The Emergence of Irish Gothic Fiction

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Chapter 4

The Monster Club:
Monstrosity, Catholicism and Revising
the (1641) Rising

I think there are monsters, like real ones!¹

It is difficult to live at ease when you believe that you are surrounded by monsters. The existential and social anxiety that can be traced in Irish Anglican attitudes and behaviour in the eighteenth century (despite the concomitant expressions of security) can be partly explained by the fact that most of them thought that they were living everyday life in a country mostly populated by diabolical monsters. This is the kind of anxiety horror cinema is particularly good at depicting, and it might be helpful to think of eighteenth-century Ireland as a refined version of a zombie movie in which a small, select group of survivors battle in a world dominated by the living dead. The best analogy may be to George Romero’s seminal zombie film Night of the Living Dead (1968), which features a group of stressed out and increasingly agitated survivors trapped in a farmhouse besieged by a large crowd of the recently dead who have mysteriously returned to some semblance of life. The zombies have only one thing left on their minds: eating living flesh.

On all sides, Irish Anglicans were surrounded by hordes of sanguinary and satanic Catholic demons waiting for a chance to dismember, disembowel and, in some cases, cannibalise them (just as they cannibalised Jesus in the Eucharist), or perhaps possess their bodies and absorb them (through conversion) into the Catholic collective like a kind of primitive Borg.² Indeed, the notion that Catholics shared one mind was expressed forcefully by Archbishop King in 1727 when he complained that all Catholics ‘have a correspondence and mutual intelligence by means of their priests and they can at any time bring a mob together from remote places’.³ The annual sermon on 23 October commemorating the 1641
rebellion was a yearly reminder – as if any were needed – of just how precarious life was for the elect in a godforsaken place like Ireland.4 ‘Are there any of those bloody papists in Dublin?’ famously asked one eight-year-old girl when she had emerged from Christ Church cathedral immediately after the commemorative sermon in 1746. The girl’s terror was palpable to Dr John Curry, a Catholic physician who was so influenced by the remark that he determined to make an effort to change the mindset of his Anglican countrymen and women by revising the history of the rising.5 Such revision, however, required convincing Anglicans that the bogeyman was not real, that Catholics were not zombies or bloodthirsty maniacs, and it therefore encountered the difficulty that it is extremely hard for people to give up the ghosts they have lived with for generations. Unmaking monsters is much more problematic than making them in the first place.

‘Monster’ may seem like an extreme term to use in relation to Anglican perceptions of Irish Catholics, so an incursion inside the teradome is necessary to justify the frequent recourse to it in this chapter. I will begin where every other critic on the matter of the monster begins, by telling you that the word monster is derived from, or at least connected, to the Latin word ‘monstrum’, meaning to show, or demonstrate, to reveal, or warn.6 Monsters tell us something – indeed, warn us to be wary and to watch out: be alert, for here be things that frighten. Beyond their function as signifiers of the potentially dangerous, however, there has not been much agreement over what actually constitutes a monster in teratology. Definition has proved very difficult. Some monsters are rather obvious: giant bugs, of the kind that populate ‘creature features’, such as the enormous ants in Them! (1954; dir. Gordon Douglas); the gigantic arachnids of The Giant Spider Invasion (1975; dir. Bill Rebane) and Eight Legged Freaks (2002; dir. Ellory Elkayem); or the oversized mutant cockroaches in Mimic (1997; dir. Guillermo del Toro). Such creatures look disgusting in the first place and cause an instinctual repulsion in humans. They are horrifying biological mistakes, clearly outside the normal order of nature. These fictional monsters have ‘real-world’ equivalents, of course, in things like the Loch Ness Monster (whose monstrosity is helpfully signalled by his/her name), the Yeti or Abominable Snowman (another rather obvious title), and also the gigantic squid rumoured to be prowling around the waters around Norway and Iceland waiting for some tasty humans upon whom to feast.

The biologically queer have traditionally been culturally figured as monsters, and this kind of monstrosity, one associated with non-human animals, segues rather too easily into a view of certain kinds of humans as also monstrous – or at least signifying monstrosity. If we are now
rather less (publicly) comfortable with assigning the term ‘monster’ to humans manifesting biological oddness such as grotesque obesity, gigantism or dwarfishm, hydrocephaly, physical retardation or handicap, this was not always the case, and freak shows and circuses made a great deal of money exhibiting such human strangeness to large crowds from the eighteenth century onwards. Moreover, humans have not been slow to translate real-life deformity into the fictional giants, dwarfs and other grotesqueries that populate myth, fairy tale and horror.

The term ‘monstrous birth’ was fairly common in the early modern period and used to describe the delivery of a newborn manifesting almost any kind of strange defect. For example, in 1715 in Darken Parish, Essex, Sarah Smith reportedly gave birth to a baby with the body of a dolphin, talons instead of hands, possessing six heads (but one neck) with various facial features such as those of a calf, a camel and a dragon. This, Sarah’s neighbours wisely decided, was obviously a monster, and a punishment for her generally loose way of life. Both mother and child died soon after the birth, with the village priest declaring (and who could dispute him?): ‘As she lived a monster, so she died of a monster’. Part of the thinking behind designating such unfortunates as monsters derives from Aristotle’s fourth book of *Generation of Animals*, where he declared, quite definitively, that ‘anyone who does not take after his parents is really in a way a monstrosity, since in these cases Nature has in a way strayed from the generic type’ (of course, given that Aristotle also believed that the first kind of monstrosity was when a female rather than a male was formed in the womb, thereby forever associating femininity and monstrosity, his certainty on this matter is not to be trusted). Biological bizarreness is, again, the central issue: monstrosity is easily legible because it is written on the body, the skin of the monster.

The great theorist of monstrosity Noel Carroll defines a monster as ‘any being not believed to exist now according to contemporary science’ and which is seen as ‘threatening and impure’, ‘categorically interstitial, categorically contradictory, incomplete, or formless’, affecting a response of disgust or horror in anyone perceiving it. For Carroll, the monster is generally a biological hybrid or horrific biological combination of different species. Such shocking co-minglings are so radically impure that they cannot fail to produce a horrific response in anyone who sees them. Carroll argues that monsters are the key to the horror genre because we are so curious as well as horrified by the bizarre biologies of the monster that we are driven by ‘cognitive appetite’ to try to find out everything we can about that monster.

So far, so (relatively) uncontroversial. Both human and non-human animals can be included in the category of the monstrous as long as they
manifest a kind of biological abnormality (in the case of humans, this will typically compromise their humanity, so that, for example, in David Cronenberg’s version of *The Fly* (1986), poor old Seth Brundle is fused with a common housefly to become ‘Brundlefly’, a hybrid of human/insect). However, given this understanding of the term ‘monster’, a problem arises when someone who otherwise looks perfectly ‘normal’ is thought of as monstrous. These people are not biologically impure but are, rather, psychological deviants. They differ from the normal not really in body but in mind, in thought. The main figure considered in relation to this category of monstrosity has been the ‘serial killer’, whose behaviour and way of thinking is so different from the norm that the term ‘monster’ seems an appropriate one to apply (perhaps the only one).

It is difficult to know what to call a figure like the Satan-obsessed serial killer Richard Ramirez, or the Night Stalker, who enjoyed himself raping, torturing and killing in 1980s California, believing himself ‘above good and evil’, except a ‘monster’ – although I suppose the liberal mind might be able to come up with a less upsetting term.11 Such ‘monsters’ are probably even more frightening to most of us than giant cockroaches. There may be a kind of evolutionary terror of spiders and snakes and various insects (useful, perhaps, when we were stumbling around the African savannah during the Neolithic, which would explain our apparent instinctual disgust when confronted with gigantic versions of these potentially harmful creatures) but our fear of the human monster that looks normal is rather more complex. On one level of course, Sigmund Freud’s theory of the *unheimlich* can be all too easily applied to the psychological monster: there is something uncanny about the human monster that looks completely normal.12 They resemble that which is long known and familiar, your neighbour, your family member, but they are actually hollowed-out shells containing a terrifying otherness. The various manifestations of Jack Finney’s *The Body Snatchers* (1954) – including the two best film adaptations, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956; dir. Don Siegel; 1978; dir. Philip Kaufman) – contain one of the most obvious representations of this kind of monster, but even the glassy-eyed unemotional pod-people pale beside real monsters able to mimic the emotions of utter normality, of the normal self. Their monstrosity is revealed only when they attempt to rape, torture or kill you. Again, while possession by an evil spirit is apparently signalled by a lot of clear indicators in our culture – such as speaking in tongues, vomiting pea soup, increased problem with body odour – this is not necessarily true historically. The witch, while often an isolated individual who behaved strangely, could be your wife, sister or mother whose evil only
became apparent at certain points of the day or night. Monstrosity could hide, as well as reveal, in other words (hence Robert Louis Stevenson’s famous story).

Contemporary horror has rather perfected the notion of the monster in our midst. The mild-mannered Denis Nilsen, or grinning John Wayne Gacy, only become obvious monsters in retrospect, the isolation and loneliness of the former and child-friendliness and penchant for clown costumes in the latter only providing evidence of monstrosity once the pile of bodies built up. Again, the liberal mind becomes uneasy with the term ‘monster’ in cases like this because the term appears to imply that there is something ‘inhuman’ about such activities: as if it is not only humans who are capable of such horrifying behaviour. The term ‘monster’ allows us to separate ourselves from the murderous other, as in the use of the term to apply to the notorious Robert Thompson and Jon Venables, the ten-year old abductors and killers of two-year old Jamie Bulger in Bootle, near Liverpool in 1993. The policeman who came to arrest Venables declared that he knew he was evil the moment he clapped eyes on him. Terry Eagleton caustically remarks that this is the kind of comment ‘that gives evil a bad name’, but it also makes application of the term ‘monster’ to perpetrators of such crimes more problematic.

It is certainly politically incorrect to bandy the terms ‘evil’ and ‘monster’ around, and there can be detected in Noel Carroll’s taxonomy of the monster an attempt to protect humans from being labelled ‘other’. Carroll is explicit in his rejection of the term ‘monster’ when it is applied to non-supernatural, completely human killers like Dr Hannibal Lecter, the extraordinarily civilized psychiatrist and cannibal of Robert Harris’s series (1981–2006). For Carroll, the term ‘monster’ is simply inappropriate in these circumstances. This has profound implications for the study of the monstrous in eighteenth-century Ireland, of course, as it would mean that the term ‘monster’ is not particularly useful in describing how Irish Anglicans read their Catholic neighbours. Rather than reveal anything, the term ‘monster’ would merely mislead and misguide the historian.

However, monster theory has to come to terms with a general tendency to apply the term in a much wider sense than the terminological gatekeepers like Noel Carroll would desire. If culturally we like to apply the term ‘monster’ to Fred West, for example, it seems rather counterproductive to quibble that Mr West does not inhabit the interstices of biological categorisation, though, of course, we could still reassure our troubled liberalism by insisting that it is unfortunate that the unlearned should descend to the language of the tabloid newspaper. Some scholars
of horror have been more accepting of the term ‘monster’ in such cases, mainly because it seems simply unacceptable that the likes of Hannibal Lecter and Norman Bates from *Psycho* (novel by Robert Bloch [1959]; film by Alfred Hitchcock [1960]) should not be called monsters just because they are not biologically odd and give no indications that they are possessed by anything other than a quirky sense of humour and a rather broader set of interests than the rest of us. Bates, it might be quibbled, is at least ‘possessed’ in a weaker sense by the memory of his mother, but even so, he is not a genuine hybrid.

The term ‘monster’ simply has to be expansive enough to take in sociological and psychological as well as biological weirdness, and for this reason horror commentators would find it much more useful to take film critic Robin Wood’s understanding of the ‘monster’ as a starting point. Although Wood is among the most politically motivated of critics, and as a good leftie finds the term ‘monster’ distasteful, he recognises that societies use it in order to identify and alienate groups and figures against which they want to define themselves, so that as a formula for the horror film he suggests that ‘normality is threatened by the Monster’, where the monster is everything that normality isn’t (it goes without saying that for Wood ‘normality’, or ‘conformity to the dominant social norms’, is actually the real enemy, and the monster a kind of victim, but this political position need not worry us here). Therefore, categories such as other people, women, the proletariat, other cultures, ethnic groups within the culture, those possessing alternative ideological and political views, deviant sexualities and children can all find themselves monstrous depending on the particular historical moment.16 Or, as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen puts it, “the monster dwells at the gates of difference”.17

Interestingly, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Catholics were considered biologically impure and interstitial, and also sociological pollutants, and therefore monstrous regardless of the theory used to examine them. Catholics could indeed be biologically anomalous in that, in league with Satan, they possessed satanic bodies, literally. There are many cases in which Catholics were treated as if they were biological contaminants and biological hybrids. They were also considered to be cognitively different – their brains worked in a different way to those of Anglicans. Moreover, they combined many different categories within these bizarre bodies. They were both ‘loyal’ and ‘disloyal’, living and dead, singular and multiple, human and animal/bestial. Even those who accepted that Catholics were nominally human, however, were not convinced that they were not for that reason to be considered ‘monstrous’. As Cynthia Freeland has reminded us, monstrosity is associated with evil, so that those who arouse moral disgust tend to be seen in
monstrous terms.\textsuperscript{18} It may also be useful to consider Steven J. Schneider’s description of a monster when thinking of how Catholics appeared to Anglicans. Using Sigmund Freud’s claim that an object appears ‘uncanny’ when it embodies past ideas that are believed to have been surmounted, he describes monsters as ‘metaphorical embodiments of paradigmatic horror narratives . . . capable of reaffirming surmounted beliefs by their very presence’.\textsuperscript{19} Given Michel de Certeau’s description of modernity as an attempt to banish forever that which is considered past,\textsuperscript{20} Catholics could often be considered the most monstrous objects on the planet since the Reformation was precisely a kind of repudiation of the past and an attempt to start anew. For this, Catholicism, and Catholics as embodiments of Catholicism, are extremely problematic, because Catholicism is an entire system of old ideas that have been supposedly ‘overcome’ and now constitute ancient history, and an individual Catholic is a personification of this dead system, he is the past come back to life. Daily life for an Anglican in eighteenth-century Ireland therefore might be considered analogous to a very bad horror film series where the monster is repeatedly killed but just as repeatedly returns as strong as ever (if not, indeed, stronger) in time for the sequel.

In England, the tradition of monstering Catholics has proved crucial to the formation of the national mind, as demonstrated by historians such as Linda Colley but also by literary scholars like Raymond Tumbleson.\textsuperscript{21} When Colley examined the origins of British identity she located it in 1707 when England and Wales united with Scotland to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain, a unity she argues made possible in large part by a shared Protestantism dating from the Reformation, a dependence on the King James Bible, a mutual anti-Catholicism and a fear of French invasion.\textsuperscript{22} The seventeenth century was imaginatively reconstructed as a providential struggle against a great demonic force able to morph into various disguises and manifest in extraordinarily diverse forms. This monster was called popery, and its tentacular malevolence could be detected in the tyrannical king, Charles I, or even in a republican junta who had behaved rather too much like the Catholics they were supposed to be vanquishing.\textsuperscript{23} Onto this grand, amorphous Cthulhu-like Catholic menace could be projected anything and everything considered abnormal, and Catholicism was configured as a perverse and disgusting repository of everything rejected by a Britain establishing its modern identity: feudal, medieval, international, superstitious, authoritarian.\textsuperscript{24} The insidious and basic anti-Catholicism of the British state has been powerfully demonstrated and analysed by historians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and certainly, the depth and extent of the fear of both the Catholic Church and even individual Catholics was
extraordinary. The intensity of anti-Catholicism can be explained as partly derived from the association between Catholicism and the alien, since Catholicism was configured as profoundly un-English, linked to the Irish, the French, the Spanish. Indeed, anti-Catholicism, and other cross-class prejudices, helped to unite a Britain that was otherwise split by internal disagreements. Colin Haydon argues convincingly that in eighteenth-century Britain ordinary Catholics ‘all feared that they would become social outcasts if they openly proclaimed their real beliefs’, though he admits that ‘it is impossible to gauge with any precision how common these problems were’. Raymond Tumbleson does, however, point out that although prejudice was widespread and manifested even in everyday life, because of a perceived relation between ‘Papist’ and ‘Romish,’ anti-Catholicism often functioned as a prejudice more directed against the foreigner rather than the man down the road. The basic anti-Catholicism in British culture allowed Catholics to be reduced to stereotypical, often caricatured, villains – the very villains who would go on to populate the Gothic novel.

As has been argued by the historian Jeremy Black, anti-Catholicism was ‘the prime ideological commitment of most of the population’ of England in the eighteenth century. The English calendar was packed full, with days set aside to honour the Protestant past and the deliverance of the national church from the grips of the papacy (the Gunpowder Plot, the St Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, and even the Great Fire of London 1666). The Protestant Almanack of 1700 includes on its frontispiece the posting of Luther’s 95 Theses, the ‘deliverance’ of England from popery by Edward VI, the second ‘deliverance’ of England from popery by Elizabeth, the Gunpowder Plot, the Fire of London, and the third ‘deliverance’ of England from popery by William and Mary. Moreover, the monstrosity of Catholics could even take biological as well as theological and sociological form. In her study of ‘monstrous births’ in post-Reformation England, Julie Crawford provides numerous incidents of Catholicism being associated with biological abnormality. Not only were Catholics casually called monsters but they were believed to be physically deformed. Crawford points to how those involved in the Gunpowder Plot, for example, were variously described as ‘Romish monsters’ and ‘the rarest form of monsters’ and how images of Catholic traitors depicted them as physiologically weird. However, the most important point about Catholic monsters was precisely that they were less easy to spot than a two-headed calf. As Crawford points out, ‘the real threat of traitorous “monsters” . . . was less their notable physiognomy than the fact that, at least from the outside, they were not remarkable at all’ and they could pass by you in the street without anyone
noticing their hidden evil: ‘from the outside, “rarer monsters” look only like men’. It is too easy to forget now, but Catholics were literally read as slaves of the antichrist in seminal texts such as John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, which was written in 1563 and enjoyed a status second only to the Bible in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This canonical text, which contained an account of the sufferings and death of the Protestants in the reign of Queen Mary, can be read as an anti-Catholic manual for slow learners. In the fourth book of Foxe’s classic, which depicts the poisoning of King John by a monk who had already been absolved of his sin by the pope, the reader is informed that this event begins the ‘proud and mis-ordered Reign of Antichrist, beginning to stir in the Church of Christ’, and after which ‘the loosing out of Satan’ is inaugurated with acts of extraordinary cruelty and barbarism being perpetuated in the years since that time, especially in the martyring and murdering of countless English Protestants during the reign of ‘Bloody’ Mary.

The monstering approach to Catholicism was particularly evident during periods when it seemed that Catholicism had become a serious threat to the state. For example, during the 1641 rebellion in Ireland the English presses released numerous pamphlets which claimed that Satan was behind the whole affair. One particularly memorable one, *Grand Plutos Remonstrance* (1642), was in the form of a long speech given to the Irish Catholic rebels by Satan himself in which he instructed them to ‘drink healths to my infernall majestie in the blood of your enemies, making their skulls your quaffing-bowls to the glory of your religion’.

Anti-Catholicism operated as what Colley has called a ‘vast superstructure of prejudice’ and was the ideological glue which allowed various (otherwise ideologically opposed) parties to come together in support of the 1688 revolution, which, as Paul Kleber Monad has written, ‘was the victory, not of timeless conceptions of “liberty”, but of virulent anti-Catholicism’. One tract written to ‘all members of the next Parliament’ warned those gathered that the Church of Rome is still the same Church it was a hundred years ago, that is, a mass of treachery, bribery, perjury, and the highest superstition; a machine without any principle or settled law of motion, not to be mov’d or stopt with the weights of any private or publick obligations; a monster that destroys all that is sacred both in Heaven and Earth, so ravenous that it is never content unless it gets the whole world into its claws and tears all to pieces.

As Linda Colley points out, the slang term applied to Catholics in the seventeenth and eighteenth century was ‘outlandish’, which meant
that ‘Catholics were not just strange, they were out of bounds’, out of the boundaries, that is, of the human as well as the nation.\textsuperscript{39} Frances E. Dolan records how discussion of Catholics usually involved connection to monstrous births as if Catholics had been conceived in the darkness, the results of ‘unnatural’ relations between humans and demons.\textsuperscript{40} Catholic strictures on sexual morality, especially as they applied to priests, were read as means by which to trick the naïve into immorality. One Protestant almanac of the late seventeenth century claimed that at least fourteen popes had been incestuous.\textsuperscript{41} In one memorable pamphlet, the MP Henry Care warned his peers to beware the growth of Catholicism in the land, a growth that could only result in

your wives prostituted to the lust of every savage bog-trotter, your daughters ravished by goatish monks, your smaller children tossed upon pikes or torn limb from limb, whilst you have your own bowels ripped up . . . and holy candles made of your grease (which was done within our memory in Ireland), your dearest friends slaving in Smithfield, foreigners rendering your poor babes that can escape everlasting slaves, never more to see a Bible, nor hear again the joyful sounds of Liberty and Property. This, this gentlemen is Popery.\textsuperscript{42}

In a diatribe like this, we are close to the extraordinarily excessive anti-Catholicism of a late twentieth-century film like \textit{The Omen} (1976; dir. Richard Donner), where a cabal of Catholic priests and Vatican officials conspire to bring about the birth of the antichrist, a memorably demonic-looking child called Damien Thorn. In \textit{The Great Law of Subordination Consider’d} (1724), Daniel Defoe emphasised the monstrous and supernatural nature of Catholicism, calling popery ‘the Hobgoblin, the Spectre with which the Nurses fright the Children, and entertain the old Women all over the country’, a state of affairs to which he has no apparent objection.\textsuperscript{43} The cannibalistic nature of Catholicism was highlighted in prints like William Hogarth’s \textit{Transubstantiation Satirized} (1725), which depicted the Virgin Mary popping the Christ child into a huge meat grinding machine for the production of communion wafers which Catholics then consume from a priest’s hand.

This monstering is perfectly understandable given the parasitic need of Protestantism for the Catholic alter ego. Without a monstrous Other, against which to define itself, the Self finds it difficult to retain any coherence. As Michel Foucault puts it in \textit{The Order of Things} (1966), ‘the unthought (whatever name we give it) is not lodged in man like a shrivelled-up nature or a stratified history; it is, in relation to man, the Other: the Other that is not only a brother, but a twin, born, not of man, nor in man, but beside him and at the same time, in an identical newness, in an unavoidable duality’.\textsuperscript{44}
The connection between radical evil and Irish Catholicism was firmly established by Sir John Temple in *The Irish Rebellion* (1842), but it was a connection that needed to be repeated periodically throughout the century following in case anyone was inclined to forget it. Hence, in 1745, one Anglican preacher, William Henry, reminded his congregation that even if the current Catholic Church was ‘too Politick to let fly her Fire-brands, Anathemas, Depositions of Princes, Crusadoes, Armys of Holy Cut-Throats’, it ‘has this artillery of Hell still in her Stores’. The annual sermons about 1641 returned constantly to the same stock of anti-Catholic imagery, and yet the congregants never seemed to grow tired of hearing the same old stories again and again. They were told, repeatedly, that Catholics were still working hard (in secret) to overturn the land settlement, to institute a Catholic theocracy, to exterminate both Protestantism and Protestants, were infiltrating the higher reaches of government, and in general were constantly seeking ways to enact their terrible nature – usually in league with demonic forces, of course. In 1722, Henry Downes warned that ‘Catholics, like others incompletely rational, must be restrained for their own, as well as for others’ good’, an attitude which basically justified any and all anti-Catholic measures since they were being enacted for the good of the Catholic soul as well as the safety of the citizenry. In another sermon, John Ramsay complained in 1714 that while the Irish had always had a strange manner of living in comparison with the civilised English, Catholicism had exacerbated this problem and encouraged ‘their wild savage way of living in single cottages and dismal unhabitable places’. Catholicism made the dirty even filthier and led to atavistic and incestuous versions of domestic life. These examples could be multiplied but the point is clear.

It was often denied, of course, that Anglicans believed that Catholics were monsters. After all, it was protested, the penal laws against Catholics were due to their political rather than their theological beliefs: Catholicism, as one commentator put it, was a ‘complicated System, mixed up with many Doctrines of a political Nature’, and therefore Catholics effectively acted as fifth columnists. However, given that the oath that had to be taken to enter parliament specifically required swearing against Transubstantiation, a purely political reading of discrimination has always had a hollow ring to it. Catholics, moreover, were also attacked in terms of what we would now call their reproductive rights, in that the confessional state attempted to intervene in the relations between Catholic parents and their children. Again, while measures intended to prevent an increase in the Catholic population can be explained as being driven by political pressures, the view that Catholics were sexual deviants who couldn’t stop breeding also played into such
legislation. Archbishop William King calculated that ‘the number of papists is greater than the number of protestants in most places 4 to 1 and in some places 20 to 1’, as Catholics were unable to keep their sexual desires under control.\textsuperscript{52} The notorious penal laws passed in the parliaments of 1695 and 1697, supplemented by additional legislation passed in the reign of Queen Anne, covered a large proportion of Irish Catholic life and constituted a thorough institutionalisation of the rampant anti-Catholicism running riot in Ireland at the time. The period as a whole witnessed the simultaneous rise of security and anxiety in the Anglican enclave as outlined in Chapter 1.\textsuperscript{53}

It is by now a historiographical commonplace that anti-Catholicism in Britain waned as the eighteenth century progressed, especially after the defeat of the Pretender at Culloden in 1746. Linda Colley, a historian who emphasises how central anti-Catholicism was in the establishment of a British identity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, nevertheless insists that Catholic Emancipation of 1829 ‘could never have come to pass without marked shifts of opinion’ in Britain over the subject.\textsuperscript{54} The foremost historian of eighteenth-century British anti-Catholicism, Colin Haydon, agrees that ‘in the thirty years or so following Culloden . . . [the] consensus in matters concerning Popery broke down’, and in elite circles an increasing ‘toleration’ could be charted, though he also insists that there remained a virulence to popular anti-Catholicism that did not go away at all (though it too, lessened).\textsuperscript{55} In his study, Haydon presents a wide variety of evidence to demonstrate this change in intellectual opinion about Catholicism, and certainly crude versions of ‘No Popery’ prejudice became embarrassing to many elite figures by the mid-century.\textsuperscript{56} Pressing practical needs hastened the decline of extreme anti-Catholicism in the corridors of power, especially when the Protestant Volunteer force in Ireland began making noises in support of the rebellious colonials in America while the Irish Catholic majority stayed silent or expressed loyalty to the crown. With the acquisition of Canada as well, a country with some 70,000 Catholic inhabitants, it became increasingly problematic to attempt to keep Catholics out of the army or to enact new penal laws, and pressure for repeal of the existing ones became difficult to ignore.\textsuperscript{57} The impact of the Enlightenment is also generally posited as a reason for the gradual decline in public anti-Catholicism, and the philosophical emphasis on toleration is held to have laid the intellectual grounds for bringing Catholics increasingly into the instruments of the state.

The argument that anti-Catholicism was on the wane through the eighteenth century in Britain is, then, probably more or less correct, though it is difficult to gloss over the Gordon Riots of 1780 and the
continued opposition to Catholic Emancipation before, during and after it was granted in 1829,\textsuperscript{58} and the sheer extent of anti-Catholicism in the very popular Gothic novel would also need to be considered by any serious study of this very complex problem.\textsuperscript{59} What the ‘waning’ of intense anti-Catholicism probably meant was that the Catholic became less of a monster for the British in political terms and more of a social and political irritant – though one whose monstrosity would quickly be re-established in the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{60}

While the (very) slow (and certainly not in any simple way ‘progressive’) erosion of anti-Catholicism in Britain can be accepted as at least a historiographical hypothesis, this is not the case for eighteenth-century Ireland. The persistence of an anti-Catholic paradigm in Ireland is understandable, because, if to some extent English Protestants could be convinced that Catholics after Culloden were not really a threat any more – especially given that the Pretender had started decrying the Catholic Church by that stage – this was not such an easy line to take for an Irish Anglican marooned in a country in which he knew himself to be one of a small minority, and where it was impossible to live life day by day without encountering very many of these bloody monsters you had been reading about in your copy of Temple’s \textit{The Irish Rebellion} or William King’s \textit{The State of the Protestants of Ireland Under the Late King James’s Government} (1691) (often handily released in a grand omnibus edition) and hearing about in annual sermons about the lessons of 1641. In 1719, the Reverend Boyle Davies warned that ‘Popish errors are really in themselves monstrous and dissonant to all sound principles, both of reason and religion’.\textsuperscript{61} It was the very fact that he lived among Catholics that drove Davies to such extreme statements since, as he insisted, ‘while we have papists among us, we shall never want an enemy, nor an executioner fitted to our destruction’.\textsuperscript{62}

For most Irish Anglicans, 1641 was only the first in a horror series; at the end of each instalment the audience goes home believing that the monster has been destroyed and normality restored – only to find that this monster reappears at the start of the next part. There were horror sequels aplenty in eighteenth-century Ireland, sequels where the monster actually looked to be growing stronger than ever rather being subject to a law of diminishing returns. And monster theory continued to be applied to Irish Catholics without much deviation. In eighteenth-century Ireland there was never any real decrease in the levels of monstrosity applied to the Catholic population. On one level the daily encounters between the two populations could bring a sense that Catholics deserved compassion and respect; however, on another it merely reconfirms the level of threat they pose: given that there are so many of them, and given
that they have demonstrated a tendency to kill and maim Anglicans in the (recent) past, seeing some of them every day just reminded the elite minority of how much it had to fear.

It is often casually believed that everyday encounters will help erase prejudice between alienated groups of people, and that while it is easy to hate a nebulous category of ‘others’ it is rather more difficult to hate the very specific others who live next door: ‘popery’ may be a system you find abhorrent, but the Catholic tenants with whose welfare you become associated are in a different category altogether. Although this argument is superficially plausible, there is reason to suspect that being forced every day to encounter people you have already decided are abhorrent does nothing but increase your hatred of them. In such cases the stereotype can, in effect, filter both memory and understanding so that stereotype-confirmation is unconsciously sought by the observer. The mind filters information to make sure it accords with beliefs already held about a group or person, which provides an obstacle to any attempt to undo the social divisions based on such group behaviours. Of course, the real point is that this kind of filtering is more or less an unavoidable fact about being human as self-definition requires others against which identity can be contrasted. Moreover, given that Anglicans genuinely feared the reversal of the land settlement, social relations with Irish Catholics could easily be seen as a zero-sum game in which, were Catholics to gain some element of readmission to the state, the result would be loss of power for the Anglican minority, and this is a situation in which stereotype flourishes.63

This fear was certainly not relieved by the sheer numbers of Catholics relative to Protestants, a topic of continued interest to the elite in the period. In one letter in 1831, Archbishop Hugh Boulter of Armagh reckoned that there were five Catholics to every Protestant in the country, though in a later letter he admitted that others felt that the actual number could be as high as eight to one.64 Ross Moore, the sovereign of Carlingford in County Louth was even more pessimistic, and in 1734 he worried that ‘the odds against us in this town and neighbouring country I am persuaded are at least 200 to one – I do not mean 100, but one single Protestant . . . at the mercy of a Popish mob’.65 This disparity was a serious imaginative problem, partly because most Anglicans seem to have believed that Catholics, in Archbishop William King’s words, ‘breed very fast’.66

The evidence that Catholics were read as monstrous in Ireland is overwhelming for the early eighteenth century. As argued in Gothic Ireland (2005), the basis of this belief is 1641 – the belief that 1641 is always already about to happen again because the monsters who caused it are
still the same and are still knocking around the place. In fact, a belief in the unchanging nature of Irish Catholics is central to their continued monstering by Irish Anglicans. Catholics, of course, attempted to deal with the monstering in a variety of ways. One way was through declarations of loyalty to the monarch, organising petitions which asserted how unflinchingly loyal Irish Catholics had been since the Williamite Settlement, pushing hard for a new formulation of various oaths of loyalty required for Catholics to enter the army or parliament.67 Others included more direct and combative challenges to the discriminatory nature of the Irish state, lobbying for the overturning of the penal laws, the bitter quarterage dispute.68 Overall, these campaigns did have some impact and contributed to a shift in the attitudes of some Irish Anglicans – indeed, Irish Anglican opinion bitterly split on the matter of toleration of Catholicism, a split into ‘liberal’ and ‘conservative’ camps (though the liberal camp remained very much a minority affair), and the Anglican Patriots made the most movement towards a rapprochement.

It is important to acknowledge that while making monsters is a complex matter, unmaking them is extraordinarily difficult. Challenging the dominant interpretation of 1641 was, perhaps, the most important but also most dangerous way of making the case that Catholics were not, in fact, the demons they had been depicted as being, and issuing such a challenge is a more aggressive methodology than simply making a declaration of loyalty to the state. After all, such a declaration could indicate that Catholics had in fact changed their natures, that while they were evil and annihilating monsters in the past, they had effectively reformed and were ready to take their full place in polite society again. To actually re-examine the central mythology of the Irish Anglican self, however, was a completely different matter altogether. To challenge the dominant interpretation of 1641 was to suggest that Irish Catholics had never been monstrous, and many challenges in fact reversed the monstrous imagery to project monstrosity onto Irish Protestants in order to absolve Catholics from all or any blame for the mistakes of the past.

While Irish Anglicans always felt uneasy in eighteenth-century Ireland, that unease only increased as the century progressed, and it reached a fairly hysterical denouement in the emergence of a new term to designate the Anglican interest in Ireland. The now notorious term ‘Protestant Ascendancy’ was coined in the fulminations of Archbishop Richard Woodward in *The Present State of the Church of Ireland* (1786), which insisted that ‘the wishes of some of the friends of the Roman Catholiks interest . . . are evidently subversive of the Protestant Ascendancy’, warned that the ‘Ecclesiastical establishment is an essential part of the Constitution of this Kingdom’, and pointed out that
‘Protestant ascendancy . . . cements this Country with Great Britain.’

That Protestant superiority felt the necessity of such an invocation of Ascendancy only from the 1780s tells us that something was happening by then that seriously threatened identity and provoked this reaction. One provocation was that surprising and unexpected result of the penal laws: the growth of a Catholic middle class, which led directly to the formation of the Catholic Committee (1756) and the regeneration of the Catholic threat. The founders of this Committee were John Curry and Charles O’Conor, whose families had both lost out in the land confiscation but who had resurfaced in the middle class. They simultaneously launched an assault on the Anglican configuration of Irish history, and during the 1750s and 1760s they wrote a number of pamphlets claiming that the stories of massacres in 1641 were wildly exaggerated, that Temple’s work was partisan and partly deranged, and that the 1641 rebellion was more justified than that of 1688. Loyal Catholics had long felt that it was imperative that the demonic version of 1641 be challenged and put firmly into the past, and this challenge was taken up by Catholic scholars of great repute.

II

There is a sense in which John Curry was the right man for the job of revising the rising. His Catholic family had been stripped of their lands in the Williamite settlement since his father had fought in support of James II, and they were, therefore, effectively driven into the middle classes; Curry’s father became a merchant, and John himself moved into medicine. During the last Jacobite rebellion of 1745, Irish Catholics did not rise to the challenge of the moment to express a loyalty with the Pretender but instead remained quiet and acquiescent. This earned them a certain respect in English intellectual opinion, and Curry, already greatly irritated by the continuing animosity towards Catholics in Ireland, took the opportunity to post his attack on traditional Anglican versions of the 1641 debacle with A Brief Account from the most Authentic Protestant writers of the Causes, Motives, and Mischiefs of the Irish Rebellion, on the 23rd Day of October 1641 (1747).

What was especially daring about Curry’s intervention was that instead of being released under his own name, he decided to perpetrate an act of literary cross-dressing. The study was published as ‘a Dialogue between a Dissenter, and a Member of the Church of Ireland, as by Law Established’ (a description which sounds suspiciously like the start of a joke). This impersonation was to have serious implications in the
literary war which broke out over the pamphlet, but Curry effectively created a version of a liberal Irish Anglican in order to exacerbate the divisions in the Anglican enclave which would later become evident in the reaction to the Money Bill dispute. Curry played the ecclesiological cross-dressing with a certain amount of tongue in cheek. Scandalously, he has his Dissenter harangue his Anglican interlocutor at the end of their dialogue for being such an intrepid advocate for Irish Catholics: ‘you have today so zealously pleaded the Cause of the Rebellious Irish Papists, that I suspect you are not so good a Protestant at the Bottom, as I would have you to be’.70 This self-referential undermining of the enterprise injects a jovial tone into what is otherwise a deadly serious literary and historiographical game as Curry attempts to wrest interpretive control of the 1641 rebellion out of the hands of those he considers zealously committed to an anti-Catholic agenda. The act of speaking in tongues not his own, of wearing ecclesiastical garb belonging to different (and adversarial) denominations, is a radical one in a period when all three Christian churches were mutually antagonistic.

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have argued that when women cross-dress it is as a ‘dream of prophecy and power’ because by appropriating the clothes of the more powerful gender some of that power is also appropriated.71 However, what cross-dressing also does is question the very notion of such a strict division between categories. For Marjorie Garber, cross-dressing is a way to offer ‘a challenge to easy notions of binarity, putting into question the categories of “female” and “male”, whether they are considered essential or constructed, biological or cultural’,72 and the same problematisation occurs when a reviled and hated other adopts the language and wears the clothes of those who revile him. While there is one sense in which this denominational cross-dressing could be read as the typical act of a monstrous traitor as he disguises himself in order to pass as normal and perpetrate his crimes much more easily, given that Curry is genuinely attempting to convince liberal Anglicans that Catholics are not the bogeymen of the 1641 fairy tales, a radicalisation of identity is the better interpretation of his pamphlet.

What Curry effects to do is no less than unmonster the Irish Catholic, and to do it through the voice of a liberal Anglican, largely by forging a connection between Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants based on their common nationality. As the liberal Anglican asserts, he speaks ‘In Justice . . . to that People (whom, notwithstanding the difference of their Religion from mine, I shall ever regard as my Brethren and Countrymen . . .)’.73 Crucially, for his revisionism, Curry has his liberal depend only on Protestant testimony (the histories written by Protestants in the aftermath of the rebellion) to prove that the traditional view of the rebellion,
and therefore of Irish Catholics, is simply untenable, while also asking some other serious questions including why, as the rebellion happened over a century prior to the publication of the pamphlet, and given their dutiful and submissive loyalty displayed ever since, the ‘inhumane Exaggerations’ of 1641 are being bought up against Irish Catholics at this time. In other words, Curry speaks with an Anglican voice through his sources as well as his dialogues, according the scholarship of his enemy a certain amount of respect.

Where Curry meets with problems, however, is in his inability to completely abandon the discourse of the monster. If the Irish Catholic is no longer to be accepted as monstrous, then Curry believes he has found another group who can be read as bestial. He reverses the general accusations against Catholics and here accuses Protestants of desiring the ‘extirpat[ion], by all possible Means’ of ‘that useful and inoffensive set of Men [Irish Catholics] from the Face of the Earth’. Instead of Catholics being guilty of numerous massacres in 1641, the whole affair was really caused by the massacre of peaceful Catholic families in Islandmagee (populated, he claims, by about 3,000 people), a massacre which started the entire chain of murderous events. More important than these reversals, however, is Curry’s attempt to distinguish between Catholics. While some are indeed bad citizens and dangerous there are also ‘sober and unbигогed Roman Catholics’ who ‘did, and do, sincerely condemn, and abhor’ the terrible behaviour by their co-religionists during 1641. Thus, rather than being ‘essentially’ evil, Catholics are an (ordinary) group of people with some flawed members, but far more judicious and moderate ones. Curry’s book attempts to produce a ‘category crisis’, introduce a porous membrane between hitherto distinct categories and allow for ‘border crossings from one (apparently distinct) category to another’.

As always, attempts to challenge the impervious nature of a border produces an immediate reaction, and Curry’s struggle to gain interpretive control of 1641 did not go unchallenged. Walter Harris, a Laois lawyer and Anglican antiquarian (with a reputation for tolerance and sympathy towards Gaelic culture) quickly responded in the white heat of intellectual battle. In Fiction Unmask’d; or, an Answer to a Dialogue lately published by a Popish Physician (1752), Harris attempted to skewer Curry by revealing the fictional strategies involved in his original intervention: as if he were the host of a masked ball reaching the end of the evening, Harris felt the need to remove the visor from Curry’s face and reveal his true nature. Fiction Unmask’d is not unlike that moment in Neil Jordan’s The Crying Game (1992) when Stephen Rea discovers that the beautiful young woman with whom he had fallen in
love is in fact a man, shocking both Rea (who immediately throws up) and the audience, which has been taken in. Of course, there are always those who claim that they are never duped by transvestism, no matter how elaborate the disguise, and like them Harris insists that he was never taken in by Curry’s trickery, representing himself as a penetrating observer alert to the subtleties of the Catholic faith. For Harris, Curry’s Anglican drag performance was weak and unconvincing from the start. Much of Harris’s response is couched in the terms of a theatre critic who is very unimpressed by the acting talent in front of him, or an anti-theatricalist terrified of the sublimated power of impersonation to transform and change, who insists again on fixity and stability.

Harris complains about Curry’s ‘personation’ and regrets that ‘weak People, believing it to be a real Discourse, must entertain strange Notions of the Protestants’. He later insists that no Protestant would argue the way Curry’s Anglican does. What disturbs Harris most, however, is not really the fact that Curry felt it his right to publicly intervene in the discourse of 1641, an event so central to Anglican mythology that it would be difficult to overestimate its importance. What is more disturbing is that some Anglicans actually bought his disguise, actually found themselves convinced by it. In other words, the threat to the Irish Anglican community comes not from the disguises or the rhetoric of a member of the Catholic community but from the failure of some members of the Irish Anglican enclave to sign up fully to the official interpretation of 1641. The first was a threat from without, one that the Irish Anglicans had suffered periodically over the course of a century; the second was symptomatic of an internal fissure, a division within the self that needed to be healed or rejected.

Some Anglicans were too amenable to the discourse of unmonstering, and Harris is very clear that these Anglicans need to be treated as traitors who have been infected by a Catholic disease – or perhaps, fallen in love with their own destruction. Harris configures those liberal Anglicans as having been seduced by a perverted desire, railing against the ‘infatuation of many who call themselves Protestants. Monstrous Infatuation! when Protestants act a Popish Part’. Curry pretended to be a Protestant; now, Protestants are ‘becoming’ (dressing as, fixated upon, infatuated by) Catholics! Intellectual assent is here configured as a kind of perverted lovemaking; the lovemaking is so intense that two have really become one, and worse, the Anglican Self has been replaced by a Catholic Other, the true self displaced by a false self (in a version of demonic possession). This slippage of identity makes it easier for Catholics like Curry to feel a right to ‘personate’ Anglicans. Curry’s transgression has engendered an era of transgression where identity
becomes fluid and out of control. Like the transvestite who tricks the heterosexual into an act of sexual betrayal, so the denominational cross-dresser who seduces an Anglican into congress with a Catholic through rhetorical seduction.

Harris’s fear is that such a thorough interpenetration of denominational identities is so radical that some will find it difficult to distinguish one from the other. He further warns that such impersonation is not confined to book publication. He claims that during the Scottish rebellion of 1745 several ‘weekly scraps’ written by a ‘Romish priest’ were published under the title ‘Impartial Examiners’. One response to this kind of role playing and theatrical performance of history is a return to the facts, and to ‘true’ identities, but – bizarrely – Harris does not opt for this, and instead continues with a different kind of fiction, one where he too can dress up, and here he decides (logically enough) to impersonate a Catholic. Instead of providing a rational history of 1641 as a rebuke to theatrical revisionism, the reader is given even more dramatic dialogue – this time between a Catholic (clearly intended to be Curry himself) and an extraordinarily knowledgeable Protestant, knowledgeable not merely about the 1641 rebellion but about Catholic/Protestant relations in the round. It must be said that whereas Curry’s Dissenter is remarkably stubborn and finds it difficult to accept anything put forward by his Anglican interlocutor, Harris’s Catholic is a less robust figure who caves in quickly to the arguments amassed by the Anglican. Often his responses to an extraordinarily prolix exposition on the evils of Catholicism are cursory and intellectually passive as if he has been overwhelmed by the subtlety of a far more engaged thinker. Where the real Curry would undoubtedly have entered into a disputatious disagreement with what he had just been told, Harris’s extremely amiable Catholic merely responds, ‘Well, proceed with your Observations.’

Considering the loyal behaviour practised by Irish Catholics in the period, the invective contained in Harris’s pamphlet is extraordinary, but it tells us much about the centrality of anti-Catholicism to Irish Anglican identity, and the dangers posed by any sense that some Anglicans were willing to make an accommodation with these monsters. For Harris, Catholicism is a mental masquerade, a vast theatre of lies and deceptions where ordinary speech cannot be trusted because of the ‘doctrine of Equivocation and mental Restrictions’ (or reservation) where Catholics are permitted to lie, even directly, depending on the intention behind their words. For example, the ability of Curry to impersonate Anglicans comes from the Catholic comfort with impersonation and lies more generally so that Catholics even swear ‘by Double Entendre’.
The traditional accusations against Catholics are trotted out by Harris, although he laces these accusations with considerable bile: Catholicism, or ‘Popery’ is a ‘deformed’ system, whose entire ambition is to ‘enslave the Majority of Mankind’ through its preaching of a series of doctrines opposed to true Christianity, doctrines including Transubstantiation, Auricular Confession, purgatory, the worship of saints, indulgences, the right to depose heads of state, and hundreds of others, and what is required is a cleansing ‘Antidote’ to ‘a Poison, with which some [Irish Anglicans] have been infected’. Catholics are an infectious disease for which Harris has the cure.

Harris argues that the case of Irish Catholics is a special one. Unlike minority populations which could be treated with pity by the ruling elite, Catholics always have to be discriminated against because Catholics are by definition always already disloyal to all non-Catholic authority. Indeed, the discourse Harris is attempting to undermine is, he believes, part of a wider Catholic conspiracy to restore the Pretender: ‘surely such Books were calculated for some expected Season of Conspiracy and Murder’ for which the Gunpowder Plot and the 1641 rebellion stand as models. Regarding 1641, Harris re-confirms that between 40,000 and 50,000 Protestants were killed, and, in response to Curry’s claim that many of the Depositions are inherently untrustworthy because they relate stories of ghosts appearing on Portadown bridge, he affirms that the ghosts did appear since the apparitions have been ‘attested by some many Witnesses of Reputation’. Harris offers here a narrative of an epidemic, sourcing the disease in the Catholic faith and tracing its impact on a host population, Irish Anglicans, who are being turned into zombie-like followers through exposure to such contagious germs. The supernatural support given to Harris’s theory of epidemic links back to a pre-Hippocratic view of diseases as ‘caused’ by the gods, rather than natural occurrences. The satanic origin of the Catholic infection is central to Harris’s argument, as it is a disease which strips the manly Anglican of his identity and replaces it with the identity of the parasite. The problem is that the average Irish Anglican is spiritually weak enough to be open to catching this disease – the Anglican disbeliever was essentially inviting the Catholic to invade and pervert his body. It is also clear that such vulnerability on the part of the Irish Anglican community would be made worse by the divisions highlighted and exacerbated by the Money Bill dispute, and a community divided against itself was sure to fall.

The heightened rhetoric of Harris’s ‘unmasking’ of Catholic theatricality could not prevent the appearance after the Money Bill dispute of a growing constituency of Irish Anglicans which was no longer convinced
that Catholics were evil incarnate – that Catholics were quite simply monstrous – and many of the members of this constituency actually saw the Catholic population as potential allies. The standard interpretation of the 1641 massacre was considered a great obstacle in the way of translating the increasingly friendly relationships between individual Anglicans and Catholics into concrete political change, including the dismantling of the penal laws. This necessitated a rewriting of Irish history from a partisan to what had become known as a ‘philosophical’ viewpoint, by which was merely meant the lack of any apparent subjective or prejudiced position. What was believed to be needed, really, was what is now called ‘Irish revisionism’, an objective, ‘value free’ rewriting of Irish history which would examine controversial episodes from a ‘neutral’ perspective.88

There was certainly a sense of fatigue in the air given the sheer intensity of the historical disagreements and, as Jacqueline Hill explains, ‘everyone (or so it seemed) was waiting for the “philosophical” history of Ireland which would identify the real lessons of Irish history’.89 The agenda was already clear for such a rewriting: the invidious nature of Irish Catholics would have to be neutralised or rebutted and the place of Irish Catholics in the kingdom made much more palatable to Irish Anglicans, who could then, with a clear conscience and without excessive fears for the consequences of such actions, pass the necessary repeals of the penal laws and admit Irish Catholics fully into political life. However, given the reaction to the work of John Curry, it was also very clear that it could not be an Irish Catholic who wrote this ‘new history’, as such a figure would simply lack credibility; what was needed was a believable, moderate, respectable and respected Irish Anglican who could claim the approval of both sides of the religious divide. It quickly became obvious who the right person for such a rewriting would be: Thomas Leland, classicist, historian, and also author of Longsword, another significant text in the emergence of the Gothic in Ireland.

Notes

1. Sean Crenshaw in The Monster Squad, film, dir. Fred Dekker, 1987. Screenplay, Shane Black and Fred Dekker. Poor Sean discovers that, not only are monsters like Dracula and the Mummy very real, but they are planning to take over the world. It is up to him and his band of adolescent monster hunters to stop them.

2. The Borg are an alien intelligence central to Star Trek: The Next Generation (1987–94). They are distinguished not only by their apparently unstoppable drive for power but also by the fact that they have managed to destroy individuality and have become one collective intelligence.
4. For an account of these sermons, see Barnard, ‘Uses of 23 October 1641’; Kelly, “Glorious and Immortal Memory”.
5. This anecdote is told by Charles O’Conor in his ‘Account of the Author’, a prefatory introduction to John Curry’s own Historical and Critical Review of the Civil Wars, iv.
7. For a brilliant study of the freak show phenomenon, see Durbach, Spectacle of Deformity; see also Youngquist, Monstrosities.
10. Carroll, Philosophy of Horror, 27, 28, 32.
11. See Eagleton, On Evil, for the liberal uneasiness with the term ‘evil’, 13–15.
12. For Freud’s theory see ‘The Uncanny’.
13. For an excellent study of the Nilsen case, see Masters, Killing for Company.
18. Freeland, Naked and the Undead, 10–11.
20. de Certeau, Writing of History, 2.
21. Colley, Britons; Tumbleson, Catholicism.
22. Colley, Britons, 11–12.
23. See Miller, Popery and Politics, 82; Kenyon, Popish Plot, 8.
24. ‘Protestants . . . [were] able to produce an image of England as inherently Protestant because Protestantism’s opposite, popery, was inherently foreign’. Lake, ‘Anti-Popery’, 82; Jones, Revolution of 1688, 95.
25. Though Robert Clifton does worry that ‘though the horror and fear felt by . . . Englishmen for Catholicism is a cliché of historical writing, its brutal strength is seldom fully communicated to readers of the present day’. Last Popular Rebellion, 57.
27. Tumbleson, Catholicism, 13–14.
29. The blaming of Catholics for the Great Fire of London was part of a complex affair. Fingers were pointed at many including the French and the Dutch, but in 1681 an inscription was added to the Monument erected to commemorate the Great Fire, an inscription that blamed Papists. See Miller, Popery and Politics, 103. For the annual commemoration of events attached to deliverance from Catholic danger, see Cressy, ‘Protestant Calendar’, 31–52.
30. Colley, Britons, 21, gives illustration. For ‘nationality’ as a subsection of Protestantism, see Clifton, ‘Fear of Popery’.
31. Crawford, Marvelous Protestantism, 104.
32. Ibid., 105–7.
33. For Foxe’s contribution to ‘nation forming’ see Haller, Foxe’s Book of Martyrs. For the idea of England as an elect nation with a singular and privileged destiny, see Lamont, Godly Rule.
34. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 1, 192, 452.
35. Anonymous, Grand Plutus Remonstrance, 4.
36. Colley, Britons, 36.
37. Quoted in Tumbleson, Catholicism, 9.
38. Quoted in Speck, Reluctant Revolutionaries, 235.
41. As one rhyme put it: ‘Their Church consists of vicious Popes, the rest / Are whoring Nuns, and bawdy bugg’ring Priests. / A noble Church! Dub’d with religious Paint, / Each Priest’s a Stallion, every Rogue’s a Saint.’ Quoted in Haydon, Anti-Catholicism, 254.
42. Quoted in Miller, Popery and Politics, 75.
43. [Daniel Defoe], Great Law of Subordination Consider’d, 20.
44. Foucault, Order of Things, 326.
45. See Killeen, Gothic Ireland, 28–54.
48. Downes, Sermon Preach’d . . . the 5th November 1722, 15–16.
49. Ramsay, Sermon Preach’d to the Protestants of Ireland, 52.
50. [James de Dallion], The ax laid to the root, 22.
51. See Backus on Irish Protestantism and child sacrifice. Gothic Family Romance, passim.
53. The best account to give consideration to all of these features is Bartlett, ‘Rise and Fall’, 7–18.
54. Colley, Britons, 325.
55. Haydon, Anti-Catholicism, 164.
56. Ibid., pp. 164–178; also Bartlett, Fall and Rise, 66–8.
57. Haydon, Anti-Catholicism, 164–203.
58. An underlying distrust of Catholicism remains central to British society today – an anti-Catholicism made visible recently in the lead up to the visit of Pope Benedict XVI in 2010. During the weeks leading up to the Pope’s arrival, a particularly startling resurfacing of this submerged current in British history was evident, though now energised by a fashionable version of atheism and a disgust at child abuse scandals.
59. For Catholicism and the Gothic, see Tarr, Catholicism in Gothic Fiction; for a more recent study which argues that the Gothic is in fact rather generous in relation to Catholicism, see Purves, Gothic and Catholicism.
60. For the sheer pervasiveness of anti-Catholicism in British life, see Haynes, Pictures and Popery. For nineteenth-century incarnations of anti-Catholicism see Peschier, Nineteenth-Century; Paz, Popular Anti-Catholicism; Norman, Anti-Catholicism; Wheeler, Old Enemies.
62. Ibid., 6.
70. [John Curry], *A Brief Account . . . of the Irish Rebellion*, 63.
73. [John Curry], *Brief Account*, 1–2.
74. Ibid., 3.
75. Ibid., 4.
76. Ibid., 50–1.
77. Ibid., 47.
78. Garber, *Vested Interests*, 16.
80. Ibid., 15.
81. Ibid., 1.
82. Ibid., 8.
83. Ibid., 3. The terror surrounding ‘mental reservation’ was recently on display again in response to Cardinal Desmond Connell’s explanation of his actions in the investigation of institutional child sexual abuse in the diocese of Dublin. When responding to questions by the Commission of Investigation under Judge Yvonne Murphy (investigating the way allegations of sexual abuse by priests and religious were dealt with by the Dublin Archdiocese from 1974 to 2005), the Cardinal gave completely inadequate and at times misleading answers, which he later justified by invoking ‘mental reservation’. His explanation provoked justified outrage.
84. Ibid., 4.
85. Ibid., 13–14.
86. Ibid., 17.
87. Ibid., 194.
88. Revisionism has had a very controversial history in twentieth- and twenty-first-century Ireland. It supposedly emerged from an attempt to write a version of Irish history which did not reproduce the nationalist tale of ‘faith and fatherland’, but it quickly became accused of perpetuating a colonial view of Irish history rather than providing anything really ‘objective’. On the ‘revisionist controversy’, see Brady (ed.), *Interpreting Irish History*; Foster, *Irish Story*; Boyce and O’Day, *Making of Modern Irish History*.