughlin (2013: 222) argues that negation should be placed towards the top of the list with newness 'because it creates a mental switch from one text world where things exist to another text world where they do not'. While I agree that this is the case with grammatical negation, I also feel that other notions of negation also act as attractors on a more purely experiential level in terms of creating a feeling of absence. In Stockwell's (2009: 37) conception of negation, this notion can extend from grammaticality to cover anything ontologically distant; for example, metaphor is a negation of the literal. Throughout this thesis, I will consider all forms of negation discussed in section 2.2.2.2 to be textual attractors.

I also claim that a great deal of the negatively connoted and associated lexis will fit under the category of *aesthetic distance from the norm*, as much of it will refer to ugly or dangerous referents. I suggest that the concept of categorial mismatch, or category jamming (Carroll 1990), as discussed in section 2.1.1.1, can also fit under this category in that interstitial entities found in horror often are dissonant, as well as dangerous or ugly. As discussed in the section above, negative emotions narrow the scope of attention. As negatively oriented lexis and instances of categorial mismatch can activate negative emotional schemata, I argue that these elements can act as typical textual attractors in horror fiction. The sense of negativity that may be triggered by such enactors may contribute to more intense types of projection within the text.

2.2.3.2 Projection

According to Whiteley (2016: 510): 'To date, most text-world approaches to emotion and the experience of reading have focused on the implications of the ontological boundary between the "real", discourse-world and the text-worlds which readers imagine'. Psychological projection is required to cross this boundary between the discourse-world and the text-world; a reader must metaphorically map his or her 'sense of self' (see Kuiken et al. 2004) into the text-world in the form of an enactor (Emmott 1992, 1997), or counterpart (Gavins 2007; Lahey 2003, 2005; Whiteley 2010, 2011). In projecting their 'sense of self' onto an enactor which acts in the text-world, readers are able to become emotionally involved in the text. Projection occurs during narrative understanding (e.g. Black et al. 1979; Bryant et al. 1992; Morrow 1985, 1994; Rall and Harris 2000; Rinck and Bower 1995; Rinck et al. 1996; Whiteley 2010, 2011). Whiteley (2010: 69–72) outlines the concept of projection in the comprehension of literary discourse. Projection is key to the Text-World-Theory understanding of readerly emotional experience.

Whiteley (2010; 2011, 2016: 510) discusses three interrelated types of projection:

- *Deictic projection* (Buhler 1982; Segal 1995): occurs when readers project themselves (their origo/zero reference point/deictic here and now) to a space and location in the text-world, aligning themselves with the spatio-temporal perspective in the text; creates feelings of immersion in the text-world.

- *Perspective-taking projection:* common form of projection which occurs when readers respond to textual prompts which enable them to mind-model the characters' worldviews, attitudes, emotions, and goals (Palmer 2004; Stockwell 2009; Zunshine 2006); readers can consider text-world characters as 'real' people with life-like thoughts, emotions, and reactions similar to those of the readers (Gavins 2007: 42–3); enables an emotional connection between the reader and the text-world entities.

- *Self-implication* or *identification*: occurs when readers identify likenesses between characteristics of their own personalities and those of text-world entities; not only do readers map their spatio-temporal context onto the text-world, but also their sense of self (Kuiken et al. 2004; Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2009; Whiteley 2010, 2011); can engender strong and significant emotional connections between readers and text-world characters.

I will consider how the various levels of projection are applicable to the experience of reading horror fiction. Since deictic projection is essential to readers' ability to understand discourse which does not correspond to their own spatio-temporal situation, I argue that deictic projection will always be present in the reading experience; that is, if the reader is actually able to understand what he or she is reading. The next step of immersion further into the text-

world is perspective-taking projection, whereby readers mind-model characters in the text-world. This mind-modelling, or mind-reading, enables readers to understand the emotions of characters, and to empathize with them, thereby creating an emotional connection. The most immersive type of projection is self-implication or identification, whereby the readers see themselves in some form or another in the characters. Perhaps in horror, or at least in the type of horror fiction discussed in my analysis of *The Exorcist*, readers may deny any sort of personal connection with the characters who are experiencing the horrific events. I would claim that the most common form of projection found in 'disgusting' horror fiction would be perspective-taking projection, as readers may be resistant to identifying with characters involved in revolting situations.

In Text-World-Theory terms, the process of projecting oneself into a text-world and its subsequent world-switches is movement from the discourse-world to the text-world. This movement is called world-switching, and accounts for the sense of movement within reading. World-switching occurs any time that the reader (or character) crosses spatial or temporal boundaries, and when negation and modality occur in the text. My analyses will consider world-switching, in addition to other stylistic phenomena, in relation to emotional involvement in the text. There will also be a focus on the discourse knowledge that readers bring with themselves to the discourse. What scares, or disgusts, a person is in large part related to their own experiences and knowledge. While I argue that many readers will share a large portion of fears and revulsions, not every reader will react in the same way. For example, a reader who is also a surgeon will unlikely find descriptions of blood and guts to be as disgusting as say, an English teacher (although this is not certain either). The degree of emotional involvement also depends largely on readerly disposition, and how immersed the reader is at the time of reading. For example, if the reader is trying to read the book on a noisy train, it may be more difficult to project fully into the story because the noise may keep the reader more fully anchored to her discourse-world.

The world-building and experiential elements discussed in this section not only affect readers' emotional experiences during reading, but depending on their emotional intensity will also affect the reader emotionally after the reading is completed; this is resonance.

2.3 After Reading – Resonance

Mar et al. (2011: 829) claim: 'The emotions evoked by literary fiction also have an influence on our cognitive processing after the reading experience has ended'. This 'after reading' effect is

literary resonance in Stockwell's (2009) terms. Resonance can be considered a musical metaphor whereby the reverberating tone is the emotional after-effect of a particularly significant reading experience. As in music, the more intense the tone is initially, the more it will resonate or echo afterwards. This idea can also be mapped onto literary resonance – the more intense an emotional experience the reader has during reading, the more intense and longer the resonating after-effects. Stockwell (2009: 21–2) therefore discusses resonance and intensity as occurring on a cline, where striking intensity of literary experience occurs at one end and it trails off into a rich, echoing resonance at the other. Resonance and intensity can account for why a particularly haunting horror novel may continue to give you occasional nightmares for years afterwards. Resonance can also have a transformative effect.

Mar et al. (2011) outline research done on how emotional engagement with a text can at least temporarily transform a reader's personality (e.g. Kuiken et al. 2004; Miall and Kuiken 2002). Readers who have a deeper engagement and involvement with texts may see longer-lasting transformative and self-modifying effects after reading (Miall and Kuiken 1995, 2002). They further point out that narrative fiction as an emotional prime for cognitive processing may be more influential than those normally studied by emotion researchers. The texts read by participants are much longer than the shortened versions usually used in emotion research. 'This extended exposure may mean that the effects of emotions evoked by narratives will last longer than the effects seen with briefer manipulations, or perhaps more pronounced' (Mar et al. 2011: 829). This again aligns with Stockwell's notion of resonance, where texts can have effects for hours, days, months, or years, depending on the reader's depth of emotional engagement with the text. In addition, the deep simulation experienced when engaged with fictional worlds are likely to cause more intense effects compared to experimental primes. Text World Theory allows me to explore this simulated experience of the narrative through text-worlds.

I suggest that a horror text is successful if it resonates in some way with a reader, as it is a genre based on emotional intensity. Resonance can occur on a cline – a reader may remember reading a novel and really enjoying it; she may recall feeling creeped out but not exactly why. Or a reader may vividly recall one scene that was particularly striking. A reader might feel more transformed by the text, which may alter behaviour, such as vowing never to go camping again. To investigate various resonant responses to my horror texts, I draw heavily upon *Goodreads* responses in Chapter 6. Although I can comment on my own resonant experiences of the horror novels that I analyze, I think it would give a more holistic view of resonance if I illustrate how these texts have resonated with other readers. Helpfully, many

Goodreads respondents still recall elements of the novels that they read many years ago, exemplifying various levels of resonance in their reviews.

2.4 Review

This section presented the research from which I drew to consider a cognitive poetics of horror fiction. I argue that the experience of horror is a multidimensional phenomenon and therefore requires an interdisciplinary approach to give insight to its various aspects. I therefore gave an overview of horror from an emotion-studies point of view, in particular highlighting how neurobiological approaches to primal emotion are pertinent to the negative emotions of horror. I aligned this emotional background with the knowledge base in the 'before reading' dimension of the horror experience. For the 'during reading' dimension, I emphasized cognitive-poetic frameworks which are suitable to explore the 'emotion as movement' metaphor for the emotional effects of reading. I focused on how negation and other negatively oriented lexis build the text-worlds of horror by establishing a particular ambience. I also considered how textual attractors and the notion of projection come into play during the readerly emotional experience of these horrible text-worlds. Finally, I briefly introduced the concept of resonance, or the echoing effect 'after reading'. Together, these elements will form the 'toolkit' that I use to analyze the emotional experience of horror fiction in Chapters 3 to 6.

Chapter 3

'Hail Satan!':

Anxiety, Atmosphere and Tone in

Rosemary's Baby

3.0 Preview

This chapter includes a detailed analysis of an extract from Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (1967). This analysis draws from elements discussed in previous chapters to illustrate how emotions can be triggered in horror fiction. I specifically focus on the emotion anxiety, and how readers may experience this while reading *Rosemary's Baby*. Atmosphere and tone are the cognitive-poetic phenomena considered in relation to reader anxiety in horror fiction. First, I summarize the concept of anxiety and consider how it can be usefully applied in cognitive-poetic analysis with atmosphere and tone. Second, I introduce Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* and consider why it is a suitable text to explore in terms of anxiety. Third, I give an overview of *Goodreads* reader responses to *Rosemary's Baby*. Drawing on the general emotional reactions in these responses, I then give a detailed introspective analysis of the experience of reading *Rosemary's Baby*.

3.1 Anxiety: *Pulvis et umbra sumus*/We are but dust and shadow

Before considering how anxiety can be triggered through stylistic features of horror texts, I will give a brief overview of the psychological background on this emotion. Anxiety and fear are related by both being negative emotions which signal a threat to the self (see Lazarus 1991), but anxiety is still its own concept. Characterized by a relatively high level of arousal, 'Anxiety is a state of unease about a distal, potentially negative outcome that is uncertain or unpredictable' (LaBar 2016: 751; see also Lake and LaBar 2011; Lang et al. 2000). As discussed in Chapter 2, it is generally acknowledged that negative emotions narrow the scope of attention while positive emotions broaden it (Huntsinger 2013; Oatley and Johnson-Laird 2014). Hunstinger (2013) and Harmon-Jones et al. (2013a, 2013b) claim that motivational intensity/goal pursuit is more important to attentional tuning than negative or positive valence. Anxiety, fear, and disgust all happen to be negative emotions that also have high motivational

intensity, so that distinction is not important to the discussion at hand. Eysenk et al. (2007: 336) claim, 'In addition to decreasing attentional control, anxiety increases attention to threat-related stimuli', which reflects the narrowing of attention commonly seen with anxiety. This decrease in attentional control refers to a stronger focus on the bottom-up, stimulus-driven system (senses) and a weaker focus on the top-down, goal-directed system (cognition). In stylistic terms, this could be mapped onto text comprehension in that there is a greater focus on bottom-up linguistic cues and a lesser focus on schematisation and world-building. According to Oakley (2009), selection for attention is a bottom-up process while sustaining attention is a top-down one. He suggests that it is 'perhaps best to think of detecting and sustaining as antagonistic forces that ensure balance between exogenous and endogenous control' (Oakley 2009: 31), where exogenous attention is automatic and endogenous attention is deliberate. Eysenk et al. (2007) suggest that anxiety can disrupt this balance. As Jeffries and McIntyre (2010: 127) discuss, a reader will simultaneously use top-down and bottom-up processing when reading a text. While I agree with Jeffries and McIntryre's assertion, I posit that Eysenk et al.'s suggestion that anxiety disrupts the balance of attentional control may mean that in reading, the presence of reader anxiety may unconsciously shift more attention onto textual features without conscious awareness. Undoubtedly, bottom-up processing is still at work when processing these textual features because in order for them to have an emotional effect, however elusive and tenuous, the reader's background knowledge must be drawn upon; however, this is not consciously done.

This unconscious feeling of anxiety while reading aligns with Oatley and Johnson-Laird's (2011: 425) definition of the emotion: a 'prolongation' of fear's mode, which is experienced in 'a free-floating, objectless way, and without it having any propositional content'. For example, you can say that you feel anxious and do not know why, without being able to give much more information on the feeling. I argue that most readers may be able to guess at why they feel anxious when reading a horror novel (as there is likely an expectation of negative emotions when reading horror, the reader may be primed to think something is going to go wrong in the story), but I do not believe that they would be able to identify all the textual cues that cohesively bring about feelings of anxiety. It is through a rigorous cognitive-poetic analysis that I aim to elucidate the textual features which may trigger anxiety.

I suggest that this decrease in attentional control correlates with deeper levels of reader immersion, while the increased attention to threat-related stimuli focuses the reader's attention on negative textual attractors, especially inherent negation and negatively connoted and associated lexis. Öhman et al. (2001) found that individuals with a phobia of snakes or spiders

were more likely to notice pictures of snakes or spiders in comparison to pictures of mushrooms and flowers, relative to a control group. It appears, then, that individual personality differences can heighten the general human predisposition to detect threat rapidly and efficiently. After reviewing various studies that found similar attentional bias amongst individuals with certain personality traits, Fox (2008: 233) concludes, 'In general then, there is substantial evidence that personality traits can influence the allocation of attention towards negative material, especially if people are also in an anxious mood state'. I believe there are also implications here for a literature context: as previously discussed, individual personality traits may affect readers' level of emotional involvement in and reaction to a text. Texts that use certain features, like negation discussed below, can potentially manipulate readers into certain moods, like anxiety or fear, which will enhance certain readers' predilection towards these negative emotions. For example, I propose that those who are already afraid of demons will find *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* to be more frightening than those who are not; this existing phobia, coupled with certain textual features that colour the atmosphere of the novel, may create 'an anxious mood state' which will in turn strengthen the demon phobia.

LaBar's and Oatley and Johnson-Laird's discussions on anxiety, along with Lazarus' (1991) core relational theme of anxiety (facing uncertain, existential threat) align with Asma's (2014) discussion of anxiety/angst as a meta version of fear, more existential in nature. Asma highlights examples of more metaphysical emotional responses to horror fiction: Poe's (1843) 'mortal terror', Heidegger's (1927) 'angst' (originally coined by Kierkegaard 1844), and Lovecraft's (1927) 'cosmic fear'. All of these instantiations of emotion have to do with the unknown and can be seen as equivalents to anxiety. Kierkegaard (1844), Heidegger and other existentialists claimed that there was a 'radical sort of human experience, which is like fear but in a way deeper' (Asma 2014: 956); this is angst, the German word for anxiety. Safranski (2002: 152) called anxiety 'a shadowy queen amongst moods', further suggesting its mysterious nature. Definite and observable (although sometimes categorially unclear) threats trigger the fear response; in contrast, angst does not accompany identifiable threats but rather makes us aware of our existential condition – Who am I? What is my place in the world? In this way, angst draws us away from the quotidian tasks of life and causes us to contemplate the emptiness, perhaps inviting us to open 'the secret door to the room you thought nobody knew of' (King 1981: 18). According to the existentialists, meditating on the emptiness through existential anxiety inevitably activates the deep-seated awareness of our own mortality (also called 'death anxiety' cf. Kesebir and Pyszczynski 2012), the groan of 'mortal terror' Poe speaks about in

'The Tell-Tale Heart': 'It was not a groan of pain or of grief – oh, no! – it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe' (2014: 204).

Lovecraft's 'cosmic fear' also draws upon the existential dread that comes from the unknown:

> Because we remember pain and the menace of death more vividly than pleasure, and because our feelings toward the beneficent aspects of the unknown have from the first been captured and formalised by conventional religious rituals, it has fallen to the lot of the darker and more maleficent side of cosmic mystery to figure chiefly in our popular supernatural folklore. This tendency, too, is naturally enhanced by the fact that uncertainty and danger are always closely allied; thus making any kind of an unknown world a world of peril and evil possibilities. When to this sense of fear and evil the inevitable fascination of wonder and curiosity is superadded, there is born a composite body of keen emotion and imaginative provocation whose vitality must of necessity endure as long as the human race itself. Children will always be afraid of the dark, and men with minds sensitive to hereditary impulse will always tremble at the thought of the hidden and fathomless worlds of strange life which may pulsate in the gulfs beyond the stars, or press hideously upon our own globe in unholy dimensions which only the dead and the moonstruck can glimpse.
>
> (Lovecraft 1973: 7)

Lovecraft's commentary above highlights why supernatural literature is important. He emphasises cosmic fear in a way that suggests anxiety as discussed above, relating in particular to the threat inherent in uncertainty. He also draws attention to the mixture of fear with 'the inevitable fascination of wonder and curiosity', seemingly paradoxical emotions which are common to the horror-reading experience. Finally, he focuses on the common primal fears shared by humans, what King (1981: 20) calls 'dreams of the mass subconscious', which drive the emotional experience of reading horror. Lovecraft's 'cosmic fear', or 'the weird', stresses the uncomfortable mystery of the unknown in literature:

> The one test of the really weird is simply this – whether or not there be excited in the reader a profound sense of dread, and of contact with unknown spheres and powers; a subtle attitude of awed listening, as if for the beating of black wings or the scratching of outside shapes and entities on the known universe's utmost rim. And of course, the more completely and unifiedly a story conveys this atmosphere, the better it is as a work of art in the given medium.
>
> (Lovecraft 1973: 7)

The mixture of dread with a 'subtle attitude of awed listening' relates to the mortal terror in Poe's 'soul when overcharged with awe'. The fusion of fear and amazement in the face of the unknown Lovecraft describes is key to the experience of anxiety in horror fiction. This dread, or anxiety that something is not quite right, that something is going to go wrong – but we are fascinated and can't quite look away – is common in horror fiction and is triggered by subtle

ambient textual cues. This chapter aims to explore the textual features in Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (1967) that trigger such a foreboding emotion in readers by using the cognitive-poetic concept of atmosphere and tone.

3.2 *Rosemary's Baby*: The beginning of an era

Rosemary's Baby (1967) marked the beginning of the demonic trend in horror fiction and film (Penzler 2010: vii– x). The film version is widely considered to be pivotal in the horror film genre for being the first major motion picture to depict the devil, as well as providing a novel sense of realism in the horror genre through Rosemary's 'humdrum' life in New York City (Spratford and Clausen 2004: 6; Zinoman 2011: 9). Palahniuk (2011) aptly named his introduction to *Rosemary's Baby*, 'The enemy is everywhere' – readers no longer had to travel to Transylvania to meet a monster; it could be found in their own homes. According to Pringle (1988: 103–5), 'Levin's frightening little book [...] triggered the whole modern boom in American horror fiction, making possible the success of William Peter Blatty's (much inferior) *The Exorcist* (1971), the Omen/Damien series of films, and the careers of novelists Stephen King and Peter Straub, among many others'. Because of these claims that *Rosemary's Baby* was a milestone in the horror genre and paved the way for Blatty's *The Exorcist* (although I do not agree with Pringle's assertion of its inferiority) and King's career, I am interested in exploring which textual and contextual features of *Rosemary's Baby* make it a horror classic and which may be similar to my other case-study texts, *The Exorcist* and King's *IT*.

As Palahniuk (2011: x) indicates in his introduction to Levin's 1967 novel, 'There are books which document the culture and books that create it, and *Rosemary's Baby* is both. Levin gave readers horror, politics, religion and comedy, all of it set where we live…' Therefore, *Rosemary's Baby* (1967) is commonly interpreted in terms of its historical context. Common historical interpretations of *Rosemary's Baby* include the novel as symbolic of the threat of Communism (see Aiello 2013) and a commentary on women's rights, specifically abortion rights (see Valerius 2005; Grixti 2014). Although I would say that these are valid interpretations of the novel, as Stockwell (2002: 76) indicates, 'critical approaches grounded in historical contexts can be seen as being more interested in history than the literature itself, treating a literary text as no more than an archaeological artefact'. While Aiello, Valerius, and Grixti illustrate the 'conscious' interpretation of the novel, I aim to show a different viewpoint: the so-called 'subconscious mind' (King 1981), or unconscious interpretation. By focusing on the text, I aim to show how the text itself, along with the reader's background information, can

trigger both primal emotions such as anxiety as well as conscious, context-driven interpretations.

Set in New York City, this novel tells the story of a young couple – Rosemary, a housewife, and her struggling actor husband Guy Woodhouse – who have just moved into the infamous Bramwell building, an apartment complex known for murders, suicides, and devil worship. Although they are warned of the building's troubling past by their friend Hutch, they decide to ignore his protests. The first part of the novel outlines Rosemary and Guy's hunt for the new apartment, and their subsequent moving and settling in to the Bramwell building. We learn that Rosemary is estranged from her family because she married Guy against their will. Rosemary wants to start having children, but Guy would like to become more established in his career first. The young couple are quickly welcomed by eccentric neighbours Minnie and Roman Castevet. Rosemary quickly makes friends with the Castevet's ward, Terry, who wears a strange charm around her neck that smells funny. Inexplicably, Terry commits suicide soon after. Initially, both Rosemary and Guy find the Castevets annoying and mock them; however, after Guy is invited to their apartment one evening, he stops ridiculing them and begins to spend a great deal of time with them. Minnie gives Terry's charm to Rosemary, telling her that it is good luck and that the strange smell is 'tannis root'. Not long after, Guy's acting rival suddenly goes blind, and Guy is offered his spot in a play. Excited to finally get his 'big break', Guy tells Rosemary he is ready to start trying for children. On the night they plan to conceive, Minnie brings over chocolate mousse for the couple. Finding that the mousse has an unpleasant aftertaste, Rosemary hides it in her napkin after only a few bites. She soon passes out. Following a disorienting dream/nightmare rape sequence, Rosemary awakes to find scratches all over her body. Guy explains that he did not want to miss the chance to conceive even though Rosemary had gone to sleep, and apologizes for his long nails.

Soon after, Rosemary finds that she is pregnant. Minnie insists that Rosemary goes to her obstetrician friend Dr Abraham Sapirstein; he tells Rosemary that Minnie will make her a daily drink including tannis root that will be good for the baby. The first trimester of Rosemary's pregnancy is very difficult – she suffers from severe abdominal pain and weight loss, and craves raw meat. Rosemary is miserable while Guy meanwhile gets his big acting break and starts to become famous. Seeing his friend looking so poorly, Rosemary's friend Hutch begins to do some research on tannis root. Inexplicably he goes into a coma soon after. Three months after falling into the coma, Hutch dies. Before his death, he awoke to give Rosemary a book on witchcraft with the cryptic message 'The name is an anagram'. Using a

Scrabble board, Rosemary figures out that Roman Castevet is an anagram for Steven Marcato, the son of a former Bramwell resident who was a suspected Satanist.

The novel tracks her increasing paranoia about her baby, her husband, and her neighbours. She eventually deduces that her obstetrician and her neighbours are part of a satanic cult, they want her baby for sinister purposes, and that Guy has been helping them in exchange for a successful acting career. Rosemary shares her fears with a different doctor who, thinking that she is delusional, calls Guy and Dr Sapirstein. They collect her from the doctor's office and she goes into labour. She is sedated by Dr Sapirstein, and when she awakes she finds that she has given birth; they tell her that the baby has died. Although they keep Rosemary sedated, she does not take her pill and is able to stay awake. She enters the Castevet's apartment through the secret door in her closet and shockingly discovers that she is wrong about why they used her; upon looking into the all-black bassinette in the middle of the room, she comes face-to-face with her yellow-eyed child. She learns that she has given birth to Satan's child, the antichrist, who the cult has named Adrian. Unbeknownst to Rosemary, Guy agreed to offer Rosemary's body to the Satanic cult next door in exchange for a successful acting career. In the end, she decides that the baby is still hers; she demands to be the baby's mother and that he be named Andy instead of Adrian. The cult eventually accepts this and 'Everyone else said "Hail Andrew" and "Hail Rosemary, mother of Andrew" and "Hail Satan"' (Levin 1967: 228).

Thematically, there are categorial mismatches which act to violate the safe space of family, friends, and marriage. Rosemary is unknowingly dealing with neighbours who are Satanists (this hopefully is an outlier in the neighbour schema) and a husband who offers his wife's body to gestate the antichrist (another abnormal description of husband behaviour). Rosemary's baby itself is an interstitial entity, as it can be considered as a type of vampire because it sucks the strength out of its mother. In this way, Valerius (2005: 131–2) draws comparisons between the undead and the unborn, claiming that both are liminal figures in that both have yet to cross a boundary (death for one and birth for that other) and they both require a living being for sustenance. Rosemary's child can be considered both her unborn son for whom she has anxiously awaited and an evil being that is supposed to rule the human race. Once the baby is born, it violates categorial norms by combining features of an infant human with that of a demon – the baby has claws and yellow eyes.

Rosemary's Baby combines elements of everyday life with undertones of paranoia about unspeakable betrayal, allowing for a great deal of anxious tension throughout the novel. The novel is very short and manages to say little while implying a lot. I argue that these implications, coupled with the reader not being sure whether Rosemary is hysterical or actually being

persecuted by her husband and neighbours, creates an unnerving atmosphere. The following section considers some of the common responses to *Rosemary's Baby* on *Goodreads*. Drawing on readers' emotional responses to the novel, I then offer a detailed stylistic analysis of passages from the book to show how such emotions are triggered.

3.3 Reader Experiences of Anxiety in *Rosemary's Baby*

With the objective of gaining insight into the emotional responses of readers of *Rosemary's Baby* on *Goodreads*, I collected the 100 most recent reviews on the novel and identified the common themes in the data (for full methodology, see section 1.3). The responses in this dataset will be identified as follows: RB#response. The following table lists the NVivo nodes that I collated from my original 100+ tags of the *Goodreads* data.

Node	# of respondents tagged/100
1. Author	19
2. Book quotes	4
3. Characters	17
4. Classic	20
5. Discourse-world affected/resonance	17
6. Dream sequence	3
7. Exclamations/Interjections	19
8. Film	26
9. Historical period	16
10. Knowledge base	54
11. Direct negative emotion	32
12. Indirect negative emotion	54
13. Plot and narrative	27
14. Direct positive emotion	23
15. Indirect positive emotion	39
16. Quick read	16
17. Readerly processes	26
18. Reader recommendation	16
19. The ending	30
20. Themes	13

21. Writing style	24

Table 3.1: Nodes tagged in Rosemary's Baby

Although emotional responses were prevalent throughout all of the above nodes, I aimed to further categorize them for ease of analysis. Many responses fit into several nodes, illustrating the richness of the data available for me to analyze. Because my goal for this chapter is to focus on the negative emotion anxiety, I paid particular attention to responses which encoded negative emotion. Several of the remaining nodes, particularly those which share characteristics with others across my *Goodreads* horror datasets *IT* and *The Exorcist* (e.g. Knowledge base), will be discussed together in Chapter 6. From the 21 nodes, I collated the relevant emotional responses into categories of 'Direct negative emotion' and 'Indirect negative emotion'. As described in section 1.3.1, I propose that 'direct' negative emotional responses are those in which the reviewer expresses negative feelings using first-person pronouns (e.g. 'I was terrified.' or 'This book terrified me.'). I also labelled 'exclamations' as direct responses because I suggest that they encode more direct emotional information about the speaker; this will be explained in greater depth in Chapter 6. Those which are labelled as 'indirect' involve responses where the reviewer encodes emotion through indirect means which do not include first-person reference and use emotive adjectives and nouns (e.g. 'This book was terrifying.'). Although both types deal with readerly emotion, I consider that direct emotional responses *may* suggest a stronger emotional reaction than indirect ones, as readers place more emphasis on themselves, the experiencers of the emotion. This is not necessarily the case, though, as I cannot ask the readers directly about their depth of emotional reaction. In addition, the prevalence of indirect emotional language appears to be more frequent than direct responses. I hypothesize that this could be due the particular writing style of respondents, or the possible tendency of reviewers to distance themselves slightly from their negative emotional reactions; again, without being able to directly ask the reviewers, it is impossible to know. It is also important to note that respondents often encoded both direct and indirect responses in one review.

For the purposes of this chapter, I will be focusing on the direct and indirect negative responses which relate to anxiety or fear, as these emotions can have some overlap. Below is a breakdown of the anxiety-related direct and indirect negative emotional responses to *Rosemary's Baby*.

Breakdown of anxiety-related 'Direct negative emotion' responses 28 tags across 32 sources

Name of Tag	# of tags
Exclamation	17
Creeps/creeped out	2
Horror/Horrific	2
Chills	1
Disgust	1
Fearful	1
Repulsed	1
Spooked	1
Unsettled	1
Willies	1
Breakdown of anxiety-related 'Indirect negative emotion' responses 59 tags across 54 sources	
Name of Tag	# of tags
Suspense	12
Creepy	10
Scary	10
Disturbing	4
Dark	3
Horrible/horrific	3
Sinister	2
Spooky	2
Tension	2
Terrifying	2
A feminist nightmare	1
Absolutely deplorable	1
Claustrophobic	1
Nerve-wracking feel	1
Shocking	1
Strangeness	1
Twisted	1
Uncomfortable	1
Uneasiness	1

Table 3.2: Breakdown of anxiety-related responses to Rosemary's Baby

Between both the direct and indirect negative emotional responses, almost all of the tags deal with emotions that in some way have to do with unease (claustrophobic; creepy, the creeps, creeped out; chills; fearful; nerve-wracking feel; spooked, spooky; tension; uncomfortable; uneasiness; unsettled; the willies), the mysterious (suspense; dark; sinister; strangeness; twisted), and reactions as the unknown becomes known (exclamations; horror, horrible, horrific; disgusted/repulsed; scary; disturbing; terrifying; nightmare; deplorable; shocking). The first two groups, 'unease' and 'mysterious', contain emotive language that can be linked to feelings of anxiety in relation to a foreboding outcome that is unknown, as discussed above in section 3.1. I posit that these emotions occur from readers reacting to textual clues embedded within the narrative. The third group is related to reactions to that sinister conclusion as readers experience it – in this case, when readers find out that Rosemary's enemies are her husband and neighbours, and that she has given birth to a demon child.

The lexis tagged in the table above appears to relate to the ambient quality of *Rosemary's Baby*. I found grouping these tags to be difficult because so many of them have fuzzy semantic boundaries (e.g. something creepy can be sinister, but sinister is generally considered more evil than creepy). As Stockwell (2013: 354) says of atmosphere and tone, though, they 'are collectively a matter not so much of denotational semantic value as connotative or associative effects'. Because of the wide range of connotative and associative effects that each reader may associate with a word, it is difficult to know exactly how readers will interpret it. Therefore, I will analyze these reader responses in greater depth below. I will begin with the responses related to creepiness or unease first before I go on to consider responses related to suspense.

3.3.1 Creepiness

In the direct and indirect emotional responses, many respondents used the concept of creepiness to describe *Rosemary's Baby*. This and many of the related adjectives (spooky, disturbing, uncomfortable, etc.) and noun phrases (uneasiness, nerve-wracking feel) deal with subtle emotional reactions that are difficult to quantify and discuss. These emotional reactions are more esoteric than being directly scared by a specific image in a text. A pervading sense of creepiness throughout a text is more difficult to explain than the fear possibly felt at reading a vivid description of someone being murdered, for example. Stockwell's concept of ambience is useful in unpacking the associations of adjectives like 'creepy'.

Twitchell claims that:

> To understand the meaning of 'horror' we are initially taken back to the Latin word horrēre, which means 'to bristle', and it describes the way the nape hair stands on end during moments of shivering excitement. In fact, the shiver we associate with horror is the result of the constriction of the skin that firms up the subcutaneous hair follicles and thus accounts for the rippling sensation, almost as if a tremor were fluttering down out back. From this comes the most appropriate trope for horror – creeping flesh or, more simply, the 'creeps'.
>
> (Twitchell 1985: 10)

Because readers focused in particular on the 'creepiness' of *Rosemary's Baby*, I argue that this novel is successful in meeting Lovecraft's requirements for 'the weird'/'cosmic fear'. Twitchell's description of the 'creeps' above involves the physiological response to fear, an emotion seen as negative, while simultaneously including a 'shivering excitement', a state generally seen as positive. Lovecraft, Kierkegaard's, and Heidegger's views of anxiety, not to mention Poe's 'mortal terror', all consider the negative element of the emotion as well as the awe and fascination inherent in it. This again mirrors the horror-reading experience, which is comprised of negative (e.g. anxiety) and positive emotions (e.g. interest, enjoyment) at once. Furthermore, the focus on the bodily sensation of this emotion highlights the embodied nature of emotion. I will consider this emotional effect in terms of direct and indirect responses. The references to creepiness are underlined below.

3.3.1.1 Direct Negative Emotion

1. This is an extremely scary, eerie book that, I must admit, truly gave me the willies. (RB24)

2. Great scary read for Halloween that gave me the creeps throughout. (RB74)

3. I don't usually get scared by stories with a supernatural twist as my pragmatist self has trouble suspending disbelief, but this one spooked me anyway, somehow. The tension was just constant throughout the novel, even when things seemed mostly fine. (RB65)

4. I just feel it was rushed in places and slow in some but I was still entertained, repulsed, fearful so it was effective, I just found it hard to connect to it fully. (RB72)

5. I was surprised by how unsettled I felt throughout as I flipped back and forth between thinking she was insane or in a dubious plot. (RB71)

6. I remember reading it and feeling - more than horror, which is there all right - an overwhelming sense of disgust. (RB23)

7. the 'dream' scene I found horrific (RB40)

8. Fun read. Read it all in one day, which is the way to go on this one; allowed me to get and stay in the mood of the book. Loved the growing tension and the ending which... well, I won't say anything about the ending. Good for an easy, fun, tantalizing read. (RB21)

9. I see why this classic is so...classic. I mean, it's horrible, exactly late '60s in writing style, dialogue, gender roles and more, and it's wonderful dated and un-PC, but oh, it gives you good chills with your dose of nostalgia, as the horror elements still stand up to time. (RB95)

10. If you've seen the movie, you know the plot, but the book gives you more time to be creeped out by Rosemary's nosy and meddling neighbors and the increasing evidence of her husband's disloyalty. (RB64)

11. you are drawn into this place that is dark and sinister. (RB98)

As evidenced in the list above, some responses with direct negative emotion talked about the text giving them something – 'the willies', 'the creeps', 'chills'. All three of these metaphors deal with bodily responses to emotion, especially in terms of touch (e.g. 'chills' deal with feeling cold abruptly, 'creeps'/'willies' to me call to mind things moving on my skin), which aligns with Twitchell's description of 'the creeps'.

Within the direct and indirect negative emotional responses, a cline of emotional intensity can be traced. Starting at the top, I suggest that more intense emotional responses are marked by the use of first-person pronouns and the text as the agent of the emotion. For example, numbers 1–3 above put the 'eerie book', 'great scary read', and 'this one [story]', respectively, in the subject position, while respondents in 1 and 2 are the indirect objects receiving 'the willies' and 'the creeps' and the reader in 3 is the direct object of the verb 'spooked' (3). I posit that these grammatical placements reflect the readers' feelings of emotional immersion in the text – they are not choosing to feel a certain way; it is being done *to* them. Examples 4–8 still use first person, but the respondents in 4–7 put themselves in the subject position and are reacting to the book, as opposed to the book giving the emotion directly. The readers in examples 9–11 speak generally about the emotional reactions using 'you'. Here, the description of emotion is direct in that a reader is described as experiencing an emotional action (e.g. being 'creeped out'), but by describing either a general reader or an implied *Goodreads* user who is reading the review, these respondents could be seen distance themselves slightly from this emotional reaction, or they may be attempting to engender empathy with their imagined *Goodreads* audience. While it can be inferred that RB64 (10) experienced similar emotions herself – otherwise, how could she make this 'creeped out' claim? – the intensity of this description is still arguably weaker than a direct 'the book creeped *me*

out'. I suggest that responses such as this which use second-person address as opposed to first-person (direct) or general emotive language (indirect) can be situated in between the two categories, although I would argue are still considered direct because of the emotional description requiring a reader as the subject or object. Responses 8 and 11 refer to readerly motion – 'you are drawn into this place that is dark and sinister' (11), where the text draws the reader in, suggesting this reader felt transported and 'g[o]t and stay[ed] in the mood of the book' (8), which suggests the reader immersing herself in the mood or atmosphere of the book. Next, I will consider the indirect responses to creepiness.

3.3.1.2 Indirect Negative Emotion

1. Super creepy! (RB2)
2. This book was so creepy. (RB16)
3. It is creepy and paced wonderfully, without being a gore-fest or going for the grossout. (RB17)
4. Creepy! …An ordinary couple, doing ordinary things...but there is a sense of (pardon the pun) brooding and foreboding that ramps up to a mind splitting paranoia as Rosemary slowly unravels her neighbour's intentions. (RB32)
5. Oooooooh this book is CREEEEEEEEEPY!... I, personally, found that this book overall was very reminiscent of the Truman Capote book Breakfast at Tiffany's, but if Breakfast at Tiffany's was creepy….Did I mention that this book is creepy? There are early signs of strangeness that draw you in to suggest something more sinister at play than a happy young couple simply moving into the apartment of their dreams.... but the actual ending is even creepier. (RB38)
6. Awesome. Subtle. Creepy fun (RB62)
7. Not nearly as scary in 2015, especially since I don't believe in the devil. But the story was very engaging and creepy in its own way. (RB77)
8. Gah, so creepy! I want to give it two stars because I hated it so much, but I hated it because it was so creepy. So, um, I guess job well done? (RB92)
9. Couldn't put the book down. Creepy and well written. (RB99)
10. A disturbing and claustrophobic novel as good as the movie by Polanski starred by Mia Farrow (RB73)
11. Disturbing. Her husband was so easily willing to sell out his wife to advance his career. (RB31)
12. Rosemary's Baby is sinister. It's masterful story-telling, deliciously disturbing, and in many ways it reminds me of The Omen movie where you can sense the malevolence of devilish little Damien long before such wickedness blatantly reveals itself.

Rosemary's Baby hides nothing by way of clues. They are all there, plain as day, for anyone to see, almost from the beginning when Hutch tries to raise the alarm, and the only ones ignoring the warning signs are Rosemary and Guy. That device by author Ira Levin, letting his audience/reader anticipate what might be ahead, makes the story all the more horrific because, like in a pantomime, we are screaming 'it's behind you' but we know that Guy and Rosemary aren't listening, especially Rosemary. (RB 55)

13. **4 Spooky Stars!** … Rosemary's Baby is a **dark** story about Satanism, witchcraft, and also betrayals and manipulations, where nobody can be trusted. (RB37, bold emphasis by respondent)The atmosphere of this story, however, and the overall tone and originality of it (at least for the time) lends it a seriously nerve-wracking feel. (RB24)Twisted. Great book. Starts slow but gets increasingly more manic and twisted. Rosemary is kind of foolish but the people around her...wow. all I can say (RB56)

14. As uncomfortable and frustrating as Rosemary's journey is in this book, it is one of the more fun horror/thrillers I've ever read (RB47)

15. As with any written form of horror, the ambition is not to outright scare you, but rather leave you with an after taste of uneasiness. Authors of Horror either strew painful images across the book, or build to a big shocking ending. This book chooses the latter approach. (RB93)

In addition to the mentions of 'creepiness' which relate to a bodily emotional response where the skin moves, 'the creeps', there are other instances of spatial and movement references. Responses 10 and 14 refer to the novel as a space – it is 'a disturbing and claustrophobic novel', which suggests an uncomfortable enclosed space (10) and the story has an 'atmosphere' (14) which gives the story a 'nerve-wracking feel'. Responses 15 and 17 also treat the text as a space, but they include references to motion within that space. Response 15 refers to the motion of the story, that is, the pace – 'starts slow but gets increasingly more manic and twisted'. Response 17 deals with authorial motion – 'Authors of horror either strew painful images across the book, or build up to a big shocking ending', where Levin is not as scattering 'painful images' but rather 'building' a shocking ending, calling to mind the physical increase of textual features which will lead to a shocking conclusion. All of these references to space and motion can be construed as contributing to the ambience of *Rosemary's Baby*. The emotive adjectives describing the ambient space in this novel relate in particular to the creepiness/unease inherent in anxiety.

Responses 1–3, 7–10, 14, and 16 claim the book is creepy or uncomfortable, but do not provide information in their responses for why they feel this way. I posit that this illustrates how difficult it is to pinpoint exactly why you feel creeped out reading this novel because the 'creepy' elements are subtly encoded in the text. Response 6 gives further description to the sense of creepiness as subtle, but does not expand on how this is done. In responses 4, 5, and

12, the readers give more specific information about how unpleasant elements are present in the characters' everyday life. For example, in response 4, the reviewer points to 'brooding and foreboding that ramps up to a mind splitting paranoia' that occurs against the backdrop of 'an ordinary couple, doing ordinary things'. Responses 5 and 12 illustrate how readers draw upon emotional schemata in their knowledge bases to experience the novel, with response 15 enacting looser associations (Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, but if it were creepy) and response 12 using her horror schema (Damien in *The Omen* film). These responses, similarly to response 4, describe the juxtaposition of weird elements and everyday life, with signs 'of strangeness that draw you in to suggest something more sinister' (5), drawing parallels between 'sens[ing] the malevolence of devilish little Damien long before such wickedness blatantly reveals itself' (12), and Levin dropping clues throughout *Rosemary's Baby* for his readers to anticipate the ending. Responses 11, 13, and 15 exemplify knowledge about the ending of the book to account for its emotional effect – Guy being willing to betray his wife for his career (11), 'Satanism, witchcraft, and also betrayals and manipulations' (13), and the characters' foolishness (15). Response 13 further suggests an emotional reaction by using the graphological feature of bolding to draw attention to the unpleasant aspects by literally darkening them– **spooky** and **dark**. Finally, response 17 suggests that the unease is caused by building tension which results in a shocking ending. All of these responses show the different ways in which readers expressed their feelings of being creeped out. Although certain readers pointed out elements which add to the sense of unease – a sense of malevolence amidst daily routines and the slow-building tension – not much was said in terms of how this is specifically achieved. I therefore aim to use stylistic analysis to illustrate how these emotions are triggered through specific textual features. Before beginning my introspective analysis, I will turn my attention to the 'mysterious' side of anxiety – suspense.

3.3.2 Suspense

Below are a sample of mixed direct and indirect emotional responses which encoded suspense. These are considered in terms of the mysterious, unknown aspects of anxiety. Language related to suspense is underlined.

1. I will say it had a lot of surprises for me and <u>kept me on the edge of my seat</u>, so I can see why it turned into a classic horror movie as well. Just beware if you hear some strange chanting in or near your abode. Make sure you know your neighbors, let alone your own husband and always keep a scrabble board around (RB74)

2. It definitely keeps you on the edge of your seat & it had a lot of twists that you wouldn't have expected. (RB78)

3. And while it's not hard to figure out what's what, the narrative still manages to be tight with atmospheric suspense. (RB7)

4. A sensational chiller! Suspense builds as poor Rosemary is suffocated with isolation. Who can she trust? A psychological and supernatural horror that shouldn't be missed. One of the all time greats (RB1)

5. an example of how the description of seemingly mundane tasks and routines and lives can build suspense. (RB20)

6. Rosemary's Baby is a good suspenseful book that set the standard for a whole genre of creepy horror and occult themed stories (RB100)

7. Astounding novel. Vivid, suspenseful, and easily the classiest horror story I have ever read. (RB25)

Again, the responses are arranged on a cline of emotional intensity. The first two responses can be considered more direct emotional responses because they describe the suspense by referring to bodily experiencing it in first person (1) and the general 'you' second person (2) in terms of being 'kept on the edge of my/your seat', a metaphorical phrase which deals with the body, location, and movement (or lack thereof). Responses 3–5 also deal with suspense in relation to space and movement. The narrative is 'tight with atmospheric suspense' (3), suggesting that there is a permeating fog of uncertainty even though some of the narrative clues are quite obvious. Responses 4 and 5 deal with suspense building, suggesting progression generally, and with response 5 commenting on the description of everyday life being the agent of this progression. Finally, responses 6 and 7 indirectly describe suspense as a feature of the book without qualification. These responses show the range of emotional descriptions of suspense in *Rosemary's Baby*, with certain reviews suggesting more emotional intensity than others.

I claim that the readers' description of suspense meets Lovecraft's requirement for the 'subtle attitude of awed listening, as if for the beating of black wings or the scratching of outside shapes and entities on the known universe's utmost rim', except in this novel's case, the readers are waiting to discover who Rosemary's enemies are, if she truly has any at all. The anticipation readers experienced contributed to the sense of anxiety that pervades this novel.

Based on the reader responses I examined in relation to creepiness and suspense, the unease and mystery that readers experience when reading *Rosemary's Baby*, often described in relation to space and motion, appear to come from the juxtaposition of unpleasantness against

the background of everyday life. The following section seeks to stylistically analyze excerpts from the text to ascertain how such anxiety-related feelings are triggered through linguistic features.

3.4 Analysis Part I – Creepiness

As evidenced in the *Goodreads* data above, many readers found *Rosemary's Baby* to be creepy and suspenseful, which I argue suggests that the novel has an anxious atmosphere. The following analysis aims to show how this atmosphere is achieved linguistically. One respondent said, 'Rosemary's Baby hides nothing by way of clues. They are all there, plain as day, for anyone to see, almost from the beginning' (RB55). While this respondent says that the obvious clues start with Hutch's warning to Rosemary and Guy, stylistic evidence suggests that subtler clues can be found even earlier in the novel, when the couple first visit the Bram. Take, for example, this extract where Rosemary is inspecting the apartment for the first time:

> Opposite the kitchen was the dining room or second bedroom, which Mrs. Gardenia had apparently used as a combination study and greenhouse. Hundreds of small plants, dying and dead, stood on jerry-built shelves under spirals of unlighted fluorescent tubing; in their midst a rolltop desk spilled over with books and papers. A handsome desk it was, broad and gleaming with age. Rosemary left Guy and Mr. Micklas talking by the door and went to it, stepping over a shelf of withered brown fronds. Desks like this were displayed in antique-store windows; Rosemary wondered, touching it, if it was one of the things that could be had practically for the asking. Graceful blue penmanship on mauve paper said *than merely the intriguing pastime I believed it to be. I can no longer associate myself* – and she caught herself snooping and looked up at Mr. Micklas turning from Guy.
> […]
> He stopped short, looking at a mahogany secretary at the head of the central hallway. 'That's odd,' he said. 'There's a closet behind that secretary. I'm sure there is. There are five: two in the bedroom, one in the second bedroom, and two in the hallway, there and there.' He went closer to the secretary.
>
> Guy stood high on tiptoes and said, 'You're right. I can see the corners of the door.'
>
> 'She moved it,' Rosemary said. 'The secretary; it used to be there.' She pointed to a peaked silhouette left ghost-like on the wall near the bedroom door, and the deep prints of four ball feet in the burgundy carpet. Faint scuff-trails curved and crossed from the four prints to the secretary's feet where they stood now against the narrow adjacent wall.
>
> (Levin 1967: 7–9)

Cleverly, the opening chapter of *Rosemary's Baby* gives enough signs about the story's climax for the readers to piece together as more information becomes available throughout the narrative. Including these subtle (and some not-so-subtle) hints helps to prime readers for a

'creepy' experience. The somewhat sinister atmosphere against the backdrop of 'normal' apartment life in New York City is established through negation. At the point in the story in the above extract, we know that the apartment's previous tenant, Mrs. Gardenia, died after falling into a coma.

Various types of negation darken the atmosphere. Lexical items which are inherently negative – 'dying and dead', 'withered brown fronds', 'silhouette left ghost-like' – suggest death and decay, reminding us of the previous tenant's death. Especially apt are the references to plant death ('small plants, dying and dead', 'withered brown fronds'), as the deceased Lily Gardenia herself shares a name with two flowers, the first of which is commonly associated with funerals. Interestingly, both white lilies and gardenias are also often connected with the idea of innocence and purity; because Mrs. Gardenia is dead, this innocence is negated but leaves an aura-like impression. The 'ghost-like' shadow of the secretary may also reference Mrs. Gardenia's ghost-like presence in her apartment – her things are still all there, and we even get to hear her speak through her diary, alerting us that there is something she could no longer associate herself with. Collectively, these references also foreshadow the imminence of further death.

There is also morphological negation ('unlighted), ('I can no longer associate myself'), and what Nahajec (2012: 128) calls a peripheral semantic form of quasi-negation ('narrow'). There are also various instances of visual lacunae – 'spilled', 'silhouette', 'deep prints' and 'scuff-trails', as well as the secretary literally blocking the closet from view. These lacunae, as well as the negation discussed above, create a sense of felt absence in the reader, which is 'resonant of gaps and indeterminacy' (McLoughlin 2013: 222). The reader may feel 'delicate and rarefied perception[s]' (Stockwell 2011: 43) such as the anxiety-related emotive language discussed in the *Goodreads* data – a sense of creepiness, mystery, unease, etc. In addition to inherent negation, there are lexical items which have possible negative connotations (e.g. 'jerry-built', 'odd', 'snooping') and negative looser associations (e.g. 'burgundy' might call to mind dried blood, suggesting injury or death).

Throughout the narrative, the action invites the reader to think back to these original negative clues. Midway through the story, after getting a bit too involved in investigating Rosemary's neighbours, her friend Hutch falls into a similar coma as Mrs. Gardenia suffered, and he dies as well. At the end of the story, although the information is not explicitly stated, we piece together that Mrs. Gardenia was part of the satanic cult next door (this is the '*intriguing pastime*' she refers to her in her diary) and specifically she grew the tannis root for them (hence all the plants in her apartment). When she no longer wanted to be a part of it (as stated in her

diary), she had a 'falling out with the Castevets' (30) and moved the secretary in front of the closet which connects her apartment to that of the neighbours. Based on the size of the secretary and the effort it would have taken her to move it, we can infer that Mrs. Gardenia was very frightened of her neighbours. The coven then cast a spell to put her into a coma, which eventually killed her. When Rosemary discovers how spells are cast in the witchcraft book, she realizes how her neighbours must have cursed Hutch by taking one of his belongings. We can infer that this same thing befell Mrs. Gardenia, as upon hearing about Hutch's coma, Minnie says 'I hope it doesn't turn out the way it did for poor Lily Gardenia' (129). Many clues to this information are encoded into a short passage at the very beginning of the novel, unconsciously preparing the reader for the unpleasantness ahead by engendering an uneasy ambience from the very beginning. The above analysis illustrates how negation and other negatively oriented lexis are used to create a sense of creepiness throughout the book. Using Text World Theory, the following analysis focuses on how this creepiness coupled with suspense is built into horror in the dream/nightmare/rape sequence.

3.5 Analysis Part II – '*This is no dream*': Suspense and Rosemary's Nightmare

The following analysis focuses on the iconic dream/nightmare/rape sequence in *Rosemary's Baby*. Described by Latham (2007: 611) as 'kitschy surrealism', this rape episode is told through a dream sequence that constantly switches back and forth between Rosemary's dream/nightmare and the originating text-world. Because this scene is told through a dream/nightmare, it is useful to draw on Giovanelli's (2013) *dream world* and *nightmare world* additions to Text World Theory. In his work on dreams and nightmares in Keats' poetry, Giovanelli (2013: 110) claims that dreaming and its associative states are modalised constructions because they are 'attitudinal, guided by the emotional concerns of the conceptualiser, and represent different degrees of closeness to reality'. Drawing on Hartmann's (1998) continuum of dreams, as well as Gavins' (2005) work on modality, he outlines a continuum of dreaming, where *desire worlds* are triggered through focused waking thought, *dream worlds* are activated through daydreaming (type A) and complete sleep dreaming (type B), and *nightmare worlds* are an extreme type of dream world (Giovanelli 2013: 73). Using research on negative emotional dreams from sleep medicine, psychology and neuroscience, he proposes that the characteristics of the nightmare world are its intrinsic world-switching properties due to waking triggers; dependence on distinct and intense emotions; and its subsequent ripple effect felt when the dreamer wakes (Giovanelli 2013: 111–119). Giovanelli accounts for

inherent negativity in the nightmare world by adapting Text World Theory's account of negation. He suggests that negation functions as a form of conceptual contrast which is felt when the reader crosses world edges through world-switching. Finally, he argues that the nightmare world emulates the powerful nightmare experience in the text, a feat which contributes to the work's texture. This analysis utilizes Giovanelli's terminology to account for the building horror in Rosemary's nightmare experience.

The scene begins with Rosemary eating drugged mousse (which her neighbour Minnie calls 'mouse') that was given to her by the neighbours, who she does not yet know are Satanists. Rosemary did not finish the mousse because she thought it tasted strange; therefore, she is not completely drugged, which accounts for the movement between her states of dreaming and being awake. We see Rosemary start to lose agency when 'the first wave of dizziness caught Rosemary' and 'The second wave came as she was hanging up the dish towel' in the kitchen (Levin 1967: 78, all subsequent references to this edition). She is the object of the action, but has no agency herself. Hereafter, Rosemary is described in terms of relational processes, but no longer has any material processes. Guy puts her to bed, which 'was a raft that floated on gentle ripples, tilting and swaying pleasantly' (1967: 79). This marks the first point of entry into the dream world, which can be seen in Figure 3.1 below (n.b. In Figure 3.1, TW1 and DW1 are diagrammatically represented more than once to show the evolution of these worlds as the discourse proceeds). At this point, the reader may think that this is merely a metaphor (which is realized as a blended metaphor world in Text World Theory); however, the world-switch is soon updated to a complete dream world with "'Just a nap,'' she said, and was sitting with a drink in her hand on President Kennedy's yacht' (1967: 79). Here, Rosemary creates a safe space for herself, a dream world where the raft becomes a luxury boat. From here, there are abrupt world-switches back to the originating text-world, where Guy is taking off Rosemary's clothes, piece by piece. The switches back to the text-world appear to be triggered by the movement of Rosemary's undressing, however switches back into the dream world are preceded by connectives such as 'and' and 'but'. The more sinister Guy's actions in the originating text-world become (from taking off sleeping Rosemary's top to taking off her wedding ring), the more negation starts to creep into the dream world. The dream world appears to undergo enactor evolution between world-switches – what begins as Rosemary, President Kennedy, and a ship mate expands with the addition of Jacqueline Kennedy,

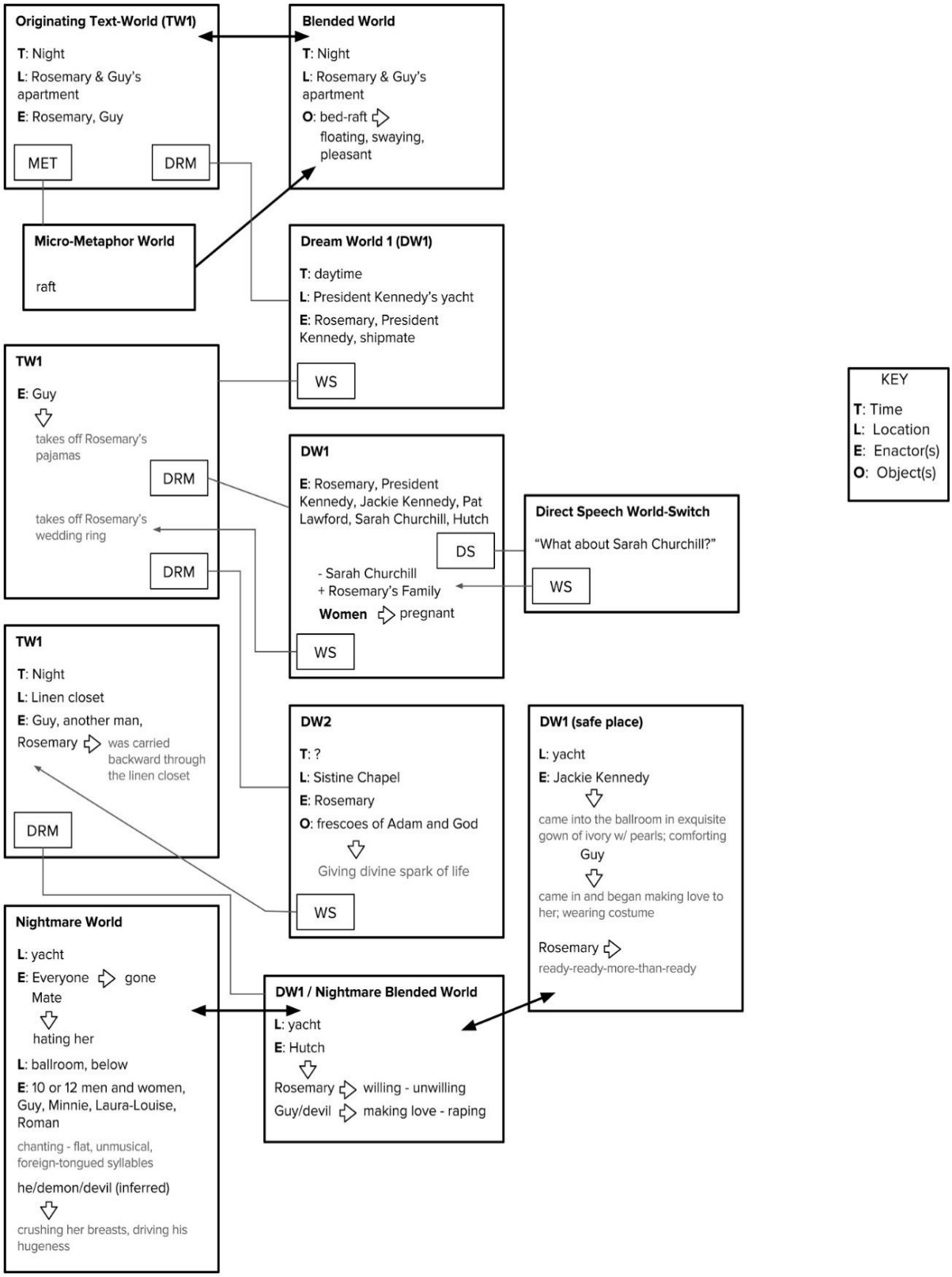


Figure 3.1: Text-Worlds of dream/nightmare scene

Rosemary's friend Hutch, and two celebrities from the 60s. Right before Guy removes Rosemary's wedding ring, the celebrities are gone; in their place are Rosemary's family – all of the women are pregnant. The use of 'gone' here is our first instance of inherent negation, and the pregnancies may be priming the reader for Rosemary's pregnancy to come. This is also foreshadowing for the conception that is going to take place soon. Following Guy's removal of her wedding ring, there is a world-switch to a second dream world, where Rosemary is alone in the Sistine Chapel. Here, she contemplates Michelangelo's frescos of God and Adam, where God is 'giving him the divine spark of life' (1967: 80). Again, we have the allusion to birth here. In addition, introducing the 'glorious' frescos in the Sistine Chapel will provide a sharp contrast for the satanic ritual to follow. From this dream world, the reader is abruptly pulled back into the originating text-world with the semicolon followed by 'and' causing a world-switch:

> She saw God extending his finger to Adam, giving him the divine spark of life; and the underside of a shelf partly covered with gingham contact paper as she was carried backward through the linen closet. 'Easy,' Guy said, and another man said, 'You've got her too high.'
>
> (1967: 80)

Here, the object of Rosemary's gaze abruptly changes from a painting of God to the underside of her linen closet. She is no longer alone, but is being carried backward (another instance of inherent negation) by her husband and another man. Here, I began to get even more worried for Rosemary because of the presence of an additional man. In addition, we are given another clue by mention of the shelf covered 'with gingham contact paper'. The shelf was mentioned earlier when Rosemary and Guy discover the linen closet after moving Mrs Gardenia's secretary and again when Rosemary covers the shelves with gingham contact paper. The mention of the paper suggests that she is being carried through this closet. This may trigger warning bells for those who remember that Mrs. Gardenia purposefully blocked off this closet for some reason.

The following world-switch back to the dream world is full of inherent negation and negatively connoted and associated lexis. Consider the nightmare world depicted below.

Key

- inherent negation is **emboldened**
- morphological negation is **emboldened and underlined**
- syntactic negation **emboldened and double-underlined**
- negatively connoted lexis is **emboldened and dashed-underlined**

- loose negatively associated lexis is **emboldened and wave-underlined**
- positive emotive language underlined

'**Typhoon**!' Hutch shouted from the dock amid all his weather-forecasting equipment. '**Typhoon!!** It **killed** fifty-five people in London and it's heading this way!' And Rosemary knew he was right. She must **warn** the President. The ship was heading for **disaster.**

But the President was **gone**. Everyone was **gone**. The deck was infinite and **bare**, except for, **far** away, the **Negro** mate holding the wheel **unremittingly** on its course.

Rosemary went to him and saw at once that he **hated** all white people, **hated** her. 'You'd better go **down below**, Miss,' he said, courteous but **hating** her, **not even waiting** to hear the **warning** she had brought.

Below was a huge ballroom where on one side a church **burned fiercely** and on the other a **black**-bearded man stood **glaring** at her. In the center was a bed. She went to it and lay down, and was suddenly surrounded by **naked** men and women, ten or a dozen, with Guy among them. They were elderly, the women **grotesque** and **slack-breasted**. Minnie and her friend Laura-Louise were there, and Roman in a **black** miter and **black** silk robe. With a thin **black** wand, he was drawing designs on her body, dipping the wand's point in a cup of **red** held for him by a sun-browned man with a white moustache. The point moved back and forth across her stomach and **down** ticklingly to the insides of her thighs. The **naked** people were **chanting – flat, unmusical, foreign-tongued** syllables – and a flute or clarinet accompanied them. 'She's awake, she sees!' Guy whispered to Minnie. He was large-eyed, **tense**. 'She ***don't*** **see**,' Minnie said. 'As long as she ate the **mouse** she **can't see nor hear**. She's like **dead**. Now sing.'

Jackie Kennedy came into the ballroom in an exquisite gown of ivory satin embroidered with pearls. 'I'm so **sorry** to hear you **aren't feeling well**,' she said, hurrying to Rosemary's side.

Rosemary explained about the **mouse-bite**, minimizing it so Jackie **wouldn't worry**.

'You'd better have your legs **tied down**,' Jackie said, 'in case of **convulsions**.'

'Yes, I suppose so,' Rosemary said. 'There's always a chance it was **rabid**.' She watched with interest as white-smocked interns **tied** her legs, and her arms too, to the four bedposts.

'If the music **bothers** you,' Jackie said, 'let me know and I'll have it **stopped**.'

'Oh, **no**,' Rosemary said. 'Please **don't change** the program on my account. It **doesn't bother** me at all, really it **doesn't**.'

Jackie smiled warmly at her. 'Try to sleep,' she said. 'We'll be waiting up on deck.' She **withdrew**, her satin gown whispering.

Rosemary slept a while, and then Guy came in and began making love to her. He stroked her with both hands – a long, relishing stroke that began at her **bound** wrists, slid **down** over her arms, breasts, and loins, and became a voluptuous tickling between her legs. He repeated the exciting stroke again and again, his hands **hot** and **sharp-nailed**, and then, when she was ready-ready-more-than-ready, he slipped a hand in under her buttocks, raised them, **lodged** his **hardness** against her, and **pushed** it powerfully in. **Bigger** he was than always; **painfully**, wonderfully **big**. He lay forward upon her, his other arm sliding **under** her back to hold her, his broad chest **crushing** her breasts. (He was wearing, because it was to be a costume party, a suit of **coarse**

leathery armor.) **Brutally**, rhythmically, he drove his new **hugeness**. She opened her eyes and looked into **yellow furnace-eyes**, smelled **sulphur and tannis root**, felt **wet** breath on her mouth, heard **lust-grunts** and the breathing of onlookers.

This is ***no dream***, she thought. *This is real, this is happening*. **Protest** woke in her eyes and throat, but something **covered** her face, **smothering** her in a sweet **stench**.

The **hugeness** kept **driving** in her, the **leathery** body **banging** itself against her again and again and again.

(Levin 1967: 80–2)

This nightmare world emerges after a number of dream world-switches. Inherent negation and negatively connoted and associated lexis help to dim down the background in preparation for the nightmare world. In this way, the creepy ambience established early on in the book is amplified in the nightmare world. One reader in particular highlighted the increasing sense of fear that gets stronger with this scene, and even commented on her physiological response to that fear, adrenaline: 'Then, bit by bit, it gets more scary (the 'dream' scene I found horrific but it also made my adrenaline flow like no one's bees wax)' (RB40). This sense of impending negativity is found throughout this dream/nightmare world. As can be seen through the prevalence of negatively connoted and associated lexis, the reader's background knowledge, the context of the extract, and the existing creepy ambience of the text work together to create the negative feeling in this scene. The increase in negatively oriented lexis helps to create suspense at what will happen next. I argue that suspense is also created with this sequence because it represents a departure from the description of Rosemary's everyday life; I suspect that readers will begin to anticipate that something bad is going to happen, which may lead to readers being 'kept on the edge of their seats', as some *Goodreads* reviewers noted (see 3.3.2 above). Some Goodreaders also found this scene to be a particularly significant moment in the text. It is described as an 'unsettling dream' (RB37) and is seen as a turning point in the story: 'After that event, things turned around and became quite odd' (RB41). Depending on the reader's level of emotional involvement with the story thus far, suspense may also be created by the worry that something bad is going to happen to Rosemary (see Labov 1972; Carroll 1996; Toolan 2009: 167). Indeed, as RB41 indicated, the 'something bad' that happens to Rosemary marks a turning point in the story – when she becomes pregnant.

The final descent into the nightmare world begins with a warning from Hutch that a typhoon is coming – the ship is headed for disaster. As Rosemary goes to warn the President, she notices that everyone from her previous dream world is gone; they are all negated. The only person left is the 'Negro' shipmate. This has obvious racist implications and I feel that this word is meant to have a negative connotation; not only is black (bad) set up in contrast to white (good), I claim that the discomfort that a modern reader may feel at reading 'Negro' also

serves a similar function to negation: to create a sense of tension and negativity. Here, I suggest that 'Negro' can also function as inherent negation because it also calls to mind its opposite, that is, a white person. Furthermore, the shipmate is described as hating her, 'hating all white people' (white=good, in this passage). The use of the word suggests the datedness of Levin's work – this word was more readily in use in the 60s. I would argue that modern readers (who are not racist) would not interpret this word as inherently negative in its original context, but rather would still see it as negatively connoted in the sense that it is generally seen as offensive by today's standards. Upon a quick perusal of *Goodreads* responses to this novel, several people noted anger at seeing the word 'Negro'. Many people also commented on the datedness of Levin's writing, which may account for the use of such words. The shipmate tells Rosemary to go 'down below', which is conceptually negative (UP IS GOOD, DOWN IS BAD). Below, Rosemary encounters her husband and her neighbours, naked and grotesque. This passage is rife with inherent negation. Several elements indicate a sharp contrast between the religious Sistine Chapel from Rosemary's second dream world and the current satanic space created in this passage. The burning church and Roman in his black miter and robe suggest a dark priest, the opposite of the Pope who is currently visiting New York during the story's action. The naked people, special dress of Roman, the drawings on Rosemary's body, and the chanting may trigger the reader's 'ritual' schema. Therefore, the reader can infer, or at least imagine, what might happen to Rosemary.

There is a blending of the dream world and the nightmare world at parts in this passage. For example, Hutch giving Rosemary a warning has elements of good (the warning; time to prepare), but also elements of bad (inevitable disaster). Furthermore, the episode with Jackie Kennedy has blended elements as well. The underlined words show emotively positive language such as 'exquisite', 'ivory', 'pearls', etc.; I personally have positive associations with Jackie Kennedy and would normally associate such words with her. She is seen as positive in this part of the dream world because she is trying to comfort Rosemary. She 'helps' her by having interns tie her down. Although the interns are wearing white, which can be seen as a contrast to all the darkness from the previous paragraph, white smocks also to me suggest orderlies at insane asylums and more peripherally a Nurse Ratched-type character. The very fact that her legs are being tied down suggests that she needs to prepare for something potentially dangerous. Although Jackie seems to comfort Rosemary by bringing in elements of her 'safe space' from the yacht above, she does leave her to her fate by going back up to the main deck. In this way, Jackie Kennedy is herself negated. I argue that Rosemary uses the emotively positive conceptualization of some events in order to 'put a good spin' on things.

For example, during the actual rape scene, she imagines that her husband comes to her and makes love to her. She even seems to be enjoying it at times ('exciting stroke', 'ready-ready-more-than-ready'). I claim that the mixture of negatively and positively oriented lexis serves as a conceptual contrast. The experience of the good makes the experience of the bad that much more intense.

Although there are elements of the good/bad blend occurring in the first half of the paragraph describing the rape, it becomes apparent quite quickly that this is a negative event, based on the amount of negatively oriented lexis. Even though Rosemary's wrists are 'bound', her 'husband's' hands are 'hot and sharp-nailed', and she is being crushed, she tries to hold on to the fantasy that this is her husband. The parenthetical comment '(He was wearing, because it was to be a costume party, a suit of coarse leathery armor.)' represents a world-switch to an alternate, future dream world, where the leathery body against her is explained away as a costume. This world-switch serves to further distance Rosemary from her horrific ideal. Valerius (2005: 123) suggests that Rosemary's 'dreams register her sensory experience, combine it with memory, emotion and the material of her subconscious, and transform it into fantasy'. She claims that the blending of Rosemary's reality into fantasy elicits real responses from her (i.e. she orgasms during the dream). She says that 'this communication between fantasy and reality suggests by extension that between the fictional narrative itself and the audience' and that Rosemary's shifting of emotions from fear to pleasure may mirror the potential fear and pleasure experienced by readers through the text (Valerius 2005: 123). I agree with Valerius that readers may experience a combination of positive and negative emotions throughout this text, and horror texts in general. I argue, however, that there is less of a shift from one emotion to another and more of a tension between the two emotions seemingly at once.

The horrific image that all the negation has been leading to is revealed when Rosemary opens her eyes and looks into 'yellow furnace-eyes' and smells 'sulfur'; her immediate thought, which is realized as a free direct thought world-switch, is '*This is no dream…This is real, this is happening*'. It is at this moment when Rosemary and the reader are abruptly transported back to the originating text-world. This 'waking moment' that Giovanelli (2013: 138–9) defines as an aspect of nightmare worlds requires the reader to do some heavy world repair (see Gavins 2007: 141–5), and may invite a re-reading of the passage. This is the moment when the nightmare world evolves into the 'real', text-world. I suggest that the reader must then carry out some major world repair by integrating all the nightmare elements, especially 'yellow furnace-eyes', 'sulfur', and 'leathery body' into the originating text-world. This lexis could

trigger various frames, depending on the reader. For myself, the word 'sulfur' triggered my 'devil/demon' schema; thoughts of 'fire and brimstone' also came to mind. By activating this schema, I was able to successfully relate 'leathery body' and 'yellow furnace-eyes' to my 'devil/demon' schema. The choice of this schema is strengthened by all the cult-related references ('black miter', 'robe', 'chanting', 'burning church', etc.) which are placed in contrast to Rosemary's Catholic faith. Interestingly, the paragraph begins with proper noun 'Guy' as the subject, which in turn becomes the definite pronoun 'he'; once Rosemary opens her eyes and sees a monster on top of her, the pronoun changes to an indefinite 'something', and then becomes a definite noun 'the hugeness' (presumably a metonym for the demon's sexual organ) and concrete noun 'the leathery body'. These changes mirror Rosemary's perspective and her understanding of what is happening to her – starting from her husband Guy 'making love to her', to a non-human, indefinite 'something cover[ing] her face, smothering her', then finally moving back to specificity with particular body parts, but not necessarily *human* body parts: the metonymic 'hugeness' and 'the leathery body' acting on her. This further indicates Rosemary using emotional distance to disassociate herself from whoever/whatever is on top of her, as non-human body parts are further along the scale of empathetic recognisability (see Langacker 1991: 301; Stockwell 2009:25) than human body parts and human agents. This empathetic distance serves to protect Rosemary from this horrific situation. It also mirrors the evolution of the normal and known elements of Rosemary's life to the unknown and anxiety-inducing ones. The 'waking moment' where Rosemary 'looked into yellow furnace-eyes' represents the 'strange life which […] press[es] hideously upon our own globe in unholy dimensions which only the dead and the moonstruck can glimpse' (Lovecraft 1973: 7), where Rosemary experiences a 'moonstruck' moment in an as-yet uneventful story. The readjustment of text-world parameters to include this demon-like entity in Rosemary's 'normal' life meets the requirements for existential anxiety discussed in section 3.1.

The reader must scrutinize the previous world-switches to decide what actually happened to Rosemary. There is still a certain amount of ambiguity as to what did happen exactly, especially because of another dream world that occurs immediately after the rape scene where Rosemary is visited by the Pope. He tells her that Jackie told him she had been 'bitten by a mouse' (which is what Minnie calls the drugged mousse she gave Rosemary). Rosemary asks him for forgiveness for not having seen him while he was in New York. The Pope grants her clemency as she kisses his ring which is described as holding a stone that 'was a silver filigree ball less than an inch in diameter; inside it, very tiny, Anna Maria Alberghetti [an Italian actress from the 60s] sat waiting' (1967: 83). This description of the stone matches that of the

tannis root charm which Rosemary wears around her neck. Following Rosemary's kissing of an object symbolic of her (yet unknown) oppression by Guy and the Castevets, 'the Pope hurried out to catch his plane' (1967: 83). I found this moment to be significant thematically in that this essentially follows the moment where Rosemary becomes impregnated with the son of the devil; the figurehead of Catholicism hurrying away from Rosemary essentially foreshadows that she will be on her own for the remainder of the story. This is mirrored deictically by the use of the adverb 'out' in the phrasal verb 'hurried out' to show the Pope quickly distancing himself from Rosemary until he, as metonymic of religion, becomes negated. The idea of the absence of Rosemary's religion surfaces again when she reads the *Time* magazine's front cover 'Is God Dead?' (1967: 187) and the general aim of the satanic cult, which is to bring forth the antichrist – as Roman declares at the end, '*God is dead and Satan lives! The year is One, the first year of our Lord! The Year is One, God is done!*' (1967: 221).

The symbolism of losing one's faith, however, mirrors Rosemary's preoccupation with worry about her own, which is described earlier in the story. That Rosemary is merely worried about her faith is a possible, non-supernatural explanation for this sequence, although it does not account for the parts of her dream which seem to correspond with the originating text-world and Rosemary's waking state. Although it is unclear exactly *what* happened in Rosemary's dream, the following chapter begins with Rosemary waking up to find scratches all over her body, which suggests that *something* happened to her while she slept. This ambiguity helps contribute to the sense of paranoia and anxiety that the book creates. Is Rosemary just a hysterical pregnant woman, or has she really been used by a satanic cult to carry the antichrist? This question is similar to the questions with which Rosemary struggles, although she believes that the satanic neighbours want her baby for some ritual, not that her baby is the son of the devil.

This analysis maps the multiple world-switches in this passage; these switches can be seen on the text-world diagram, Figure 3.1. The numerous abrupt world-switches help account for the feelings of anxiety and fear that a reader might experience, for as Giovanelli (2013: 196) says, 'mapping out the movement between worlds and across world edges in the readerly process of edgework allows for an explanation of the effects of terror and helplessness that stem from the interplay of embedded worlds'. The edgework necessary in the above sequence may cause readers to become anxious because it is unclear what is happening and the rapid world-switching makes the action more difficult to track, and perhaps as if the reader is in less control of their understanding of the text. The abrupt world-switches in this dream/nightmare sequence also help to create suspense. The departures to dream world 1 slow the movement

into the nightmare world; such delay by way of 'tangential matters, or an "expanding" of the moment into the psychological time of the anxious protagonist', generates suspense (Toolan 2009: 168). Because the influence of reader attention through edgework can evoke feelings of anxiety and suspense, I therefore claim that there is emotion in the edgework. It is the sensation of movement that helps the reader experience emotions during the reading process.

3.6 Review

Rosemary's Baby meets Lovecraft's requirements for supernatural literature, or 'the weird'. Being about the daily life of a normal 'yuppie' couple which is infused with sinister undertones, the story may evoke anxiety. As Rosemary is unsure of who her friends and enemies are – even her husband and neighbours are not safe – there is a tension that blooms into paranoia throughout. The supernatural elements of the story – Rosemary's bed being visited by the devil and meeting her yellow-eyed son – count as 'contact with unknown spheres and powers' (Lovecraft 1973: 7). This anxiety is achieved through negatively oriented lexis – including negation and negatively connoted and associated words – which is strewn throughout the text to evoke a sense of creepiness and suspense. The world-switching, or edgework, triggered by negation as well as blended worlds, dream worlds, and nightmare worlds causes readers to engage in a great deal of edgework to interpret this scene in the text. The abrupt feelings of movement through contrasting positive and negative text-worlds may evoke anxiety-related emotion in the reader.

In Chapter 4, I continue to investigate how negatively oriented lexis affects the readerly experience of horror fiction. I focus in particular on how negation and other world-switches can be used to manipulate the reader's attention to cause shock or fright in Stephen King's *IT* (1986).

Chapter 4

Fuck Everything and Run: FEAR and Attention in *IT*

4.0 Preview

On numerous occasions, Stephen King has suggested that FEAR is an acronym for 'fuck everything and run' (see, e.g., *11/22/63* (2011), *Doctor Sleep* (2013)). What is it about horror fiction that triggers this sort of extreme response in our consciousness – what makes us jump internally when we read and prepare for 'fight or flight' (in the case of the FEAR acronym, flight)? This chapter explores how horror fiction can evoke fear in the reader by analysing a chapter from Stephen King's *IT* (1986). I aim to discuss how attention can account for emotional responses in this particular text, and further consider how world-switching and other conceptual movement can be used to manipulate the reader's attention to cause reactions such as fear (see also Stewart-Shaw forthcoming). I begin with a review of how attention can affect readers' emotional responses to a text and then consider how *IT* is a suitable text to explore in terms of attention because of the abundance of conceptual movement depicted throughout the text. I then present an overview of fear-related *Goodreads* responses to the text. Drawing on the common responses, I will move into my primary analysis, which is steam-stylistic in nature. I particularly focus on how world-switching, in particular negation, can be particularly useful in manipulating the reader's attention.

4.1 Fear and Attention

As outlined in 1.2.3, fear is the overarching emotion experienced during the horror-reading experience. Throughout this thesis, I consider fear-related emotions such as anxiety, fright, and disgust. Chapter 3 illustrated how negatively oriented lexis can attract readers' attention, bringing about feelings of anxiety which contribute to a subtle ambient effect in the rising action of *Rosemary's Baby*. This creepy, uneasy ambience relates to Lazarus' (1991: 122) core theme of anxiety: 'Facing uncertain, existential threat'. In contrast, the essence of fright relates to 'Facing an immediate, concrete, and overwhelming physical danger' (Lazarus 1991: 122). Because anxiety is characterized by uncertainty, Lazarus (1991: 238) calls anxiety more of 'an

ache than an acute pain'. There is nothing specific to flee from, so there is an uncomfortable tension in not knowing what to expect or do. In this way, the ambience of a horror story, the hallmark of which is a sense of creepiness and impending doom, is like a dull ache, while moments of immediate and obvious horror, that is fright, are acute pains and may evoke a more obvious fearful reaction. The immediacy and obvious danger in fright are what cause the 'fight or flight' response in us. This chapter considers the full gamut of fear, exemplifying how memories of fear and existing phobias that are contained in readers' knowledge bases are drawn upon by readers during the discourse and how anxiety can be triggered leading up to a more urgent type of fear – fright.

Fright and other negative emotions narrow the focus of attention (see 2.2.3.1). Because these negative emotions prime the reader to focus on negatively oriented features such as negation and other lexis, unpleasant experiences (frightful memories, negative somatic markers, phobias, etc.) may be triggered through association. These primed negative experiences may permeate the discourse experience, causing the reader to feel fearful or anxious, depending on the context (e.g. whether the characters are being chased by the monster or the action leading up to that moment). Attention therefore helps the reader to build the text-world of the discourse through their discourse-world knowledge; attention can also manipulate the reader's feelings of conceptual movement within and throughout the text-worlds and their world-switches, setting readers up for frightening moments. In the literary-reading context, I argue that the experience of fright can be felt through simulation and can manifest itself physiologically (increased heartrate, sweaty palms, physical tension, facial expressions, etc.) as well as psychologically. The 'fight or flight' reaction can be manifested through 'fight' – keep reading, quicken pace, etc. – or 'flight' – slow pace, cover the page, close the book, etc. These physical reactions, as well as readerly interpretation, can be affected by the intensity of emotion experienced as well as reader traits (see Cupchik et al. 1998; László and Cupchik 1995).

There is a great deal of conceptual movement within the text of *IT*. The various types of movement, especially world-switching, serve to manipulate readers' attention, which in turn affects the textural experience of the novel. The textural experience of emotions is particularly salient in *IT*, as the category-transgressing monster contains within it all that which children fear, presenting an abundance of potential fearful associations to which readers can relate. Therefore, I aim to discuss this attentional movement and its subsequent emotional effects in *IT*.

4.2 '...you'll float too' IT and the destruction of childhood sleep

Stephen King's bestselling novel *IT* (1986) is a prime example of a narrative that induces fear in the reader, being that it is about a creature that feeds on the fear of its victims (and sometimes literally feeds on the victim), not to mention that the creature generally takes form as a murderous clown. *IT* tells the story of a shape-shifting monster that terrorizes the small town of Derry, Maine in a cycle of approximately every 27 years. The novel's action centres on a group of seven childhood friends called 'The Loser's Club' at two time periods in their lives – 1958, as 11-year-old children, and 1985, as 'grownups'. After defeating the creature that they call It in 1958, they make a blood promise to return to Derry if It ever returns again, which of course It does in 1984. The novel has many encounters with It, which mostly appears as Pennywise the Clown, but often takes the shape of anything that the children of Derry fear. While it qualifies as a horror novel (many instances of child murder are depicted, there is a supernatural villain, etc.), *IT* is also a story of friendship and the magic of childhood. *IT* meets the requirements of category jamming in horror – the innocence of childhood that is established in the relationships of The Loser's Club is violated by the monster It. As Carroll points out:

> The monster in King's *IT* is a kind of categorially contradictory creature raised to a higher power. For It is a monster that can change into any other monster, those other monsters already being categorially transgressive.
>
> (Carroll 1990: 34)

Therefore, the eponymous monster of this novel exponentially violates the norm.

Personally, I find this novel to be very scary; therefore, I was interested to look at how the stylistics of this text may cause me to be afraid of this story. In addition to its thematic suitability and my personal feelings towards it, I chose this novel to analyze in terms of fear because it holds the #2 spot on *Goodreads* top lists such as 'The Definitive Horror Book List', 'Best Horror Novels', and 'Best of Stephen King'. Not to mention that this novel has enjoyed a resurgence of popularity for its 30th anniversary (Smythe 2016) and its upcoming film reboot in September 2017 (dir. Muschietti). Therefore, I knew that this horror novel was indeed very popular; I was interested to find out why and whether a sample of Goodreaders' responses matched my own. The following section considers the common emotional responses to *IT* on *Goodreads*. Drawing on reader's reviews, I aim to do a micro-level stylistic analysis of key passages from the text.

4.3 Reader Experiences of Fear in *IT*

For rigour in my emotional analysis of *IT*, I have collected 100 of the most recent responses (as of March 2016) to the novel on *Goodreads.com*. These responses were also independently tagged by a colleague and many of the nodes were found to overlap, lending reliability and intersubjective validation to the data (Hasan and Stewart-Shaw 2016). Overall, the average *Goodreads* rating of the 100 chosen reviews was 4.29/5, while the overall rating for *all* Goodreads responses is 4.16/5. I identified 22 main tags in my *Goodreads* data, shown in Table 1 below:

Node		# of respondents tagged/100
1.	**Book quotes**	4
2.	**Characters**	25
3.	**Classic**	4
4.	**Discourse-world affected/resonance**	21
5.	**Exclamations/Interjections**	12
6.	**Film or mini-series**	15
7.	**Knowledge base**	67
8.	**Length of novel**	15
9.	**Direct negative emotion**	28
10.	**Indirect negative emotion**	34
11.	**Opening scene**	5
12.	**Plot and narrative**	18
13.	**Direct positive emotion**	28
14.	**Indirect positive emotion**	49
15.	**Readerly processes**	19
16.	**Reader recommendation**	13
17.	**Re-readable**	8
18.	**Stephen King**	43
19.	**'THAT' scene**	9
20.	**The ending**	18
21.	**Themes**	13
22.	**Writing style**	15

Table 4.1: Nodes tagged in IT

There is a wealth of information to discuss in all of my tags, many of which overlap in some way. Out of these tags, I will specifically address the fear-related responses contained within the 'Direct negative emotion' and 'Indirect negative emotion' tags. Other pertinent tags will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, in particular 'Knowledge base' and direct/indirect 'positive emotion' tags, when I address overlapping issues within my *Goodreads* dataset of responses to *Rosemary's Baby*, *IT*, and *The Exorcist* as a whole.

As outlined in Chapter 1 and put into practice in Chapter 3, I divided readers' negative emotional responses into two categories – direct and indirect. For the purposes of this analysis chapter, I will be focusing specifically on fear and fear-related emotional responses. The breakdown of individual responses related to fear within direct and indirect negative emotional responses can be seen in the table below:

Breakdown of fear-related 'Direct negative emotion' responses 18 tags across 28 sources	
Name of tag	**# of tags**
Scared	5
Chills	2
Creeped out	2
Fear	1
Haunted	1
Shivers	1
Horrified	1
Anxiety	1
Jumpy	1
Paranoia	1
Disturbed	1
Uncomfortable	1
Breakdown of fear-related 'Indirect negative emotion' responses 32 tags across 34 sources	
Name of tags	**# of tags**
Scary/scarier/scariest	11
Terrifying	5

Creepy	5
Horror/horrifying	3
Chilling	1
Dread	1
Eerie	1
Fear	1
Disturbing	2
Twisted	1
Unsettling	1

Table 4.2: Breakdown of fear-related responses to IT

As evident from the table above, the majority of negative emotional responses to *IT*, both direct and indirect, have to do with fear and related feelings, in particular anxiety. As argued previously, fear and anxiety can be discussed as separate emotions, with fear being related to facing an immediate, identifiable threat and anxiety being related to facing an uncertain threat (see Lazarus 1991: 122). However, in horror fiction, anxiety at the unknown danger in a text often builds up to the frightening moment when the nature of the threat is revealed. I contend that anxiety can be created in any horror text, and is specifically evoked in *IT* during the build up to the more outwardly frightening moments in the story, one of which will be specifically analyzed in 4.5 below.

The remaining negative responses generally were critically negative feelings towards the book such as certain elements of the book 'bugged' one respondent (direct) and others found the book to be 'boring' (indirect). Based on *Goodreads* ratings as well as individual statements, I found that 25/28 reviewers who directly expressed negative emotions liked the book, even though they listed 'negative' emotions. I therefore think it is safe to say that many readers enjoyed experiencing negative fear-based emotions when reading. (This dual fear and enjoyment will be discussed more in depth in Chapter 6.)

The list below puts into context the 'Direct negative emotion' tags found in Table 4.2 above:

4.3.1 Direct Negative Emotion

1. I read this book in 7th grade. It was horrifying but compelling and has haunted me ever since. (IT95)

2. scared the shit out of me! (IT2)

3. This book scared me so much! (IT4)

4. This was the only book to hook me within one line. "We all float down here, Georgie." The visualization of long-since-decayed dead children, chilled me to the very bone. (IT78)

5. This book gave me chills and is so much scarier than the movie. (IT22)

6. First book I ever read that truly creeped me out. (IT26)

7. It's one of the only books that disturbed me to the point where I was still jumpy for weeks. If you want to be scared out of your mind read IT!!!!! (IT62)

8. I've always been a fan of horror novels, but very few have ever actually scared me. This book did the trick. (IT90)

9. really gives you the shivers - Steven King is a demon at frightening the living daylights out of you! (IT66)

10. I could barely keep reading at this part because I was imagining the picture in my head and I was totally creeped out. (IT32)

11. some of the scares are genuinely scary. I found my heart beating faster several times. (IT5)

12. I can't tell you how many nights I lay awake with my paranoia while reading this! Even during finals, (which should explain why I would even attempt to read this at night) I couldn't put it down. I don't think a book has ever affected me in that way! (IT89)

13. Many of kings books do a version of this, but that's simply characters you can believe are real, this is a different animal. And then it starts doing things to those characters. And either your heart sings because that's exactly what you hoped, or it plummets as the rug is dragged from under you and you're forced to come to grips with this new version of life in Derry, Maine. Here's how bad it got: there's a definite tipping point in the book about 850 pages in. It took me almost a month to work up the courage to read those last 175 pages. That's how much anxiety I had worked up over what might or might not happen to the people I'd grown to care about. (IT33)

14. Read this in high school and was still horrified. (IT59)

15. I remember this being particular creepy to me because of the whole targeting kids thing and the fact that the monster can shape shift. (IT46)

16. As to whether I found those themes particularly scary? I have to admit I didn't, of course I'm a fully grown man and I'd suggest if I'd been younger I'd certainly be spooked by Pennywise and his various forms. For me probably the scariest part (other than 'that' part towards the end, I mean) involved one of the books antagonists a kid named Patrick, who was a part of the group of bully's that hounds the Losers Club throughout, he was basically a sociopath who liked to torture animals and personally I just find that highly disturbing, I mean somebody who can do harm to an innocent creature without any level of empathy, to me that is truly scary. (IT8)

17. Horrifying! I read it in one sitting and I hate clowns but I like to be scared. (IT92)

The above responses are roughly arranged in order of emotional intensity, with those placing the text, the characters, or the author in the subject position, thus making the readers themselves the passive objects of the emotion (responses 1–9). I argue that this feeling of a loss of agency suggests a deeper emotional connection. Responses 1–8 included first-person pronouns while response 9 features the general 'you', arguably distancing themselves slightly from the emotional response but suggesting in general that readers will feel this way. In responses 10–17 the readers place themselves in the subject position. Response 11 in particular deals with a physiological response to fear – faster heart rate – suggesting an intense emotional response. Somewhat differently from the anxiety discussed in the previous chapter, it appears to be easier for readers to attach propositional content to their feelings of fear to explain why they are feeling that way. For example, responses 4 and 10 link their fear to the visualisation of the story, in particular 'of long-since-decayed dead children' (4); 13 details how the characters and their fates led to her intense emotional attachment; 15 points to the targeting of children and the shape-shifting, category-transgressing nature of the monster to be scary; 16 indicates animal cruelty is most scary to his adult self but that the shape-shifting monster would have scared his younger self, further suggesting that readers' fears can change over time; and 17 indicates her fear of clowns but also notes that she enjoys being scared, a possible reason for why horror fans enjoy this genre.

There were also many indirect references to negative fear-related emotional reactions. A sample can be found in the list below:

4.3.2 Indirect Negative Emotion

1. Way too scary for me. (IT17)
2. maybe it's that I'm older and have a more palpable sense of fear, I don't know, but this book has become, over time, much more terrifying. Not just the monster hiding in the grates but also the people of Derry. (IT98)
3. Stephen King's It is the scariest book I have ever read, and the movie is equally terrifying. (IT57)
4. Probably the most unsettling thing I've ever read and I loved every moment of it. (IT1)
5. I would say this is so far the scariest Stephen King book I've read. At least in terms of creep factor. (IT5)
6. This book was one of the scariest I have ever read. (IT60)
7. One of the scariest books I have ever read. (IT20)

8. so much scarier than the movie (IT22)
9. This was so scary and I loved every page of it. When a book scares you, it's a good book! (IT76)
10. "It" is terrifying in the best way. (IT78)
11. the looming threat of "It" is always present and genuinely chilling. (IT86)
12. I read this book in junior high school. It is scary and very engaging. (IT72)
13. Pennywise the Clown embodies fear itself and most of the dread comes not from what he does, but the fear of what he might do. (IT12)
14. The characters are great, the story wonderfully eerie.(IT28)
15. I enjoyed every page of this scary story! (IT31)
16. a great and creepy story. (IT59)
17. This book is very unique, it's long and terrifying. (IT62)
18. There is horror in this book, but it is not just a horror book. (IT18)
19. Most of the read is great though – fun, exciting, suspenseful and occasionally terrifying. (IT61)

Responses 2–6 deal describe *IT* as being superlatively scary, with response 2 being the most intense ('*the* scariest book I have ever read', emphasis mine), then 3 modalizes slightly with '*probably* the most unsettling…' (emphasis mine), 4 specifies that it is the scariest Stephen King book so far, and 5 and 6 note '*one of* the scariest' (emphasis mine). These indirect responses to fear also commented on the cause of their emotional reactions. Responses 2, 11, and 13 point to the characters as the source of their fear, with particular attention on the monster It. Respondent 2 in particular gives personal background information about her 'more palpable sense of fear' as she ages, again illustrating how fear can evolve over time. Responses 14, 15, and 16 attach the adjectives 'wonderfully eerie', 'scary' and 'creepy' to the story, 17 and 18 note terror and horror as a quality of the book itself, and 19 specifies that the read itself is 'occasionally terrifying'.

Interestingly, many of the above responses, both direct and indirect, employ metaphors to illustrate fear as an emotional response to *IT*. The responses below metaphorically show the realisation or enactment of fear being depicted:

- scared the shit out of me! (IT2)

- Pennywise the Clown embodies fear itself and most of the dread comes not from what he does, but the fear of what he might do. (IT12)
- This book gave me chills and is so much scarier than the movie. (IT22)
- First book I ever read that truly creeped me out. (IT26)
- I could barely keep reading at this part because I was imagining the picture in my head and I was totally creeped out. (IT32)
- It's one of the only books that disturbed me to the point where I was still jumpy for weeks. If you want to be scared out of your mind read IT!!!!! (IT62)
- really gives you the shivers – Steven King is a demon at frightening the living daylights out of you! (IT66)
- This was the only book to hook me within one line. "We all float down here, Georgie." The visualization of long-since-decayed dead children, chilled me to the very bone. (IT78)

The above responses use mixed metaphors to discuss fear as an emotional reaction to the text. Many of these responses deal with some aspect of the text as an agent that acts on fear contained within the readers' bodies, where fear is triggered and causes some aspect of the reader's self to come *out* in some way ('scared the shit out of me', 'creeped out', 'scared out of your mind', 'frightening the living daylights out of you'). The underlying metaphor is actually quite disturbing if you consider that it suggests part of yourself temporarily leaves because it is so scary. Response IT12 focuses on the character of Pennywise the Clown embodying fear itself; this suggests that Pennywise somehow deals out fear to the reader. A mixed metaphor is embedded within response IT66: the author Stephen King is seen as a demon, another embodiment of fear, who can 'frighten the living daylights out of you'. The phrase 'living daylights' itself is a metaphor for 'life force or consciousness', suggesting that one can be scared unconscious and perhaps to death. IT62's response suggests that reading *IT* might scare you 'out of your mind', which similarly to IT66 suggests that one can be so scared as to lose consciousness or sanity (the mind). There is also a sense that 'fear is cold', whereby some aspect of the text triggers fear and it manifests as coldness (e.g. 'gave me chills', 'gives you the shivers', 'chilled me to the very bone'). To me, all of these metaphors somehow suggest movement, in particular the transfer of energy from agent (some aspect of the text) to the patient (the reader) which somehow results in fear resonating (perhaps even literally physically) within the body (e.g. being 'jumpy', getting 'the shivers', etc.), or manifesting itself by coming *out* of the body or causing some part of the reader to come out of the body (e.g. 'creeped out',

'scared out of your mind'). Indeed, the use of prepositions such as 'out' is prevalent in my *Goodreads* data across all three of my case-study texts, especially expressed through the expression 'creeped out'. This sense of movement corresponds with my argument, following Gibbs (2002), that emotion is felt as movement.

This section focused in particular on the embodiment of fear generally within my Goodreaders' reviews. I found that fear and fear-related responses were the most dominant of the 'negative' responses tagged in my data. This illustrates how fear is a common reaction to the book. I also saw a trend towards describing emotion in terms of movement. Based on the prevalence of fear-related responses, many of which involved embodied movement, in the following analysis I will stylistically investigate how fear is triggered in the text and how this relates to movement.

4.4 Analysis Part I: Movement

My analysis aims to examine *IT* from a macro to micro view. First, I will consider the general movement of attention from various character perspectives and different temporal text-worlds across the novel as a whole. Although each and every part, chapter, and subsection includes myriad world-switches and other conceptual movement which add to the work's overall texture, it is outside the scope of this thesis to consider them all. Therefore, my second aim is to focus on one chapter in particular to do a micro-analysis of the various types of movement found there, which is reflective of other chapters in the novel but also has some distinctive characteristics as the opening chapter. Within this single-chapter analysis, I will first talk about the overall movement of perspective within the chapter, then will talk generally about zooming and circularity, subtler movement such as foreshadowing, and then will bring everything together for a fine-grained analysis of textual attractors within a specific passage.

4.4.1 Macroanalysis

I claim that part of the allure of *IT* is its texture; I argue that this texture is due in part to the rich interconnected text-worlds that the story presents and the multiple interwoven character perspectives that populate these text-worlds. The novel makes several switches back and forth between the Loser's Club's childhood summer of 1958 and their present day, 1985, using various textual deictic markers such as graphology, in particular italics, to mark the temporal world-switches. The novel is divided into five parts, with an interlude after each part, and a final epilogue. Part 1, 'The Shadow Before' includes three chapters, the first two of which detail the beginning of Its killing cycles in 1957 and 1984, respectively. The third chapter gives

the perspective each in turn of six of the Loser's Club members as they receive a phone call from Mike Hanlon, the only member of the Loser's Club to stay in Derry after childhood. He gives them the dire news that It has returned once more and reminds them of their blood oath that they must come back to Derry to fight It again. The friends are surprised to realize how little they remember about their childhood, but they remember enough to return to Derry as Mike asks. Part 1 is followed by 'Derry: The First Interlude'. The interludes are described in the novel as such:

> *The segment below and all other* Interlude *segments are drawn from 'Derry: An Unauthorized Town History,' by Michael Hanlon. This is an unpublished set of notes and accompanying fragments of manuscript (which read almost like diary entries) found in the Derry Public Library vault. The title given is the one written on the cover of the loose-leaf binder in which these notes were kept prior to their appearance here. The author, however, refers to the work several times within his own notes as 'Derry: A Look Through Hell's Back Door.'*
>
> *One supposes the thought of popular publication had done more than cross Mr. Hanlon's mind.*
>
> (King 1986: 153)

As the only member to stay in Derry, and the only one to fully remember the actions of the Loser's Club in 1958, Mike has been self-assigned the task of being vigilant of any signs that It has returned, and also to chronicle Derry's past to find clues about the origins of It. These interludes serve to inform the reader about Derry's (and Its) history and to fill in gaps from the rest of the discourse.

Parts 2 and 4, 'June of 1958' and 'July of 1958' respectively, recount the events of the summer of 1958, centring on how the Loser's Club came to be and on their individual and collective experiences with It, as well as childhood bullies. Each chapter is divided in numbered subsections, each of which generally follows the perspective of one character. In Part 2, the remaining Loser's Club members in 1985 (minus Stan, who committed suicide upon learning that It had returned) each make their way back to Derry and start to recount the events of the summer of '58. Each character's perspective begins in 1985 (and is signalled by italics), but is world-switched to 1958 mid-memory. The preceding sentence which begins in italics, is split (normally into subsection 2) and the font becomes normal again, signalling the switch to the character's childhood perspective.

Part 3, 'Grownups', deals with the Loser's Club reunion in Derry, where Mike recounts what has been happening in Derry since they have been gone, and suggests how they might hope to defeat It for good this time. Part 4 further details the Loser's Club's childhood experiences with It and their plans to defeat It, which include shooting it with a silver slug.

Again, each chapter in Part 4 begins in subsection 1 with the perspective of one of the Loser's Club in 1985 (signalled by italics), and moves to that character's 1958 perspective starting with subsection 2. Part 5, 'The Ritual of Chüd', switches back and forth between 1958 and 1985 (again world-switching mid-sentence, but broken by chapter subsection numbering and titles indicating time and place; in this part, italics are used to signify changes back to 1958), focusing on how the friends stopped It (but incidentally didn't actually kill It) in 1958 and how they killed it (for sure?) in 1985. The final interlude and epilogue tell how everyone loses their memory of Derry and It once more.

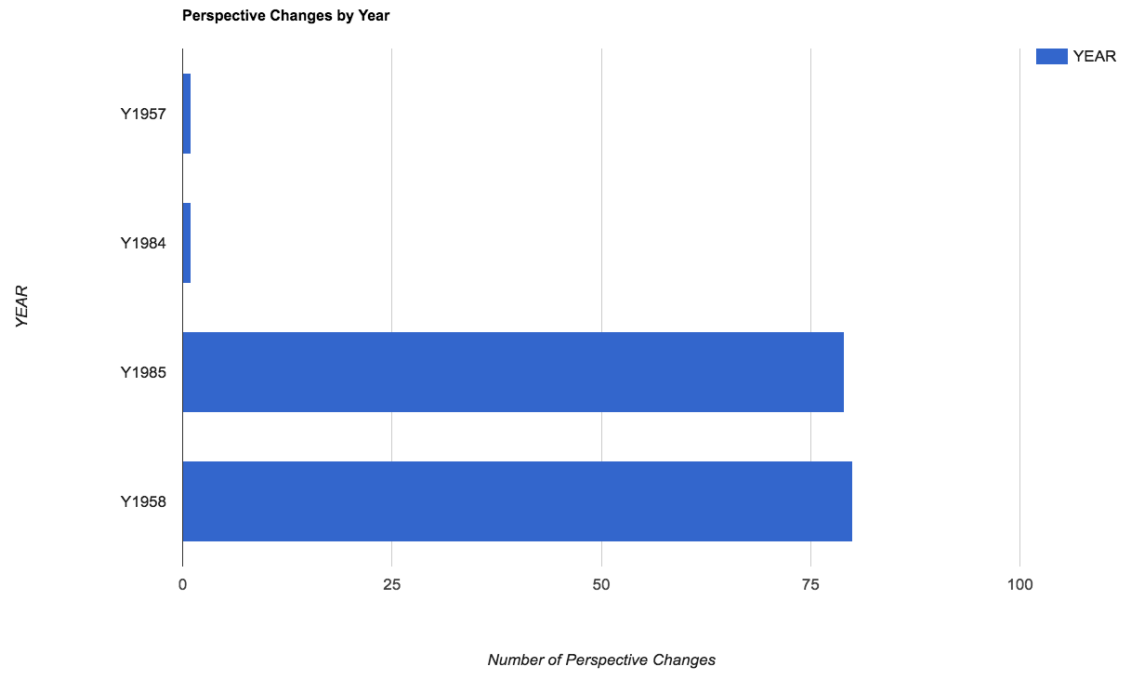


Figure 4.1: Perspective changes by year

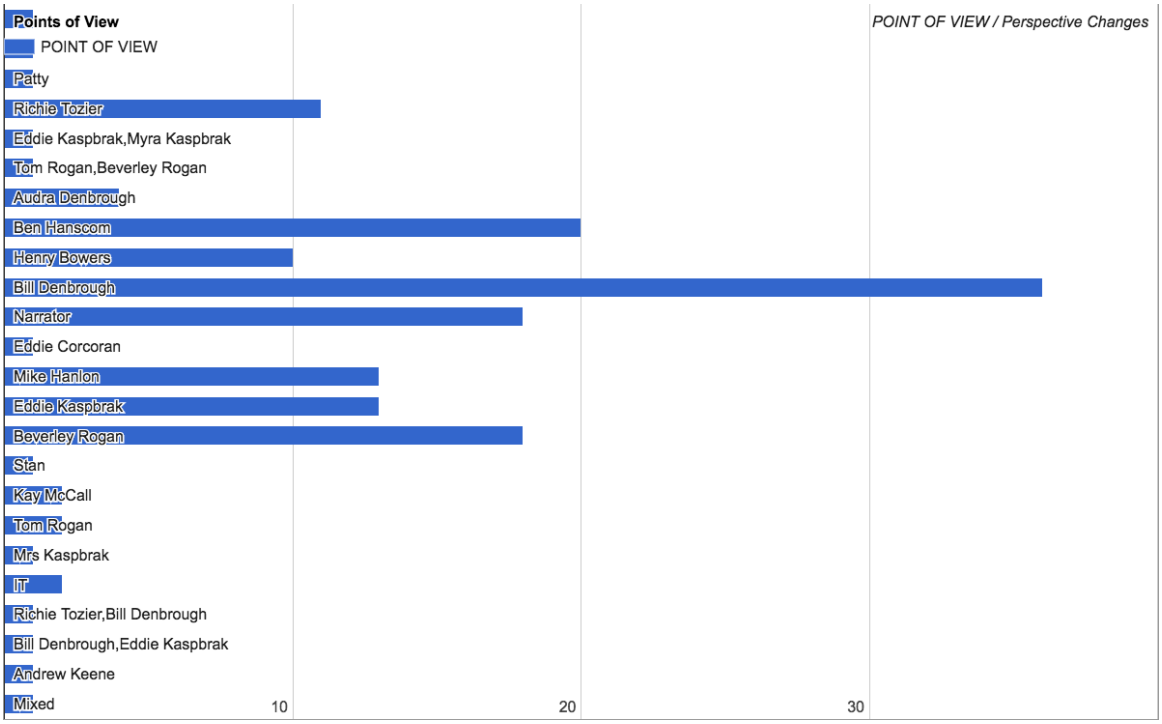


Figure 4.2: Perspective changes by character

Figure 4.1 illustrates the distribution of temporal action in *IT*, with roughly half of the temporal world-switches which coincided with perspective changes occurring in 1958 and half in 1985. Figure 4.2 shows the multitude of character-perspective switches and highlights the dominance of main-character perspective while still showing the plethora of minor characters perspectives that are also introduced throughout the text. (n.b. some one-time minor character perspectives were not included due to the size of the diagram.) Unsurprisingly, Bill Denbrough as the main protagonist has the most character perspective changes attributed to him. As briefly outlined above and in Figures 4.1 and 4.2, *IT* consists of many interrelated characters and text-worlds. The transitions between these time periods and perspectives are realized graphologically through textual deixis by way of headings such as Part 1, 2, etc., chapter titles, numbered subsections within the chapters, occasionally titled subsections within the chapters, and interludes. I believe that these graphological cues enable the reader to switch between the various text-worlds with minimal confusion, as there is definitely a lot to keep track of in this novel. Another textual deictic feature which contributes to the texture of the novel is the paratactic use of epigraphs before the beginning of the novel, each part, each interlude, and the epilogue. The epigraph before all of the five parts includes a stanza each from William Carlos Williams's poem *Paterson* (1946–1951). As Lahey (2006: 152) hypothesizes, epigraphs tend to be processed at the discourse-world level more frequently than the text-world level since they represent something only the author knows (see also Genette 1997: 153). I argue

that they can be used by the reader to predict world-building elements of the text-worlds that she is about to encounter. In *IT*, then, the reader is invited to draw on the contents of each stanza of *Paterson* to anticipate world-builders or function-advancers in the upcoming part of the novel.

As outlined above, there is a significant amount of perspectival movement between different temporal text-worlds (mainly 1958 and 1985) and different character perspectives within those text-worlds. It is imperative to mention that within each of these text-worlds, there is a plethora of world-switches through flashback, negation, direct speech and thought, etc. It is outside of the scope of this chapter to consider all of these world-switches, but I suggest that they affect the reader's experience nevertheless. I have illustrated the frequency of general switches at a macro level in the figures above. I aim to carry out a micro-analysis of various world-switching in the first chapter of *IT* to illustrate what the text can do to the reader's attention at a micro level. I will analyze the first chapter of the novel, which focuses on the beginning of Its killing cycle with the unfortunate death of six-year-old George Denbrough, the brother of one of the main protagonists, Bill Denbrough. I find this chapter to be especially scary because it is the first time that It is introduced, but this does not occur until nearly the end of the chapter; there is a great deal of attention manipulation and suspense-building, which may cause fear or anxiety, leading up to Its appearance, which arguably may trigger fright in the reader.

4.4.2 Microanalysis

This section focuses on the analysis of the first chapter of *IT*, entitled *After the Flood (1957)*, which begins with the sentence:

> The terror, which would not end for another twenty-eight years – if it ever did end – began, so far as I know or can tell, with a boat made from a sheet of newspaper floating down a gutter swollen with rain.
>
> (1986: 15)

The first line of prose begins with a definite noun phrase 'the terror' in the subject position, giving 'the terror' agency and topicality, both textual attractors, which immediately notify the reader of its importance. The use of the definite article 'the' suggests a specific terror that has already been established. The idea of entering 'the terror' in *medias res* makes it a bit more mysterious, I suggest, as the reader is unaware of what this specific terror refers to and what

events possibly led up to it. Beginning the novel with a definite concept tells the reader what to expect from this chapter and indeed the rest of this book – terror.

'The terror' refers to the eponymous character of the novel, It. Although the noun phrase 'the terror' is not mentioned directly again, it is referred to throughout the text using other definite noun phrases such as 'the real horrors' and 'what he saw', and consistently as the neuter personal pronoun 'It'. Because 'It' is capitalized, it suggests a proper name, and is indeed a main character in this novel. As argued in 4.2, It is an exponentially categorially transgressive entity and the use of the pronoun 'It' further suggests that the characters cannot categorize this monster according to existing schemas (Carroll 1990: 34–5). On the scale of empathetic recognisability (see Langacker 1991: 307), 'It' is at the far end – as an object or an abstract entity. The reader is therefore not invited to empathize with this creature, even though It does often appear as Mr Bob Gray or Pennywise the Clown, among other personalities. Even though it does take on 'human' form, this is merely a costume for It, used to lure in its prey. The reader knows this, and may therefore be resistant to empathizing with It (for more on reader resistance, see Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2009, Chapter 5; Whiteley 2014). However, there are a few sections in the novel told from the perspective of It; these appear completely italicized, a deviant form of graphology within Part 5 where it appears, which I suggest invites the reader to continue to see It as a distinct, alien identity. Readerly resistance may be employed to resist empathizing with It.

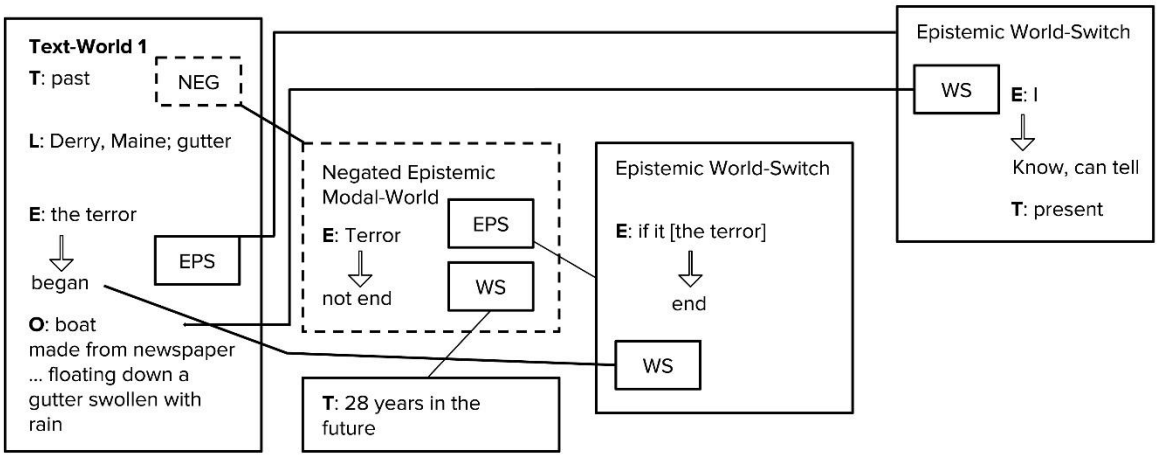


Figure 4.3: Text-worlds of opening line of IT

As evidenced in Figure 4.3 above, there are four world-switches contained in this first sentence alone. The subordinate clause starting with 'which would not end' creates a negated epistemic modal world-switch that negates 'the terror', but the epistemic modal-world triggered by 'if it ever did' embedded within the negated world-switch attempts to negate that negation. This creates a level of uncertainty, at the very first sentence of the novel no less (even before the verb predicating 'the terror' is read), as to whether or not there will actually be a resolution. Within the aforementioned negated epistemic modal-world, the modifier prepositional phrase 'for another twenty-eight years' creates an embedded temporal world-switch because it causes the reader to conceptualize this text-world 28 years in the future. (If the reader has skimmed the contents page which includes dates, she may be aware that the novel does indeed go 28 years into the future, so this temporal world-switch is a reference/flash-forward to the future text-world of the novel.) Another layer of uncertainty is added with the epistemic modal-world triggered by 'so far as I know or can tell', which calls into question the reliability of the 'I' narrator. Indeed, first-person narrators already suggest a level of uncertain reliability (Short 1996: 257–8). The movement created by multiple world-switches contained in one sentence immediately creates a sense of confusion, and possibly anxiety at that dashed aside 'if it ever did end' (most readers would hope that the 1100-page book that you just started will actually have a resolution). I propose that the world-switches establish the fearful ambience from the very beginning.

Beginning with 'The terror', there is a feeling of 'zooming in' (see *world zoom* in Giovanelli 2013: 85–86 and Stockwell 2009: 19–20) onto the first scene. Giovanelli (2013: 85) proposes the term *world zoom* to describe an inward focus which reconfigures the deictic makeup of the scene. This sort of world zooming is seen throughout this opening sequence. In the first paragraph, the subject is 'the terror' and the object is the newspaper boat. The second paragraph then has the boat in the subject position with lots of action ('bobbed, listed, righted itself again and dived bravely […] and continued on its way'). The third paragraph begins with a small boy running cheerfully along beside the boat. From here on the boy, George Denbrough, tends to occupy the subject position, so he is the object of the reader's attention as the figure. This zooming in of attention from the subject 'the terror' to that of 'the boat' and finally to that of George meets Giovanelli's requirement that the deictic makeup of the scene be changed. This zoom-in 'shot', to think of it in cinematographic terms as Giovanelli does, establishes George's consciousness as the central figure in the opening chapter.

Interestingly, the overall world zoom from the abstract noun 'the terror' to the concrete, proper noun 'George Denbrough' has 'mini' zoom-ins within it, including movement from indefinite to definite within each one:

> 1.) the terror (definite, abstract noun) → 2.) a boat made from a sheet of newspaper (indefinite, concrete noun) → the boat (definite, concrete noun) → 3.) a small boy in a yellow slicker (indefinite, concrete noun) → the boy (definite, concrete noun) → George Denbrough (definite, proper noun)

According to Langacker's scale of empathy and Stockwell's textual attractors, the reader's attention is more attracted to specific entities rather than general ones. Therefore, this movement from indefinite to definite and from abstract to concrete mirrors the zooming in of attention, as well as an increase in empathetic recognisability. Also note that the degree of world-zooming in number 3 above is pushed a level deeper than 2. This deeper push enhances the reader's focus on George (and his personhood) as the main focalizer in this chapter.

The central concerns of this opening chapter are George's current action and thought process (i.e. playing with his boat in the rain, which leads him to 'his strange death') and the actions and thoughts of George and his brother Bill, previous to George leaving the house to play. The attention flows back and forth between these thoughts and actions. Roughly, the contents of the subsections of this chapter are as follows:

1. introduction of the terror, the boat, and the boy (George Denbrough); his brother 'Stuttering Bill' is also introduced, but we do not see him in person yet; general overview of the storm and flooding (past and present) which brought George out with his boat to begin with

2. flashback to Bill helping George make the paper boat; George has to go to the basement to get the paraffin to waterproof the boat; George thinks about 'It', the 'apotheosis of all monsters' (18), which he fearfully imagines lives in the basement; warm, happy moments are shared between the two brothers as they waterproof the boat together

3. back to George playing in the street, the boat falls down into the stormdrain; George sees yellow eyes and hears a voice from the drain; there is a series of thoughts from George before he meets Pennywise the Clown, who offers to give him a balloon and his boat back to him; the clown seizes George's arm and kills him; Dave Gardener finds George dead

4. George's boat continues floating along down in the drains; while George's mom is being sedated at the hospital, the boat makes its way to the river, and 'passes out of this tale forever' (28)

As is evident from the above summary, this chapter mainly focuses on George, but there are also many world-switches which bring in other perspectives on the flooding in Derry (past and present), George's family's life (especially character-building elements for Bill, the leader of the Loser's Club), the police's perspective on George's death, and commentary from the I-narrator on the boat. This multi-layered storytelling approach is representative of Stephen King's style and authorial tone. I propose that this multifaceted approach to storytelling is one of the key elements of *IT*'s texture because of the amount of edgework with which it requires the reader to engage. This sense of constant movement may contribute to the reader's emotional reaction to the story.

4.4.2.1 Scale of empathetic recognisability

The movement of attention in terms of enactors moves in a circular motion. The antagonist starts with a definite, but abstract noun 'the terror', 'It', etc. then is marked by 'yellow eyes', then 'a voice', then comes 'a clown', 'the clown', and then more specifically 'Mr Boy Gray/Pennywise the Dancing Clown', then the clown's face changes into 'what he [George] saw then was terrible enough to make his worst imaginings of the thing in the cellar look like sweet dreams'/ 'the thing'/ 'it'. In this way, the description of the antagonist has gone from definite to abstract, to zoomed in parts (yellow eyes, a voice), then indefinite to definite modifiers of the clown, then back to more abstract descriptions. The only departure from this cycle is an attentional zoom back to a single part: 'that chuckling, rotten voice', which is the last thing to be mentioned of the antagonist.

There is a similar circularity to the description of the chapter's protagonist, George. He is first described as 'a small boy', then becomes 'the boy', then 'George Denbrough'. George keeps his status as George or Georgie, until he heard screaming and then is found dead and turned over by Dave Gardener, where he again becomes 'a small boy' and 'the boy', respectively. The process of moving from 'George' back to 'a/the boy' begins once he sees the clown's face change and 'what he saw' destroys 'his sanity in one clawing stroke' (26). George is being deconstructed into parts by the text (and literally by the clown) – the deconstruction begins with his sanity (which is negated in 'one clawing stroke'), then the focus moves to George's arm ('It held George's arm in its thick and wormy grip' (26)), then his neck ('George craned his neck away from that final blackness' (26)), then his shoulder ('George's shoulder socked against the cement of the curb' (26), and then the perspective changes to that of Dave Gardener, who 'saw only a small boy in a yellow rain-slicker, a small boy who was screaming

and writhing in the gutter' (26–7). Gardener also notices that there is 'muddy water surfing over his face', which again highlights a specific part of George's body, his face. I argue that the repetition of 'a small boy' here, and from a peripheral character's perspective, serves to distance George from his name, thereby enabling the reader to distance herself from the gruesome killing as well as highlighting the fact that George is only a young child, which makes his murder more horrible in my opinion.

The perspective then changes back to 'that chuckling rotten voice' and George, where 'there was a ripping noise and a flaring sheet of agony, and George Denbrough knew no more' (27). Here, George is given his full name one more time before his consciousness is negated through syntactic negation – he knew no more. The reader is forced to infer that George has died. The moment of death is conveyed through sound and through feeling, not through any direct images. Again, I claim that this enables the reader to be distanced from the horror – the use of sound and feeling descriptions and the euphemism 'he knew no more' are a little easier to read, and perhaps more sophisticated, than something such as 'George got his armed ripped off and died'. I argue that the movement from body part to body part not only allows the reader to distance herself from the horror by moving George down the opposite side of the scale of empathetic recognisability, but also creates misaligned edges which create a more textured reading experience. I liken this to multiple zoom shots/flashing images in a movie, which can cause the viewer to become disoriented and more panicked.

The penultimate paragraph of this subsection further illustrates the deconstruction/negation of George. When Gardner reaches him, 'George Denbrough was already dead' (27). There is a focus on 'George's body' – 'The left side of George's slicker was now bright red. Blood flowed into the stormdrain from the tattered hole where the left arm had been. A knob of bone, horribly bright, peeked through the torn cloth' (27). Here, there is a literal lacuna – George's arm is no longer attached to his body. The 'horribly bright' knob of bone is a textual attractor for several reasons: it's new, bright, and aesthetically distanced from the norm, as we are unaccustomed to seeing bone outside of the body. The juxtaposition of the negatively oriented adverb 'horribly' and the generally positive adjective 'bright' can be seen to reflect the contrast between good and bad in this chapter. It also reflects the dissonant mixture found in the clown (e.g. bright clothing, colours, smiling, but also a murderous clown). In the final paragraph of this subsection (3), the only mention of George is again relating to his body – 'The boy's eyes stared up at the white sky, and…they began to fill up with rain' (27). Here, again George is distanced from his self as he is only referred to as 'the boy' and his eyes

are the focus of this attention. The mention of eyes here mirrors that of the 'yellow eyes' that George initially saw in the stormdrain.

Although George's name is mentioned again in the final subsection (4) of this chapter, it is generally in relation to his possessions (his boat, his mother) or his past actions. Because the reader knows George is dead, however, I suggest that a type of negation goes on when reading about his past actions (when he left the house, when he waterproofed the boat with Bill) – we read George's name and recall his actions, but must adjust his fictional ontological status accordingly.

The end of the chapter comes almost full circle with the focus ending on the paper boat and the presence of the I-narrator:

> The boat dipped and swayed and sometimes took on water, but it did not sink; the two brothers had waterproofed it well. I do not know where it finally fetched up, if ever it did; perhaps it reached the sea and sails there forever, like a magic boat in a fairytale. All I know is that it was still afloat and still running on the breast of the flood when it passed the incorporated town limits of Derry, Maine, and there it passes out of this tale forever.
>
> (1986: 28)

The sentences focalized through I-narration mirror the modality used in the first paragraph where the first-person narrator is initially mentioned. The first sentence is reproduced here for ease of reference:

> The terror, which would not end for another twenty-eight years – if it ever did end – began, so far as I know or can tell, with a boat made from a sheet of newspaper floating down a gutter swollen with rain.
>
> (1986: 15)

The use of the lexical verb 'know', which creates epistemic modality, is used in both instances. In the final paragraph of the chapter its use is even more epistemically distant than the initial 'so far as I know or can tell' because it is negated: 'I do not know'. In addition, the first-person constructions using 'know' in these instances create enactor-accessible epistemic modal-worlds in Text-World-Theory terms, meaning that the information provided is filtered through the character and therefore is unverifiable by the reader (see Gavins 2007: 141). Both the introductory and concluding paragraphs also use a similar hypothetical construction ('if it ever did end'; 'if ever it did'), further suggesting uncertainty by evoking the counterfactual scenario whereby the terror may not have ended and the boat did not turn up again. The paragraph from the end of the chapter follows on this counterfactual scenario with another: 'perhaps it

reached the sea and sails there forever, like a magic boat in a fairytale', in which the adverb 'perhaps' suggests epistemic modality and the simile 'like a magic boat' further demonstrates epistemic distance, additionally highlighting the uncertainty of what happened to the boat. In the final paragraph, the narrator's comment beginning with 'All I know…' suggests that he/she is omniscient when it comes to what happens in Derry, but has no dominion outside the incorporated town limits. Together, both instances of the I-narrator in the first chapter of *IT* cultivate a sense of uncertainty and perhaps unreliability in the narrator because the seemingly omniscient narrator cannot or will not tell the readers exactly what happened with the boat, and also the end of the story. The circularity of these stylistic choices adds to the feeling of movement, and thereby the texture of the chapter. Additionally, the I-narrator does not appear again in the novel, making its appearance in the first chapter more noteworthy.

Interestingly, the paper boat may pass out of this particular tale forever, but it is mentioned again in the final *Dark Tower* (2004) novel by King, which is likely to be noticed by King's 'Constant Readers'. King is known for intertextuality amongst the stories in his multiverse, with additional information about previous works often appearing almost 'Easter-egg-like' throughout his works (see McAleer 2009; Stewart 2013). Adding world-building information in this way personally adds to the texture of the Stephen-King reading experience and makes me feel more immersed in the text-worlds. Another feature common to King's authorial tone is his use of foreshadowing.

4.4.2.2 Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing can be subtle or overt. Subtle foreshadowing includes clues for later events in the form of adjectives or other description that can be re-evaluated by the reader after the event for which the reader was primed occurs. The effect of such foreshadowing is a delicate ambience that sets the scene for unpleasant events to come. In narratological terms, overt foreshadowing can be seen as a type of prolepsis in Genette's (1972) terminology, where narration of an event occurs before it has happened chronologically. The amount of information given in each instance of overt foreshadowing varies, but I argue that it is overt if the narration specifies that something is going to happen. There are both types found in this chapter; I claim that they can divert the reader's attention and contribute to the texture of the story, especially upon re-reading when the reader is more likely to spot the foreshadowing, now knowing the story specifics. Or, the reader may recall the foreshadowing once the death happens, inviting world repair.

The table below includes examples of foreshadowing throughout the first chapter, labelled subtle or overt, with key triggering phrases underlined:

	Text	Overt/Subtle
1	'The terror, which would not end for another twenty-eight years – if it ever did end' (15)	**Overt**
2	'[…] began with a boat floating' (15)	**Subtle**
3	'In that autumn of 1957, eight months before the real horrors began and twenty-eight years before the final showdown, Stuttering Bill was ten years old.' (15)	**Overt**
4	'God knew it had happened before – the flooding in 1931 had been a disaster which had cost millions of dollars and almost two dozen lives.' (16)	**Subtle**
5	'In Derry such forgetting of tragedy and disaster was almost an art, as Bill Denbrough would come to discover in the course of time.' (16)	**Overt**
6	'Their buckles made a jolly jingling sound as George ran toward his strange death.' (17)	**Overt**
7	'[…] while he was feeling for the light switch, some horrible clawed paw would settle lightly over his wrist…and then jerk him own into the darkness' (18)	**Subtle**
8	'(his left arm curled around the doorjamb in a deathgrip), that cellar smell seemed to intensify until it filled the world. Smells of dirt and wet and long-gone vegetables would merge into one unmistakeable ineluctable smell, the smell of the monster, the apotheosis of all monsters. It was the smell of something for which he had no name: the smell of It, crouched and lurking and ready to spring. A creature which would eat anything but which was especially hungry for boymeat.' (18–19)	**Subtle**
9	'As if this thought were his cue, Bill called from his bedroom: "Did you d-d-die out there, Juh-Georgie?"' (19)	**Subtle**
10	'[…] an old can of Turtle wax. For some reason this can struck him, and he spent nearly thirty seconds looking at the turtle on the lid with a kind of hypnotic wonder' (20); 'That turtle, George thought…Where did I see a turtle like that before?' (20–21)	**Subtle**
11	'The piano began once more – Für Elise again. Stuttering Bill never forgot that piece, and even many years later it never failed to bring	**Overt**

	gooseflesh to his arms and back; his heart would drop and he would remember: My mother was playing that the day Georgie died.' (21–22)	
12	'Okay. Just don't get any on the blankets or Mom'll kill you.' (22)	**Subtle**
13	"'Be c-careful." "Sure." His brow creased a little. That was something your mom said, not your big brother. It was as strange as him giving Bill a kiss. "Sure I will." He went out. Bill never saw him again.' (23)	**Overt**
14	'And yet under it all was the smell of flood and decomposing leaves and dark stormdrain shadows. That smell was wet and rotten. The cellar smell.' (26)	**Subtle**

Table 4.3: Subtle and overt foreshadowing in IT

Apart from the great amount of negatively oriented lexis which can have a foreshadowing function through establishing a foreboding atmosphere, there is an equal amount of subtle and overt foreshadowing identified in the first chapter. Examples 1 and 3 plainly refer to the ending of the novel, which foreshadows 28 years into the future from the first sentence of the novel. Sweetser (2006: 321–2) suggests that negation can serve a foreshadowing function – by calling to mind a possibility in a negated construction, this possibility can be primed to occur later in the text. An instance of negation is found in example 1 – 'which would not end' – suggesting that the terrible events encountered in the first chapter will not be totally resolved for 28 years. As discussed earlier, however, the construction 'if it ever did end' may negate this negation (see Dancygier and Sweetser 2005 on conditional constructions and negation). Therefore, two possible endings are foreshadowed – one where the terror ends in 28 years and one where it doesn't end at all. Other instances which point towards the novel's future events outside this chapter and ending are 4 and 10. Example 4 is actually a sort of analepsis (see Genette 1972), as it describes events that happened 27 years earlier in Derry. I still argue that this primes the reader for future events in the novel, as a similar flood occurs later in the story, claiming many more lives than that of 1931. In addition, the date serves as a clue as to the cycle of It – every 27–8 years the monster appears – 1957-1931 = 27 years; the first paragraph mentions that the 'final' showdown occurred 28 years after the action of the first chapter. The reader may piece this information together later on in the story. Example 10 gives a subtle clue to the ending as well, as there is a turtle involved, but this will likely only be noticed upon re-reading after the novel has been finished.

Several instances of subtle and overt foreshadowing combine to prime the reader for George's death. The first subtle instance is the use of 'floating' to describe the boat in example 2. This instance of 'floating' mirrors the exchange between George and the clown where they discuss whether balloons float. Before the clown kills George, he says '…when you're down here with me, you'll float too' (26). George's arm is eventually torn off and presumably found floating as well. This example primes the ambience of the story through subtle lexical choices that become more salient as the action unfolds. Example 5 gives some explicit character-building information about the novel's main protagonist, Bill Denbrough, by overtly saying that he will discover the art of forgetting tragedy and disaster, suggesting that he will eventually be dealing with tragedy and disaster. Example 6 explicitly says that George will die, which may make the reader reconsider previous information such as example 5 and apply it to the knowledge that George will die that day and that is the tragedy Bill will try to forget. Instances 7 and 8 are George's imaginings about 'the apotheosis of all monsters' that will jerk him into the darkness. Similar to the 'floating' reference, these subtle references mirror what does actually befall George. Every time George goes down to the cellar, he imagines 'that while he was feeling for the light switch, some horrible clawed paw would settle lightly over his wrist…and then jerk him down into the darkness'. This episode and George's death episode are cohesive with each other; he is indeed murdered and his sanity destroyed 'in one clawing stroke'. The pauses in the form of ellipses are also replicated. It does indeed pause once while waiting for George to come a bit closer to the stormdrain and another while waiting for him to reach for his boat, and George smells the same 'cellar smell' (example 14). There is also some character-building with reference to the clown in the cellar imaginings. The reference to the monster as It with a capital I is the first description of the antagonist in this way, and one that is continued throughout the book by the other characters. The description of It as 'something for which he had no name' aligns with Asma's (2014) and Carroll's (1990) concept of category jamming or categorial mismatch – the 'It' does not fit into George's exiting schema.

The remaining examples of foreshadowing either subtly (9, 12) or overtly (11, 13) refer to George's death. Negatively oriented lexis such as 'deathgrip' (8), 'Did you d-d-die' (9), and 'Mom'll kill you' (12), while still subtle in that they do not directly say George will die in the same way that 11 and 13 do, add anxiety to the developing scene as we have been directly told earlier that George will die that day. Foreshadowing, especially overt foreshadowing (e.g. 'running toward his strange death'), can create a sense of dread in the reader because they know what is going to happen to George, if not how it happens specifically. I argue that emotion can be evoked three ways with foreshadowing. First, subtle foreshadowing such as negatively

oriented lexis that is encountered prior to finding out directly that George will die help to create an ominous ambience. As this is a horror story, readers will be somewhat primed to expect something bad to happen, but they may not know what that is, unless they are familiar with the book. This chapter is saturated with inherent negation and other negative lexical items which achieve this dark ambience. Second, once the narration indicates what will happen, a sense of dread or foreboding may be felt because readers know (unless the narrator is very deviant, unreliable and lies to them) that George, who is only six years old, will eventually die and in a strange manner. Third, emotion may be created by hypothesizing how this death is going to come about. In Text-World-Theory terms, conceptualizing a hypothesis in this way creates a text-world similar to a modal-world. Whiteley (2010) calls these types of hypotheses participation-worlds, or p-worlds, based on Gerrig's (1993) notion of participatory response. Although these mental conceptualizations are not part of the communicated text-worlds, they are triggered indirectly by linguistic cues from the text, coupled with the reader's background knowledge. The anticipation caused by forming p-worlds regarding the manner of George's death could lead to emotions such as anxiety, fear, or suspense and could make the reader feel jumpy as they read through the chapter. For example, one *Goodreads* reviewer commented, 'In the beginning, the story is like a roller coaster because you never quite know when the bad guy will strike' (IT60). The uncertainty of when George will be killed by 'the bad guy' creates suspense and shifting emotions for this reader, expressed through the use of the 'roller coaster' metaphor, as if she felt moved up, down, etc.

Combined, subtle and overt foreshadowing can act as textual attractors which help to create a textured experience for the reader, which may result in the various emotional effects discussed above. The movement from subtle to overt foreshadowing elements can be understood in terms of edgework, as overt edges represent an obvious departure from the originating text-world.

4.4.2.3 Types of edges

Subtle edges can be things like general textual attractors. I argue that you are not as aware of the edgework when things are happening within the originating text-world; that is, there are no obvious edges like a world-switch. I also claim that negation is a subtler type of world-switch; I do not believe that readers are consciously aware of the fact they have created a different world to then negate it, whereas it is more apparent that the mind is somewhere different than it previously was when readers encounter a flashback, for example.

Overt edges can be graphological elements like page breaks between paragraphs, chapters or sections, or obvious world-switches like temporal ones. In addition to breaking up

the action, the dramatic effect of page breaks between chapters can be heightened by ending the chapter with an ominous sentence, to give a horror-specific example. For instance, the final sentence of chapter 1, subsection 1 is 'Over his head, a grim gust of October wind rattled the trees, now almost completely unburdened of their freight of colored leaves by the storm, which had been this year a reaper of the most ruthless sort' (17); the final sentence of chapter 1, subsection 2 is 'He went out. Bill never saw him again' (23). Both sentences are ominous – the first is full of negative lexis (grim gust, rattled, storm, reaper) and morphological (unburdened, ruthless) negation and the mention of 'reaper' in particular calls to mind death, which has been primed by that particular subsection mentioning that George dies. The second sentence is more overtly sinister, as it straightforwardly says that Bill will never see his brother again. I claim that these sorts of sentences, especially overt ones like the second one, give the reader a sense of hearing the stereotypical ominous horror-movie music. For myself in particular, I find it difficult not to continue reading on to the next section or chapter after reading such a sentence. Therefore, I feel these foreboding sentences placed at the end of chapters or sections create anticipation and encourage the reader to complete the next set of edgework, that is, continue to read.

I find that there is a tension in this chapter between knowing what will happen to George, triggered by various types of foreshadowing, and a misplaced hope, or perhaps just a strong want, that the ending will be different than expected. Arguably, a reader knows upon picking up this book that it is from the horror genre, and therefore is primed to expect horrible things, based on background knowledge of genre characteristics. In my own case, I strangely find myself hoping that somehow George will survive this time, even though I have read this passage dozens of times. I am not delusional and do not *expect* this to actually happen, but part of me still wants him to survive. I also find myself creating p-worlds saying such things as 'Run, Georgie! Get away!', again knowing that he will not. What is happening here? In her work on reader traits, Hasan (2016) suggests that readers who find hope in a hopeless situation, which is a dispreferred reading in much dystopian fiction (her research focuses on dystopian fiction with closed endings; that is endings where hope is not suggested by the text), may do so because of their own personal traits such as optimism and hope. Her case study found that it depends, in particular on which other dystopian novels the readers have previously encountered. Therefore, it appears important to consider the readers' individual knowledge bases in terms of genre experience and expectation. I agree with Hasan's intuition that personal traits such as optimism and hope do affect a reader's experience. I suggest, however, that there may be some textually driven reasons for feeling a mixture of want and hope when reading

this chapter. As mentioned earlier, perhaps it is not hope that I feel at all, but rather just a strong desire that things would be different, without actually expecting them to be so. I claim that this tension between certainty in the negative outcome of the chapter and slight hope that it might turn out differently can be explained by examining the movement between 'good' and 'bad', or positive and negative, in this chapter.

This binary movement can be seen through the use of negative/'bad' lexis in the background and the juxtaposed positive/'good' lexis of George's childhood innocence. The binary movement is also evident in the deixis used in this chapter – there is a lot of pushing and pulling motions, up and down, etc. I argue that it is through this binary good—bad movement, which will be explained in detail below, that the reader is being moved along between good thoughts (e.g. 'Maybe George will run away this time.') and bad thoughts (e.g. 'He is going to die.).

4.5 Analysis Part II: Negation

As illustrated in the previous chapter, inherent negation and other negatively oriented lexis are key world-builders in the text-worlds of horror fiction. I will briefly outline the different types of negative lexis in the introductory chapter to *IT* to show how this helps establish the ambience of this scene, as well as the rest of the story. As discussed above, the definite noun phrase 'the terror' acts as negatively connoted lexis, whose negative associations set up the atmosphere of this scene which will reverberate throughout this chapter and the whole book. This, and numerous other instances of inherent negation as well as negatively connoted and loosely associated lexis contribute to the foreboding ambience of this chapter.

Although the figure is obviously very important, the ground also serves an important purpose. The background of Chapter 1 is described as dark, grey, and rainy. The character George is associated with bright colours such as yellow and red, and he is described as running 'cheerfully'. He stands in direct contrast to his surroundings. He finds the sound of the rain to be 'a comfortable, almost cozy sound', reminding the reader that he is a happy, young boy who makes the best of a bad situation – the heavy rains which would keep most children indoors. He is the 'good' figure placed against a 'bad', dark background. This figure/ground relationship is manipulated throughout the chapter.

Throughout the introductory chapter, there are many instances of the good/bad binary. The reader is moved back and forth between up and down, light and dark, forward and back, reaching and pulling, positive and negative. I argue that this reflects the struggle between the town, specifically George, and 'the terror', It. The reader constantly encounters the good

moments (like Bill and George's brotherly jokes) and the bad (the thing George imagines is in the cellar, George's horrible death). Pennywise the Clown morphs from being a creature with yellow eyes, to a happy clown with blue eyes, and then back to a sanity-destroying monster. This mirrors the chapter's dark undertones scattered amongst everyday moments in the lives of George Denbrough and his family. Ultimately in the first chapter, the reader is left on the dark side of the pendulum with the horrific death of a six-year-old boy. The clown itself is a strange mix of good and bad; it is meant to be a character loved by children. However that is merely a façade used to draw them into its web. Although in theory a clown would look happy with its brightly coloured clothing and giant greasepaint smile, there is a sinister undertone to Pennywise the Clown that even the children sense. I found it to be sad that throughout the first chapter, George is described as running 'toward his strange death'. Even though he was ultimately pulled by It into the darkness and his death, he did in a way initiate the 'push' action by going outside and trying to retrieve his boat from the flooded stormdrain. Ultimately, he is 'pulled' to his death in the sewer.

As illustrated in Chapter 3, negation acts as a common world-builder in horror fiction. Its use in *IT* is no different, and it also works as a textual attractor which draws the reader's attention to it. Take, for an example of syntactic negation, part of the conversation between George and Pennywise the Clown at their first (and last) meeting:

> 'I'm <u>not supposed to</u> take stuff from strangers…'
> '…Therefore, I will introduce myself. I, Georgie, am Mr Bob Gray, also known as Pennywise the Dancing Clown. Pennywise, meet George Denbrough. George, meet Pennywise. I'm <u>not a stranger</u> to you, and you're <u>not a stranger</u> to me. Kee-rect?'
> (1986: 25, emphasis mine)

The repetition of the negated phrase 'not a stranger' and the syntactic negation 'I'm not supposed to take stuff from strangers' foregrounds the fact that the clown is a stranger, before negating it, even though they each know each other's name (although the clown knew even though George didn't tell him). Inherent negation is also present in this passage through the word 'stranger', whose opposite is someone known. Through double negation then, Pennywise claims that he is a friend ('not a stranger'), while really highlighting the opposite. Nahajec (2009: 115) suggests that Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle supports Giora et. al's (2004) and Hassan and Glucksberg's (2006) claims that participants retain aspects of positive mental representations from negative constructions: 'by flouting the maxim of relation, speakers or writers are signposting the expectation of a positive counterpart to a negative expression as salient to the ongoing discourse. Negated concepts are therefore incremented to the textually

driven mental representation' (Nahajec 2009: 115). Therefore, the repetition of the negation 'not a stranger' causes the reader to find the opposite of this – that the clown is a stranger – relevant to the discourse.

The above exchange between Pennywise and George echoes a previous sentence about George's boots:

> Their buckles made a jolly jingling as George Denbrough ran toward his strange death. (1986: 17)

This sentence, with 'jolly jingling' being a loose association I have with clowns, is a cataphoric reference to George's death at the hands (claws) of the 'not a stranger' Pennywise the Clown. The noun phrase 'jolly jingling' may activate the reader's 'clown schema'; that is, if the reader is aware that the monster in this story is a clown (clown-related words add an element of cohesion to the story). If not, I still argue that this sound contributes subtly to the atmosphere of the chapter by enriching the background with foreshadowing elements. Again, this is quite subtle as not everyone may associate this sound with clowns; I certainly think the adjective 'jolly' can describe clowns. There is a contrast between 'jolly jingling' and 'strange death', which is a dissonant image that acts as a textual attractor. 'Strange death' cancels out the 'jolly jingling', but the aura of its significance potentially still lingers through its association with the clown. This aura of significance is its dominion (see 2.2.2.1); even if the reader does not associate 'jolly jingling' with clowns, this alliterative phrase should call to mind other potential associations, perhaps Santa Claus. All of these potential associations are thinly held strands in the reader's consciousness that contribute to a general sense of unease. Even though potential associations with 'jolly jingling' could be construed as positive (Santa Claus, maybe clowns, etc.), these potential images' juxtaposition with the negatively connoted 'strange death' is dissonant.

4.5.1 Using Negation for Shock

The following section aims to draw together all that has been previously discussed in this chapter and apply it to one particular passage, where George meets Pennywise the Clown and his unfortunate demise. I decided to use this passage because it is the first time the reader meets the antagonist, 'the terror', which turns out to be a clown. I find the revealing of the clown to be particularly frightening or shocking. The image of the clown in the stormdrain is particularly resonant for me, so I was interested to explore why that is in particular.

This passage is from towards the end of Chapter 1, when George had lost his paper boat down the stormdrain and just dropped to his knees to look for it there.

Key

- inherent negation is **emboldened**
- morphological negation is **emboldened and underlined**
- syntactic negation **emboldened and double-underlined**
- negatively connoted lexis is **emboldened and dashed-underlined**
- loose negatively associated lexis is **emboldened and wave-underlined**

> He got up and walked over to the **stormdrain.** He **dropped** to his knees and peered in. The water made a **dank hollow** sound as it **fell** into the **darkness**. It was a **spooky** sound. It reminded him of –
>
> 'Huh!' The sound was **jerked out** of him as if on a string, and he **recoiled**.
>
> There were **yellow eyes** in there: the sort of eyes he had always imagined but **never** actually seen **down** in the **basement.** It's an animal, he thought **incoherently**, that's all it is, some animal, maybe a housecat that **got stuck down** in there -
>
> Still, he was ready to run - would run in a second or two, when his mental switchboard had dealt with the **shock** those two **shiny yellow eyes** had given him. He felt the **rough** surface of the macadam under his fingers, and the thin sheet of **cold** water flowing around them. He saw himself getting up and **backing away**, and that was when a voice - a perfectly reasonable and rather pleasant voice - spoke to him from inside the **stormdrain.**
>
> 'Hi, Georgie,' it said.
>
> George blinked and looked again. He could **barely** credit what he saw; it was like something from a made-up story, or a movie where you know the animals will talk and dance. **If he had been ten years older, he would not have believed** what he was seeing, but **he was not sixteen.** He was six.
>
> There was a **clown** in the **stormdrain.** The light in there was **far from good**, but it was good enough so that George Denbrough was sure of what he was seeing. It was a **clown,** like in the circus or on TV. In fact he looked like a cross between **Bozo** and Clarabell, who talked by honking his (or was it her? - George **was never really sure** of the gender) horn on Howdy Doody Saturday mornings - Buffalo Bob was just about the only one who could understand Clarabell, and that always **cracked** George up. The face of the **clown** in the **stormdrain** was white, there were funny tufts of **red** hair on either side of his **bald** head, and there was a big **clown-smile** painted over his mouth. **If George had been inhabiting a later year, he would have surely** thought of **Ronald McDonald** before **Bozo** or Clarabell.
>
> The **clown** held a bunch of **balloons,** all colors, like gorgeous ripe fruit in one hand.
>
> In the other he held George's newspaper boat.
>
> (1986: 24–5)

As illustrated through the emboldened and underlined words, there is a fair amount of negative lexis and inherent negation present in this passage. Note certain items which fit into Nahajec's (2012: 129) typology of textual vehicles for pragmatically creating an absence – 'far from good' creates an absence through a grammaticalised metaphor (see Yamanshi 2000) and the

conditional constructions 'If he had...he would not have believed' and 'If George had been inhabiting…he would have surely' also arguably create an absence because they represent events which will not occur, but have been conceptualised nevertheless. Similar to the employment of such techniques seen in Chapter 3 in *Rosemary's Baby*, this use of lexis helps to darken down the background to prepare the reader for horrific events. In particular, the use of various types of negation creates feelings of 'felt absence'. These textual attractors foreground negativity for the reader and build the negative atmosphere of this passage, which serves to create negative feelings such as fear, dread, etc. These feelings will be heightened based on the loose associations each individual reader brings to the discourse. The prevalence of negatively associated words for me illustrates how many negative connotations I have with this passage. Particularly, my phobia of clowns and my existing negative experience with the novel and film versions of *IT* cause me to attach strong negative somatic markers to clowns, sewers, and to a lesser extent balloons in certain contexts. These negative associations will vary from reader to reader, but coulrophobia (fear of clowns) is fairly common, and recently in the US and UK, a series of clown-related incidents may have fed this phobia for some (see Burnett 2016). Clowns may cause fear for many because of categorial mismatch. It is disturbing to a human face that deviates from the norm – pale white face (perhaps suggestive of a corpse) and exaggerated mouth and eyes. For me in particular, there is always a mixture of fear and anticipation because I know this is where George is going to meet the clown, which triggers my emotional memory of this scene from the film and from having read it many times, as well as stirring up the negative connotations and associations I have with many of the words above.

There are a number of images throughout this passage that begin to prepare the reader for the jolt of seeing the clown. For example, the reader is told of yellow eyes that George thinks belong to an animal and that a 'perfectly reasonable' voice that knows George's name speaks from the stormdrain. Even though the voice is claimed to be 'perfectly reasonable', we guess that whoever/whatever is in the drain is not reasonable, for what sort of person speaks to small boys from the sewer? These sneak peeks of the clown (yellow eyes, a voice, etc.) I argue divert the reader's attention shortly, like little jerking movements or 'misaligned edges', which create a bumpy edgework experience. Stockwell (2009: 107) says 'misaligned edges are harder to track and call for greater effort and attention'. I claim therefore that since the text includes tiny jerks to the attention, almost like cinematographic flashes of the monster through the trees in horror movies, this causes the reader to put more cognitive power into processing the text. In turn, they are primed to concentrate greatly on the world-switches (especially negation) that this passage has, which sets them up to be jolted when the monster appears.

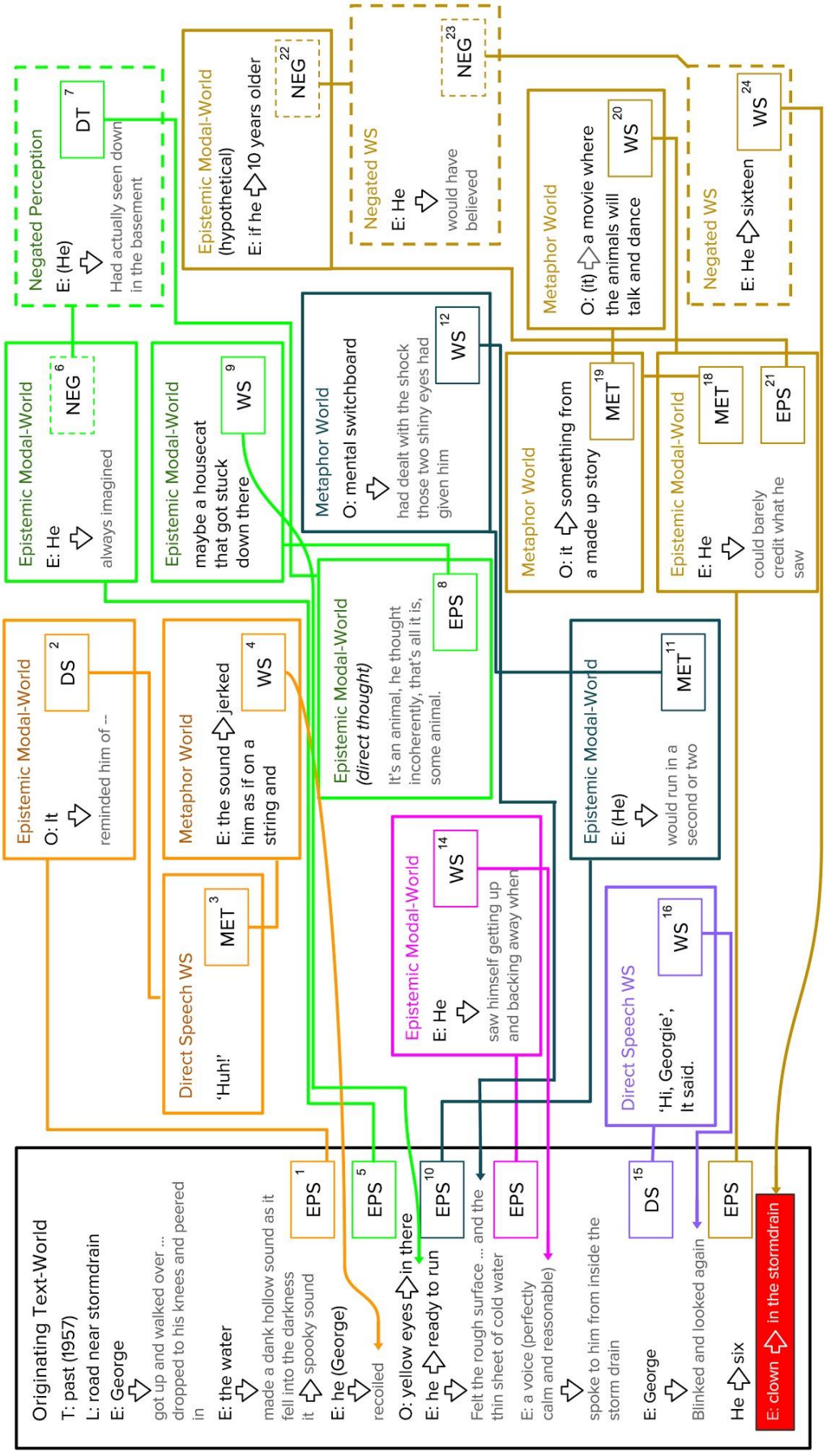


Figure 4.4: World-Switching in IT

For a depiction of the many world-switches leading up to 'There was a clown in the stormdrain', see Figure 4.4 above.

Figure 4.4 illustrates the plethora of world-switches found in the passage. Each different coloured cluster of world-switches represents a departure (with embedded world-switches) from the originating text-world. The first two sets of switches (orange and green) are similar in length of departure from the originating text-world. I argue that these three- and four-world deep movements away from the originating text-world make the action seem less urgent. Simpson (2014) claims that narrative urgency generally requires fewer world-switches to sustain itself. While I would posit that this should be an urgent moment – at least the reader may think so, because she knows that George will die at some point in this chapter – but it is slowed down. I suggest that this slowing down of the scene may create a false sense of security in the reader. Perhaps they might fleetingly create a p-world with thoughts such as 'Okay, it's not going to happen yet. Maybe it is just a cat'. Leading up to the more urgent part of the text – where George is ready to run – the world-switch departures accordingly become shorter with a two- and one-switch deep movement from the dark blue and pink clusters. Interestingly, there is a focus in the originating text-world on the water. Before the first set of world-switches, George is listening to the water, which he thinks makes a spooky sound and reminds him of something which is cut off in the text, but the reader may infer that he is referring to the cellar, which we know scares him. Between the dark blue (when George is ready to run, once he deals with the shock of seeing the eyes) and pink (he sees himself getting up and backing away) world-switch clusters, George feels the rough surface of the pavement and the 'thin sheet of cold water'. This further slows down the action by focusing on sound and haptic images of water and macadam, which arguably grounds the discourse more in the present moment, originating text-world. Perhaps this grounding helps to create more of an obvious transition/edge between the world-switch departures and the originating text-world. Also, the focus on water may also serve to further foreshadow George's death; as he is pulled in by the clown 'toward that terrible darkness where the water rushed and roared and bellowed', he is seen by Dave Gardener with 'muddy water surfing over his face and making his screams sound bubbly', and finally his dead open eyes 'began to fill up with rain'.

At the most urgent part of the text, where George hears a voice speaking to him from the stormdrain, there is one quick direct speech world-switch (purple), which is ontologically very close to the originating text-world. At this point, depending on readerly disposition and feelings of involvement, the reader would like for George to leave the stormdrain, but the reader may also be curious about who/what this voice belongs to. I argue that this is an urgent

moment because it is known that George will eventually die, and a voice (belonging to something with yellow eyes) is not something that would normally speak to a person from inside a sewer grate, no matter how perfectly calm and reasonable it sounds. Therefore, 'alarm bells' may be sounding for the reader, and they are ready to see who is speaking to George. At this point, however, there is the longest stretch of world-switches (mustard coloured), with two instances of negation and several of modality. I claim that the purpose of this longest stretch of world-switches serves to misdirect the reader's attention. While the reader is busy attending to a series of epistemic modal, metaphor/blended, and negated world-switches, a shocking image is being prepared in the background.

Negated sentences demand more cognitive attention than positive sentences. I therefore argue that negation can be a textual attractor, which enables the reader to become further immersed in the story. As negation creates a world-switch, it pushes the reader deeper into the text, and further away from the originating text-world. I propose that this conceptual distance is utilized as a distraction for the reader; while the reader is immersing herself in a negated world-switch (or any other type of world-switch, as they all have a distancing effect), a 'shock' is being prepared simultaneously in the text-world. Therefore, when the reader is 'popped' back into the text-world, something new has appeared and consequently may give the reader a fright. This new image – a clown in a stormdrain who speaks reasonably meets several textual attractor requirements, making it a very strong attractor. It is new, it described as bright and colourful, and it is dissonant (a clown in a sewer is obviously not normal) and dangerous (the reader knows It's dangerous, anyway).

While the reader is off in George's thoughts, 'what he saw' is relegated to the object position and is therefore backgrounded. The text manipulates figure and ground by switching them suddenly, causing the 'Ahh!' moment. There are more examples of George going off into his thoughts and being brought back suddenly, but nothing as scary as this one moment. Other examples can be found in King's *The Shining* (1977), which often holds the #1 spot on top horror lists on *Goodreads*. This sort of misdirection is common in King's work, as his authorial tone commonly indulges in extended flashbacks, foreshadowing, and perspective changes. Although I do not doubt that this sort of misdirection occurs in other horror author's works, it only obviously occurred in *IT* out of my three case studies.

The sentence 'There was a clown in the stormdrain' is set apart in the beginning of a new paragraph, a textual deictic feature which literally breaks the flow, causing a minor pause in reading. It is a 'jolt' to the reader – because it is a dissonant image (textual attractor). It is preceded by a negation. The reader is made to visualize George ten years older at sixteen, not

believing 'what he was seeing', before this image is negated. George does indeed believe what he is seeing because he is six. The negation serves to potentially make the reader feel sad for George because he will never reach sixteen, for as the reader knows, George dies on the day of the story's action. Hope is somehow created in the reader by imagining George at an older age, but then taken away when the image is negated and the reader should remember the aforementioned death of George at six years old. This contributes to the undulating sense of good and bad that is felt throughout the chapter, and indeed throughout the novel – while it is a horror novel, and there are some very terrible scenes, it is also a heart-warming tale of friendship and the magic of childhood.

In this instance, 'There was a clown in the stormdrain' is delivered in such a simple, straightforward way, that it can be even more jarring to the reader. This constitutes a change in texture. The texture of a negated world-switch differs from that of the text-world. The language in this sentence is not necessarily rich; there are no adjectives or adverbs. The preceding paragraph with the negation and modalisation is much more complex linguistically and cognitively. But why make the reader work harder to understand? Is it just to concentrate their attention on something else? Take, for example, the popular online video that invites you to study an image very closely. While you are focused on that benign image, a horrible monster pops up suddenly, making you jump. I posit that something similar is going on in this particular instance. (For an example 'jump scare' YouTube video, see xymox1971 (2006).)

'He was six' is the trigger that brings the reader back from the negated world-switch to the originating text-world. 'There was a clown in the stormdrain' is the next world-building element given in the discourse, and for me at least, it led to fright and general discomfort. Again, this passage is particularly resonant for me because of my personal experiences with the horror genre, especially in my formative years. I actually first encountered this scene in film form when I was eight years old. I slept with the lights on for two weeks. It didn't help that since then my mother yells 'Come here, little girl!' in a scary voice every time I pass near a storm drain. While these extratextual experiences from my knowledge base have undoubtedly caused part of my fearful reaction to this scene (even after reading it dozens of times), I also argue that the textual features of this scene contribute to that general sense of discomfort when I read it. Other readers found this scene to be resonant as well. Reviewer IT 54 comments, 'You know that when a book starts off with a little boy getting his arm ripped off by a clown that you're in for a wild ride. This book didn't disappoint'. Similarly to IT60, IT54 draws a comparison between the experience of reading this book and a ride, which starts with 'a little boy getting his arm ripped off by a clown'. This suggests that the reader found the book to

only get 'wilder' from that point. Reviewer IT90 says, 'Only Stephen King could write an 1100 page book about the innocence and wonder of childhood, and then kick it off with a six-year-old boy getting his arm ripped off by a clown'. IT90 also suggests an emotional reaction by humorously juxtaposing the novel's theme of 'innocence and wonder of childhood' with its beginning of a young boy getting his arm torn off. This reviewer also exemplifies knowledge of Stephen King's writing style by specifically mentioning his name, the length of the book (King's books are commonly very long), and his common juxtaposition of feel-good themes with atrocities. Knowing that this reviewer rated the book 5/5 and his/her declaration that 'I've always been a fan of horror novels, but very few have ever actually scared me. This book did the trick' leads me to believe that his/her response to the novel is one of fear, but also shows an endearing tone towards Stephen King as an author.

4.6 Review

This chapter drew upon the common fear-related responses from *Goodreads* users and used them to drive my macro to micro steam-stylistic analysis of conceptual movement in *IT*. I detailed how various textual attractors and world-switches brought about feelings of movement in the reader, which affected their textural experiences of this novel. This analysis further illustrated how negatively oriented lexis can contribute to the foreboding ambience of a horror text-world. I particularly focused on various types of negatively oriented lexis and negation and how these textual features can be used to manipulate readers' attention to cause fright.

Chapter 5 builds upon the previous analyses by continuing to describe the effects of negatively oriented lexis on the construction of text-worlds in horror. It takes as its focus the cognitive-poetic notion of projection and considers how this affects the experience of horror text-worlds, in particular those where the action may cause disgust.

Chapter 5

'…what an excellent day for an exorcism': Disgust and Projection in *The Exorcist*

5.0 Preview

This chapter includes a detailed analysis of the infamous crucifix/head-spin scene from William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* (1971). I specifically focus on how readers may experience disgust while reading this novel, and in particular this scene. Projection can account for the sense of immersion which may cause emotional connections, such as disgust, that readers feel with texts. First, I give an overview of the emotion disgust and consider how it can be usefully applied to cognitive-poetic analysis, in particular projection. Second, I introduce *The Exorcist* and consider why it is a useful text to explore in terms of this emotion. I then give a detailed introspective, steam-stylistic analysis of an iconic scene from *The Exorcist*. Third, I consider how the addition or absence of certain linguistic features in the 40th-anniversary edition of *The Exorcist* (2011) slightly alters the emotional intensity of the scene discussed. Finally, I investigate *Goodreads* responses to the novel and consider how different types of disgust are encoded in the reviews.

5.1 Disgust

Before I consider how disgust can be triggered in literary experiences, I will give a brief overview of the psychological concept of this emotion. Disgust is considered by some (e.g. Ekman et al. 1982; Oatley and Johnson-Laird 1987, 1996, 2011, 2014; Toronchuk and Ellis 2007) to be one of the primal, or basic, emotions and is rooted in biological necessity, as its original purpose was to keep humans from 'bad' things that could cause bodily harm, such as rotten food (Rozin et al. 2008). Darwin's *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872), arguably the earliest scientific investigation of disgust, catalogued a cline of physiological reactions to disgusting things, ranging from a basic frown to open-mouthed revulsion with a possible 'Ach' sound to facial responses similar to those experienced before vomiting (i.e. 'the gape' discussed below: wide-open mouth, wrinkled nose, retracted upper lip); in some extreme cases, actual vomiting occurs. Darwin also found that what people found disgusting also

differed (e.g. a native found Darwin's cured meat to be disgusting when touched, while Darwin was disgusted by 'a naked savage' touching his food, even though he appeared 'clean'.) Darwin's identification of different triggers of disgust and his inventory of bodily responses to disgust are useful to consider when discussing emotion in literature; that is, elicitors of disgust may be different for each person, there is no one response to disgusting things, and each bodily response may differ in degree. For example, I would posit that only those very sensitive to disgust elicitors might actually vomit while reading a repulsive text. I suggest that the more common physiological reactions to simulated disgust in literature would be frowning and other facial responses of varying degrees. Some more extreme reactions might include sounds or exclamations or the reader physically distancing herself from the text by putting her hands over the handout with the extract on it and pushing it away (this was observed during a presentation on *The Exorcist* extract discussed below).

Returning to the underlying causes of disgust in general, Rozin (1997) claims that disgust has elements of both 'nature' ('survival by aversion' (D'Amato 1998)) and 'nurture' (culturally acquired). There is a primal side to disgust – 'the gape', or disgust face, is shared by humans, birds, and some mammals like rats; its purpose is to assist in the rejection of food that smells or tastes unpleasant and may potentially be dangerous. For example, human infants employ 'the gape' when encountering sour tastes or irritating ones, such as spicy food. This sensory reaction to express distaste differs from what Rozin calls 'core disgust', or 'ideationally based, contamination-sensitive revulsion or withdrawal' (Rozin and Fallon 1987; Rozin et al. 2008) (e.g. both of Darwin's examples above are ideationally based; neither disgust trigger was inherently dangerous or 'bad'). Rozin's example of 'core disgust' is someone biting into an apple to find half a worm: the disgust felt is not because the worm tasted bad, or because the worm was tasted at all; it is felt by finding the worm writhing in the apple. Worms are not inherently dangerous and do not necessarily have negative sensory properties; some cultures eat worms (e.g. the Yekuana people of Venezuela). I argue the texture of a worm could be construed as disgusting, but this is culturally related as well – one might imagine gummy worms or maybe calamari has a similar texture, but these things are enjoyed by many. The discovery itself, and the associations around live worms, trigger the disgust reaction. It is important, then, to consider how disgust may be culturally acquired or influenced.

Considering that disgust has elements of both 'nature' and 'nurture', Rozin et al. (2008) and others (Haidt et al. 1994; Rozin et al. 1993; Rozin et al. 1997) posit that elicitors of disgust come from nine domains:

1. food
2. body products
3. animals
4. sexual behaviours
5. contact with death or corpses
6. violations of the exterior envelope of the body (including gore and deformity)
7. poor hygiene
8. interpersonal contamination (contact with unsavoury human beings)
9. certain moral offenses

Whether biologically distaste-related or culturally acquired, disgust works to keep humans from real or imagined harm (Rozin et al. 2008). It is important to note that the 'imagined' harm (e.g. the worm in the apple) can elicit just as strong a disgust reaction as potential real harm (e.g. eating rotten meat). The above list of elicitors of disgust can be divided into real or imagined harm from physically related disgust (elicitors 1–7) or sociomorally related disgust (elicitors 8–9) (Rozin et al. 1997). The eighth and ninth elicitors, interpersonal contamination and certain moral offenses, pertain more to potential mental or spiritual harm, rather than bodily harm. While I agree that physical disgust differs from sociomoral in terms of potential bodily harm as opposed to mental or spiritual harm, I argue that both types of disgust are experienced bodily. For example, I could encounter an 'unsavoury human being' (perhaps reading about a rapist in the news) and feel my skin crawl, much the same way I might feel if I saw maggots on food.

Haidt (1998) suggests that disgust now functions to distance ourselves from our animalistic nature. Many physical disgust elicitors are functions that we have in common with animals – waste voiding/bodily products, etc. Interestingly, one of the only bodily products that does not *generally* elicit disgust is tears, the by-product of a decidedly human process. Haidt posits:

> If physical disgust is about distinguishing ourselves from animals, then social disgust is about distinguishing ourselves from 'demons.' 'Human being' is a charged category, and we want to keep its boundaries clearly defined. Someone who cheats on his taxes can be human; someone who eats human flesh cannot. Socially disgusting acts are those that reveal that you have inhuman motives.
>
> (Haidt 1998, quoted in D'Amato 1998)

Philosophers have hypothesized that disgust, like fear, is triggered by a schematic mismatch. Related to Haidt's view that disgust functions to distance ourselves from non-human categories, Douglas' (1966) *Purity and Danger* 'correlates reactions of impurity with the transgression or violation of schemes of cultural categorization' (Carroll 1990: 31). Categorial

or schematic mismatches include elicitors that suggest me/not me (e.g. faeces, etc.), inside/outside (e.g. vomit, blood, etc.), and living/dead (e.g. corpses, etc.). All of these things are integral parts of being human, but are also processes shared with animals and are less than pleasant aspects of humanity that we might seek to distance ourselves from, as Haidt suggests. In terms of horror literature, the use of 'impure', interstitial entities is a staple of the genre. For example, there are vampires, zombies, ghosts (dead, but also somehow living); monsters, like werewolves, Creature from the Black Lagoon, etc. (both share human and animal characteristics). There is also a subgenre of horror called body horror (also called splatterpunk or extreme horror; see Spratford and Clausen 2004: Chapter 13), which focuses on gory, tortured bodies; this undoubtedly can elicit disgust, both sociomoral and physical, in some readers (e.g. the cannibals in Jack Ketchum's *Off Season* (1984) are both disgusting in terms of their inhuman behaviour and the depiction of said gory behaviour). Following Carroll (1990), I argue that categorial mismatch is key to understanding the triggers of disgust in the horror-reading experience.

Categorial mismatch arises from schemata contained in each reader's knowledge base. While category jamming will often occur similarly across certain sociocultural groups due to shared schematic knowledge, each individual person has an idiosyncratic knowledge base; therefore, each person may react differently to the same textual stimulus when reading horror fiction. This of course is important to consider in regards to disgust – especially sociomoral disgust – in the reading experience. As aforementioned, each person may have different disgust triggers based on their personal experiences and furthermore may experience disgust to different degrees based on personality and readerly disposition.

As discussed above, it is obvious that humans can have strong disgust reactions to imagined harm, both physical and sociomoral. While the apple and worm example depicts a physical representation of the imagined harm, reading about a rapist in a newspaper requires simulation. This simulation is the same that takes place when reading fiction. In an fMri study conducted where disgust was triggered in participants by a noxious substance, Wicker et al. (2003: 661) found that 'there is a common mechanism for understanding the emotion in others and feeling the same emotions in ourselves'. This of course is known through embodied cognition, and the same principle underlies cognitive poetics. It is through simulation during reading that readers might also experience the disgust felt by characters themselves, or as an effect of the experiences depicted in the text. Perhaps a reader of the news might be more disgusted reading about an actual rapist rather than a fictional one, but this reaction only differs

in degree, not kind. In both instances, the disgust reaction serves to distance ourselves from the repulsive, sociomorally transgressive actions of the rapist.

I argue that horror fiction can present the reader with opportunities to directly feel and/or simulate all domains of disgust, physical and sociomoral alike. This chapter considers various linguistic features and cognitive-poetic phenomena that may trigger disgust in readers of horror fiction. In particular, this analysis draws on levels of projection (as outlined in Whiteley 2010, 2011, 2016) that may contribute to readers' feelings of disgust, as well as how narrative urgency (Simpson 2014) may influence the feelings of emotional immersion caused by projection. Returning to Haidt's claim that physical disgust is about distinguishing ourselves from animals while social disgust is about distinguishing ourselves from 'demons', William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* provides a wealth of both types of disgust and is an excellent case study for investigating this unpleasant emotion in the horror-reading experience.

5.2 *The Exorcist*: 'The most terrifying book ever written'

William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* (1971) is perhaps one of the best-known horror stories of the twentieth century. It depicts the story of the famous actress Chris MacNeil and her young daughter Regan, who becomes inexplicably ill while Chris is filming a movie in Georgetown, Washington D.C. After a series of poltergeist-like disturbances in their home, Regan becomes increasingly more withdrawn and aggressive. After trying to find rational explanations for Regan's behaviour in several failed psychological and physical tests, Chris, an atheist, turns to a Jesuit priest, Father Damien Karras, for help. After meeting with Regan, he initially is convinced that there is a psychological explanation for her behaviour, but eventually comes to believe she is possessed by a demon, Father Karras requests permission to perform an exorcism on the 12-year-old girl. A more experienced priest named Father Merrin, who has fought Pazuzu the demon (who is seemingly the same demon possessing Regan) in his past, is called in to perform the exorcism. Following a series of disgusting episodes, Father Merrin dies of a heart attack during the exorcism, and Father Karras is left to face the demon on his own. He eventually expels the demon, which then possesses him. To save Regan, he jumps out of the window to end his own life and the hold of the demon. Regan is saved and mercifully, although to the annoyance of the detective investigating the deaths surrounding Regan's exorcism, does not remember anything of the whole ordeal.

Blatty adapted the novel into a screenplay after publishing his first draft. Director William Friedkin's *The Exorcist* (1973) is one of the most famous horror films of all time (Carroll 1990: 1–3), and is recognized by some as the first 'blockbuster' movie (Cardin 2007:

32). In 1973, *The Exorcist* was the first horror film to be nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture. Indeed, the film was nominated for ten Academy Awards, with Blatty winning for Best Adapted Screenplay. The content of the film triggered a theological discussion in the USA and some have claimed it prompted many 'fear-based conversions and reconversions to Christianity' (Cardin 2007: 32). Although arguably more popular than the book, the film lacks some of the nuance of the novel's original 1971 version, as it promotes the interpretation that Regan is possessed and does not really allow for the uncertainty at which the novel hinted (see Williams 2011).

It has been claimed that Blatty based the exorcism on the 1949 exorcism of a young boy from Cottage City, Maryland (Winter 1996: 86–8). The plotlines of many famous horror novels are inspired by so-called 'true events' (e.g. Peter Benchley's *Jaws* (1974), Jay Anson's *The Amityville Horror* (1977), and Jack Ketchum's *Off Season* (1980) and *The Girl Next Door* (1989), etc.). Perhaps the idea that the stories really did happen at some point makes them all the more terrifying. Returning to the example in 5.1 of reactions of disgust differing between 'real-life' events and fictional events in only degree but not kind, I suggest that emotional reactions to believed 'true events' may be stronger than events believed to be 100% fictional. I believe this stronger emotional reaction is reflected through the above claim that the film version promoted fear-based reconversions to Christianity. This also exemplifies how much horror taps into the reader's/viewer's individual knowledge base of things they fear to trigger such strong effects which also somehow influence the reader's discourse-world after the book is closed, or the movie finished. Considering the deep fear prompted by *The Exorcist*, Carroll claims:

> The book is rather complicated insofar as it aspires to more than mere horror – allegorically, it is an affirmation of the existence of inexplicable evil in the world (note the page of quotations that precedes the story), and it has a theory about the real purpose of demonic possession.
>
> (Carroll 1990: 103)

This 'existence of inexplicable evil' points to *angst*, or existential dread. This is not mere fright, but a more cognitive, deep-seated level of fear. Carroll (1990) continues:

> Blatty thinks that the demonic purpose of possession is not primarily to appropriate the soul of the possessed, but to undermine the faith of all those who surround and witness the spectacle: to make them doubt and despise themselves in such a way that they cannot believe that God could love them.
>
> (Carroll 1990: 104)

Carroll's claims about the purpose of possession are clearly philosophically profound. It perhaps suggests why demonic possession is so scary to some, especially the religious, further illustrating the importance of personal knowledge bases to readerly meaning and emotional reactions. In addition, it shows how possession stories affect all those characters in the story, not just the possessee.

While the above criticism of *The Exorcist* mostly addresses feelings of fear and angst, it is important to note that many have found the novel and the film version to also induce disgust. Disgust can be argued to relate to fear, as it represents a fear of real or imagined harm from something impure. While the overall themes of the book arguably cause fear or even angst in the reader, I claim that several of the specific scenes in the novel may cause disgust, due to their graphic nature, representation of category jamming, and certain cognitive-poetic features like projection.

5.2.1 Category Jamming

Returning to the idea that horror depends on being a violation of some norm, *The Exorcist* is rooted in the 'safe space' of family (Tallon 2010: 39). The security of the family is violated when the daughter, Regan, becomes possessed by a crude entity who makes her do and say terrible things. As Carroll (1990: 33) points out: 'Demonically possessed characters typically involve the superimposition of two categorially distinct individuals, the possessee and the possessor, the latter usually a demon, who, in turn, is often a categorially transgressive figure (e.g., a goat-god)'. The case of *The Exorcist* definitely fits Carroll's description of category jamming. Not only is the Regan–demon character a combination of two separate enactors (Regan and the demon), the demon itself is thought to be Pazuzu, who is mentioned in the novel's prologue, which focuses on Father Merrin:

> […] At the palace of Ashurbanipal he paused then shifted a sidelong glance to a limestone statue hulking *in situ*: ragged wings; taloned feet; bulbous, jutting, stubby penis and a mouth stretched taught in a feral grin. The demon Pazuzu.
>
> Abruptly he sagged.
>
> He knew.
>
> It was coming.
>
> (Blatty 1971: 21)

This description of Pazuzu, who is the personification of the southwest wind, mixes several animal features with human ones; this arguably qualifies the demon as a 'categorially transgressive figure'.

While it is not directly stated that the demon possessing Regan is Pazuzu, there are several clues pointing in this direction – as the above quote from the novel suggests, Father Merrin senses the return of the demon and incidentally ends up performing the exorcism later in the novel. When Merrin arrives to the house to exorcise the demon from Regan, the demon appears to know the priest – in a bone-chilling moment for me, while the others are downstairs greeting Merrin, the walls shake and they hear the demon scream from upstairs 'Merriiiiinnnnnn!' (1971: 315) and later, upon Merrin meeting Regan, the demon says 'This time, you're going to lose' (1971: 319), referring presumably to the previous exorcism he performed. Regardless, the possessee–possessor relationship represents a categorial mismatch that may cause arousal and fear and/or disgust. The enactor of the demon qualifies even more so as categorially transgressive or aesthetically distant from the norm through its register, which includes varied elements such as sophisticated, academic language, multiple foreign languages (including Latin, German, English spoken backward, etc.), strong expletive language and insults, and animal sounds. For readers to be emotionally moved by this categorial mismatch, which they should be able to account for in their horror schemas, they must project themselves into the text-world, thereby distancing themselves from their discourse-worlds in order to be immersed in the emotionally charged atmosphere of *The Exorcist*.

5.3 Analysis Part I

This chapter aims to present a multi-layered analysis of an iconic scene from *The Exorcist*. This scene was chosen because of its notoriety and ability to induce disgust (King 1981: 17; Schweitzer 2007: 183). While there are many memorable scenes from *The Exorcist*, the 'crucifix masturbation scene' is arguably the most unforgettable that occurs in both the novel and the film (n.b. the 360-head-rotation scene only happens in the film). I consider how various stylistic elements combine to create feelings of immersion through projection, and potentially emotional responses, to this passage I find disturbing (and suspect that the majority of readers will too). Text World Theory acts as my overarching model to discuss this text; however, I will be utilizing various tools from my stylistic toolkit to account for the fine-grained textuality of this scene and to present a rigorous account of the various aspects of the text which work together to create a piece that incites emotion within readers.

First, I will discuss in-depth paragraphs 1 to 8 to highlight the onset of urgency in this scene.

(1) Chris jerked her head up at the sounds of commotion in Regan's bedroom.

(2) Rappings, rapid, with a nightmarish resonance; massive, like a sledgehammer pounding in a tomb!
(3) Regan screaming in anguish; in terror; imploring!
(4) Karl! Karl bellowing angrily at Regan!
(5) Chris bolted from the kitchen.
(6) *God almighty, what's happening?*
(7) Frenzied, Chris raced for the stairs, toward the bedroom, heard a blow, someone reeling, someone crashing like a boulder to the floor with her daughter crying, '*No*! Oh, no, don't! Oh, no, *please*!' and Karl bellowing--- No! No, not Karl! Someone else! A thundering bass that was threatening, raging!
(8) Chris plunged down the hall and burst into the bedroom, gasped, stood rooted in paralyzing shock as the rappings boomed massively, shivering through walls; as Karl lay unconscious on the floor near the bureau; as Regan, her legs propped up and spread wide on a bed that was violently bouncing and shaking, clutched the bone-white crucifix in raw knuckled hands; the bone-white crucifix poised at her vagina, the bone-white crucifix she stared at with terror, eyes bulging in a face that was bloodied from the nose, the naso-gastric tubing ripped out.

(Blatty 1971: 245–7)

Arguably, most of the novel is imbued with inherent negation and other negatively oriented lexis, which contributes to the general unpleasant ambience that is built into this text-world for me. This passage is no different – almost every sentence of this scene is negatively coloured. The world-building elements of this text-world are the location – Chris' house, more specifically the kitchen and Regan's bedroom; the time of day is not specified but it is the present time, not a flashback; and the enactors of this text-world are Chris (Regan's mother), Regan, Karl (the caretaker), and 'someone else'. If the reader is immersed, an enactor of the reader is also present. The reader's enactor observes the scene through projection, and may metaphorically experience the action depending on which level of projection she achieves. This passage lends itself to reader projection because it contains several sentences which lack traditional subject–verb conjugations (e.g. paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 6). I argue that it is easier to project into the action of a text if there are less mentions of the character's name and fewer reporting verbs. There are many function-advancing propositions in this text-world, but the important ones are Chris hearing a commotion, running to Regan's bedroom, and seeing Regan on a shaking bed with the crucifix poised at her vagina. Most of this scene stays within the originating text-world; there are hardly any world-switches apart from those triggered by a few metaphors ('like a sledgehammer pounding in a tomb', 'crashing like a boulder', 'a thundering bass') and free direct thought ('*God almighty, what's happening?*'). The importance of staying mostly within the originating text-world is discussed further below in the section on narrative urgency.

There are many textual attractors in this passage, both in terms of world-building and function-advancing. Recall from Chapters 1 and 2 that textual attractors attract and direct the

attention of readers, which affects the readers' aesthetic experience of the text. This short passage contains elements from all of Stockwell's (2009: 25) textual attractors. I will discuss the attractors I found to be most striking here. The first four paragraphs include verbs that suggest sound ('screaming', 'imploring', 'bellowing'), as well as nouns relating to sound ('sounds of commotion', the whole of paragraph 2). These paragraphs quickly set the tone of the action by abruptly figuratively amplifying the sound of the scene to signify its importance to the reader; this represents the textual attractor *noisiness*. Readers know that something important is happening upstairs (*height* being another textual attractor) and become alert along with Chris. *Fullness* is also denoted in this passage, as intensity of sound and emotion are described (e.g. paragraph 2, 'A thundering bass that was threatening, raging!', 'the rappings boomed massively', 'screaming in anguish', etc.). Perhaps the strongest of the textual attractors is *aesthetic distance from the norm*. In paragraphs 7 and 8 we have dangerous referents present – the 'someone else' who is threatening and raging, and who we see in paragraph 8 has knocked Karl unconscious (he was the 'someone crashing like a boulder'). The most dissonant attractor is Regan – her legs are 'spread wide' with 'the bone-white crucifix poised at her vagina'. This image is very alien and categorially transgressive – readers likely do not generally expect to encounter young girls staring with terror at crucifixes over their genitalia.

Furthermore, it is obvious that Regan is scared and hurt – she is bleeding from the nose, her eyes are bulging and her knuckles are raw. The definite reference of the crucifix is also interesting – earlier in the novel Chris found a crucifix under Regan's pillow and did not know how it got there. The crucifix is never described, though, and is not mentioned again until this scene – if it is indeed the same crucifix. When it appears in this scene, however, it becomes 'the bone-white crucifix'. Bone-white is an interesting textual attractor as it denotes lightness (white), but also possibly denotes death (bone). This could be a symbolic reference to it being a holy religious object (white is good), but at the same time it is being used in a negative way. (Again, there is categorial mismatch here.) The possible reference to death is primed by the previous metaphor of the sound being 'massive, like a sledgehammer pounding in a tomb!'. It is also interesting to note that the definite noun phrase 'the bone-white crucifix' is repeated three times in the space of one paragraph, and even more minutely it repeats three times in the span of 57 words. If the reader were not already following the gaze of Regan to 'the bone-white crucifix', the text really draws attention to it through repetition, and even once puts the noun phrase into the subject position ('the bone-white crucifix poised at her vagina') and once fronts the phrase as an object ('the bone-white crucifix she stared at with terror').

Combined, all of these textual attractors serve to zoom-in the reader's attention ultimately to the crucifix, which we will see is important in the remainder of the passage.

5.3.1 Narrative Urgency

I claim that the urgent pacing of this scene can add to readerly feelings of immersion and can encourage projection into the text. Simpson's (2014) stylistic profile [SP] of narrative urgency offers a useful means to explore how this urgency is encoded in the text. There is a sense of urgency in the passage, suggested by semantically intense function-advancing verbs associated with Chris such as '*jerked* her head up', '*bolted* from the kitchen', '*Frenzied*, Chris *raced* for the stairs', and 'Chris *plunged* down the hall' (emphasis mine). The onset of urgency seems to be triggered by the first sentence (1), which is immediately followed by two seemingly verbless phrases linked by semicolons (2). The present participle 'rappings', being used as a gerund here, produces a more dynamic feel than a noun would, possibly because it may call to mind the verb 'rapping' (the verb being more common than the gerund form of this word), which has a more active quality; this dynamicity is further suggested by the gerund's modifier 'rapid'. A number of present participles are found in this passage: 'pounding', embedded in the simile 'like a sledgehammer pounding in a tomb', as well as 'screaming', 'imploring', 'bellowing'. Toolan (1983: 225–6, 1990) calls present participles like these 'non-finite progressives'. He argues that non-finite progressives are often used to indicate actions that overlap or occur in quick succession and that they suggest ongoing action, with no clear beginning or end. In this way, the use of non-finite progressives is useful in conveying Chris' frenzied experience of the confusing turn of events depicted in this scene. This realistic depiction of Chris' perspective through non-finite progressives may help the reader to feel more immersed in the multi-layered action. I claim that the depiction of Chris' experience of the action as occurring all at once or in quick succession increases the pace of the scene, consequently increasing urgency and tension. As Simpson notes:

> Moving from the textual metafunction to the experiential, the transitivity profile needed for 'urgency' is one that embodies the world of physical actions and events, less so the world of consciousness, and less so again the world of abstract relations.
> (Simpson 2014: 6)

Indeed, the passage under consideration deals almost solely with physical actions, illustrated through material and behavioural processes (see Halliday 1985), for example (e.g. 'bolted', 'raced', 'burst'). This urgency is further suggested by the use of exclamation points at the end

of each of paragraphs 2–4, as well as the stand-alone sentences in paragraphs 1–6. I suggest that another element of the stylistic profile of narrative urgency to consider in more depth may be orthographical elements such as punctuation.

Although it is true that this passage focuses more so on the world of physical actions and events, it also includes elements that suggest the world of consciousness. This representation of consciousness, however, falls under the remit of Free Direct Thought (FDT) and Free Indirect Discourse (FID), which are some of the free forms of discourse that Simpson requires for his fifth feature in the stylistic profile of narrative urgency, if speech or thought is represented. In paragraphs 2–4, Chris' thought and perception processes are internally focalized through the use of FID. This represents a departure from the rest of the novel's narration, which is characterized by a relatively authoritative narratorial voice. I suggest that FID is suggested through the use of emotive and evaluative language and other discourse markers that mimic oral style, such as the use of exclamations. (Exclamation points are generally used throughout the novel, but only in instances of reported direct speech and direct thought.) I propose that paragraph 6 is written in FDT because the use of italics corresponds with other instances of direct thought presentation throughout the book, although oftentimes those occurrences are marked with reporting verbs. As pointed out by Wales (2011: 175): 'In contrast with free indirect thought […] FDT appears much more dramatic '. I claim that the use of FDT here is meant to be a dramatic 'deep breath' for the reader before the pace quickens even more in paragraph 6 where more urgent action occurs – Chris hears a blow and someone falling to the floor 'like a boulder'; she realizes in this paragraph that the 'bellowing' voice is not that of Karl, but that of 'Someone else!' Paragraph 8 gives more information on who this 'someone else' is. I will return to this in section 5.4.

5.3.2 Levels of Projection

I propose that it is fairly easy to reach the first level of projection in this text, which is deictic. If the reader metaphorically maps her embodied sense of time and location from her discourse-world to the text-world, she will be aligned with the spatio-temporal perspective of the text. This begins the process of readerly immersion. As aforementioned, the use of non-finite progressives may strengthen the feelings of immersion due to their depiction of character experientiality. Through this immersion, the reader may experience emotions triggered by the action of the text, such as anxiety or discomfort during the build-up to seeing Regan on the bed, and disgust at seeing her bloodied and exposed.

Through deictic projection it is possible that the reader may align with the perspective of Chris. I argue that this is easy to do because of the presentation of Chris' consciousness in

this passage, especially in paragraphs 1–3 and 5. I believe that these paragraphs represent Chris' perception of the sounds she is hearing and her thoughts at those sounds. One such thought is directly suggested ('*God almighty, what's happening*?'; the absence of a reporting verb here foregrounds the character over the narrator), but the others are implied through the use of emotive language within the narration (e.g. 'Frenzied', 'paralyzing shock').

The next level of projection, perspective-taking, may be achieved through aligning with the perspective of Chris. By doing so, it might be easier to then mind-model Chris and reconstruct her worldview, attitudes, emotions, etc. This sort of perspective-taking projection may lead to sympathy (Stockwell 2009; see also van Peer and Pander Maat 1996; Oatley 1999a, 1999b; Sklar 2013) with Chris. I argue that sympathizing with Chris at the beginning of the passage will affect readers' experience of disgust throughout the remainder of the passage, especially its ending, as they will feel more closely aligned with her perspective. From the beginning eight paragraphs of the sequence, I believe that readers who are performing perspective-taking projection are able to understand that Chris loves her daughter and is motivated to help her through this strange and difficult time. (Assuming that readers have read the novel up to this point, this mind-modelling (see Zunshine 2006; Stockwell 2009: 140) should have already been well established.) Chris' emotions and motivations are fairly evident through the text, but the reader may create richer models of Chris' mind through further inference. Assuming that the reader does sympathize with Chris and also wants her daughter Regan to be free of whatever possesses her, I argue that the reader may feel a higher level of disgust when she eventually gets to the part of the scene where Regan loses the battle for control and is forced to violate herself with a crucifix than if the reader had not felt sympathetic towards the characters' plight. I do not claim that the masturbation scene is not potentially disgusting regardless of sympathy (some readers may be disgusted because the content of this scene violates their sociocultural morals), just that I feel the level of disgust is greater if the reader has more of an emotional attachment to the characters.

Regan's emotions can be reconstructed by focusing on the language used in the description of the sounds in the scene. For example, Chris is described as hearing Regan screaming 'in anguish', 'terror', 'imploring'; from the use of this negatively charged emotive language, it can be deduced that Regan is terrified and that something very bad is happening to her. The description of the other voice in the commotion, which originally is thought to be Karl but in reality is 'someone else', it can be inferred that 'someone else' is very angry, 'threatening, raging', etc. Therefore, we know that this person, this someone, is potentially dangerous.

The urgency continues in the following four paragraphs. One-clause structures clustered in asyndetic juxtaposition (often using commas or semicolons instead of conjunctions for linkage) continue to increase the pace of the action. If the reader has immersed herself in the action through her text-world enactor, she will be feeling the effects of this pacing, potentially through feelings of anxiety or maybe increased heart rate. Paragraph 8 is the culmination thus far of all the narrative urgency I have discussed – the 'big reveal' of what is happening in Regan's bedroom is presented in layers, linked with semicolons followed by 'as' to show multiple things happening at the same time. Karl is unconscious on the floor and Regan, with a bloody nose, is sitting on a shaking bed, terrified, with 'the bone-white crucifix poised at her vagina'. I argue that the end of paragraph 8 primes the reader to experience disgust, if she does not already feel disgusted. Again, as with all emotions discussed in this thesis, there is a cline of emotional responses to disgust. Not everyone finds the same things disgusting, while certain people will find this scene to be incredibly disgusting already due to the textual attractors classed as *aesthetic distance from the norm*. For those who are not yet disgusted, the remainder of the passage, discussed in section 5.4, may change their minds.

5.4 Analysis Part II

The second part of this analysis deals with paragraphs 9 to 25 of this scene.

(9) 'Oh, Please! Oh, no, *please*!' she was shrieking as her hands brought the crucifix closer; as she seemed to be straining to push it away.
(10) 'You'll do as I *tell* you, filth! You'll *do* it!'
(11) The threatening bellow, the words, came from *Regan*, her voice coarse and guttural, bristling with venom, while in an instantaneous flash her expression and features were hideously transmuted into those of the feral, demonic personality that had appeared in the course of hypnosis. And now faces and voices, as Chris watched stunned, interchanged with rapidity:
(12) '*No*!'
(13) 'You'll do it!'
(14) '*Please*!'
(15) 'You *will*, you bitch, or I'll kill you!'
(16) '*Please*!'
(17) 'Yes, you're going to let Jesus *fuck* you, *fuck* you, *f*---'
(18) Regan now, eyes wide and staring, flinching from the rush of some hideous finality, mouth agape shrieking at the dread of some ending. Then abruptly the demonic face once more possessed her, now filled her, the room choking suddenly with a stench in the nostrils, with an icy cold that seeped from the walls as the rappings ended and Regan's piercing cry of terror turned to a guttural, yelping laugh of malevolent spite and rage triumphant while she thrust down the crucifix into her vagina and began to masturbate ferociously, roaring in that deep, coarse,

deafening voice, 'Now you're *mine*, now you're *mine*, you stinking cow! You bitch! Let Jesus *fuck* you, *fuck* you!'

(19) Chris stood rooted to the ground in horror, frozen, her hands pressing tight against her cheeks as again the demonic, loud laugh cackled joyously, as Regan's vagina gushed blood onto sheets with her hymen, the tissues ripped. Abruptly, with a shriek clawing raw from her throat, Chris rushed at the bed, grasped blindly at the crucifix, was still screaming as Regan flared up at her in fury, features contorted infernally, reached out a hand, clutching Chris's hair, and yanked her head down, pressing her face hard against her vagina, smearing it with blood while she frantically undulated her pelvis.

(20) 'Aahhh, little pig mother!' Regan crooned with a guttural, rasping, throaty eroticism. '*Lick* me, *lick* me, *lick* me! Aahhhhh!' Then the hand that was holding Chris's head down jerked it upward while the other arm smashed her a blow across the chest that sent Chris reeling across the room and crashing to a wall with stunning force while Regan laughed with bellowing spite.

(21) Chris crumpled to the floor in a daze of horror, in a swirling of images, sounds in the room, as her vision spun madly, blurring, unfocused, her ears ringing loud with chaotic distortions as she tried to raise herself, was too weak, faltered, then looked toward the still-blurred bed, toward Regan with her back to her, thrusting the crucifix gently and sensually into her vagina, then out, then in, with that deep, bass voice crooning, 'Ah, there's my sow, yes, my sweet honey piglet, my Piglet, my –'

(22) The words were cut off as Chris started crawling painfully toward the bed with her face smeared with blood, with her eyes still unfocused, limbs aching, past Karl. Then she cringed; shrinking back in incredulous terror as she thought she saw hazily, in a swimming fog, her daughter's head turning slowly around on a motionless torso, rotating monstrously, inexorably, until at last it seemed facing backward.

(23) 'Do you know what she *did*, your cunting daughter?' giggled an elfin familiar voice.

(24) Chris blinked at the mad-staring, grinning face, at the cracked, parched lips and foxlike eyes.

(25) She screamed until she fainted.

(Blatty 1971: 245–7)

This portion of the scene updates the originating text-world I have discussed in the previous section. The time is the same and the location is still Chris' house, but has zoomed into Regan's room. The enactors are Chris, Karl is still present but backgrounded as he is unconscious, Regan, and the 'someone else' is revealed to be Regan's 'feral, demonic personality' (11). How this alternate 'demonic personality' is conceptualized by readers depends on whether or not they feel Regan is actually possessed by a demon, or if she is just experiencing hysteria. As mentioned in 5.2, the novel version of *The Exorcist* allows for the possibility, albeit a small one, of a psychological explanation for Regan's behaviour, while the film version very clearly depicts Regan as possessed by a demon. At this point in the story, it could be possible that the reader still feels there is a rational explanation for everything. I argue, however, that most modern-day readers will be biased towards the possession explanation, as it is likely that they are already

familiar with the film version. Personally, I read horror *hoping* that there is a supernatural explanation because that is my favourite kind. Although I know that not all readers share this hope with me, many do.

Returning to the conceptualization of text-world enactors, I propose that there are two enactors between Regan and her demonic personality/demon. Even if a reader feels that Regan is not possessed, there are still two clearly different voices speaking from her body. The main difference in seeing Regan and the demon as two distinct enactors versus seeing two enactors of Regan herself (a split personality, perhaps) is ethical. If Regan is not possessed by some uncontrollable malevolence, then how is the reader to respond to her causing untold pain to her mother and her friends, and causing the deaths of two, maybe three, people? Although there is an argument that Regan is not in control of her own actions if she is suffering from hysteria, then why is she not institutionalized at the end of the story for causing two deaths? Why would she be allowed to carry on in the world if there were the possibility that her issues would return?

In terms of function-advancing, this scene has many direct speech world-switches between Regan and the demon. Ultimately, Regan loses her battle to overcome the demon's wishes, and the demon enactor ultimately masturbates with the crucifix. When Chris is finally spurned to action and rushes to her daughter's bedside, the demon catches Chris by the hair and pushes her head into Regan's bleeding vagina. She is then thrown across the room by the demon, where she thinks she sees Regan's head rotate 180 degrees. (This is the precursor to the more famous 360-degree head-spin we see during the exorcism, but only in the film version.)

5.4.1 Direct-speech World-switches

Although this scene is mainly focalized through Chris' perspective, she does not speak once, save for 'a shriek clawing raw from her throat' (19). As aforementioned, a great deal of the world-switches seen in this scene are those of direct speech. Therefore, a lot of the conceptual movement that the reader experiences is between Regan and the demon; it is almost a tennis-like exchange back and forth between the two characters. The use of direct speech with no reporting verbs functions similarly to the previously discussed example of Chris' FDT. The absence of reporting verbs foregrounds the character over the narrator. Because the exchange occurs between two enactors sharing Regan's body, even more focus is required on the part of the reader; I argue that this leads to deeper immersion within the story, and perhaps deeper emotional reactions; readers especially might feel disgust at essentially reading out (silently) the cruel words of the demon.

I suggest that this back-and-forth direct-speech exchange between Regan and the demon represents perspective-taking projection. Whiteley (2010: 72) argues that this level of projection can be conceptualized in terms of a performance metaphor, where the reader takes on the role of the actor. Like actors do by trade, readers should 'give substance to the psychological lives of characters' (Gerrig 1993: 17). Whiteley (2010: 72) claims that Text-World-Theory accounts of emotion also employ this performance metaphor. According to Lahey (2003, 2005), readers construct enactors of themselves that populate their text-worlds through projection and these enactors take on the role of a character or addressee within their text-worlds. It is possible for readers to act in the roles of both reader and addressee, for example in a poem (Lahey 2005: 281; see also Green 1992; Leech 1969; Short 1996). Although this is not a poem, the Regan–demon exchange arguably functions similarly, as there is an addresser and an addressee. Depending on the depth of immersion, the reader may metaphorically project herself into the characters' role. Whether or not the reader projects herself into the role of the demon may be a matter of reader resistance (see Gavins 2007; Stockwell 2009, Chapter 5; Whiteley 2014). Again, I claim that the lack of reporting verbs allows for easier projection into this scene and consequently into the roles of the character(s).

This unmodified delivery of direct-speech also adds to the quick pacing of this scene. Returning to narrative urgency, Simpson (2014) says:

> Put more simply, scene is when the time taken to tell the story is the same as the time the story itself takes. By contrast, non-isochronous narrative duration includes pausing, where zero time passes, or acceleration, where the action of the story outstrips narrative delivery time. An important characteristic of the SP, narrative scene tends to relay only the core action and, in its rendering of dialogue in particular, often feels very much like a screenplay.
>
> (Simpson 2014: 7; see also Simpson and Hardy 2008: 129)

Several world-switches are triggered by direct speech in this scene. Simpson also argues that the sixth feature of the SP is that the action is primarily in the originating text-world. Although strictly speaking the direct speech is a world-switch, it is anchored to the originating text-world by occurring at the same ontological level. As Simpson notes above, dialogue in the scene being discussed does feel like a screenplay. Indeed, much of the novel reads like a screenplay (potentially because Blatty is a Hollywood screenplay writer as well as a novelist; this could arguably affect his authorial tone). The second half of the scene I am examining matches what Simpson calls 'scene', as it runs like the present and does not pause or accelerate. In contrast, while the first half of the scene also suggests the present, it does pause slightly to deliver description of multiple things happening at once. In paragraphs 11 and 18 the word 'now'

appears. This is a temporal deictic marker which situates the action in the present by zooming-in the action more so to the current moment. This is further suggested through the use of direct speech without reporting verbs – the reader is not reminded of the past tense because of the lack of past-progressive tense reporting verbs like those seen in other parts of the scene.

In Regan's struggle with the demon, we are reminded that she is not in control. As exemplified throughout the novel, the disturbing actions that Regan performs are attributed to her body as opposed to Regan herself. In paragraph 9 ('as her hands brought the crucifix closer; as she seemed to be straining to push it away'), 'her hands' are foregrounded as performing the motion and she herself seems to be fighting. Paragraph 18 marks an important transition in the scene – the enactor of Regan departs as 'Regan's piercing cry of terror turned to a guttural, yelping laugh of malevolent spite and rage triumphant'. We no longer hear from Regan herself, and only the demon and Chris are left to perform any actions. After the demon is triumphant, it begins to use the crucifix to deflower Regan, which may trigger strong disgust reactions in readers.

5.4.2 Disgust in the Masturbation/Rape Scene

This scene arguably is disgusting on both the physical and sociomoral levels. In terms of physical disgust, there are several sensory-related descriptions that I find to be disgusting or disturbing, with negatively oriented emotive language underlined:

- Sight: 'her legs propped up and spread wide on a bed that was violently bouncing and shaking', 'raw knuckled hands', 'bone white crucifix poised at her vagina', 'the bone-white crucifix she stared at with terror, eyes bulging in a face that was bloodied from the nose, the naso-gastric tubing ripped out', 'in an instantaneous flash her expression and features were hideously transmuted into those of the feral, demonic personality ', 'she thrust down the crucifix into her vagina and began to masturbate ferociously', 'Regan's vagina gushed blood onto sheets with her hymen, the tissues ripped', 'yanked her head down, pressing her face hard against her vagina, smearing it with blood while she frantically undulated her pelvis', 'her face smeared with blood', 'her daughter's head turning slowly around on a motionless torso, rotating monstrously, inexorably, until at last it seemed facing backward', 'mad-staring, grinning face, at the cracked, parched lips and foxlike eyes'

- Sound: 'Regan screaming in anguish; in terror; imploring', 'her voice coarse and guttural, bristling with venom', 'guttural, yelping laugh of malevolent spite and rage triumphant', 'roaring in that deep, coarse, deafening voice', 'the demonic, loud laugh cackled joyously', 'crooned with a guttural, rasping, throaty eroticism', 'bellowing spite', 'that deep, bass voice crooning', 'giggled an elfin familiar voice', various expletives

- Touch: 'with an icy cold that seeped from the walls as the rappings ended'

- Smell: 'stench in the nostrils', blood – 'smell (inferred)'

- Taste: 'Regan…yanked [Chris'] head down, pressing her face hard against her vagina, smearing it with blood while she frantically undulated her pelvis', blood – 'taste (inferred)'

Together, the above sensory descriptions induced disgust in me. The combination of emotive language and imagery caused me to zoom in on Regan and Chris' body parts. Especially in terms of sight, the body is foregrounded with mentions of Regan's legs, hands, vagina, bulging eyes, bloody nose, undulating pelvis, and cracked, parched lips. I argue that foregrounding body parts here further illustrates that Regan is not in control of her own body and is danger, as many of them depict the body parts as somehow injured (e.g. bloody nose, raw knuckles, etc.); the foregrounding also works to draw the reader's attention to the more disgusting, uncomfortable images (e.g. Regan's head facing backward, a very categorially transgressive image). While I did find the description of the demon's voice made my skin crawl, I found it more frightening than disgusting.

Personally, the most disgust-inducing images were those of sight and, more subtly, smell and taste. While the smell or taste of blood is not specifically mentioned in this scene, there are multiple mentions of blood being present ('bloodied from the nose', 'Regan's vagina gushed blood', 'Regan…yanked [Chris'] head down, pressing her face hard against her vagina, smearing it with blood while she frantically undulated her pelvis', '[Chris'] face smeared with blood'). The repeated mentions of blood and the description of the demon forcing Chris' face into Regan's bloody vagina, coupled with the repeated collocation of face with smeared blood, I inferred that Chris would, at the very least, be able to smell the coppery blood and, at the worst, would be able to taste the blood. Therefore, I have labelled these instances smell and taste (inferred) because, although they are not explicitly mentioned, the text allows you to deduce their presence. In this way, they are indirectly textually driven. In my opinion, the smell of blood is not pleasant, and tasting blood is not something humans are overly accustomed to (unless you like very rare meat, you are a cannibal, or you accidentally bite your tongue), and I posit would avoid as much as possible. I therefore argue that both tasting and/or smelling blood, as well as Chris' face being pressed into her daughter's vagina, fit into several of Rozin et al.'s (2008) elicitors of disgust: body products, violations of the exterior envelope of the body, poor hygiene, and sociomoral offenses.

This passage also offers sociomoral elicitors of disgust. Depending on the religious background of the reader, among other personal factors, the sacrilegious use of a crucifix may be more or less offensive than the violation and deflowering of a young girl. Depiction of rape is one of the most sensitive, emotion-inducing types of scene to be found in literature and film (see e.g. Koopman et al. 2012; Weidmann et al. 2009). Although Regan's hand is performing the masturbatory action with the crucifix, readers are led to believe that she is not in control of her own body. (Again, I am assuming a demonic presence here. Readers may interpret this scene differently if they think that Regan is hysterical, although hysteria may suggest lack of control as well; however, in either interpretation, this scene is not pleasant, at least not to me.) This is evident in the heated exchange Regan and the demon have with each other in different voices, but using Regan's body. To me, there are two enactors present here; therefore, this scene represents rape – of body (physical actions and bodily harm), mind (the demon enactor is taking control away from Regan of her mind and body), and soul (the religious/spiritual implication of being possessed). To add insult to injury, the demon calls Regan names ('filth', 'you bitch', 'you stinking cow', 'my sow', etc.), threatens her ('I'll kill you!), and uses crude language to describe the act about to occur ('You're going to let Jesus *fuck* you'). These examples of the expletive aspect of the demon's register may add to the reader's disgust. These elements are disgusting because they are not something discussed in polite society, and certainly not something that was generally depicted in film or literature in the early 1970s.

As a religious person, the disgust is heightened for me by the use of what is supposed to be a holy object to violate a pre-teenaged girl. Symbolically, using the crucifix for such a heinous act is mocking the church who is supposed to be helping Regan to break free from the demon. Instead, a symbol of the church is used as a tool to harm her further. In religious rites the crucifix is a sign of the power of Christ. In Gothic literature, the power of the crucifix or cross is exemplified by its ability to ward off or kill vampires, the embodiment of evil in those texts. In this scene from *The Exorcist*, the power that the crucifix traditionally holds in religious iconicity is taken away; instead, the icon, customarily used to drive out demons, is now devoid of power and being used by such a demon to violate the innocent girl, thereby mocking the crucifix's normal purpose. Bastardized use of religious iconicity is common in such demon-related horror literature: for example, in the same text a statue of the Virgin Mary is defaced as harlot and excrement is found on the chapel altar; in *Rosemary's Baby*, an upside-down crucifix is hung above the cradle, etc. Converting traditional religious symbols into their demonic opposites highlights the themes of good versus evil that are commonly present in demonic literature.

5.5 – 40th-Anniversary Edition

This comparative analysis follows on from Sotirova's (2016) approach to authorial revision, paying particular attention to stylistic features altered in the revision process. In his introductory note on the 40th-anniversary edition, William Peter Blatty details how he was unable to write a second draft of *The Exorcist* before it was published in 1971 and his regret at not having done so. The only changes that he was instructed to make were to clean up Christ MacNeil's 'potty mouth' and to make the ending 'less obvious'. He outlines the changes he was able to make almost 40 years later:

> With respect to the plot, the novel's structure and the characters, the answer is nothing. Well, *almost* nothing. There *is* a new character who functions within a totally new six-page scene that I imagine, by the way, many readers will find the most hauntingly chilling in the book; and there are touches of new dialogue as well as changes to make the ending more obvious. But most of the change in this draft amounts to a very careful polishing of the rhythms of the dialogue and prose throughout.
>
> (Blatty 2011: ii)

Changes to this scene are underlined. New lines are double underlined.

(1) Chris jerked up her head. Some commotion in Regan's bedroom: rappings, rapid and loud and with a nightmarish resonance that was massive and yet somehow muffled, like a sledgehammer pounding at a limestone wall deep within some ancient tomb.
(2) Regan screaming in anguish; in terror; imploring!
(3) Karl shouting angrily, fearfully, at Regan!
(4) Chris bolted from the kitchen.
(5) God almighty! What's happening? What!
(6) Frenzied, Chris ran to the staircase, raced up to the second floor, then toward Regan's bedroom when she heard a blow, someone reeling, someone crashing to the floor and her daughter crying, '*No!* Oh, no, *don't!* Oh, no, *please!*' and Karl bellowing! No! No, not Karl! Someone else with a deep bass voice that was threatening and raging!
(7) Chris plunged down the hall and burst into the bedroom, then gasped and stood rooted in paralyzing shock as the rappings boomed massively, shivering through walls; as Karl lay unconscious on the floor near the bureau and as Regan, with her legs propped up and spread wide on a bed that was violently bouncing and shaking, her eyes wide and bulging with terror in a face smeared with blood that was dripping from her nose where the nasogastric tubing had been violently ripped out as she stared at a bone-white crucifix clutched and held poised in the air just above and aimed directly at her vagina. 'Oh, please! Oh, no, *please!*' she was shrieking as her hands brought the crucifix closer while seeming to be straining to hold it back.
(8) 'You'll do as I *tell* you, filth! You'll *do* it!'
(9) The threatening bellow, the words, came from Regan, in a voice coarse and guttural and bristling with venom, while in an instantaneous flash her expression and features hideously transmuted into those of the feral, demonic personality that had appeared in the course of hypnosis, and as Chris watched, stunned, both the faces and voices interchanged with rapidity:

(10) '*No!*'
(11) 'You'll do it!'
(12) '*No!* Please, *no!*'
(13) 'You *will*, you little bitch, or I will kill you!'
(14) And now the switch back to Regan with her eyes wide and staring as if flinching from the rush of some hideous finality, her mouth agape and shrieking until, again, the demonic personality possessed her, filled her, the room suddenly filling with a stench in the nostrils, with an icy cold that seemed to seep from the walls as the rapping sounds ended and Regan's piercing cry of terror elided into a guttural, yelping laugh of malevolent spite triumphant while she thrust down the crucifix into her vagina, then again and again, as she masturbated with it ferociously while roaring in that deep, coarse, deafening voice, 'Now you're *mine*, you bitch, you stinking cow! Yes, let Jesus *fuck* you, *fuck* you *fuck* you!'
(15) Chris stood rooted to the floor in horror, her hands pressing tightly against her cheeks as again the demonic, loud laugh cackled joyously as from Regan's vagina her blood gushed onto white linen sheets, and then abruptly, with a shriek coming raw and clawing from her throat, Chris rushed at the bed, grasping blindly at the crucifix while, her features contorted infernally, Regan flared up at her in fury and, reaching out a hand, clutched Chris's hair and, powerfully yanking her head down, firmly pressed Chris's face against her vagina, smearing it with blood as Regan undulated her pelvis.
(16) 'Aahhh, little pig mother!' Regan crooned with a guttural eroticism. '*Lick* me, *lick* me, *lick* me! Aahhhhh!' Then the hand that was holding Chris's head down jerked it upward while the other arm smashed a blow across her chest that sent Chris reeling across the room and crashing into a wall with stunning force while Regan mockingly laughed.
(17) Chris crumpled to the floor in a daze of horror, in a swirling of images, of sounds in the room, as her vision spun, blurring, unfocused, her ears ringing loud with chaotic distortions as she weakly tried to raise herself, pushing up with her hands on the floor, and, faltering, looked toward the bed, toward Regan with her back to her, thrusting the crucifix gently and sensually into her vagina, then out, then in, with that deep, bass voice crooning, 'Ahh, there's my sow, yes, my sweet honey piglet, my –'
(18) Chris started crawling painfully toward the bed, her face smeared with blood, her eyes still unfocused, limbs aching, and then cringed, shrinking back in incredulous terror as she thought she saw hasily, as if in an undulating fog, her daughter's head turning slowly and inexorably completely around on a motionless torso until at last Chris was looking directly into the foxlike, angry eyes of Burke Dennings.
(19) 'Do you know what she *did*, your cunting daughter?'
(20) Chris screamed until she fainted.

The most notable difference between the above scene in the original 1971 publication of *The Exorcist* and its 40th-anniversary 2011 edition is the addition of conjunctions throughout (e.g. 'and', 'as if', etc., see double-underlining above for more). Adding conjunctions instead of relying on punctuation such a semicolons makes the new edition rely more upon overt, syndetic coordination rather than the more subtle, asyndetic juxtaposition of the original edition. I argue that this move towards syndetic coordination takes away some of the narrative urgency from the scene. Losing some of the urgency also creates a less frenzied feel to the

scene, in my opinion, and I feel that this slightly lessens the feelings of immersion and therefore the emotional reaction of readers.

Some syntactic changes have also been made. For example, in the new edition paragraph 7 (in contrast to the 1971 edition paragraph 8), mentions of 'the bone-white crucifix' are lessened and this phrase is moved from the subject position to the object position. It is also not fronted in the object position as it was in the original. The movement of this phrase and removal of two repetitions of the full phrase make it less foregrounded to the reader, thereby making it less prominent in the action. I suggest that putting less of an emphasis on this striking image makes the scene also less striking, if only minutely.

Another difference is the addition of further description in the scene. In particular, paragraph 18 makes very explicit note that Regan's face has transformed somehow into that of Burke Dennings, who she/the demon presumably murdered. This is in contrast to the original paragraphs 23 to 24, where clues were given (the use of Burke's vocabulary (e.g. 'cunting') and recurring physical descriptions from earlier in the novel (e.g. 'an elfin familiar voice', 'foxlike eyes')), but it was left for the reader to infer Burke's presence based on previous character-building in the novel.

As Lovecraft (1927) claimed, and as was discussed in Chapter 3, fear of the unknown is the greatest fear. I contend that in being much more explicit in the new version of *The Exorcist*, Blatty has taken some elements of the unknown away from the novel. It leaves less for the reader to infer on their own, which I personally find makes my reading experience slightly less enjoyable. One reviewer of this edition said, 'other times the story simply suffers from lacking a needed subtlety' (E51). On the other hand, one reviewer realized things that he hadn't from watching the film and found his realization to be horrifying, so the lack of subtlety perhaps is not always a bad thing: 'the moment Regan first speaks with Dennings' voice was one I hadn't picked up on in the film and so, realising that, made my stomach churn a little, not gonna lie' (E12). However, I am unable to say whether or not this reader would have picked up on Regan speaking with Dennings' voice in the original version of the novel, where it is not as obviously stated as the 40th-anniversay edition. This is similar to the new version being more explicit in making the demon Pazuzu known. I feel that this new version of the novel is much more like the film, which is also more explicit because of the visual media. While I still believe that the 40th-anniversary edition still induces fear and disgust – the elicitors of disgust are still present, after all – I feel that the minor changes to the stylistics of this scene do indeed subtly detract from the ambience of this scene and the novel in general.

5.6 Reader Experiences of Disgust in *The Exorcist*

As discussed above, my personal emotional reaction to reading *The Exorcist* was, and continues to be, one of fear and disgust. To be more rigorous in my analysis of emotional reactions to *The Exorcist*, I have collected 100 reviews of the novel from *Goodreads.com*. Below, I inventory the reviewers' emotional responses which I felt related to disgust. These responses are divided into Direct Negative Emotion and Indirect Negative Emotion, with disgust-related language underlined.

5.6.1 Direct and Indirect Negative Emotion

1. with sections that truly horrified me ([the moment Regan first speaks with Dennings' voice was one I hadn't picked up on in the film and so, realising that, made my stomach churn a little, not gonna lie (E12)

2. The offensive language bothered me at times, but the prince of darkness is probably fond of such terms. It therefore adds to the unnerving atmosphere. (E42)

3. I'm more grossed out than terrified, but I glimpse the terror that must have gripped my mom's generation, possibly even my older brother's, at the events of the book. (E11)

4. There were many scenes describing gruesome experiences, which I will not describe in detail. There were also many disturbing sexual references and actions, mainly happening to the young, possessed girl, Regan. I myself found that the most terrifying (though there were many) scene in the book, was when Regan came slithering like a snake unexpectedly and began to lick Sharon. As much as I completely loved this book, I was not recommend it for a sensitive mind and stomach. (E61)

5. This was a curious read. It wasn't really scary, but it was unsettling. I can definitely see why it caused quite the stir back when it first came out: it was disturbing. That being said, I didn't care for the writing style. I also had difficulty with the sexist/misogynistic language scattered throughout the book. I know I need to consider the time this book was written, but I still found it frustrating. (E8)

6. A very graphic and visceral horror novel! Has some passages that were quite disturbing! (E1)

7. This book is all kinds of fucked up. Which is why I absolutely adored it and couldn't stop reading. (E58)

8. This book was and explicit and weird...and I absolutely loved it. (E97)

9. It was fun, gross, and didn't overstay its welcome. (E68)

10. some of the descriptions of the behaviour of the demon taking over Regan's (a 12 year old girl) body were pretty graphic and more gory than scary (vomiting and defecating everywhere) and I did find the religious part of the story pretty hard going. (E10)

11. The problem I have isn't with the admittedly gross and shocking parts Blatty puts in. He's using them to make a point about evil and societal boundaries. (E11)

12. But it was definitely disturbing and gross. […] However, I do find that the book was much more disturbing in demonic possession content than what was displayed in the movie. Mostly all of it is sexually vulgar in the book. (E31)

Responses 1–3 can be considered more direct responses to disgust because they describe first-person disgust-related reactions to the disgusting parts of the book. The remaining responses 4–12 are more indirect in that they attribute the disgust to the features of the book, but some still use emotive language which encodes their own emotional reaction (e.g. use of exclamation points (6) and expletive language (7). While the above responses did indicate some form of disgust, not all of them gave detailed enough information to decipher what the elicitor of that disgust was. Below, I will outline the general elicitors of disgust that reviewers identified and categorize them according to Rozin et al.'s (2008) list of elicitors of disgust. While not all readers classified their emotion as disgust, if the trigger for their emotional response fit into Rozin et al.'s list, I added it under possible elicitor of disgust. I argue that online responses such as *Goodreads* do not always include every single emotion that the reviewer was feeling, but I feel that by decoding the emotive language used by the reviewers, I am able to hypothesize which emotion they might have been discussing.

5.6.1.1 Elicitors of disgust

- body products
    - […] some of the descriptions of the behaviour of the demon taking over Regan's (a 12 year old girl) body were pretty graphic and more gory than scary (vomiting and defecating everywhere) (E10)

- sexual behaviours
    - Mostly all of it is sexually vulgar in the book. (E31)
    - There were also many disturbing sexual references and actions, mainly happening to the young, possessed girl, Regan. (E61)

- violations of the exterior envelope of the body (including gore and deformity)
    - I myself found that the most terrifying (though there were many) scene in the book, was when Regan came slithering like a snake unexpectedly and began to lick Sharon. (E61)
    - […] the moment Regan first speaks with Dennings' voice was one I hadn't picked up on in the film and so, realising that, made my stomach churn a little, not gonna lie (E12)

- certain (socio)moral offenses
    - […] and I did find the religious part of the story pretty hard going. (E10)
    - The problem I have isn't with the admittedly gross and shocking parts Blatty puts in. He's using them to make a point about evil and societal boundaries. (E11)
    - There were also many disturbing sexual references and actions, mainly happening to the young, possessed girl, Regan. (E61)

I found that there was a certain amount of overlap between sexual behaviours and sociomoral offenses in the list above. I argue that for the purposes of *The Exorcist*, these two categories could be combined because the sexual behaviours that are depicted in the novel are sociomorally offensive in nature: there is no depiction of just 'weird' sex that some may find distasteful (perhaps S&M); the sexual exploitation by the twelve-year-old Regan by the demon, I suggest, transcends sexual deviance and is more culturally offensive. In regard to specific emotional reactions to the 'crucifix masturbation' scene described above, there were few specific reviews that addressed this particular scene, or any scene at all for that matter. The tendency of *Goodreads* respondents to not respond to particular scenes may be due to reviewers perhaps seeing the purpose of the review as giving a general overview of their opinion of the text, as opposed to evaluation of specific scenes. Again, without specifically being able to ask reviewers why they responded in such a way, it is impossible to know. One notable exception of a response specifically to the crucifix scene is described below.

5.6.1.2 Self-implication

> That shit with the crucifix in the cooze, though? That shit was horrifying. I don't have lady bits and cannot fathom taking a block of wood to my vahjayjay, but I imagine it'd be up there with getting kicked in the dangly bits. Yowch! (E68)

The above response represents an instance of the strongest level of projection, self-implication. Reviewer E68 used his own background knowledge about physical pain ('getting kicked in the dangly bits') to imagine what it would be like to experience Regan's ordeal. His imagination, though, seems limited to the more physical instance of disgust, where the body itself is harmed. He does not reach full self-implication/empathy with Regan, as he does not address the lack of self-control or concept of violation that is also included in this scene. The following reviewer, however, seems to be more bothered by the sociomoral aspects of the crucifix scene.

5.6.1.3 Sociomoral disgust

> One scene was so grotesque and... for lack of a better word, 'immoral,' that I can't believe it was ever published. It was of course SUPPOSED to make you feel terrible, and be awful, but it was one of the worst, most vile things I've ever read. And this was a deeply unsettling and frightening book. But I can't shake the sense that it commingled equal parts brilliant storytelling with horrible images and disgusting language to make you feel freaked out. But that's part of its charm, I guess. I enjoyed it very much. It was just, well... awful! (E79, underlining mine)

The use of emotive language such as 'grotesque', 'immoral', 'awful', 'terrible', 'vile', 'unsettling', 'disgusting', etc. suggest to me that reviewer E79 was deeply moved by this scene and in particular found it to be disgusting. The use of the adjective 'immoral' and the disbelief that it was ever published point to a more sociomoral sense of disgust, suggesting that this scene was offensive enough that E79 may think that this scene should not have been published. E79's idea that this scene was *intended* to 'make you feel terrible, and be awful' suggests that the contents of the scene flaunt their immortality. The idea that the general reader is supposed to feel bad when reading it returns us to the discussion of the purpose of horror reading in the first place. What is the purpose of feeling these negative emotions? E79, at least, suggests that feeling these negative feelings ('terrible', 'awful', 'freaked out') are part of *The Exorcist's* charm and that he/she enjoyed it. Again, we encounter this tension between experiencing negative emotions, but *liking* it, a categorial transgression in itself. This concept will be addressed further in the following chapter, but suffice it to say for now that most readers of horror do on some level enjoy feeling these horrible emotions. This is further exemplified in the *Goodreads* rating of *The Exorcist*: its overall *Goodreads* rating is 4.12/5 and the average rating of my data set is 4.16/5.

5.7 Review

In this chapter, I have shown how the emotion disgust is elicited through the interaction between textual triggers in horror fiction and individual readers' knowledge bases. I specifically considered how psychological conceptions of disgust could be usefully applied in the cognitive-poetic analysis of the horror-reading experience, using the notions of projection and narrative urgency within the Text-World-Theory framework. I conducted a personal, steam-stylistic analysis of the iconic 'crucifix' scene from *The Exorcist* and compared my own emotional reactions to those of reviewers from *Goodreads*. I found that while the reviewers' general emotions towards the novel as a whole, fear and enjoyment, matched my own, not

many reviewers specifically addressed the specific scene that I analyzed. Many, however, did note direct or indirect emotive language suggesting disgust to parts of the novel.

Chapter 6

Goodreads and Emotion in the Horror-reading Experience

6.0 Preview

In this chapter, I will present my findings from *Goodreads* on the similarities in emotional responses across my three case-study texts, *Rosemary's Baby*, *IT*, and *The Exorcist*. The collective responses to all three novels shared many dominant tags that I identified: 'Character', 'Plot and Narrative', 'Reader Recommendations', 'The End of the Story', 'Themes', and 'Writing Style'. While the aforementioned tags are all fruitful avenues of analysis, I have chosen to focus instead upon those tags which encoded the most emotional responses. As several of my tags overlap, many of the above named tags are still considered throughout the thesis and in this chapter, but under a different categorization. The tags which are the focus of this chapter encompass the emotional dimensions of horror reading outlined in Chapter 2. In section 6.1, prior information that may affect emotion is considered through the tag 'Knowledge Base', which includes mentions of the novels' 'Film Version' and 'Author'. In sections 6.2 and 6.3, the self-reported emotional experiences felt during reading are explored through the tags 'Direct Negative Emotion', 'Direct Positive Emotion' and 'Indirect Positive Emotion', and 'Mixed Positive and Negative Emotions'. Section 6.4 considers the effect of emotions on the reader's discourse-world after reading and the degree of permanence those emotions have with the tag 'Resonance/discourse-world affected'. Finally, section 6.5 gives a review of these tags and their relation to the dimensions of the horror-reading experience.

6.1 Knowledge Base

Across *Goodreads* responses to all of my texts, mentions of prior life experiences were prevalent; I categorized these under the Text World Theory term 'knowledge base' in my tagging. These experiences ranged from general knowledge of the horror genre and specific knowledge of the historical period in which the novels were published, to specific reading experiences with other novels, to very personal experiences that readers linked to their reading of these specific texts. While idiosyncratic experiences with these novels are interesting, I found that the most

ubiquitous references to personal experience dealt with horror texts and authors in particular. This commentary can be further classified as occurring under their horror schemas. In this section, I will discuss the two most commonly occurring tags sub-classified under 'horror schema': 'film version' and 'author'. The former focuses on readers drawing upon their experiences with the film version of the novel in their reviews, while the latter centres on instances where readers specifically mention the author by name and suggest prior knowledge of that author's work. I consider how these horror-schematic elements may impact upon the readers' readings of the texts in question.

6.1.1 Horror Schema

Horror-schematic features found in my *Goodreads* data often included mentions of the horror genre as a whole (e.g. 'I've always been a fan of horror novels, but very few have ever actually scared me. This book did the trick'. (IT90)), how the novel fits (or doesn't) into the genre (e.g. 'Straightforward and plain spoken gothic horror'. (RB84); 'More like suspense than a horror'. (E27)), and the novel's classic status within the genre (e.g. 'The Exorcist is a horror classic in every sense'. (E6)). Within these categories, readers often stated that fellow reader recommendations prompted their reading of the novel (e.g. 'I always hear people putting the book & movie in top 25 horror reads of all time so I was really dying to read it'. (RB78)). Others also went into reading the novel with more specific genre-related expectations, for example, this review about *The Exorcist*:

> As a child I vividly remember being told NOT to read this book because it was evil and Satanic. After reading it, though, I have come to see that it's a fascinating book that tells a horrifying story, but in the end is quite uplifting. I'm sorry I didn't read this book sooner. It's a classic tale of good vs evil. (E86)

The above example illustrates how readers can be primed by previous knowledge of a book. In this case, however, the reader did not arrive at the same interpretation as whoever told him not to read it as a child. Instances of reader priming are also common when the reader has seen the film version before reading the novel. This will be discussed below.

6.1.1.1 Film version

Another dominant tag that I identified across the *Goodreads* reviews of my three texts was commentary regarding the film or mini-series versions of the novel. All three of my texts had film or TV versions made fairly close to their respective dates of publication (*Rosemary's Baby* directed by Polanski (1968), published by Levin in 1967; *IT* directed by Wallace (1990), published by King in 1986; and *The Exorcist* directed by Friedkin (1973), published by Blatty in

1971). All three stories have had a recent resurgence of popularity as they each had a reboot or reimagining of the original film or TV series (miniseries of *Rosemary's Baby* directed by Holland (2014); film of *IT* directed by Muschietti (2017); 40th-anniversary extended director's cut of *The Exorcist* (2013), TV show reimagining of *The Exorcist* created by Slater (2016)). In this section, I consider how having previous knowledge of the film version may have affected the readers' experience of the novel. Before going in depth with the *Goodreads* 'film version' tags, I will discuss more generally the importance of the relation between novel and film in the horror genre.

Carroll (1990: 2) argues that the rise of the horror blockbuster, notably triggered by the film *The Exorcist* (1973), in turn encouraged readers to consume more horror fiction and therefore writers and publishers to output it. Those who were horrified by the film version of *The Exorcist* then sought to read the book, and were intrigued to read more horror fiction. Many novels from the horror genre are notable for also being movies; I claim that horror novels often are made into films because their suspense and disturbing imagery translates well to screen. Indeed, Collins (1996: 113) argues for the importance of the 'dialogue of mutual aesthetic influence' between horror film and fiction and specifically claims that *Rosemary's Baby* began the contemporary period of horror with its 'aggressively visual prose style […] and genuinely cinematic structure', including its 'relative brevity' and 'use of tight, well defined scenes which build in concise, Spartan sequence'. Also, many horror writers have been heavily influenced by previous horror films, so the cycle continues. Some researchers (Cardin 2007; Schweitzer 2007) feel that *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* paved the way for writers such as Stephen King:

> Together with Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (1967) and blockbuster films of both, *The Exorcist* made the Devil the object of fear again in popular culture and heralded, not merely a wave of possession reports and would-be exorcisms, but also the beginning of the modern commercial Horror boom, which enabled such writers as Stephen King and Clive Barker to become bestsellers.
>
> (Schweitzer 2007: 180–1)

Schweitzer's words show how important the novel and film versions of early contemporary horror works by Levin and Blatty were to the 'Horror boom' which produced writers like King.

Further arguing for the interconnectedness of novel and film in horror, Schweitzer claims that *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* must be approached together as novels and films. He argues, 'In the popular culture, they are now as inextricable as Sherlock Holmes or Tarzan and their film versions. Both novels were bestsellers in their own right, but they worked

together with their film adaptations for maximum impact' (Schweitzer 2007: 180). This can explain why *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* in particular were mentioned in relation to their film version in the *Goodreads* reviews. Out of those readers who mentioned the film version of the novels in their reviews, the majority of them stated that they had actually seen the film version – 19/26 for *Rosemary's Baby*, 35/43 for *The Exorcist*, and 14/15 for *IT*. Of those who stated that they had yet to see the film version, most of them indicated that they then wanted to see it after having read the book. At least with the Goodreaders analyzed for this thesis, Friedkin's (1973) *The Exorcist* clearly is the most popular in terms of film. Similarly to Schweitzer (2007), Cardin (2007: 48), discussing *The Exorcist*, claims that the novel and its screen adaptation are inseparable, 'so entwined have they become in cultural memory'. This can perhaps offer justification for why so many Goodreaders also mention the film version in their reviews. Certainly in my personal experience, the images of the film, which were applied to my reading of the novel, have resonated with me so much that I cannot imagine Regan as anyone other than Linda Blair, the actress who played her in the film.

Notably, the reviews for *Rosemary's Baby* and *IT* have less mentions of the film than *The Exorcist*. Based on Cardin and Schweitzer's claims for *Rosemary's Baby*'s novel and film version being inextricable, one would expect to see more references to the film. Of course, one of the downsides of *Goodreads* as a data source is that it is impossible to know whether a reader has seen the film or felt that it affected their reading experience unless they state this information. Just because I could not specifically ask this question of the reviewers, however, does not mean that the film version did not affect them in some way. Arguably, though, a reviewer might not have found this aspect of the reading experience as salient as others if they did not mention it explicitly. Another drawback to *Goodreads* is that the demographic information about a reviewer is lacking unless they explicitly provide it. I would imagine that the average reviewer is younger than a reader who is old enough to remember the novel and film versions of *Rosemary's Baby* when they originally were released, experience which may increase their chances of seeing the novel and film as inseparable. Perhaps it can be surmised that more modern readers would not have seen the 1968 film unless they are specifically horror fans who aim to read and watch every classic novel and movie, or if they are specific Polanski fans. Each individual reader's background knowledge is very important when considering their responses to texts, but unfortunately it is not information readily available to me through *Goodreads*. Therefore, I can only hypothesize about it at this point. While *Rosemary's Baby* is lauded as being the first in demonic fiction by critics (e.g. Palahniuk 2011; Schweitzer 2007), *The Exorcist* is arguably more popular and is the modern standard for possession stories (Carroll 1990: 3; Spratford and

Clausen 2004: 73). This could perhaps account for why the film version of *The Exorcist* was referenced more times than the other two novels.

In terms of *IT*, however, I argue that King's films are much less entwined in cultural memory than the other two texts. Magistrale (2003) points out how critically underexamined and underappreciated King's numerous film and television adaptations are. Amongst King fans, the majority of the cinematographic versions of his works are regarded as being lacklustre, with exceptions being given to *Carrie* (De Palma 1976) and *The Shining* (Kubrick 1980), for example (see H.C. 2016; Reddit Thread 'Why do Stephen King novels often translate so poorly to film?'). *IT* is often regarded as one of the more mediocre adaptations (H.C. 2016), so perhaps this is why it is either not on the radar of some *Goodreads* respondents, or not important enough to mention. Reddit users claim that the miniseries of *IT* did not 'accurately depict how disturbing the book could be at times' and that King works in general have too much detail to be accurately translated to screen without turning them into *Game of Thrones*-like television series. Unsurprisingly then, out of those 14/15 who did see the miniseries version of *IT*, seven said that the novel was better in some way than the movie, three explicitly said that they did not like the movie, one specifically said *not* to watch the movie, and only two definitely said that they enjoyed it. Four respondents expressed excitement at the remake of *IT* due in September of 2017, which with its 'Restricted' rating is expected to include some of the novel's more disturbing scenes, so time will tell how the new version fares with respondents.

Returning to the *Goodreads* responses referencing films, some readers find imagining the film version to detract from the written text, for example:

1. Reading something that I've already seen, made me anticipate and see certain plot hints that kinda made the book dull. (RB8)

2. I remember reading it years ago as a child. I 'borrowed' the book from my father and read it while he was at work and it terrified me. I had nightmares and thought it was brilliant. This time though while I must admit I was nervous it did nothing to me. Maybe after watching the movie I'm immune to it, maybe it's because I knew exactly what was going to happen. (E18)

3. It is annoying to find out the hard way that a book and its movie adaptation are completely identical in almost every way. I would have enjoyed this novel a lot more if I did not watch the movie first. There were no surprises and nothing that could have added more depth to the story. (E60)

From these examples, it appears that some readers do not like knowing plot points in advance, which may diminish the suspense of the novels and, as evidenced in review 2, can lessen

emotional response. Additionally, having the novel and film versions be as similar as they are for *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* takes away the dark surprises in horror that some readers expect. I argue, however, that having seen the film before reading can add to the experience of the text, as the reader may already have formed strong, emotionally laden images from having seen the film. Consider the positive responses of readers below:

1. They all were very scared but they all had to work together to face their fears and finally kill IT. I think that was the scariest part of the movie. This was very, very creepy to me because I didn't expect IT to transform into some sort of spider thing. I could barely keep reading at this part because I was imagining the picture in my head and I was totally creeped out. (IT32)

2. I read the book with the film cast in my head and "remembered" parts of the book being in the film. (IT71)

3. There's depth, vivid and effective imagery, mystery, absolute characters, and the core horror of it all. It was effective, even traumatizing. The writing style was convincing and amazing. Reading it felt like watching the film itself. (E5)

4. Having seen the movie over the years, Jason Miller's portrayal of Father Karras provided excellent visualization for me. I always felt he had owned the role. (E87)

5. I could see the movie playing in my head (at least, the part I saw from behind my hands). At one point, I nearly jumped out of my skin because my sister started playing creepy music quietly and I honestly thought everything in the book was true and I was going to die before I realized she was just studying, and it was just some weird pop music. (E100)

All of the above responses deal with the film imagery in some way. Response 1 in particular notes that while reading the end of *IT*, she imagined the spider from the movie and this led to the emotional response of being 'totally creeped out' and nearly kept her from finishing this part of the book. This represents a strong emotional response to the book which is tied to emotional schematic knowledge from the film version. Responses 2 and 4 show how readers can adopt the images of the cast from the film when imagining the characters in the novel, which I would argue is a fairly common occurrence for those who have seen film versions of novels prior to reading them. Response 3 suggests that the style of the novel was vivid enough to seem cinematographic to this reader; however, because this respondent has seen the film prior to reading *The Exorcist*, it could be claimed that the 'convincing and amazing' writing called up the existing film images in his mind. Responses 2 and 5 similarly felt as if they were watching the film at times when reading. Response 5 encodes a great deal of emotion in this short review. A physiological reaction to the film is mentioned (watching it from behind her

hands), which suggests a strong fear response established through the film. This response is encoded in the reader's emotional-schematic knowledge of this horror classic, which arguably affected her experience of reading the novel. The metaphor employed to describe her reaction to hearing creepy music while reading the book also reflects bodily movement, jumping out of one's skin. This can be interpreted as a literal jump or start that was triggered by the extratextual musical feature which, when coupled with the frightening text material and the memory of the film, caused this reader to react strongly and fear (seemingly, but perhaps hyperbolically) for her life. This sort of quick unconscious action is common to the horror experience, although degrees of intensity of course vary.

While I argue that having seen the film prior to reading the novel can enhance the reading experience, as shown above, it can also put the novel into perspective in a positive manner. The following are examples where readers found that the novel was better in some way than the film.

1. I'd seen the movie adaptation before reading the book and didn't know if the suspense would be downgraded, but I was pleasantly surprised by the masterful writing and structure in the novel. (RB47)

2. If you've seen the movie, you know the plot, but the book gives you more time to be creeped out by Rosemary's nosy and meddling neighbors and the increasing evidence of her husband's disloyalty. (RB64)

3. I really enjoyed this book. It answered a few questions that I had after watching the movie. (RB94)

4. I saw the mini-series about a bazillion times as a kid and it was rewarding to learn much more about the story, characters, and town reading the book. (IT21)

5. As much as I love the film version, also written by Blatty, the novel offers a more detailed and well rounded version of that story. It includes subplots that were dropped for time in the film, but that explain the characters' motivations much better. (E6)

6. However, I do find that the book was much more disturbing in demonic possession content than what was displayed in the movie. (E31)

7. The movie comes close to the suspense and dread of the story, but the book in much more intense. (E37)

8. This frightened me more than the movie. I'm glad I read it. It went into more depth. (E74)

9. I read this book after seeing the movie, but felt that it went into more detail and gave more of a backdrop of the story which made it well worth reading. I also found the book far more scary than the movie. (E95)

Almost all of the above reviews deal with the book being similar or better to the film in terms of emotional response: 'suspense' (1), 'more time to be creeped out' (2), 'rewarding' (4), 'much more disturbing' (6), 'suspense and dread…much more intense' (7), 'frightened me more than the movie' (8), and 'far more scary' (9). Others point to the book answering questions that the movie didn't (3) and providing more information and detail about the plot, characters, and setting (4, 5, 8, 9). These examples show how the novel medium can provide much more detail on several different narrative elements, especially character motivation. This extended information can lead to greater emotional involvement on the part of the reader. Another example of additional personal knowledge and experiences that can increase the reader's emotional involvement is prior knowledge of the author.

6.1.1.2 Author

Although the importance of the author has been debated a great deal (see Wimsatt 1976 for an overview), recently the connexion between the author and the reader and how this relationship may affect the reading has been re-examined in stylistics (e.g. Sotirova 2014; Stockwell and Mahlberg 2015; Stockwell 2016b; see also Irvin 2006). While arguably knowledge of the author is not required for the reader to interpret and enjoy a text, it is undeniable that background knowledge of an author does influence the readings of some readers. The author's impact is shown in my *Goodreads* data, where the reviews of each text mentioned the author: *Rosemary's Baby* (19/100), *IT* (43/100), and *The Exorcist* (13/100).

Mentions of Blatty in reviews of *The Exorcist* dealt exclusively with his writing of that novel or the screenplay for the film. They mostly addressed his writing style and one review brought up Blatty's statement that 'in writing The Exorcist he had no "intention to frighten the reader" instead he intended to write a "thrilling and suspenseful detective story"'(E36). This quote comes from Blatty's introduction to the 40th-anniversary edition. The reader having cited this quote, then questioning it, shows how paratextual information such as author introductions can influence or challenge a reader's reaction to a book and how the author's intentions for a text do not necessarily mean that is how the text will be received. This is evident with *The Exorcist*, as many readers are frightened by it and it is firmly situated in the horror genre, not detective fiction. The same reviewer brought up biographical information about Blatty: 'Early in Blatty's career he served at the head of the Policy Branch of the USAF Psychological Warfare Division. I wonder if this helped him weave such a frightening tale?' (E36) This shows how readers often draw upon biographical knowledge of the author to enhance their understanding of the author's inspiration or motivations for writing the book,

as well as the author's level of expertise in the material depicted in the book. Because *The Exorcist* deals with psychological issues – investigations into Regan's illness as well as the psychological effects it has on those around her, not to mention the psychological effects it may have on readers – it makes sense that readers would be interested in Blatty's background knowledge in this area.

Commentary including Levin in reviews of *Rosemary's Baby* mostly concerned the author's writing style in general as well as specific approaches used in this book. Readers also mentioned some of Levin's other work, *The Stepford Wives* (1972) and *Boys from Brazil* (1976). This illustrates how readers often draw on authors' existing work for comparison with the text under discussion. One reader stated, 'I can't wait to read his other work' (RB71), suggesting that part of their enjoyment of the novel stemmed from Levin's writing style which they would like to experience again with other novels.

There are many more references to the author in *IT* reviews as opposed to the other texts. While reviews of both *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* mention both 'the author' in the abstract as well as the author by name, reviews of *IT* almost exclusively (42/43 instances) mention the author, Stephen King, by name. The one outlier said 'master story teller' (IT57) instead of some form of King's name – Stephen King, Stephen (Steven), King, SK, Mr. King, Mr. SK. I argue that this points to King's distinctive authorial tone, which invites equation between him and his work, as well as his noteworthy fan base (dubbed Constant Readers by King) who feel connected to him and his extensive oeuvre. The less formal addresses to King in the reviews show the personal attachment many readers feel to him, or at least his implied author persona (see Booth 1961), or his extrafictional voice (see Lanser 1981).

By drawing attention to King's role in creating the story, readers give him authorial power that may affect their feelings towards the book. Below are a sample of reviewer responses to King:

1. This book continues to re-affirm that you should not judge Stephen King by the movies he allows to be made of his books. (IT19)

2. I rarely read Stephen only once...Love all of his books!!!! Oh and I love him, watch his talks on YouTube...he's hilarious!!!!! Favorite writer bar none!!!!!! (IT23)

3. Stephen King has been my favorite author for half my life, a truth that is confirmed over and over with each story of his that makes it way to me through the years. (IT30)

4. I do like a lot of King's work, and I've enjoyed others in his horror universe. (IT55)

5. You will never forget the "losers", thanks to limitless Stephen King's imagination. (IT58)

6. There are some scenes in the book that were hard to get through, i can't even imagine the depths of his dark mind they came from. But overall, LOVE IT!! (IT70)

7. Huh!? That ending...What in the blue hell were you thinking Stephen King!? Were you stoned out of your ever loving mind? You were? Okay that kinda explains it. Kinda. (IT8)

8. He also uses dramatic irony to keep his users hooked, and to see what is going to happen next. In this way, Stephen King really makes the evil that is It present and looming for the grand finale that is the end of the book. (IT80)

9. King is so great at pulling you into the world of the characters. (IT88)

10. In short, I am that Constant Reader to which King addresses his Author's Notes…I enjoy all of King's work but it is King's longer work that has the more truly mythic impact. It is his longer work that tends to have its own individual mythos, as well as being fundamental building blocks of the overarching mythos throughout King's work, the Kingverse as it were (with its focus on Maine). (IT94)

Response 1 exemplifies knowledge of King's existing work and the film adaptations made from it. Again, King fans generally are not happy with the results of his books being made into film. This further shows how existing knowledge of an author's work, whether text or film, can be used to describe the work under review; this review, by stressing that this novel 'continues to re-affirm that you should not judge Stephen King by the movies he allows to be made of his books' (plus its 4/5 rating of the book on *Goodreads*) may suggest that this particular reviewer feels that *IT* and other King works are good (hence not judging King by the *IT* movie because of the book) and better than their film counterparts. Responses 1, 2, 3, 4 and 10 point to knowledge of King's universe ('Kingverse') and shows how many of his readers are 'Constant Readers' that are familiar with his works. Responses 5–9 suggest that King has some sort of agency in evoking emotional responses from readers: Review 5 claims that you won't forget the characters thanks to King's imagination; 6 correlates the difficult scenes to get through with 'the depths of his dark mind'; 7's emotive and informal language ('Huh!?', 'blue hell', 'ever loving mind', etc.) suggests anger/disbelief at the ending of the novel and this reviewer considers that King being on drugs accounts for this ending; 8 suggests that King uses specific literary devices to keep his readers interested; and 9 generally suggests that King is good at keeping readers interested, without positing how this is done. Response 10, on the other hand, gives King's work itself the agency (e.g. 'King's longer work that has the more

truly mythic impact…tends to have its own individual mythos'). This idea aligns with King's focus more on the story than on himself – 'It is the tale, not he who tells it' (1982), as he is often quoted saying – which, I argue a 'Constant Reader' such as reviewer 10 would be familiar with. As Beahm (1998: xiii) claims of King's work, however, 'it is the tale *and* he who tells it. The two are inseparable'. While I do not agree that King is *necessarily* inseparable with his work for the average reader, for many of his Constant Readers it is very difficult, if not impossible, to separate King's authorial persona from his stories. This is evident in several of the *Goodreads* responses that mentioned King by name.

This section has illustrated the various ways that readers place importance on the texts' authors. Common themes include the authors' writing styles, biographical details, existing work, and personal connections readers may feel with these authors. Together, these authorial elements can enhance emotional experiences of the text for those readers who place importance on the author.

6.2 Negative Emotion

This section focuses upon a particular issue that arose under the 'Direct negative emotion' tags – exclamations/interjections. While there were many avenues to explore in terms of negative emotional responses, many of them were covered in detail throughout the previous three analysis chapters. I have chosen to give an overview of this subject because it raises interesting questions for future research into the use of *Goodreads* responses for emotional analysis exclamations/interjections.

6.2.1 Exclamations/Interjections

Under 'direct' emotional responses, I included the tag 'exclamations'. I claim that the use of exclamations and interjections suggests a more direct emotional response than merely using emotive language such as adjectives or nouns to describe the experience of reading horror. Exclamations such as 'Wow!' and other asides can be seen as interactional talk (cf. Murphy 2007). Sometimes, readers seem to be interacting with the author or characters through vocatives (e.g. 'C'mon, Ira Levin!' (RB11); 'Well played Mr. King, well played.' (IT95)), while other times they appear to be speaking to fellow *Goodreads* users (e.g. 'Anyway, it's all up to you. Be prepared to get angry at characters – I think you're supposed to – and get ready for a really suspenseful book!' (RB38); 'Stay away from those drains!' (IT42); 'Horror readers, this one is for you!' (E52)). Finally, some respondents appear to be engaged in self-talk (Goffman 1981) (e.g. 'When I realized how it was going to end, I almost cried about how much time I

spent reading it. Stupid stupid stupid'. (RB39)) Taavitsainen (1998: 195) claims that 'Emphatic language invites the reader to live with the emotions of the characters or share the comments of the narrator'. Although Taavitsainen was writing in particular about romantic literature, I argue that exclamatory interjections or asides serve a similar purpose in *Goodreads* responses, as most are written assuming an audience of other Goodreaders, or an imagined audience of the author or character.

Wharton (2003: 210) states, 'Interjections communicate attitudinal information, relating to the emotional or mental state of the speaker' (see also Ameka 1992; Wierzbicka 1992). He discusses the continuum of showing/saying for interjections, where natural verbal exclamations such as 'ow' when in pain are on the 'showing' end of the scale and stylised imitations of natural expressions of emotion (e.g. 'Wow!' (RB59); 'Huh!?' (IT8)) are closer to the 'saying' end. My *Goodreads* data, being written responses, are exclusively stylised imitations of vocal interjections that convey their emotional response of the reading experience. Although there is no way to know without observing these readers while they are reading, I argue that some of them might have actually exclaimed such things aloud during reading that they consequently wrote in their reviews. For example, RB14 writes: 'The plot is tight, terrifying, and at every turn, it made me go "arghhhh nooo!!! Don't!!!"'. I propose that this oral style suggests that this exclamation was said out loud; this also constitutes a p-world in Text-World-Theory terms, as the desire for something to not happen is expressed by RB14. I personally often make similar noises when reading horror. There may also be instances of readers experiencing 'natural' interjections that Wharton places at the far left of the 'showing' side of the interjection continuum, such as yawing or smiling. One reader simply wrote '*shudder*' (RB79) as her review. 'Bounded' asterisks commonly signify that 'the user's nonverbal behaviour is expressed with its closest translation' (Yus 2011: 173; see also Herring 2012). RB79's use of such asterisks suggests that she had one of the nonverbal, physiological reactions common to horror – the shudder. Together, the interjections found in the dataset suggest direct emotional connections that the readers had with the text; in the *Goodreads* review forum, these interjections 'say' their emotion while I argue that this suggests on some level that they may have 'shown' their emotion through interjections during the online reading process.

6.3 Mixed Emotions

6.3.1 Direct and Indirect Positive Emotion

	Direct Positive Emotion	Indirect Positive Emotion
Rosemary's Baby	23/100	39/100
IT	28/100	49/100
The Exorcist	22/100	53/100

Table 6.1: Positive emotions

In terms of direct positive emotional responses, most readers used constructions to express enjoyment such as 'I loved the entire book' (RB27), 'I really like this book because it is very intriguing' (IT32), and 'I really enjoyed this book, and I think it doesn't get taken very seriously just because of the movie and the kind of cheesy head-spinning, projectile vomit stuff.' (E39). For indirect positive emotional responses, there was a range of positive emotive adjectives such as 'great', 'good, 'fun', 'amazing', 'awesome', 'interesting', etc., many of these suggesting enjoyment of and engagement with the text. *Goodreads.com* counts any rating over 3/5 as having liked the book. I also claim that the average *Goodreads* rating reflects the general levels of enjoyment shared by readers: *Rosemary's Baby* (3.86/5 average in dataset/94% liked it, 3.96 average global reviews/93% liked it); *IT* (4.29/5 average in dataset/95% liked it; 4.17/5 average global reviews/94% liked it); *The Exorcist* (4.16/5 average in dataset/96% liked it, 4.13/5 average global reviews/95% liked it). All three of my texts were mostly enjoyed by readers, according to their *Goodreads* ratings and use of positive emotive language. I find the level of enjoyment of readers to be unsurprising because of my three texts' 'classic' status and high placement in horror top-lists. While pure enjoyment of the text is important, I am more interested in the mixed positive and negative emotions that horror appears to evoke.

6.3.2 Mixed Positive and Negative Emotion

As outlined in section 1.2.2, many horror fans read texts from this genre specifically to experience the negative emotions it can evoke. Saricks (2009: 121) claims, 'fans of the Horror genre read to be frightened, to confront their personal nightmares, or to experience the terror they had not even imagined before. Their favorite writers are those who meet these expectations'. Therefore, reader expectations of enjoyment of a text include the experience of unpleasant emotions – a paradoxical feeling of being uncomfortable in some way, but liking it. Twitchell (1985: 10) terms this phenomenon oxymoronic – 'a moment of ecstatic dread, a second of full-passioned fixity, of panic and exultation'. From a cognitive psychological viewpoint, the research of Turner and Silvia (2006) shows that interest and unpleasantness are

related. This aligns with Asma's (2014) and Clasen's (2012) claims that horror can evoke negative emotions as well as be captivating, as discussed with the case of SM described in section 2.1.1.3. It is unsurprising then that my datasets included substantial description of negative emotions, direct and indirect, while also rating the texts quite highly to reflect enjoyment. In fact, I argue that for nearly every reader who expressed experiencing a negative emotion, and also rated the novel highly, mixed emotions were present. Many readers specifically described the mixed feelings that the wider dataset reflects through reviewer ratings. This section focuses on instances where readers expressed both a negatively valenced emotion, such as fear, and a positively valenced feeling, such as enjoyment. Below is a sample of the most striking mixed responses, with positive responses underlined and negative responses double-underlined:

1. I want to give this book one star because of the trouble it's caused me, but I also want to give it five stars because it was surprisingly good. (E36)
2. This book is all kinds of fucked up. Which is why I absolutely adored it and couldn't stop reading. (E58)
3. I enjoyed it very much. It was just, well... awful! (E79)
4. As uncomfortable and frustrating as Rosemary's journey is in this book, it is one of the more fun horror/thrillers I've ever read. (RB47)
5. Absolutely deplorable
   Loved it! (RB86)
6. Gah, so creepy! I want to give it two stars because I hated it so much, but I hated it because it was so creepy. So, um, I guess job well done? (RB92)
7. I just love this book. It kept me coming back for more. Really creepy but in a good way.(IT84)
8. Probably the most unsettling thing I've ever read and I loved every moment of it. (IT1)
9. This was so scary and I loved every page of it. When a book scares you, it's a good book! (IT76)

Responses 1 and 6 draw comparisons between low ratings and negative emotional responses and higher ratings with the book being 'good' or 'well done'. The higher ratings being connected to positive responses supports *Goodreads'* system of counting all reviews over three stars as having liked the book. The remaining responses link negative aspects of the book with why they liked it (e.g. 'all kinds of fucked up' (2); 'just, well…awful!' (3); 'uncomfortable and

frustrating' (4); 'absolutely deplorable' (5); 'really creepy but in a good way' (7); 'most unsettling thing I've ever read' (8); and 'so scary' (9)). Responses 8 and 9 specify that *IT* was unsettling and scary, but that they loved 'every moment of it' and 'every page of it', suggesting that they did not just enjoy one aspect of the book, but felt fully emotionally transported constantly. Response 6 uses exclamations ('Gah, so creepy!') and other markers of oral style ('So, um, I guess job well done?') to suggest a deeper emotional reaction, or at least a stronger description of her emotional reaction. Her response shows the tension between the two emotions. By saying that she wants to give it a lower rating because she hated it, but she hated it because it was creepy, she is suggesting that the creepiness is the positive part of the reading experience, again highlighting how a negative feeling such as being creeped out can be seen in a positive light. Response 7 indicates a similar tension by specifying 'Really creepy but in a good way'.

The above descriptions of enjoyment simultaneous with negative emotions illustrate how experiencing horror can also be captivating. The following section considers how these mixed-emotional experiences can resonate with readers over time.

6.4 Resonance/ Discourse-world affected

The best horror resonates with its readers (Saricks 2009). As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, resonance is the residual effect of having read an emotional text. Arguably, there is a certain amount of resonance for all the *Goodreads* reviewers across the three texts because they wrote reviews of the novels after having read them. I claim that readers who were not affected by the book in at least some small way, and whether they liked it or not, would not go to the trouble of reviewing it. There are, however, many instances of meaningful and long-lasting emotional reactions to the texts I examined. While I argue that the reader's discourse-world is affected by any emotional response they experience during the process of reading a horror novel – before, during, and after – I think certain emotional responses manifest themselves more intensely at the time of reading, often in a more physiological way (e.g. racing heartbeat) or in a longer-lasting way that may affect the reader's knowledge or belief system or behaviours after reading; this is resonance. The objective of this section is to give examples across the continuum of intensity and resonance (see Stockwell 2009: Chapter 2).

6.4.1 Intensity

Throughout my engagement with *Goodreads* responses in Chapters 3 to 5, I have discussed the intensity of emotional responses to each horror text in relation to the emotion being examined

in each chapter. Below, I exemplify some of the intense emotional responses described by *Goodreads* users across all the texts for all emotions.

1. Couldn't put the book down…I plan to read more of this authors work. (RB99)

2. This book gave me chills at times and it was hard to put down. (E75)

3. So many moments where you want to just scream at Rosemary that something is seriously wrong. (RB65)

4. growing tension you could literally feel while you read it. (E88)

5. some of the scares are genuinely scary. I found my heart beating faster several times. (IT5)

6. Good grief. I am so emotionally drained right now. That was one sneaky book. I had no idea what it was up to until it was far too late. Darn thing got its hooks in… But that book. You know what it's like? I'll tell you what it's like because the sun is coming up and although my phone says 8 it's really 7 and I can't run around the house and tell my groggy friends what it's like. It's like a tv show. The darn thing sets you up with characters, love them or hate them, that you slowly become attached to without even realizing it. (IT33)

7. I cried yet again. It's this weird personality jazz that I have where I often react unaccordingly on things in contrast with its expected results. Meaning, I cry on funny things, I laugh on sad movies, I sob on horror films. Maybe it just suggests that I react like that because I appreciate the deeper meanings (this surprises me, too) and The Exorcist did that to me, even if it involves disturbing and occult imagery and thrill. (E5)

8. I could see the movie playing in my head (at least, the part I saw from behind my hands). At one point, I nearly jumped out of my skin because my sister started playing creepy music quietly and I honestly thought everything in the book was true and I was going to die before I realized she was just studying, and it was just some weird pop music.

   If you've seen The Exorcist, or are a horror movie/book person, this book is definitely a classic and a must read. The line 'this time, you're going to lose', sent chills down my spine. It's brilliantly written. Seriously. Read this book. (E100)

9. Completely sucked me in when I read this years ago, to the point where I thought one of the events was actually occurring to me. Thankfully, not one of the horrific kind but a more mundane character arriving to my home situation. (E56)

The above direct emotional responses show a range of intense responses to the horror texts. This intensity relates particularly to readers' feelings of involvement or immersion within the

text during the reading process. Responses 1 and 2 mention not being able to put the book down, suggesting that they felt so moved by the experience of reading that they didn't want to stop. Indeed, across all of my texts, readers noted that they felt engaged and read the books very quickly – *Rosemary's Baby* (16/100); IT (19/100); *The Exorcist* (10/100). Response 3 suggests the reader's creation of a p-world (see Whiteley 2010) to interact with Rosemary's character. Responses 4 and 5 point to physiological responses during reading – feelings of tension and faster heartrate. Response 6, whose reference to the sunrise suggests she has been reading all night, indicates very intense emotional investment to the point of feeling emptied by it ('emotionally drained'). This reviewer, amongst others (2, 7, 8, and 9), note the book or some aspect of it as being the agent of the emotional reaction – the 'sneaky' book 'got its hooks in', causing her to become very attached to the characters. Response 7 represents an intense, yet very idiosyncratic, response to this book – tears, which this reviewer appears to think is an odd reaction. Response 8, discussed in more detail in 6.1.1.1, was so immersed that an extratextual sound from her discourse-world caused her fright in the text-world; she also links a specific quote to feeling chills, indicating the source of her intense reaction. Response 9 similarly felt so involved that he thought one of the events was actually happening to him. These responses represent examples of specific intense reactions which occurred during the reading process. The following examples will consider the range of reviews which suggest degrees of resonance with the novels.

6.4.2 Resonance

After analysing all responses tagged for 'Resonance' in my datasets, I identified a number of sub-tags that can be applied. While many of these tags will overlap with each other, I will discuss each category separately.

6.4.2.1 Sleep disturbance

The most commonly occurring response suggesting resonance is some disruption to night-time routines or sleep. That this intense reaction commonly occurs as the result of reading horror is not surprising, considering the psychological effects of the imagery created by negatively oriented lexis and the manipulation of emotions that is common to horror.

1. It by Stephen King is an alarmingly realistic horror story that will leave its readers shivering in their bed, fearing what is in the closet. (IT80)

2. It is an unconventional but incredibly poignant coming-of-age triumph that leverages the entire gamut of human emotion; the book will leave you laughing, feeling, and sleeping with the light on. (IT49)

3. It gave me nightmares. (IT43)
4. Gave me goosebumps and made me paranoid of every bump in the night (E40)
5. I found myself afraid to turn off the lights. (E19)
6. This book alone gave me nightmares. (E25)
7. p.s. I slept with the lights on last night (E62)
8. I can't tell you how many nights I lay awake with my paranoia while reading this! Even during finals, (which should explain why I would even attempt to read this at night) I couldn't put it down. I don't think a book has ever affected me in that way! (IT89)
9. Very scary...gave me nightmares. No reader of this fantastic and deeply religious novel will come away untouched by the power of that ritual, or unaffected by those things in this world which cannot be explained by the most rational inquiry, the most informed scepticism. (E9)
10. I must admit I had trouble sleeping the two nights that I read this. But it was nothing like the trouble I had sleeping after watching the film all the way through for the first time on the second date with my husband. Will I read it again? Probably not. Am I glad to finally put the story to rest? Absolutely! (E36)
11. I remember reading it the first time as a kid. Scared the bejesus out of me. Couldn't sleep for two weeks. (E48)
12. His prose is vivid, visual and visceral - indeed, the only books that have given me bad dreams, something which generally only occurs from the direct visualization of movies. In short, I am that Constant Reader to which King addresses his Author's Notes. (IT94)
13. I read this as a teen in the 70's before the movie came out. I have had random, weird nightmares occasionally ever since and I'm in my 50's. This sets the stage for something most of us never want to even think about in our deepest, darkest moments. The most frightening book I've ever read. (E47)

Responses 1 and 2 are general stylised reviews suggesting what the resonant responses to *IT* would be, including post-reading effects such as 'fearing what is in the closet' and 'sleeping with the lights on'. The remaining responses are direct reader responses detailing similar, personal nightmare responses to the text. Most responses of this sort, ranging from nights during the reading process to two nights after to two weeks after, resonate closer to the time of reading. Those nightmare responses for which a time duration is not specified (3–5) appear to also have occurred closer to the time of reading due to the use of simple past tense in the review. Particularly intense experiences which have affected readers on a deeper psychological

level can echo throughout a lifetime. Response 13 is one such echoic response, with the reader experiencing 'random weird nightmares occasionally' for decades after reading *The Exorcist.*

6.4.2.2 Resonance over time

1. I read this a long time ago but don't remember the year. I was a strange book but memorable (RB5)

2. Will pick this up again after seeing friends read it recently. (Why the sudden redux?) Recall post-high school being mesmerised by a number of concepts: Urban marriage portrayed both as banal and expectant (literally, figuratively); the descriptions of pregnancy; harrowing homesteading; and god knows what else after 40 years... but I stayed up late over a couple nights! (RB48)

3. King has managed to write a novel that not only haunts you in your day-to-day life, but one that also brings you the greatest feeling of nostalgia and childhood love, joy, fears, and curiosity. (IT16)

4. Still scary after all these years. (RB67)

5. I've loved this book since I was a child. It never gets old for me. (RB42)

6. I read this book in 7th grade. It was horrifying but compelling and has haunted me ever since. (IT95)
7. Between the book and the movies I was scarred by this for years, it still gives me the heebies today. Although I have no desire to revisit this I consider it a staple for readers enjoy horror books. (E66)

The above responses exemplify the ability of resonance to reverberate over time for readers by linking time and memorability in their responses. Responses 1 and 2 deal more with general memorability of the novel as opposed to experiencing residual emotions post-reading for any great duration of time. Arguably, however, general memorability is still an aspect of resonance, but a less emotionally intense one. Response 2 outlines the reasons for *Rosemary's Baby* being memorable, namely the thematic concepts and their descriptions being mesmerising to her. This captivation is another example of how horror has elements of fascination through its juxtaposition of normalcy (urban marriage as banal) with unpleasantness ('harrowing homesteading'); responses 3 and 6 also capture this duality ('haunts you in your day-to-day life…also brings you greatest feeling of nostalgia…'; 'horrifying but compelling'). The emotions described vary from negative responses ('haunts you in your day-to-day life' (3); 'still scary' (4); 'has haunted me ever since' (6); 'still gives me the heebies…I have no desire to revisit this' (7)) to positive ('loved this book since I was a child' (5)). The metaphorical language used in some of the reviews suggests the longevity of these emotional reactions – 'it never gets old

for me' (5); 'haunts you…' (3) and 'has haunted me ever since' (6) suggest a ghostlike presence that regularly materializes; and 'I was scarred by this for years', indicating a feeling of being physically marked by the book. The feeling of being marked in this way, as well as lesser emotional reactions that still resonate will be updated in the readers' emotional schemata to be drawn upon in other instances, in particular when encountering horror fiction.

6.4.2.3 Schema updating

1. I can't wait to read the sequel! (RB40)
2. I will seek out more of their work in the future. (RB46)
3. I can't wait to read his other work. (RB71)
4. Now I can see the movie....and read Son of Rosemary! (RB81)
5. I liked it enough that I'll be interested to read the Stepford Wives as well (RB9)
6. I also learned that there is a sequel to this novel. Hope it is good but will have to wait and see. I also think that I will give some more of his work a try. (RB94)
7. Desire to reproduce: GONE (RB80)
8. PS - This book/movie is also the reason I have a long standing fear of Ouija boards, thanks Father O'Malley/William Peter Blatty. (E100)
9. Images from IT are now in my mind which will never leave me. (IT21)
10. You will never forget the "losers", thanks to limitless Stephen King's imagination. (IT58)
11. The relationships and bonds between the characters of this book stick with you far beyond the conclusion. (IT81)
12. Life changing. A huge puzzle with memorable and real characters that goes beyond the mere scary clown, giving the reader life lessons and unforgettable stories. (IT44)

The updating of readers' knowledge bases is another way that literary resonance can be observed. Responses 1–6 suggest that *Rosemary's Baby* affected them enough that they would like to read the sequel, *Son of Rosemary* (1997), as well as Levin's other work. This suggests adding 'enjoyment/interest' to the emotional schemata of the *Rosemary's Baby* schema (possibly including film version), Ira Levin schema, and perhaps horror schema more generally. If the readers do actually read more of Levin's work because of their experience with *Rosemary's Baby*,

this represents behavioural modification, which will be discussed further in 6.4.2.4. Response 7 humorously suggests at least a temporary updating of the 'human reproduction' schema, presumably because of the trouble that having a child brings about in *Rosemary's Baby*. Response 8 describes an updating of the reader's phobias, namely 'fear of Ouija boards'. Acquiring this phobia due to the book, movie, the reviewer's lecturer, and Blatty as the author show how fears can be soft-wired (see 2.1.1.4) by attaching negative somatic markers to objects or entities, in this case a Ouija board. Responses 9–12 suggest resonant elements from *IT* will stay with them – imagery (9), 'life lessons and unforgettable stories' (12), and characters (10–12).

The updating of various schemata is common after reading a work, but certain elements that were particularly poignant during a reading may take a stronger presence in the reader's schema. Many readers throughout my datasets specifically mentioned characters in their reviews – *Rosemary's Baby* (17/100); *IT* (25/100); *The Exorcist* (24/100). This, along with other research into characterization (e.g. Vermeule 2010), shows that character is a very important aspect of the emotional experience readers have during the reading experience. This character salience also aligns with Spatford's (2012) list of horror appeal factors, where sympathetic characters are an important part of the horror experience. For reviews 10–12 above, the relationships between the characters will stay with them in a 'feel good' sort of way. Another aspect of readerly relationships with characters that may be more emotionally involving is portability. Harrison and Stockwell (2014: 8) claim that 'characters in fiction appear to be "portable" – having the capacity apparently to take on a virtual life outside their source texts in the lives of readers' (see also MindMOOC 2016, designed by Stockwell). In horror, portability of characters can often be rather unpleasant, potentially causing sleep disturbances such as those discussed above. I have personally experienced portability of two characters that have been discussed in this thesis – the possessed enactor of Regan from *The Exorcist* and Pennywise the Clown from *IT*. The relationship I have with these characters post-reading has echoed from childhood to present-day and at times has caused me to modify my behaviour (e.g. avoid walking near sewer grates). These sorts of more intense resonant experiences will be discussed below.

6.4.2.4 Self-modifying effects/behaviour and personality changes

1. This was my first time reading Stephen King's book and now I'm reluctant to read his other works. (IT69)

2. As a teen who was struggling with his sexuality as he read "IT", that was enough to put me off King for years. (IT28)

3. It's one of the only books that disturbed me to the point where I was still jumpy for weeks. (IT62)

4. …this book got me through a rough patch when I was just out of the hospital once. (IT23)

5. I think this is one of his finest work and I've learned a lot about the craft of writing supernatural stories - esp. pacing and character development. It is my textbook, something I use to jump start my personal writing process. (IT97)

6. This was the book to help anyone dealing with a difficult transition between locations. Mine was leaving my family, my close friends who each had a key to our apartment, back in San Diego, and my new life as a hermit in Los Angeles. I keep an excerpt from his epilogue as a reminder. To always know family, my childhood, my friends, will always be there. While they may not create a blood pact to come back in the Barrens, I know they are responsible for becoming the man I am today. Like spending the last ten years devoting my life to following King's work. (IT78)

As discussed in 2.3, emotional engagement with a text can temporarily modify a reader's personality (e.g. Kuiken et al. 2004; Miall and Kuiken 2002) and in more extreme cases can cause longer-lasting transformative and self-modifying effects (Miall and Kuiken 1995, 2002). The above responses illustrate instances where such modification has occurred. Similar to responses discussed above where readers sought out more of Levin's work, the schema altering effects of texts may have the opposite effect if readers are unhappy with that particular work or author. Responses 1 and 2 above are such instances where readers did not like King's work in *IT* and it caused them to not want to read more of his books. Response 2 specifies that his avoidance of King lasted for years because of his adverse reaction to King's description of homosexuality in *IT*, which was heightened by the reviewer's personal experience of struggling with his own sexuality when he was reading the novel. This illustrates how a reader's context is an important element of the reading experience.

Response 3 is an example of a temporarily transforming experience of the personality, where this reader was 'jumpy'/anxious for weeks following the reading of *IT*. Response 4 illustrates another fleeting, but meaningful emotionally transformative experience with the book, where the reader found it useful in helping him through a difficult time. Response 5 indicates that *IT* had long-lasting effects on him as it taught him a lot about writing and is a writing tool he often uses to 'jump start' his process. Finally, response 6 describes another emotionally meaningful transformative experience with the book, where the character relationships and bonds helped him through a difficult transition. He even keeps an excerpt as a reminder of the lessons learned in the book. This intense emotional response also caused

him to devote the last ten years of his life 'to following King's work'. Combined, these reactions show the range of life-affecting after-effects that texts can have on readers.

This section gave examples that stretched the spectrum of intensity and resonance. In it, I illustrated various aspects of resonance that readers of *Rosemary's Baby*, *IT*, and *The Exorcist* experienced – sleep disturbances, variance in duration of resonance, schema modification, and transformative experiences. Common resonating effects include nightmares, negative emotions which arise at various times in the reader's life, and attachment to characters. The examples of attachment to characters and life-changing experiences that were discussed were mostly positive, uplifting experiences. I suggest that this further exemplifies how there is good in horror: while oftentimes the 'good' is juxtaposed with the bad to make it seem all the worse, in many horror endings, good will triumph. This is related to the catharsis of satisfying narrative closure. As Tallon says of horror, however:

> As a genre, horror doesn't like you. Horror doesn't care if it causes you to lose sleep. Horror doesn't mind if it frightens you so much it makes you swear off something you love, like camping or swimming in the ocean. In essence, horror is a jerk.
> (Tallon 2010: 35)

Tallon's description includes many of the resonant effects which were discussed throughout this section. While 6.4.2.4 focused mainly on positive transformative effects, Tallon indicates other, less-pleasant reactions to horror, such as swearing off camping (or avoiding sewer grates).

6.5 Review

In this chapter, I highlighted some of the most interesting emotionally related aspects of the three-dimensional horror-reading experience that occurred across all three of my datasets. For the 'before reading' dimension, I considered how common horror-schematic elements were drawn upon by readers during their interpretations of the text. I found that readers often activated their 'film version' and 'author' schemas when discussing the texts. I argued that this illustrated how important readers' knowledge base is to interpreting a text, how film versions of horror texts are often so interconnected in readers' schemata, that it is difficult to discuss one without the other, and how connected some readers feel to the author of the texts. For the 'during reading' dimension, I considered how direct negative emotional responses such as exclamations and interjections encode intense emotions. I also discussed the paradoxical

mixed-emotions of the horror-reading experience and how this links to the captivating nature of fear. Finally, I discussed how the 'after reading' experience is characterised by resonance. I gave an overview of responses which corresponded with the cline of intensity and resonance and discussed how these responses reflected the impact of the horror-reading experience.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: The Dance Has Ended

7.0 Preview

This chapter provides a concluding discussion of the main findings of this thesis and its broader implications for future research. In section 7.1, I review the areas of cognitive poetics and horror that I aimed to develop through my analysis, in particular the texture of horror (7.1.1.1), the construction of text-worlds of horror (7.1.1.2), the experience of horror text-worlds (7.1.1.3), and reader responses to horror (7.1.1.4). In section 7.3, I outline possibilities for future research which would not be possible without my proposed model.

7.1 Points of Innovation

My primary aim in this thesis, as outlined in 1.4, was to present a cognitive-poetic account of the readerly experience of horror fiction, paying particular attention to how emotions may be textually evoked. I argued that emotion can be felt as movement (see Gibbs 2002, 2006), which aligns with Stockwell's (2009) explanation of the cognitive aesthetics of reading, or texture, in that this effect is achieved by moving from one conceptual medium to another. This feeling of movement was explored primarily by using Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) and the attention and resonance model (Stockwell 2009). In Chapter 2, I framed my theoretical discussion of the emotional experience of horror through a three-dimensional model of emotion and horror-reading, focusing on the stages before reading, during reading, and after reading (Mar et al. 2011). Due to the emotionally driven nature of horror fiction, the approach that I adopted was necessarily interdisciplinary.

To account for the various factors that come into the horror-reading experience during all three dimensions – emotions, preferences, existing experiences, reader traits, not to mention the text itself – I implemented a multifaceted approach which drew upon emotion studies, neurobiology, psychology, philosophy, literary criticism, cognitive poetics, and stylistics. This multidimensional approach was at times objective, subjective, and intersubjective. Again, this mixed method was necessary in attempting to account for the various aspects of richly textured horror-reading experience. The use of emotion studies, including neurobiological, psychological, and philosophical considerations, enabled me to explore how basic emotions

such as fear, anxiety, and disgust are evoked in humans. This theoretical grounding allowed me to consider how these processes might translate to the reading context. I also gleaned insight into why such primal emotions are useful to human beings and how these evolutionary advantages may contribute to the appeal of reading horror and purposefully triggering such emotions. The use of stylistics and cognitive poetics enabled me to objectively textually ground some of the insights that literary criticism of horror has offered in relation to the popular texts that I had chosen. The introspective textual analysis conducted was subjective to illustrate how negatively connoted and associated lexis affected me personally when reading horror; although my emotional analysis is reported and removed from the 'online' evocation of the emotion, I argue that it nevertheless usefully demonstrates how horror can affect someone personally. To complement my introspective analysis, I considered external reviews to the novels from *Goodreads* users and analyzed these reader responses in terms of emotive language. This provided an intersubjective viewpoint, drawn from an extensive dataset, which enhanced my own subjective analysis and gave insight to the wider emotional responses to the horror texts in question.

The interdisciplinary, cross-analytical approach I developed to explore the cognitive-poetic effects of emotion in horror fiction was the first rigorous, extended account of its kind. While others have focused on specific aspects of certain horror texts (e.g. van Peer and Graf 2002; Gibbons 2011, 2016), my account was novel in that it sought to exemplify how a range of cognitive-poetic phenomena affected the textural experience of reading classic horror texts. In the remainder of this section, I review the specific contributions I have aimed to make to the areas of cognitive poetics and horror fiction and their implications for wider research.

7.1.1 Cognitive Poetics

Cognitive poetics was identified as the most suitable discipline to use in literary study because it necessarily accounts for the text, the context, and the reader. It does not make claims about literary works which are not textually grounded, as literary analysis which does not closely engage with the text is partial and improper. Cognitive poetics is committed to evolving with the times; it constantly reassesses its terminology and models in accord with current developments in the arts, humanities, and sciences. By being a 'supercharged' discipline, it draws constantly on cognitive-scientific advances in language, thought and consciousness. Because cognitive poetics connects the textual features of works to cognitive-scientific theories, it presents a suitable means by which to explore the holistic experience of horror fiction, which requires a multipronged approach to account for its various textual, emotional, and psychological factors.

7.1.1.1 Texture

In this thesis, I furthered the discussion of the emotional effects of a work's texture. By specifically focusing on the texture of horror fiction, I did not seek only to account for the aesthetic enjoyment of a text, but also unpleasant emotions which are characteristic of experiencing horror. My account was the first of its kind to conduct an extended analysis of the cognitive-poetic triggers of negative emotions, in particular anxiety, fear, and disgust. Texture is the experienced quality of textuality. The various lexico-grammatical features that make up this textuality are experienced as conceptual correspondents of physical movement. It is in crossing the edges from one feature to another, whether change in character perspective, depiction of movement within the text, flashbacks, foreshadowing, etc., that that texture is evoked. Texture, then, is essentially experienced through this edgework.

Having drawn on the idea of emotion experienced as movement (Gibbs 2002, 2006), I aligned King's (1981) metaphor of horror as a *danse macabre*, or 'dance of death', with experiencing emotions while reading horror. I found this to be a suitable metaphor for the horror-reading experience, which accounts for the readerly feeling of textural movement throughout a fictional world, as well as the general morbid ambience of horror texts. This *danse macabre* is the textured experience of horror as the reader moves with the text throughout the narrative. I claimed that the best way to account for the experience of horror as a macabre narrative space that the reader moves through with the characters and possibly implied author, is by applying Text World Theory and the attention and resonance model. Although these frameworks were my primary focus, I also drew upon other steam-stylistic and cognitive-poetic approaches in order to account for the multitude of ways that texture can be evoked.

Text World Theory was chosen as the primary model for my investigation of the horror experience as movement because it enabled me to map the reader's experience of conceptual movement throughout the discourse, from its initial production throughout the various dimensions of the fictional worlds created. Its dual emphasis on text-drivenness and the reader's knowledge base allowed me to systematically investigate the pragmatic, textual, and cognitive complexities of the horror-reading experience. Between Text World Theory's focus on the knowledge base, which includes reader phobias, memories, and extensive schemata linked to previous emotional, literary, and other horror-related experiences, and the tendency to discuss emotions in relation to their parallels with physical space and movement (e.g. I felt moved by this text; I felt like I was *in* the story, etc.), this model enabled me to talk about experiencing horror in terms of movement. The attention and resonance model complements Text World Theory in its ability to psychologically explain how readers' attention is directed

by textual attractors. These textual attractors can act as world-building elements, function-advancing propositions, or world-switches in Text-World-Theory terms. My main objective in using Text World Theory was to specifically identify the common world-building elements of horror text-worlds and to demonstrate how negative emotions are experienced in these text-worlds.

7.1.1.2 Building Horrible Worlds

In Chapter 2, I hypothesized that since negative events are generally described in negative lexical terms (Allan 2009: 627), negative lexis would be prevalent in horror texts. I proposed that such negative lexis would therefore be a common world-builder in the construction of readers' horror text-worlds. I claimed that such negatively oriented lexis contributed to the macabre ambience that readers have come to expect of the horror text-world. Following Giovanelli (2013) and McLoughlin (2013), I argued that negation is an experiential textual attractor because it foregrounds that which is absent. I also proposed that other negatively oriented lexis, such as negative connotations and associations, fit into the attractor category *aesthetic distance from the norm* because they are often ugly or dangerous referents. Furthermore, I claimed that Carroll's (1990) notion of category jamming, or categorial mismatch (see Asma 2014), also arises under this attractor category because it foregrounds that which is unusual in relation to a norm.

The psychological concept of attention offered useful insight into the experience of negative emotions and its ability to disturb the balance of attention. As discussed in 2.2.3.1, it is commonly argued that negative emotions narrow the focus of attention while positive emotions broaden it. Therefore, I suggested that the establishment of a negative readerly mood will reinforce attention paid to negative textual attractors. Eysenk et al. (2007) claim that the negative emotion anxiety can disrupt the balance of top-down and bottom-up attentional processing, focusing more involuntary attention on potentially threatening stimuli. I claimed that this had possible implications for reading in that unconscious attention might be paid to conceptually threatening stimuli such as textual attractors related to *aesthetic distance from the norm*. I argued that directing readerly attention to such negatively oriented textual attractors may cause the reader to trigger existing fear-related information such as unpleasant memories, existing phobias, etc. This activation will in turn encourage negative emotion. My analysis of such negatively oriented textual attractors' role in world-building purposes will be discussed below.

Atmosphere, tone, and ambience

I demonstrated that under the heading of 'negatively oriented lexis', there are two main types which appear on a sliding scale: inherent negation and semantically negative lexis, which includes negative connotations and associations. As discussed in 2.2.2.2, inherent negation is difficult to identify because it often has fuzzy semantic boundaries. I also argue that while true inherent negation is positive in form, but negative in semantic content in that it creates an absence (e.g. bad ≠ good), its semantic content is not always pejorative. For example, bald ≠ hair. While being bald often does have negative connotations, it is not always pejorative. Therefore, it is difficult to categorially say that any inherent negation will also have 'bad' connotations. In addition, there are words which do not semantically create an absence as inherent negation does, but generally have 'bad' connotations (e.g. a tornado is seen as destructive). Finally, there are words which do not generally have 'bad' connotations, but for some readers will have looser negative associations, which may be stronger or weaker depending on the context in which they appear (e.g. balloons for me after reading *IT*). I therefore proposed that inherent negation, negatively connoted lexis, and negatively associated lexis be considered as part of a sliding scale based on context (see Figure 2.2). In this scale, more strict denotational (but not necessarily pejoratively connoted) inherent negation occurs on one end (e.g. bald), commonly pejoratively connoted inherent negation occurs in the middle (e.g. bad), followed by commonly pejoratively connoted, but no absence is created (e.g. tornado), and finally negatively associated, idiosyncratic lexis with no absence created falls on the extreme opposite end (e.g. balloons, clowns, etc.). I argue that across the scale, the various mixtures of felt absence and negative connotations can create unpleasant feelings in the reader.

Using this rough continuum as a starting point, I conducted an introspective, stylistic analysis of my three horror texts. In Chapter 3, I used the cline of negatively oriented lexis to stylistically analyze how the use of such lexis establishes the creepy and suspenseful ambience in *Rosemary's Baby* that *Goodreads* reviewers discussed in their reviews. I identified a great deal of negation, as well as negatively connoted and associated lexis, which aligned with *Goodreads* reviewers' descriptions of creepiness. Similar foreboding ambiences were identified in the analyses of both *IT* and *The Exorcist*. Across my three texts, I demonstrated that negatively oriented lexis contributes to the construction of a negative ambient space. This was achieved through the interaction of negation, which creates feelings of felt absence, and negatively connoted and associated lexis; together, these led to delicate reader perceptions such as anxiety. My analysis gave textual and contextual evidence that negation and negatively oriented lexis are key textual attractors and subsequent world-builders in the text-worlds of horror.

7.1.1.3 Experiencing Horrible Worlds

While negatively oriented lexis helped to create the uncomfortable space in text-worlds of horror, other movement-related elements were shown to contribute to the emotional experience of reading horror. Throughout my analysis, I demonstrated the notion of emotion being in the edgework, or movement across real- and fictional-world boundaries. This was exemplified through the world-switching analyses in Chapters 3 and 4. In Chapter 3, I drew on Giovanelli's (2013) text-world concepts of the dream world and nightmare world to further demonstrate how a negative, dark space is created through intense emotionally related language. I tracked the confusing series of world-switches which culminated in a horrific nightmare world. This build-up illustrated how the creepiness established by the opening scenes in *Rosemary's Baby* was amplified by moments of horror in the nightmare/rape sequence. I argued that this constant world-switching between text-worlds with unclear boundaries caused the reader to engage in a great deal of edgework, which could contribute to a sense of anxiety. My analysis of *IT* in Chapter 4 dealt with various types of conceptual movement from a macro to micro view. In reviewing *Goodreads* responses to *IT*, I identified the common negative emotional responses, namely fear-related responses, to the novel. Considering these responses with my own, I illustrated how the richly textured worlds of *IT* contribute to the readerly experience of emotion in this novel. I proposed that the multitude of conceptual movement used in this novel – including graphological movement, multiple perspective changes, semi-constant temporal changes, enactor zooming, circularity of empathetic recognisability, etc. – contributed to a rich sense of readerly immersion. This immersion was important when considering reader's tracking of world-switches in tense moments. In a micro analysis of the first chapter of *IT*, I stylistically showed how negatively oriented lexis, including various forms of negation, and subtle and overt foreshadowing techniques worked to create a sense of foreboding. In my specific focus on the scene where George met the clown, I exemplified how world-switching could be used to manipulate the attention of readers. Several embedded world-switches distanced the reader from the originating text-world while a frightening scene was being prepared there. I claimed that any series of world-switches which distance the reader from the originating text-world could be used for misdirection, but I suggested that negation creates the most useful type of distracting world-switch because it requires more cognitive effort on the part of the reader; this further distracts the reader's attention, which can be used against them. My innovative identification of the use of extensive world-switching as a distraction for emotive effect is a fruitful avenue for future research into other genres that depend upon emotional reactions.

Another movement-related phenomenon discussed in my analysis was projection and its relation to narrative urgency in Chapter 5. In my analysis of *The Exorcist*, the first to specifically consider how urgency related to projection and disgust, I argued that the sense of urgency, which describes the apparent speed of readerly movement through a narrative, could contribute to levels of projection in a text. Therefore, this aspect of the horror dance was considered in terms of quality of movement. I linked the depth of projection with readerly feelings of disgust.

7.1.1.4 Reader response

The use of *Goodreads* reviews provided key empirical validation in my analysis of the emotive effects of horror fictions. I argued that *Goodreads* is an acceptable means to gather a large amount of reader-response data from which to draw common emotional responses to popular horror texts. A commonly accepted view is that language has an emotive use and that individual lexical items have emotional connotations (Ogden and Richards 1923). Because *Goodreads* reviews are an existing data source and have not been prompted in any way by a researcher, I proposed that the emotive language encoded in the reviews is a good starting point for identifying the common affective responses that readers have to specific texts.

To analyze the *Goodreads* responses to the three novels, I divided the emotional responses into direct and indirect. I argued that the intensity of the emotional response was higher for direct emotional reactions because they often included first-person pronouns, which I claimed suggested a deeper emotional reaction by emphasising themselves as the experiencer of the emotion. Nevertheless, I proposed that indirect responses, which depended upon emotive language, still encoded emotional reactions, just to a lesser degree. My specific application of *Goodreads* data represented a novel use of *Goodreads* reviews to identify readerly emotion and its intensity.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I began with *Goodreads* responses to the novels to establish the common emotional reactions on which to base my stylistic investigations in the text extracts. I considered how these reactions aligned with the negative emotion associated with each novel, which I based on how Lazarus' (1991) core relational themes of each emotion related to the thematic concerns of each novel. Chapter 5 took a different approach to the use of *Goodreads* reviews by investigating them after the stylistic analysis to see how they aligned with Rozin et al.'s (2008) elicitors of disgust. Throughout my *Goodreads* reviews, I found that readers often spoke of the emotion in question in relation to feelings of movement. This aligns with existing notions of readerly immersion as being transported or moved by a text. In Chapter 6, I revisited my three datasets together and discussed some important aspects of the data which were seen

across all three sets. I organized these tags in relation to the three dimensions of the horror-reading experience – before, during, and after. I exemplified that readers often drew on existing knowledge of the texts' film versions and the authors of each text in their interpretation, suggesting that this is a possible avenue of inquiry for future research into the appeal of and effects of horror fiction. I also used reader responses to demonstrate how the horror-reading experience is often characterized by mixed emotional reactions. I discussed how this seeming paradox aligns with the psychological and philosophical notion of being fascinated with horror, as well as seeking out negative emotions for cathartic purposes. Finally, I gave an overview of the spectrum of intense and resonant responses to horror after reading, illustrating how significant horror fiction can be for some readers. The evidence of this emotional significance further validated my use of *Goodreads* reviews to discuss their emotional implications.

My reader response analysis was a micro approach to emotionally specific aspects of my *Goodreads* data. The collective datasets are much richer than what was discussed in this thesis and represent many fruitful avenues for wider research. In particular, reader responses to character would be a useful continuation of the emotional experience of horror, as character relationships are often noted as important to readers in the dataset. This aligns with Saricks' (2009) and Spratford's (2012) discussion of the appeals of horror, of which 'character' is included, as well as with the cognitive-poetic study of the importance of character (e.g. Vermeule 2010; Sanchez-Davies 2017). Another promising tag to explore in more detail is readerly discussion of the ending of each novel. I argue that this data can be explored in relation to the notion of catharsis and narrative closure, other important horror-appeal factors discussed in 1.2.2.

7.1.2 Horror

My analyses focused on Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (1967), Blatty's *The Exorcist*, and King's *IT* (1986). These texts were chosen because they represent a decade each of a cycle of contemporary horror fiction started by *Rosemary's Baby* (see, e.g., King 1981; Morrison 1996; Cardin 2007). *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* were chosen for their 'classic' status and influence in paving the way for King's work and dominance of the horror market in the 1980s and 1990s. To my knowledge, my stylistic analyses of *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* were the first of their kind. King's *IT* has been analyzed in a cognitive-poetic manner by van Peer and Graf (2002), but they focused on the differences in linguistic representation of spatial language between children and adults in the novel. Therefore, my multipronged emotion-based, intersubjective cognitive-poetic analysis of each novel was a development of the current literary critical and cognitive-poetic understandings of these classic texts, and the first to specifically

consider how certain negative emotions are experienced as movement during the horror-reading process.

Thematically, all three novels deal with overlapping violations of some sort of normalcy – defilement of family and married life in *Rosemary's Baby*, of childhood innocence in *IT*, and of childhood innocence and family life in *The Exorcist*. During intense negative emotional scenes, all the novels appear to foreground body parts in the description of Rosemary's rape, Georgie's murder, and Regan's violation. They all also exemplify the notion of categorial mismatch (see Asma 2014), or category jamming (Carroll 1990) through their antagonists. All instances involve a human figure which is somehow uncomfortably altered through inhuman characteristics. During the nightmare/rape scene in *Rosemary's Baby*, Rosemary's husband Guy is attributed devil-like features. Rosemary's baby Andrew/Adrian is categorially transgressive in that he/it has a mixture of human infant characteristics, in addition to yellow eyes, claws, and horns. In *IT*, the eponymous monster is exponentially categorially transgressive – being described with the neutral pronoun 'It', this creature defies existing classifications by shape-shifting into any creature, many of which are already categorially transgressive themselves. The monster form that It most often assumes is Pennywise the Clown, a figure which also meets category-jamming standards by taking a somewhat human form, but with abnormal features such as a pale white face, bright red hair, exaggerated eyes and mouth, etc. Finally, the demon-possessed figure of Regan in *The Exorcist* is presented in the body of a normal pre-teenaged girl, but over time changes occur and Regan becomes emaciated, speaks in various voices and foreign tongues, and performs grotesque, gravity-defying acts. The demon itself is seen as a categorially transgressive figure as it combines human and animal characters. Together, these three novels present a mixture of thematic and character-based norms which are violated in some way, thus drawing readerly attention to these elements in order to cause emotional reactions such as anxiety, fear, and disgust.

The novels were presented in the sequence anxiety in *Rosemary's Baby*, fear in *IT*, and disgust in *The Exorcist* because of the cognitive-poetic features that I identified in each analysis. While I found subtle world-builders which establish a creepy, foreboding ambience at times in all three texts, I found that the reader responses to *Rosemary's Baby* most aligned with anxiety-related feelings of creepiness and tension. These delicate feelings are stark in contrast to many of the obvious, grotesque descriptions of evil found in *IT* and *The Exorcist*. Schweitzer (2007: 183) claims that while *Rosemary's Baby* 'is about a sophisticated, subtle form of soul-corruption, *The Exorcist* is back-to-basics in terms that the medievals could understand'. Therefore, I argue that *Rosemary's Baby* is subtler in its stylistic methods of making you uncomfortable, and this is

more easily explored using negatively oriented lexis and ambience. In contrast, while *The Exorcist* also has its layers of subtlety, its writing is style is more 'in-your-face' disturbing, depending more on striking imagery to achieve the effect of disgust. The analysis of *IT* was selected to appear between *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist* because the passage chosen for analysis began with a similar creepy ambience to *Rosemary's Baby*, but the uncertainty characteristic of the anxious atmosphere of *Rosemary's Baby* did not last long in *IT*. While there are elements of uncertainty in the first chapter of *IT*, namely when George will die, the reader discovers fairly quickly that George *will* die. This knowledge added a more fearful atmosphere to the reading. Therefore, *IT* can be seen to build upon the anxious feeling from *Rosemary's Baby*. I ended with my analysis of *The Exorcist* because its grotesque imagery leaves nothing to the imagination and its intense atmosphere is urgent from the beginning. Therefore, the analyses mirror the level of urgency from slow-building to vitally urgent.

All three novels exemplify tension between hope/good elements and fear of threat. I argue that this binary of good and evil is necessary for horror to work. Like negation, conceptual contrast is necessary to foreground the horrific. This is achieved through the juxtaposition and interplay through figure and ground of negative lexis and positive lexis. This happens in each novel, with 'happy' elements established to then be negated. For example, in *Rosemary's Baby*, the positive Mrs. Gardenia's presence (her status as a lawyer, e.g.) is felt in her apartment even though she is dead. In *IT*, George's happy life before his murder is described in detail. In *The Exorcist*, descriptions of Regan being a normal, happy child enjoying a good relationship with her mother are brought up. In order for horror to function, there needs to be some sort of normalcy to violate. By exploring negation and negatively oriented lexis, my combined analyses of these texts linguistically demonstrated how category jamming and other conceptual contrasts worked to create an emotional tension in the novels.

7.2 Emotional Approach Advantages

The multidimensional, interdisciplinary approach I adopted to explore the cognitive-poetic activation of emotions in horror fiction has various advantages that make it useful for further applications in other contexts. By drawing together the at times overlapping threads of emotion studies, psychology, and philosophy, literary criticism, stylistics, and cognitive poetics, I have put forward an approach that can account for various aspects of an 'emotions' genre-specific exploration. I argue that trying to explain the holistic experience of a specific genre necessarily requires an approach which can take into consideration all potential factors which contribute to its textural experience. As I have discussed throughout the thesis, emotional

reactions can be affected by numerous influences, including the reader's knowledge base (with all the emotional schemata, personal traits, memories, dreams, etc. that this entails), the discourse-world specifics at the time of reading (including reader disposition, time of day, etc.), and the stylistic features of the text. Because such factors contribute to a reader's experience of emotion when reading, a study of a genre that centres on the evocation of a specific emotion must be able to explain these dynamics where necessary.

In terms of the analytical method of conducting such studies, I have put forward one that is at times objective, subjective, and intersubjective. Again, I argue that such a flexible multi-analytical model is useful in accounting for various factors of the reading experience. The textual objectivity of steam stylistics grounds literary analysis in theory and is rigorous and replicable. The subjective, introspective cognitive-poetic analysis affords an account of personal emotion which also benefits from linguistic and literary knowledge. The intersubjectivity of online response forums such as *Goodreads* enables researchers to access wide stretches of data which encode emotional reaction and complement the introspection of the researcher. The combination of these methods allows for a multifaceted investigation of the interdisciplinary aspects of a study of emotion-based genres. Therefore, I suggest that the approach that I have used for horror could usefully be applied to other emotion-related genres such as thrillers, romance, or suspense. I also propose that this approach can be applied to other emotions as well. In a larger-scale study, the horror-reading approach could be expanded to include other horror-related emotions such as suspense or lust.

My proposed approach and its application to my case-study texts can be seen as the groundwork for a much larger project which would seek to encompass the cognitive-poetic features of the whole horror genre. This approach can be applied to any horror text, in any horror sub-genre, or time period-related category (e.g. Gothic, contemporary, modern, etc.). I propose that the insights from my use of *Goodreads* could be used to develop an interdisciplinary study on the cognitive processes described throughout the thesis. This would provide an additional empirical dimension to my study, adding further cognitive-scientific evidence to my claims about how emotions are experienced during the horror-reading experience. Another additional empirical aspect that could be developed from my existing data is a corpus study of the ambience created by negatively oriented lexis. A corpus approach to ambience is being developed by Stockwell and Mahlberg (2016). I argue that the common emotive language used when discussing horror texts that my *Goodreads* data has enabled me to identify would serve as the starting point for a corpus investigation. Indeed, the richness of my

Goodreads data has given me multiple possibilities for future investigation into the emotional triggers and appeals of horror.

7.3 Thesis Review

The objective of this thesis has been to develop a cognitive-poetic approach to emotion in the horror-reading experience. This has been carried out through the multipronged approach including Text World Theory, the attention and resonance model, emotion studies, and reader response studies. By combining these frameworks, I have stylistically analyzed the emotional experience in three classic horror texts. My analyses were empirically validated by the use of *Goodreads* reviews to demonstrate emotional effects. The resulting analyses have contributed to the critical understanding of the three classic horror texts I analyzed, especially in terms of how the negative emotions paired with each text align with common literary interpretations of the novels. The analysis has exemplified a cognitive-poetic account of readers' emotional experience of the texture of horror and have given insight into how emotion can be experienced as movement during the three dimensions of the horror-reading process. I hope that this rigorous and systematic study of the experience of this *danse macabre* through the worlds of horror will stand as a contribution to the development of studies of textured emotion in cognitive poetics.

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