

(Re)claiming Barbara Baynton's Gothic Creek: An Analysis of Gillian Mears' *Foal's Bread* and Jessie Cole's *Deeper Water*

Alexandra Philp

Queensland University of Technology

Abstract

The creek is a threatening site for women in Barbara Baynton's *Bush Studies* (1902). The female characters in her stories are routinely represented as vulnerable, drowning, or murdered at the creek, and the slippery banks and murky waters have been established by Baynton as an Australian gothic space where women (and their bodies) are denied agency. Gillian Mears and Jessie Cole are two contemporary writers who challenge Baynton's representation of the gothic creek. The female protagonists in their most recent Australian gothic novels, Noah in Mears' *Foal's Bread* (2011) and Mema in Cole's *Deeper Water* (2014), understand the creek as a subversive site that accommodates alternative female corporeal experiences. While Noah in *Foal's Bread* finds body autonomy in her use of the creek as a birthing space for her firstborn child, Mema in *Deeper Water* experiences body empowerment in her use of the creek as a space of sexual awakening. Though the gothic creek is a fearful site for women in Baynton's establishing Australian gothic text, *Bush Studies*, both *Foal's Bread* and *Deeper Water* demonstrate that the contemporary gothic creek is able to (re)negotiated as a site of female body autonomy and empowerment.

Keywords: Baynton, Mears, Cole, Australian gothic, creek, female body, autonomy, empowerment

Introduction

The creek is a dangerous site for women in Barbara Baynton's canonical text of colonial Australian gothic fiction, *Bush Studies* (1902). Though the gothic trope of the vulnerable maiden (Milbank, 2007, p. 155; Turcotte, 2009, p. 128; Martin, 2013, p. 135; Pettee, 2015, p. 25) perhaps ensures that Baynton's female characters are at risk in all gothic spaces, the creek is one site in her stories where the female body is particularly threatened. Within *Bush Studies*, women are routinely represented as murdered, drowning, or fearful at the creek; their bodies are touched, harmed, and considered "object." Within these collected stories, an "early and canonical work" (Stadler, Mitchell, & Carleton, 2016, p. 38) of Australian gothic that offers a "grim realisation and depiction of female suffering in the Australian bush" (Milner, 2013, p. 96), the agency of the female characters' embodiment is either undermined or simply denied.

Baynton's stories reflect not only the gothic "maiden" trope, but also attitudes towards the female body within wider Western ideologies. The creek, with surrounding bushy banks, murky waters, and hidden crevices, is an established site of fear for women within *Bush Studies*. Gillian Mears and Jessie Cole are two contemporary writers whose most recent novels, *Foal's Bread* (2011) and *Deeper Water* (2014) respectively, have challenged Baynton's representation of the creek as a dangerous space. The protagonists of both novels have experiences of body autonomy and empowerment at the creek and, as such, both Mears and Cole push back against Baynton's colonial Australian gothic creek. In doing so, they continue the narrative that Baynton began by articulating—from a female perspective—female experiences of the bush and an alternative to female vulnerability by (re)claiming the contemporary gothic creek as a space of female body autonomy and empowerment.

Representations of the Creek in Baynton's *Bush Studies*

Female vulnerability at the creek within *Bush Studies* derives from a tradition of fear within the wider environment in colonial Australian gothic fiction. Key theorists argue that Australian gothic formed out of a colonial response to the harsh and unfamiliar Australian landscape (Turcotte, 2009, p. 62), and that writers imported and adapted what David Punter refers to as "original gothic" (2013, p.1) tropes, such as those of the uncanny, haunting, and the abject, to their writing in order to explore themes "endemic in the colonial experience" (Turcotte, 1998, p. 10; 2009, p. 18). These themes include isolation, fear of the unknown, and fear of pursuit (Turcotte, 2009, p. 18). While colonial Australian gothic fiction represents the Australian landscape as "threatening" to (nearly) all colonials, within Baynton's stories, it is women who are most at risk. Within "Squeaker's Mate," for example, the female protagonist known only as "Squeaker's mate" is paralysed by a falling tree (Baynton, 1902/2012, p. 14), and within "The Chosen Vessel," a young mother hides inside her hut while a swagman stalks outside, trying to find a way in (p. 119). Clearly, the landscape is always no (safe) place for a woman in Baynton's fiction.

It is Baynton's creek, however, which is represented as perhaps the *most* harrowing and dangerous site for women. In "A Dreamer", the young female protagonist attempts to cross the creek to visit her dying mother. A storm is fierce, and halfway through the water the girl "clutched a floating branch, and was swept down with it. Vainly she fought for either bank. She opened her lips to call" (Baynton, 1902/2012, p. 8). Here, the creek denies female navigation. She fights to reach either bank, and is no longer insistent on reaching her mother: only safety. The protagonist is terrified and drowning, and the creek seems to actively prevent her seeking help, as demonstrated by the line, "a wave of muddy water choked her cry" (p. 8). Though water drowns her voice, the reader understands that even if the woman had managed to cry out, her effort would be fruitless and heard by no one. The creek denies the body function of screaming—of speaking at all—by filling her mouth with muddy water. The creek silences the woman's voice: an action symbolic of the lack of autonomous female experiences within the gothic creek space of Baynton's stories.

To return to "Squeaker's Mate," Squeaker's new mate refuses to collect water from the creek due to a population of poisonous snakes hiding in the reeds (p. 29). Similarly, in "The Chosen

Vessel,” as previously mentioned, the young mother hides inside her hut while a swagman stalks outside. Upon hearing a horseman ride past, the woman flees into the bush. At the creek, however, she is murdered by the waiting swagman (p. 121). In both stories, the creek clearly holds threats for women; threats that women are all too aware of. The phallic image of the waiting snakes in “Squeaker's Mate,” along with the swagman in “The Chosen Vessel” indicate what Leigh Dale (2011) has already noted about the creek in Baynton's stories; that although the creek “roars out of control,” the space “is not itself dangerous, but is the hiding place of a would-be-murderer” (p. 373). The creek itself does not harm the female character, but is the site of her demise. The notion that the creek is not inherently hostile echoes what has “been widely acknowledged by a number of commentators” (Tilley, 2009, p. 38), that the “Australian bush is not literally an antagonistic or uncanny space,” but the danger is instead “a white Australian cultural construct” (2009, p. 38). Baynton's representation of the gothic creek, then, must be questioned. If the creek is not inherently dangerous, why has it been continually represented as threatening to women within her fiction?

Considering the Australian gothic landscape is nearly always “imagined as a passive feminine space” (Scott & Biron, 2010, p. 310), it is perhaps not surprising that the creek is prescribed an identity of particular risk for women within Baynton's *Bush Studies*. The “feminine landscape” (Schaffer, 1988, p. 22) within Australian gothic texts—a construction which recalls the common understanding of “land as mother earth within a Western European discourse” (1988, p. 22)—harbours spaces that represent femininity more than others. The creek, with its obvious association with fluidity, is one such space.

There is a long, contested relationship between notions of the female body and notions of fluidity within Western discourse. The mind–body dualism, for example, links masculinity to the mind and femininity to the body. The male body, therefore, is (falsely) represented as contained (Longhurst, 2001, p. 2) within Western society, and the man is able to transcend the corporeal and enter the conceptual order. The woman, however, is bound to her leaky, uncontrollable, and unreliable body: a misogynistic representation that provides the secondary social position of women with a “convenient self-justification” (Grosz, 1994, p. 14). Longhurst argues that women “seep” menstrual blood, vaginal discharge, and breast milk, rendering the boundary between the internal and external body unstable (2001, p. 2). Such fluidity is eminent within the gothic trope of “abject.” According to Julia Kristeva, the abject broadly refers to bodies whose boundaries have become liminal or porous, and who disrupt the illusion of a “whole” body (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). The “leaky,” uncontrollable female body is clearly one such example. The woman and her bodily functions, therefore, are represented as inherently abject in a way that the man and his bodily functions are not. The female body openings from which such abject functions protrude, like the mouth and the vagina, are parts of the body that Mikhail Bakhtin names “grotesque” (1968, p. 136). The woman, then, learns from an early age that her body is “fundamentally flawed” (Hartley, 2001, p. 60); she is inescapably abject and grotesque. As such, the female body is often a source of self-hatred and shame (Hartley, 2001, p. 60; Johnson & Moran, 2013, p. 10). Though all women experience categorization as “abject” and “grotesque,” the bodies of women who identify as LGBTQI+, non-white,

overweight or underweight, disabled, elderly, or who are unable to reproduce are considered doubly “flawed” by Western patriarchy.

As it is common in Western (patriarchal) discourse to teach women to fear their “leaky” and “uncontrollable” bodies, by placing women in danger at the creek, Baynton’s gothic stories may well inadvertently suggest that her female characters must be afraid of the “threat” of their own bodies. The creek, though “fluid” and “leaky” like the female body, offers no refuge and no empowerment. The harm and demise of women at Baynton’s creek suggests that women cannot (and should not) be comfortable and autonomous in their own “feminine” space. For women in *Bush Studies*, their sex is the greatest danger.

The “rushing” (Baynton, 1902/2012, p. 6) creek in “A Dreamer” is especially harrowing, then, because the creek is known to the female protagonist. Just as a woman knows her own body, the protagonist has grown up with the landscape. By daylight, she knows the creek, the “Bendy Tree”, and the tree that looks like “Sisters” (p. 4). During a storm and at night, however, the creek is unknowable and dangerous to the protagonist. The creek—a metaphor for the female body—is a familiar space that the protagonist is unable to rely on. However, just as the creek harbours danger but is not itself dangerous in Baynton’s stories “Squeaker’s Mate” and “The Chosen Vessel,” the creek also has the potential to provide an alternative narrative for the female protagonist in “A Dreamer.” The harrowing creek, quick to drown the protagonist, just as quickly converts to comforting and assisting her across the waters:

Then a sweet dream-voice whispered “Little woman!”

Soft strong arms carried her on. Weakness aroused the melting idea that all had been a mistake, and she had been fighting with friends. The wind even crooned a lullaby. (Baynton, 1902/2012, p. 9)

Baynton’s creek “threatens to take and then gives life” (Dale, 2011, p. 373). The female character struggles to move through the antagonistic creek, but is then helped to cross by the creek itself. Such contradictions demonstrate that the creek is not a fixed space in Australian gothic fiction. The creek can be transformed from a space harbouring danger, a hostile border unable to be crossed, to a space that is able to be navigated and survived. This notion manifests in contemporary Australian gothic fiction. While the creek is a frightening space for women in Baynton’s colonial Australian gothic text, characters within contemporary texts such as Gillian Mears’ *Foal’s Bread* and Jessie Cole’s *Deeper Water* find the creek to be a site of refuge, autonomy, and empowerment for their “abject” body experiences.

The Creek as a Site of Body Autonomy in Mears’ *Foal’s Bread*

Though the creek is the site of a difficult experience in Mears’ *Foal’s Bread*, ultimately the creek accommodates empowered corporeal experiences for the female protagonist, Noah. The contemporary gothic novel is set during the early to mid-twentieth century in Wirri, rural New South Wales, and centres around the Nancarrow family of One Tree Farm. The creek on the property—Flaggy Creek—is established as a site of (complex) female autonomy early in the narrative through Noah’s experience of giving birth in the creek itself.

As Noah is pregnant at fourteen, her body is considered especially abject. Not only is her pregnant body seen as “leaky” and “out of control”, but her youth ensures that her corporeality is abound in contradictions and therefore defies a pure, “whole” body (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). As Gail Reekie suggests, the pregnant teenager is “youthful but physiologically mature; childlike yet maternal; innocent while sexual; the object of both compassion and censure” (1997, p. 77). Noah’s “abject” body defies conventional ideas of maternity and motherhood and, in colonial Australian gothic texts such as Baynton’s, would be vulnerable to feelings of shame if not to physical danger at the creek. In Mears’ contemporary text, however, Noah’s “abject” body is not only safe but also autonomous throughout her birth experience within the space.

Noah and her father stay a night on One Tree Farm in order to complete their job herding pigs. Soon after her father and his drovers have left for the night to drink at “shanty” (Mears, 2011, p. 9), Noah experiences the first signs of labour. Her pregnancy is a product of rape by her (recently deceased) Uncle Nipper, and her birthing experience is as secretive and isolating as Nipper’s continuous sexual abuse. As Noah begins to give birth, she moves from their creek-side campsite to further “along the creek’s beach” (p. 10). When “water began to stream out from between her legs” (p. 10), Noah sits in the creek bed itself. The creek is a space where her internal body functions—“shit and blood” (p. 10)—are able to pass into the external as comfortably as possible, and where she is able to “halt the blood” by sitting in the cold water after the birth (p. 16). For Noah, the creek is a space where she is able to take care of herself. The creek is at once a birth space and a postnatal space; consequently, Noah does not have to ask others for help or reveal her pregnancy at all. This allows Noah to have hold sole agency in decisions about her birth experience and of what to do with the baby.

Though Noah originally plans to drown the baby, she instead decides to place the baby (alive) in a butter box and watch him follow the current of the creek. The creek accommodates Noah’s choice to leave her baby: a reminder of her continuous sexual abuse. Though Noah had no choice in her pregnancy (or sexual experiences), the creek allows Noah to reclaim autonomy in giving her choice about the birth. Many spaces in Noah’s life were not safe for her: she experienced Uncle Nipper’s sexual abuse in the bush, in her house, in rooms while her father slept in the room next door (Mears, 2011, p. 323). The creek, then, is perhaps the first space where Noah experiences body autonomy. However, such a choice also results in the creek harbouring alternative associations. As Jopi Nyman suggests, Flaggy Creek is also “a trope of memory” (2014, p. 400) throughout the novel that reminds Noah of her firstborn. The choice of what to do with the baby is not as facile as Noah expected, and though she feels “[a] kind of triumphant relief” (Mears, 2011, p. 15) after her choice, she is continually haunted by the baby regardless:

for the rest of her life she’d be watching Flaggy Creek spinning that baby away from her, the fast waters making it disappear like a little bend-and-flag pony that’s forgotten to take the final turn. (Mears, 2011, p. 15)

Flaggy Creek haunts Noah and is often associated with an event that is partly horrific to her. The event, however, also acts as a positive reminder. Her birth experience:

added to [Noah's] fearlessness. All that blood. All alone but for porkers, and never come close to dying. To have punched off the one that would've et the bub. What could ever be scary again? (p. 28)

Her birthing experience in the creek empowers Noah to continually trust in her own strength and perseverance, particularly in regards to the strength of her body when she is competing as a show jumper (Mears, 2011, p. 28). Though the emotions surrounding her birth experience are complex, the decisions of the birth were strictly Noah's and have empowered the way she considers her body. Although haunting, then, Flagggy Creek may still be considered a space that accommodates (in fact, facilitates) Noah's body autonomy.

Towards the end of the novel, when Noah is an adult and her own daughter Lainey is a young teenager, the creek is almost transformed into a site made all too familiar in Baynton's gothic fiction. Uncle Owen, the brother of Noah's mother-in-law Minna, attempts to rape Lainey on the creek bank. Such abuse mirrors Noah's own experience of sexual abuse as a young teenager and would ensure that the creek becomes (remains) a dangerous site for females and their bodies. Upon seeing Uncle Owen attack Lainey, Noah rides to the creek bank and cracks a whip in the air to scare Uncle Owen and force him to leave the creek. Such a harrowing event echoes representations of the creek within Baynton's stories, and particularly within the "The Chosen Vessel": while the creek itself is not dangerous, it harbours immense danger. Lainey's attempted rape, however, occurred on the creek bank and not in the creek water. The water itself, the place of Noah's birth experience, remains a safe place of female body autonomy.

It is important to note that, apart from animals, Noah was alone while she gave birth in the creek. The creek enabled Noah to (as previously noted, perhaps for the first time) gain autonomy in a corporeal experience, while Lainey's body was threatened when Uncle Owen entered the creek space. This reflects what is suggested within Baynton's establishing Australian gothic fiction: the immense danger harboured at the creek is in fact male violence towards women, a thought suggested by Susan Barrett who argues that within Baynton's stories "the real danger comes not from the bush but from the men who inhabit it" (2003, p. 3). Baynton's stories "Squeaker's Mate" and "The Chosen Vessel," along with Lainey's creek experience, lead to a harrowing notion: if women are denied bodily agency at the gothic creek when men are present in the space, can women in Australian gothic fiction only find empowering body experiences when alone? Jessie Cole's *Deeper Water* (2014) is one contemporary text that pushes back against this notion. Cole's protagonist, Mema, experiences body empowerment at the creek both alone and with a male present, and as such, provides another alternative narrative for female protagonists in contemporary Australian gothic fiction.

The Creek as a Site of Sexual Awakening in Cole's *Deeper Water*

Some would argue that Cole's *Deeper Water* (2014), a somewhat coming-of-age narrative, is too far removed from the established use of Australian gothic tropes for the text to be considered "gothic." Though Cole does move away from the use of all key Australian gothic

tropes, I argue that the text is gothic in that it engages with the themes of female entrapment and suppressed sexuality: ideas inherent within gothic traditions (Wallace, 2013, p. 19). Gothic itself, of course, is a genre difficult to define (Turcotte, 2009, p. 37), and Cole's text provides a contemporary (re)use of the established gothic sensibility.

Unlike in *Foal's Bread*, the creek in *Deeper Water* is a site of exclusively female bodily empowerment. The creek is neither dangerous nor harbouring danger and does not carry alternative dominant meanings for the protagonist, twenty-two year old Mema. Raised by her mother and older sister Sophie, Mema's older brothers have left their remote hinterland property while Mema has stayed behind, content spending time with her best friend Anja in the landscape that she knows.

Throughout the novel, the creek is established as the site of Mema's sexual awakening. The novel begins with heavy rainfall that results in the creek flooding; imagery that suggests the shift and change that is about to occur in unworldly Mema. Mema is out in the rain to help her cow, Bessie, give birth, though she rescues Hamish, an environmental consultant from an undisclosed city, when he tries to cross the flooding creek in his car. This unexpected meeting is the catalyst, though by no means the method, of Mema's sexual awakening. The creek continues to be a central figure in Mema's growing intimacy with Hamish: they go "creek riding" (Cole, 2014, p. 65) together using body boards when Hamish is stranded on the property, and they paint each other's faces using the wet colour from creek rocks. As Mema's desire for Hamish grows, she expresses this by imagining the sensuality the creek can offer her:

I thought of diving into the cool waters of the creek, of its icy softness engulfing me, of being enveloped in its velvet touch. I imagined the creek as endless, shimmering, the water stretching out before me like a silver ribbon. I could drift without air forever, sliding with the current. Beneath the surface, I was free. (Cole, 2014, p. 105)

For Mema, the creek is not a site of fear but of potential pleasure. Mema's sexual experience is furthered by her kiss with Anja, and as she has sex (for the first time) with Billy. After losing her virginity, Mema decides to lie in a grassy field alone and guides herself to her first orgasm. Mema uses creek imagery to arouse herself; she imagines "the water hole, and all the pockets and crevices of the creek bank" (Cole, 2014, p. 246) and "All those secret hollows" (Cole, 2014, p.246). The creek, and fluidity, is (re)constructed by Mema as sensual, pleasurable, and positive: "Sitting in the rain, quenched and dripping, I threw back my head and laughed" (Cole, 2014, p. 247).

The following morning, as Mema lies in bed, she thinks of her own sexuality, of "all of the ways [she] could have [her] own pleasure" (Cole, 2014, p. 249), rather than thinking of Billy or Hamish. When considering what may arouse her, Mema returns to imagining the creek. She "thought about the places in the creek . . . where it was soft and pliant under [her] feet, and how, if [she] sat in the shallows, the pebbly soil would shape itself to [her] form, accommodating [her] like the palm of a giant hand" (Cole, 2014, p. 249). In Mema's imagination, the creek yields to her body and cradles her form. Cole's choice of the words "soft" and "pliant" suggest that the creek is able to shift to suit Mema's needs. The creek space is able to be (re)negotiated to serve Mema's sexuality and body pleasure. Mema is active in

this process, where her decision to sit in the shallows forces the creek to shift, to “shape itself” (Cole, 2014, p. 249). This, along with Mema’s attention to her *own* sexuality, transforms the gothic creek from a threatening site as represented in Baynton’s stories to a site that accommodates and articulates Mema’s growing sexual empowerment.

The creek continues to be an erotic site for Mema throughout the narrative. The second and third time Mema and Billy have sex, Mema chooses to be with Billy at the creek. Within these sexual experiences, Mema reaches orgasm first and also chooses the way they engage with sex to benefit her own sexual preferences. The creek remains a site of sexual empowerment for Mema: a place where she determines her own pleasure. Mema’s continuous reference to the creek when articulating her desire and sexuality ensures that the creek, along with fluidity (and the connotations of femininity and the female body), is reclaimed as a positive site. Such positive, pleasurable experiences also ensure that Mema’s body is never represented as “abject.” Mema, not only having a (“leaky”) female body, also has a club foot. Her corporeality, by Western patriarchal standards, embodies such gothic notions of the “abject.” Mema’s fantasies of the creek, and by extension of her body and sexuality, are empowering and thereby associate notions of fluidity and Mema’s body with pleasure and autonomy rather than with shame.

Though Mema experiences sexual pleasure and empowerment alone, she also experiences sexual pleasure with Billy. Mema’s actions suggest that she has agency in these shared experiences: when Billy suggests that they go to the shack for their second time having sex, Mema decides to take Billy to the creek instead (Cole, 2014, p. 253). As well as Mema choosing the location, she also guides Billy to engage with her in ways that would be pleasurable. This direction results in Mema reaching climax before Billy. Mema’s confident autonomy in her sexual experience with Billy suggests that Mema regards her own sexual enjoyment as equally important to Billy’s. Unlike in *Bush Studies* and *Foal’s Bread*, where it might be suggested that women struggle to have safe corporeal experiences at the creek when men are present, Mema enjoys body empowerment while a man (Billy) shares the space. Perhaps such an experience is possible because *Deeper Water*, as previously suggested, moves away from the established binds of Australian gothic. Mema’s experience of the creek as a site of sexual awakening suggests that by loosening other established Australian gothic tropes, the tendency for female vulnerability at the creek also slackens. In what ways, then, could *all* bodies be safe and carry agency at the creek in more strictly “gothic” texts? Future research would inevitably have to ask: In Australian gothic fiction, must the safety, empowerment, and autonomy of female and non-binary bodies be sacrificed for the body autonomy of males? Can all bodies simultaneously find empowerment in the Australian gothic creek, or does one always have to demonstrate sovereignty?

The creek as represented in Barbara Baynton’s colonial Australian gothic text *Bush Studies* (1902), and in the contemporary Australian gothic texts *Foal’s Bread* by Gillian Mears (2011) and *Deeper Water* by Jessie Cole (2014), is undeniably a problematic space. Though the creek has been established a site harbouring danger for females in Baynton’s stories, both *Foal’s Bread* and *Deeper Water* offer the creek as a site of body empowerment. The use of

the gothic creek for Noah's autonomous birth experience and for Mema's sexual awakening disrupt Baynton's canonical representation of the harrowing Australian creek, and suggests that the vulnerable maiden trope is not obligatory in a contemporary Australian gothic narrative. This is not to suggest, however, that Baynton's stories are lacking or insignificant. Baynton importantly placed female subjectivity into Australian gothic landscape, but her female characters were ultimately let down by the established spaces and structures surrounding them. Mears and Cole continue the narrative Baynton began by questioning the ways in which the contemporary gothic creek could positively (re)neogitate female corporeal experiences. Though Baynton's established practices of the Australian gothic construct the creek as a dangerous site, the paradoxical nature of the gothic genre is ideal for accommodating alternative and subversive representations of the creek in contemporary texts Australian gothic texts.

References

- Bakhtin, M. (1968). *Rabelais and his world* (H. Iswolsky, Trans.). Massachusetts, MA: The M.I.T. Press. (Original work published 1965).
- Barrett, S. (2003). No place for a woman? Barbara Baynton's bush studies. *Journal of the Short Story in English*, 40(Spring): 2-8. Retrieved from <http://jsse.revues.org/293>.
- Baynton, B. (2012). *Bush studies*. Melbourne, VIC: The Text Publishing Company. (Original work published 1902).
- Clarke, M. (1990). *For the term of his natural life*. North Ryde, NSW: Angus & Robertson. (Original work published 1874).
- Cole, J. (2014). *Deeper water*. Sydney, NSW: Fourth Estate.
- Dale, L. (2011). Rereading Barbara Baynton's bush studies. *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 53(4), 369-386. doi: 10.1353/tsl.2011.0020.
- Gelder, K. (2007). Australian gothic. In C. Spooner and E. McEvoy (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to gothic* (pp. 115-123). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Genz, S. (2007). (Re)making the body beautiful: Postfeminist Cinderellas and gothic tales of transformation. In B. A. Brabon and S. Genz (Eds.), *Postfeminist gothic: Critical interventions in contemporary culture* (pp. 68-84). doi: 10.1057/9780230801301.
- Grosz, E. (1994). *Volatile bodies: Towards a corporeal feminism*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Hartley, C. (2001). Letting ourselves go: Making room for the fat body in feminist scholarship. In J. E. Braziel & K. LeBesco (Eds.), *Bodies out of bounds: Fatness and transgression* (pp. 60-73). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Johnson, E. L., & Moran, P. (2013). Introduction. In E.L. Johnson & P. Moran (Eds.), *The female face of shame*, (pp. 1-22). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Kristeva, J. (1982). *Powers of horror: An essay on abjection* (L. S. Roudiez, Trans.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. (Original work published 1980).
- Lindsay, J. (1967). *Picnic at hanging rock*. Melbourne, VIC: Penguin Books.
- Longhurst, R. (2001). *Bodies: Exploring fluid boundaries*. London, UK: Routledge. Retrieved from <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/ezp01.library.qut.edu.au>
- Martin, D. (2013). Feminine adolescence as uncanny: Masculinity, haunting and self estrangement. *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 49(2), 135-144. doi:

- 10.1093/fmls/cqs067.
- Mears, G. (2011). *Foal's bread*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Milbank, A. (2007). Gothic femininities. In C. Spooner and E. McEvoy (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to gothic* (pp.155-163). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Milner, J. (2013). Australian gothic soundscapes: The preposition. *Media International Australia*, 148 (August): 94-106. doi: 10.1177/1329878X1314800111.
- Moers, E. (1976). *Literary women*. Garden City, KS: Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- Nyman, J. (2014). Gillian Mears's foal's bread as postcolonial pastoral: Land, humans, and animals. *Orbit Litterarum*, 69(5), 390-410. doi: 10.1111.
- Pettee, L. G. (2015). *Terra australis incognita: A geocritical analysis of Australian gothic literature* (Masters dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global (1754615452).
- Punter, D. (2013). *The literature of terror: A history of gothic fictions from 1765 to the present day* (2nd ed.) [EBL version]. Retrieved from <http://reader.eblib.com.au>
- Reekie, G. (1997). History and the bodies of the illegitimately pregnant woman. *Australian Feminist Studies* 12(25), 77-89. doi: 10.1080/08164649.1997.9994842.
- Schaffer, K. (1988). *Women and the bush: Forces of desire in the Australian cultural tradition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Scott, J. & Biron, D. (2010). Wolf Creek, rurality and the Australian gothic. *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 24(2), 307-322. doi:10.1080/10304310903576358.
- Stadler, J., Mitchell, P., & Carleton, S. (2016). *Imagined landscapes: Geovisualizing Australian spatial narratives*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Tilley, E. (2009). The uses of fear: Spatial politics in the Australian white-vanishing trope. *Antipodes*, 23(1), 33-41. Retrieved from <http://search.informit.com.au.esp01.library.qut.edu.au/fullText;dn=200909394;res=ELAPA>
- Turcotte, G. (1998). Australian gothic. In M. Mulvey-Roberts (Ed.), *The handbook to gothic literature*, (pp. 10-19). Hampshire, UK: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Turcotte, G. (2009). *Peripheral fear: Transformations of the gothic in Canadian and Australian fiction*. Brussels, Belgium: P.I.E Peter Lang.
- Wallace, D. (2013). *Female gothic histories: Gender, history and the gothic*. Retrieved from: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qhbt8.1>