



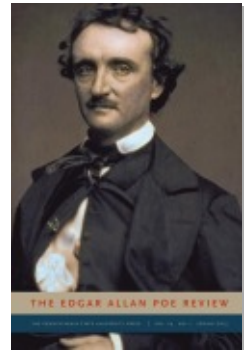
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Joseph Matthew Meyer

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The Marian Aesthetics of Edgar Allan Poe

Joseph Matthew Meyer, University of Arkansas

Abstract

This study explores Poe's aesthetic vision of the Virgin Mary in "Morella" and the "Catholic Hymn"—or the "Hymn," as the poem is referred to today. The argument put forth is that Poe's depictions of Mary in the texts previously mentioned are influenced by his early Anglican upbringing. More specifically, the author traces Poe's early exposure to both the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia and the Anglican Church of England, concluding that the latter appears to have had a more pronounced influence on Poe's Marian aesthetics. The anti-Roman Catholic themes we find in "Morella" indicate that Poe was well aware of the common charges of the time that were levied against Roman Catholics, especially the argument concerning Mary as a type of divine intercessor. However, the beautifully poetic language attributed to Mary that we find in the "Catholic Hymn" conveys Poe as a man who revered and adored the Virgin. Poe's Anglican upbringing—especially his exposure to the Church of England—would have taught him that the proper amount of veneration for Mary lies somewhere in between the Roman Catholic Church and the more evangelical Protestant sects of Christianity, and it is in this middle space, the author of the study claims, that we are able to see Poe's Marian aesthetics.

The origin of this study came about through a moment of curiosity about a painting that hung in Moldavia, the mansion that was purchased by John Allan in 1825. The title of the painting is *The Holy Family* (1647, oil on canvas) by Tobias Pock. One need not be an art critic to appreciate the beautifully dramatic depiction of Mary, Joseph, and the young Christ child. There is, however, an interesting detail to note about this work. If we look at the right hand of Jesus, he is holding a crown of flowers, which is also being held by Mary. The way the crown is being held by both Jesus and Mary indicates that Pock wants us to connect both mother and son with royalty. The notion



FIG. 1 *The Holy Family*
by Tobias Pock (1647).
Courtesy of the Edgar
Allan Poe Museum,
Richmond, Virginia.

of Christ as a king is familiar to many Christians; however, the depiction of Mary as a royal figure, in this case queen of heaven, may not be as easily recognizable.¹ The portrait harks to the Roman Catholic hymn that is sung during the coronation of Mary in the month of May. The song is traditionally known as “Bring Flowers of the Rarest,” in which parishioners sing the following lines: “O Mary we crown thee with blossoms today, / Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May.”² This interpretation of the painting becomes all the more likely when we consider the title of one of Pock’s other notable works, *Coronation of the Virgin*. The Roman Catholic subject matter in this painting is undeniable. This prompts the question: why was it hanging in the home of the Allans?

The question of just how much reverence should be given to Mary is in essence a personal matter for Christians; however, we cannot deny that the mother of Jesus has been—and continues to be—one of the most controversial figures in the post-Reformation era. Thus there are certain questions that arise from the ownership of this painting. First, can this picture tell us anything about

how the Allans approached their religion? Second, does this religious approach manifest itself in Poe's works? In order to answer the first question we need to understand the differences between how both the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church approach the role of Mary in Christian worship. Regarding the second question, we can see how these Anglican views may have affected Poe through his aesthetic use of the Virgin Mary, especially when we look at the history behind his poem the "Hymn," which originally appeared in the short story "Morella." The evolution of this poem—from its dark Roman Catholic subject matter to the more subdued Anglicanized version of the poem that we find in the majority of collected works of Poe today—is indicative that the early part of the author's Anglican heritage may have had more of an impact on his aesthetic approach than we previously thought. The Anglican faith is part of the Protestant tradition; however, it retains some aspects of Roman Catholicism. Thus Anglicanism is a faith that resides in somewhat of a middle space in Christianity. One of the most contested topics that reside within this middle space is the question of representation of the Virgin Mary. It is my contention in this study that Poe's Marian aesthetics in "Morella" and the "Hymn" is a result of his Anglican upbringing.

Background Information

In Michael L. Burdick's lecture presented at the Seventy-Second Annual Commemoration Program of the Poe Society (October 2, 1994), he looks at various works of Poe to suggest that the author "was not only familiar *with* but perhaps sympathetic *toward* some of the Church of Rome's basic teachings."³ Burdick defends his claim by citing examples from the author's works; however, he does not consider the influences of Poe's early upbringing as Anglican. The fact is that Poe could have just as easily received many of these same influences that Burdick cites as being specifically Roman Catholic from his childhood in Virginia and England. For example, Burdick discusses Poe's allusions to various saints, such as Saint Bruno and Saint Catherine, citing that "Protestant churches generally do not recognize saints as such."⁴ In the Anglican tradition, however, they do venerate saints in a way that many other Protestant sects find potentially blasphemous. It is for this very reason that our first task will be to try and create a portrait of the type of religious precepts that Poe may have been exposed to as a young man.

In comparison to figures like Hawthorne and Melville, there is still a relatively sparse amount of criticism written on the subject of Poe and religion. The problem is that there simply isn't as much verifiable information on the subject

as compared to the previously mentioned authors. Thanks to the scholarship of critics such as Killis Campbell, Thomas Mabbott, Dwight Thomas, and David K. Jackson, we do have some information on Poe's early religious life.⁵ Here is what we know. We have records that the Monumental Church of Richmond issued a notice that on April 13, 1814, "the sale of the pews . . . will take place on this day, at 12 o'clock." In response to this call, "John Allan purchases Pew No. 80 for \$340."⁶ What we can gather from this information is the place of worship, which is significant, as it gives us an idea of the type of Christianity in which the Allans were most likely exposed to after the purchase of the pew, in this case a Protestant Episcopalian faith.⁷

The Allans were not in Virginia all that long in between the purchase of the pew and their leaving for England. In fact, as I will discuss, Bishop Moore consecrates the Monumental Church in November 1814,⁸ and the Allans are "on English Ground" by July 29th of 1815.⁹ Therefore, the Allans would have had relatively little exposure to Bishop Moore at this early point of the Monumental Church's history. Nonetheless, it is important to note what type of religious doctrine they would have witnessed during that brief period. Not long after John Allan purchases the pew, Richard Channing Moore is sworn in as rector of the Monumental Church and bishop of the Virginian Diocese. An announcement in the *Richmond Enquirer*, dated November 15, 1814, reads, "The Monumental Church of the city of Richmond was consecrated on Sunday last, by the Right Rev. Richard Channing Moore, with the usual solemn ceremonies, and discourse was delivered appropriate to the occasion."¹⁰ Moore was very highly regarded by his peers. He was noted for displaying a balance between revering the Church's traditions, while at the same time exhibiting an evangelical spirit of a proper proportion. It is this idea of maintaining a balance between tradition and zeal that becomes the hallmark of Moore's character. John Nicholas Norton, in his memoir of Bishop Moore, writes, "With a worldly wisdom, which proved its effectiveness by its fruits, he knew how to adapt himself to times and circumstances, and while he strictly observed the minutest rules of the Prayer-book on all ordinary occasions, he had common sense enough to discriminate when the rigid inflexibility of general laws should be relaxed."¹¹ To be a good clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church meant to maintain a balance between traditions and fervor, and part of this maintenance of a state of equilibrium extended itself to the interpretation of the role of the Virgin Mary in the Church as well.

The relationship between Protestant churches and Mary is complex. There are varying degrees of reverence for Mary within Protestant sects.¹² In the *Lectures on the Catechism of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (1813), William

White is clear about how one should view the role of the Virgin in the Anglican Churches of America. In the section titled “Of the Worship of Images,” he argues that in the Roman Catholic faith there are times when “an unlawful object of worship” can be given “to the Virgin Mary, and to the saints.” This is “unlawful” because “it presumes attributes, of which we have no reason to suppose them possessed.”¹³ This argument by itself is certainly not a new one; however, the wording of the next section is quite important to this study. He continues, “To the Virgin, a higher species of worship is professedly given, although not thought to amount to that which is paid to God. In the gospel, there is nothing to countenance it beyond what we read in the hymn called ‘The Magnificat’—‘Behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed.’”¹⁴ Immediately following this quote he adds, “It would surely be profane, to detract from the honour anticipated in these words.”¹⁵ White sees any reverence beyond what he mentions here—Mary’s blessedness—as “extravagance.”¹⁶ However, he explicitly says that “a higher species of worship is professedly given.” As an example of this elevated level of worship he cites the “Magnificat,” also known as “Mary’s Song/Hymn.” White’s mentioning of the “Magnificat” is intriguing when we consider that, at the time that he is writing his treatise, the hymn had already been removed from the Episcopalian version of the Book of Common Prayer.

When the Anglican colonists decided to form the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, they realized that it also offered them an opportunity to revise the Book of Common Prayer to better reflect their established church. Most of the Book remained unchanged; however, in 1789 there were some modifications. One of these changes included the removal of the “Magnificat.” This may have had to do with influences from other Protestant sects at the time in America who from the beginning did not share a heightened sense of reverence for Mary as did the Roman Catholics or the English Anglicans. Bishop White’s readers who were old enough to remember would know the “Magnificat” intimately because it was a part of the Book they grew up reading. However, younger readers might not be as familiar with the hymn. Thus we are already beginning to see some of the differences between the Church of England and the Episcopalian Church that may have affected Poe as a young man. This doesn’t mean that even among Episcopalians themselves there weren’t disagreements relating to doctrines and ceremonies.¹⁷ As E. Brookes Holifield states, “Far more than most other American Protestants, the American Episcopalians . . . strove to balance scripture, reason, and tradition as sources of theological authority, though they themselves differed about the proper weighting.”¹⁸ As previously mentioned, the Allans would be in England only two years after Bishop White publishes his *Lectures on the Catechism*; therefore, in order to get a proper understanding of

Poe's background, we need to look at what he may have been exposed to while in England.

On July 6, 1816, "John Allan receives a bill for Poe's tuition at the school kept by the Misses Dubourg."¹⁹ Two of the items we find on this list of expenses are a "Prayer Book" and the "Church Catechism Explained."²⁰ This is not the Protestant Episcopal Church of America; this is the Church of England. Therefore, the "Magnificat" was still a part of the Book of Common Prayer, and thus Poe would have been familiar with the hymn. In the 1816 *Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments*, we find on the fifth page, under the title "Evening Service," that as an option a reader can choose to sing "The Song of the blessed Virgin Mary, after being told by the Angel that she should be the Mother of the Messiah, and after the like assurance from the Mother of John the Baptist."²¹ The following is a portion of the hymn, which is based on Luke 1:46–49:

My soul doth magnify the Lord:
And my spirit hath rejoiced in
God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded: the
Lowliness of his handmaiden.
For, behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is might hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.²²

We can see that there is indeed a difference between what Poe may have witnessed abroad in England versus what he would have seen had he remained in Virginia. In choosing to keep the "Magnificat" in the Book of Common Prayer, Anglicans in England still maintained a more open reverence for Mary than did Episcopalians in America.²³ It is rather easy to believe that Poe was exposed to the "Magnificat" while he was attending school in England. Thus the picture we come away with from this background information is that Poe most likely learned to approach Mary with a sense of veneration for her position as the mother of God, but that anything further than that would be considered blasphemous. When we turn our attention to "Morella," we can begin to see the effect this upbringing had on Poe's aesthetic sensibility.

"Morella" and "The Catholic Hymn"

I will briefly summarize the plot of "Morella," as I'm sure many are familiar with the tale. The plot is centered on the relationship between the narrator and his wife, Morella. At first the protagonist is impressed with his wife's insatiable

consumption of knowledge. As James W. Gargano explains, “She serves as a gentle temptress who lures his intellect to the doors that vision and philosophy promise to open but that remain, maddeningly for him, forever locked.”²⁴ Eventually, the narrator wishes for nothing more than to be rid of the woman he once loved. One day, the husband hears Morella reciting a hymn. He stops to listen to her and soon realizes that it is a supplication to Mary. When she is finished with the hymn, Morella prophetically informs her husband that she is dying, but that she will yet live. Morella, who had been pregnant, gives birth to a daughter. The protagonist loves the child and raises her, but he does not give her a name. Upon the ceremony of baptism, the minister asks for the child’s name. In a moment of pure terror, the father shouts the name Morella. The child responds to hearing the name and then immediately passes away. Our final image is of the father, in a fit of laughter, carrying the child to the grave.

“Morella” is a work that has received relatively sparse critical attention over the years. The most common critical debate surrounding “Morella” concerns identity construction and psychoanalysis/psychosexuality.²⁵ However, when we look at the various studies of “Morella” that deal with the mystical aspects of the tale, we find an interesting connection that leads us to our initial discussion of Poe’s relationship with the Virgin Mary. Mabbott argues that Poe may have taken the name Morella from Juliana Morell (she was known as the Venerable Mother Juliana Morell) of the sixteenth century, who was, as he contends, “fairly well known in the early part of the nineteenth century.”²⁶ If Morell was indeed well-known at the time then readers would most likely be aware of her Roman Catholic background as well.²⁷ Thus Mabbott touches on one possible link between Poe’s tale and Roman Catholicism, but he does not go into any great detail about this connection. Although Juliana Morell was known for her intelligence—a trait that both Juliana and Morella share—the more intriguing connection lies in how both Mary and Poe’s dark lady are essentially reborn through their children.

Morella’s pregnancy is vital to our understanding of not only Poe’s short story as a whole, but to our understanding of how Poe envisions Mary aesthetically as well. Dawn Keetley puts forth the discussion that in “Morella” we see Poe showing just how much he was fascinated by the procreative power of women.²⁸ However, it is worth mentioning that she does not use an edition of the story that contains the “Catholic Hymn.” In Douglas Anderson’s reading of the story, however, he takes into consideration how the appearance of the hymn affects our reading of both Morella and the story as a whole. Anderson argues that “Morella’s hymn . . . points toward very specific anxieties of transmission. It is an appeal to the Mother of God in the voice of a young woman, apparently

on the verge of childbirth and deeply apprehensive about the oncoming trials through which Mary and her own offspring have already passed. Poe's ambivalence about retaining the hymn in the final published version of the story may reflect his desire to turn the reader's attention away from Morella's mysterious pregnancy—a condition that leaves virtually no traces in the plot itself—toward the mental pregnancy of his narrator.”²⁹

Indeed, it appears as if Morella is making a supplication to Mary in order to seek empathetic support during the trials and pangs of childbirth; however, when we examine the language of the hymn itself in conjunction with the narrator's words just prior to the birthing, we are led to believe that what we are witnessing is more of a dark ceremony, a covenant of evil. As Floyd Stovall argues, “Morella, though she resembles Ligeia . . . , is imbued with more of a mysticism and magic, and there is something about her that savors of evil.”³⁰

From the language of the hymn itself we can conclude one thing: Poe was very much aware of the common Protestant charge of Mariolatry against Roman Catholics. The hymn is as follows:

Sancta Maria! Turn thine eyes
Upon the sinner's sacrifice
Of fervent prayer, and humble love
From thy holy throne above.

At morn, at noon, at twilight dim,
Maria! Thou hast heard my hymn.
In joy and wo, in good and ill,
Mother of God! be with me still.

When my hours flew gently by,
And no storms were in the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy love did guide to thine and thee.

Now, when clouds of Fate o'ercast
All my Present, and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine.³¹

Mabbott suggests that Morella “appropriately prayed to the Blessed Virgin, since compacts with the Devil do not involve renunciation of the Mother of

God, and medieval story included accounts of Her rescue of repentant witches who could not pray to God.”³² On the surface it certainly seems that Morella is asking for redemption, but the major problem with this reading is that she does not appear to be penitent in any sincere sense. There doesn’t seem to be any substantial evidence, other than the supplication itself, that Morella is seeking forgiveness. Nonetheless, Poe includes this hymn for a reason, and when we look at the poem closely, the author’s intentions become apparent.

The first stanza is the key to our understanding of Poe’s use of the hymn. Immediately we should note the reference in the final line to the holy throne above in relation to the painting we discussed at the beginning of this study, where Mary is holding the crown of flowers. Perhaps Poe is thinking back to this portrait. If so, we can legitimately question whether by the time Poe publishes this hymn for “Morella” in 1835 he believed Pock’s painting to be more in line with Mariolatry than Mariology. This reference, however, is not the part of the hymn that may have incensed the majority of Poe’s Protestant readership the most.

In *Illustrations of Popery: The “Mystery of Iniquity Unveiled”* (1838), one of the charges it claims against Roman Catholics is that “they unite the Virgin Mary and all Saints, as inferior Mediators with the only Advocate Jesus Christ the righteous.”³³ This is exactly what Poe appears to be doing in “Morella.” The narrator says, “But one autumnal evening, when the winds lay still in Heaven, Morella called me to her side. There was a dim mist over all the earth, and a warm glow upon the waters, and amid the rich October leaves of the forest a rainbow from the firmament had surely fallen” (449). The narrator’s words appear as if nature is preparing itself for the dark ceremony that is about to take place. Perhaps the most telling part of the speaker’s comment is the falling of the rainbow, which can be interpreted as a symbolic destruction of the covenant that God makes with Noah after the flood. Poe’s use of the Virgin here as a dark intercessor can be read as being anti-Catholic; however, we should not immediately conclude that this is an indication of Poe’s own feelings toward Roman Catholicism.³⁴ It is likely that Poe uses Catholicism here because it is the only sect of Christianity that utilizes the notion of transubstantiation—the belief that when the Eucharist is consecrated at the altar it is actually (not metaphorically) the body of Christ. Poe is not making a social commentary; he is using the ceremonial nature of Roman Catholicism, along with the common charge of Mariolatry from Protestants, as an aesthetic plot device in order to create the proper environment from which Morella can achieve her dark task of circumventing death. As is the case in transubstantiation, Morella’s rebirth or reconstitution is not metaphorical; it is literal.

Directly after Morella sings her hymn, she says, “It is a fair day for the sons of Earth and Life—ah! more fair for the daughters of Heaven and Death” (449). The sons of earth and life can be a reference to the patriarchal nature of Christianity: Jehovah/Christ, with “Life” being a reference to eternity. However, when she mentions the daughters of Heaven and Death, we realize that Poe is setting up a parallel of matriarchal divine authority, a power that not only has influence over Heaven but also in Death. It is a fairer day for the daughters because through Mary they have an advocate with power, a queen in heaven. The hymn itself is an indication that Morella realizes she cannot achieve her goal of being reborn without the help of the Virgin Mary as well.

Poe is playing on the fear of Protestants who view Roman Catholics as idolatrous because of their veneration for the Virgin Mary. In the case of “Morella,” the intercession actually works because she indeed does come back to life through the daughter. Forrest argues, “Since he was romanticist the phases of formal religion that attracted Poe most naturally were Catholic.”³⁵ Poe indeed combines romantic elements of dark knowledge with the ceremonial nature of Roman Catholicism to create a depiction of Mary that would horrify those Protestants who already believed Catholics worshipped Mary on the same level as Christ. Poe in a sense gives this audience what it wishes to see: Mary is not only worshipped in this hymn, but she assists in bringing the sinister Morella back to life. Ultimately, Poe chooses to remove the hymn from the story. In doing so, we do lose an important plot connection that helps to more thoroughly explain how Morella achieves her goal of being reborn. Poe’s revised version of the poem, however, indicates that he did retain the type of veneration for the Virgin Mary that he most likely learned as a young boy in England.

The “Catholic Hymn,” as it is originally titled, appears in its entirety in the 1835, 1839, and 1840 editions of “Morella.” In the 1842 version of the short story, and in subsequent editions of the text, the hymn has been removed. In 1845, Poe publishes the poem in both the August 6 edition of *Broadway Journal* as well as in *The Raven, and Other Poems*. In these iterations of the poem Poe removes the problematic first stanza that we find in “Morella.” In doing so, it completely changes both the tone and the intention of the poem. The revised version of the hymn is as follows:

At morn—at noon—at twilight dim—
 Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!
 In joy and woe—in good and ill—
 Mother of God, be with me still!
 When the Hours flew brightly by,

And not a cloud obscured the sky,
 My soul, lest it should truant be,
 Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;
 Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast
 Darkly my Present and my Past,
 Let my Future radiant shine
 With sweet hopes of thee and thine!³⁶

The language of this version of the poem is significantly different from the one that appears in “Morella.” It asks for Mary to be with the speaker, but it does not mention anything about sacrifices or even the holy throne above. The aesthetic depiction of Mary here appears to be more in line with the Church of England depictions of Mary than the Protestant Episcopal Church’s, as Poe would have been aware of the fact that there would still be many Protestants who would find the invocation to Mary blasphemous.

There is another important difference between the two versions of the poem. In the previous version of the hymn from the short story, *Morella* states in the third stanza, “Thy love did guide to thine and thee.” In the revised version, the speaker changes this to “Thy grace did guide to thine and thee.” This may appear to be a simple change; however, there is an important distinction to be made between the terms “love” and “grace.” Poe knew theology well enough to understand that he couldn’t write that Mary’s “grace” could lead *Morella* to her dark wish of being reborn, because grace is something that only God can bestow on an individual. However, love is something that one human can bestow on another. By revising the poem to read that it is Mary’s grace that is leading the speaker, we know that it is automatically something that God has given his approval of because only He could have given her that grace.

In the J. Lorimer Graham copy of the *Raven and other Poems*, Poe crosses out the word “Catholic” from the title.³⁷ We have no way of knowing for sure why Poe removes the Catholic part of the title. It may have been that he thought his readers would just automatically assume it was a Catholic poem; however, it could also be the case that Poe wanted to show that Roman Catholics are not the only sect of Christianity that can display veneration for the Virgin Mary. This seems more believable when we consider that George W. Peck, in his review of the 1850 edition of Poe’s works, wrote that “one need not be of the Roman faith to feel a loftier aspiration” when reading the “Hymn.”³⁸ Thus Poe’s final aesthetic vision of the Virgin Mary is one of hope that can be shared by many.

What we witness in both “*Morella*” and the “Hymn” is a careful construction of two different Marys: one is used to highlight darkness, and other is used

to manifest light, to enhance a feeling of hope and belonging. This indicates that Poe had more than just an understanding for the nuances of the debates over the representations of Mary in Christianity; it exhibits a specifically Church of England approach to Marian aesthetics as well. Today, most editions of Poe's poems include the shortened version of the "Hymn." The evolution of the poem, however, from its original version in "Morella" to its current edition, appears to coincide with the type of Anglican upbringing that Poe was most likely exposed to as a youth.

Returning to the initial query of this study, the painting by Pock, we have a better understanding for why the Allans may have had such a painting in their home. Had the Allans stayed in Virginia and continued to attend the Monumental Church instead of moving to England, they would have been exposed to a more evangelical version of the Anglican faith than what they experienced abroad. The revised "Hymn" appears to indicate, as Mabbott argues, that Poe "himself revered Our Lady."³⁹ However, the supplication in "Morella" leads us to believe that the author's reverence only went so far. What we take away from the discussion of Poe and his relationship with the Virgin Mary is that it appears that he held his veneration for Mary in balance, just as he was most likely taught to do as a young Anglican, and he conveyed this aesthetically balanced representation of Mary in his works.

Notes

I would like to thank Chris Semtner at the Poe Museum for his help in procuring a digital image of figure 1.

1. See Edward Wagenknecht, *Edgar Allan Poe: The Man Behind the Legend* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 206, for a brief discussion of how Poe seemingly made two references to Christ as king: the first in "Lenore" and the second in "The Coliseum."

2. M. M. Miles, ed., *Maiden and Mother: Prayers, Hymns, Songs, and Devotions to Honour the Blessed Virgin Mary* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001), 99.

3. Michael L. Burdick, "Usher's 'Forgotten Church'? Edgar Allan Poe and Nineteenth-Century American Catholicism" (lecture, Seventy-Second Annual Commemoration Program of the Poe Society, Baltimore, Md., October 2, 1994), available at <http://www.eapoe.org/papers/psblctr/pl19941.htm>.

4. *Ibid.*, 14.

5. See Killis Campbell's "Poe's Knowledge of the Bible," *Studies in Philology* 27 (1930): 546–51, for an interesting discussion of just how well Poe may have known the Bible. Poe's knowledge of the Bible is not necessarily at the forefront of my own study; however, for those interested in Poe and religion it is still an important piece of scholarship. See also Thomas O. Mabbott, ed., *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 216–17; and Dwight Thomas and

David K. Jackson, eds., *The Poe Log: A Documentary Life of Edgar Allan Poe, 1809–1849* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1987).

6. Thomas and Jackson, *Poe Log*, 21.

7. See William Mentzel Forrest, *Biblical Allusions in Poe* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), 148–50, for some interesting thoughts on John Allan's Presbyterian roots. Forrest believes that John Allan's Scotch Calvinism may have had an effect on Poe, especially in terms of the doctrine of unconditional foreordination (16). For a thorough explanation of the origin of the Protestant Episcopal Church, see *The American Church History Series*, vol. 7, edited by Rev. Philip Schaff, D.D.; Rt. Rev. H. C. Potter, D.D.; Rev. Geo. P. Fisher, D.D.; Bishop John F. Hurst, D.D.; Rev. E. J. Wolf, D.D.; Henry C. Vedder; Rev. Samuel M. Jackson, D.D. (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1895). The preface to this volume very succinctly states the origin of the Episcopalian faith as follows: "The Protestant Episcopal Church is the lineal and legitimate descendent of the Church of England. It represents in the United States of American Christianity as it is received and embodied in the Established Church of Great Britain. In doctrine, discipline, and worship it aims not to depart from its august parent further than local circumstances compel" (v). However, as we will discover, this does not mean that it didn't differ from the Church of England in certain areas of doctrine, especially in the representation of the Virgin Mary.

8. George D. Fisher, *History and Reminiscences of the Monumental Church, Richmond, VA, from 1814–1878* (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1880), 85.

9. Thomas and Jackson, *Poe Log*, 25.

10. Fisher, *History and Reminiscences of the Monumental Church*, 65.

11. John Nicholas Norton, *The Life of the Right Reverend Richard Channing Moore, D.D.* (New York: General Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union, and Church Book Society, 1857), 52.

12. Jaroslav Pelikan, ed., *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Developmental Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), writes, "Some of the descendants of the Reformation deplored the tendency to 'derogate as much from the Blessed Virgin on the one hand as she has been overexalted on the other,' and, without relapsing into what they took to be a superstitious Mariolatry, sought to rehabilitate an evangelical picture of her as one who gave birth to Christ not only physically but also spiritually" (144).

13. William White, D.D., *Lectures on the Catechism of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1813), 329.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 330.

17. One such topic of debate that continually prompted—and still prompts even today—discussion among Episcopalians is the designation of a church as "high" or "low." There are quite a few characteristics that would lead one church to be designated one over the other, and it would require a great deal of time to go through such intricate details—and many of these details themselves are debatable. Nonetheless, a very simplified version of the discussion is as follows: a "high" church generally adheres more closely to the ceremonial and traditional aspects of the Anglican religion; a "low" church tends to be more evangelical in nature. The problem with such an argument is that the definitions of both high and low are not static. Not only are the definitions highly dynamic, but the need to establish clergymen during the inception of the Episcopal Church seems to have taken precedence over the establishment of one type of churchman over the

other. In *The American Church History Series* (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1895), 424, we find that “as the High-church Hobart was trained under the moderate Bishop White, and the Low-church Griswold came from the hands of the High-church Bishop Seabury, so the intensely Evangelical Moore received his guidance into the church from the latitudinarian Provost [sic].” See also J.P.K. Henshaw, *Memoir of the Life of the Rt. Rev. Richard Channing Moore, D.D.* (Philadelphia: William Staveland, 1843), 290–93, for a brief discussion of the problems of classifying Bishop Moore—or any clergyman for that matter—as a “high” or “low” churchman. Henshaw argues that Moore had the characteristics of both a high and a low clergyman.

18. E. Brookes Holifield, *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 242.

19. Thomas and Jackson, *Poe Log*, 30.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Church of England*, ed., The Hon. Sir John Bayley, Knight (London: Longman, 1816), 5.

22. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

23. The “Magnificat” was later added back into the American Book of Common Prayer in 1892.

24. James W. Gargano, “Poe’s ‘Morella’: A Note on Her Name,” *American Literature* 47, no. 2 (May 1975): 261.

25. See Killis Campbell, “Poe’s Reading,” *Studies in English* 5 (1925): 190, for Schelling’s influence on “Morella.” Michael J. S. Williams, *A World of Words: Language and Displacement in the Fiction of Edgar Allan Poe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988), discusses Locke’s presence in the text. In regard to readings of a psychosexual nature, Marie Bonaparte, *The Life and Works of Edgar Allan Poe: A Psycho-Analytic Interpretation*, trans. John Rodker (London: Imago, 1949), looks at the role of transference in the shaping of both Poe’s and the narrator’s psyches. James Hutchisson, *Poe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), discusses “Morella” in terms of Aristophanes’s argument from Plato’s *Symposium* that humans were both male and female before Zeus split them, and that sex is a means of re-creating the wholeness of human being (118). More recently, Yongsoo Kim, “Identity, Difference, and the Dissolution of Power in Poe’s ‘Morella,’” *Nineteenth-Century Literature in English* 5, no. 1 (2001), argues, “Morella is none other than the name of the unnamable, untameable residue of language and none other than the sign of the male narrator’s complete inability to grasp the meaning of the sexual Other” (155). There has been, however, virtually no thorough discussion that I can find of the Catholic hymn in “Morella.”

26. Thomas O. Mabbott, “The Source of the Title of Poe’s ‘Morella,’” *Notes and Queries* 172 (January 1937): 26.

27. In the reference to Juliana Morella from the September 1834 edition of *Godey’s Lady’s Book* (Philadelphia: L.A. Godey), from which Mabbott believes Poe may have taken the name for his dark lady, it states that Juliana Morella “belonged to the Dominican convent of Avignon” (144).

28. Dawn Keetley, “Pregnant Women and Envious Men in ‘Morella,’ ‘Berenice,’ ‘Ligeia,’ and ‘The Fall of the House of Usher,’” *Poe Studies/Dark Romanticism: History, Theory, Interpretation* 38 (2005): 1–16.

29. Douglas Anderson, *Pictures of Ascent in the Fiction of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: Palgrave, 2009), 33.

30. Floyd Stovall, "The Women of Poe's Poems and Tales." *Studies in English* 5 (1925): 203.
31. Edgar Allan Poe, "Morella," *Southern Literary Messenger* 1, no. 8 (1835): 449–50. Subsequent references to "Morella" will come from this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.
32. Mabbott, *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, 1:216–17.
33. *Illustrations of Popery: The "Mystery of Iniquity Unveiled": In Its "Damnable Heresies, Lying Wonders, and Strong Delusion." With the Sanguinary Persecutions of the "Woman Drunken with the Blood of the Saints"* (New York: J. P. Callender, 1838), 234.
34. A sufficient study of anti-Roman Catholic sentiments in the nineteenth century is beyond the scope of this study; however, it is important to note that there were strong objections to Catholicism emerging out of the East Coast cities in the 1830s and 1840s. In 1834, Samuel Morse—inventor of Morse code—publishes anti-Catholic papers under the pseudonym "Brutus," charging that Catholics in Europe were trying to subvert the republican values of the United States. In 1835, these papers are collected and published under the title *Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States: The Numbers of Brutus, Originally Published in the New-York Observer* (New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1835). In the prefatory note to the book, four men have signed their names in approval of the publication of these papers, including John Milnor, the rector of St. George's Episcopal Church in New York. Milnor will also accuse the Roman Catholic Church of trying to infiltrate and undermine the American way of life. See John S. Stone, *A Memoir of the John Milnor, Late Rector of St. George's Church, New York* (New York: American Tract Society, 1848), 621, for more information about Milnor's warning to Americans, issued at the 1842 American Tract Society meeting in New York. Poe was most likely aware of the anti-Catholic sentiment that was emerging in New York; however, these feelings had more to do with politics than religion or theological disagreements. The increasing number of Irish Catholic immigrants coming to American cities in the East, such as New York, sparked fear in some individuals who felt that the American landscape was going to drastically change. Arguably the most explicitly anti-Catholic elements we find in Poe's works are the hymn from "Morella"; the use of the Spanish Inquisition in "The Pit and the Pendulum"; and the character of Fortunato in "The Cask of Amontillado." See Zachary Z. E. Bennett, "Killing the Aristocrats: The Mask, the Cask, and Poe's Ethics of S & M," *Edgar Allan Poe Review* 12, no. 1 (2011): 49–51, for a reading of Catholic antagonism toward Freemasonry. This certainly in no way proves that Poe was anti-Catholic himself. We know that later in life, when Poe lived in Fordham (the Bronx), he routinely walked the campus of St. John's College—most likely to use the library—and enjoyed the company of the Jesuit priests greatly.
35. Forrest, *Biblical Allusions in Poe*, 12.
36. Edgar Allan Poe, *The Raven, and Other Poems*, reproduced in facsimile from the J. Lorimer Graham copy of the edition of 1845 with author's corrections, introduction by T. O. Mabbott (New York: Columbia UP, 1942), 15.
37. *Ibid.*
38. George W. Peck, "The Works of Edgar A. Poe," *American Whig Review* 11 (March 1850): 315.
39. Mabbott, *Collected Works*, 1:217.