

## 1: Ann Radcliffe – Delphi Classics

*Valancourt Books' recent publication of Mrs. Radcliffe's Gaston de Blondville is a publication long overdue. The novel, originally published in , three years after the mistress of the Gothic's death, was actually written by her in , but then suppressed by her from publication.*

Harriet Blodgett Emily Vindicated: No one assumes that influence may have flowed the opposite way, from feminist Wollstonecraft to put it in our contemporary terms of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman to Radcliffe. However, it is noteworthy that Emily St. Conceivably Radcliffe was influenced by Wollstonecraft. Alternatively, both reflect the current of eighteenth-century feminist protest that demanded respect for female rationality. In either case, Emily needs to be allowed a more intelligent mind and spirited independence than is ordinarily granted her. When Walter Allen describes Emily as "incarnate sensibility," Smith long ago reminded critics that Udolpho is an open "attack on the cult of sensibility", deploring its excesses and cautioning Emily against them, the misguided tendency to regard Emily as purely a creature of feeling persists. Of course Emily has an overactive imagination and fantasizes more mysteries than actually exist—the progress of the plot depends on her doing so. Nonetheless, her heart does not run away with her head, nor does she let herself be put upon. The suggestion will not seem so strange now that recent criticism has shown how often the Gothic novel contains elements of feminist protest. The Gothic, as Katherine Ellis says, by temporarily brushing away all social conventions made possible bold statements that the decorum of the realistic novel forbade. Ellis argues that Charlotte Smith uses Gothic machinery to attack the tyrannical institution of the bourgeois family. Investigating the paradoxical role of sensibility in restricting women yet simultaneously furnishing them power and an arena for action, Radcliffe, says Poovey, uncovers "the root cause of the late eighteenth-century ideological turmoil, the economic aggressiveness currently victimizing defenseless women of sensibility" Yet Radcliff, Poovey assumes, does not suggest an alternative to paternalistic society but rather retreats into idealization. Spencer discusses The Romance of the Forest, for example, as a "fantasy of female power, through which women could escape in imagination from the reality of their oppression" Radcliffe achieves this principally by feminizing her hero with a share in the "womanly virtues" he is remarkable for his "passive fortitude"—and creating a haven for female virtue in a "romance-world of idealized paternal authority" For psychoanalytic critics such as Claire Kahane, the Gothic as evidenced by Radcliffe confronts the mother imago, pursuing the "mystery of female identity, teeming with archaic fantasies of power and vulnerability" that are encouraged by the cultural divisions of patriarchal society Tania Modleski likewise believes that Udolpho in particular is blocked out in terms of the vicissitudes of female psychic life, from its oedipal start through its maternal separation-anxiety problems. Even more pertinently, Leona F. Sherman, believes that Radcliffe uses the Gothic to express her repressed discontent with her inhibited middle-class female life: Marriage enforced that dependency which she was so ambivalent about but so did her entire culture in its every aspect. Restriction must have bred resentment, and in the course of her novel, she reveals her feelings of unrest, ambivalence, passion, hostility, and rebellion—the whole gamut of her awakened unconscious desires which were impossible for her to admit or act upon in her world. Moreover, it is not even necessary to probe latent content or assume Oedipal conflict or invoke Nancy Chodorow to see that Radcliffe was impatient with female gendering when she conceived the heroine of Udolpho. The manifest portrayal of Emily herself is informative. Udolpho makes its first overtures towards feminism through the particular focus it gives its literary form. As the plot goes, Emily, who has been gently reared by her father at an idyllic estate, La Vallee, in southern France in the late sixteen century, is cast by circumstances out of her Eden of innocence into the world of evil and self-interest at sophisticated Venice and then at the gloomy castle of Udolpho in the Apennines. Strong-minded, she never collapses in self-pity or misanthropy under her own trials. However, Emily errs not only in imagining ghosts, murders, and incredible horrors the most notable one is a presumable corpse hidden behind a black veil which turns out to be only a decayed waxen image crawling with worms but also in attributing to Montoni a more sinister personality than he actually has. He is not the monster her imagination creates but a mere brigand, a leader of condottieri with a useful mountain stronghold. Having

escaped his clutches and returned to France for the final stage of her education, Emily discovers certain important secrets in the past history of her family and unravels some of the mysteries of Udolpho. She surmounts her severest trial in acknowledging the moral shortcomings of Valancourt who has had a mistress and impetuously gambled away his good name during her absence without losing her love for him. Discovering, finally, that he has been only rash and generous-natured rather than truly dissolute, she marries him. From innocence of evil to hastiness to exaggerate evil and even give it supernatural status, she has learned through her experiences to maintain her ideals but temper them to the reality of the fallen world, relegating evil to its ordinary human manifestations. Scorning female coquetry and frivolity, "despising that weak elegance of mind, exquisite sensibility, and sweet docility of manner" 9 expected of women, and contemptuous of their definition as creatures of feeling, Wollstonecraft makes her goal to encourage them to become fully rational human beings superior to their sexual natures: I wish to persuade women to endeavour to acquire strength, both of mind and body, and to convince them that the soft phrases, susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste, are almost synonymous with epithets of weakness, and that those beings who are only the objects of pity and that kind of love, which has been termed its sister, will soon become objects of contempt. She insists, therefore, that "from their infancy women. Even as "To become respectable, the exercise of their understanding is necessary, there is no other foundation for independence of character" 51 , so "the most perfect education. To please us, to be useful to us, to make us love and esteem them,. Prominent in Udolpho is the very unRousseauistic education given Emily a striking choice of name by her father. Wishing her to be a virtuous person, we are told at length at the outset, M. Aubert "endeavoured to strengthen her mind; to inure her to habits of self-command; to teach her to reject the first impulses of her feelings" 1: In fact, we are told, he "cultivated her understanding with the most scrupulous care" because "a well-informed mind is the best security against the contagion of folly and of vice: The vacant mind is ever on the watch for relief, and ready to plunge into error to escape from the languor of idleness. Store it with ideas, teach it the pleasure of thinking; and the temptations of the world without will be counteracted by the gratifications derived from the world within. The daughter he rears is a credit to his teaching, neither coquette nor social butterfly, who carries books with her for sustenance when she travels. Her beauty touched with the languid delicacy of illness, gained from sentiment what it lost in bloom. The negligence of her dress, loosened for the purpose of free respiration, discovered those glowing charms, which her auburn tresses, that fell in profusion over her bosom, shaded but could not conceal. Adeline is a largely unchanging prop in a plot whose male characters are more important than she is except that she provides them an object to victimize or to save. As her seventeenth-century story goes, she is the convent-reared daughter of a man who, after the death of his heiress-wife, has been murdered by his brother, the Marquis de Montalt, for his wealth, though Adeline knows nothing about her true parentage. When her supposed father attempts to have her killed because she refuses the veil, her intended murderers in pity hand her over to Pierre de la Motte, a fugitive from his creditors, to take away with him. She remains hidden with his family at a ruined abbey deep in the forest until he not realizing the relationship schemes to hand her over to the uncle who killed her father and has designs on her virginity and then on her life. But she escapes with the help of the chevalier Theodore Peyrou, who has fallen in love with her. When finally the villain is unmasked by various males, her true parentage revealed, and her inheritance restored, Adeline weds Theodore. She has filled her role by being the gentle maiden and perfect victim of patriarchal myth with downcast eyes, who entered the room with a modest blush and a timid air. Twice as inclined to cry and faint as Emily, she weeps increasingly as the book proceedsâ€”even as Emily cries less and less as her story advances. Although both find the courage to run away from their persecutors when their circumstances become critical and both are brave enough to explore secret places to gratify their curiosityâ€”and keep the plot goingâ€”it is Emily, alert to her surroundings, who is the constant sleuth; only once does Adeline check out a secret room. She has had a dream of a beseeching man; she accidentally finds the secret chamber in the abbey in which he was immured and killed; he will later prove to have been her father. Escapes aside, only once does Adeline show real initiative, and that is of the nurturing kind. When Theodore is wounded while resisting arrest because of her, she doubts the doctor who attends his illness and finds him a better physician. Otherwise, whereas Emily seeks for solutions within her reach, "the persecuted

Adeline" 2: Repeatedly Emily" with a strength of mind that refused to yield to grief while any duty required her activity" 2: She also puts men in their place. We are solicited to admire her for her wits and the edge they give her, as when she opposes a bullying uncle, M. Quesnel, so effectively through "the mild dignity of a superior mind" that she compels him "to feel his own inferiority" 1: For the sake of their future reputation and out of family duty, before leaving for Italy she refuses an immediate clandestine marriage urged by her suitor Valancourt, although she loves him deeply. Removed to Venice by the villainous Montoni, she resists spiritedly the marriage proposal of obnoxious Count Morano and later at Udolpho, an attempted rape despite the combined efforts of her relations and Montoni to force her into the suit. In a characteristic response, "considering that reflection could neither release her from her melancholy situation nor enable her to bear it with greater fortitude, she tried to divert her anxiety, and took down from her little library a volume of her favourite Ariosto" 1: Montoni nonetheless, and defying his wrath, pertinaciously forces Montoni to give the dying woman at least minimal consideration. Although Montoni subjects Emily to psychological torment, she staunchly resists his demand that she sign over to him the properties inherited from her aunt" but not when it becomes very evidently more practical to yield "to preserve her life, perhaps her honour" 2: Though Montoni holds the power of life and death over her, "she felt the full extent of her own superiority to Montoni, and despised the authority which, till now, she had only feared" 2: In the end she bests him by fleeing to France where she soon reclaims her properties by Venetian court order. She accepts the help of another prisoner, M. Du Pont, in effecting her escape but persistently refuses his suit for her hand even though he proves to be a very eligible, and secretly a long-time, devoted, admirer. She has the power of refusal and no sense that she is obliged to marry other than by choice. In France, where she transacts the business matters of her estate capably, she finds a dishonored Valancourt who has led a profligate life in her absence; therefore she refuses his advances even though she has longed for him. He must meet her terms for a "good" man, and if she cannot ask that he be chaste, she can insist that he be spiritually pure. Only when Valancourt is vindicated and therefore proven worthy of her" he had gambled away his small fortune to help someone else and sincerely repents his temporary fling with dissoluteness" does she agree to marry him. More important, she is the very model of the self-respecting and stubborn female whose goal is to do as reason bids her to and not be coerced by others. She acknowledges as superiors or equals only those whose moral worth entitles them to such rank. Wollstonecraft could have approved of Emily. Her solution is retreat into an idealized pastoral world, where womanly virtue and patriarchal authority are no longer in conflict" It is a novel addressed to a world of Emilys, telling them that they must learn to endure their frustrations, unhappinesses, and losses, for that is all they can do. She warns them against action and denies any possibility of change. She preaches complacency, daydreams, books, and religion as the only possible outlets and sources of reward. Yet she is interesting precisely because she gives one some sense of the vast number of women of her day who were neither rebels nor slaves but rather had learned" like so many women even now" to accommodate themselves to a patriarchal culture without yielding their belief in intrinsic female worth; therefore they could be responsive to feminist winds of change without being swept away by them. Radcliffe was inspired to depict a role model in Emily of a female who has too much self-respect and wits to be a male plaything or a mere pawn. Such a readily acceptable image may have been more useful to raise the consciousness of the mass of her female readers whether or not such was her goal than a more aggressive heroine would have been. By the excesses of the Terror had affrighted enough English hearts to make rebels unpalatable, but even without that shift, the mass of women have historically shown themselves bred to be conservative. Her other distinguished achievements in characterization are interestingly her male villains such as Montoni or Schedoni of *The Monk*, the novel which followed *Udolpho*. Does Radcliffe owe something in Emily to Wollstonecraft? Radcliffe was a well-read woman even as Wollstonecraft was a much-read one before counter-revolutionary reaction of the nineties to French political excesses made her radical ideas suspect. Thus Radcliffe may have known *A Vindication*, directly or indirectly; there is no reason to suppose, out of hand, that she would have been uninterested in a book that aroused a great deal of comment. Radcliffe does show some indebtedness in Gothic techniques to Sophia Lee, a writer with feminist sympathies, and having grown up in Bath, probably even attended the school run by Lee and her sister; admiring Lee could have encouraged her to read Wollstonecraft.

Moreover, although the standard portrait of Radcliffe, owing much to T. The Wollstonecraft of *A Vindication* and Radcliffe share a common ground in their faith in rationality. Radcliffe is always staunchly the proponent of reason; in all her novels except the posthumous *Gaston de Blondville*, the apparently supernatural is shown to be rationally explicable, and credulous superstition is reprimanded. But the link between the two writers is more than an overall respect for reason. Her *Emily* is its triumph—though assuredly not for an exquisite sensibility.

### 2: Editions of Gaston de Blondville by Ann Radcliffe

*Gaston de Blondville [Annotated] (Valancourt Classics) Published August 13th by Valancourt Books Kindle Edition, pages.*

Plot introduction[ edit ] The *Mysteries of Udolpho* is a quintessential Gothic romance, replete with incidents of physical and psychological terror; remote, crumbling castles; seemingly supernatural events; a brooding, scheming villain; and a persecuted heroine. Modern editors point out that only about one-third of the novel is set in the eponymous Gothic castle, [3] and that the tone and style vary markedly between sections of the work. Radcliffe also added extensive descriptions of exotic landscapes in the Pyrenees and Apennines, and of Venice, none of which she visited [3] and for details of which she relied on contemporary travel books, leading to the introduction of several anachronisms. Set in southern France and northern Italy, the novel focuses on the plight of Emily St. Aubert, a young French woman who is orphaned after the death of her father. Emily suffers imprisonment in the castle Udolpho at the hands of Signor Montoni, an Italian brigand who has married her aunt and guardian Madame Cheron. Emily also investigates the mysterious relationship between her father and the Marchioness de Villeroi, and its connection to the castle at Udolpho.

Plot summary[ edit ] Emily St. Aubert is the only child of a landed rural family whose fortunes are now in decline. Emily and her father share an especially close bond, due to their shared appreciation for nature. She accompanies him on a journey from their native Gascony, through the Pyrenees to the Mediterranean coast of Roussillon, over many mountainous landscapes. During the journey, they encounter Valancourt, a handsome man who also feels an almost mystical kinship with the natural world. Emily and Valancourt quickly fall in love. Her aunt marries Montoni, a dubious nobleman from Italy. After discovering that Morano is nearly ruined, Montoni brings Emily and her aunt to his remote castle of Udolpho. Emily fears to have lost Valancourt forever. Morano searches for Emily and tries to carry her off secretly from Udolpho. Emily refuses to join him because her heart still belongs to Valancourt. In the following months, Montoni threatens his wife with violence to force her to sign over her properties in Toulouse, which, upon her death, would otherwise go to Emily. Many frightening but coincidental events happen within the castle, but Emily is able to flee from it with the help of her secret admirer Du Pont, who was a prisoner at Udolpho, and the servants Annette and Ludovico. Returning to the estate of her aunt, Emily learns that Valancourt went to Paris and lost his wealth. In the end, she takes control of the property and is reunited with Valancourt.

Characters[ edit ] Emily St. Much of the action takes place from her point of view. Emily has a deep appreciation for the sublimity of nature, which she shares with her father. She is unusually beautiful and gentle with a slight, graceful figure, fond of books, nature, poetry, and music. She is described as extremely virtuous, obedient, resourceful, brave, sensitive, and self-reliant. Her sensitivity leads her to dwell often in tears on past misfortunes and to imagine, with dread, troubles that might befall her in the future. She is given to writing verse, selections of which punctuate the novel. He warns Emily on his death bed to not become a victim of her feelings but to acquire command over her emotions. The younger brother of the Count Duvarney, Valancourt forms an attachment to Emily while travelling with her and her father through the Pyrenees. He is a dashing, enthusiastic young man with a noble character, on furlough from the army when he meets Emily. Aubert considers Valancourt a desirable match for Emily, though Valancourt lacks wealth. Madame Cheron later Madame Montoni: Madame Cheron is a selfish, worldly, vain, wealthy widow living on her estate near Toulouse when Emily becomes her ward after St. She is contemptuous and cold, even cruel, to Emily at first, and thinks solely of herself: The prototypical Gothic villain. He is cold and often cruel to Emily, who believes him to be a captain of banditti. Introduced to Emily by Montoni, who commands that she marry Morano. Emily refuses but Morano continues to pursue her in Venice and later Udolpho. Morano attempts to abduct Emily twice, but both attempts fail. A maid who accompanied Madame Cheron from France. Annette is inclined to exaggeration and superstition, and is talkative, but she is faithful, affectionate and honest. She is in love with Ludovico and often gets locked in closets. He falls in love with Annette and provides assistance to Emily. He is more sensible than Annette, and is both brave and quick-thinking. He is the locker of closets. Cavigni, Verezzi, and Bertolini: Cavaliers

and friends of Montoni. Cavigini is sly, careful, and flatteringly assiduous. Verezzi is a "man of some talent, of fiery imagination, and the slave of alternate passions. He was gay, voluptuous, and daring; yet had neither perseverance or true courage, and was meanly selfish in all his aims. An assassin described as the "chief favourite of Montoni". He is cruel, suspicious, relentlessly vengeful, and merciless. She was married to the Marquis de Villeroi, but becomes estranged from him and dies thanks to the intervention of Laurentini di Udolpho. She was sister to M. Signora Laurentini di Udolpho also called Sister Agnes: A nun living in the French monastery of St. She dies in the final volume of the novel, whereupon she is revealed to be Signora Laurentini, heiress of the house of Udolpho. She estranged the Marquis de Villeroi, her first love, from his wife, after which she retired to the monastery to live in guilt. She divides her fortune between Emily and the wife of M. The Marquis de Villeroi: Lover of Laurentini before he married the Marchioness. He leaves the Chateau-le-Blanc after her death. Francis Beauveau, Count De Villefort: Heir to the mansion at Chateau-le-Blanc in Languedoc. He inherits the chateau from his friend the Marquis de Villeroi. He has two children from a previous marriage, Blanche and Henri, and is married to the Countess De Villefort. A sweet young woman who has a deep appreciation for the sublime and writes poetry. She resides at Chateau-le-Blanc and befriends Emily, with whom she shares many interests. A servant at the Chateau-le-Blanc. She is superstitious, like Annette, but less inclined to be found in a closet. He steals a miniature of Emily belonging to her mother, which he later returns. He helps Emily and her companions escape from Udolpho. He is a friend of De Villefort, who supports his suit. When Emily steadfastly rejects him, he turns his attentions to Blanche, but is thwarted again when she marries St. He is cold and unfeeling towards Emily until she becomes an heiress. She initially approves of the match between Valancourt and Emily, but finally decides that there are better prospects for both of them. An officer in the French service, around fifty years old. Emily meets him at the convent. His wife inherits the castle at Udolpho. He marries her at the end of the novel. The Veiled Picture; or, The Mysteries of Gorgono is a chapbook abridgement of The Mysteries of Udolpho preserving most characters and plot elements, but dispensing with details and descriptions. OUP, , p. Accessed 4 June

### 3: Gaston de Blondville by Ann Radcliffe

*King Henry III is holding court at Kenilworth. Festivities abound, wine flows copiously, and spirits are high as the King and his subjects prepare to celebrate the nuptials of Sir Gaston de Blondville.*

### 4: Gaston de Blondville () - Valancourt Books

*Ann Radcliffe's last work, published posthumously. The most significant portion of this publication is the novel Gaston de Blondville, written in , a historical Gothic tale about a visit by Henry III to Kenilworth Castle.*

### 5: Harriet Blodgett

*Gaston de Blondville is an Gothic novel by noted British author Ann Radcliffe.. Plot summary. Set in the 13th century court of England's King Henry III the novel centers around the wedding of the title character.*

### 6: The Mysteries of Udolpho - Wikipedia

*Six Gothic Dramas (De Monfort, Orra, The Dream, The Family Legend, The Phantom, Witchcraft) by Joanna Baillie Sleeping Waters (Valancourt Classics) by John Trevena The Snake's Pass by Bram Stoker.*

### 7: Valancourt Classics | Awards | LibraryThing

*Gaston de Blondville is a Gothic novel by noted English author Ann Radcliffe, published posthumously in , three years after Radcliffe's death.. Plot summary. Set in the 13th-century court of England's King Henry III, the novel centers*

*around the wedding of the title character.*

### 8: Gaston de Blondville : Wikis (The Full Wiki)

*Gaston de Blondville () Ann Radcliffe, Edited by Francis Chiu "A scholarly edition with a selection of contemporary reviews and extracts from various key reformist players, Gaston de Blondville supports the recent opinion that Radcliffe's narrative politics are more radical than has previously been considered.*

### 9: Valancourt Books added to Publishers - The Neglected Books Page

*Gaston de Blondville by Ann Ward Radcliffe, , available at Book Depository with free delivery worldwide.*

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