**Gothic Terms**

**The Abject:** "in between...ambiguous" (Julia Kristeva). Something that breaks down the barriers between subject & object or self & other. E.g. A corpse.

**The Revenant:** The past - 'what comes back'. This could be an evil deed from the past or a fear that we thought we banished. Ghosts, hauntings and the 'return of the repressed'.

**Obscurity:** Both physical & mental. Darkness, fogginess, confusion and things not understood.

**Otherness:** Anything which is different from ourselves and therefore perceived in some way as a threat.

**The Liminal:** The experience of being on a threshold or a boundary. Neither one thing or the other; the point of uncertainty and fluidity.

**Abhuman:** A subject only partly human and possibly in the process of becoming something monstrous. "Characterised by variability...continually in danger of becoming not-itself" (Kelly Hurley).

**Opposition:** sanity/madness; wild/domestic; male/female; living/dead; past/present; reason/passion. Often shown to collapse in the Gothic genre.

**The Doppelganger:** A double, mirror image or alter-ego. Usually reveals the negative, evil or repressed.

**The Supernatural:** What is above nature, mysterious, inexplicable.

**The Sublime:** A sense of awe, astonishment, of being overwhelmed in the face of something much bigger than ourselves. It depends upon obscurity.

**Terror:** Fear generated through uncertainty or obscurity. Shadowy and Insubstantial. A threat to the imagination.

**Sublime Terror**: "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger ... is productive of the strongest emotion" (Edmund Burke)

**The Uncanny:** The strange, eerie or mysterious. In Freudian terms the 'unheimlich' is something familiar and strange at the same time.

**Taboos:** Cultural, moral or religious rules which are put under pressure or violated (e.g. incest, murder, blasphemy, perversion).

**Horror:**  Fear generated by physical shock. Actually seen or experienced.