

Gothic Architecture, Sexuality, and License at Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill

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You will express yourself in your home whether you want to or not.—Elsie de Wolfe, *The House in Good Taste*, 1913¹

The New York interior designer's famous proclamation might serve as a warning to all patrons of domestic architecture and interiors. Its admonitory message applies particularly to "eccentric" men of taste, such as Horace Walpole (1717–1797), whose life and home, the neo-Gothic villa called Strawberry Hill in Twickenham, near London, have been subject to sustained critical attention from his own day to the present. The house's design and decoration emerged from close collaboration within his coterie of male friends between about 1747 and 1777, particularly the designers John Chute (1701–1776) and Richard Bentley (1708–1772), and a number of prominent architects, including Robert Adam (Fig. 1). Adopting the cheeky schoolboy moniker the "Strawberry Committee" or, latterly, the "Committee of Taste," Walpole, Chute, and Bentley built a house that offered a profoundly new vision of the Gothic as an architectural style and a historical idiom.² Encasing a small seventeenth-century house within several additions, Strawberry Hill's fabric seems imprinted with an ancient architectural history, modeled on England's heritage of late Gothic religious and seignorial architecture (Fig. 2).³ Emulating the stone construction of medieval Gothic architecture in plaster, wood, and papier-mâché and incorporating medieval spolia in stained glass and other media, the interiors and their furnishings perform a series of formal and material transpositions. In Walpole's words, they "pretend . . . to be an observance of the *costume* [of the Middle Ages], even in the furniture," thus underlying his overtly ornamental and sensory interpretation of the Gothic (Figs. 3, 4).⁴

But Strawberry Hill was more than simply a building project over which a famous patron and his friends lovingly obsessed. It was a complex, carefully constructed, and very public projection of Walpole himself, as Elsie de Wolfe intimates. Intrinsic to the house was the collection of art and objects that Walpole amassed for it throughout his life, many of which are medieval or allude to the medieval past as he understood it, including arms, armor, stained glass, *ars sacra*, and Tudor portraiture. Walpole promoted his home and collection as a major stop on the tourist route of London houses and advertised it in the first illustrated account of an English house in his book *A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole* of 1774 (revised and reprinted 1784). A group of representations across paintings and graphic works playfully juxtapose Walpole's body with Strawberry Hill, not simply as the setting for his literary and artistic pursuits but as a personification of its patron (Fig. 5). The relationship between patron and building can now be usefully understood as a doubling of Walpole's self: a projection of Walpole's ego that was a subject of his narcissistic desire, while also ensuring his

immortality after his death. Not only did he frequently allude to his house as a lover to whom he was singularly faithful,⁵ thereby enacting the central trope of narcissism, but he often joked that his architectural self would leave as little to posterity as his physical self ("I am no poet, and my castle is of paper, and my castle and my attachment and I, shall soon vanish and be forgotten together!").⁶ The symbiotic relationship between Walpole and Strawberry Hill was a dominant mythology of the house in the eighteenth century: a harshly partisan critique, for example, called it "a picture of the master's mind" in which there was "nothing great," however filled with "elegant knowledge" and presented with "superior polish and amusement."⁷

Critical inquiry on Strawberry Hill culminated in its recent and ongoing restoration, the 2009–10 exhibitions at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, and the accompanying catalog published by Yale. With this in mind it might reasonably be asked whether Horace Walpole, Strawberry Hill, or his appraisal of the Gothic required further research at this point. Notably absent from the recent catalog, however, is consideration of the aesthetic consequences of Walpole's sexuality and that of the "Committee of Taste": what has been called their "shared sexual subjectivity" as it applied to art and architecture.⁸ This is notable, because considerable attention has been recently paid to the homoeroticism of Walpole's letters, the interrelations of his homosocial companions, the language of epistolary exchange they shared, and the "queer" poetics of his literature—particularly his 1764–65 novel *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story*.⁹ The aesthetic consequences of Walpole's sexuality for the design of Strawberry Hill were hinted at in a few paragraphs of Timothy Mowl's rich, if controversial, 1996 biography *Horace Walpole: The Great Outsider*, a book that is not cited in the recent catalog. In a few short paragraphs, Mowl discusses Walpole's "homosexuality" as the ever-present but largely overlooked or ignored key to understanding his aesthetics. Walpole's employment of the Gothic becomes a statement of his "high camp defiance of normal conventions," thus emphasizing his denial of the Palladian idiom, which was employed in no less significant an architectural statement than his father's estate at Houghton Hall, Norfolk, designed in 1722 by Colen Campbell (Fig. 6).¹⁰ As the "plaything" of the wayward son of Britain's first prime minister (Sir Robert Walpole), Strawberry Hill becomes "a large Gothick 'closet' to which Walpole could sometimes retire when he wished to express his true persona to intimate friends." Mowl gives "cautious consideration" to the possibility that Gothic may have had a specific appeal for queer patrons and viewers in the eighteenth century as part of a "deliberate rebel counter-culture" and to Walpole and his circle of self-proclaimed "Goths" in particular.¹¹ Mowl's thesis has been criticized by historians of literature who



1 Horace Walpole and others, Strawberry Hill, view from the south, 2012 (artwork in the public domain; photograph © The Strawberry Hill Trust, provided by Nicholas Smith)

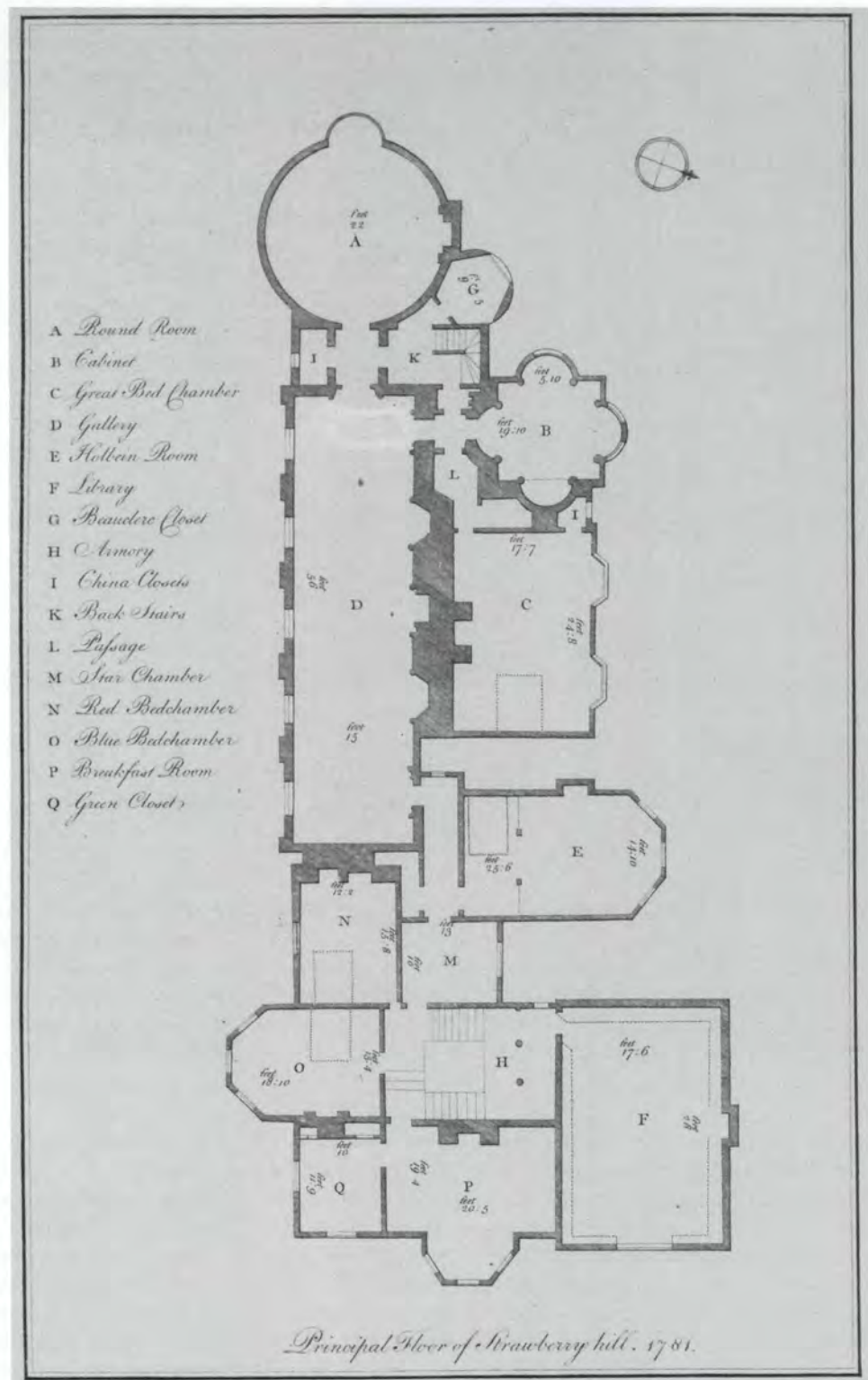
rightly noted the inappropriate application of contemporary sexual categories and terminologies to the eighteenth century.¹² But, to date, historians of architecture have not responded to his thesis, despite a wealth of criticism on the relation of gender and sexuality to domestic architecture in the early modern period.¹³

Architecture and Sexuality

In returning to the complex relationship between architecture and sexuality at Strawberry Hill, I begin with the observation that the revival of the Gothic as a “new” mode of architectural design was paralleled and informed by new formulations of human sexuality that emerged in England around 1700. What were called the “modern styles” of architecture, embracing the new Gothic and Chinese styles (*chinoiserie*), constituted a self-conscious challenge to the authority of the antique mode and were characterized by Walpole as the new “liberty of taste.”¹⁴ The “modern styles” in architecture and the decorative arts coincided with, and were informed by, the formation of a new category of male sexuality, which in some respects anticipates the modern category “homosexuality.” Historians of sexuality broadly agree that this new category emerged in England in the years around 1700 that was defined by sexual desire by men for men, in contrast to earlier constructions of sexuality, structured by age (intergenerational sexuality) or by a more fluid bisexuality. The new, intersexual category was viewed as neither male nor female but a new, third sex, a categorization based in part on the perception of a mixture or corruption of genders: the adoption of “female” manners rendered males effeminate, a regular adjective for men of the third sex.¹⁵ The

new codifications of sexuality were subjects within a broader debate about corporeality and the gender and propriety of form that significantly inflected critical writings on the human body and architecture and informed analogies between them.

As a new building type that progressively populated the suburbs of London throughout the eighteenth century, the villa was a focus for these critical debates. Built in the new Gothic or Chinese styles—or a perverse mixture of both—these buildings were critiqued in the popular press and in satiric prints. Signifying the “degeneracy of our national taste,” the modern villa is pictured as a lamentable sign of the times that reflected greater social changes in the eighteenth century, namely, an aspiring nouveau riche class of patron, his affected and effeminized lifestyle, and the new forms of sexuality to which it was often related.¹⁶ All of these factors were positioned to contrast with the modes and manners of a “true” aristocracy from the generation preceding.¹⁷ Writing in the *World* in 1753, one author sardonically advises, “If one wished to see a coxcomb expose himself in the most effectual manner, one would advise him to build a villa; which is the chef d’oeuvre of modern impertinence, and the most conspicuous stage which folly can possibly mount to display herself to the world.”¹⁸ Besides being a very public emblem of self-fashioning (or “exposure”), the villa is in particular a locus of novelty, an architecture that emblemizes the perceived degeneration and corruption of eighteenth-century life. It is the product of the coxcomb, a new category of narcissistic, effeminized masculinity, which included the “macaroni,” fop, or dandy and men of the third sex. In this critical context, the modern villa becomes a product of, or



2 Plan of the Principal Floor of Strawberry Hill, 1781, from Horace Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole*, Twickenham: Strawberry Hill Press, 1784, engraving, 13 × 8⁷/₈ in. (33 × 22.5 cm) (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

even analog for, modern male sexualities, including the third sex.¹⁹

Emerging as new “modes” in the eighteenth century, the Gothic style and the third sex were connected in the minds of some contemporary critics and patrons of architecture, and both were understood as new phenomena that threatened to undermine the social order, reversing long-standing value systems in British culture.²⁰ Although it has eluded architectural historians, the association of Walpole’s sexuality with his

architectural tastes has a long history in critical accounts of Walpole’s life and oeuvre during his time and afterward, from George Hardinge’s 1813 ascription of the “whim and foppery” of Walpole’s architectural tastes as products of his “nature” (Hardinge’s emphasis) to Thomas Babington Macaulay’s caustically homophobic attack on Walpole’s “diseased and disorganized mind” (1833) that produced a “grotesque house [decorated] with pie-crust battlements.” Macaulay developed an elaborate analogy between the appar-



3 John Carter, *The Tribune at Strawberry Hill*, ca. 1789, watercolor, $23\frac{1}{4} \times 19\frac{1}{2}$ in. (59.2 \times 49.5 cm). The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 789.00.00.73dr++ (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

ent flimsiness of Strawberry Hill (and, thus, its character as a simulation) and Walpole's physical and sexual self: in all of Walpole's endeavors, according to Macaulay, Walpole wore "a mask within a mask," but "his real tastes perpetually show themselves through the thin disguise."²¹ Subsequently, the effeminacy or "queerness" of eighteenth-century "Rococo Gothic" (to use Kenneth Clark's label) has been addressed in code, as in Chris Brooks's view that during the eighteenth century Palladianism was "subverted by the naughty curves of the rococo style" or Michael Hall's description of the "Gothick" idiom as "light, frivolous, witty, and even slightly naughty," all epithets that were certainly applied to Walpole in his lifetime and afterward.²²

It might be said that the very formalist paradigms of English architectural history have worked against an understanding of Strawberry Hill's sexual resonances. Architectural historians have pursued archaeological and stylistic analysis of the fabric or have focused on the prosopographical issues of the authorship of, or sources for, individual aspects of the house by the Strawberry Committee.²³ Also, the place of Strawberry Hill as the fountainhead of the Gothic Revival has,

from even before Charles Eastlake's influential study (1872), tended to guide readings of it as a false start for the Gothic Revival, a "not Gothic enough" version of the archaeologically correct simulations of medieval design that began to be produced in the years around 1800.²⁴ Positioning Strawberry Hill within a teleology of the Gothic Revival has served to reinforce constructions of its "whimsical theatricality," its status as a clever if amateur play on the Gothic, almost by its very nature as being "early." This has tended to divert critical attention from the house's startling novelty, or "modernity," as Walpole would have it. A further problem is the subject's inherent interdisciplinarity. Strawberry Hill and Horace Walpole's construction of the Gothic now belong equally to the disciplines of art and architectural history, the history of collections, literary studies (the Gothic novel), medievalism, and eighteenth-century studies in general. As students in these fields have long understood, Walpole was an interdisciplinary medievalist *avant la lettre*, whose mutually informing Gothic texts have a common temporal and thematic location in his historiography, and they demand to be treated as such. By far the most significant and compelling interpretative



4 Edward Edwards, *Staircase at Strawberry Hill Showing the Armoury*, 1784, pen and ink and wash, $8\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$ in. (21.9 × 17.6 cm), from Walpole's extra-illustrated copy of *A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole*. The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 49 3582 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

work on Walpole's conception of the Gothic—particularly as it relates to the history of sexuality—has been done by historians of literature, who have concentrated on relations between Walpole's architecture and historiography or between his Gothic architecture and literature. The study of Walpole's Gothic thus demands careful interdisciplinary synthesis that accommodates ideas and methodologies from disciplines outside the history of art.

Horace Walpole's "Gothic"

Strawberry Hill was only the most visible manifestation of Walpole's enthusiasm for the Gothic. Contemporary with the building of the house in the 1750s through the 1760s, Walpole was actively engaged with a reciprocal project of mythologizing the Gothic in his art criticism, letters, and literature as an architectural style and as a historical idiom. Strawberry Hill was an integral component of this developing conception of the Gothic, and its construction and decoration served as a performance of its various tropes.²⁵ Through his architecture and writing, Walpole actively reshaped the con-

ception of the Gothic from a debased architectural style from a "middle age" in the tradition of Giorgio Vasari's influential myth of the Gothic as a style of northern barbarians (popularized in England by John Evelyn, 1620–1706, and Christopher Wren, 1632–1723), to a privileged historical style fit for revival in the present.²⁶ This movement involved a conscious reframing of the medieval past, a reversal of the values and historiographical conventions of contemporary Neoclassical art criticism. Most troubling to its contemporary audiences, the revival of the Gothic confronted the Enlightenment idea of historical progress and signaled something deeply disruptive to the conception of an "enlightened" present. Articulated by Walpole as a lost past of physical and political freedom or "liberty" prior to the perceived strictures of a sanitized, "enlightened" present, enthusiasm for the Gothic implied mourning for a lost past.²⁷ As Susan Stewart has argued, eighteenth-century revivals of anachronistic forms (what she calls "distressed" forms) expose the "gap between past and present as a structure of desire. . . . We see the structure of desire as the structure of nostalgia; that is, the



5 Richard Bentley, frontispiece to *Memoires of King George II*, n.d. (unpublished), pen on paper, 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (28.9 × 17.2 cm). The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, MS vol. 152 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

desire for desire in which objects are the means of generation and not the ends."²⁸

Despite the prevalence of Gothic architecture across Walpole's writings, he published only one statement of its history and meanings in his art criticism: his remarkable chapter "The State of Architecture to the End of the Reign of Henry VIII," in his seminal art historical text *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (1762–71), which earned him the label "England's Vasari."²⁹ Here he constructs the Gothic as the central phase in a history of English architecture that began in the reign of Henry III (1216–72) and continued through (and even beyond) the reign of Henry VIII (1509–47).³⁰ Walpole's construction of the Gothic period as a golden age of art and aesthetics that terminated with the reign of Henry VIII and the Dissolution of the Monasteries was an inheritance from Elizabethan and Stuart historians such as William Camden (1551–1623), John Stow (1525–1605), Henry Spelman (1562–1641) and, particularly, William Dugdale (1605–1686), whose

work Walpole knew well.³¹ Walpole not only read and employed the wisdom of Dugdale's texts (*The Antiquities of Warwickshire*, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, and *The History of St. Paul's Cathedral in London*), but he was also to use Wenceslaus Hollar's accompanying engravings as models for a number of Gothic installations (such as fireplaces and chapels) at Strawberry Hill, thereby "imprinting" (to use his verb) this vision of the Gothic on the interior of his home (see below and Figs. 16, 21).³² Writing in the wake of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, which saw the break with Rome and the rise of the Protestant Church of England, Dugdale and his contemporary antiquarians were, like Walpole and many of the "Goths" in his circle, sympathetic to the aesthetic and sensory character of Catholicism, even if few publicly confessed to be "Papists."³³ Considering the Dissolution to be an "unparalleled catastrophe" that "arrested the stream of English life" through the destruction of much of the nation's heritage in religious art, they elided the Gothic with Catholicism as aesthetic/religious emblems of a glorious phase of English art and spirituality.³⁴

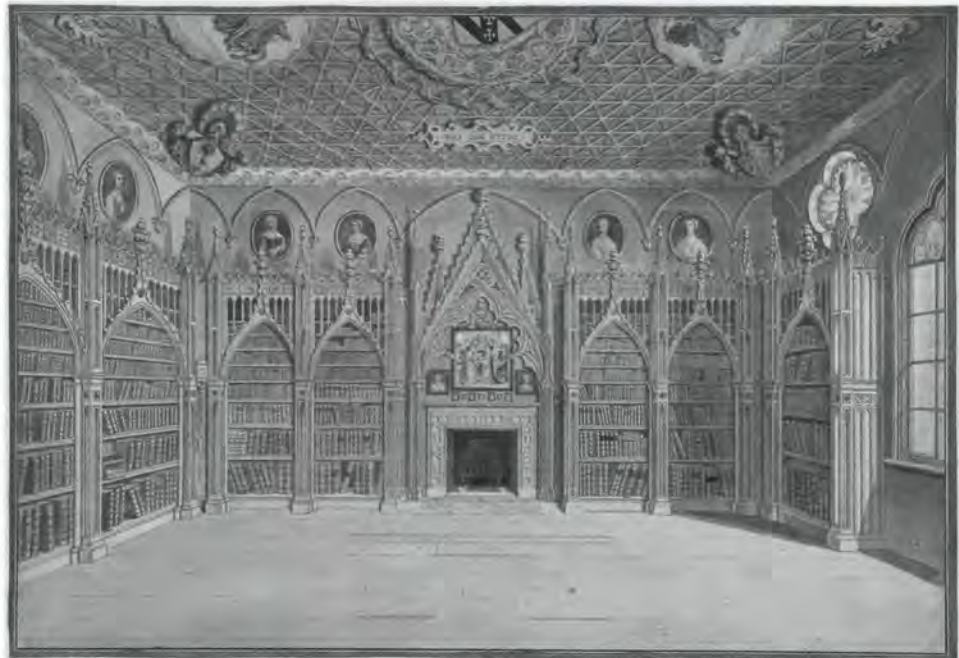
Emphasizing the aesthetic dimension of medieval Catholicism and minimizing its dogmatic aspects, Walpole transformed this Elizabethan-Stuart political narrative into Enlightenment art history by regarding the Gothic as a period of freedom, elegance, and ornamental extravagance that existed between two periods of repressive, ascetic classicism: the "Saxon," or Romanesque, and the "Grecian," or Neoclassical.³⁵ For Walpole, the pointed arch, the signature feature of the Gothic for eighteenth-century commentators, is an "improvement" on the heavy, round-headed arches of the classical tradition. Walpole celebrates, as many would in the eighteenth century and beyond, the apparent "lawlessness" of the Gothic and its exemplification of artistic and social freedom, or "liberty," as Walpole would have it.³⁶ Framing the advent of classicism in sixteenth-century English architecture as a "reform" of Gothic, Henrician classicism is elided with broader social "reforms," notably, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the resulting destruction of much of England's Gothic art. "Reform" in Walpole's *Anecdotes* is figured as an oppressive force of traditional morality, which he compares to the physical fridity of Siberia and the political tyranny of Nero. Signaling the end of "true Gothic," which he implies is possible only in an environment of religious and social freedom, these reforms gave way to a mixed or "mongrel Gothic," which continued until the final death of the style with the Puritan Revolution or English Civil War of the seventeenth century. These replaced an "Arbiter elegantiarum" with a "Censor morum."³⁷ Leading to the present age of "enlightenment" (or "reform"), the classical or Neoclassical becomes an agent of social control and a model of aesthetic and corporeal repression. Walpole's preference for the "unreformed," libertarian character of the Gothic is decisively manifest in the style of his house and in its notation: his motto (borrowed from his namesake, the Roman poet Horace), painted on the library ceiling of Strawberry Hill, featured in his graphic works: *Fari quae sentiat* ("Say what one feels") (Figs. 5, 7, 22).

Typical of the political contours of Walpole's historiography, artistic style is a reflection of the political character of its period, leading to an integrated, moral reading of the history

6 Colen Campbell, *Elevation of the South Front of Houghton Hall in Norfolk*, 1723, from Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, 3 vols., London, 1715–25, vol. 3, 33 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the author)



7 Edwards, *The Library at Strawberry Hill*, ca. 1781, watercolor, pencil, and pen and ink on laid paper, $12\frac{1}{4} \times 17\frac{7}{8}$ in. (31 × 45.3 cm). The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 781.00.00.45dr (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)



of art.³⁸ Walpole broadly understood the Glorious Revolution of 1688 to signal a return to political and artistic freedom that allowed for the revival of Gothic architecture (despite the fact that the style would not be revived for a generation) and other arts such as landscape gardening. Informing Walpole's writing was the Whig tradition of Gothic liberty, which located the freedom of Britons from monarchical absolutism in the "ancient Gothic constitution" of the Saxons that was confirmed in the signing of the Magna Carta.³⁹ Walpole was to emphasize this association through the display of a copy of the Magna Carta and the death warrant of Charles I in his bedchamber at Strawberry Hill.⁴⁰ He explored this trope in his letters to comic effect and not, perhaps, without double entendre: writing to his favorite cousin, Henry Seymour Conway (with whom he had a lengthy emotional and possible

romantic attachment), in 1755, he speaks of "Strawberry Castle, where you know how I love to enjoy my liberty. I give myself the airs, in my nutshell, on an old baron."⁴¹ Walpole does not define precisely what "liberty" means, but he hints at an aesthetic and possibly erotic subtext. This may justify Macaulay's view that his political appraisal of the Gothic was double-edged: his "whiggism . . . was of a very harmless kind," which he kept "as he kept the old spears and helmets at Strawberry Hill, merely for show."⁴² The association of Gothic architecture with political freedom had been well established in a number of important Gothic building projects preceding Strawberry Hill, including William Kent's Merlin's Cave at Richmond (1736) and James Gibbs's Gothic Temple of Liberty at Stowe (1741).⁴³ Although couched within a familiar Whig pattern of history, Walpole developed the idea of Goth-



8 Carter, *The Entry of Frederick into the Castle of Otranto*, 1790, pen and black ink with gray and blue watercolor, 23¾ × 19¾ in. (60.2 × 50.3 cm). The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 790.00.00.138dr+ (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

ic's liberty, or "freedom," to extend beyond politics to embrace a wider range of sensory, erotic, and emotive states of being.

In *Anecdotes of Painting*, Walpole juxtaposed the emotional and libidinal "freedom" of Gothic architecture and its effect on the viewer with the rational appeal of classicism ("Grecian" architecture) to "sensibility" and "taste" in a number of antitheses:

It is difficult for the noblest Grecian temple to convey half so many impressions to the mind, as a cathedral does of the best Gothic taste. . . . the latter exhausted the knowledge of the passions in composing edifices whose pomp, mechanism, vaults, tombs, painted windows, gloom and perspectives infused such sensations of romantic devotion. . . . One must have taste to be sensible to the beauties of Grecian architecture; one only wants passions to feel Gothic.⁴⁴

Gothic's appeal—both as a period and as a style—lies in its appeal to the senses and the imagination: it is a style of aesthetic excess, sensory enrichment, and libidinal pleasure in contrast to the purely intellectual attraction of classicism. Here, as elsewhere in his writings, Walpole's perceptions of architecture were guided by contemporary associationism: the triggering of a range of associations in the viewer's mind when gazing on a work of architecture.⁴⁵ This inherently

subjective interpretative apparatus—which locates pleasure within the individual rather than within the work of art—was manifestly central to Walpole's design and perception of architecture. He illustrates this through an elaborate comparison between St. Peter's in Rome and Westminster Abbey in London:

In St Peter's one is convinced that it was built by great princes—In Westminster-abbey, one thinks not of the builder; the religion of the place makes the first impression—and though stripped of its altars and shrines, it is nearer converting one to popery than all the regular pag-eantry of Roman domes.⁴⁶

Walpole thus alludes to the Gothic's apparent power to convert and persuade, something that is antithetical to classicism's oppressive adherence to formal "rules." Able to "convert one to popery," the Gothic thus appeals to an alternative erotic subjectivity. Walpole's friend Thomas Warton developed this parallel division of styles with erotic states of being in his 1782 poem "Verses on Reynolds's Painted Window at New-College." He is enticed from his acceptable, "chaste" love of classicism by the Gothic's "treacherous hand" that does not "spare the weakness of a lover's heart" for "ravished pleasures."⁴⁷ As literary critics have recently shown, eroticism and particularly illicit sexuality was a dominant motif of the Gothic and one that Horace Walpole was instrumental in shaping.⁴⁸

Walpole's elision of the Gothic with libidinal and emotional freedom has an important context in Enlightenment art historiography in which "freedom" is not solely or principally political in meaning but signifies a broader physical and cognitive condition. In this sense, *Anecdotes of Painting* can be compared to Johann Joachim Winckelmann's directly contemporary *History of Ancient Art* (1764), in which "freedom" operates as an elaborate and multifaceted euphemism to convey the values of artistic cultures of the past. Alex Potts and Whitney Davis have shown that Winckelmann's *History* coded his own homoerotic *aisthēsis* behind or within the history of Greek art, in which freedom served as a perceived model of "social-sexual organization."⁴⁹ In his art historiography Walpole similarly explores the topos of the Gothic's liberty (or "freedom") with a tinge of irony to implicate the aesthetic and the sexual. But if eroticism exists as one of the possible imbrications of meaning for the Gothic in the context of Walpole's "official" art history, the erotic aspect of the Gothic—as a broader historiographical idiom rather than as an architectural style—was displaced to his Gothic fiction.

Most significant in this context is his contemporary 1764–65 novel *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story*. Using the term "Gothic" for the first time to describe (and invigorate) a new literary tradition, Walpole invites cross-disciplinary study of his Gothic texts (although few architectural historians have followed his lead). Set in Italy during the twelfth or thirteenth century, the story begins after an ancient regicide when Manfred, the unofficial "prince" of Otranto, attempts to marry off his effeminate son Conrad to continue his family's hold on the principality. The plot unravels with the return of the rightful heir, Theodore, but not before, in what must be one of literature's great non sequiturs, Conrad is

crushed to death by a gigantic helmet that suddenly falls from the sky into the courtyard. Initiating a central trope of Gothic fiction, the main protagonist in the novel was the Gothic castle itself. Significantly, Walpole was clear that the literary castle was based on Strawberry Hill: he called his house "my own little Otranto" and he developed a range of conceits to reinforce the double identity of his home (for instance, by calling himself "Master of Otranto").⁵⁰ He also staged various objects within Strawberry Hill to reinforce this association for the viewer, including John Carter's drawing *The Entry of Frederick into the Castle of Otranto* (Fig. 8), which hung in the Little Parlour. The novel was, as Walpole confirmed, an associationist response to Strawberry Hill, a fantasy of the Middle Ages inspired by his house's fictive Gothic interiors and collection. Within the mechanics of associationism, the story provides us with a useful guide to the kinds of things that Walpole imagined might take place within (or be normalized by) a Gothic setting.

Literary critics have shown that *The Castle of Otranto* and the eighteenth-century Gothic novel as a new literary mode thematized sexual alterity through transgressions of social and sexual binaries. For this reason incest, sexual violence, and same-sex desire feature centrally as "queer" reversals of established sexual decorum within the medievalizing narratives of the Gothic novel.⁵¹ Walpole claims to have written the novel as an antidote to the constraints of contemporary culture (which certainly implicates sexuality), in which "the great resources of fancy have been dammed up, by a strict adherence to common life."⁵² As George Haggerty and others have argued, *Otranto* and its progeny in the Gothic genre relocate unsanctioned erotic fantasy from the eighteenth-century English present to a Catholic, medieval (and frequently foreign) past.⁵³ Walpole's novel, of course, does not focus overtly on same-sex desire; rather, it is addressed in code. Centered around the perversions of male effeminacy and the threat of public exposure, *Otranto* has been understood as "a cipher for how the dynamics of contemporary homophobia operated in its movement towards denigrating both the feminine and the effete."⁵⁴ Located within "the long labyrinth of darkness" of a Gothic castle, Walpole's Gothic architectures—the castle in *Otranto* and Strawberry Hill—introduced a trope of the Gothic in which architecture (the castle, the monastery, and so on) served as the setting or repository for alternative social and sexual relations.

Walpole's construction of the Gothic enjoyed an important spiritual and political context in England's Catholic past or the Continent's Catholic present.⁵⁵ Understood as a subversive "other" mode of spiritual and political allegiance within Protestant England that was anachronistic and/or decisively foreign, Catholicism and its perceived excesses were connected explicitly with sexual license. A rich satiric tradition across literature and prints in the eighteenth century puts lascivious monks and wayward nuns engaging in sexual acts within Gothic monasteries and castles (notably, "nun" had a double meaning as "prostitute" and "nunnery" as "brothel" in the period).⁵⁶ Catholicism and same-sex desire were especially "marked by a history of tropological substitution and interimplication" for contemporary audiences.⁵⁷ Catholic Italy, considered "the Mother and Nurse of sodomy," was widely understood to have transformed the sexualities of

aristocratic travelers during the grand tour (of whom Walpole and his friends were examples), thereby "importing" homosexuality into England.⁵⁸ As Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has argued, the artistic connoisseurship acquired by many gentlemen on the grand tour, tastes for foreign theatrical performance (notably the "Barbarous and Gothick" Italian opera), effeminacy, and an inclination toward Catholicism were features that clustered around an emerging concept of "homosexuality" for aristocratic men.⁵⁹

Although he referred to himself as a "Protestant Goth" and a strain of anti-Catholicism runs through his writing, a romantic appreciation of Catholicism and the aesthetic pomp of the Catholic rite nevertheless formed a part of Walpole's and the Strawberry Committee's aesthetic appreciation of Gothic art and architecture.⁶⁰ "I like Popery as well as you, and have shown I do," Walpole claimed to his friend Rev. William Cole, "I like it as I like chivalry and romance. They all furnish one with ideas and visions which Presbyterianism does not. A Gothic church or convent fills one with romantic dreams."⁶¹ Walpole playfully allegorized Strawberry Hill as a Catholic shrine ("A Gothic Vatican of Greece and Rome," borrowing his wisdom from Alexander Pope's *Dunciad*), and he was clear that aspects of its interiors were intentional approximations of the splendor and "gaudiness" of medieval Catholic art, with "all the glory of Popery."⁶² Here Walpole references the Tribune or "chapel" (Fig. 3)—a quasi-liturgical space that featured a collection of Catholic liturgical *ornamenta* (an altar, altarpiece, and candlesticks) beside a range of homoerotic objects such as a sculpture of Antinous, the famed lover of the emperor Hadrian, a "sleeping hermaphrodite between satyrs" (notably, "hermaphrodite" was a contemporary term to describe the third sex), and a miniature representing Ovid's Salmacis and Hermaphroditus—a central myth of sexual corruption—given to Walpole by his friend John Chute.⁶³

Erotic fascination with Catholicism was explored through performance and impersonation in Walpole's circle. Walpole, Chute, and George Montagu conducted a faux mass at the Wyne, Hampshire, with ancient mass books and incense, and had "a most Catholic enjoyment of the chapel there"; elsewhere, Walpole recounts dressing Conway in an old helmet found in a parish church in Hertfordshire, thereby relocating his erotic desire into the Catholic or Gothic past: "you can't imagine how it suited him, how antique and handsome he looked, you would have taken him for Rinaldo [from Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, 1581]."⁶⁴ This context is significant for understanding Walpole's Gothic villa, which is composed of quotations from Catholic religious architecture, and his collection of artifacts, many of which derive from the Gothic/Catholic past. It also informs his coy naming of Strawberry Hill as an "abbey" (or "convent") of which he was the "abbot." Walpole's friend Richard (Dickie) Bate-man (of whom more will be said below) employed the same trope for his Gothic "Priory" at Old Windsor, and this trope would be reimagined by William Beckford as "abbot" of Fonthill Abbey a generation later.⁶⁵ For Walpole and his circle (to paraphrase Ellis Hanson), beneath the cowl of Catholic monasticism was a cult of homoerotic community.⁶⁶

Homoerotic cultures were not the only ones that exploited the monastic Catholic trope of the Gothic in the period. The



9 Attributed to John Donowell, Entrance to the "Hellfire Caves," West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, 1752 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the author)

Gothic's Catholic and particularly conventual associations served as a guise for the performance of overtly heterosexual license at the former Cistercian abbey at Medmenham and the estate at nearby West Wycombe (Buckinghamshire) under Sir Francis Dashwood in the 1750s and 1760s. The members of Dashwood's "Hellfire club" indulged in their illicit, orgiastic exploits in Gothic guise as the "Medmenham monks," under the cloak (literally) of a comic and anticlerical medievalism.⁶⁷ The "mock celebration of the more ridiculous rites of the foreign religious orders among the Roman Catholics," to cite one member's description, extended to the company of "nuns" (prostitutes) to entertain the monks.⁶⁸ Their sexual exploits took place in Gothic architectural settings, including the Cistercian monastery itself and the so-called Hellfire Caves at West Wycombe that were entered via a fictive Gothic church facade erected in 1752 (Fig. 9).⁶⁹ The Medmenham monks remind us that the historiographical construction of the Gothic up to the reign of Henry VIII as a period of sexual freedom was not unique to Horace Walpole. On visiting Medmenham, Walpole noted that the chapter house featured a genealogy of the kings and queens of England, but the image of Henry VIII, who dissolved the monasteries, was deliberately erased, implying the continuation of a sexual tradition of "monastic" life.⁷⁰ The comparisons with Strawberry Hill extend to the tongue-in-cheek motto employed throughout Medmenham, *Fay ce que voudras*, or "Do what you will" (from François Rabelais's *Abbey of Thélème*), an allusion to sexual liberty that echoes Walpole's own *Fari quae sentiat*.

A "clear division between religious and secular motives" has been sensed in Walpole's crypto-Catholicism,⁷¹ yet both of these features can be reconciled within his broader, erotic appraisal of Catholicism and the Catholic rite.⁷² As Patrick R. O'Malley has recently argued, Catholicism may itself have an important place in the development of modern British sexualities. As alternative and illicit identities within Protestant England, Catholicism and "homosexuality" not only shared common tropes of introspective investment, homosocial brotherhood, the sensory pleasure derived from the unveiled

male form, and "the elaborate stagecraft of ritualism [in which] they celebrated the effeminate effusions of the dandy,"⁷³ but Catholicism as a minoritized subjectivity may also have provided a model for the discourses that constructed a modern "queer" subjectivity epitomized by the "closet" (conveniently, the term "closet" shares a Latin root with the term "cloister"). O'Malley's work may provide a useful model in which to understand the quasi-devotional appeal of the Gothic and its Catholic connotations for Walpole and his circle.⁷⁴

The broader, interdisciplinary perspective sketched out thus far illuminates the ethical and aesthetic agenda behind Walpole's "revival" of the Gothic as an architectural style and the sexual/libidinal emotions that it signified. For Walpole, the Gothic represented a lost erotic past, characterized by freedom from sexual "norms" and freedom from artistic and sociopolitical stricture, two features that form part of a common approach to his aesthetics. Walpole's Gothic becomes a discourse on modernity's prehistory, and particularly on the aspects of human culture that have been lost or erased for modernity to be put into place.⁷⁵ Although Walpole would be hesitant to admit it, his Gothic was very much an Enlightenment construct: his eroticized historiography of the Gothic was consistent with the contours of contemporary art historiography in general, in which aesthetic judgment and (homo)-erotic desire, or artistic *aisthēsis* and sexual *aisthēsis*, were part of the same approach to the phenomenological world and can be paralleled in contemporary writings of Winckelmann, Joseph Addison, and others.⁷⁶

The Licentiousness of Gothic: Bodies and Buildings

Although focused on the Gothic of the Middle Ages up to the reign of Henry VIII, Walpole's theory also paved the way for a positive interpretation of the revival of the Gothic as a new style of eighteenth-century architecture. He addressed this directly, stating: "*Gothic architecture*, inflicted as a reproach on our ancient buildings in general by our ancestors who revived the Grecian taste, is now considered by a species of modern elegance" to be positioned against the values of the older, established, classical mode.⁷⁷ Employing a biological metaphor, Gothic reenters eighteenth-century culture as a new "species," characterized as "genteel" and with "grace" and "refinement."⁷⁸ Walpole suggests that the Gothic, or the "modern style," is representative of the new modes in the eighteenth century (the "new liberties of taste"), which positions it among various new phenomena, including new modes of sexuality to which it is related.⁷⁹

But Walpole's voice was one of many in the debate over new architectural styles. For traditionalist critics in Augustan England, the novelties of the effeminized, third-sex body and modern Gothic architecture signaled degenerations of models of ideal form, the first in the aristocratic gentleman and the second in Palladian classicism. This debate was epitomized in a posthumous critique titled simply "Strawberry Hill" (1818), in which an anonymous author interrogates the psychosexual origins of Walpole's tastes in art and architecture and compares them with his father's tastes for the Palladian at Houghton (Figs. 1, 6):

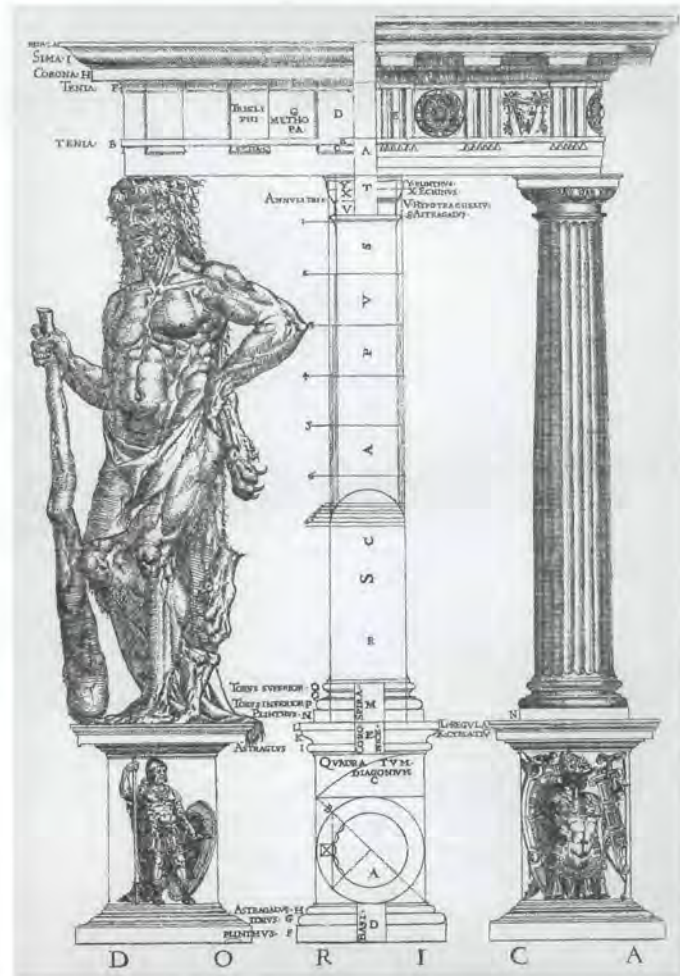
His father distinguished himself as a lover of the arts, by the Houghton collection. . . . [Horace] Walpole may,

therefore, be supposed to have inherited a portion of that taste which he cultivated, though in a less elevated course. Nor shall we pretend to determine whether it proceeded from the structure of his mind, the consequent habits of his life, or his physical constitution, which was naturally weak, that his pursuits, though not without taste and elegance, had little of masculine energy or mental capaciousness. If the catalogue of the Houghton pictures were compared with that of the Strawberry Hill curiosities, the minds of the two noble collectors would be distinctly determined.⁸⁰

Our author here reads Horace Walpole and his tastes for the Gothic as weak, effeminized versions of Sir Robert Walpole and his Neoclassical tastes at Houghton. Lacking “masculine energy or mental capaciousness” and possessing a body that was “naturally weak,” Walpole is the subject of a common homophobic trope of mental and physical degeneracy or weakness as a code for homosexuality, the “consequent habits of his life.”⁸¹ In this reading, the apple had fallen too far from the tree: Sir Robert’s Palladianism at Houghton was consonant with aristocracy, patriarchy, and the political and moral authority of the British Empire, while his son’s taste for the Gothic became the product of his queerness, an aesthetic and corporeal degeneration of his father’s muscular Neoclassical example.

Walpole’s appraisals of the Gothic, and those of his critics, were informed by a lengthy and multivalent discourse on the propriety and gender of architectural form initiated by the Roman author Vitruvius, much of which was based on direct analogy between architecture and the human body.⁸² Within this essentially ethical discourse, the orders became figured as human “types,” and their deviations from canons of design served as analogues for bodily deviations from established modes of conduct. For the influential theorist John Shute (d. 1563), for example, the muscularity of the Doric order was compared with Hercules, since both possessed the virtue of fortitude (Fig. 10), while for Henry Wotton the elaborate Corinthian order is “lasciviously decked like a Curtezane,” thus interpreting the plastic enrichments of the capital as an expression of the wantonness of the Corinthians (1624).⁸³ Within this context, classicism served as a model of the ideal aristocratic body based on the tenets of symmetry, proportion, harmony, and decorum. As Inigo Jones famously stated, classicism was to be “masculine and unaffected” in its external propriety, a sentiment echoed throughout eighteenth-century architectural theory.⁸⁴ Bodies and buildings in the classical mode were characterized by a decorous reduction in exterior ornamentation, by corporeal control and architectonic stability. Eliding morality with physical or decorative restraint, the body-building analogy in the classical mode may be understood as an episode in the formation of the English “stiff upper lip.”⁸⁵

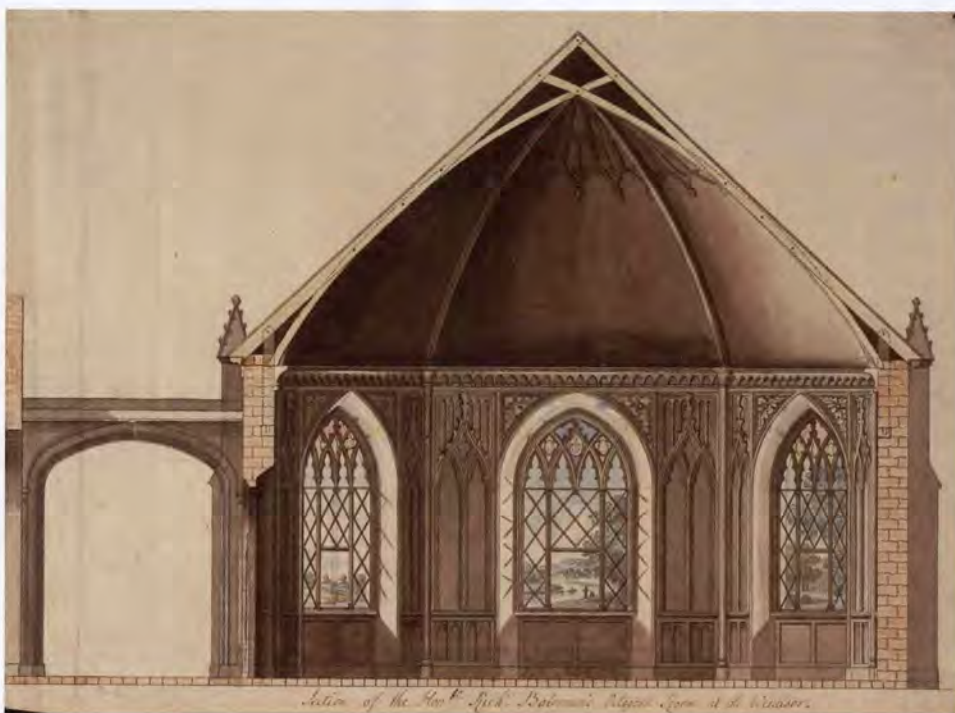
The eighteenth century saw the introduction of a range of highly topical nuances in this discourse that were positive reflections of the changing sexual climate. Writing in his text *The Polite Philosopher; or, An Essay on that Art which Makes a Man Happy in Himself and Agreeable to Others* (1734), James Forrester argued that “Behaviour is like Architecture, the Symmetry of which pleases us so much, that we examine not into



10 John Shute, *Dorica*, from Shute, *The First Chief Grounds of Architecture*, 1563, reprint, London: Gregg Press, 1912 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the author)

its Parts, which if we did we should find much Nicety required in forming such a structure.” Forrester shifts from prose to poetry to develop an elaborate comparison between the “polite” human body and classicism, in particular, Inigo Jones’s Palladian Banqueting Hall in London.⁸⁶ Forrester’s elaboration of the Vitruvian analogy was a new theorization indebted to eighteenth-century transformations in aesthetics. As Anthony Vidler has shown, the early eighteenth century witnessed a revision to the Vitruvian body-building analogy that advanced what he has called “a more extended bodily projection in architecture” inspired directly by the aesthetics of the sublime.⁸⁷ This shift is epitomized by Edmund Burke’s (1729–1797) replacement of the precise formal analogy between architecture and the human body with a complex psychological analogy between architecture and the various *states* of the body, both mental and physical, and, by extension, psychosexual.

The revival of the Gothic in the eighteenth century as an architectural style demanded that it be located and rationalized within this tradition. Conceived of as an “other” to classicism, the Gothic naturally assumed a range of associations related to femininity or sexual alterity.⁸⁸ In an important passage evaluating the corporeality of the classical and the Gothic, Walpole contrasts “the rational beauties of regu-



11 Johann Heinrich Müntz, *Section of the Honble. Rich. Bateman's Octogone Room at Old Windsor*, 1761, ink and wash on paper, $8\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{3}{8}$ in. (21.5 × 37 cm). The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, Folio 75 M92 761 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

lar architecture [classicism], with the unrestrained *licentiousness* of that which is called Gothic."⁸⁹ While Walpole employs the term "licentiousness" to describe physical and aesthetic freedom from moral censorship elsewhere in *Anecdotes of Painting*,⁹⁰ his reference here is to an established topos of architectural theory in which the terms "licentiousness" and "license" formed part of an ethical critique of deviations from "proper" antique form.⁹¹ Although he wore his learning lightly, Walpole was an attentive student of architectural history, and he knew well that in the historiography of the Gothic, "licentiousness" was the most common pejorative employed in commentaries on the style by Wotton, John Evelyn, Christopher Wren, and others. They derided the Gothic as a "fantastical and licentious Manner of Building," focusing in particular on its ornamental character, defined by "crinkle-crinkle," "not naked of gaudy sculpture, trite and busy carvings" and "not Worthy of the Name of Architecture."⁹² The deviations articulated by license were gendered as feminine or effeminate elaborations of or to "proper" antique form. Similar critiques were advanced by Englishmen about the foreign and equally deviant forms of the Continental Baroque. In the *Vitruvius Britannicus* of 1717, Colen Campbell raged against the effeminate ornamental excess of the Continental Baroque compared to the restraint of English classicism, calling it "affected and licentious," an art that "has endeavored to debauch Mankind with his odd and chimerical beauties."⁹³ For Campbell and for Walpole, the ornamental additions of the indigenous Gothic and the Continental Baroque not only were deviations from "ideal" form but they also amounted to a kind of effeminate drag: an ornamental perversion of the architectural body itself. Always the contrarian, Walpole appropriates license as a positive critique of the Gothic, thus turning this critical tradition on its head. In doing so, Walpole alluded to broader changes of taste and corporeality that extended beyond the sphere of architecture. It is not a coincidence that *license* and *licentiousness* were

used contemporaneously to describe effeminate deviations from heteronormative male conduct, most conspicuously, homosexuality, in a range of cultural productions, from law to fashion and theater.⁹⁴ In theater as in architecture, theatricality and ornamental excess threatened established conceptions of decorum, raising the specter of sexual difference, sodomy, and queerness.⁹⁵ Posing a fundamental challenge to Augustan aesthetics and its gendered paradigms, Walpole's "licentious/ness" registered as a double entendre—a comment on bodies and/as buildings.

The elision of the licentious modern styles with the bodies and manners of the third sex is evidenced in a number of contemporary critiques of architecture. The house of Walpole's friend—and rival arbiter of taste—Dickie Bateman at nearby Old Windsor (the Priory) is a case in point. Rebuilt in the Gothic mode of Strawberry Hill from 1758 by Walpole's designers, Johann Heinrich Müntz and Richard Bentley, it was a statement of the Gothic as the dominant taste within Walpole's circle (Fig. 11).⁹⁶ In two contemporary accounts, the character of the house is likened to a specific caricature of male homosexuality: the "fribble," which was satirized as a new sexual "type" in print and on the contemporary stage (Fig. 12).⁹⁷ Defined by his attenuated domesticity, prissiness, and flamboyant manners, the fribble may be understood to anticipate the "queen" in contemporary constructions of homosexuality. In 1759 Lord Lyttelton characterized the fussy rococo hybridity of the house as "half Gothick, half attack, half Chinese and completely fribble," while in 1768 Mrs. Delany used the same term to convey the effect of the Gothic-Chinese library of the house (no longer extant): "his library is indeed as *fribbish* as himself, and so furnished with looking glass that had it the property of representing to him his inside as well as outside, it might read him a better lesson than he could find in his whole collection of books, and shew him his own insignificance."⁹⁸ Identifying the house with Bateman's own "fribbish[ness]," Lyttelton and Delany unam-

biguously allude to it as an embodiment of this particular sexual type, a translation of its manners and mores into architectural form, an "extended bodily projection" of the fribble into the built environment.

Significantly, Walpole was also called a fribble and his tastes in architecture were labeled fribblish in a homophobic attack on Walpole's affections for Gothic architecture and his "fribble tutor" in taste (perhaps Thomas Gray or Bateman himself).⁹⁹ As Haggerty has recently suggested, "the effect of the house [Strawberry Hill] was indistinguishable, even in his own mind at times, from his own personal affect."¹⁰⁰ Given this history, we do not risk imposing contemporary sexual categories on Walpole's villa by considering it a supremely defiant statement of architectural self-fashioning (or self-"exposure," to paraphrase contemporary critiques). Walpole's construction of Strawberry Hill as an "extended body," to use Jill Campbell's phrase¹⁰¹—what he understood to be a complex projection of his sexual subjectivity—was challenged in 1764 with the publication of William Guthrie's *Reply to the Counter Address*, which exposed Walpole's love for his cousin Conway. This bitter attack critiqued Walpole's effeminacy ("by nature malish, by disposition female") and equated him with a chimerical creature—a hermaphrodite.¹⁰² Writing in a fit of despair to Thomas Pitt, Walpole states, "You know the passion I have for Strawberry Hill, but trust me, at this moment I know I could with pleasure see it sold, if reduced to it by suffering for my country and its principles."¹⁰³ Walpole's outing resulted in a radical if temporary "masculinization," by which he devised to make himself "more manly" (Walpole's words), which meant severing his ties to the subject of the 1764 critique, his "queer" or feminine self, which Walpole specifically connected to his Gothic villa.¹⁰⁴ Not unlike the destruction of the castle at the climactic end of *The Castle of Otranto*, to which the letter has been compared, Walpole's public outing deflates the fantasy of Strawberry Hill as a safely disguised projection of his erotic self, so much so that his "real" self and his architectural self became distanced from his newly masculinized self-image.¹⁰⁵

Parody, Replication, and Miniaturization at Strawberry Hill

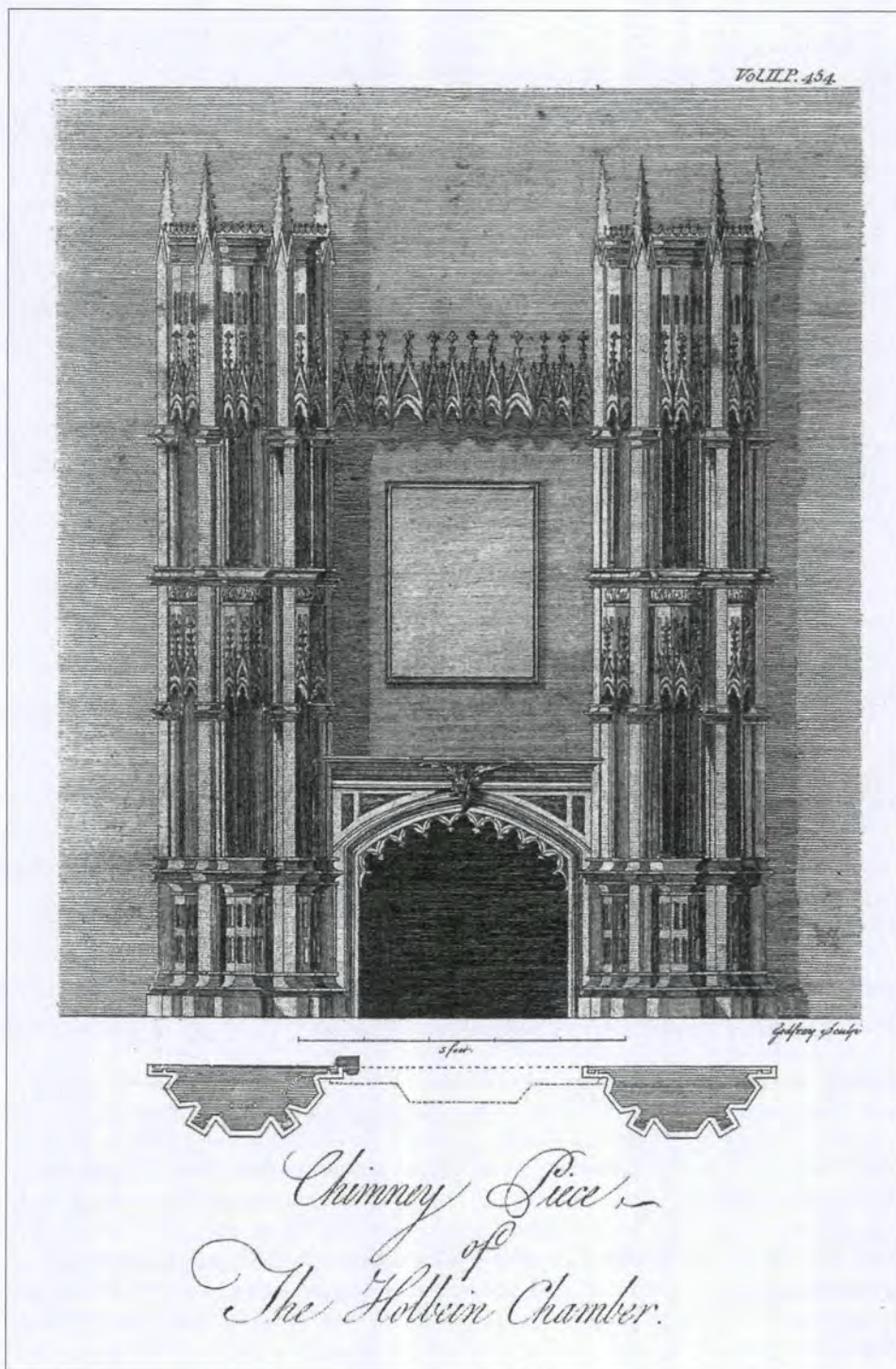
We can no longer delay a focused analysis of the architecture of Strawberry Hill in the light of the argument presented thus far. As we turn to explore these ideas, it bears restating that, although conceived within the terms of an established building type, Strawberry Hill was stylistically and formally unique. Unlike previous experiments in the style that employed the Gothic as an ornamental vocabulary to adorn what were traditional Palladian structures, such as William Kent's Esher Palace (which has been called Palladian Gothic),¹⁰⁶ Strawberry Hill mirrors the additive, ramshackle building patterns of medieval architecture, with ornament of different periods and dates, seemingly disconnected spatial volumes, and varying floor levels. If not the first Gothic mansion in England, Walpole's villa was the first domestic building to attempt to simulate the decorative and spatial effects of Gothic domestic architecture, thereby transforming Walpole's villa into an elaborate medieval stage set. The house has often been considered a random mélange of Gothic ornament from different periods and places used out of its appropriate context, and it has been explained as a product of Walpole's nonclas-



12 Thomas Holloway, *Contrasted Attitudes [of] a Man and a Fribble*, from John Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*, 3 vols. London, 1789, vol. 3, 213 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the author)

sificatory and romantic rather than scholarly vision of the medieval past. To some extent this view is based on Walpole's own flippant denigrations of his house as "a paper fabric" and "an assemblage of curious trifles."¹⁰⁷ But taking Walpole's characterizations literally obscures what careful students of medieval architecture he and the "Committee" were: it is surely significant that some of the earliest meditations on the taxonomy and periodization of medieval architecture and ornament took place within their milieu.¹⁰⁸

As suggested above, Walpole's appraisal of the Gothic as a "licentious" style was more than simply a revision of Neoclassical aesthetics: it was central to his aesthetic appreciation of architecture, and it can be understood as the very premise of the language of ornament at Strawberry Hill. As an example of "the new liberty of taste" or "the modern style," Strawberry Hill's modernity was manifest in its "licentious" appraisal of medieval buildings—the consciousness of an evident chasm between the forms of medieval Gothic and their replications in modern Gothic.¹⁰⁹ Walpole and his circle addressed this directly in their written exchanges on the house. Gray coined the term "gothicism" to describe the house's effects, articulating a sense of historical distance from the medieval past in modern Gothic. Walpole separates the interpretation of the common observer of Strawberry Hill from that of the "true Goth[s]" (that is, the "Committee") when he notes that "every true Goth must perceive that they [the rooms of his house] are more the works of fancy than of imitation."¹¹⁰ Analyzing Walpole's idiomatic Gothic, Charles Eastlake, in his foundational *History of the Gothic Revival*, noted that Walpole's replication of Gothic forms at Strawberry Hill took the form of parody.¹¹¹ "Parody" for Eastlake was a stick with which to beat the early statements of the Gothic Revival by Horace Walpole and Batty Langley, which, within his Victorian predilection for archaeologically correct replication, failed as inaccurate



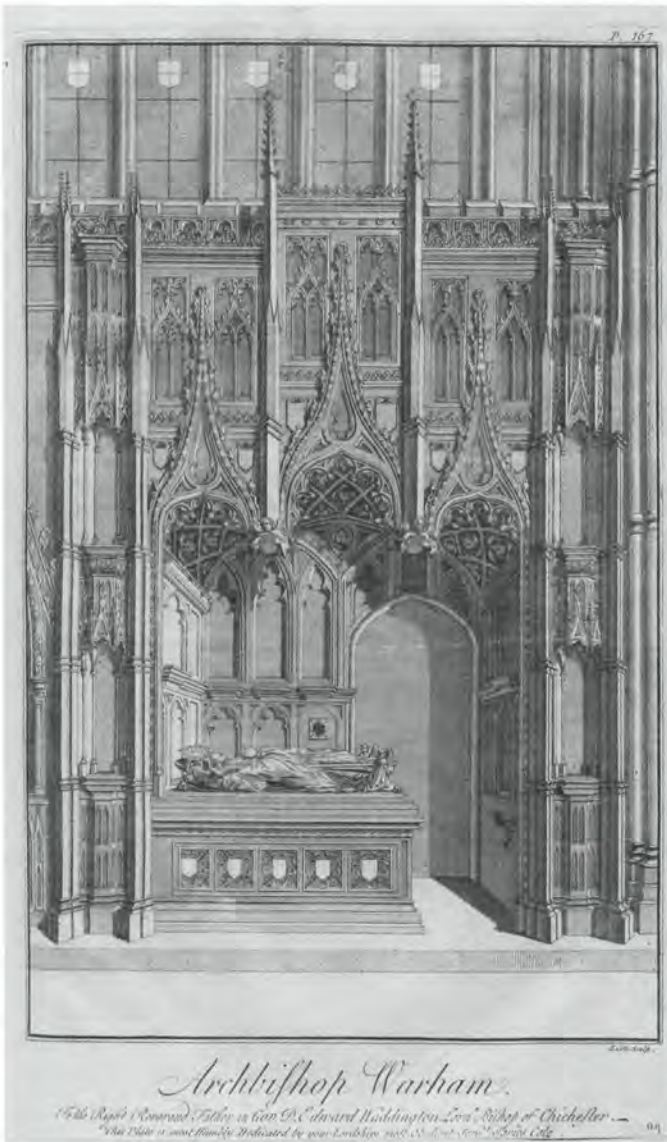
13 Chimney Piece of the Holbein Chamber, from Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole* (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

simulations of medieval Gothic architecture. However biased, Eastlake's assessment was correct. Walpole left plenty of evidence that parody was a significant aspect of Strawberry Hill. For example, Walpole comically appropriates a doggerel passage from Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577), when he quips that Strawberry Hill was almost like the home of a medieval baron:

When I am in my castle of Bungey
Situat upon the river Wavenay
I ne care for the King of Cockney.¹¹²

Historians of architecture have not, since Eastlake, been sufficiently attentive to the subversive humor of Strawberry Hill, its witty, parodic nature. Parody, however, was a dominant strain of Walpole's medievalism in general, as historians of his literature have recently shown, a point to which I shall return below.¹¹³

For the moment it will suffice to point out that Walpole's licentious Gothic—the formal deviations of its ornamentation from its sources—implies radical aesthetic leaps from medieval Gothic to modern Gothic. Walpole's *Description* would seem to be an exposition or even a justification of this



14 [Tomb of] Archbishop Warham, from John Dart, *The History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Canterbury*, London, 1726, 167 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

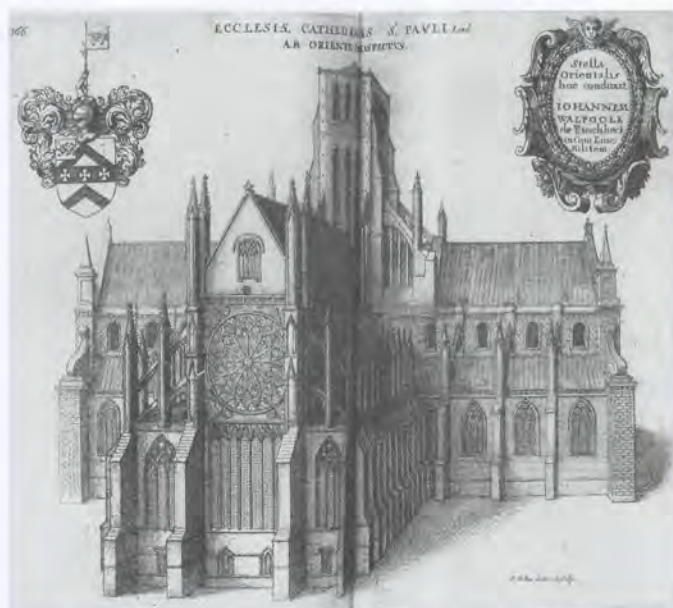
approach, since it offers the reader or visitor explanatory notes on the origins of the ornament in the house, and thus on its status as a replication. For example, in the Holbein Room, "The chimney-piece, designed by Mr [Richard] Bentley, is chiefly taken from the tomb of archbishop Warham [1450–1532] at Canterbury."¹¹⁴ He deliberately fractures the "originality" of the house by pointing out that the fireplace stands in a chain of replications, from the medieval monument, to the recording and publication of the monument, the reproduction of specific formal aspects of the monument at Strawberry Hill (note Walpole states it is only "chiefly" taken from Warham's tomb), and, finally, the engraving of the monument for the *Description* (Fig. 13). Archbishop Warham's tomb was an appropriate choice for the Holbein Room, which was intended to be an early "period room" featuring objects that celebrated the sixteenth-century history of England. John Dart's engraving in the *History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Canterbury* (1726) provided the



15 Carter, *The Round Drawing Room*, n.d., watercolor, 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (34 × 29.5 cm), from Richard Bull's extra-illustrated copy of Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole*. The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, Folio 30 30 Copy 11, fol. 153 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

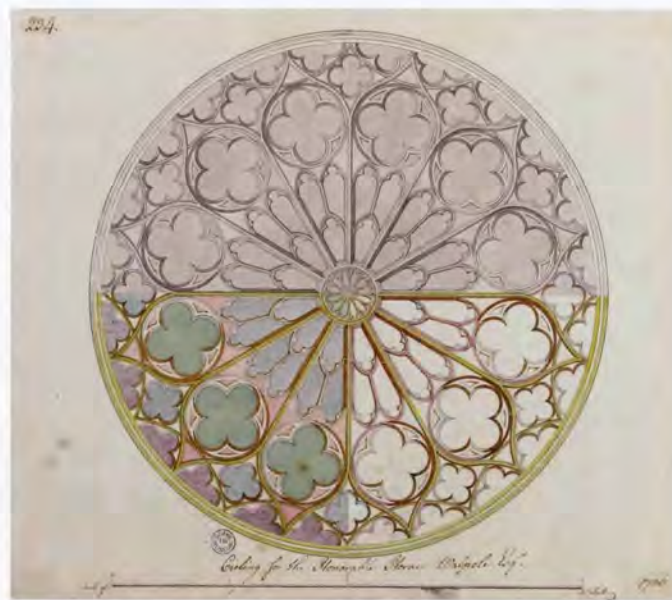
source for the two tiers of richly embellished Perpendicular niches executed in wood that flank the fireplace, but little else (Fig. 14). Bentley used the single row of niches on either side of the tomb, multiplied them by three, and set them within the form of semicircular turrets. The canopy work above the tomb is removed altogether and replaced with a repetitious frieze of Gothic arches to make space for a main image above the mantel, and the tomb is replaced by the fireplace. These alterations not only transgress and secularize the original functions of frequently sacred or commemorative objects derived from the medieval past but also imply deliberate material transgressions, as stone-built medieval Gothic is replicated in modern materials (plaster, woodwork, and paint). Walpole plays with the fictive materiality of his "paper house" when he jokes that a painted shield with the face of Medusa that hung in his "armoury" (Fig. 4) was "almost in too good taste . . . to put my Gothic house to shame—I wish the Medusa could turn it into stone!"¹¹⁵

The same relation between model and copy can be charted throughout the ornamentation at Strawberry Hill. In the ceiling of the Round Room (constructed by 1762), Walpole employed the Palladian architect Robert Adam to create one of the most dramatic statements of the Gothic (Fig. 15).¹¹⁶ As Walpole notes in his *Description*, the ceiling was "taken from a round window in old Saint Paul's."¹¹⁷ His source here was an engraving by Hollar in Dugdale's *History of St. Paul's* (the cathedral was destroyed by fire in 1666), from which he



16 Wenceslaus Hollar, *Ecclesiae Cathedralis S. Pauli ab oriente prospectus*, from William Dugdale, *The History of St. Paul's Cathedral in London*, London, 1658, 166. Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia (artwork in the public domain)

derives the forms of the original thirteenth-century rose window in the north transept (Fig. 16). Employing the forms of the engraving, Walpole transposed the linear outlines of the rose window onto the ceiling in paint and plaster. Referencing neither a vault pattern nor a real rose window, Walpole uses Hollar's engraving to endow the Round Room with elegant Gothic ornament that becomes almost completely reimagined and decontextualized.¹¹⁸ Adam's 1766 drawing shows that yellow and brown were proposed for the main tracery and white for the minor tracery, while the inner lancets and quatrefoils were tricked out in light blue (Fig. 17). The greater lancets were pink, the large quatrefoils green, and the half quatrefoils around the circumference purple, thus simulating coloristic effects (if not the materials) of medieval stained glass. Similar transpositions are evidenced in the entrance hall at Strawberry Hill, where imitation blind Perpendicular tracery based on the chantry chapel of Prince Arthur at Worcester Cathedral constructed about 1502 was painted onto wallpaper after the designs of Bentley (Figs. 18, 19). The employment of a modern mode of mural decoration as a base for *trompe l'oeil* representations of medieval stone tracery was surely what Walpole had in mind when he mentioned the "satisfaction of imprinting the gloomth of abbeys and cathedrals on one's house" in a famous letter to Horace Mann, cleverly merging "gloom" and "depth."¹¹⁹ If the allusion to a medieval referent was at all significant in creating the staircase, wrapping the fictive tracery around the staircase walls created the effect of the medieval chantry chapel turned inside out. As Barrett Kalter has demonstrated, Gothic patterned wallpaper during the eighteenth century participated in a "commodification of nostalgia" for the medieval past in its popularization of Gothic ornament in a contemporary, even *nouveau riche* mode of interior decoration. It also indicates something of the multi-



17 Robert Adam, *Design for the Ceiling of the Round Drawing Room*, 1766, pencil and ink on paper, 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (32.6 × 37.8 cm). Sir John Soane's Museum, London, vol. 11, 234 (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Sir John Soane's Museum)

ple historicisms at play in Strawberry Hill, since wallpaper is a new object in an ancient style without a prototype.¹²⁰

Strawberry Hill's Gothic simulacra also indicate deliberate departures from the scale of medieval Gothic architecture. Throughout the house, Gothic ornament not only is taken out of context and reconstructed in new materials, but it is also re-created in an entirely different, and typically diminutive, scale. This is evident in a long list of objects, from the uses of medieval tombs for fireplaces to the design of furniture, such as William Hallett's chairs of about 1755: carved in beech and painted black to simulate ebony, these chairs employ miniaturizations of Decorated fourteenth-century window tracery on their backs, based on a synthesis of monumental tracery designs by Walpole and Bentley (Fig. 20). As in furniture, so in cabinetry: taken from another engraving by Hollar in Dugdale's *History of St. Paul's*, the bookcases are wooden simulations of the thirteenth-century stone choir screen doors, referred to as "compressions of the choir screen at Old St Paul's" (Figs. 7, 21).¹²¹ As Jill Campbell has recently pointed out, the miniaturization and transformation of monumental forms were central to Walpole's design aesthetic and to the language of description he developed with his friends and members of the "Committee": "In much of Walpole's correspondence, an aesthetics of 'the miniature' . . . offers a highly-developed medium of connection among them, in the sociable tonalities of epistolary exchange and in the collaborative creation of a 'castlet.'"¹²²

Walpole regularly speaks of Strawberry Hill in diminutive terms as "a nutshell" or "a baby-house [dollhouse] full of playthings."¹²³ Shortly after acquiring the house from the famous toyshop owner Mrs. Chenevix, he compared it to an objet d'art: "It is a little plaything that I got out of Mrs Chevenix's shop and is the prettiest bauble you ever saw." The metaphors of the house as jewelry and therefore as a

18 Bentley, *Perspective of the Hall & Staircase at Strawberryhill*, ca. 1753, pen and ink and watercolor, $8\frac{7}{8} \times 7$ in. (22.7×17.7 cm), from "Drawings and Designs by Richd. Bentley" [1760], fol. 30. The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)



collectible, precious commodity of the upper classes (and particularly of women) can be traced through his letters, where, for example, "Strawberry" is "set in enameled meadows and filigree hedges, this small Euphrates is rolled, and little finches wave their wings of gold."¹²⁴ When Walpole invited the medievalist Thomas Warton to Strawberry Hill, he mentioned "some miniatures of scenes of which I am pleased to find you love—cloisters, screens, round towers, and a printing house, all indeed of baby dimensions, would put you a little in mind of the age of Caxton [1415–1492]."¹²⁵ Walpole's miniaturizations of the house and of its ornament—his allegories of the house as collectible object or bauble—suggest not merely a shared language of description between writer and reader but a shared language based in effeminized reversals of normative male taste. Significantly, diminutiveness, or "the little manner"—art as personal commodity or ornament rather than art as monumental form—was regularly coded as female in eighteenth-century aesthetics, in

contrast to the "Grand/Great Manner" of Neoclassicism. Alexander Pope, for example, critiqued these tastes as "those Bawbles most Ladies affect," while Lord Shaftesbury confirms: "Reason for this little manner, viz. cabinet-furniture, *process-de-cabinet* for ladies and the court. Ladies hate the great manner, love baby-sizes, toys, miniature." The homophobic satire *The Pretty Gentlemen* (1747) goes further still in aligning the tastes of the third sex with those of women, both of whom are disposed to "softer and more refined Studies; Furniture, Equipage, dress, the Tiring Room, and the Toy-shop."¹²⁶ These gendered readings of scale and form help us to understand that in the miniaturized forms of Strawberry Hill and in the developed language of *ekphrasis* used to describe them, Walpole's Gothic performs artistic and literary tropes of male effeminacy and of the third sex in particular. Considered in these terms, Walpole's idiomatic appraisal of the Gothic maps rather neatly onto modern notions of camp, which have often enough been applied to his medievalism.¹²⁷



19 The chantry chapel of Prince Arthur, Worcester Cathedral, ca. 1502 (photograph by Chris Guy, reproduced by permission of the Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral)

Indeed, his construction of “licentious” may be understood to have operated analogously with modern notions of camp. This is an issue that cannot be examined in depth here, but we may usefully consider, as Susan Sontag and others have done, Walpole’s Strawberry Hill as a formative statement of camp, bound as it is to the origins of both modern sexualities and aesthetics.¹²⁸

“Queer Family Romance” at Strawberry Hill

An understanding of Walpole’s sexuality and the nature of the bonds he shared with his circle also informs a reading of aspects of Strawberry Hill’s collections and the strategies of their display. During Walpole’s lifetime, and up until the dispersal of the contents of the house in a highly public sale in 1842, Strawberry Hill housed a burgeoning collection of artwork, objects, and curiosities that were cataloged in his own *Description* (1774, 1784). As Alicia Weisberg-Roberts has recently reminded us, a number of deliberate narrative and thematic trajectories, or “discursive trails,” were constructed through the display of unique or “singular” objects (to use Walpole’s term) at Strawberry Hill: literary (objects that reminded the viewer of the house’s fictive “other,” the castle of Otranto), antiquarian and nationalistic (as in the collection of objects connected with famous figures from British history, such as the hat of Cardinal Wolsey or the gloves of James I), and familial or genealogical (the construction of royal and family genealogies through the display of portraits, heraldry, and objects).¹²⁹ An overlooked aspect of Strawberry Hill and the collection that it was designed to house is its implicit and frequently explicit construction of diverse “familial” connections—articulating both Walpole’s biological family and what may be called his “queer family” of homoerotically inclined friends—evident in the display of heraldry in stained glass, wall painting, on the house’s fireplace mantels and furniture, and in the portraits that hung in the house in carefully structured family groups.

The genealogical displays of heraldry and portraiture at Strawberry Hill were integral components of the house and to what Walpole took to be “Gothic” about it. They were



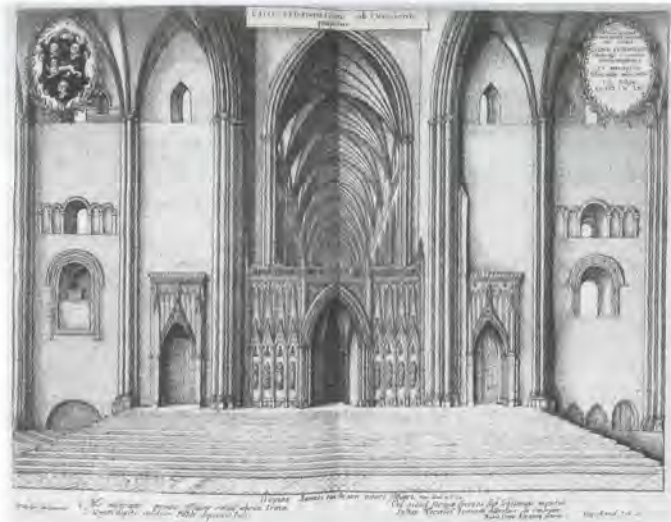
20 William Hallett Sr., after the designs of Richard Bentley and Horace Walpole, Chair, ca. 1755, beech painted black (upholstery modern), 52 × 24 × 20½ in. (132 × 60.8 × 53 cm). The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)

based in a specific conception of medieval architecture and the aristocratic family seat in particular that was filled with heraldic blazons and other emblems of family lineage. A passage in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* of 1739 provides an established contemporary image: “Methinks there was something respectable in those old hospitable Gothick halls, hung round with the Helmets, Breast-Plates, and Swords of our Ancestors; I entered them with a Constitutional Sort of Reverence and look’d upon those arms with Gratitude, as the Terror of former Ministers and the Check of Kings.”¹³⁰ But Walpole’s construction was also indebted to his active antiquarian research into the history of his own family—the Walpoles on his father’s side and the Shorters on his mother’s. Glossing his own familial displays at Strawberry Hill, he often mused that he was building a new “family seat,” a replacement of sorts of his father’s former estate at Houghton (Sir Robert Walpole died in 1745, two years before the acquisition of Strawberry Hill). Writing to his friend George Montagu in 1753, Walpole called Strawberry Hill “the castle . . . of my ancestors.” He goes on to describe his armory

(Fig. 4) in the main staircase that “bespeaks the ancient chivalry of the lords of the castle” and the Gothic lantern (“lanthorn”) designed by Bentley into which he set a stained-glass armorial blazon of the de Vere family (earls of Oxford) to suggest that, despite its recent manufacture, it derived from the twelfth-century castle at Hedingham.¹³¹ Walpole’s use of the word “castle” is significant: in the eighteenth century, this term connoted ancient family seats and encouraged associative connections to England’s great ancestral mansions, an evocation of the perceived patriarchal structures of the Middle Ages.¹³²

In the historiography on Strawberry Hill and its collection, Walpole’s heraldry and portraiture have typically been interpreted as evidence of his attachment to traditional aristocratic values in creating the next “family seat” of the Walpoles. As a “dynastic symbol,” Strawberry Hill functions as an idealized replacement of his family seat at Houghton Hall, then in decline after the father’s political disgrace in a motion of no confidence in Parliament in 1742 and his death in 1745.¹³³ Stephen Bann has usefully considered Strawberry Hill a “compensatory fantasy,” a means of overcoming a range of anxieties about patriarchy and familial succession.¹³⁴ There is, of course, much to recommend these views: Walpole and the “Committee” were actively interested in genealogy and heraldry as extensions of their antiquarian endeavor, and they employed Strawberry Hill as a setting to display and order their various emblems of collecting and genealogical research. But here, as in other aspects of Walpole’s appraisal of the Gothic, there was a subversive double edge that seems to question, if not substantially undermine, literal readings.¹³⁵ Studies of Walpole’s Gothic literature, what have been called his “family Romances”—*The Castle of Otranto* and *The Mysterious Mother* (1768)—have rightly interpreted these narratives as ciphers for Walpole’s complex family dynamics: in these narratives, sexual sin—particularly incest—consistently thwarts patterns of patriarchal succession as the fundamental mode of transmitting power between father and son. Domineering fathers are vanquished at the feet of sympathetic mothers.

When understood in the light of his sexuality, Walpole’s new “family seat” at Strawberry Hill appears to be encoded with a series of paradoxes. Strawberry Hill was an “ancient” Gothic family seat without a history. If it was intended to be the new “seat” of the Walpoles, then it was one that was self-consciously antithetical in style and meaning to his father’s estate at Houghton, as numerous commentators have mentioned. Second, and perhaps more important, Strawberry Hill was the “family seat” of a resigned bachelor whose sexuality made it unlikely that he would produce heirs (as he and his circle manifestly understood).¹³⁶ These tensions between a patriarchal family seat and an alternative sexuality can be gleaned in the objects themselves and in the strategies of their display at Strawberry Hill. Indeed, Walpole’s “family seat” seems to hold competing genealogies: Walpole’s biological family—real and imagined—and his “queer family” of friends and associates. Working from Sigmund Freud’s 1909 essay “Family Romances,” which explores the child’s conscious remaking of his/her lineage during adolescence,¹³⁷ Whitney Davis defines queer family romance as “the witting (or even witty) invention of alternate inheritances by a per-



21 Hollar, *Partis exterioris Chori ab Occidente prospectus*, from Dugdale, *The History of St. Paul's Cathedral in London*, 168. Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia (artwork in the public domain)

son who finds himself or herself disoriented in the imprinted norms of the parental matrix.” Within queer art collections, queer family romance articulates “family resemblances among forms that allowed queer significances (homosexual or not) to emerge into visibility even when particular artifacts did not inherently possess a queer iconography,” and it “relays imaginations of a better social order, and possibly a radically different one.”¹³⁸

Walpole’s family romance is recognizable in the displays of heraldry at Strawberry Hill, reflecting his descent from the Walpole and Shorter lines. Complicating this picture, Walpole also introduced a third line of ancestry in the Robsart family. In his early genealogical research (what W. S. Lewis called “dredging the past for distinguished ancestors”), he discovered, presumably in William Musgrave’s 1738 *Brief and True History of Sir Robert Walpole and His Family*, the medieval relations of the Walpoles in the Robsarts, a significant Norfolk family.¹³⁹ Sir Terry Robsart was the maternal grandfather of John Walpole, Sir Robert’s great-great-great-grandfather, and the presence of these medieval relations serves to simultaneously emphasize and substantially replace Horace’s father’s presence in the home with an alternative family line. The Robsarts offered a number of distinguished ancestors, but Walpole focused particularly on the figure of Terry Robsart, a Knight of the Garter, whom he took to be a famed Crusader, a chivalric champion from the wars of Richard II. Willfully, perhaps, Walpole confused Terry Robsart (knighted 1483 and died 1496) with Sir John Robsart, who fought in the Saracenic wars under Richard II (r. 1367–99). As often as not, Walpole referenced a fabled Crusader as a cipher for his father’s family in the figure of Terry Robsart.

The library at Strawberry Hill formed the setting for the grandest of Walpole’s genealogical displays (Fig. 7). The trompe l’oeil ceiling was a design by Walpole and Bentley, painted by Andien de Clermont in 1754. Walpole elaborates on it in his *Description*:



22 Library ceiling, Strawberry Hill, 2012 (artwork in the public domain; photograph © The Strawberry Hill Trust, provided by Nicholas Smith)



23 Blue Bedchamber, Strawberry Hill (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the author)

In the middle is a shield of Walpole surrounded by quarters born by the family. At each end in a round[el] is a knight on horseback, in the manner of ancient seals; that next to the window bears the arms of Fitz Osbert, the other of Robsart. At the four corners are shields, helmets, and mantles; on one shield is a large H, on another a W, semée of cross crosslets, in imitation of an ancient bearing of the Howards in Blomfield's Norfolk.¹⁴⁰

The heraldic blazons and replications of sigillographic images of knights celebrated his medieval (and, as Walpole believed) Crusader ancestry, linking his arms and initials with the Fitz Osberts and the Robsarts (Fig. 22).¹⁴¹ The devices of the Walpole arms and crest were dismantled and reemployed in a decorative frieze running along the top of the bookcases in alternating cross crosslets and Catherine wheels. Walpole was not above bold and deliberate invention in his display of

family ancestry, such as the swords, shields, and armor in his "armory" on the staircase landing leading to his library, which he suggested were "all *supposed* to be taken by Sir Terry Robsart in the holy wars" (Walpole's italics confirm the degree of artifice involved) (Fig. 4).¹⁴² Positioned symmetrically above each of Chute's imitation Gothic bookcases was a portrait set within a roundel and framed by a pointed arch (thirteen in total) celebrating the Shorter family—Walpole's legitimate aristocratic lineage from his mother's side. Framing this display of family lineage were stained-glass portraits of Charles I and II and the royal arms of England and a late fifteenth-century wedding portrait that Walpole took to be the marriage of King Henry VI (now attributed to an anonymous Flemish master and titled *Marriage of a Saint*).¹⁴³

In the genealogical displays of the library, Walpole manifestly privileges his mother's aristocratic line over his father's "notoriously common" ancestry, the only belatedly knighted prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole. Emma Clery was no doubt correct to describe Strawberry Hill's genealogical displays as "an ingenious form of revenge" on Walpole's father.¹⁴⁴ A straightforward "family romance" in the Freudian sense can be detected in Walpole's denigration of his father at Strawberry Hill (whose relatively common heritage was trumped by his mother's aristocratic pedigree) and his promotion of the Shorter family. Walpole's fragmentation of traditional patriarchal patterns has elsewhere been understood as a critique of the aristocratic order and of the sentimental bonds of the bourgeois family in contemporary England. Exposing the structures of this critique, Marcie Frank and others have shown that parody was central to the construction of Walpole's Gothic "family romances."¹⁴⁵ This observation helps to nuance the earlier point made about the parodic nature of Walpole's architectural Gothic and suggests a broader, subversive conception of the Gothic as a historicist idiom as Walpole understood it.

Walpole's unwriting of "family romance" in the display of the Strawberry Hill collection can also be sensed in the construction of alternative, "queer" genealogies in the house.

24 John Giles Eccardt and John Wooton, *Portrait of Sir Robert Walpole and Catherine Shorter, His First Wife*, ca. 1746, oil on canvas, 20 × 40 in. (50.8 × 101.6 cm), with frame in the style of Grinling Gibbons, ca. 1680. The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)



The images of “family romance” in the quasi-public and scholarly space of the library can be usefully contrasted with images of “queer family romance” in the more private spaces of the Round Room and the Blue Bedchamber (Figs. 15, 23). The Blue Bedchamber was reached on the route from the refectory to the library and was created in the same construction campaign. As Michael Snodin has recently proposed, its hang was “conceived as a complement” to the ancestral display in the library but it was a complement that alluded to biological *and* nonbiological forms of family.¹⁴⁶ The hang comprised seven paintings by the society portraitist John Giles Eccardt (1720–1779) commissioned by Walpole between about 1746 and 1755.¹⁴⁷ Over the Gothic fireplace (designed by Bentley) hung a posthumous image of Sir Robert Walpole and Catherine Shorter, his first wife, of about 1746, in a frame in the style of Grinling Gibbons of about 1680 (Fig. 24). Set in front of Houghton Hall, this portrait celebrated Walpole’s maternal and paternal ancestry and his parents’ shared legacy of Houghton, but it also implied an erasure of his father’s very public affair with a mistress—Maria Skerrett—whom he married very shortly after his wife’s death in 1738, much upsetting Horace. Also by Eccardt were images of Walpole’s half sister (born to Skerrett), Maria Walpole, and her husband, Charles Churchill. The remaining portraits in the room were related in one way or another to what has been called Walpole’s “erotic camaraderie”:¹⁴⁸ Conway; the poet and playwright Sir Charles Hanbury Williams (who holds a copy of his play *Isabella, or the Morning*—a clever satire on the third sex featuring their mutual friend Dickie Bateman and other men in their circle);¹⁴⁹ the scholar and poet Thomas Gray (Fig. 25), with whom Walpole had a youthful romantic liaison in the course of his grand tour; Bentley, a member of the Strawberry Committee (Fig. 26); and Walpole himself, positioned in front of Strawberry Hill (Fig. 27). With the exception of his parents’ portrait, all of the other paintings in the room participated in the current



25 Eccardt, *Portrait of Thomas Gray*, 1747–48, oil on canvas, 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 12 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (40.3 × 32.7 cm). National Portrait Gallery, London (artwork in the public domain; photograph © National Portrait Gallery, London)

fashion of historicized family portraiture in which subjects appeared in the style of past masters and frequently in anachronistic costume.¹⁵⁰ Walpole noted that Bentley’s, Gray’s, and his own portrait were modeled after the style of Anthony Van



26 Eckardt, *Portrait of Richard Bentley*, 1753, oil on canvas, 16½ × 13½ in. (42.2 × 34.3 cm). National Portrait Gallery, London (artwork in the public domain; photograph © National Portrait Gallery, London)

Dyck, while Conway's was based on that of Antoine Watteau and Maria Walpole's on Peter Paul Rubens's. This created what eighteenth-century observers would have understood as a "family portrait gallery," notably, those attuned to grand displays of similar historicizing family portraits familiar from the country house tour. Emphasizing this continuity, Walpole framed each portrait (again, his parents' portrait excepted) in black and gold frames "carved after those to Lombard's prints from Van Dyck, but with emblems particular to each person."¹⁵¹ Employing the technologies of contemporary family portraiture, Walpole's hang in the Blue Bedchamber constituted a clever rethinking of the genealogical display in the library to express the familial bonds between himself and his intimate coterie: a queer family romance.

This was one of a number of potential displays of queer family romance at Strawberry Hill.¹⁵² Walpole's Round Room held "Six curious and interesting sketches, drawn at Venice, Portraits of the Earl of Lincoln, Horace Walpole, John Chute, Joseph Spence, Mr Chaloner and Mr Whitsend [that is, Francis Whitehead, an intimate of Chute] by Rosalba [Carriera]," the prominent Venetian pastelist, which were made when Walpole and his friends were on the grand tour in 1741.¹⁵³ Only the sketch of Chute now survives. In all likelihood these were the preparatory sketches for later pastels that hung at Houghton Hall and elsewhere.¹⁵⁴ How these images were displayed is unclear, since they do not appear in Walpole's 1774 or 1784 *Description*, but for Walpole and his circle these



27 Eckardt, *Portrait of Horace Walpole*, 1754, oil on canvas, 15½ × 12½ in. (39.4 × 31.8 cm). National Portrait Gallery, London (artwork in the public domain; photograph © National Portrait Gallery, London)

images recalled the heady days of his grand tour, a journey that resulted in his introduction to Chute, a split with Thomas Gray that would be later reconciled, and a renewed affair with his cousin Henry Fiennes-Clinton, 9th Earl of Lincoln. As George Rousseau suggests, "Walpole's Grand Tour evolved to a large extent out of his homoerotic needs" and "virtually institutionalised [his] homosocial relationships."¹⁵⁵ Celebrating Walpole's overlapping homosocial circles—his queer family—these groupings of portraits provide visual corollaries to his witty inventions of coterie labels, such as the "Strawberry Committee" and the "Quadruple Alliance" formed at Eton of Walpole, Gray, Richard West, and Thomas Ashton. It is significant that the men in Walpole's circle hung similar galleries in their homes. In 1768 Bateman's new Gothic dining room at Old Windsor held a gallery of his own "queer family" (Fig. 11), and Chute's Gothic mansion at the Vyne, Hampshire, likewise featured a portrait collection celebrating the circle around Walpole, featuring Chute, Gray, Bentley, and Whitehead, what Maurice Howard has called "a true 'Strawberry circle.'"¹⁵⁶ These galleries demonstrate clever ways in which third-sex coterie were assimilated into the eighteenth-century domestic interior.

"Queer family romance" may also be a useful model for understanding the dissemination of architectural style among Walpole's circle. As the paradigmatic statement of Gothic taste in England in the second half of the eighteenth century,

Strawberry Hill was mythologized by Walpole as a court of Gothic taste over which he presided as (self-appointed) ruler, and his friends (often fellow builders in the style) as courtiers.¹⁵⁷ These men were responsible for building, designing, or advising on a long list of buildings in the Gothic style of Strawberry Hill, effectively popularizing the style.¹⁵⁸ As we have seen, Walpole's writings are full of (often tongue-in-cheek) allusions to the familial bonds he felt for his fellow "Goths" and for Strawberry Hill as a product of their shared efforts and tastes. Walpole extended this familial relationship to implicate the very houses built by his circle in the Strawberry Hill style. Walpole called Lee Priory in Kent (destroyed in 1954), built for Thomas Barrett (d. 1803) between 1785 and 1790 by the architect James Wyatt (1746–1813), "my Gothic child" and "a child of Strawberry, prettier than the parent," thus positing a familial relationship between his own Strawberry Hill and the Gothic buildings built by his friends. Lee Priory had a "Strawberry Room" (now installed at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Fig. 28) built in homage to Strawberry Hill; Walpole described it as "a delicious closet too, so flattering to me" and as "My closet" (Walpole's emphasis).¹⁵⁹ As Walpole would have it, Strawberry's genealogy could be charted in terms of its architectural progeny—a growing "family" of buildings. Emphasizing this genealogy, Walpole kept and displayed images of buildings built in the Strawberry Hill style by his friends, including drawings of Chute's house at the Vyne in his own bedchamber, images of Chute's work at Donnington Castle, Berkshire, in the Beauclerk Closet, and what may be identified as a drawing of Bateman's Old Windsor in the Green Closet, forming a disparate "family" of Strawberry Hill Gothic buildings.¹⁶⁰

At Strawberry Hill, the idiomatic nature of patron and building manifestly put pressure on existing tenets of decorum and corporeality. These pressures, witnessed in style and comportment and in architecture and ornament, enact more fundamental changes in eighteenth-century aesthetics. A significant aspect of the "new sensibility" of the eighteenth century, what Neil Levine has called the rise of a subjective "narrative of the self" in architecture, can be located in contemporary developments in human sexuality, and particularly in the rise of a new third sex of "homosexual" men.¹⁶¹ But however influential Strawberry Hill and related buildings were in shaping taste for the Gothic in eighteenth-century England, it would be reductive and inaccurate to assume that the perception of the Gothic shared by Walpole's homosocial circle was necessarily that of others outside their milieu. While Mowl was correct to note that the Gothic was adopted by many patrons and designers seemingly of the third sex, from Walpole to Richard Payne Knight and William Beckford, among others,¹⁶² the Gothic and its significations—of femininity, of sexual license, of Catholicism—were capable of adapting and appealing to a range of alternative identities (sexual or otherwise) during the eighteenth century. The multivalence of the Gothic and of human sexuality advocates the suppler approach employed by cultural and literary historians who note that human sexuality, particularly alternative sexuality, was a central and exceptionally malleable trope of the Gothic during the eighteenth century and beyond.¹⁶³ While the Gothic did not have a fixed sexual identity in the



28 James Wyatt, the Strawberry Room, Lee Priory, 1785–90, built for Thomas Barrett. Victoria and Albert Museum, London (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by V&A Images, Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

period, it is nonetheless significant that many of the changes in sexuality that took place in eighteenth-century England were explored or performed at sites of architecture or landscapes, or through their construction, with the Gothic featuring centrally.¹⁶⁴ Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the theoretically rich and corporeally resonant (but safely nonrepresentational) sphere of architecture suggested it to eighteenth-century English culture as a place to debate and define new sexual and social norms in a way it had not been used before.

Locating Walpole's Gothic villa within the social and sexual contexts explored here, rather than within the style-based teleologies that have long characterized studies of the Gothic Revival, may usefully destabilize some of its dominant paradigms. It is worth stating a fundamental point too often overlooked in the study of Walpole's oeuvre: his promotion of the Gothic was never intended to be anything other than a coterie taste and was not designed to initiate a full-scale "Gothic Revival" in architecture (even if he is often seen to be responsible for this). Ultimately, it was friendship among the men of Walpole's circle (his "erotic cameraderie") that provided the conduit for the dissemination of the "Strawberry Hill Gothic" style and for the future careers of his friends and designers. In this sense, Walpole's construction of Strawberry Hill as a "court" of Gothic taste was apt. That the "queerness" of Strawberry Hill was sensed in early nineteenth-century critiques by some of the first Victorian Gothic Revivalists is of interest to us. Standing outside Walpole's cultural milieu,

these critics discerned the subversive character of Strawberry Hill that diverged considerably from the archaeologically accurate simulations of the Gothic that they favored. This alone may help us to understand the partial erasure of the Strawberry Hill Gothic style from narratives of the nineteenth-century Gothic Revival, when the Gothic was transformed from a style of otherness to an ideal of religious nationalism at the hands of A. W. N. Pugin and his contemporaries.

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Notes

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1. Elsie de Wolfe, *The House in Good Taste* (New York: Century, 1913), 5.
2. On Walpole's circle, see Brian Fothergill, *The Strawberry Hill Set* (London: Faber and Faber, 1983); George Haggerty, "Strawberry Hill: Friendship and Taste" and "The Strawberry Committee," in *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, ed. Michael Snodin, exh. cat. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 75–85; and idem, *Horace Walpole's Letters: Masculinity and Friendship in the Eighteenth Century* (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 2011).
3. On the architectural history, see Peter Guillery and Michael Snodin, "Strawberry Hill: Building and Site," *Architectural History* 38 (1995): 102–28; Michael McCarthy, *The Origins of the Gothic Revival* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 63–115; and Kevin Rogers, "Walpole's Gothic: Creating a Fictive History," in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 59–74.
4. Horace Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill near Twickenham, Middlesex*, 2nd ed. (London: Strawberry Hill Press, 1784; reprint, London: Pallas Athene, 2010), 397. I reference this edition throughout, cited hereafter as *Description*. The best general discussion of the interiors remains Clive Wainwright, *The Romantic Interior: The British Collector at Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 71–198. The stained glass has been recently studied in Michael Peover and Kevin Rogers, "New Light on Strawberry Hill: Walpole's Display of Glass and the Representation of the Ancient Abbey," *Journal of Stained Glass* 34 (2010): 7–52.
5. For example, Walpole's erotic attachment to the house is suggested in an unpublished poem in which he rejects female advances in preference for Strawberry Hill, now an unpaginated insertion in his own copy of the *Description* (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University [hereafter LWL], MS 49 2522): "In Eden's lovely garden our grandmother Dame Eve / With an apple of the forest, Old Adam did deceive, / But had I been her husband, the / Pippin then had fail'd / And Strawberry, sweet Strawberry alone / Shou'd have prevailed."
6. Horace Walpole to Lady Ossory, August 11, 1778, in Horace Walpole, *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. Wilmath Sheldon Lewis et al., 48 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937–83), vol. 33, 42–43 (hereafter *HW Corr.*). The paired posterity of Walpole and Strawberry Hill was a common refrain in Walpole's writings. See, for example, the preface to the 1784 *Description*; and Walpole to Horace Mann, January 27, 1761, *HW Corr.*, vol. 21, 471, and May 17, 1775, vol. 24, 103.
7. Peter Sabor, ed., *Horace Walpole: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge Kegan and Paul, 1995), 251. This relationship has been reinforced in recent scholarship: Stephen Bann, "Historicizing Horace," in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 117–33, at 132, for Strawberry Hill as "a theatre for 'self fashioning'"; and Marion Harney, "Strawberry Hill," *Architectural Review* 224 (2008): 72–76, at 72: "Strawberry Hill is a prime example of an associative, autobiographical site, where the man, the 'little Gothic castle' and the landscape are inextricably linked."
8. The singular exception is Haggerty, "Strawberry Hill: Friendship and Taste," which deals principally with Walpole's letters rather than his appreciation of art and architecture. The lack of attention to these issues has been noted in reviews by Matthew M. Reeve, *Antiquaries Journal* 91 (2011): 390–92; and Timothy Mowl, *Times Higher Education*, March 18, 2010: "Its editor . . . seems so embarrassed by Walpole's deviant sexual identity that, in his commissioning role, he has managed to airbrush out almost all accounts of Walpole's wildly romantic love life, even though they would have explained both the inspiration behind the house and his choice of its contents."
9. Raymond Bentman, "Horace Walpole's Forbidden Passion," in *Queer Representations: Reading Lives, Reading Cultures*, ed. Martin Duberman (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 276–89; George Haggerty, "Walpoliana," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 2 (2001): 227–49; idem, "Queering Horace Walpole," *Studies in English Literature* 46, no. 3 (2006): 543–62; idem, "Strawberry Hill: Friendship and Taste"; idem, *Horace Walpole's Letters*; Anne Williams, "Horace in Italy: Discovering a Gothic Imagination," *Gothic Studies* 8, no. 1 (2006): 22–34; and Andrew Elfenbein, *Romantic Genius: The Prehistory of a Homosexual Role* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 91–124.
10. Andrew Moore, ed., *Houghton Hall: The Prime Minister, the Empress and the Heritage* (London: Philip Wilson, 1996).
11. Timothy Mowl, *Horace Walpole: The Great Outsider* (London: John Murray, 1996), 7, 116–22. A similar claim had been made previously by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in reference to Gothic literature: *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosexual Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), esp. 92–93.
12. Jill Campbell, "'I Am No Giant': Horace Walpole, Heterosexual Incest, and Love among Men," *Eighteenth Century* 39, no. 3 (1998): 238–60, at 241 and n. 3; Haggerty, "Queering Horace Walpole," 544; idem, *Horace Walpole's Letters*, 3–4, 12; and Williams, "Horace in Italy," 24.
13. The literature is extensive. Most useful for my interests have been Christy Anderson, "Masculine and Unaffected: Inigo Jones and the Classical Ideal," *Art Journal* 56, no. 2 (1997): 48–54; Catherine King, "Architecture, Gender and Politics: The Villa Imperiale at Pesaro," *Art History* 29, no. 5 (2006): 796–826; Anne Laurence, "Women Using Building in Seventeenth-Century England: A Question of Sources?" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 13 (2003): 293–303; Lucy Worsley, "Female Architectural Patronage in the Eighteenth Century and the Case of Henrietta Cavendish Holles Harley," *Architectural History* 48 (2005): 139–62; and Louise Durning and Richard Wrigley, eds., *Architecture and Gender* (Toronto: John Wiley and Sons, 2000).
14. Walpole to Mann, February 25, 1750, *HW Corr.*, vol. 20, 127. Patricia Crown, "British Rococo as Social and Political Style," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 23, no. 3 (1990): 269–82; and David Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
15. Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, vol. 1, *Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); and idem, "Modern Sodomy: The Origins of Homosexuality, 1700–1800," in *The Gay History of Britain: Love and Sex between Men since the Middle Ages*, ed. Matt Cook et al. (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2007), 77–106. The literature is extensive. See also George Haggerty, *Men in Love: Masculinity and Sexuality in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); and G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
16. Beverley Sprague Allen, *Tides in English Taste (1619–1800): A Background for the Study of Literature*, 2 vols. (New York: Pageant Books, 1958), vol. 2, 87–99, at 94. I discuss these issues at greater length in Matthew M. Reeve, "Dickie Bateman and the Gothification of Old Windsor: Architecture and Sexuality in the Circle of Horace Walpole," *Architectural History* 56 (2013): 99–133.
17. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility*, chap. 3; Peter Cryle and Lisa O'Connell, *Libertine Enlightenment: Sex, Liberty, and License in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 11–12.

- teenth Century (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Emma J. Clery, *The Feminization Debate in Eighteenth-Century England: Literature, Commerce and Luxury* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Philip John Carter, "Mollies, Fops, and Men of Feeling: Aspects of Male Effeminacy and Masculinity in Britain, c. 1700–1780" (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 1995); and Felicity Nussbaum, "Effeminacy and Femininity: Domestic Prose Satire and *David Simple*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 11, no. 4 (1999): 1–24.
18. *World* 16 (April 12, 1753): 86–93, at 93.
 19. For example, the admonitory definition in S. H., "The Character of a Coxcomb," *Lady's Magazine* 24 (1793): 173–74: "It is well-known that one of these butterfly-men loves no created being as much as himself. . . . Though he extravagantly admires no lady, still may he be the friend and patron of many. Superficial women court his attention, because they are pleased with his finery: and sensible women have pleasantry enough to indulge his vanity and self-approbation. His forms of politeness and good humor are conspicuous, and he will grant a lady everything, except his admiration and love."
 20. For a discussion of related issues in a later period, see Michael Hatt, "Space, Surface, Self: Homosexuality and the Aesthetic Interior," *Visual Culture in Britain* 8, no. 1 (2007): 105–28.
 21. Hardinge's and Macaulay's essays are conveniently reprinted in Sabor, *Horace Walpole: The Critical Heritage*, 289–92, 311–26. For further discussion of Walpole's sexuality in the historiography, see Marcie Frank, "Horace Walpole's Family Romances," *Modern Philology* 100, no. 3 (2003): 417–35.
 22. Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival* (London: John Murray, 1962), 46–65; Chris Brooks, *The Gothic Revival* (London: Phaidon, 1999), 59; and Michael Hall, introduction to *Gothic Architecture and Its Meanings, 1550–1830* (Reading: Spire Books, 2002), 7–26, at 11. Although not concerned with sexuality, a valuable overview of the problematics of the term "rococo" is Nicholas Newman, "In the Name of Rococo," *Res* 40 (2001): 129–34.
 23. Classically in McCarthy, *The Origins of the Gothic Revival*.
 24. Charles Locke Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival* (London: Longmans, Green, 1872). For example, Humphry Repton's (1752–1818) denigrating comments in his *Memoirs*, ed. Ann Gore and George Carter (Norwich, U.K.: Michael Russell, 2005), 132: "The house is one of the earliest attempts at Modern Gothic, by which I mean that heterogeneous mixture of abbey, castle and manor house for which bad taste had been introduced by the experiments of Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill. The public had pronounced this new style to be 'vastly pretty,' and the same mongrel breed of architecture has been propagated ever since." A related critique was advanced in the early nineteenth century about the additions to Audley End (Essex) of about 1770: "[the chapel was built] according to the fashion of the day, with pointed arches, clustered pilasters, and a groined ceiling, in the style called after its patron, *Strawberry Hill Gothic*, a mode of decoration sufficiently objectionable under any circumstances. . . ." Richard Lord Braybrooke, *The History of Audley End* (London, 1836), 127.
 25. See, for example, Sean Silver, "Visiting Strawberry Hill: Horace Walpole's Gothic Historiography," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 21, no. 4 (2009): 535–64.
 26. For a recent reassessment of Vasari's text, see Anne-Marie Sankovitch, "The Myth of the 'Myth of the Medieval': Gothic Architecture in Vasari's *Rinascita* and Panofsky's *Renaissance*," *Res* 20 (2002): 29–50. On the broader literary context, see Paul Frankl, *The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), esp. 359–70. For recent discussions of the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century writings on the Gothic in England, see Olivia Turner, "The Windows of This Church Are of Several Fashions: Architectural Form and Historical Method in John Aubrey's 'Chronologia Architectonica,'" *Architectural History* 54 (2011): 171–93.
 27. John Fletcher, "The Sins of the Fathers: The Persistence of Gothic," in *Romanticism and Post-Modernism*, ed. Edward Larrissy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 113–40, at 115.
 28. Susan Stewart, "Notes on Distressed Genres," *Journal of American Folklore* 104, no. 411 (1991): 5–31, at 11.
 29. For a recent discussion, see Nigel Llewellyn, "The *Anecdotes of Painting* and Continental European Art History," in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 137–49, although this text naturally explores painting rather than architecture. The periodization of architectural style, however, continued to be debated in Walpole's milieu. See, for example, John Soane Museum, London, MS 171 (Arco Acuto MS), an unpublished correspondence of June 29, 1784, between M. Agincourt and Horace Walpole on the origins of the pointed arch and the stylistic development of Gothic architecture.
 30. Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, 5 vols. (London: Shakespeare Press, 1828), vol. 1, chap. 5.
 31. For Walpole's ownership of these texts, see Allan T. Hazen, *A Catalogue of Horace Walpole's Library*, 3 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969). For Walpole's assessment of Spelman, see recently, Alison Shell, *Oral Culture and Catholicism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 33–37.
 32. Marion Roberts, *Dugdale and Hollar: History Illustrated* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2002).
 33. Graham Parry, *The Trophies of Time: English Antiquaries of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). These paradigms were to be influential for subsequent Gothicists, particularly A. W. N. Pugin. See Rosemary Hill, "Reformation to Millennium: Pugin's Contrasts in the History of English Thought," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (hereafter *JSAH*) 58, no. 1 (1999): 26–41.
 34. Joan Evans, *History of the Society of Antiquaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), 2.
 35. For the eighteenth-century historiography of the Romanesque and "Saxon" styles, see Tina Waldeier Bizarro, *Romanesque Architectural Criticism: A Prehistory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
 36. Most famously, perhaps, in the writings of A. W. N. Pugin, *Contrasts and the True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (Reading, U.K.: Spire Books 2003); John Ruskin, "The Nature of Gothic," in *The Stones of Venice*, 3 vols. (Boston: D. Estes, 1911), vol. 2; and William Morris, *Gothic Architecture: A Lecture for the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (Hammersmith, U.K.: Kelmscott Press, 1893).
 37. Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. 1, xvi–xvii.
 38. See, for example, Richard E. Quantance, "Walpole's Whig Interpretation of Landscaping History," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 9 (1979): 285–300; and Fiona Price, "Ancient Liberties? Rewriting the Historical Novel: Thomas Leland, Horace Walpole and Clara Reeve," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 1 (2011): 19–38.
 39. Samuel Klier, *The Goths in England: A Study in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Thought* (New York: Octagon Books, 1972); and R. J. Smith, *The Gothic Bequest: Medieval Institutions in British Thought, 1688–1863* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). These aspects of Strawberry Hill have been emphasized in David Duane McKinney, "History and Revivalism: Horace Walpole's Promotion of the Gothic Style of Architecture" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 1992); idem, "The Castle of My Ancestors: Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill," *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 13 (1990): 119–213; and Giles Worsley, "The Origins of the Gothic Revival: A Reappraisal," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6, no. 3 (1993): 105–50.
 40. Walpole to George Montagu, October 14, 1756, *HW Corr.*, vol. 9, 197–98.
 41. Walpole to Henry Seymour Conway, September 23, 1755, in *ibid.*, vol. 37, 406.
 42. Thomas Macaulay, quoted in Sabor, *Horace Walpole: The Critical Heritage*, 314.
 43. Judith Colton, "Merlin's Cave and Queen Caroline: Garden Art as Political Propaganda," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 10, no. 1 (1976): 1–20; and George Clarke, "Grecian Taste and Gothic Virtue: Lord Cobham's Gardening Programme and Its Iconography," *Apollo* 97 (1973): 566–71.
 44. Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. 1, 198–200.
 45. For example, Walpole's sensual response to the "Gothic" Hampton Court Palace: "It was moonlight and late, and very hot, and the lofty façade of the palace, and the trimmed yews and canal, made me fancy myself of a party in Gramont's time—so you don't wonder that by the help of imagination I never passed an evening more deliciously. When by the aid of some historic vision and local circumstance I can romance myself into pleasure, I know nothing that transports me so much. . . ."; Walpole to Lady Ossory, August 11, 1778, *HW Corr.*, vol. 33, 42. On Walpole's associationism, see Harney, "Strawberry Hill"; and, in general, John Archer, "The Beginnings of Association in British Architectural Esthetics," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 16, no. 3 (Spring 1983): 241–64; and Caroline van Eck, "The Splendid Effects of Architecture, and Its Power to Affect the Mind: The Workings of Picturesque Association," in *Landscapes of Memory and Experience*, ed. Jan Birksted (London: Spon Press, 2000), 107–27.
 46. Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. 1, 200.
 47. Thomas Warton, *The Poetical Works of the Late Thomas Warton*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1802), vol. 1, 54–62. For Warton's perception of Gothic architecture, see "Rev. Thomas Warton's Essay," in Warton et al., *Essays on Gothic Architecture*, 2nd ed. (London: Architectural Library, 1802), 1–15.
 48. Harriet Guest, "The Wanton Muse: Politics and Gender in Gothic Theory after 1760," in *Beyond Romanticism: New Approaches to Texts and*

- Contexts 1780–1832*, ed. Stephen Copley and John Whale (London: Routledge, 1992), 118–39; and George Haggerty, *Queer Gothic* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).
49. Whitney Davis, "Winckelmann Divided: Mourning the Death of Art History," in *Gay and Lesbian Studies in Art History* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 141–60, at 142, 144; and Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
 50. On the architecture of the castle of Otranto and its relation to Strawberry Hill, see W. S. Lewis, "The Genesis of Strawberry Hill," *Metropolitan Museum Studies* 5, no. 1 (1934): 57–92; Lee Morrissey, *From the Temple to the Castle: An Architectural History of British Literature, 1660–1760* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1999), 108–30; and Susan Bernstein, *Housing Problems: Writing and Architecture in Goethe, Walpole, Freud, and Heidegger* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 41–59. See also Matthew M. Reeve, "'A Gothic Vatican of Greece and Rome': Horace Walpole, Strawberry Hill and the Narratives of Gothic," in *Architecture and the Classical Tradition: From Pliny to Posterity: A Festschrift for Pierre Du Prey*, ed. Reeve (New York: Harvey Miller, forthcoming).
 51. For example, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's (*Between Men*, 92) epitome, "the Gothic novel crystallized for English audiences the terms of a dialectic between male homosexuality and homophobia"; Haggerty, *Queer Gothic*; Campbell, "I Am No Giant"; William Hughes and Andrew Smith, eds., *Queering the Gothic* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 2009); and Max Fincher, *Queering the Gothic in the Romantic Age* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
 52. Horace Walpole, second preface to *The Castle of Otranto*, ed. Wilmarth S. Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 9.
 53. Haggerty, *Queer Gothic*. Recent thinking about the 1764 writing of *The Castle of Otranto* suggests that it was a response to the public outing of Walpole and his relationship with his cousin Henry Seymour Conway in the same year. Mowl, *Horace Walpole*, 182–86. See subsequently Max Fincher, "Guessing the Mould: Homosocial Sins and Identity in Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*," *Gothic Studies* 3, no. 3 (2001): 229–45; and Campbell, "I Am No Giant," for revisions of this thesis.
 54. Fincher, "Guessing the Mould," 233.
 55. On the relation between Catholicism and same-sex desire in eighteenth-century Gothic writing, see Haggerty, *Queer Gothic*, 63–83; Dale Townsend, "'Love in a Convent': Or, Gothic and the Perverse Father of Queer Enjoyment," in Hughes and Smith, *Queering the Gothic*, 11–35; and Maria Purves, *The Gothic and Catholicism: Religion, Cultural Exchange and the Popular Novel, 1785–1829* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010).
 56. See, for example, Monk of the Order of St. Francis, *Nocturnal Revels; or, The history of the King's Place, and other modern nunneries: With the portraits of the most celebrated courtizans of this period*, 2 vols. (London, 1779); and, for a recent discussion, Domenic Janes, "Unnatural Appetites: Sodomitical Panic in Hogarth's *The Gate of Calais*, or, *O the Roast Beef of Old England* (1748)," *Oxford Art Journal* 35, no. 1 (2012): 19–31. This tradition was the subject of a recent exhibition at the Lewis Walpole Library at Yale University. See the pamphlet by Misty G. Anderson, *Sacred Satire: Lampooning Religious Belief in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Farmington, Conn.: Lewis Walpole Library, 2011).
 57. Clara Tuite, "Cloistered Closets: Enlightenment Pornography, the Confessional State, Homosexual Persecution, and *The Monk*," *Romanticism on the Net* 8 (1997): 22, <http://www.erudit.org/revue/ron/1997/v/n8/005766ar.html#reIno35> (accessed November 10, 2011).
 58. "Reasons for the Growth of Sodomy (1749)," reprinted in Ian McCormick, ed., *Secret Sexualities: A Sourcebook of 17th and 18th Century Writing* (London: Routledge, 1997), 138–39; and Ellen T. Harris, *Handel as Orpheus: Voice and Desire in the Chamber Cantatas* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 17–19. The formative influence of Walpole's grand tour has been discussed in Anne Williams, "Monstrous Pleasures: Horace Walpole, Opera, and the Conception of Gothic," *Gothic Studies* 2 (2000): 104–18; and idem, "Horace in Italy."
 59. Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 93; idem, *The Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 140; and David Hilliard, "UnEnglish and Unmanly: Anglo-Catholicism and Homosexuality," *Victorian Studies* 25, no. 2 (1982): 181–210.
 60. For Walpole's appraisal of Catholicism, see Mowl, *Horace Walpole*, 235–36; Alison Shell, *Oral Culture and Catholicism*, 33–36; and Patrick O'Malley, *Catholicism, Sexual Deviance, and Victorian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 14–15. For his youthful (1742) commentary on religious art, "Sermon on Painting," see Clare Haynes, *Pictures and Popery: Art and Religion in England, 1660–1760* (Ashgate, U.K.: Aldershot, 2006), 83–88.
 61. Walpole to Rev. William Cole, July 12, 1778, *HW Corr.*, vol. 2, 100.
 62. Walpole to George Montagu, August 23, 1765, *ibid.*, vol. 10, 168. See also Walpole to William Hamilton, June 19, 1774, vol. 35, 421, for his chapel-in-the-garden.
 63. Walpole, *Description*, 471, 473, 477. The hermaphrodite was employed in other contexts in the eighteenth-century house to articulate a "contested sexuality." On the hermaphrodite at Dashwood's West Wycombe, for example, see Wendy Frith, "Sexuality and Politics in the Gardens at West Wycombe and Medmenham Abbey," in *Bourgeois and Aristocratic Cultural Encounters in Garden Art, 1550–1850*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 289–309, at 309. On the myth of Hermaphroditus and Salamacis, see Vanda Zajko, "Listening with Ovid: Intersexuality, Queer Theory, and the Myth of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis," *Helios* 36, no. 2 (2009): 175–202. For the description of Walpole as a hermaphrodite, see below and n. 102.
 64. Walpole to Richard Bentley, November 3, 1754, *HW Corr.*, vol. 35, 185; and Walpole to Montagu, September 28, 1759, vol. 9, 102. Elsewhere, Walpole compares Strawberry Hill to the fabled house of the *Jerusalem liberata*: Walpole to Lady Ossory, October 21, 1778, vol. 33, 61.
 65. Walpole to Montagu, June 18, 1764, *ibid.*, vol. 10, 127; for Strawberry Hill as a "convent," see Walpole to Montagu, vol. 10, 167–68; and Timothy Mowl, "William Beckford: A Biographical Perspective," in *William Beckford, 1760–1844: An Eye for the Magnificent*, ed. Derek E. Ostergard (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 17–32. On Old Windsor, see T. Eustace Harwood, *Windsor Old and New* (London: Printed for the author, 1929), 315–34; and Reeve, "Dickie Bateman and the Gothicization of Old Windsor."
 66. Ellis Hanson, *Decadence and Catholicism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 7, 24–25.
 67. For recent overviews, see Evelyn Lord, *The Hell Fire Clubs: Sex, Satanism and Secret Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 97–113; and Jason M. Kelly, *The Society of the Dilettanti: Archaeology and Identity in the British Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 77–89.
 68. See John Wilkes, *The New Foundling Hospital for Wit* (London, 1786), 105. On Wilkes's association with the "Hell Fire Club," see Arthur H. Cash, *John Wilkes: The Scandalous Father of Civil Liberty* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 32–36.
 69. The cave entrance has been attributed to John Donowell. See Michael Symes, "Flintwork, Freedom and Fantasy: The Landscape at West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire," *Garden History* 33, no. 1 (2005): 1–30, at 14–15; Sir Francis Dashwood, *The Dashwoods of West Wycombe* (London: Aurum Press, 1987), 45; and Frith, "Sexuality and Politics." Dashwood's sexually satiric medievalism was celebrated in William Hogarth's *Sir Francis Dashwood at His Devotions*, ca. 1751, private collection. See Robin Simon, *Hogarth, France and British Art: The Rise of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Paul Holberton/Hogarth Arts, 2007), 206–16.
 70. Paget Toynbee, "Horace Walpole's Journals of Tours to Country Seats &c.," *Walpole Society* 16 (1928): 8–80, at 50; Lord, *The Hell Fire Clubs*, 101, 113; and Dashwood, *The Dashwoods*, 29.
 71. Anne McWhir, "The Gothic Transgression of Disbelief: Walpole, Radcliffe, Lewis," in *Gothic Fiction: Prohibition/Transgression*, ed. Kenneth Graham (New York: AMS Press, 1989), 29–48, at 37.
 72. The appeal of Catholicism is frequently addressed in Walpole's letters, and often not without some deliberate historical misinterpretations. For example, writing on May 22, 1777, of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, to his friend William Cole, he claimed that "its beauty penetrated me with a visionary longing to be a monk in it." *HW Corr.*, vol. 2, 46.
 73. Patrick R. O'Malley, "The Epistemology of the Cloister: Victorian England's Queer Catholicism," *GLQ: Gay and Lesbian Quarterly* 15, no. 4 (2009): 535–64, at 542, citing Hanson, *Decadence and Catholicism*, 7.
 74. This issue will be discussed at greater length in my forthcoming book.
 75. Fletcher, "The Sins of the Fathers."
 76. Whitney Davis, *Queer Beauty: Sexuality and Aesthetics from Winckelmann to Freud and Beyond* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); and Kathleen Lubey, "Erotic Interiors in Joseph Addison's Imagination," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 20, no. 3 (2008): 415–44.
 77. Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. 1, 194.
 78. *Ibid.*, 198.
 79. It is not a coincidence that "elegance" and "refinement" of taste and manners were part of current characterizations of the third sex. For a 1747 satire of the parallel revival of effeminized "taste" and the third sex of "pretty gentlemen" after the Restoration, see Edmund Goldsmid, ed., *The Pretty Gentlemen; or, Softness of Manners Vindicated* (Edinburgh, 1885).
 80. "Strawberry Hill," quoted in Sabor, *Horace Walpole: The Critical Heritage*, 251.

81. Homophobic tropes of physical and mental degeneracy were common in Walpole's posthumous critiques. See, for example, Ian Watts, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict, 1764–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 22–23. See also Goldsmit, *The Pretty Gentlemen*, 18, for the connection of the "weak" tastes with "weak" bodies of men of the third sex.
82. On these issues, see most recently Indira McEwan, *Vitruvius: Writing the Body of Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002); and George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, eds., *Body and Building: Essays on the Changing Relation of Body and Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005).
83. Vaughan Hart, "From Virgin to Courtesan in Early English Vitruvian Books," in *Paper Palaces: The Rise of the Renaissance Architectural Treatise*, ed. Hart and Peter Hicks (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 297–320, at 315.
84. Anderson, "Masculine and Unaffected"; and Vaughan Hart, *Inigo Jones: The Architect of Kings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), chaps. 5, 6. See also Isaac Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture* (London, 1768), 447, for the "plain, manly, noble orders" in comparison with the Gothic and Chinese styles; and Lord Chesterfield's 1749 advice to his son on the decorous use of classical ornament on a new facade—itsself a mirror of the physicality of the youthful aristocrat—cited and discussed in Nicholas Cooper, "Rank, Manners and Display: The Gentlemanly House, 1500–1700," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12 (2002): 291–310, at 309–10.
85. Still of great value on these issues is Ernst H. Gombrich, *The Sense of Order: A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art* (London: Phaidon, 1979), esp. 17–31.
86. James Forrester, *The Polite Philosopher; or, An Essay on that Art which Makes a Man Happy in Himself and Agreeable to Others* (Dublin, 1734), 25: "That true politeness we can only call, / which looks like Jones's Fabrick at Whitehall / Where just Proportion we, with Pleasure, see, / Tho built by Rule, yet from all Stiffness, free. / Tho grand, yet plain, magnificent, not fine, / The Ornaments adorning the Design, / It fills our Minds with rational Delight, / And pleases on Reflection, as at Sight."
87. Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 71–72.
88. Guest, "The Wanton Muse." On architecture, see Laurence, "Women Using Building," 301–2; Peter Smith, "Lady Oxford's Alterations at Welbeck Abbey, 1741–55," *Georgian Group Journal* 11 (2001): 133–68; Worsley, "Female Architectural Patronage," 150–53; and Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 257–90.
89. Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. 1, 202.
90. Walpole (ibid., xvii) argues for the supremacy of the licentiousness under Charles II over the austerities of the Presbyterians. In an unsigned letter in the *World* 160 (January 22, 1756), Walpole satirically puns on the reformation of license by Adam Fitz-Adam in the present in comparison to that in the medieval past.
91. On the Renaissance origins of this tradition, see Alina A. Payne, *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 15–21.
92. John Evelyn, *Parallel of the Ancient Architecture with the Modern* (London, 1707), 9. For Wren's critiques of Gothic churches, see Lydia M. Soo, *Wren's "Tracts" on Architecture and Other Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 34–92. In general, see E. S. de Beer, "Gothic: Origin and Diffusion of the Term: The Idea of Style in Architecture," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948): 143–62; and S. Lang, "The Principles of the Gothic Revival in England," *JSAH* 25 (1966): 240–67. Horace Walpole's library held all of the canonical volumes on architecture available in the period. Hazen, *A Catalogue of Horace Walpole's Library*. I have been able to examine many of these, but a complete study of Walpole's architectural books is now in need.
93. Colen Campbell, introduction to vol. 1 of *Vitruvius Britannicus; or, The British Architect*, 2 vols. (London, 1715), 1.
94. For example, the author of the homophobic satire *A View of the Town* (1735) described homosexuality in traditional terms as "inverting nature to a foul design" and lamented it as the product of a "licentious age"; *A View of the Town: In an Epistle to a Friend in the Country; A Satire* (London: R. Penny, 1735), 18–20. Lord Shaftesbury applied this term to the effeminate elaborations in contemporary theater, hoping that men of his class could "restrain the licentiousness of the theatre and make it contribute its assistance to the advancement of morality, and to the reformation of the age"; Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility*, 116. Broader discussions of the "corruptions of manners" by critics such as John Tinney suggested that if England was to avoid Rome's fall from "manly pride" into the "effeminacy" and "vanity of the East," it needed to abandon "that feeble, sumptuous and licentious effeminacy characteristic of the Eastern Emperors"; quoted in David Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 96. For advice to young men countering effeminacy and licentiousness, see James Fordyce, *Addresses to Young Men* (London, 1782): "Address XIII: On a Manly Spirit, as Opposed to Effeminacy," esp. 248, 250. Samuel Johnson's 1755–56 *Dictionary of the English Language* provided a moral reading of *licentious* as "unrestrained by law or morality" and *licentiousness* as "boundless liberty; contempt of just restraint."
95. On queerness and theatricality I am indebted to Thomas A. King, *The Gendering of Men, 1600–1750*, vol. 1, *The English Phallus* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004).
96. The house survives but its interiors have been substantially remodeled. I discuss the evidence for the house in Reeve, "Dickie Bateman and the Gothicization of Old Windsor." The fullest study to date is McCarthy, *The Origins of the Gothic Revival*, 104–10.
97. On the fribble, see Laurence Senelick, "Mollies or Men of Mode? Sodomy and the Eighteenth-Century London Stage," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1, no. 1 (1990): 33–67; and Thomas A. King, *The Gendering of Men, 1600–1750*, vol. 2, *Queer Articulations* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), esp. 64–69, 128–29, 131–34.
98. Lord Lyttelton to Elizabeth Montagu, August 11, 1759, British Library, London, RP 2377 (i), Letter 2. A partial transcription appears in Emily T. Climensohn, *Elizabeth Montagu: The Queen of the Bluestockings*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1906), vol. 2, 192; and Mrs. Delany to her sister, October 10, 1768, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mrs. Delany*, 3 vols. (London, 1862), vol. 1, 176–78.
99. David Garrick, *The Private Correspondence of David Garrick* (London, 1831), vol. 1, 138–39. W. S. Lewis was of the opinion that Thomas Gray was referred to here, but it is as likely to have been Bateman, since "fribble" appears to have been a nickname for him as much as a sexual type that applied to him. See *HW Corr.*, vol. 13, 39. Walpole was called a fribble in Macaulay's critique: "You wretched fribble! You shallow scorners of all that is noble! You are nothing but a heap of silly whims and conceited airs! Strip off one mask of affectation from your mind, and we are still as far as ever from the real man." Cited in Leslie Stephens, *Hours in a Library*, new ed., 3 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, 1892), vol. 1, 348.
100. Haggerty, "Strawberry Hill: Friendship and Taste," 77.
101. J. Campbell, "I Am No Giant," 245.
102. Guthrie's critique is in the same vein as the criticisms of Lord Hervey as a "hermaphrodite" and "a vile antithesis." See Jill Campbell, "Politics and Sexuality in Portraits of John, Lord Hervey," *Word and Image* 6, no. 4 (1990): 281–97. The homosexual significations of hermaphrodites are explored in Patrick Graille, *Les hermaphrodites: Aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001); and Alice Domurat Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sexuality* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 126–38. I have commented on this passage elsewhere in terms of the sexual hybridity of architecture: Matthew M. Reeve, "Gothic," *Studies in Iconography* 33 (2012): 233–46, at 240–43.
103. Walpole to Thomas Pitt, June 5, 1764, *HW Corr.*, vol. 40, 336–37.
104. Walpole to Conway, April 21, 1764, *HW Corr.*, vol. 38, 381. See also Fincher, "Guessing the Mould," 232–33, for discussion of this passage and for commentary on Walpole's masculinity in general.
105. See J. Campbell, "I Am No Giant," 254–55. For the complexity of the modern styles as "performative guises," that is, styles that reflect or even conceal subjectivities, see Stacey Sloboda, "Fashioning Bluestocking Conversation: Elizabeth Montagu's Chinese Room," in *Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors*, ed. Denise Amy Baxter and Meredith Martin (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2010), 129–48.
106. McCarthy, *The Origins of the Gothic Revival*, 33–37.
107. Walpole, *Description*, 395.
108. Marion Roberts, "Thomas Gray's Contribution to the Study of Medieval Architecture," *Architectural History* 36 (1993): 49–68.
109. For example, in an unpaginated insertion in Walpole's copy of the *Description* (LWL, MS 49 2522), Walpole quips on the distinctions between medieval and modern Gothic: "The year before the gallery was built, a stranger passed and asked an old farmer belonging to Mr Walpole, if Strawberry Hill was not an old house! He replied, 'yes, but my master designs to build one much older next year!'" On postmedieval constructions and paradoxes of Gothic and/as modernism in architecture and theory, see Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "'Gothico More Nondum Visa': The 'Modern Gothic' Architecture of Jan Blažej Santini Aichl," in *The Eloquent Artist: Essays on Art, Art Theory and Architecture, Sixteenth to Nineteenth Century* (London: Pindar, 2004), 371–91; Jacob Wamberg, "Ghiberti, Alberti, and the Modernity of Gothic,"

- Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 21 (1993): 173–211; and Ethan Matt Kavaler, *Renaissance Gothic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).
110. Gray to Warton, August 1763, *Correspondence of Thomas Gray*, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), vol. 2, 805; and Walpole to Mary Berry, October 17, 1794, *HW Corr.*, vol. 12, 137.
 111. Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival*, 47: "Ceilings, screens, niches &c., are all copied, or rather parodied, from existing examples, but with utter disregard for the original purpose of the design. To Lord Orford [Horace Walpole] Gothic was Gothic, and that sufficed."
 112. Walpole to Conway, September 23, 1755, *HW Corr.*, vol. 37, 406.
 113. Abby Coykendall, "Gothic Genealogies, the Family Romance, and Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 17, no. 3 (2005): 443–80; and Frank, "Horace Walpole's Family Romances." Parody was notably central to Stewart's construction of eighteenth-century "distressed genres" ("Notes on Distressed Genres," esp. 22–26).
 114. Walpole, *Description*, 454.
 115. Walpole to Hamilton, June 19, 1774, *HW Corr.*, vol. 35, 420.
 116. See most recently John Wilton-Ely, "Style and Serendipity: Adam, Walpole, and Strawberry Hill," *British Art Journal* 11, no. 3 (2011): 3–14.
 117. Walpole, *Description*, 469.
 118. There were some precedents for round, stone-vaulted Gothic spaces in postmedieval architecture, as, for example, at Longford Castle, Wiltshire, ca. 1590. See Mark Girouard, *Elizabethan Architecture: Its Rise and Fall, 1540–1640* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 438–39. Walpole very likely went to Longford Castle in 1759 and could have been inspired by its design. See Walpole to Lord Hertford, September 1, 1759, *HW Corr.*, vol. 38, 25.
 119. Walpole to Horace Mann, April 27, 1753, *HW Corr.*, vol. 20, 372.
 120. Barrett Kalter, "DIY Gothic: Thomas Gray and the Medieval Revival," *English Literary History* 70 (2003): 989–1019, at 990.
 121. Mowl, *Horace Walpole*, 143.
 122. J. Campbell, "I Am No Giant," 256. On these issues, see also Morrissey, *From the Temple to the Castle*, 121–23; Louisa Calè, "Gray's Ode and Walpole's China Tub: The Order of the Book and the Paper Lives of an Object," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 45, no. 1 (2011): 105–25; and Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003), esp. 61–64.
 123. Walpole to Conway, September 23, 1755, *HW Corr.*, vol. 37, 406; to George Nicol, July 6, 1790, vol. 42, 285; and to Elizabeth Vasey, June 18, 1784, vol. 42, 99.
 124. Walpole to Conway, June 8, 1747, *ibid.*, vol. 37, 269. Elsewhere, in a letter to Horace Mann of June 12, 1753 (*ibid.*, vol. 20, 382), Strawberry Hill becomes dematerialized and scaleless: "it is really incredible how small most of the rooms are. . . . For the rest of the house, I could send it to you in this letter as easily as the drawing [which accompanied it], only that I should have nowhere to live till the return of the post (!)"
 125. Walpole to Thomas Warton, August 21, 1762, *ibid.*, vol. 40, 255.
 126. Alexander Pope, quoted in Morris Brownell, *Alexander Pope and the Arts of Georgian England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 271; and Lord Shaftesbury, *Second Characters, or the Language of Forms*, ed. Benjamin Rand (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), 131. For *The Pretty Gentlemen*, see n. 79 above. On miniaturization as effeminate and licentious, see Crown, "British Rococo as Social and Political Style," 281.
 127. For example, Martin Myrone, "Fuseli to Frankenstein: The Visual Arts in the Context of the Gothic," in *Gothic Nightmares: Fuseli, Blake and the Romantic Imagination* (London: Tate Publishing, 2006), 31–42, 35, for Walpole's "notorious masterpiece of camp, the papier-mâché extravaganza of Strawberry Hill"; and Watts, *Contesting the Gothic*, 21, for Walpole as a progenitor of the camp sensibility.
 128. Walpole's "camp" was first noted in Susan Sontag's famous "Notes on Camp" (1964), in which she located the origins of camp in the eighteenth-century milieu of Pope and Walpole and in the products of the "modern style," including chinoiserie and the Gothic Revival (Strawberry Hill is mentioned parenthetically). Sontag, "Notes on Camp," reprinted in *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject*, ed. Fabio Cleto (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 53–65, with discussion in the author's introduction, 1–43. The historiography on camp is considerable. See in particular Moe Meyer, ed., *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (London: Routledge, 1994); and David Bergman, ed., *Camp Grounds: Style and Homosexuality* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993). I will consider the relation of Walpole's Gothic to the modernist aesthetics of camp in my forthcoming book.
 129. Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, "Singular Objects and Multiple Meanings," in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 87–97, at 87.
 130. *Gentleman's Magazine* 9 (1739): 641.
 131. Walpole to George Montagu, June 11, 1753, *HW Corr.*, vol. 9, 149.
 132. McKinney, "The Castle of My Ancestors," 199–214.
 133. *Ibid.*, 199.
 134. Stephen Bann, "Historicizing Horace," 121–22.
 135. Heraldry was both a serious pursuit and a playful pastime at Strawberry Hill. At a party at Strawberry Hill, Walpole and his friends playfully invented a number of blazons, including one for White's Club in London formed from the accoutrements of card playing and dice. Walpole and his friends also adopted mock medieval titles, including "Strawberry-king-at-arms" (John Chute) and "our chief Herald painter" (Richard Edgcombe). See Walpole to Montagu, April 20, 1756, *HW Corr.*, vol. 9, 186. For the commemoration of these men at Strawberry Hill, see below.
 136. Musing on this in a letter to Henry Conway concerned in part with "matrimonial satire," June 27, 1748, *HW Corr.*, vol. 37, 289–90, Walpole recounts some early visitors to Strawberry Hill, his sister Lady Mary Walpole and her husband Charles Churchill: "I only tell you this, to hint that my house will hold a married pair: indeed it is not quite large enough for people who lie like the Patriarchs with their whole genealogy, and manservants and maidservants and oxes and asses in the same chamber with them." Employing his well-worn trope on the house's diminutiveness, Walpole plays on the possibility—thus underlining the impossibility—of his home being able to hold a married couple.
 137. For an English translation, see Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey et al., 24 vols. (London: Hogarth Press, 1952–74), vol. 9, 237–41.
 138. Whitney Davis, "Queer Family Romance in Collecting Visual Culture," *GLQ: Gay and Lesbian Quarterly* 17, nos. 2–3 (2011): 309–29, at 323; and previously, *idem*, "Homoeerotic Art Collection from 1750–1920," *Art History* 24, no. 2 (2001): 47–77.
 139. Lewis, "The Genesis of Strawberry Hill," 69–70; and Walpole to Mann, June 12, 1753, *HW Corr.*, vol. 20, 381, esp. n. 11.
 140. Walpole, *Description*, 442.
 141. As though glossing the imagery of the library ceiling, Walpole quipped to the Countess of Ossory, "Thus you see, Madam, whichever way I turn myself, I have royal or Fitzroyal connections [!]" December 9, 1784, *HW Corr.*, vol. 33, 454.
 142. Walpole to Mann, June 12, 1753, *ibid.*, vol. 20, 381; and Stuart Phyrre, "The Strawberry Hill Armoury," in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 221–34.
 143. Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, cat. no. 99.
 144. Emma J. Clery, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 75–76. Here as elsewhere, Walpole's perspectives were double-edged. On his return from the grand tour, Horace spent more time with his father at Houghton and prepared the catalog of his father's collection, the *Aedes Walpolianae* (1743). "Despite their marked differences in taste, temperament, and physical appearance, he would remain a stout defender of Sir Robert's political career." Peter Sabor, "Horace Walpole: His Life and Character," in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 1–13, at 3.
 145. Frank, "Horace Walpole's Family Romances"; and Coykendall, "Gothic Genealogies."
 146. Michael Snodin, "Going to Strawberry Hill," in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 41.
 147. For Walpole's account of the Blue Bedchamber, see his *Description*, 435–36. The known portraits are cataloged in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, cat. nos. 39–44, with additional biography. John Giles Eccardt was the subject of Walpole's poetic epistle "The Beauties" of 1746. See Walpole to Eccardt, July 1746, *HW Corr.*, vol. 30, 324–29.
 148. Haggerty, "Strawberry Hill: Friendship and Taste," 84.
 149. For Charles Hanbury Williams's portrait (current location unknown), see John Kerslake, *Early Georgian Portraits* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1977), no. 383 n. 3. The play is printed in Charles Hanbury Williams, *The Works of the Right Honourable Sir Chas. Hanbury Williams*, ed. Horace Walpole, 3 vols. (London, 1822), vol. 1, 72–89. The evidence that Williams holds this text is derived from the 1842 sale catalog (George Robins, *A Catalogue of the Classic Contents of Strawberry Hill Collected by Horace Walpole* [London, 1842], unpaginated); it is not noted in Walpole's 1774 or 1784 *Description*.
 150. Deborah Cherry and Jennifer Harris, "Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and the Seventeenth-Century Past: Gainsborough and Van Dyck," *Art History* 5 (1982): 287–309; and Kate Retford, "Sensibility and Geneal-

- ogy in the Eighteenth-Century Family Portrait: The Collection at Kedleston Hall," *Historical Journal* 46, no. 3 (2003): 533–60.
151. Walpole, *Description*, 436.
 152. For example, Walpole commissioned Joshua Reynolds to paint a group portrait called *Out of Town Party: A Conversation* (Bristol City Art Gallery, Bristol, U.K.) in 1759 featuring George Selwyn, George James Williams, and Richard Edgcumbe. This is illustrated in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, fig. 144. Bann ("Historicizing Horace," 126) considers this image of Walpole's friends "a testimony to the fact that Walpole wished such cultural bonds to be placed on record."
 153. These drawings are described in lot 1 of the twenty-first day of the Strawberry Hill sale, May 18, 1842. Robins, *A Catalogue of the Classic Contents of Strawberry Hill*. For discussion of the sale, see Stephen Clarke, "The Strawberry Hill Sale of 1842: 'The Most Distinguished Gem That Ever Adorned the Annals of Auctions,'" in Snodin, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 261–74. These images are also curiously described as "later additions" in Thomas Kirgate's annotated proof copy of the 1784 *Description*. The manuscript, now in a private collection, is described in Clarke, "'Lord God! Jesus! What a House!': Describing and Visiting Strawberry Hill," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33, no. 3 (2010): 357–80, at 377: "Six Portraits, with Pen and Ink, of Mr Walpole, Mr Chute, Mr Spence, &c drawn by Rosalba, when those Gentlemen were in Italy."
 154. Francis Russell, "Drawings by Rosalba," *Burlington Magazine* 139, no. 1128 (1997): 196–98. For discussion of the erotic significance of these later finished pastels, see Mowl, *Horace Walpole*, 78, 100.
 155. George S. Rousseau, *Perilous Enlightenment: Pre- and Post-Modern Discourses, Sexual, Historical* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1991), 174–75, 179. The sexual dimensions of Walpole's grand tour have also been explored in Williams, "Horace in Italy"; and Mowl, *Horace Walpole*, 38–108.
 156. For Bateman's portrait gallery, see *Windsor and Its Environs* (Windsor: Newbery and Carnan/J. Blakeney, 1768), 83; Reeve, "Dickie Bateman and the Gothicization of Old Windsor"; and Maurice Howard, *The Vyne, Hampshire* (London: National Trust, 2006), 55.
 157. For the influence of Walpole and Strawberry Hill on eighteenth-century Gothic architecture, see McCarthy, *The Origins of the Gothic Revival*; and McKinney, "History and Revivalism," esp. 250–79. On Walpole's Strawberry Hill as a "court," see Gray, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, 775.
 158. The fullest account of their patronage to date is McCarthy, *The Origins of the Gothic Revival*. The literary references are extensive. A typical statement of this form of emulative patronage is Gray's commentary (*Correspondence*, vol. 1, 406–7) on Warton's new interiors, stating with approval that his friend had "enter[ed] into the spirit of Strawberry-Castle."
 159. Walpole to Mary Berry, July 23, 1790, *HW Corr.*, vol. 11, 98; August 27, 1789, vol. 11, 59; September 27, 1794, vol. 12, 111; October 17, 1794, vol. 12, 137. On Lee Priory, see John Martin Robinson, *James Wyatt (1746–1813), Architect to George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 220–23. George Chamberlayne's correspondence with Barrett is now LWL MSS File 18. It explores their conversion to Catholicism and their exploits in Naples in the sodomitic circle around the architect Lord Findlater, who was exiled from Scotland for homosexual offences. For Findlater's work, see A. A. Tait, "Lord Findlater, Architect," *Burlington Magazine* 128, no. 1003 (1986): 737–41.
 160. Walpole, *Description*, 452, 504. Walpole also displayed the architectural achievements of Henry Conway in the Beauchamp Closet. See *ibid.*, 504, 428. "A landscape in Indian ink, with Italian, Gothic and Chinese buildings; by Mr Bentley, in his best style" likely refers to Bateman's Old Windsor prior to Bentley's Gothicization from 1758. It is beyond the bounds of this article to explore fully the significances of queer family romance for Strawberry Hill. A fuller study would need to account for not only representations of Walpole's queer family but also the objects that they owned, collected, shared, bought, and gave to each other, as well as the significance that they had for Walpole in assembling his collection.
 161. See Neil Levine, "Castle Howard and the Emergence of the Modern Architectural Subject," *JSAH* 62, no. 3 (2003): 326–51. See also Rudolph Wittkower, "Classical Theory and Eighteenth-Century Sensibility," in *Palladio and English Palladianism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982), 193–204; Karen Lang, "The Body in the Garden," in Birksted, *Landscapes of Memory and Experience*, 107–27; and Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England*.
 162. Mowl, *Horace Walpole*, 122–24. On Beckford, see Whitney Davis, "The Site of Sexuality: William Beckford's Fonthill Abbey, 1780–1824," in *Archaeologies of Sexuality*, ed. Robert A. Schmidt and Barbara L. Voss (London: Routledge, 2000), 104–13; and *idem*, "Queer Family Romance"; on Payne Knight, see Andrew Ballantyne, *Architecture, Landscape and Liberty: Richard Payne Knight and the Picturesque* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Davis, *Queer Beauty*, 51–82.
 163. See Guest, "The Wanton Muse." Queer readings have also been advanced for aspects of the nineteenth-century Gothic Revival. See, for example, Douglass Shand-Tucci, *Boston Bohemia, 1881–1900* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), esp. 272–369. I am grateful to Sherry Lindquist for drawing Tucci's work to my attention.
 164. For discussions of architecture and sexuality in eighteenth-century England, see Lisa L. Moore, "Queer Gardens: Mary Delany's Flowers and Friendship," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39, no. 1 (2005): 49–70; Davis, "The Site of Sexuality"; and Stephen Daniels, "Gothic Gallantry: Humphrey Repton, Lord Byron, and the Sexual Politics of Landscape Gardening," 311–36, and Frith, "Sexuality and Politics," both in Cohen, *Bourgeois and Aristocratic Cultural Encounters in Garden Art, 1550–1850*.

