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The Americanization of conventional gothic elements in James Fenimore cooper's The pathfinder

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Abstract
The Americanization of typical gothic components and tactics by Cooper in The Pathfinder is the focus of this study. That Cooper uses the American wilderness as a stand-in for the more common European gothic settings like castles and monasteries is implied. Characters experience dread and panic due to the gothic environment of the American wilderness, which is characterised by an air of danger and peril. The scary and untamed American wilderness makes Mabel Dunham and her friends nervous and unsure the whole way through the book. The gothic quality of the American woods is emphasised via Cooper's use of suspense and the sublime. Cooper modifies gothic elements for an American context, but instead of the usual spectres and ghosts, he uses Native Americans. The abhorrence and cruelty of Cooper's Indians, according to this article, are just as terrifying as these unexplained ghosts. Their viciousness and depravity heighten the gothic ambiance of the American woods and heighten the protagonists' sensations of horror. Those ghostly beings are said to resemble goblins due to their rapid appearances and disappearances. By using uniquely American materials and components, this thesis contends that Cooper gives the gothic style a new lease of life in the United States.

Keywords: the *Pathfinder*, American wilderness, gothic, danger, threat, fear, terror, Indians

Introduction

J. Fenimore Cooper In the middle of the nineteenth century, one of the most popular and influential American books was The Pathfinder: or, the Inland Sea by James M. Cooper. This is the fourth installment of the legendary frontiersman known as Leather stocking, and it was published in 1840. The tales revolve on his life and experiences. Despite Cooper's hero's death and burial in an Indian hamlet on the western plains at the conclusion of The Prairie, he is revived in The Pathfinder and resurrected at about the same age as he is in The Last of the Mohicans (1826). The Pathfinder delves into the colonial conflicts fought between France and England for control of the North American continent, taking place in 1759 in Lake Ontario during the French and Indian War (Seven Years' War). The Last of the Mohicans depicts the horrific massacre at Fort William Henry, when the Huron Indians brutally slaughtered the surrendered British men. This tale takes place after that massacre. Similar to the second book, The Pathfinder illustrates the violent struggle between humans and the natural world in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. One of the key reasons the work has remained praised since its debut is because of the picturesque descriptions and literary paintings of American natural surroundings. Examples of favourable reviews include "a true work of genius" from the New-York Review and "an admirable production, full of fine pictures of exalted virtue in the humble paths of life" from the Knickerbocker (Dekker 17–8). The French writer and critic Honoré de Balzac lauded Cooper's use of picturesque settings—including rivers, woodlands, and waterfalls—to create "a succession of marvellous tableaux, which in this work as in those that preceded it are quite inimitable" (qtd. in Valtiala 151). The Pathfinder's positive welcome might potentially be this is because it draws from a variety of genres and styles, including woodland romances and sea romances, among others. The epic, elegiac, and gothic literary styles are used by the author to depict the savage battles fought between the English and the French.

Since Cooper avoids using the typical gothic tropes and features seen in European gothic writing, the suggestion that Cooper's The Pathfinder may be characterised as a gothic book may seem ridiculous. For instance, you won't find any cryptic corridors or underground mazes in any castle. There isn't a monastery or ancient manor home where a villainous monk kidnaps a helpless heroine and threatens to rape her or do other terrible damage. Just as in Horace Walpole's The Castle of Otranto and Matthew Gregory Lewis' The Monk, there are no spectres, bloodstained pictures, or ominous portents to terrify the protagonists. Also, Cooper doesn't make use of any unexplained or supernatural occurrences to prove that irrationality is better than logic in everyday life. Since these conventional gothic features are not necessary for the style, Cooper's work may be considered gothic even if it lacks them in The Pathfinder. It is not the fortress or abbey that is significant to Gothic architecture, according to Donald A. Ringe, but rather a feeling of confinement that may be conveyed by other means. Similarly, the dread of the unknown and the unexpected is the root cause of phobias like ghosts, spectres, and weird noises. There are other ways to communicate it as well" (Ringe). The fact that The Pathfinder lacks the typical gothic features lends credence to Ringe's assertion. All of these things are really substituted with other tools that make people feel threatened and insecure in the personality types. Without a doubt, the gothic form places more emphasis on these sentiments of menace and terror than on the means to achieve them. "The external elements used to express it are not important; what matters is the sense of insecurity and danger, of a threat to the self" (Ringe). It is clear that Cooper adapts the gothic style to the American milieu by using various strategies and techniques in his works.

In The Spy, The Pilot, and Lionel Lincoln, Cooper drew inspiration from traditional gothic themes that are typical of European gothic literature. However, in the Leather stocking Tales, he sought to establish a uniquely American gothicism. This effort showcased his status as a uniquely American writer and demonstrated his desire to depart from the European gothic tradition. By using only local materials that are appropriate for the New World's demands and environment, Cooper Americanizes the traditional gothic themes in The Pathfinder. He moved the gothic castle to the American wilderness since America lacks the ancient structures and ruins seen in Europe. While Washington Irving and Charles Brock den Brown's novels also included elements of the American forest in their gothic settings, Cooper proved that the American wilderness could be just as effective as a haunted castle in gothic literature, although he wasn't the first to do so (White 107). As terrifying as the hidden corridors and mazes of a European mediaeval castle or monastery, it exudes an air of menace and peril. The Pathfinder is characterised by forest gothic, which "looks to the interior of wooded groves" and enclosed landscapes "pictured like the interior of a Gothic cathedral" (Axelrad), in contrast to Cooper's reliance on mountain gothic in his early Leather stocking novels like The Pioneers (1823) and The Prairie (1827) when describing the American landscape. There are no towering peaks, chasms, or other vertical features in the natural landscapes shown in The Pathfinder; rather, they are flat and horizontal. The natural landscapes are endlessly expansive and breathtaking. The savagery of the Native Americans adds to the gothic element of these images, making them appear even more terrifying with their brutality and mercilessness. Americanizing the gothic and using uniquely native materials are further highlighted by Cooper's attention on the Indians as essentially American subjects.

The American wilderness as a gothic setting

The American wilderness is portrayed throughout The Pathfinder as a terrifying gothic environment that enchants those who go into it. Danger lurks around every corner in this kind of setting. Both Mabel Dunham and her uncle Charles Cap are uneasy in the unfamiliar setting, and they sense an ominous destiny speeding up due to an enigmatic and unexplainable power. Cooper expresses this concept early on in the book when he says that their lengthy trek through the woods is "necessarily attended with danger" (11) and that they are traversing a "vast natural vault that was upheld by myriads of rustic columns" (15). Cooper implies that the conventional haunted castles and monasteries featured in European gothic literature are not more horrifying than the American wilderness by drawing an analogy between the forest and a natural vault. This concept goes beyond

further emphasised by the fact that Mabel and Cap are utterly confused about who to trust in the wild because of how unsafe and unpredictable it is. For example, while Mabel and her companions are being led by Arrowhead, a Tuscarora Indian, towards Fort Oswego, they see a cloud of smoke rising above the trees, but they can't tell if their enemies or friends started the fire, or if it portends good or bad fortune. Cooper emphasises the sense of dread and danger felt by the passengers in this scenario by saying that when they approach the site of the fire, they all take extra precautions and remain silent. By highlighting the dangerous and precarious scenario in which the whole group finds themselves, Cooper primarily employs the gothic genre. Cap despises nature and believes the wilderness is nothing more than a "tame surface" (10) that isn't any riskier than the Atlantic Ocean, while Mabel views it as just as hazardous. Cap asserts that the wilderness is devoid of storms, hurricanes, and terrifying creatures like sharks and whales. In response, Mabel warns that the woods are teeming with "beasts, Indians, Frenchmen, desperadoes, subterfuges, and ambushes [which] all lie in wait beneath the treetops" (Gilmore 60). The dangers of the woods are exaggerated, and Cap is ridiculed for being naive about them. A saltwater sailor's perspective shifts, and he eventually concedes that the water is just as dangerous as the Atlantic.

There are a lot of sequences in The Pathfinder that show how dangerous the American wilderness is and how terrified and threatened the protagonists are. Cooper recounts Leather stocking and his comrades' attempts to evade the Iroquois Indians in one such scenario. Fearing likely death or imprisonment, the fugitives immediately begin to search for means of evading the enemy after hearing from Leather stocking's Indian companion Chinga chgook that the Indians are following them and that they face the possibility of an ambush. Upon reaching the Oswego River's shore, where the stream's bend facilitated the party's goal, Cooper narrates how Leather stocking and his companions construct a man-made canopy to conceal their boats and evade detection from the opposing bank. After completing his mission to deceive their enemies upstream by building a fire near a fallen tree, Leather stocking's white buddy Jasper Eau douce is unable to locate the cover, which seems to be both effective and secure. Despite his keen senses and skill, not even Chingachgook can discover it quickly. Three Iroquois Indians approach the travellers' hiding spot, and one of them pauses abruptly after glancing at some leaves that had drooped somewhat from sun exposure, suggesting that the artificial cover's efficiency and protection are only temporary. Cooper emphasises the dangerous and unstable situation of the runaway in this gothic scene by saying that "nothing sheltered the travellers, but the branches and leaves of plants so pliant, that they yielded to every current of air, and which a puff of wind, a little stronger than common, would have blown away" (62). Upon initial sight of the hostile Indians, the fugitives are likened as a multitude of living statues inside the shelter. All characters, even Cap—who is described as "narrow-minded" (Abel 370)—fall prey to gothic terror as the drama progresses. Every single one of them seems paralysed with fear, too fearful to move or even talk freely. The shipwreck surfer,

for example, suffers from severe anxiety at the prospect of being beheaded by Indians and has no idea how to protect himself and his friends from harm. Defining the fugitives' dangerous circumstances primarily via a gothic lens is a sure bet. This mode's primary goal is to show how vulnerable the people are and to emphasise how Cooper sees the wilderness as a "domain of danger and evil" (Babington 141).

In Cooper's account of the Thousand Islands, the mood of peril and danger that permeates the American wilderness is intensified. Major Duncan of Lundie dispatches Sergeant Dunham and his companions on a sailing expedition to relieve a post known as Station Island. The travellers are uneasy and fearful of sudden and unanticipated danger, despite the island's hidden location. Cooper mostly uses

Mabel, who is shown as easily frightened by even the smallest danger, to illustrate Gothic terror. In order to intercept the French supply boats bound for Frontenac, the Sergeant, Leather stocking, and Jasper depart from the island, which intensifies her feelings of unease and disturbance. Despite the presence of her uncle, Lieutenant Muir, Corporal McNab, and three other troops to protect the island in the event that it is found and assaulted by the enemy, her dread of the unknown persists. She is already terrified, but her fears are heightened when the Dew of June, Arrowhead's wife, surreptitiously joins her on the island and orders her to seek refuge in the blockhouse, the only spot she knows of that is safe from the enemy's firearms. Mabel feels her blood turn to ice as the Dew of June warns her the island will soon be invaded by the Iroquois Indians. After the Dew of June leaves, Mabel finds a little scrap of fabric that looks like a flag waving from a tree limb, which adds to her anxiousness and lack of peace. The thought that Arrowhead's wife may be deceiving her or that Jasper has told the enemy about the island's strategic location terrifies her. Since Jasper was previously banished below decks and accused of treachery when the group sailed to Station Island on the Scud, the second option seems to be both logical and warranted. In the midst of all this, Mabel's fears become so great that she runs to the blockhouse to hide with Jennie, the soldier's wife, as her suspicions are heightened.

Some have said that the blockhouse scene is important because it shows how the protagonists' overwhelming sense of danger and the gothic elements of the American woods are brought to life. When the Iroquois Indians launch a surprise and savage assault on the island, wreaking havoc and confusion, Mabel's worst nightmares come true in this scenario. Upon seeing Corporal McNab's lifeless corpse, Mabel is overcome with fear to the point that she is unable to scream or even quake in her boots, while the hostile Indians open fire from a neighbouring island. She seems to be in a haze of unconsciousness as she disregards her own well-being in favour of tending to her dying friend. Cooper states that her heart was "beat tumultuously" and that she was unable to "act [ing] collectedly" due to her overwhelming dread, and that she felt "blind terror" from the moment the Indians attacked (339). She takes refuge in the apparently safe blockhouse, but her fear persists as she listens to the incessant gunfire of the Indians and eventually becomes

worried about what would happen to her gathering. According to Cooper, Mabel's blood "curdled" (340) when she peered through a blockhouse gap and saw the three dead soldiers lying beside Corporal McNab. The heroine's fear is intensified as she anticipates that Cap and Lieutenant Muir, who are nowhere to be seen on the island, will meet the same end as the soldiers. This Gothic setting is "as fearful as it was extraordinary" (340), according to Cooper. It depicts Jennie, whose only option for evading certain death is to hide in the blockhouse, as being just as terrified and terrified as Mabel. Just like Mabel, she is overcome with dread and despair the moment the island comes under assault. She rushes to the blockhouse, locks the door behind her, and leaves Mabel outside to plead for admission, revealing her profound concern and anxiety right from the start of the attack. Upon learning of her husband's death, Jennie leaves her hiding area and makes her way to the site where his corpse lies. Arrowhead quickly tomahawks her as her panic reaches its climax in this scenario. Cooper "Americanizes the Gothic techniques" in The Pathfinder by using the forest as "a symbol of fear" due to the perils and threats that Mabel and her companions encounter following the island invasion (Kaftan 31). He follows in Brock den Brown's footsteps by bringing gothic elements to a contemporary American context (Note 1).

Cooper used suspense as a primary device in The Pathfinder to bring the gothic genre to a uniquely American context. The depiction of dangerous circumstances where the protagonists' lives are in danger is the primary means by which gothic literature builds tension. The protagonists in these stories often experience dread and an air of mystery about their ultimate destiny. It's clear that Cooper wants to highlight the gothic elements of the American woods via his repeated use of suspense. The Pathfinder has heart-pounding suspense that makes it hard to guess what will happen or who will win or lose. Cooper, for instance, keeps the gothic tension high right up to the very end of the scene when the travellers take shelter under the man-made cover, right up until the young Iroquois Indian buries his hatchet in the skull of the fugitive and Chingachgook enters the scene. The destiny of the travellers is still up in the air with the killing of this Iroquois Indian, since their pursuers wasted no time in identifying and attacking the corpse. Given that his canoe is the most vulnerable to enemy firearms and that he was the last fugitive to leave the Oswego coast, Leather stocking's destiny seems to be the most unclear of all the fugitives. Cooper emphasises the danger Leather stocking is in by saying that bullets twice sliced through his clothing without hurting him and that he seems to be living a lucky life. With other Iroquois Indians joining their companions on the riverbank and continuing to fire at the fugitive, the life of Leather stocking is becoming increasingly precarious at this time of tremendous tension. When Leatherstocking hides behind a tiny rock that rises above the river and gets a boat from his pals, he reaches the western side, maintaining the Gothic suspense. By showing Chingachgook in a similarly precarious predicament, whose destiny is similarly shrouded in mystery, Cooper maintains the tension. He is about to be shot from a short distance in the woods after one of his enemy Indians found him. The tension builds until Leatherstocking uses his weapon, Killdeer, to kill his enemy.

There are plenty of other situations in The Pathfinder when Cooper uses strong and terrifying tension. Cooper recounts a situation in which Chingachgook and Jasper try to free their canoe from a shallow section of the rift as Leatherstocking is escaping from his pursuers. Cooper relates that Chingachgook and Jasper, armed with knives and a tomahawk, are forced to swim across the river at night. The darkness is so thick and deep that not even close to their location can be seen, so they must rely on instinct instead of sight to search. The situation is set to be suspenseful by Cooper as the explorers find an Iroquois Indian moving in the water within their grasp. The situation grows serious and perilous for Jasper and Chingachgook as they grudgingly pursue their adversary towards the eastern coast, where the Iroquois await his return, when this hostile Indian discovers the canoe and asks them for aid. However, Jasper is unable to see Chingachgook due to the darkness. The situation becomes even more intense when four other Iroquois Indians join their youthful companion, and the heroes wind themselves smack dab in the centre of their most formidable foes. Everything that happens next is completely up in the air since Chingachgook and Jasper's fate is so mysterious. Because of their numerical and military advantages, the Iroquois Indians make any kind of escape look not just unlikely but impossible. A tragic end

seems to be in store for Chingachgook, whose skill and cunning appear to be to blame. The scene's gothic tension reaches a fever pitch when the young Iroquois Indian faces up against his adversaries in the water and a brutal and fatal combat breaks out between him and Chingachgook. To set the stage for the unveiling of the gothic scene's conclusion, Cooper describes how Jasper gets the canoe and gets to his pals on the western side. Thus, the two Indians' ultimate destiny is still up in the air, and the tension is high. Because the river is so calm, Leatherstocking and his companions can't even begin to guess what happened during the conflict. The tension builds until Chingachgook makes an appearance and discloses the truth. The next scenario is just as nail-biting as the one before it. It details the fugitives' remarkable escape from impending death as they across the Oswego gap, according to Cooper. The passengers' destiny is still up in the air and full of suspense until they are safe from any threats. A lot of the gothic elements of the American wilderness, with its terrifying aura, are brought to light in the many terrifying sequences in The Pathfinder.

Cooper uses the aesthetic term of the sublime to describe nature in The Pathfinder, further emphasising the gothic aspect of the American wilderness. A quick definition and history of this aesthetic category is essential for understanding Cooper's work and its treatment of this topic. Many authors and thinkers, like Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant, laid the groundwork for seeing nature's sublime beauty as a gothic tool. According to Burke's 1757 work A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, the former is associated with vastness, infinity, magnificence, magnitude, and obscurity, while the latter is associated with beauty's potential definition as smallness, smoothness, softness, and delicacy.

The sublime is male in nature, in contrast to the feminine qualities associated with beauty. How these two types of beauty make the observer feel is another way in which they vary. Sublime art, in contrast to the pleasant and satisfying effects of beauty, may evoke strong negative emotions like dread, agony, and horror. According to Burke, amazement is the most powerful sensation that the sublime can provoke. According to him, "the passion caused by the great and sublime in nature is astonishment." He goes on to say that astonishment is the emotional condition when the soul is suspended in some degree of terror, with all its movements halted (39). According to him, when amazement takes hold, the mind becomes fixated on its target to the point that it can't think about anything else or reason about anything other than the item that uses it (39). This is why, according to Burke, the effects of admiration, veneration, and respect are lower than amazement, which is the greatest degree of sublime effect. Kant, who built upon Burke's thoughts and aesthetic notions, shared Burke's differentiation between the beautiful and the sublime. In his Critique of Judgement, Kant posits that formless and limitless things are linked with the sublime, whereas objects possessing clear bounds are associated with beauty (61). In Kant's view, the primary difference between beautiful and sublime things is that the former are objects of pleasure that seem to be pre-adapted to human judgement, while the latter are objects of terror that seem to go against the goals of the power of judgement (61).

One may argue that Cooper's gloomy, horrific, and untamed settings in The Pathfinder are justified by his use of the aesthetic concept of the sublime. For instance, Cooper states early on in the book that "[t]he sublimity connected with vastness, is familiar to every eye" (7), highlighting the presence of the sublime in nature. He goes on to say that when the poet looks into the "illimitable void" (7), his most complex and far-reaching ideas encroach upon the mind. He implies that awe, horror, and adoration are emotions evoked by the sublime. Cooper mostly uses the description of the woodland wilderness scene at the introduction of The Pathfinder to demonstrate his use of the sublime. Perched atop a mound of fallen trees brought down by the forest's recent storm, Mabel and her friends are at an ideal vantage point from which to survey the scene below. Cooper wrote a lengthy description of this view, and a brief passage from it deserves to be quoted because it is striking and significant in the analysis of the gothic aspects of the American wilderness. The scene was truly one that deeply impresses the imagination of the beholder. As the group turned to face the west, the only direction visible, the view stretched out before them: a verdant sea of leaves, adorned with the vibrant colours and textures of a bountiful vegetation, and veiled by the lush hues typical of the 42nd degree of latitude. The notion of grandeur was included in the seemingly endless expanse of greenery, the view's breadth. Delicate tones, softened by subtle shifts in light and shadow, were to reveal the beauty, while the grave stillness evoked awe. (8-9)

Cooper highlights the sublimity and magnificence of the scenery in his depiction of this "panoramic" (Morris 225) picture of the woodland solitude. Not only does the woodland exude an aura of profound tranquilly and seclusion, but its expansiveness serves to accentuate its breathtaking beauty.

aspects. It seems as if Cooper is implying that the forest is more larger and more expansive than the ocean. He believes that such a forest view is eternal and unending, and he emphasises the fact that from the viewers' location, all they can see is a carpet or ocean of leaves and greenery. By describing the range of emotions experienced by the individuals, Cooper primarily emphasises the gothic nature of the setting. For instance, it is clear that Mabel feels a mix of dread, horror, and amazement as she gazes at the vast forest that Cooper says is its own universe. She seems to be in a condition of suspended animation as her spirit is enthralled by the scenery. "Her face was beaming with the pensive expression, with which all deep emotions, even though they bring the most grateful pleasure, shadow the countenances of the ingenuous and thoughtful" (8), which Cooper uses to emphasise Mabel's profound fear and terror at the sight of this forest wilderness. The gothic and "Salvatorean" (Nevius 42) scenery frightens Mabel, as Cooper's comment implies, in addition to pleasing and satisfying her (note 2).

Cooper depicts a plethora of breathtaking, Gothic-style natural settings in The Pathfinder. As an example, the moment when Mabel first gazes onto Lake Ontario from atop a bastion of Fort Oswego highlights the sublime nature of the vista. Cooper asserts that Lake Ontario's "field of rolling waters" (108), which Mabel describes as a "true panorama which is so fascinating and charming that the human eye cannot but fully appreciate its glory," evokes the same mixture of fear, wonder, and amazement that she feels when gazing at the aforementioned forest wilderness. Cooper emphasises the sublimity of this lake primarily via describing its apparent interminability and immense size. According to him, it is impossible to see any land from Mabel's vantage point atop the bastion. Water rules unchallengedly to the north, east, and west.

Lake Ontario's gothic features are apparent in various ways, including its size and the colour of its waters, among many others. Unlike the ocean, its waters aren't a glistening green or a dark blue. The colour, according to Cooper, is slightly amber and, despite its complexity, has little effect on the lake's transparency. The "hollow" is another feature that draws attention to the sublimity of Lake Ontario.

(109) noises that are often audible close to the lake's edge, where the water flows into the caves. Cooper claims that the quiet serenity of the lake is unaffected by these noises, despite their hollowness. All they do is bring out its majesty and splendour. According to Cooper, who emphasises the gothic element of the scenario, Mabel seems to be "unconscious" as she stares at the lake, which is "pervading both her body and her mind" (110). Fear, panic, and amazement are further conveyed by Mabel's frequent expressions of appreciation and surprise.

Native American savagery, hellishness and Spectrality

Cooper's use of uniquely indigenous elements and his Americanization of the gothic are emphasised by his emphasis on Native Americans as exclusively American subjects in The Pathfinder. Cooper relied substantially on written sources to fill in the gaps in his understanding of the Indians and their original culture. He used the works of John Heck as an example.

welder whose depiction of Indian culture was heavily influenced by Weaver's account of Indian history, manners, and customs (74). These factors contribute to the extreme goodness (or evil) shown by his Indians. Bad Indians are shown as "bloodthirsty" (Corbett 175) barbarians whose villainy and devilry make them look like dreadful characters, in contrast to good Indians who are depicted as honourable fighters with impeccable morals, honesty, and justice. There are many distinct Indian tribes, each with its own history, customs, and beliefs. However, according to Cooper, the good Indians were those who supported the British, while the evil Indians were those who supported the French. The Pathfinder and the other Leather Jacket Tales have good Indians—the Mohicans and the Delawares—and wicked Indians—the Iroquois, the Tuscaroras, and the Hurons. According to the portrayal, the second group of Indians is fundamentally wicked and their animosity is seemingly unwarranted. Their savagery and cunning conjure images of demons whose only purpose is to destroy those they have targeted. Additionally, they are portrayed as inhumane barbarians that take pleasure in consuming human blood and as ruthless savages. Their savagery and violence intensify the sense of peril and danger inherent in the American environment, making it even more terrifying. Additionally, they heighten the protagonists' sense of dread and panic. An American take on the spectres, bleeding portraits, and enigmatic apparitions seen in European gothic literature may be these Indians. They elucidate Cooper's desire to establish a distinct national literature and his use of a gothic literary style even further.

One interpretation of Arrowhead in The Pathfinder is that he embodies "Injin deviltry" (75) and the worst aspects of Indian culture. He is shown as a devilishly evil and "tricky" (Winchester 201) character right from the start of the book. He plans to carry out his heinous deeds and eliminate his unsuspecting adversaries in the most brutal way possible by posing as an ally of the British army and working with major Duncan of Lundie. Actually, Arrowhead has been in cahoots with the French for quite some time, and he has done his best to keep his betrayal from his enemies under wraps. He clearly doesn't want to show Mabel and her uncle the way to Fort Oswego; instead, he wants to trick them into becoming his hostages by leading them into the forest. As the Iroquois find Leather Stocking and his companions at the site of the manufactured cover, his abrupt abandonment of them and joining his fellow Indians on the river's eastern bank is the first indication of his deceit. When Jasper and Leather Stocking catch and arrest him when he and his wife are following the Scud to the Thousand Islands, his infidelity becomes even more apparent. Mabel thinks it's quite likely that he was the one who found and betrayed the location of Station Island to the French. The Dew of June does not explicitly tell Mabel this, but she does confess that Arrowhead was the one who spearheaded the Iroquois Indian assault on Station Island. The ferocity, barbarism, and inhumanity of Arrowhead are most on display during this horrific attack, when he carelessly and cold-bloodedly brains Sandy's wife with his tomahawk before charging forward like a monster from hell. Cooper emphasises his viciousness and callousness in this scenario by asserting that Jennie's "reeking hair was hanging at his girdle, as a trophy" (342). That is

Arrowhead is a vicious barbarian who spares no victims, even women and children, as Cooper made clear. It makes no difference to him whether his foes are young or old; what matters most is that he gets the scalps. Given these factors, Arrowhead may be seen as the prototypical monstrous villain typical in gothic fiction.

Key episodes that portray the ferocity and hellishness of Native American life in The Pathfinder include Cooper's description of the Iroquois' terrible assault on Station Island. There is no indication that Arrowhead's inhumanity and cruelty are any worse than those of his fellow Indians in this incident. The indigenous people of the American wilderness are depicted in Cooper's work as being so vicious and heartless that fear becomes horror. Based on Cooper's analysis of the "horrible scene" (342), Jennie's horrifying and exciting scream upon finding her husband's corpse appears to be "melody to the cry that followed it so quickly as to blend the sounds" and to the "terrific war-whoop that arose out of the covers of the island" (342). The image is horrifying for Mabel, but it becomes much worse as these hideous Indians leap out of their hiding places and joyfully chop Corporal McNab and three other soldiers' bodies to pieces. The latter is so horrified by what she sees that she seems to have her senses dulled and her blood frozen with fear. After imbibing some English spirits, the Iroquois Indians plan to burn down the blockhouse with "hellish ingenuity" (355), a tactic they hope would make Mabel give up and submit. This act further highlights their brutality and heartlessness. These Indians are "whooping and leaping like demons" (354), and they can't wait to get their hands on Mabel's scalp, burn the whole building, and proclaim victory against the English soldiers. The Iroquois use a combination of dry leaves and light sticks to light a fire, despite the fact that the fire had been put out by Monsieur Sanglier, the French officer in charge of the Indian warriors, before he left Station Island, and the natives do not possess flint or steel. This allows them to carry out their wicked plans. According to Cooper, if it had been a white man trying to produce fire in this way, the effort would have been abandoned. However, the savages' cunning and cruelty allow them to achieve their terrible goals using methods that are foreign to civilization. By assisting Mabel in putting out the fire, the

Dew of June saves her life only moments before she is about to die. It is clear that Cooper believes the Iroquois Indians to be vicious and unfeeling since he calls them savages many times.

Not only is the Indians' depravity "shocking" (Long 116) in the blockhouse scenario, but it's also revolting. By detailing the Native Americans' plot to trick Sergeant Dunham and his men into thinking the island was back to normal after their horrific assault, Cooper emphasises the insidious intelligence of the indigenous people. The sight of McNab and the three other soldiers' lifeless corpses beside the blockhouse reawakens Mabel's gothic terror, which she now experiences as horror. In addition to covering up all the bloodstains, the Indians used a plethora of additional cosmetic enhancement techniques to give the impression that the figures were still alive. Described in detail is this military tactic, which "in its gruesomeness could have been invented by an author of Gothic novels" (Tetley-Jones 65):

The spirit rebelled as their limbs stiffened into various positions meant to mimic life. Nonetheless, terrifying as these things seemed to anyone in close proximity to the terrifying disparity between their portrayed and actual personalities, the arrangement had been crafted with such skill that it might have fooled an unwary spectator from a hundred yards away. June meticulously surveyed the island's shoreline before directing her companion's attention to the fourth soldier, who was sat with his feet dangling over the water, his back tied to a tree, and a fishing rod held in his hands. The heads that were devoid of scalps were concealed by their caps, and all trace of blood had been meticulously removed from every face. pages 362-63)

Cooper vividly portrays the Iroquois Indians' unbelievable levels of barbarism, immorality, and depravity as he describes the elaborate schemes they utilised to fool their foes. No white guy would ever dream of deceiving his enemies in such a savage fashion. The insidiousness and betrayal of the Indians beyond her wildest dreams, Mabel cries out to June. Cooper emphasises the horrific distortion of Jennie's body, adding to the scene's gruesomeness and ghastliness. This second figure is shown as a broom-wielding woman standing at the entrance of a cottage, with a cap covering her head that is devoid of a scalp. She seems to be smiling hysterically as she looks at the troops, thanks to her malformed lips and jaws. On the other hand, her laughing is more terrible and artificial than natural and nice. It drives home how cruel and callous the Native Americans were. Cooper clearly disapproves, rather than approves of, the Indians' wicked behaviour and acts throughout the encounter. Mabel, who is shown as being utterly repulsed and sickened by the sight of the corpses, primarily serves as an instrument for him to express his disapproval of these acts. As an expression of her disgust and fury, she tells June that she would rather see the enemy than the horrific twisted bodies of the fallen troops. Despite June's satisfaction—and even boasting—about the Indians' artifices, Cooper compares them to the "revelries of demons" (364). The Iroquois employ them to ambush the English army, and they do no damage to the dead.

Returning from their sailing trip, Sergeant Dunham and his group are further emphasised in the scenario by the Indians' brutality and savagery. According to Cooper, "the war-whoop rang in all the surrounding thickets" (379) and a deafening noise of gunfire erupted as soon as the troops disembarked from the boats and stepped foot on the island. Near the boats, Leatherstocking and Mabel can hear a lot of wailing and groaning from within the blockhouse. As her "heart beat so violently, that she was fearful its throbs would be heard" (372), the latter's gothic anxiety and dread are heightened by her profound worry for her father's fate. When Mabel hears her father's voice, she realises her greatest fears have come true; he is in critical condition after a rifle bullet went through his body. According to Cooper, the troops in this macabre scenario are all either wounded or dead by the Indians' gunfire. At the novel's conclusion, the brutality and cruelty of the Iroquois Indians are brought to light by the Sergeant's demise. Attacking the blockhouse to finish off the English troops further highlights their devilry. "At that very moment," Cooper relates, "the thunderous boom of a gunshot pierced through the darkness, followed by the sound of splintered wood as the logs in the room above were ripped to shreds, and the entire block trembled from the impact of a shell that became stuck in the mortar" (397). The howitzer's discharge intensifies the vicious and perilous Indian assault. Upon entering the blockhouse, Leatherstocking scupperingly avoids imminent death. The terrifying sensations brought on by the release of this

In the story, Mabel, who "could not repress a shriek, for she supposed all over her head, whether animate or inanimate, destroyed," emphasises the missiles. Her father's frenzied cries of "Charge!" only served to heighten her fear.No. 397. Cooper's usage of gothic style is emphasised throughout the sequence by Mabel's sentiments of terror and dread. The gothic tone of the scenario is intensified when the Iroquois resume their "hellish job" (396), which involves setting a fire against the logs of the blockhouse. Actually, Leatherstocking and his companions are putting themselves in grave danger by being subjected to this brutal and inhumane kind of coercion.

Cooper implies that the spectres and enigmatic apparitions used in Gothic literature from Europe are not more chilling and terrible than the Iroquois Indians by highlighting their brutality and crime. Actually, Cooper's Indians in The Pathfinder appear more like ghostly beings. Their likeness to actual ghosts and goblins, as well as their "insubstantiality" (Bergland 87), are highlighted by the fact that they emerge and vanish without warning. Mabel and her friends are plagued by their paranormal abilities as they traverse the American wilderness. For instance, Cooper's Indians seem ethereal in the scene depicting the assault on Station Island. Despite June's warnings about the impending assault, Mabel fails to see any indications of the adversary or the danger that lies ahead. Assaults are carried out in a spectral fashion once they begin. The assault is "too sudden, too awful, and too unexpected" (338) according to Cooper, such that Mabel doesn't even shiver or weep. As Mabel takes refuge in the blockhouse and meticulously surveys the apparently empty island, the spectral presence of the Indians is further highlighted. In order to emphasise the ethereal aspect of the Indians, Cooper says that

Initially, Mabel was shocked to see that the island was devoid of any sentient beings, whether they were friends or foes. A little white cloud drifting in front of the wind indicated to her which direction to search for the Frenchmen and Indians, but they were not visible. The guns had gone off in the direction of the island from where June had come; however, Mabel was unable to determine whether the enemy were on that island or had arrived independently. Upon

reaching the vantage point that offered a view of the location where McNab lay, her stomach turned at the sight of his three seemingly motionless men at his side. Almost simultaneously, the unseen enemy—whom the corporal pretended to hate—shot down these guys as they hurried to a unified centre in response to the initial alert. ..To sum up, the island was located in the stillness of the cemetery. (340)

The Iroquois Indians' invisibility on the island lends credence to the assertion that Cooper's story depicts them as ethereal entities. They look like goblins to Mabel because they materialise out of thin air. The scene's gothic undertones are heightened by the tranquilly of the location, which gives them an eerie, ghostly quality. They still seem like otherworldly creatures revelling in the downfall of Christian men even when they appear on the island out of nowhere. Their eerie nighttime screams and cries add to the mystique surrounding their appearance. Unfortunately, their island appearance is short-lived. They swiftly dematerialize after using the aforementioned artifices to fool their foes, and the island is back in the quiet of the dead. Regardless matter how meticulous after thoroughly searching the area, Mabel finds no indications that they are there. It seems as if they had magically and oddly disappeared from the island. Upon returning from their mission, the Sergeant and his group similarly see the appearance of the Indians as a spectral figure. Surprisingly, not a single soldier has noticed that there are hostile Indians stationed at the outpost. The Indians don't show up again until Jasper and his companions return, after their terrible attack and their failed effort to set fire to the blockhouse. All through the book, you can see the Indians' surprising materialisations and dematerializations. Because of this, they become just as terrifying as the spectres from Gothic literature in Europe.

Conclusion

One may argue that Cooper's use of uniquely American locations and materials in The Pathfinder makes it a gothic book, even if it lacks traditional gothic features and approaches. Cooper's use of the American wilderness as a setting, rather than the typical castle seen in European gothic literature, is the most striking example of how the genre has been adapted to the American environment. All through the book, the American wilderness is shown as a dark and dangerous gothic environment. Fear and horror grip the protagonists as they grapple with its insecurities and uncertainties. For example, Mabel Dunham and her uncle Charles Cap experience gothic terror in many sequences, such the one when they shelter under a makeshift canopy to avoid imminent death or imprisonment. Cooper emphasises the gothic elements of the American wilderness and its sense of danger and peril via his use of suspense in describing the protagonists' dangerous condition. The Pathfinder has jaw-dropping suspense that makes you wonder what will happen next and how the characters will out. The magnificent and gothic settings that Cooper depicts in the book also contribute to the sensations of fear and dread. Actually, the story's events and actions are set against a horrific background provided by Cooper's wild and scary natural surroundings. Cooper uses Native Americans instead of the traditional European gothic tropes of ghosts, spectres, and enigmatic apparitions in his Americanized take on gothic storytelling. Savagery, violence, and hellishness define Cooper's evil Indians. These elements heighten the protagonists' sense of danger and uncertainty and the novel's gothic tone. In The Pathfinder, Arrowhead exemplifies the archetypal gothic villain with his devilishly nasty and brutal personality. Hellish characters obsessed with scalping their foes are likewise shown among the other Iroquois Indians. The brutality and barbarism of the Indians are most striking in the blockhouse sequence, when the horrific nature of the scenario causes the audience to go from terrified to horrified. As ghostly forms, these Indians come and vanish just as quickly, giving the impression that they are terrifying phantoms. Cooper helps to create an autonomous national literature by reimagining the gothic style using local features and resources.

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