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Dracula's Inky Shadows: The Vampire Gothic of Writing

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Abstract

Always a story about a story, the vampire tale is forever in dialogue with the past, conscious of its own status as a rewrite. This makes the vampire a figure onto which readers and authors can project ambivalence about writing – the gothic of living with texts. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) vividly illustrates this connection. The novel presents textual interactions as both dangerous and pleasurable. What is more, *Dracula* has accumulated significance through criticism and adaptation. These retellings tie the novel even more closely to the processes of writing and rewriting.

This thesis will begin by examining *Dracula*'s gothic of reading and writing. After this follows a consideration of the vampire fiction preceding Stoker's novel, beginning with the figure of the embodied author in early nineteenth-century works like John William Polidori's The Vampyre' (1819), and James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney, the Vampyre* (1845-47). The thesis will then address the gothic of scientific and institutional language in the vampire fiction of the mid nineteenth-century, including Sheridan Le Fanu's 'Carmilla' (1872). A return to the *fin de siècle* follows, with a consideration of degeneracy and art vampirism outside *Dracula,* and discussion of works including Florence Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire* (1897) and George Sylvester Viereck's *The House of the Vampire* (1907). The thesis will proceed to the twentieth century, studying the gothic interplay of film and literature in works like F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922). It will then trace the resemblance between Victorians and their modern adapters, suggesting that re-imaginings of *Dracula*, like Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), betray an affinity between Victorians and the 'enlightened' twentieth century. The thesis will conclude by examining the vampire as a figure of intertextuality, and considering the way in which postmodern vampires like those of Joss Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) acknowledge that their world is comprised of other texts. *Buffy* offers the possibility that the world shaped by narratives may also be rewritten, with results that can be either terrifying or liberating.

Dracula's Inky Shadows: The Vampire Gothic of Writing

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A thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

No material in this thesis has been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other University. The work is solely that of the author, Lauren Owen, under the supervision of Professor Simon James.

Statement of Copyright

Acknowledgements

Introduction

'Monstrous, Unnatural, or Preposterous': Vampires as Disreputable Literature, *Dracula* as 'Respectable' Critical Text

I. A Fearful Vision of Literature

In August 1872, an 'Original Burlesque' by satirical writer Robert Reece opened at the Royal Strand Theatre.[1] The play, titled *The Vampire,* was a parody of Dion Boucicault's 1852 drama of the same name. According to Roxana Stuart's summary, Reece's vampire, Alan Raby, is 'an Irish writer of gothic penny dreadfuls who attempts to steal plots from lady novelists.'[2] This comic vampire is more interested in ink than blood – the *Illustrated London News* commented that '[t]he interest accordingly of the action is purely literary.'[3] The 'literary' focus of Reece's play extends beyond the linking of vampirism and plagiarism: according to the *Era*, Reece cited his inspiration as 'a German legend, Lord Byron's story, and a Boucicaultian drama'.[4] In its review of the play, *Bell's* described the vampire myth as a 'celebrated German legend', and listed earlier examples written by Byron, Boucicault, and Planché.[5] Reece was not only engaging in direct parody, he was also drawing on an established literary figure. The year before *The Vampire* debuted, Charles Dickens Jr. wrote, '[f]ifty years ago, vampire literature had a temporary run of public favour', going on to list notable examples like the story 'purporting to be by

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[1] Roxana Stuart, *Stage Blood: Vampires of the Nineteenth-Century Stage* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994), p. 165.
[2] Stuart*,* p. 166.
[3] 'The Theatres', *Illustrated London News*, 24 August 1872, p. 186, in *The Illustrated London News Historical Archive* [accessed 6 February 2017].
[4] 'The London Theatres', *Era*, 18 August 1872, p. 11, in *British Library Newspapers* [accessed 6 February 2017].
[5] 'Music and Drama', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle,* 17 August 1872, p. 3, in *19th Century UK Periodicals* [accessed 6 February 2017].

the Right Honourable Lord Byron' (this was 'The Vampyre' of 1819, written by

Byron's physician John William Polidori).[6]

Reece's play extends its literary satire beyond the vampire, singling out the

female sensation novelist for ridicule. Stuart observes that '[t]he concept of female

writers was apparently funny on its own.'[7] The play also called attention to its own

language – *Bell's* alerted its readers to the fact that the play contained considerable

'punning, and word-torturing'.[8] The *Illustrated London News* warned that 'there is

scarcely a sentence which is not rendered unintelligible by a double meaning'.[9]

Mingling plagiarism, satire, intertextual reference and outrageous punning, Reece's

play makes the vampire into a creature of writing – literary reference combined with a

riot of playful, self-conscious language so elaborate that it threatens to obscure its

own significance.

The vampire story often deals with writing as both verb and noun – the act of

setting the vampire encounter down on paper, and the resulting text which others may

read and quote. David Seed identifies Robert Southey's *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801)

as the 'first substantial mention of vampires in English Literature'.[10] Yet even this

early example looks backwards to prior tales of the undead – in a lengthy footnote,

Southey lists a number of sources, including the famous case of Arnod Paole (or

Arnold Paul), first publicized in Britain in 1732 by the *London Journal*.[11] Erik Butler

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[6] Charles Dickens Jr, 'Vampires and Ghouls', *All The Year Round*, 20 May 1871, 579-600 (p. 597) in *British Periodicals* [accessed 6 February 2017].
[7] Stuart, p. 166.
[8] 'Music and Drama', p. 3.
[9] 'The Theatres', p. 186.
[10] David Seed, '"The Platitude of Prose": Byron's Vampire Fragment in the Context of His Verse Narratives', in *Byron and the Limits of Fiction,* ed. by Bernard Beatty and Vincent Newey (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1988), pp. 126-47 (p. 128).
[11] Robert Southey, *Thalaba the Destroyer,* Second Edition, 2 vols (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1809*)*, II, p. 104, in *Internet Archive* <https://archive.org/details/thalabadestroye08soutgoog > [accessed 27 February 2017]. Southey's footnote covers over ten pages in this edition, and also quotes from Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens' *Jewish Letters* (1738-1742), Joseph Pitton de Tournefort's *Voyage to the Levant* (1702), and L. F. Cassas, *Travels in Istria and Dalmatia: drawn up*

warns against accepting the vampire as 'a near-eternal being whose existence reaches

back to the ancient world', pointing out that the earliest written records of the word

'vampire' are not even three centuries old, and that Dom Augustin Calmet, in his

1746 work on supernatural apparitions, viewed belief in the vampire as a recent

development.[12] However, though Calmet did not regard the vampire as ancient

legend, it was a story that had already fuelled considerable discussion. Calmet

considers an array of sources, including written documents and spoken accounts, and

summarizes earlier sources, like John Christopher Heremberg, who 'mentions a great

number of writers' who have also dealt with vampirism.[13] The vampire creates a

written and spoken chain of story sharing. Reporting an account of vampire

executions in Hungary, on the orders of the Count of Cabreras, Calmet notes that

'[t]he gentleman who acquainted me with all these particulars, had them from the

count of Cabreras himself'.[14] Some written accounts summarize witnesses' spoken

testimony, distancing Calmet's work even further – the chapter eleven extract from de

Boyer's *Jewish Letters* is a reprint of a second-hand report.[15] Southey is following

Calmet by citing earlier reports in *Thalaba*, presenting the vampire as a creature

whose story has already been told elsewhere. Later works of fiction, like Southey's,

would draw on the textual account, which filters and preserves the spoken one,

establishing a tradition of second-handedness and citation for the literary vampire.[16]

The vampire tale is a story of literary transfer as well as blood drinking.

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from the itinerary of L. F. Cassas, trans. Joseph Lavallée (1805). Arnod Paul's story is discussed in further detail on pp. 120-21 of this thesis.

[12] Erik Butler, *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010), p. 3, p. 4, p. 5.

[13] Dom Augustin Calmet, *Dissertations Upon the Apparitions of Angels, Dæmons, and Ghosts, and Concerning the Vampires of Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia* (London: M. Cooper, 1759), p. 205, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* [accessed 17 February 2017].

[14] Calmet, p. 199.

[15] Calmet, p. 200.

[16] I discuss this transition further in Chapter Three.

A relationship with a text (like an encounter with a vampire) may take many different forms, but it generally requires a transfer of meaning, a kind of exchange. The text demands its reader's time (a small portion of their life), but leaves something behind. Like the vampire, writing is not 'pure'.[17] As a monster of the supernatural which is also a monster of textual experience, the vampire can offer a monstrous vision of textual interaction. James B. Twitchell associates the vampire legend with artistic production, particularly with the output of the Romantic poets:

> [the Romantic artist] is both enervated and energized by the art of creation. Likewise we in the audience feel both catharsis and rejuvenation in the process of experiencing his art. Hence, vampirism, simply as a process of energy exchange, is implicit in the creative process.[18]

These chapters will explore the interaction between the vampire and writing – the way in which the vampire allows writing to talk about itself, and especially to explore those elements of textual interaction which might be viewed as 'gothic', and coloured with fear or ambivalence. Writing, like the vampire, may trouble definitions of the human, allow a meeting with a barbarous past, create alarm or ambivalent desire. The vampire provides a metaphor for writing which is outrageous and overblown, attractive and alarming. Whilst Twitchell is sceptical about the worth of later vampire works – and about the value in considering the vampire tradition sequentially – I will

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[17] 'We are taking language not as a system of abstract grammatical categories, but rather language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as a world view, even as a concrete opinion'. (Mikhail Bakhtin, 'Discourse in the Novel', in *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, ed. by Michael Holquist, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 259-422 (p. 271)).

[18] James B. Twitchell, *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1981), p. 142.

suggest that the vampire's value as a way of considering the gothic of writing may persist and even increase with the passing of decades and the accumulation of vampire media.[19]

Fred Botting presents an uncanny vision of literature in his discussion of gothic's role in the formation of the unconscious (which draws on *Dracula*'s inclusion of the concept of 'unconscious cerebration'). In Botting's view, the unconscious, rather than being 'discovered' in gothic literature, may in fact 'take its bearings from fictional figures.'[20] Shaped by such motifs, the unconscious – like literature – develops a gothic tinge:

> In the process of eighteenth-century cultural change, literature takes
>
> on a recognisable form, as does the unconscious, becoming associated
>
> with a darker nature, infantile wishes and sexuality, female desire in
>
> particular.[21]

For those in the eighteenth century critical of literature's presumed negative social influence, fiction became a 'dangerous, gloomy, and horrifying' labyrinth.[22] Such dark visions of fiction may be reminiscent not only of the gothic, but also, more specifically, of the vampire. Before the eighteenth-century cultural development identified by Botting, seventeenth-century concerns about reading characterize the novel in terms akin to the literary vampire. Margaret Anne Doody shows how novels were perceived to offer dangerous visions of inward emotion (and a potential for effeminacy), as well as confusing distinctions between 'history and lies; intellect and

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[19] Twitchell, *The Living Dead*, p. ix, p. 5.

[20] Fred Botting, 'The Gothic Production of the Unconscious', in *Spectral Readings: Towards a Gothic Geography*, ed. by Glennis Byron and David Punter (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 11-36 (p. 17).

[21] Botting, 'The Gothic Production of the Unconscious', p. 23.

[22] Botting, 'The Gothic Production of the Unconscious', p. 25.

the boudoir; aristocracy and bourgeoisie; authority and women.'[23] Another sort of confusion was also feared – a psychological muddling of the reader's self with the characters they read about, resulting in 'an artificial hybrid' of the two.[24] The vampire in literature is similarly adept at blurring divisions within established categories (like gender and race), confusing even the boundary between living and dead.

Just as the vampire is mutable, expressing a variety of different fears, so the novel provoked anxiety of another kind in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. An advice manual of 1798 branded novels as 'Monstrous, Unnatural, or Preposterous' – a description which might easily apply to the vampire.[25] The practice of novel reading was criticized as a depraved taste, like eating opium.[26] It was even characterized as a mental poison.[27] The vampire is similarly toxic and addictive for its victims, whilst compulsively pursuing its own depraved appetite for blood. Novel and vampire both also threaten sexual corruption: Ana Vogrinčič notes that circulating libraries were compared to both gin-shops and brothels.[28] Like a vampire, the novel could override free will, particularly amongst the young and inexperienced: Samuel Johnson feared that fictional examples were able 'to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will'.[29] Women were particularly vulnerable to the novel's wiles – just as they were the usual victims

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[23] Margaret Anne Doody, *The True Story of the Novel* (London: Fontana, 1998), p. 266.

[24] Doody, p. 271.

[25] Erasmus Darwin, *A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education in Boarding Schools* (1798), quoted in Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1990), p. 106, in *MyiLibrary* [accessed 7 September 2016].

[26] Joe Bray, *The Female Reader in the English Novel* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 10.

[27] In 1778, English essayist Vicesimus Knox opposed the 'sweetened poison' of the novel to 'true histories' which offer the mind 'plain and wholesome food'. (Vicemius Knox, 'On Novel-Reading'*, Essays Moral and Literary*, quoted in Ana Vogrinčič, 'The Novel-Reading Panic in 18th-Century in England: An Outline of an Early Moral Media Panic', *Medijska Istrazivanja/Media Research*, 14 (2008), 103-24 (p. 113)).

[28] Vogrinčič, p. 111.

[29] Samuel Johnson, 'The Modern Form of Romance Preferable to the Ancient. The Necessity of Characters Morally Good', *The Rambler,* 6 vols (London: J. Payne, 1752), I, pp. 27-35 (p. 31), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* [accessed 17 February 2017].

of early vampires like Ruthven and Varney.[30] They could also become disseminators

of fiction – Fred Botting notes the unease inspired by female writers, and the way in

which their employment was characterized in terms of monstrous motherhood (like

the disturbing vampire motherhood of *Dracula*).[31]

Burns and Coleridge might have deplored the writer's vulnerability to

'vampyre booksellers' at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but a few decades

later the creation of literature was to become more overtly tinged with the gothic and

vampiric.[32] As part of a wider concern about degeneration, the late nineteenth century

saw a preoccupation with 'degenerate' art and artists. The latter were identified by

Max Nordau via both physical and mental stigmata, and associated with criminality.[33]

In Stephen Arata's words, Nordau attributed 'idiosyncrasies of style' to 'chemical

vagaries of nerve cells or the misfirings of synapses.'[34] Degenerate works refused to

respect the strong ties between 'words and things', 'generat[ing] meanings with

scandalous abandon.'[35] Maggie Kilgour connects Dracula with 'contemporary images

of the artist as a murderer, ghoul and vampire, used both by decadent writers and their

attackers', and identifies Stoker as writing against dangerous tendencies in modern

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[30] In 1780, *The Lady's Magazine* declared that 'novels [...] are powerful engines with which the seducer attacks the female heart'. ('Cursory Thoughts on the Modern Novel', *The Lady's Magazine* December 1780, p. 693, quoted in Joe Bray, *The Female Reader in the English Novel* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 10).

[31] Botting, 'The Gothic Production of the Unconscious', p. 25.

[32] Robert Burns, 'To Robert Graham of Fintrey, Esq.', in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, ed. by James Kinsley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 585-89 (p. 587). The poem was borrowed in a private letter by Coleridge, who retained the 'vampire bookseller' comparison in his condensed version. (John-David Lopez, 'Coleridge's Publisher and Patron: Cottle and Poole', in *The Oxford Handbook of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. by Frederick Burwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 49-67 (p. 60).)

[33] 'Degenerates are not always criminals, prostitutes, anarchists, and pronounced lunatics; they are often authors and artists.' (Max Nordau, *Degeneration*, trans. from the Second Edition of the German work (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), p. v).

[34] Stephen Arata, *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 28.

[35] Arata, *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle*, p. 29.

literature.[36] The charge of degeneracy could spring up unexpectedly, however. Stoker

himself argued that there was 'nothing base' in *Dracula*.[37] Yet one American critic

described the book as 'degenerate', warning (or rather promising) readers: '[i]f you

have the bad taste, after this warning, to attempt the book, you will read on to the

finish, as I did, – and go to bed, as I did, feeling furtively of [sic] your throat.'[38]

Stoker's novel, like the habit of blood-drinking (also a 'bad taste') is undesirable but

difficult to quit, once begun.

A degenerate or decadent text (Nordau reads a combination of hysteria and

degeneracy in the production of decadent works of art) could prove a corrupting

influence – like the 'poisonous' novel that infects Dorian Gray.[39] Nordau warned that

art could 'exercise a powerful suggestion on the masses', exerting 'a disturbing and

corrupting influence on the views of a whole generation' – especially those of 'the

impressionable youth.'[40] Nordau's description of the degenerate artist's influence

resembles Dracula's scheme to introduce a 'circle of semi-demons' into London.[41]

Nordau warns:

> Under the influence of an obsession, a degenerate mind promulgates
>
> some doctrine or other – realism, pornography, mysticism, symbolism,
>
> diabolism. He does this with vehement penetrating eloquence, with

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[36] Maggie Kilgour, 'Vampiric Arts: Bram Stoker's Defence of Poetry', in *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, ed. by William Hughes and Andrew Smith (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 1998), pp. 47-61 (p. 52.)
[37] Bram Stoker to William Ewart Gladstone, 24 May 1897, quoted in William Hughes, *Beyond Dracula,* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), p. 15.
[38] *San Francisco Wave*, 9 December 1899, quoted in Elizabeth Miller, *A Dracula Handbook* ([n.p.]: Xlibris, 2005), p. 53.
[39] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 122. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text. The novel, unnamed in Wilde's work, has been identified with Joris-Karl Huysman's *À Rebours* (1884). Richard Ellmann, for instance, proposes this connection. (Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde* (London: Penguin, 1988), p. 238).
[40] Nordau, p. v.
[41] Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, ed. by John Paul Riquelme (Boston: Bedford/St Martin's, 2002), p. 74. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

eagerness and fiery heedlessness. Other degenerate, hysterical,

neurasthenical minds flock around him, receive from his lips the new

doctrine, and live thenceforth only to propagate it.[42]

Like the vampire, the artist is only acting according to his nature, as are his initial

followers.[43] As the circle widens, others are brought within its bounds – adopting the

new creed not out of conviction, but 'because they hope, as associates of the new sect,

to acquire fame and money'.[44] Renfield, Dracula's disciple, is both kinds of follower,

a passionate devotee who is also motivated by self-interest: Seward comments that he

'thinks of the loaves and fishes even when he believes he is in a Real Presence'

(*Dracula,* p. 121).

More than a century later, the vampire is again associated with dangerous

reading in criticism of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* novels (2005-2008). Some

detractors viewed Meyer's novels as a negative influence on readers, especially young

women. Like Johnson, these critics were concerned about writing's potential

influence – though they warned of the dissemination of reactionary gender roles,

rather than moral corruption. Anna Silver explores the appeal and ideology of

Twilight in a feminist context, addressing its possible effect on a young female

readership and noting its participation in the Young Adult genre – in Silver's view, a

more didactic genre than adult fiction.[45] *Twilight* fans' 'unhealthy' fixation became a

topic of even greater interest after the release of film adaptations of the series (2008-

2012). Christine Spines, for instance, discusses the *Twilight* 'junkies' who liken their

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[42] Nordau*,* p. 31.

[43] Dracula lacks 'heedlessness', but he is obsessive – compelled to take blood, to behave in set ways. His 'doctrine' is the spread of vampirism, or the return of the old warlike days. Alternatively, Dracula is less an artist than an ideology, spread by degenerate English minds like Renfield's and Lucy's.

[44] Nordau*,* p. 31.

[45] Anna Silver, '*Twilight* is Not Good For Maidens: Gender, Sexuality, and the Family in Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* Series', *Studies in the Novel*, 42 (2010), 121-38 (p. 123.)

love of the series to drug addiction.[46] *Twilight* is not only appealing to 'giddy teenage girls', but also unhealthily stimulates 'the passions of middle-age women.'[47] (Notably the passionate fans, like the American critic of *Dracula,* derive enjoyment from their 'addiction'.)

These chapters will explore the connection between vampire and 'dangerous' writing further, arguing that the vampire expresses a variety of gothic visions of living with texts. I will follow the example of works like those of Ken Gelder and Nina Auerbach, who study the vampire chronologically, and, like Gelder and Auerbach, I will pay special attention to *Dracula,* which is where the project will begin and end.[48] I will combine this focus with a wider perspective on the connection between vampires and gothic textual experience, tracing the development of the fictional vampire through changes in media and shifting attitudes to fiction. **Chapter One: Gothic Readings and Writings of *Dracula***, will deal with *Dracula*'s gothic depiction of encounters with literature. In addition to addressing how Stoker makes reading and writing into gothic activities, this chapter will examine how criticism of the novel may show itself to be gothic. **Chapter Two: Bodies, Identities, Texts**, addresses the earliest fictional vampires in Britain, concentrating on Polidori's 'The Vampyre' and James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney, the Vampyre* (1845-47). This chapter will consider the gothic body which was commercialized in the early vampire text – from the embodiment of the writer to the body concerns (sex and violence) of the populace (or mob) offered by *Varney.* **Chapter Three: Slaying by the Book**, discusses the gothic of scientific and institutional discourse as depicted in mid-century

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[46] Christine Spines, 'When Twilight Fandom Becomes Addiction', *LA Times*, 27 June 2010 <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/jun/27/entertainment/la-ca-twilight-addiction-20100627> [accessed 20 October 2016].
[47] Spines.
[48] Ken Gelder, *Reading the Vampire* (London: Routledge, 1994; repr. in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2001), in *Myilibrary* [accessed 16 February 2017]. Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

vampire tales, notably Sheridan Le Fanu's 'Carmilla' (1872). The slaying of vampires is sanctioned by official and educated language, and interpretive authority is translated into violent action. **Chapter Four: Art in the Blood** returns to the *fin de siècle*, focusing on *Dracula*'s vampire contemporaries. The chapter shows how vampire texts of this era offer a gothic of literature that is tied to wider fears about art and influence. The vampire is akin to the decadent artist and decadent art, associated with both physical and cultural degeneracy. This chapter will consider the appearance of hereditary and psychic vampirism, focusing especially on *The House of the Vampire* and *The Blood of the Vampire.* **Chapter Five: Sluts and Playboys**, moves to the twentieth century, addressing *Dracula*'s adaptation to film and suggesting that the translation into a new medium gives voice to an ambivalent response to Victorian culture – a struggle tinged with the gothic, revealing an unwanted affinity between modernity and the past. Finally, **Chapter Six: Our Vampires Are Different**, examines vampires of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, as depicted in Joss Whedon's television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) and Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* novels, tracing the gothic of reading and writing in a postmodern climate. Inescapably intertextual, the vampire embodies the impossibility of originality in a world suffused with and constituted by stories – by texts that are derivative, commercialized, and 'impure'.

II. Making a Vampire Genre: *Dracula* and its Criticism

William Hughes questions the 'myth-making that has progressively foregrounded Stoker's novel as an arbitrary high point in the alleged evolution of vampirism in literature', arguing that *Dracula* would better serve as means to 'illuminate a wider range of vampire fictions' through comparisons and contrasts.[49] Dracula the everyvampire could then facilitate the discussion he has monopolized. When considering the connection between the vampire and gothic visions of writing, however, *Dracula* may have some claim to pre-eminence. Conspicuously narrated, and with an emphasis on the materiality of textual production, *Dracula* exploits the sensational potential of living – and dying – with texts. Like Reece's satire, the interest of *Dracula* is 'literary' – how its texts are written, read, copied, translated, endangered, rescued. Stoker's novel epitomizes the vampire tales' gothic relationship with texts, as well as throwing a sinister light over writing more generally.

Dracula is also exceptional in the way it has set the terms for discussion of the vampire in both fiction and criticism. Carol A. Senf reads Stoker's vampire as 'a turning point for the literary vampire', a transitional figure between old-fashioned, unattractive vampires and modern, attractive ones.[50] Christopher Frayling follows the 'family tree' of the European vampire in fiction, a line of descent culminating with *Dracula*.[51] Robert Tracey notes how works like 'The Vampyre' and *Varney, the Vampyre* serve as potential source materials for the later *Dracula*. (Varney's suicide, for instance, is viewed as a possible foreshadowing of Dracula's peaceful dying

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[49] William Hughes, 'Fictional Vampires in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), in *Blackwell Reference Online* <doi. 10.1111/b.9780631206200.2001.00014.x> [accessed 29 March 2017].
[50] Carol A. Senf, *The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century English Literature,* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1988), p. 31.
[51] Christopher Frayling, 'Lord Byron to Count Dracula', in *Vampyres: Lord Byron to Count Dracula*, ed. by Christopher Frayling (London: Faber and Faber, 1991; repr. 1992), pp. 3-84, p. 5.

expression.)[52] Ken Gelder situates *Dracula* at the midpoint as he examines similarities and differences between vampire fictions – which combine in a distinct genre. He holds that though literary vampires appear in many varied forms, at the same time 'vampire narratives do share, or even "reproduce", certain features.'[53] *Dracula* has been situated at the heart of literary criticism on vampires – as the culmination of the nineteenth century tradition, and the turning point for the years that followed.

Whether or not this exulted position is justified, the criticizing and mythologizing process has made *Dracula* even more closely bound up with ideas of reading, writing, and rewriting. Stoker's tale is supplemented by the history of the novel's afterlife, its influence and adaptations. *Dracula* could be described as a story about a story: the reaction of Stoker's nineteenth century to the intrusion of a much-older myth. The action of the novel hinges on an old tale (the vampire) being transported to an up-to-date setting. In the century that followed the novel's publication, *Dracula* was altered in readers' minds by repeated adaptations and re-readings – making the work a story about a story in a different sense. (Or even a story about a story about a story – Stoker's tale of a migrating story has itself migrated into a later time.) A narrative has developed around the novel's survival, its accumulated significance via retelling and adaptation, its belated but robust critical afterlife. Dracula's deathlessness offers a tempting metaphor for the novel itself, blending criticism with fiction – Gail B. Griffin, for instance, writes: 'The Dracula myth, like its namesake, lives forever, feeding on all of us.'[54]

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[52] Robert Tracey, 'Loving You All Ways: Vamps, Vampires, Necrophiles and Necrofilles in Nineteenth-Century Fiction', in *Sex and Death in Victorian Literature*, ed. by Regina Barreca (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 32-59 (p. 40).
[53] Gelder, *Reading the Vampire,* p. ix.
[54] Gail B. Griffin, '"Your Girls That You All Love are Mine": *Dracula* and the Victorian Male Sexual Imagination', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics*, ed. by Margaret L. Carter (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 137-48 (p. 137) (first publ. in *International Journal of Women's Studies*, 3 (1980), 454-65).

In 1997, Roberto Fernández Retama observed that fifty years earlier, 'taking the Count seriously was not considered respectable.'[55] *Dracula* received little scholarly attention until the nineteen-seventies, when it began acquiring a precarious intellectual respectability, gradually sneaking into the establishment – as Dracula himself does in the novel. *Dracula*'s initial low literary status means that early critical pieces are sometimes prompted to justify themselves or acknowledge the artistic shortcomings of Stoker's novel. Bacil F. Kirtley, writing in 1956, describes *Dracula*'s origins as 'the sub-literary pits of Gothic horror fiction.'[56] Kirtley's phrasing is distinctly gothic, reminiscent of Jonathan Harker's description of the trio of female vampires as 'devils of the Pit' (*Dracula,* p. 75). Kirtley defends his study of *Dracula* by focusing on Stoker's use of South-eastern European superstition and supposed adaptation of historical record (the Russian monastic chronicles), and by stressing the novel's wide appeal: *Dracula* cannot be considered a 'successful' novel, but 'the fact that it is still in print and is still read proves it has a kind of vitality, provokes a kind of interest.'[57] *Dracula* first justifies critical attention via its inclusion of folklore, and claims that situate it within 'popular myth'. In 1972, Royce MacGillivray wrote:

> Stoker created a myth comparable in vitality to that of the Wandering
> Jew, Faust, or Don Juan. […] Such a myth lives not merely because it
> has been skilfully marketed by entrepreneurs but because it expresses

[55] Roberto Fernández Retamar and Christopher Winks, 'On Dracula, the West, America, and Other Inventions', trans. by Christopher Winks, *The Black Scholar*, 35 (2005), 22-29 (p. 22) (first publ. in *Marx Ahora*, 3 (1997)).
[56] Bacil F. Kirtley, '*Dracula,* the Monastic Chronicles and Slavic Folklore', *Midwest Folklore*, 6 (1956), 133-39 (p. 133).
[57] Kirtley, p. 138.

something that large numbers of people feel to be true about their own lives.[58]

In a similar vein, in 1977 Stephanie Demetrakopoulos characterized *Dracula* as '[p]opular art' which is also 'collective dreaming', answering a society's suppressed desires – in *Dracula*'s case, the nineteenth-century weariness with 'conventional sex roles'.[59] The novel is relevant because of its status as a cultural symptom.

Dracula's changing critical standing illustrates literary criticism's increasing interest in 'popular' works. In 1988, Philip Martin described *Dracula* as a 'peculiarly "pure" text, comparatively free from critical attention, and fortunately bereft of the stigmata commonly induced in texts burdened with concepts of authorial genius.'[60] As the novel became a justifiable object of study, this 'purity' would become heavily overwritten. William Hughes comments that '*Dracula* is always a palimpsest of theoretical opinions, a point at which methodologies converge, compete and combine.'[61] By this account, the novel becomes to critical methodologies as the Carpathians are to superstition – for according to Jonathan Harker, 'every known superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool' (*Dracula,* p. 28).

Dracula's criticism provides a catalogue of twentieth-century critical methodologies and nineteenth-century horrors, offering many different answers to the question of what the vampire hunters (and Stoker, and Stoker's era) really had to fear.

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[58] Royce MacGillivray, '*Dracula*: Bram Stoker's Spoiled Masterpiece', *Queen's Quarterly*, 79 (1972), 518-27 (p. 518).
[59] Stephanie Demetrakopoulos, 'Feminism, Sex Role Exchanges, and Other Subliminal Fantasies in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 2 (1977), 104-13 (p. 106).
[60] Philip Martin, 'The Vampire in the Looking-Glass: Reflection and Projection in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Nineteenth-Century Suspense: From Poe to Conan Doyle*, ed. by Clive Bloom, Brian Docherty, Jane Gibb and Keith Shand (New York: St Martin's Press, 1988), pp. 80-92 (p. 80).
[61] William Hughes, *Bram Stoker, Dracula: A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008; repr. 2009), p. 4. Kindle ebook.

Gary Day suggests three broad categories for this wide body of criticism, focused on race, class, and sexuality.[62] John Paul Riquelme considers recent criticism to be roughly separable into psychoanalytic readings and interpretations which concentrate on history or society.[63] William Hughes divides his review of *Dracula* criticism into six chapters, looking at nineteenth-century responses to the novel; psychoanalysis and psychobiography; medicine, mind and body; racial and colonial politics; Irish studies; and gender studies.[64] Drawing on these assessments, I have found it helpful to consider *Dracula*'s critical literature under the three initial heads of psychoanalysis, history, and text, following each of these broad topics in turn as they branch in a variety of directions.

Ernest Jones's Freudian reading deals principally with the vampire superstition and its psychological significance, but offers a number of ideas that would prove central to psychoanalytic criticism of *Dracula*. Jones identifies 'love, guilt and hate' behind the idea of the return of the dead, and connects the vampire's return with 'infantile incestuous wishes.'[65] Maurice Richardson draws on Jones's linking of necrophilia and the vampire embrace, and reads *Dracula* in light of Freud's theory of the primal horde, characterizing Dracula as 'a father-figure of huge potency'.[66] Richardson is an early proponent of the belief that Stoker was unaware of the erotic element of the vampire myth, and he links the creation of Dracula to Stoker's father-fixation.[67] Richardson's identification of 'traditional mythical

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[62] Gary Day, 'The State of *Dracula*: Bureaucracy and the Vampire', in *Rereading Victorian Fiction,* ed. by Alice Jenkins and Juliet John (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 81-95 (p. 81).
[63] John Paul Riquelme, 'A Critical History of *Dracula*', in *Dracula,* ed. by Riquelme, pp. 409-33 (p. 410).
[64] Hughes, *Bram Stoker, Dracula: A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism*, p. 20.
[65] Ernest Jones, *On the Nightmare* (London: Hogarth Press, 1931). Extract reprinted as 'On the Vampire', in *Vampyres*, ed. by Frayling, pp. 398-417 (p. 399, p. 401).
[66] Maurice Richardson, 'The Psychoanalysis of Ghost Stories', *The Twentieth Century*, 166 (1959), 419-31. *Dracula* material excerpted as 'The Psychoanalysis of Count Dracula', in *Vampyres*, ed. by Frayling, pp. 419-22 (p. 419).
[67] Richardson, pp. 420-21.

properties' in *Dracula* connects the novel closely to traditional superstitions (like those analysed by Jones) and its characters to characters from a Freudian reading of the Oedipus myth (Dracula as the bad father).[68] This approach is present in other psychoanalytic readings of *Dracula,* which follow Richardson – the novel, like a dream, is analysed for its symbolic components. Scenes which are charged with violent and/or sexual symbolism – like the staking of Lucy – receive particular attention in this mode of criticism. Phyllis A. Roth, for instance, views the novel as consisting of 'two major episodes, the seduction of Lucy and of Mina, to which the experience of Harker at Castle Dracula provides a preface'.[69]

The majority of later psychoanalytic criticism of *Dracula* concentrates on submerged fears and desires within the novel, rather than on psychobiographic treatments of Stoker's life.[70] Christopher Bentley identifies incest, rape, and fears of menstruation in the depiction of vampires and vampire attacks in *Dracula*.[71] James B. Twitchell finds an expression of the father/daughter incest taboo in his psychoanalysis of the vampire.[72] Richard Astle argues that the novel presents the Oedipal fantasy of killing one father (Dracula) and obeying the other (Van Helsing).[73] Phyllis A. Roth differs by viewing *Dracula*'s fantasies as primarily pre-Oedipal, rather than Oedipal,

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[68] Richardson, p. 418.

[69] Phyllis A. Roth, 'Suddenly Sexual Women in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics*, ed. by Carter, pp. 57-67 (pp. 61-02) (first publ. in *Literature and Psychology*, 27 (1977), 113-21).

[70] Psychoanalytic readings focusing on Stoker include that of Simon Shuster, who reads *Dracula* as the result of Stoker's 'terrifying experiences in a hospital' as a child. (Simon Shuster, 'Dracula and Surgically Induced Trauma in Children', *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 46 (1973), 259-70 (p. 262)).

[71] Christopher Bentley, 'The Monster in the Bedroom: Sexual Symbolism in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics*, ed. by Margaret L. Carter (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 25-34 (p. 27, pp. 29-30) (first publ. in *Literature and Psychology,* 22 (1972), 27-34).

[72] James B. Twitchell, 'The Vampire Myth', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics,* ed. by Margaret L. Carter (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 109-16 (p. 115) (first publ. in *American Imago*, 37 (1980), 83-92).

[73] Richard Astle, 'Dracula as Totemic Monster: Lacan, Freud, Oedipus and History', *SubStance*, 8 (1979), 98-105 (p. 102).

dealing with the reader's covert wish to 'desire to destroy the threatening mother, she who threatens by being desirable'.[74]

For readers taking up the novel nearly a hundred years – or more – after it was published, Dracula can be friend or enemy, upholder of patriarchy or its opponent (or he can take both 'sides' at once). He is associated with femininity and Mother Nature by Anne Williams, who makes use of the Freudian idea of 'reversal' in dreams, which can produce phenomena like 'the appearance of a female as a male entity'.[75] The connection is also made by Marie Mulvey-Roberts, who like Bentley reads a disgust at menstruation in the novel, with Dracula acting as a focus for misogynistic revulsion towards the menstruating woman.[76] Alan Johnson also connects Dracula with the feminine, presenting him as embodying the rebellious ego of Lucy and Mina (as well as embodying the egoism of the male characters which prompts this rebellion).[77] Stephanie Moss argues that *Dracula* both espouses and mocks phallocentric gender notions, using hysteria from Lucy, Mina, and Jonathan to parody the 'forced performance of gender'.[78]

Elisabeth Bronfen views the ending of *Dracula* as a temporary attempt at restoring order – the 'paternal symbolic order' is threatened by the vampire, and the novel's male characters try – but ultimately fail – to re-establish stable meaning via violent staking (fixing the vampire's meaning) and by 'accurate documentation'.[79] John Greenway also presents the ending of the novel as tinged with failure – in his

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[74] Roth, p. 65.

[75] Anne Williams, '*Dracul*a: Si(g)ns of the Fathers', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 33 (1991), 445-63 (pp. 447-48).

[76] Marie Mulvey-Roberts, '*Dracula* and the Doctors: Bad Blood, Menstrual Taboo and the New Woman', in *Bram Stoker: History, Psychoanalysis and the Gothic*, ed. by Hughes and Smith, pp. 78-95 (p. 80).

[77] Alan Johnson, p. 237.

[78] Stephanie Moss, 'The Psychiatrist's Couch: Hypnosis, Hysteria, and Proto-Freudian Performance in *Dracula*', in *Bram Stoker's Dracula: Sucking Through the Century 1989-1997*, ed. by Carol Margaret Davison (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), pp. 123-46 (p. 134).

[79] Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), p. 314, p. 318, p. 320.

reading, Dracula acts as a catalyst for atavistic impulses in his human opponents. They reject trains of thought leading in troubling directions, and ultimately learn nothing from their experience.[80] Valdine Clemens holds that Freudian theory 'can be useful in diagnosing the psychological aberrations, sexual neuroses, and oedipal conflicts found so frequently in Gothic tales', but an assessment of the 'therapeutic potential of gothic experience' must be found via other approaches, like that of Jung.[81] Matthew C. Brennan's Jungian reading takes a more positive view of *Dracula*'s conclusion (and its characters' development), suggesting that Jonathan and Mina achieve psychic healing – in part because they can remember and recount their nightmare experiences.[82] *Dracula* becomes an allegory of how the psyche grows (or, in Lucy's case, fails to grow).

Psychoanalytic criticism illustrates the epistemological gulf between *Dracula*'s characters and its critics. Richardson declares that only from the psychoanalytic standpoint does *Dracula* 'really make any sense'.[83] In the novel, characters also attempt to make sense of incredible events by interpreting and labelling them (Seward classifies Renfield, Mina classifies Dracula). In the case of Dracula, this is an instance of the new imposing an interpretation on the old – not dissimilar to the way in which, as Hughes suggests, psychoanalytic criticism 'impose[s] the order of a commenting present upon the textuality of an earlier period'.[84] The question of the soul has become the question of the psyche – Brennan

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[80] John Greenway, '"Unconscious Cerebration" and the Happy Ending of *Dracula*', *Journal of Dracula Studies*, 4 (2002) <https://kutztownenglish.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/jds_v4_2002_greenway.pdf> [accessed 16 July 2016].
[81] Valdine Clemens, *The Return of the Repressed: Gothic Horror from The Castle of Otranto to Alien* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), p. 12. Clemens reads *Dracula* in the context of a wider survey of gothic literature, which she argues offers the reader a revitalising, atavistic experience. (Clemens, p. 2).
[82] Matthew C. Brennan, *The Gothic Psyche: Disintegration and Growth in Nineteenth-Century English Literature* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1997), p. 114.
[83] Richardson, p. 418.
[84] Hughes, *Bram Stoker, Dracula: A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism*, p. 46.

asserts that the saving of souls from the vampire means saving the psyche.[85] This transition is prefigured in the way that science and religious morality interplay – sometimes uneasily – in *Dracula*'s depiction of vampires.[86]

Considerations of *Dracula* and gender draw on psychoanalysis, but also extend into queer and feminist theory. An early feminist reading comes from Judith Weissman, who argues that the novel contains characteristically Victorian fears of (and attempts to curb) women's sexual desires.[87] Gail B. Griffin also connects the portrayal of female sexuality in the novel to nineteenth-century attitudes towards women, reading the female vampires as desirable as well as terrible: 'the worst nightmare and dearest fantasy of the Victorian male: the pure girl turned sexually ravenous beast.'[88] A number of readings, like that of Emma Dominguez-Rue, identify the killing of Lucy and the other female vampires as violently sexual – the penetration via stake is a symbolic rape, restoring these women to 'proper', 'feminine' passivity.[89] Dominguez-Rue relates sexuality with appetite with a consideration of the Victorian ideal of female thinness, exploring how a display of hunger – for food or sex – was considered unfeminine.[90]

The New Woman (and Stoker's view of this controversial figure) is also a frequent point of critical interest. Carol A. Senf writes that Lucy's 'desire for three husbands suggests a degree of latent sensuality which connects her to the New

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[85] Matthew C. Brennan, 'Repression, Knowledge, and Saving Souls: The Role of the "New Woman" in Stoker's *Dracula* and Murnau's *Nosferatu*', *Studies in the Humanities*, 19 (1992), 1-10, p. 1.
[86] The ghost of morality perhaps lingers in the 'repressive hypothesis', which I discuss in Chapter One.
[87] Judith Weissman, 'Women and Vampires: *Dracula* as a Victorian Novel', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics,* ed. by Margaret L. Carter (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 69-77 (p. 77) (first publ. in *Midwest Quarterly*, 18 (1977), 392-405).
[88] Griffin, p. 143.
[89] Dominguez-Rue, p. 304. Christopher Craft, '"Kiss Me with those Red Lips": Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Representations*, 8 (1984), 107-33 (pp. 117-18).
[90] Emma Dominguez-Rue, 'Sins of the Flesh: Anorexia, Eroticism and the Female Vampire in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Journal of Gender Studies,* 19 (2010), 297-308 (pp. 299-30).

Woman of the period.'[91] Mina, meanwhile, combines the independence and

intelligence of the New Woman with traditional femininity – an acceptable hybrid.[92]

Similarly, Sos Eltis considers Mina's motherhood to validate her modernity, making

her a combination of traditional and new.[93] In contrast, Anne Cranny-Francis reads

Dracula as a hostile response to the New Woman, showing the punishment of overt

feminine sexuality and the re-imposition of an ideology of 'male power and

dominance.'[94] Troy Boone writes that discussions like Cranny-Francis' 'tend to view

[the novel] as either reinscribing or radically revising dominant values – and both

claims in part neutralise the text's useful representation of Victorian ideas of sexual

difference.'[95] Boone argues that vampirism in the novel allows a challenging of

dominant ideas about progress and gender, suggesting 'that a new understanding of

sexuality and decay is necessary for any attempt to attain social order and growth.'[96]

    Dracula speaks about masculinity as well as femininity, as some critics have

observed, tracing submerged narratives of fear and dislocation as the novel's male

characters respond to the pressures and constraints attending late-Victorian

masculinity. Thomas B. Byers reads the novel as an expression of male vulnerability

in relationships with women.[97] Jasmine Yong Hall identifies Jonathan Harker's

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[91] Senf, '*Dracula*: Stoker's Response to the New Woman', p. 42. Senf also argues that the vampire women at Dracula's castle are marked out as New Women by their subversion of traditional sexual roles and lack of maternal feeling. (pp. 40-41).

[92] Senf, '*Dracula*: Stoker's Response to the New Woman', p. 45.

[93] Sos Eltis, 'Corruption of the Blood and Degeneration of the Race: *Dracula* and Policing the Borders of Gender', in *Dracula,* ed. by Riquelme, pp. 450-65 (p. 457, p. 462).

[94] Anne Cranny-Francis, 'Sexual Politics and Political Repression in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Nineteenth-Century Suspense: From Poe to Conan Doyle*, ed. by Clive Bloom, Brian Docherty, Jane Gibb and Keith Shand (New York: St Martin's Press, 1988), pp. 64-79 (p. 64).

[95] Troy Boone, '"He is English and Therefore Adventurous": Politics, Decadence, and *Dracula*', *Studies in the Novel,* 25 (1993), 76-91 (pp. 76-77).

[96] Boone, p. 77.

[97] Thomas B. Byers, 'Good Men and Monsters: The Defenses of *Dracula*', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics,* ed. by Carter, pp. 149-157 (p. 153) (first publ. in *Literature and Psychology*, 31 (1981), 24-31). Byers argues, unlike Roth and Weissman, that men are afraid of 'themselves and their vulnerability' as well as 'women and their sexuality'. (Byers, p. 150).

profession as a source of vulnerability and feminization.[98] Differentiating himself

from both Craft and Yong Hall, Dejan Kuzmanovic reads Jonathan Harker's arc in the

novel as survival of an identity crisis: Jonathan, anxious about the move into the

pressures of marriage and work as a solicitor, undergoes a 'temporary destabilization'

of his ego (homoerotic desire) 'in order to be re-stabilized in a modified form which

can accommodate these external pressures.'[99]

In Christopher Craft's reading, Dracula troubles the boundaries between male

and female, heterosexual and homosexual.[100] The novel 'evokes, manipulates,

sustains' the 'sexual threat' of male homosexual desire, male penetration of another

male, but never shows this directly.[101] Instead, women act as go-betweens allowing

men to touch, and a mask of 'monstrous heterosexuality' is imposed over same-sex

desire.[102] Talia Schaffer reads the novel as Stoker's response to the trials of Oscar

Wilde, with Dracula representing 'the complex of fears, desires, secrecies,

repressions, and punishments' attached to Wilde's name in 1895.[103] Dracula

encompasses the monstrous Wilde depicted by his prosecutors, as well as Stoker's

'imaginative identification' with him.[104] Barry McCrea, like Schaffer, reads *Dracula*

as being written from the closet, suggesting that the novel depicts heterosexual

marriage as a gothic prison, making 'a giddy, gruesome conjecture about what it

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[98] Jasmine Yong Hall, 'Solicitors Soliciting: The Dangerous Circulations of Professionalism in *Dracula* (1897)', in *The New Nineteenth Century: Feminist Readings of Underread Victorian Fiction,* ed. by Barbara Leah Harman and Susan Meyer (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), pp. 97-116 (p. 101).
[99] Dejan Kuzmanovic, 'Vampiric Seduction and Vicissitudes of Masculine Identity in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Victorian Literature and Culture,* 37 (2009), 411-25 (p. 412).
[100] Craft, p. 122.
[101] Craft, p. 110.
[102] Craft, p. 111.
[103] Talia Schaffer, '"A Wilde Desire Took Me": The Homoerotic History of *Dracula*', *ELH*, 61 (1994), 381-425 (p. 398).
[104] Schaffer, p. 398.

might mean to be a well-married, lucky wife.'[105] Elsewhere Damion Clark argues that

Stoker actually exploits homophobia to create a sense of threat in *Dracula,* thereby

implying that the English should not dread those of different nationality (like himself)

but those of other sexualities.[106] Charles E. Prescott and Grace A. Giorgio,

meanwhile, argue that the depiction of Lucy and Mina's passionate friendship reflects

new questioning of female intimacy in a 'cultural climate of feminist reform,

sexology, and degeneration anxiety'.[107]

　　As we have seen, Bacil F. Kirtley justifies a reading of *Dracula* by connecting

the novel to folklore and chronicle.[108]A decade later, Grigore Nandris examines

Stoker's use of historical sources, as well as suggesting both mythological and

contemporary inspiration for *Dracula* (including Stoker's contemporaries Jack the

Ripper and Oscar Wilde).[109] Like Kirtley, Nandris closely identifies Dracula with

Vlad the Impaler, whose story he recounts, even including a family tree. This search

for Dracula combines the search for a fictional character with the pursuit of a

historical personage, and follows a precedent established by Stoker. Not only does he

name friends and acquaintances (Arminius Vambery and Ellen Terry) in *Dracula*, he

also implies a connection to Jack the Ripper in the preface to the 1901 Icelandic

translation.[110] The intersection between history, mythology, and commercialism (and

the tourist trade's melding of fiction and reality) would later receive attention with

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[105] Barry McCrea, 'Heterosexual Horror: *Dracula*, the Closet, and the Marriage-Plot', *Novel: A Forum on Fiction,* 43 (2012), 251-70 (p. 268).

[106] Damion Clark, 'Preying on the Pervert: The Uses of Homosexual Panic in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Horrifying Sex: Essays on Sexual Difference in Gothic Literature*, ed. by Ruth Bienstock Anolik (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007), pp. 167-76 (p. 168).

[107] Charles E. Prescott and Grace A. Giorgio, 'Vampiric Affinities: Mina Harker and the Paradox of Femininity in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 33 (2005), 487-515 (p. 492).

[108] Kirtley, p. 133, p. 138.

[109] Grigore Nandris, 'The Historical Dracula: The Theme of His Legend in the Western and in the Eastern Literatures of Europe', *Comparative Literature Studies*, 3 (1966), 367-96 (p. 378).

[110] Miller, *A Dracula Handbook,* p. 54.

criticism focusing on the effect *Dracula* tourism has had on Romanian culture and folklore.[111]

Dracula's mythology is infused with Christian ritual and symbolism to a degree previously unprecedented in vampire fiction – here Stoker's plot depends on the fact the Host and crucifix can physically repel vampires. Christopher Gist Raible and David Punter have both considered the novel's use (and inversion) of Christian myth, but *Dracula*'s engagement with religion has received comparatively little attention.[112] In 2002, Christopher Herbert noted this fact despite *Dracula* being 'very likely the most religiously saturated popular novel of its time.'[113] Herbert considers Dracula to be Stoker's embodiment of ancient forces of superstition, pitted against Christianity (and modernity) – though the dividing line between superstition and religion becomes blurred.[114] *Dracula*'s religious aspect distinguishes it from its successors as well as its precursors. Jules Zanger has identified this shift, pointing out that while Dracula is associated with the Anti-Christ, subsequent vampires, separated from this 'metaphysical, anti-Christian' aspect, may be '"good" vampires.'[115] Later iterations of the vampire would frequently borrow Stoker's use of religious symbols without retaining a theological framework of souls and damnation. In a secular view

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[111] See Dina Iordanova, 'Cashing in on Dracula: Eastern Europe's Hard Sells', *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, 48 (2007), 46-63, and Tuomas Hovi, 'Authenticity, Dracula Tourism and the Folklore Process', *Folklore Fellows' Network*, 45 (2014), 4-11.

[112] David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day*, Second Edition, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1996), II, p. 16. Christopher Gist Raible, 'Dracula: Christian Heretic', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics,* ed. by Margaret L. Carter (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 105-107 (first publ. in *Christian Century*, 96 (1979), 103-104). Others who have considered *Dracula*'s relationship with religion include Clive Leatherdale, who reads Dracula as an inversion of Christ, and the novel as an affirmation of the existence of God in an increasingly secular age. (Clive Leatherdale, *Dracula: The Novel and the Legend* (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: The Aquarian Press, 1985), p. 176). Leatherdale argues that *Dracula* responds to Darwinian thought and advocates for Christianity in the face of the 'evolutionary apocalypse' feared by some in the late nineteenth-century. (Leatherdale, p. 191).

[113] Christopher Herbert, 'Vampire Religion', *Representations*, 79 (2002), 100-21 (p. 101).

[114] Herbert, p. 102, p. 104.

[115] Jules Zanger, 'Metaphor into Metonymy: The Vampire Next Door', in *Blood Read: The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture,* ed. by Joan Gordon and Veronica Hollinger (Philadelphia: University of Pensylvania Press, 1997), pp. 17-26 (pp. 18-19).

of the vampire, religion might merge with arcane superstition.[116] As with the search for the 'real' Dracula, Stoker leaves the seeds for this interpretation in the novel itself – Christian symbols are effective, but sometimes cruelly or mysteriously so, as in the scorching of Mina's forehead.

Dracula not only has the power to transform religion into superstition, history into myth. The novel also plays welcoming host to manifold historical and political allegories – whilst feminist critics draw on contemporary attitudes to women, others have examined Stoker's treatment of class, race, and economic issues. It is possible to tease out strands of *Dracula* relevant to a number of different late-Victorian social and political concerns – but more than this, *Dracula* offers a space to talk about the past. Nineteenth-century history is viewed in light of its twentieth-century repercussions. In his Marxist reading, Franco Moretti connects Dracula to the dead force of capital: 'money that had been buried comes back to life, becomes capital and embarks on the conquest of the world'.[117] In Moretti's reading, the novel tells the story of the emergence of monopoly capitalism. Dracula is horrifying to his bourgeois opponents because the monopoly capitalism he personifies 'threatens the idea of individual liberty' and works as the antithesis of free trade.[118] Moretti also associates Quincey Morris with vampirism, arguing that the novel reflects fears about American economic subjugation of Britain, whilst American capitalism, a product of British capitalism, can consequently not be condemned as monstrous or tyrannical, despite tending towards the feared force of monopolisation.[119]

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[116] The presentation of Christianity in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* develops this theme further still. Here religion operates on rules which appear cruel, violent, or irrational (Elisabeta's damnation for suicide, the bleeding crucifix.)

[117] Franco Moretti, 'Dialectic of Fear', in *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms,* trans. by Susan Fischer, David Forgacs and David Miller (London: Verso, 1983; revised 1988), pp. 83-108 (p. 91).

[118] Moretti, p. 93.

[119] Moretti, p. 96.

Calling attention to attributes like Dracula's '"dark" aura' and peculiar smell',

Burton Hatlen identifies Dracula with bourgeois attitudes to the working classes

whose labours sustained their privileged existence.[120] (Hatlen describes both Mina

and Lucy as living idle lives, forgetting Mina's employment.)[121] Paradoxically, Hatlen

argues, Dracula also represents the aristocracy which 'although moribund, might

suddenly revive.'[122] A later socioeconomic reading of *Dracula* comes from Gail

Turley Houston, who examines *Dracula* in light of the concept of bankerization – the

centralizing of banking, and the move to reliance on credit rather than gold or

notes.[123] Houston notes that 'Victorians strongly associated blood circulation with

national and international circulation of credit and goods.'[124]

Like money and class, race emerges in *Dracula*'s criticism as an issue touched

with uncertainty and fear in the *fin de siècle*. Patrick Brantlinger associates *Dracula*

with the 'Imperial Gothic' – late-Victorian fiction which 'combines the seemingly

scientific, progressive, often Darwinian ideology of imperialism with an antithetical

interest in the occult.'[125] Stephen D. Arata argues that 'Dracula imperils not simply

his victims' personal identities, but also their cultural, political, and racial selves',

colonizing them via blood exchange.[126] Arata quotes John Allen Stevenson, who

observes how Dracula transforms Lucy and Mina into his own bloodline, deracinating

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[120] Burton Hatlen, 'The Return of the Repressed/Oppressed in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Minnesota Review*, 15 (1980), 80-97 (p. 91).
[121] Hatlen, p. 83.
[122] Hatlen, p. 92.
[123] Gail Turley Houston, *From Dickens to Dracula: Gothic, Economics, and Victorian Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005; repr. 2007), p. 7, in *MyiLibrary* [accessed 17 January 2013].
[124] Houston, p. 118.
[125] Patrick Brantlinger, *British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 227.
[126] Stephen D. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization', *Victorian Studies*, 33 (1990), 621-45 (p. 630).

them.[127] Stevenson reads the novel from an anthropological perspective, arguing against the incest themes propounded by Richardson and Twitchell, and viewing Dracula 'not as a monstrous father but as a foreigner', threatening '*interracial* sexual competition rather than […] intrafamilial strife.'[128] In a more recent assessment of race in *Dracula,* Attila Viragh depicts Dracula as a subaltern who undergoes cultural assimilation and consequent loss of historical record.[129]

Matthew Gibson has encouraged reading *Dracula* as an expression of more literal xenophobia, reading the novel in the context of its Eastern European setting.[130] Some critics, like Vesna Goldsworthy, interpret the novel as expressing late nineteenth-century fears of the Balkans as a potential arena of conflict, a 'threat to the European status quo'.[131] Eleni Coundouriotis sees a response to the Eastern Question in *Dracula,* associating Dracula with a 'backwards' Ottomanized Europe emerging from Turkish rule.[132] Ultimately, in Coundouriotis's argument, Dracula is 'a composite figure straining to represent coherently all the social forces that the disintegrating Ottoman Empire brought to light.'[133] Gibson disagrees with Coundouriotis, arguing that Dracula is 'not treated as a part of Ottomanised Europe, but as Turkey's less worthy opponent.'[134] In Gibson's view, *Dracula* presents Turkish influence as a desirable alternative to the expansion of Russia over Orthodox Christian Balkan states, whose 'natural degeneracy' required Ottoman rule.[135] Both

[127] John Allen Stevenson, 'A Vampire in the Mirror: The Sexuality of *Dracula*', *PMLA*, 103 (1988), 139-49 (p. 144).
[128] John Allen Stevenson, p. 139.
[129] Attila Viragh, 'Can the Vampire Speak?: *Dracula* as Discourse on Cultural Extinction', *English Literature in Transition*, 56 (2013), 231-45 (pp. 237-38).
[130] Matthew Gibson, *Dracula and the Eastern Question* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 8.
[131] Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania; The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 74.
[132] Eleni Coundouriotis, '*Dracula* and the Idea of Europe', *Connotations*, 9.2 (1999/2000), 143-59 (p. 153).
[133] Coundouriotis, p. 154.
[134] Gibson, p. 71.
[135] Gibson, p. 75.

Gibson and Jimmie E. Cain point out the probable influence of Stoker's brother

George on the Russophobia in *Dracula*.[136] Cain and others also read Stoker's shifting

attitude to the Balkans in light of his 1909 work, *The Lady of the Shroud* (where

Turkey takes an antagonistic role for much of the novel).[137]

Nineteenth-century British economic and political fears overlapped in regard

to powerful nations like Germany and America. Stephen Shapiro reads *Dracula* as

expressing tensions between England and Germany, epitomized in the nations'

friction over gold mining in South Africa.[138] He argues that Arata's argument of

reverse colonization 'decontextualizes the specific traits of imperialism', and neglects

late nineteenth-century imperialism's financial focus. In this context, acquisition of

territory is a financial solution to economic troubles at home.[139] Arata notes Stoker's

ambivalent – perhaps vampire-like – characterization of Quincey Morris, associating

him with American challenge to British power – a link which has been taken up by

subsequent critics.[140] One, James R. Simmons, gives a detailed assessment of the

'vampiric' aspects of Morris's characterization, suggesting that he may be like

Dracula, 'a literal, and not just a metaphorical, enemy, perhaps himself one of the Un-

Dead'.[141] Louis S. Warren's reading draws on the friendship between Stoker's friend

and employer Henry Irving and William F. Cody (better known as Buffalo Bill),

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[136] George Stoker was a volunteer physician with the Turkish army during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, and later published a travelogue about his experiences: *With the Unspeakables; or Two Years' Campaigning in European and Asiatic Turkey*. See Jimmie E. Cain Jr, *Bram Stoker and Russophobia* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006), p. 103.

[137] Cain, p. 117. Others to address this include Matthew Gibson, who uses *Dracula* and *The Lady of the Shroud* to show how Stoker's position towards the Balkans changed in response to shifts in European politics (like the souring of the relationship between Britain and Austria-Hungary in 1908) whilst he continued to support the Treaty of Berlin. (Matthew Gibson, 'Bram Stoker and the Treaty of Berlin (1878)', *Gothic Studies,* 6 (2004), 236-251 (pp. 247-48).)

[138] Stephen Shapiro, 'Transvaal, Transylvania: *Dracula*'s World-System and Gothic Periodicity', *Gothic Studies,* 10 (2008), 29-47 (p. 36, p. 41).

[139] Shapiro, p. 36.

[140] Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist', p. 641.

[141] James R. Simmons, '"If America Goes on Breeding Men Like That": *Dracula*'s Quincey Morris Problematized', *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 12 (2002), 425-36 (p. 426).

whose Wild West show took late-Victorian London by storm.[142] Here, *Dracula* expresses the ambivalence with which England responded to the Wild West show – the 'regenerative promise of frontier warfare' coexisting with 'a spectre of reverse colonisation by racially powerful frontier warriors'.[143] Andrew Smith also detects hostility towards America in *Dracula*, arguing that this expresses Stoker's wish, as an Irishman, to depoliticize Ireland's position, along with a view of America as a threat to Anglo-Irish power.[144]

Fin-de-siècle Britain, viewed through the lens of *Dracula*, appears fissured with fears and conflicts. Another source of both was Ireland, and Irish criticism has revealed *Dracula*'s complex relation to Stoker's homeland. The sympathies of both author and novel appear decidedly ambiguous. Terry Eagleton points out Stoker's support for Irish home rule, and identifies Dracula as a reflection of the absentee Anglo-Irish landlord.[145] This relationship is seconded by Seamus Deane, who characterises Dracula as an absentee landlord '[r]unning out of soil'.[146] The landlord connection is questioned by Bruce Stewart, who links Dracula instead to the Land League activists in Ireland, pointing out that Dracula could represent both landlord and agrarian crime groups.[147] Canon Schmitt identifies Dracula with the Irish as seen in the English press – violent Fenianism combined with Catholic feudalism.[148] Schmitt also considers Dracula's 'mother' role in the novel – he mirrors Anglo-Irish fears of Irish absorption by 'feeding' Mina blood, changing her racial identity and that

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[142] Louis S. Warren, 'Buffalo Bill Meets Dracula: William F. Cody, Bram Stoker, and the Frontiers of Racial Decay', *The American Historical Review*, 107 (2002), 1124-57 (p. 1125).
[143] Warren, p. 1129.
[144] Andrew Smith, 'Demonising the Americans: Bram Stoker's Postcolonial Gothic', *Gothic Studies*, 5/2 (2003), 20-31 (p. 23).
[145] Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995), p. 215.
[146] Seamus Deane, *Strange Country* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 90.
[147] Bruce Stewart, 'Bram Stoker's *Dracula*: Possessed by the Spirit of the Nation?', *Irish University Review*, 29 (1999), 238-55 (p. 243).
[148] Cannon Schmitt, *Alien Nation: Nineteenth-Century Gothic Fictions and English Nationality* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), p. 147

of her son.[149] (Yet Dracula might also offer a racial mixing which may prove reinvigorating for an enervated English race.)[150] Gregory Castle views Dracula as a vision from an Anglo-Irish perspective of both the 'primitive Catholic Other', and the English who abandoned their Anglo-Irish clients.[151]

Raphael Ingelbien addresses the difficulty in determining if aspects of Dracula's characterisation can legitimately be considered 'Irish' – for instance, does Dracula's famous power of seduction owe anything to Parnell, or is it merely to be expected of a vampire?[152] Ingelbien identifies Dracula as an Ascendency figure, but emphasizes that this argument is not motivated by 'contemporary nationalist agenda, or by a desire to play up Ascendency guilt through simplistic allegories'.[153] Indeed, Dracula probably can't 'function as one extended, coherent allegory (whatever the nature of that allegory is).'[154] Joseph Valente argues for Irish criticism's status as not merely 'another unitary allegorical framework baffled by the textual excess of the novel'.[155] In his view, Stoker critiques English preoccupation with 'blood as a signifier of identity'.[156] Valente presents Stoker as a carefully ironic author, writing from the ambiguous position of the 'metrocolonial' Irish people, 'at once agents and objects […] of Britain's far-flung imperial mission'.[157] The 'conflictual overdetermination of Dracula's Irishness' has wider applications, infusing other racial considerations in the novel.[158] Not only is *Dracula* resistant to blood or race

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[149] Schmitt, pp. 152-53.
[150] Schmitt, p. 154.
[151] Gregory Castle, 'Ambivalence and Ascendency in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Dracula,* ed. by Riquelme, pp. 518-37 (p. 522).
[152] Raphael Ingelbien, 'Gothic Genealogies: *Dracula*, *Bowen's Court*, and Anglo-Irish Psychology', *ELH*, 70 (2003), 1089-1105 (pp. 1093-94).
[153] Ingelbien, pp. 1092, 1093.
[154] Ingelbien, p. 1093.
[155] Joseph Valente, *Dracula's Crypt: Bram Stoker, Irishness, and the Question of Blood* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2002), p. 4.
[156] Valente, p. 11.
[157] Valente, p. 3.
[158] Valente, p. 59.

essentialism regarding Irishness, but by extension – and without Stoker's intention – it offers a criticism of racial ideology of British imperialism.[159] An obsession with blood and its conflation with identity (a tendency shared by Dracula and his opponents) must be modified for humanity to triumph.

Dracula's use of anti-Semitic imagery initially drew attention from Jules Zanger, who connects Dracula with other fictional Jewish villains, like Svengali. Zanger argues that Stoker drew on existing anti-Semitic myths to energize his novel and appeal to readers.[160] Potential connections between Dracula and Jewishness made by Zanger include the blood libel, stereotypes of Jewish parasitism, and Dracula's hostility to the crucifix.[161] Zanger connects late-nineteenth century Jewish immigration with rising anti-Semitism in Britain, and points out that Jack the Ripper (whom Stoker himself linked to Dracula) was supposed by many to be Jewish.[162] In her study of anti-Semitism in the British gothic, Carol Margaret Davison identifies Dracula with the Wandering Jew archetype.[163] Davison also notes the late nineteenth-century association between Jewishness, degeneration, and syphilis.[164] Dracula, like the Jew, brings infection, 'endangering the national body politic.'[165] Judith Halberstam later writes about how identifying anti-Semitic tropes in *Dracula* inadvertently 'essentialized Jewishness', making the figures of Jew and vampire into reflections without questioning how the monstrousness of either figure is produced.[166]

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[159] Valente, pp. 67-68.
[160] Jules Zanger, 'A Sympathetic Vibration: Dracula and the Jews', *English Literature in Transition*, 34 (1991), 33-44 (p. 43).
[161] Zanger, pp. 37, 38.
[162] Zanger, pp. 34, 42.
[163] Carol Margaret Davison, *Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 120.
[164] Davison, p. 125.
[165] Davison, p. 126.
[166] Judith Halberstam, *Skin Shows* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995; repr. 2000), p. 88. I discuss Halberstam's concept of the 'technology of monstrosity' further in Chapter One.

Dracula criticism's survey of fin-de-siècle dread uncovers fears for the race as well as fears for the nation. Ernest Fontana addresses Stoker's reference to the criminologist Cesare Lombroso, and views Dracula as Stoker's depiction of a survival of an earlier stage of humanity, rather than a reversal.[167] Dracula's threat lies in awakening 'potentially "diseased" individuals' – like Lucy and Renfield – and returning them to atavism.[168] In Fontana's view, Stoker differs from Lombroso in suggesting that the atavistic man may offer 'within his blood mysterious sources of renewal and regeneration', as well as contamination.[169] Body and race could also be poisoned by sexually-transmitted disease, a theme that has been addressed by critics including Elaine Showalter who, reading Dracula in the context of 1890 attitudes to syphilis, likens Dracula to 'the syphilitic men who prey on the heroines of feminist novels', whilst Lucy recalls the infected victim who requires 'violent medical interventions' from the men.[170] Leila S. May considers the Victorian dread of contamination, linking concerns about moral and physical infection to bourgeois anxieties of boundary erosion and loss of selfhood. The prostitute – and the venereal disease she was blamed for spreading – was one such fear.[171] Syphilis is a recurring theme in Dracula criticism, responding not only to the 'disease' of vampirism in the novel, but also Stoker's presumed death from the same illness.[172]

Critics have also taken up the theme of Victorian science in Dracula, connecting it with wider contemporary concerns about the nature of humanity. Exploring the presence of late nineteenth-century 'weird science' in Stoker's work,

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[167] Ernest Fontana, 'Lombroso's Criminal Man and Stoker's Dracula', Victorian Newsletter, 66 (1984), 25-27 (p. 25).
[168] Fontana, p. 25.
[169] Fontana, p. 27.
[170] Elaine Showalter, 'Syphilis, Sexuality, and the Fiction of the Fin de Siècle', in Reading Fin de Siècle Fictions, ed. by Pykett, pp. 166-83 (p. 173).
[171] Leila S. May, 'Foul Things of the Night: Dread in the Victorian Body', Modern Language Review, 93 (1998), 16-22 (p. 16, p. 17).
[172] See for instance Alan Johnson, p. 232.

Diane Long Hoeveler shows the strategies of othering and control behind disciplines like racial theories, physiognomy, criminology, brain science and sexology. She notes that '[t]he most frightening aspect of all of these attempts to categorize "race" or "evil" was the shockingly obvious fact that there was often a lack of correspondence between the external and internal.'[173] Daniel Pick notes Stoker's reference to the newly-respectable process of hypnotism and suggests that the novel reflects contemporary medical questioning of the sharp dividing line between sanity and madness.[174]

David Glover relates *Dracula* to what he sees as a late-Victorian crisis in classical liberalism, with questioning of 'the true dimensions of human agency and their implications for the proper relationship between the individual and the state.'[175] He looks at how Stoker's engagement with science and pseudoscience (like physiognomy) demonstrates 'a more general malaise in the liberal milieu', a questioning of the individual's free will in the face of 'forces outside our mastery,' brought to light by scientific theories like that of 'unconscious cerebration.'[176] Rosemary Jann examines the conflict between the supernatural and nineteenth-century science in *Dracula,* arguing that Stoker ultimately comes down on the side of science.[177]

Historical and textual interpretations of *Dracula* meet in consideration of the novel's use of *fin-de-siècle* media and technology. Critics have frequently detected

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[173] Diane Long Hoeveler, 'Objectifying Anxieties: Scientific Ideologies in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and *The Lair of the White Worm*', *Romanticism on the Net*, 44 (2006) <http://www.erudit.org/revue/ron/2006/v/n44/014003ar.html> [accessed 29 October 206] (para. 19 of 26)

[174] Daniel Pick, '"Terrors of the Night": *Dracula* and "Degeneration" in the Late Nineteenth Century', in *Reading Fin de Siècle Fictions*, ed. by Lyn Pykett (London: Longman, 1996), pp. 149-65 (p. 155, p. 156).

[175] David Glover, 'Bram Stoker and the Crisis of the Liberal Subject', *New Literary History*, 23 (1992), 983-1002 (p. 984).

[176] Glover, p. 999.

[177] Rosemary Jann, 'Saved by Science? The Mixed Messages of Stoker's *Dracula*', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language,* 31 (1989), 273-87 (p. 283).

ambivalence in *Dracula*'s attitude towards cutting-edge inventions, despite

characters' enthusiasm for novelties like the travellers' typewriter. Regina Gagnier

considers the potential for loss of Benjaminian 'aura' ('the lost province of

connoisseurship, the work's history') caused by mechanical reproduction in *Dracula,*

and argues that the 'authentic story' belongs to Dracula and cannot be duplicated.[178]

Leah Richards compares *Dracula* to a newspaper, and calls attention to the anxiety

attached to potentially unbelievable, 'inauthentic' typed documents.[179] Susan M.

Cribb points out the sense of voyeurism created by Stoker's use of diaries and private

letters, as well as the role of technology in removing intimacy from narrative

accounts.[180] In Friedrich A. Kittler's argument, it is through use of modern techniques

of data processing that the vampire hunters – via Mina, who reflects the new figure of

the female secretary – are able to defeat Dracula: the 'hand-written diary, as soon as it

is hooked up to phonographs and typewriters, autopsies and newspaper reports, will

kill the Lord of the East and the Night.'[181] However, the encroachment of technology

into activities like writing (once completed by the human body, not the machine)

becomes sinister. Machines take over handwriting, converting personal narratives like

the diary and phonograph recording.[182] Leanne Page argues that *Dracula* shows

technology as more than a symptom of modernity – instead it is anthromorphised, has

an active role to play, compelling its users to perform language differently, and

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[178] Regenia Gagnier, 'Evolution and Information, or Eroticism and Everyday Life, in *Dracula* and Late Victorian Aestheticism', in *Sex and Death in Victorian Literature*, ed. by Regina Barreca (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 140-57 (p. 146, p. 147).

[179] Leah Richards, 'Mass Production and the Spread of Information in *Dracula*: "Proofs of so Wild a Story"', *ELT,* 52 (2009), 440-57 (p. 442).

[180] Susan M. Cribb, '"If I Had to Write With a Pen": Readership and Bram Stoker's Diary Narrative', *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 10 (1999), 133-41 (p. 134, p. 138). Cribb argues that there are two versions of the *Dracula* text – one for readers of the novel, one for characters within the novel. (Cribb, pp. 138-39).

[181] Friedrich A. Kittler, 'Dracula's Legacy', in *Literature, Media, Information Systems*, ed. by John Johnston, trans. by William Stephen Davis (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 50-84 (p. 56).

[182] Kittler, pp. 73-74.

proving itself 'disruptive and uncanny', as well as useful.[183] *Dracula* depicts a number of 'failed techno-performances' which implicate both users and technologies.[184]

The interaction between women and inventions like the typewriter is a point of particular critical interest. Jennifer Wicke traces an equivalence between Dracula's powers and the powers of modern technology (telepathy works like the telegraph, for instance).[185] Women, based in the home, become consumers, a place where mass culture – like a vampire – can enter the home and make it 'a palace of consumption.'[186] By contrast, Jennifer L. Fleissner argues against 'a tendency in recent literary historicism to treat late-nineteenth-century middle-class women almost exclusively as a new army of consumers, rather than of wage earners'.[187] She stresses that Mina's typewriting work reflects a new late nineteenth-century trend of women clerical workers who would 'become invaluable to the masculine business world.'[188] Mina's story is a newly acceptable one of a woman working before setting aside her employment to become a wife and mother.[189]

Tanya Pikula, like Wicke, considers women as both consumers and objects of consumption in late-Victorian commodity culture. Pikula discusses the intersection between pornography and advertising at the end of the nineteenth century, arguing that Stoker's novel exploits the linguistic codes of pornography and the 'sex-sells tactics' of commercial culture whilst simultaneously 'reaffirming traditional

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[183] Page, p. 104.

[184] Leanne Page, 'Phonograph, Shorthand, Typewriter: High Performance Technologies in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Victorian Network,* 3 (2011), 95-113 (pp. 110-11).

[185] Wicke, p. 475.

[186] Wicke, p. 479.

[187] Jennifer L. Fleissner, 'Dictation Anxiety: The Stenographer's Stake in *Dracula*', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 22 (2000), 417-55 (p. 419).

[188] Fleissner, p. 418.

[189] Fleissner, p. 419.

ideologies of gender, class, and race'.[190] Eric Brownell takes a different approach, identifying Mina as both a virgin saint figure typical of chivalric romance and medieval women's devotional texts, as well as a mechanized cyborg figure, receiving 'transmissions' whilst in a hypnotic trance.[191] As this interest in women's changing social position (at home and work) suggests, a thread of emerging modernity runs through this consideration of media and technology – *Dracula* not only reveals a late-Victorian response to developments like typewriters, it is also held up as an illustration of the birth of modern methods of living, shopping, and working. Those reading and writing in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries will know that this modernity is destined to become both extensively technologized and intensely textual.

Technology and narrative work together in *Dracula* – the story is told via a series of documents processed on state-of-the-art technologies. Carol A. Senf, David Seed, and Alison Case have noted Stoker's exploitation of this narrative technique to produce deliberate effects, like compromising the believability of his characters' testimonies.[192] Aside from this, *Dracula*'s relationship with writing and language is a complex one. Philip Martin considers Dracula to be cut off from language – drawing on Lacan, he argues that Dracula 'never moves through the mirror stage to accept the "reality" of the world constructed through language' – hence he is described by other

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[190] Tanya Pikula, 'Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and Late-Victorian Advertising Tactics: Earnest Men, Virtuous Ladies, and Porn', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 55 (2012), 283-302 (p. 284).
[191] Eric Brownell, 'Our Lady of the Telegraph: Mina as Medieval Cyborg in *Dracula*', *Journal of Dracula Studies,* 12 (2010), 29-51 <https://kutztownenglish.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/jds_v12_2010_brownell.pdf > [accessed 25 July 2016].
[192] See Seed, 'The Narrative Method of *Dracula*', Alison Case, 'Tasting the Original Apple: Gender and the Struggle for Narrative Authority in *Dracula*', *Narrative*, 1 (1993), 223-43, and Jan B. Gordon, 'The "Transparency" of *Dracula*', in *Bram Stoker's 'Dracula': Sucking Through the Century*, ed. by Carol Margaret Davison (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), pp. 95-122. I discuss *Dracula*'s narration in more detail in Chapter One.

characters in the very words which exclude him.[193] Malcolm Sutcliffe, in his extensive study of literary imagery in *Dracula,* notes not only that metaphors establish kinship within groups (like the medical team Van Helsing and Seward) but also that Dracula has the power to make metaphor become real.[194]

As we have seen, *Dracula* criticism often debates the novel's progressiveness (or lack thereof). This question recurs in the question of whether or not the novel's narrating languages can be considered democratic or not. Rebecca A. Pope makes a Bakhtinian reading, arguing that *Dracula* is about language, and that this language has neither a 'supreme voice nor a master discourse.'[195] Taking an opposing view, Laura Sagolla Croley asserts that one particular discourse dominates discussions of *Dracula* – this being 'reform rhetoric', used to associate Dracula with the 'residuum'.[196] Erik Butler points out how writing may become a conduit for vampirism, arguing that by the end of the novel characters have become 'interchangeable parts in a machine fuelled by impersonal writing'.[197] But Christine Ferguson argues against the theory of linguistic hegemony in *Dracula,* attributing Dracula's defeat to the diverse languages of England.[198]

Dracula's fame has not only dominated discussion of vampire literature – it has also eclipsed the rest of Stoker's literary output. David Glover claims that this has

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[193] Philip Martin, 'The Vampire in the Looking-Glass: Reflection and Projection in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Nineteenth-Century Suspense: From Poe to Conan Doyle*, ed. by Bloom, Docherty, Gibb and Shand, pp. 80-92 (p. 82).

[194] Malcolm Sutcliffe, *'Dracula' Revealed: Styles, Themes, Archetypes, and Echoes of Bram Stoker* (Bradford: Sutcliffe, 1999), p. 28.

[195] Rebecca A. Pope, 'Writing and Biting in *Dracula*', *Lit*, 1 (1990), 199-216 (p. 200).

[196] Laura Sagolla Croley, 'The Rhetoric of Reform in Stoker's *Dracula*: Depravity, Decline, and the Fin-de-Siècle "Residuum"', *Criticism,* 37 (1995), 85-108 (p. 87).

[197] Erik Butler, 'Writing and Vampiric Contagion in *Dracula*', *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies,* 2 (2002), 13-32 (p. 15).

[198] Ferguson cites Moretti, Belford, and Wicke as advocates of the homogenous language view. She also includes a discussion of the history of linguistic 'purity' in England in the nineteenth century, as English spread through the world via colonial expansion. (Ferguson, p. 231, p. 232).

in turn obscured both the range and the cultural context of Stoker's writings.[199] A study of these, Lisa Hopkins argues, would permit a clearer view of 'Stoker's interests', and the 'pressures and contexts' behind the creation of *Dracula*.[200] Hopkins notes that a view of Stoker's work offers the potential for a view of 'an entire cultural movement'.[201] She investigates the interplay between Stoker's life and writing, avoiding 'one-to-one correspondence' whilst following connections like the influence of Stoker's professional life in the theatre on his writing of *Dracula*.[202] Catherine Wynne also studies the influence of the theatre on Stoker's work. Wynne writes that the 'dialogue between theatrical production and literary text extends [...] beyond the biographical', and sees a wider theatrical influence in Stoker's work.[203] Her study offers many points of connection between *Dracula* and the theatre, including the influence of Ellen Terry, held up as the epitome of loveliness by the *Westminster Gazette* journalist in Stoker's novel.[204] A study of Stoker's wider work and influence might, William Hughes suggests, accompany a critical move beyond the predominance of sex and sexual symbolism which has overshadowed *Dracula* criticism.[205]

As this consideration has demonstrated, *Dracula*'s criticism offers a view of manifold nineteenth-century fears and manifold critical methodologies – along with an array of different ways of considering the vampire. The variations in the dreads Dracula represents are accompanied, less sensationally, by multiple versions of Bram Stoker – even in this brief survey, Stoker emerges in different writings as an ignorant

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[199] David Glover, *Vampires, Mummies, and Liberals: Bram Stoker and the Politics of Popular Fiction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), p.8.
[200] Lisa Hopkins, *Bram Stoker: A Literary Life* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 1.
[201] Hopkins, p. 8.
[202] Hopkins, p. 5, 56.
[203] Wynne, *Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage*, p. 165.
[204] Wynne, *Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage*, p. 92.
[205] William Hughes, *Beyond Dracula*, p. 4.

conduit, a careful artist, a misogynist, a supporter of women, Anglo-Protestant,

Anglo-Celtic, a repressed homosexual, a repressed heterosexual, a sick child.

Discussing Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 *Bram Stoker's Dracula,* Thomas Leitch

argues that a film title which includes the author's name does not necessarily suggest

'unusual fidelity', but 'announce[s] instead that the author and the author's world

have become part of the subject along with the events of the novel.'[206] Coppola was

not the first to use the phrase 'Bram Stoker's Dracula' – it recurs in a number of titles

of essays quoted in this chapter. Though Stoker has been overshadowed by his

fictional creation, an assessment of *Dracula* does frequently involve a judgement of

both Stoker and his era. To investigate or expose *Dracula*'s depths seems sometimes

to mean investigating and exposing the depths of Victorian culture. Christopher Craft

finds 'a whole culture's uncertainty about the fluidity of gender roles' in *Dracula.*[207]

Christopher Bentley views Stoker's reticence on sexual matters as being common to

'almost all respectable Victorian novelists.'[208]

     Dracula, however, is not merely about the nineteenth century. Nina Auerbach

views *Dracula* as a turning point in vampire literature, a move away from earlier

vampire friendships towards a more impersonal relationship with the undead:

    In his blankness, his impersonality, his emphasis on sweeping new

    orders rather than insinuating intimacy, Dracula *is* the twentieth

    century he still haunts. […] Dracula's disjunction from earlier, friendly

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[206] Thomas Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From 'Gone with the Wind' to 'The Passion of the Christ'* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), p. 108.
[207] Craft, p. 123.
[208] Bentley, p. 26

vampires makes him less a spectre of an undead past than a harbinger

of a world to come, a world that is our own.[209]

The emergence of our own world, of modernity (the New Woman, new media, new

technology) is a recurring theme in *Dracula*'s criticism. Friedrich A Kittler, for

instance, identifies in *Dracula* a '[w]ritten account of our bureacratization'.[210]

Coupled with this concern is an assessment of *Dracula*'s 'goodness' – in terms of

healthy psyches rather than healthy souls, in terms of how 'enlightened' (if at all) the

book's views really are. *Dracula*'s modernity is also evident in the way in which it is

criticized in relation to later works of twentieth- and twenty-first-century popular

culture. (These include works as diverse as J. R. R. Tolkein's *The Lord of the Rings*

and the 2006 film comedy *Borat.*)[211]

Dracula criticism's horror tour of the late nineteenth century differentiates

'modern' and Victorian ideas, whilst still perceiving the birth of modernity in the

novel. In spite of the distinction, modernity emerges as compromised – *Dracula* is

still read, and perhaps offers similar attractions to modern readers. Roth's criticism

illustrates how both the Victorians and later readers of *Dracula* may both be touched

by misogyny: she argues that the 'hostility toward female sexuality' that she finds in

the novel is shared by the Victorians and modern readers.[212] Writing about *Dracula*

combines a pursuit of the vampire with an investigation of Stoker and his age – an

undertaking with the potential to reveal unexpected affinities. In the next chapter, I

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[209] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves,* p. 63
[210] Kittler, p. 73.
[211] See Gwenyth Hood, 'Sauron and Dracula', *Mythlore,* 52 (1987), 11-17
<http://mds.marshall.edu/english_faculty/24/> [accessed 4 October 2016] and Nárcisz Fejes, 'Feared
Intrusions: A Comparative Reading of *Borat* and *Dracula*', *The Journal of Popular Culture,* 44 (2011),
992-1009 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/wol1/doi/10.1111/j.1540-5931.2011.00884.x/full> [accessed
3 October 2016.
[212] Roth, p. 57.

will consider *Dracula*'s criticism alongside the novel's gothicization of reading and writing, drawing a parallel between the critic and the vampire hunter. Both, *Dracula*'s criticism would suggest, are engaged in hunting the dead.

Chapter One

Gothic Readings and Writings of *Dracula*

I. *Dracula*'s Gothic Texts

In *Dracula,* the flow of narratives is almost as crucial as the flow of blood. The first mystery to confront the reader is not that of Dracula's origin and intentions, but the origin and intentions of the text itself. The novel's anonymous preface raises this question with a statement that is carefully – doubly – passive: 'How these papers have been placed in sequence will be made clear in the reading of them' (*Dracula,* p. 26). Reader, writer, and editor have all vanished, and the papers are all that remain.[1]

As a number of early reviews pointed out, *Dracula*'s narrative style is strongly reminiscent of Wilkie Collins.[2] There is an especially close resemblance to *The Woman in White* (1859-60), which is also relayed by multiple narrators and begins by calling attention to this fact. Unlike *Dracula,* however, *The Woman in White* securely tethers its introduction to one of its character-narrators (Walter Hartright of Clement's Inn, Teacher of Drawing) and is more explicit about the purpose for which the characters' testimonies have been assembled. Here the story sets out to uncover a crime, and appoints the reader in the role of surrogate judge: 'As the Judge might once have heard it, so the Reader shall hear it now.'[3] The courts may fail to deliver

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[1] In the preface to the Icelandic translation of *Dracula*, Stoker writes in his own identity, claiming that the events that follow really took place. This device throws doubt on the testimonies that follow in a different way, blurring fiction and reality. Stoker's believability is reduced by the fact that he claims to be friends with Seward who is revealed to have died insane in the Epilogue. (Bram Stoker and Valdimar Ásmundsson, *Powers of Darkness: The Lost Version of Dracula*, trans. by Hans Corneel de Roos (New York: Overlook Duckworth, 2017), p. 62, p. 289).

[2] *Punch,* for instance, described Stoker's narrative device as 'a rather tantalising and somewhat wearisome form of narration, whereof WILKIE COLLINS was a past-master.' ('Our Booking-Office', *Punch*, 26 June 1897, p. 327, in *19th Century UK Periodicals* [accessed 6 February 2017]).

[3] Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White*, ed. by John Sutherland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996; repr. 1998), p. 5.

justice, but the judicious reader will not.[4] What *Dracula* wants from its reader is less clear. Valerie Pedlar notes that its preface is less confident than that of *The Woman in White*.[5] It finally emerges that the vampire-hunters do not expect to be believed by the public, nor do they have any evidence to corroborate their story.[6] (Hartright, by contrast, does eventually succeed in having the truth established, though by his own detective efforts and compilation of testimonies rather than through official legal channels.)

Carol A. Senf argues that Stoker encourages readers to suspect the narrators' judgement, beginning with the preface, which emphasizes 'the subjective nature of the story.'[7] The too-specific claim that there is 'no statement of past events wherein memory may err' (*Dracula,* p. 26) may be as likely to inspire doubt as reassurance. The text defends itself before it is accused – perhaps the author of the preface is writing with a guilty conscience. This suspicion persists throughout the novel, most obviously in characters' repeated questioning of their own sanity, and the truth of statements made by others – as Mina does after first reading Jonathan's diary (p. 189).[8]

The doubtfulness of *Dracula*'s manuscripts is compounded by the lurking possibility that the narrators do not really want to be believed. Marjorie Howes presents inauthenticity as a potential refuge for those who write. In Howes's reading,

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[4] Not all of the testimonies of Collins' novel are to be trusted – like *Dracula,* for example, it features false 'Narrative of the Tombstone' (Collins, p. 366). But this falsehood is eventually corrected, whilst *Dracula* ends without a secure public establishment of the facts.

[5] Valerie Pedlar, '*Dracula*: Narrative Strategies and Nineteenth-Century Fears', in *The Nineteenth-Century Novel: Identities*, ed. by Dennis Walder (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 217-41 (p. 218).

[6] Dracula's body crumbles into dust, and virtually all original documents have been replaced by a 'mass of type-writing' (*Dracula,* p. 449).

[7] Carol A. Senf, '*Dracula*: The Unseen Face in the Mirror', *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, 9 (1979), 160-70 (p. 161).

[8] Elsewhere Seward wonders if Van Helsing's 'mind can have become in any way unhinged' (*Dracula,* p. 212). Later, whilst the campaign against Dracula is underway, he writes, 'I sometimes think we must all be mad and that we shall wake to sanity in strait-waistcoats' (*Dracula*, p. 276). The novel is suffused with madness, with all of Van Helsing's team eventually moving into Seward's asylum in Purfleet. Van Helsing declares that '[a]ll men are mad in some way or the other' (*Dracula,* p. 135) and looks to Renfield's insanity as a potential source of knowledge (*Dracula,* p. 258).

Dracula deals with male anxiety about 'female' aspects of the male character, including both same-sex desire and overt emotionality. At the end of the novel, 'Mina's transcription has fictionalized the experience', neutralizing what has happened (and the 'monstrous' feminine side of the masculine) by making it into a story.[9] The writings of *Dracula* may also be deliberately compromised due to their complicity with violence, and seek to obscure rather than to reveal. Nur Elmessiri considers *Dracula*'s obsessive writing a 'strategy of erasure.'[10] To prevent awkward accusations of murder, Van Helsing and his team want Dracula's body to vanish. Their writings become a precaution – a potential defence against an incriminating corpse. The script stands in for the vampire's body – to justify the vampire hunters' actions, and to prevent Dracula's body speaking for itself.[11] This recalls Renfield's notebook, with its tallies of flies, spiders, and birds – dozens of bodies substituted with figures and consumed (*Dracula,* p. 92). (Renfield's vomiting of sparrow feathers would imply that such violence cannot be entirely concealed.) Macy Todd also argues that writing and violence are tied together in *Dracula*, as characters record the shock of supernatural violence, and organise a violent campaign against the vampire. In Todd's view, Van Helsing and his team aim to 'produce a violence that will erase all violent writing, including its own'.[12] Dracula himself attempts a violent erasure via writing in the three letters he dictates to Jonathan, who describes them as a 'fatal series which is to blot out the very traces of my existence from the earth' (*Dracula,* p. 69).

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[9] Marjorie Howes, 'The Mediation of the Feminine: Bisexuality, Homoerotic Desire, and Self-Expression in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 30 (1988), 104-19 (p. 116).

[10] Nur Elmessiri, 'Burying Eternal Life in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, 14 (1994), 101-35 (pp. 109-10).

[11] Elmessiri, p. 110.

[12] Todd, p. 362.

Where texts are murky and compromised, the reader's role as interpreter and sense-maker is crucial. Whilst *The Woman in White* casts the reader as a judge, *Dracula* offers the role of detective – reader and characters share responsibility for evaluating the various texts that make up the novel. In his examination of how late nineteenth-century discourses like psychiatry and sexology produced an erotic 'meaning' of vampirism, Robert Mighall characterizes *Dracula* as a novel about interpretation – with its horror lying in the failure of scientific explanation when confronted with a supernatural (rather than medico-sexual) vampire – like the undead Lucy, who is able to defy the laws of physics.[13] *Dracula* is shaped by textual analysis as well as medical diagnosis, encompassing not only the nature of the vampire (mundane versus marvellous), but also the nature of the texts in which the vampire appears. The meanings hidden within writings like the *Westminster Gazette* article about the 'bloofer lady' must be gleaned by interpreting with a secret, additional context, with specialized knowledge not shared by the average newspaper reader. The journalist who wrote the article is as ignorant of the true nature of the 'bloofer lady' as the majority of his readers will be – and so the meaning of a piece of writing is not exclusive to its creator, and words may convey more than their user realizes or intends. The newspaper segments create implied misreaders alongside an implied reader who is 'in the know'. Throughout *Dracula*, readers – inside and outside the novel – will be called upon to interpret, to interrogate such texts for their truth.[14] In some instances, the reader may be more knowing than the characters – as in chapter

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[13] Robert Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History's Nightmares* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 212, p. 234.

[14] Experience makes characters into better readers – and not merely of the texts comprising *Dracula,* but more generally. Jonathan Harker, imitating Hamlet as he continues his diary to keep hold of his sanity, comments that previously he 'never quite knew what Shakespeare meant' (*Dracula,* p. 60) by having Hamlet call for writing implements after a traumatic supernatural encounter.

six, when Mina broods over the meaning of Jonathan's uncharacteristically terse letter.

Dracula's contemporary reviews suggest a first audience of seasoned novel-readers, able to recognize fictional conventions and relish them. *Punch* declared that '[i]n almost all ghostly, as in most detective stories, one character must never be absent from the *dramatis personae*, and that is The Inquiring, Sceptical, Credulous Noodle. […] "Friend JOHN" is Mr BRAM STOKER's Noodle-in-Chief.'[15] The 'Noodle' is a familiar character, but not an unwelcome one – the review's tone suggests that one of the pleasures of being a regular consumer of fiction is the pleasure of recognition. *Dracula* repeatedly offers such a pleasure – watching Seward (Doctor Watson to Van Helsing's Sherlock Holmes) struggle to understand what his mentor is driving at, for instance. Or earlier, noticing the shades of Bluebeard beginning to creep into Jonathan Harker's narrative (much earlier than Jonathan does himself).[16] *Dracula*'s other special pleasure of recognition comes from spotting the vampire's presence in apparently unrelated documents (Mina's diary, the newspaper articles, the log of the *Demeter*). Like the 'Noodle', Dracula keeps returning, recognizable in the words of different writers.[17]

As is the case with vampire (and vampirized) bodies, small clues may reveal crucial facts. However, it can be difficult to pin down the significance of text or body very securely. Dracula's physical appearance varies: he can look old or young, and can take the form of a man, a dog, or a pillar of mist. Similarly, testimonies like that

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[15] 'Our Booking-Office', *Punch*, 26 June 1897, p. 327.

[16] In addition to forbidden chamber tales, Jonathan's experience at Castle Dracula also recall tales featuring a forbidden place (such as a castle) to which the hero travels, ignoring all warnings of danger.

[17] The kind of reading implied in *Punch* might be connected with the new late-Victorian literary culture described by Emily Jenkins in her discussion of George du Maurier's 1894 bestseller *Trilby*. In Jenkins' argument, *Trilby* achieved its bestselling status in part due to the growth of a new reading audience who would talk over and popularize novels, a new market of middle-class consumers. In Jenkins' words, 'reading was becoming something far from passive or private.' (Emily Jenkins, '*Trilby*: Fads, Photographers, and "Over-Perfect Feet"', *Book History,* 1 (1998), 221-67 (p. 258)).

of the *Demeter*'s captain have several different interpretations – the reporter who offers the transcript of the captain's log cautions that it must be taken '*cum grano*' (*Dracula*, p. 102) as it is a dictation of an off-the-cuff translation. The case's open verdict allows scope for interpretation, both inside and outside the text. For instance, Leslie S. Klinger suggests that the ship's mate, rather than Dracula, is the true killer.[18]

The 'folk' of Whitby have their own interpretation, which is filtered through the journalist's more cautious assessment. Here and elsewhere in *Dracula*, the reader may encounter a kind of interpretive double vision, as one genre is retold or enveloped in the style of another (here a folk tale or sailor's yarn is filtered through nineteenth-century journalism). The *Demeter* episode recalls both the ship of death in Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' (1798) (quoted in the *Dailygraph* report), and a chapter in James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney, the Vampyre* (1845-1847) where a ship's crew discovers a mysterious – probably diabolic – stowaway with 'wild and singular-looking eyes'.[19] In both these accounts, the style of narration fits the tale throughout – both stories are related via ventriloquism of a sailor character. In *Dracula,* the captain's words are enclosed by a style which resists the supernatural horror he has to recount. One reading method superimposed onto another produces a disorienting effect. The difficulty facing *Dracula*'s characters is selecting the right reading process, the right genre settings – always assuming that there is a single correct interpretation to be made. The *Morning Post* suggested that *Dracula* might pose a challenge to '[r]eaders who are accustomed, with but little warrant as a rule, to regard a novelist's work as the expressions of his opinions' – such readers might be unsure whether or not Stoker was arguing for the existence of vampires. Anticipating

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[18] Leslie S. Klinger, *The New Annotated Dracula* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), p. 154. Klinger takes this argument from Fred Saberhagen's novel *The Dracula Tape* (1975).
[19] James Malcolm Rymer, *Varney, the Vampyre* (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 2010), p. 161. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

the varied critical responses that *Dracula* – and Bram Stoker – that would follow in the next century, the reviewer concludes that '[t]he question will no doubt be answered according to the idiosyncrasies of each individual.'[20] Reading is no straightforward transfer of fact, but a challenge of interpretation and genre attribution, permitting a range of different interpretations – an uncertain process, which may not infallibly bring the truth to light.

Dracula challenges active reading even as it invites it, beginning by highlighting the reader's ignorance, placing them in a subordinate position. The preface raises questions and ambiguities rather than laying them to rest, challenging the reader's discernment whilst also reminding them of the pleasurable vulnerability of their situation. The reader is told that '[a]ll needless matters have been eliminated' (*Dracula,* p. 26) from what they are about to read: the narrators, apparently, know best. However, their reliability is subsequently thrown into doubt: they are shown making grievous errors about what information ought to be shared. The decision to ban Mina from their plans, for instance, is patently unwise – and once she is readmitted to the group, she provides invaluable assistance. In light of such blunders, it is easy to suspect the narrators' evaluation of what matters are truly 'needless'. (Mina is certainly not 'needless', and they were prepared to dispense with her.) The novel is haunted by the eliminated details, like the blonde vampire in Castle Dracula. She is the ghost of a missing chapter – the cancelled section to the novel later released as a short story under the title 'Dracula's Guest'.[21] Such ghosts belong to every work of fiction, but here the discarded writing has returned via gothic personification, a

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[20] 'Recent Novels. Dracula', *Morning Post*, 3 June 1897, p. 2, in *British Library Newspapers* [accessed 6 February 2017].
[21] See Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, p. 66.

reminder that there are matters which narrator and author have eliminated – or tried to eliminate.[22]

Nicholas Daly connects *Dracula* with the late nineteenth-century revival of romance, rather than the gothic genre.[23] He stresses the difference between the *fin-de-siècle* gothic romance – a popular literary form – and the more aristocratic gothic of writers like Ann Radcliffe, who did not write for a mass audience.[24] A contemporary source, *Lloyd's*, also made this generic link, describing *Dracula* as a 'romance of vampirism'.[25] Gillian Beer argues that the enjoyment of a romance depends on willing submission to the writer's power – he or she determines the rules of the romantic fiction, which may differ from those of the reader's lived experience.[26] Beer takes as an example the Wedding Guest from Coleridge's 'The Ancient Mariner' – psychologically dominated by the Mariner and forced to hear his tale, an experience which is 'terrible as well as pleasurable'.[27] Jonathan Harker, who suffers generic upheaval when his travelogue is swallowed up by a horror story, experiences a similar terrible, pleasurable moment of submission when confronted by the three vampire women living in Dracula's castle. His romantic imaginings of ladies of old brings

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[22] Occasionally reminiscent of the Bible, *Dracula* has its own Apocrypha – the preface mentions them, but Jonathan's diary suggests they do not necessarily meekly submit to dismissal.

[23] Daly considers *Dracula* amongst other contemporary works as part of the *fin-de-siècle* revival of Romance, and argues for considering such works outside the idea of a Gothic tradition. He notes that contemporary readers of *Dracula* and its relations would not have described it as 'gothic'. (Nicholas Daly, *Modernism, Romance and the Fin de Siècle: Popular Fiction and British Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 13-14).

[24] Daly observes that 'the readership for Gothic – except in its cheapest chapbook form – was still highly circumscribed' – consequently books like Radcliffe's 'could hardly be seen as "popular" in the way the romances of the 1880s and 1890s would be'. (Daly, p. 13) David Punter points out that book sales were not extensive at the time that Radcliffe was writing, and that her style, with its quotations from Shakespeare and other classical allusions, would have been inaccessible for labourers and domestic servants. David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day*, Second Edition, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1996), I, pp. 22-23.

[25] Anonymous, 'Literature. A Romance of Vampirism', *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 30 May 1897, p. 8, in *British Library Newspapers* [accessed 6 February 2017].

[26] 'We have to depend entirely on the narrator of the romance: he remakes the rules of what is possible, what impossible. Our enjoyment depends upon our willing surrender to his power. We are transported. The absurdities of romance are felt when we refuse to inhabit the world offered us and disengage ourselves, bringing to bear our own opinions.' (Gillian Beer, *The Romance* (London: Methuen, 1970), p. 8).

[27] Beer, p. 9.

forth a spectral visitation, a gothic-romantic adventure. Like the reader of a thrilling romance, Harker is thrown into 'an agony of delightful anticipation' (*Dracula,* p. 61). He passively enjoys the vampire women's seduction, like a reader succumbing to the power of the romance.

This is an extreme case of reader subjugation – but any novel can create a comparable situation of passivity, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick observes:

> The inexplicit compact by which novel-readers voluntarily plunge into worlds that strip them, however temporarily, of the painfully acquired cognitive maps of their ordinary lives (awfulness of going to a party without knowing anyone) on condition of an invisibility that promises cognitive exemption and eventual privilege, creates, especially at the beginning of books, a space of high anxiety and dependence. In this space a reader's identification with modes of categorization ascribed to her by a narrator may be almost vindictively eager.[28]

The anxious partygoer might cling to the first available conversationalist, even if they turn out to be poor company. Jonathan Harker depends on Dracula for his safety (from wolves, and the vampire women) though Dracula is plotting his death. The reader of *Dracula* may acquiesce to the prologue's authority – encouraged by its promise to explain everything – even whilst mistrusting its fidelity.

Mina pursues similarly uncertain reading when she takes up Jonathan's diary, reading in a locked room, unable to decide 'whether it be true or only imagination' (*Dracula,* p. 189). In spite of her caution (reading secretly, reading sceptically), Mina

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[28] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), p. 97.

is not quite safe. Two days later she writes, 'That awful journal gets hold of my imagination and tinges everything with something of its own colour' (p. 191). Jonathan's diary shows that reading may have risks – but may also prove obsessively interesting. Later in the novel, Seward loses track of time due to his absorption in this same 'wonderful diary' (p. 265). The pleasure of becoming engrossed in narrative disrupts routine – one critic of *Dracula* found himself so fascinated that he could not stop reading even to light his pipe.[29] This enjoyment coincides with an experience of dread: readers of the gothic often find – and enjoy finding – the fears evoked by stories of terror overspilling the limits of the text, colouring their perceptions of the everyday. (Deliberately seeking out an experience like Mina's.) Contemporary reviewers of *Dracula* identified just this effect: the *Pall Mall Gazette* recommended the book for 'the man with a sound conscience and digestion, who can turn out the gas and go to bed without having to look over his shoulder more than half a dozen times as he goes upstairs' – but not for the 'maiden aunt' or 'new parlourmaid with unsuspected hysterical tendencies', who might find the novel rather strong meat. For the reader who is made of sterner stuff, the book offers a 'genuine "creep"' to 'revel in.'[30] This species of gothic hangover is to be sought out and enjoyed by a horror aficionado – adding a comfortable thrill of danger to mundane activities like turning out the gas and going to bed. Like Van Helsing's definition of faith – 'believe[ing] things which we know to be untrue' (p. 202) – fearful reading establishes a liminal place where belief and unbelief coexist – and rather like the vampire it is positioned somewhere between welcome and unwelcome.[31]

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[29] 'The World of Books', *Daily Mail*, 1 June 1897, p. 3, in *Daily Mail Historical Archive, 1896-2004* [accessed 6 February 2017].

[30] 'For Midnight Reading', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 1 June 1897, p. 11, in *British Library Newspapers* [accessed 6 February 2017].

[31] Barthes makes a similar observation: 'Many readings are perverse, implying a split, a cleavage. Just as the child knows its mother has no penis and simultaneously believes she has one (an economy

Dracula's 'gothicizing' effect expands beyond the reader's perception of their surroundings, encompassing a variety of themes and subjects – both those addressed within the novel itself, and those introduced by the reader or critic. The work invites such an assortment of treatments (along with repeated adaptations and rewrites) by combining compression with omission. Discussing the novel's narration, David Seed observes that 'the gaps between the narrating documents become as important as the narrative proper.'[32] Eliminating Dracula means eradicating the spaces between documents, connecting different points of view to cover everything that happens. *Dracula*'s spaces are not all closed up by the end of the novel, however, and continue to invite readers in. Even in characterisation there are deliberate blanks. As a romance, *Dracula* provides characters who are defined by their emptiness, rather than their fullness. In Gillian Beer's argument, '[b]y simplifying character the romance removes the idiosyncrasies which set other people apart from us; this allows us to act out through stylized figures the radical impulses of human experience.'[33] The simplified characters of *Dracula* serve as an invitation, allowing readers potentially to 'step into' the text. The space generated gives room for the reader's imagination to enter a romantic or puzzling situation without undue focus on individual characters.

Dracula, above all, offers this invitation: Jan B. Gordon argues that he possesses 'corporeal emptiness which enables him to cleave to a variety of often mutually antagonistic representations' – he is empty, a floating sign who is not tied to

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whose validity Freud has demonstrated), so the reader can keep saying: *I know these are only words, but all the same…*(I am moved as though these words were uttering a reality). Of all readings, that of tragedy is the most perverse: I take pleasure in hearing myself tell a story *whose end I know:* I know and I don't know, I act toward myself as though I did not know: I know perfectly well Oedipus will be unmasked, that Danton will be guillotined, *but all the same…*' (Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text,* trans. by Richard Miller (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975), pp. 47-48)).

[32] Seed, 'The Narrative Method of *Dracula*', p. 68.

[33] Beer, p. 9.

one meaning.[34] Dracula's emptiness makes him, in Carol A. Senf's words, the

'supreme bogeyman' – he will embody almost any fear.[35] (He is able to change shape

and, in Stoker's original notes, had the ability to make himself large or small, like a

fairy tale creature.)[36] In this sense, *Dracula,* via its central antagonist, functions as a

kind of gothic machine. In the words of Judith Halberstam:

> The monster's body, indeed, is a machine that, in its Gothic mode,
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> produces meaning and can represent any horrible trait that the reader
>
> feeds into the narrative. The monster functions as monster, in other
>
> words, when it is able to condense as many fear-producing traits as
>
> possible into one body.[37]

Dracula is more effective for being paradoxically overdetermined and empty – empty

like a machine awaiting fuel or raw material. When reading and writing about

Dracula, it is easy to feed new meanings and ideas into this gothicizing machine – to

use the vampire to express manifold fears, and cast a fearful light over a multitude of

ideas and preoccupations.

In *Dracula*, those who feed the vampire grow to resemble him – or perhaps

they resemble him already. (Many critics have observed Dracula's kinship with the

human characters of the novel).[38] The issues and critical approaches which feed and

reanimate Dracula (presenting him afresh in roles like Ascendancy landlord or

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[34] Jan B. Gordon, 'The "Transparency" of *Dracula*', in *Bram Stoker's Dracula: Sucking Through the Century 1897-1998,* ed. by Carol Margaret Davison (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), pp. 95-122 (p. 99).
[35] Senf, '*Dracula*: Stoker's Response to the New Woman', p. 47.
[36] Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller, *Bram Stoker's Notes for 'Dracula'* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008), p. 25.
[37] Halberstam, p. 21.
[38] Carol A. Senf for instance argues there is a 'marked similarity' in the depiction of Jonathan and Dracula, noting Jonathan standing over Dracula's 'prostrate vampire, a significant example of role reversal.' (Carol A. Senf, *Dracula: Between Tradition and Modernism*, p. 43).

Victorian patriarch) grow gothic as they enter the narrative – perhaps suggesting a pre-existing gothic affinity. Critical parallels drawn between the figure of Dracula and the trope of the aristocratic rake, for instance, produce a 'gothicizing' effect. Christopher Bentley likens Dracula to 'gentlemanly seducers' like Lovelace.[39] Fed into *Dracula*, the archetype of the Byronic, 'gentlemanly seducer' becomes a bloodthirsty multiple-murderer. The comparison works both ways – in illustrating Dracula, it also reflects back a gothic image of Lovelace – a reminder that this 'gentlemanly seducer' eventually drugs and rapes the object of his attentions. The affinity between the two characters becomes a striking illustration of 'society's double standard' – and a dark vision of certain timeworn tropes of heterosexual romance.[40]

If *Dracula* offers gothic visions of romance and seduction, the gothicized image of reading and writing is no less important. This aspect of reading *Dracula* (perceivable in the experience of dealing with uncertain narrators, or reconciling oneself to readerly passivity) is compounded by the fact that the novel is gothic reading about gothic reading. Literacy, like heterosexual romance, is presented in a new and uncanny light in the novel. In effect, *Dracula* gothicizes the very activity which gives it life. Mina reads Jonathan's diary, and the reader reads about Mina's fearful reading – Mina's experience not only mirrors the reader's, it also contributes to it.

Noting the gothic portrayal of reading in horror fiction of the late nineteenth century, Garrett Stewart writes that *Dracula* may be 'the most exhaustive anatomy of the reading effect, in all its gothic undertones, mounted by any narrative of the

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[39] Bentley, p. 31.
[40] Bentley, p. 31. A similar effect cam be seen in Barry McCrea's view of *Dracula* as a fascinated, horrified view of heterosexual marriage, written from the closet. (See McCrea, p. 253).

period.'[41] Stewart links the fringe science (corporeal transference, materialization, astral bodies, hypnotism) described by Van Helsing with an 'anatomy of textual transaction in the reading moment.'[42] Stewart argues that the horror genre can deliberately trouble the experience of reading, exposing the reader's collusion with the author in the terrors experienced by the characters.[43] The reader is compromised by being abruptly confronted by their own desires. *Dracula* welcomes the reader and then (as Stewart suggests) confronts them with themselves. The romantic invitation described by Beer becomes a trap.

Dracula compliments its gothic vision of reading with a gothic treatment of writing. In the phrase of David Seed, the novel 'narrates its own textual assembly' – it displays its own manufacture, makes the creation and ordering of texts a feature of its plot.[44] As Anne Williams observes, the novel has a particularly strong focus on 'both the materiality of writing and its implicit inadequacies: its discontinuities, ambiguities, unreliabilities, silences', as well as problems of meaning – a feature characteristic of the gothic genre.[45] The narrative is preoccupied with the physical act of writing, and manuscripts are imperilled along with bodies and souls (in Castle Dracula, for instance, Jonathan's shorthand letter is captured, like its author). Writing also allows for a quasi-supernatural multiplication of selves – when Mina writes in her diary for comfort, she reflects that it is 'like whispering to one's self and listening at the same time' (*Dracula,* p. 93). Such multiplication is facilitated by the new media which transmit writing in *Dracula.* Jennifer Wicke considers these modern inventions to be vampiric in themselves. She associates Dracula himself with new mass cultural

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[41] Garrett Stewart, '"Count Me In": *Dracula*, Hypnotic Participation, and the Late-Victorian Gothic of Reading', *Lit*, 5 (1994), 1-18 (p. 5).
[42] Stewart, '"Count Me In"', p. 11.
[43] Stewart, '"Count Me In"', p. 1.
[44] Seed, 'The Narrative Method of *Dracula*', p. 73.
[45] Anne Williams, *Art of Darkness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 66-67.

technologies, including (but not limited to), 'mass-produced narrative'.[46] She notes

the 'vampiric' qualities of the typewriter, which creates multiple identical copies,

linking the 'mechanical replication of culture' with the vampiric.[47] Alison Case shows

how controlling the narrative means controlling the world of *Dracula* – organizing a

piece of writing allows Van Helsing and the others to make sense of what is

happening, and plot their future campaign against Dracula.[48] Modern life appears to

be constructed and controlled by a gothic, technologized species of writing.

     Stoker's gothicization of writing – even at the level of language and words – is

also present in his short story 'The Dualitists; or, The Death Doom of the Double

Born' (1881). Here the infant Bubb twins are estranged from language, producing

cries which the narrator reveals to be the 'feeble effort of childish lips as yet unused

to the rough, worldly form of speech to frame the word Father.'[49] The effect recalls

Terry Eagleton's discussion of Freud and language:

> his lesson is that the body is never quite at home in language, will
>
> never quite recover from its traumatic insertion into it, escaping whole
>
> and entire from the mark of the signifier. Culture and the body meet
>
> only to conflict; the scars which we bear are the traces of our bruising
>
> inruption into the symbolic order.[50]

The twins' struggle with language is prescient, since language is later shown to be

hostile towards them. Language permits a cruel yoking of grandiose, biblical first

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[46] Wicke, p. 469.

[47] Wicke, p. 476.

[48] Case, pp. 223-24, p. 239.

[49] Bram Stoker, 'The Dualitists; or, The Death Doom of the Double Born', in *Dracula's Guest and Other Stories* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 2006), pp. 197-209 (p. 198).

[50] Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 265.

names with suburban, middle-class circumstances and surnames. From the outset, Zerubbabel and Zacariah Bubb (sons of Ephraim and Sophonisba) are marked out for ridicule by their ludicrous names. This comic distance means that the grisly fate of the Bubb family (parents crushed to death by the plummeting, headless bodies of their infant sons) is deprived of dignity, played for laughter. This effect is compounded by the piling up of crimes: infanticide, parricide, suicide – comical because of its repetition, because the words are misapplied or applied only in a strictly technical sense (the twins cannot reasonably be considered parricides), and finally simply because the English language contains these words at all (along with many other '-cide's'). The killings are given a mock-official, mock-classifiable, mock-palatable veneer, which provides a horrible and amusing contrast to the butchery Stoker's words describe.

This tendency, comic in 'The Dualitists', looks rather grimmer in *Dracula,* where Seward gives thanks and praise for the word 'euthanasia': 'an excellent and a comforting word! I am grateful to whoever invented it' (*Dracula,* p. 331). The simple linguistic trick reconciles Seward to the prospect of driving a stake through Mina's heart and cutting off her head. This potential for moral and linguistic ambiguity can be seen earlier in *Dracula,* during the killing of the vampire Lucy – written up by Seward as a righteous act and mercy-killing. Christopher Craft points out how Lucy's death is justified by a 'complicity between masculine anxiety, divine textual authority, and a fixed conception of femininity'.[51] Language is a currency which can be used for good or ill (similar to the power of money and of Dracula himself – both features which are emphasized in *Dracula*).

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[51] Craft, p. 118.

It also has a gothic ability to realize the unthinkable. In another story, 'How 7 Went Mad' (1881), Stoker takes this possibility a step further, combining language (here letters and numbers) with insanity. This story serves as a reminder that writing, the activity which in *Dracula* is held up as a refuge against madness, may itself be tinged with insanity. (Jonathan Harker's feverishly detailed account of his sufferings at Dracula's Castle, Renfield's pocket-book.) Regina Gagnier diagnoses Harker with 'graphomania'.[52] Renfield is diagnosed with the same condition by Erik Butler.[53] It may not be a matter of distinguishing between true and mad text (as Mina attempts to do) – madness may be everywhere. Christine Ferguson argues that '[r]ather than standardizing or reifying language, *Dracula* seems to deliberately confound what Daniel Cottom has termed "Enlightenment faith in words" as rational, transparent signifiers.'[54]

'The Dualitists' recalls two stories by Oscar Wilde – 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime' (1891) and 'The Canterville Ghost' (1891), both of which display the amoral potential of language. Lord Arthur Savile's quest to complete a successful murder is described in an approving tone – as a serious moral duty, rather than a crime: 'Many men in his position would have preferred the primrose path of dalliance to the steep heights of duty; but Lord Arthur was too conscientious to set pleasure above principle.'[55] Murder completed, Lord Arthur is rewarded by a happy marriage, a fate similar to Harry and Tommy's idyllic existence at the end of 'The Dualitists': 'Fortune seemed to smile upon them all the long after years, and they lived to a ripe old age, hale of body, and respected and beloved of all.'[56] Violence can become

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[52] Gagnier, p. 150.
[53] Butler, 'Writing and Contagion in *Dracula*', p. 18.
[54] Ferguson, p. 232.
[55] Oscar Wilde, 'Lord Arthur Saville's Crime', in *The Complete Short Stories,* ed. by John Sloan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 3-32 (p. 15).
[56] Stoker, 'The Dualitists', p. 209.

farcical at the will of the writer. Moralistic phrases can be applied to the most immoral of actions – the letter of the law is not incorruptible.[57] In 'The Canterville Ghost', Sir Simon reminisces about his ghostly repertoire in the terms of a gothic melodrama, taking pleasure in remembering the mayhem and misfortune he has inflicted on the Canterville family. This catalogue of horrors is comic and ingenious – the reader is drawn to admire the ghost's (and Wilde's) creative use of gothic tropes in devising ghostly-theatrical roles like 'Gaunt Gibeon, the Blood-sucker of Bexley Moor', and 'Dumb Daniel, or the Suicide's Skeleton'.[58] The full title of 'The Dualitists' shows a similar enjoyment of melodramatic titles – and hints that the description of terrible events (like a 'death doom') can lend itself not merely to comedy, but also to gothic enjoyment. Writing is not tied irrevocably to goodness or rationality, and may employ violence for fun.

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[57] It is interesting to consider Terry Eagleton's discussion of Freud and the law: 'Freud's most subversive move […] is to reveal the law itself as grounded in desire. The law is no more than a modality or differentiation of the id; and it can therefore no longer be a matter, as with traditional idealist thought, of envisaging a transcendental order of authority unscathed by libidinal impulse. On the contrary, this eminently rational power stands unmasked in Freud's writing as irrational to the point of insanity – as cruel, vengeful, vindictive, malicious, vain and paranoid in its authority, madly excessive in its tyrannical demands.' (Eagleton, p. 272).

[58] Oscar Wilde, 'The Canterville Ghost', in Oscar Wilde, *The Complete Short Stories*, ed. by John Sloan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 38-63 (p. 44, p. 47).

II. *Dracula*'s Gothic Criticism

Dracula throws writing into a gothic light – this doubtful and echoing text acts like a gothicizing system, and includes the reading and production of texts in its sinister reflection of reality. The Introduction showed how writing and reading enter the novel in another fashion, through *Dracula*'s varied strains of criticism. Noting how Dracula 'seems all things to all people', Garrett Stewart attributes this to the novel's use of vampirism as a subtle criticism of 'overreading': 'a running analysis of the emotive capitulations involved in projecting one's fears and desires onto a narrative object cut loose from subjectivity's own intrinsic – and social fortified – defence mechanisms.'[59] As Stewart's survey of *Dracula* criticism suggests, Dracula is most varied, most truly 'all things to all people' when he is considered via literary criticism. (This is paralleled, of course, in his varied afterlives in popular culture.)

The assortment of critical approaches discussed in the Introduction have developed into what is sometimes referred to as a 'Dracula industry'.[60] Ken Gelder writes that there is 'not one *Dracula,* but many *Draculas,* which compete with each other for attention in the academic/student market place.'[61] (Criticism has realized Dracula's goal of self-duplication more effectively than he was able to do himself.) Gelder argues that the novel combines 'a multiplicity of discursive fields', and that its productivity 'may lie in the uneasy cohabitation of these various discursive fields and in the variability of their coding – it may undercode at times and overcode at others.'[62] Undercoded and overcoded, *Dracula* provides compressions and omissions which act as an invitation to all readers, but perhaps especially to critics, who find

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[59] Stewart, '"Count me in": *Dracula*, Hypnotic Participation, and the Late-Victorian Gothic of Reading', p. 10.

[60] For instance, in her author acknowledgements, Carol A. Senf thanks 'other members of the *Dracula* "industry"'. (Carol A. Senf, *Dracula: Between Tradition and Modernism* (New York: Twayne, 1998), p. ix).

[61] Gelder, *Reading the Vampire*, p. 65.

[62] Gelder, *Reading the Vampire*, p. 65.

grist for their own fears, fantasies, and interests. Such concerns may be introduced to discussion of *Dracula* and become blended with the vampire. For instance, Michael Valdez Moses describes Dracula as 'an overdetermined figure onto whom are *cathected* many of the most formidable political and social issues of nineteenth-century Ireland.'[63] This gothic aspect may contribute to a resemblance between *Dracula* criticism and the text it studies, which is evident from the beginning. As the Introduction showed, the reactions of early critics displayed a degree of anxious self-examination – rather like the narrators of *Dracula,* who mistrust their own authenticity, sometimes even their own sanity. *Dracula'*s criticism frequently questions its own existence: why is the book so popular, and why do readers return to it so reliably? Carol A. Senf writes 'Just when I think I understand it, *Dracula* returns to haunt me with what I do not know.'[64] Writing about *Dracula* can turn into writing about writing about *Dracula.*

The gothicization of *Dracula* criticism can also occur at a stylistic level – Maurice Richardson being a famous example. In his description of the vampire story, Richardson writes:

> Here we enter a twilight borderland, a sort of homicidal lunatic's brothel in a crypt, where religious and psychopathological motives intermingle. Ambivalence is the keynote. Death wishes all round exist side by side with the desire for immortality. Frightful cruelty, aggression and greed is accompanied by a madly possessive kind of love.[65]

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[63] Michael Valdez Moses, '*Dracula*, Parnell and the Troubled Dreams of Nationhood', *Journal X*, 2 (1997), 66-112, quoted in Ingelbien, p. 1091).
[64] Carol A. Senf, *Dracula* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010), p. 85.
[65] Richardson, p. 418.

William Hughes suggests that Richardson's deliberately hyperbolic style is a 'teasingly ironic response' to criticisms about the amount of writing on sex in *The Twentieth Century*.[66] Richardson's style recalls the Hammer outrageousness, along with the comic note usually present (invited or not) in film adaptations of the vampire.[67] Richardson need not be in deadly earnest to be gothic. The vampire text often has its own humour – Van Helsing's hysterical laughter after Lucy's funeral, for instance. Richardson's response is not the only instance of *Dracula* criticism becoming gothic in style. Later criticism touches on gang-bangs (in Anita Levy's reading).[68] It also extends to the lushest and most ornate of prose: 'The vampire – perfect incarnation of Eros and Thanatos, whose coming ruptures the hymen of midnight, corrupts the virtuous virgin and de-elightens the sexual morals; illuminating the eclipsed subconscious, and embodying archetypes of the sexual imagination.'[69]

Along with gothic doubt and gothic style, writers on *Dracula* may also engage in a gothic pursuit, hunting the vampire like Van Helsing's team, seeking his history and his castle, endeavouring to discover the 'true story' of Dracula. Elizabeth Miller highlights a persistent tendency for those writing on Dracula to connect him to Vlad Tepes in their search for a 'real', historical Dracula, and she is sceptical of claims that

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[66] William Hughes, *Bram Stoker - Dracula: A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism*, p. 148.

[67] Hammer Film Productions was first formed in 1934, but the company found notoriety as a purveyor of horror, beginning in 1957 with *The Curse of Frankenstein*. James Craig Holte describes the Hammer style as 'a formula that stressed physical action, sexuality, the use of colour photography, and gothic settings.' (James Craig Holte, *Dracula in the Dark: The Dracula Film Adaptations* (Westport, CT: London, 1997) p. 50). According to Andrew Tudor, one critic dismissed *The Curse of Frankenstein* for its 'preoccupation with disgusting – not horrific – charnelry'. (Andrew Tudor, *Monsters and Mad Scientists: A Cultural History of the Horror Movie* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 40). Tudor argues that the 1958 *Dracula* 'exhibits an even richer visual style […] [the] same attention to gory detail, the same emphasis on reds and blues, the same carefully constructed décor'. (Tudor, p. 46). Richardson's provocative combination of sex and death (the brothel in the crypt) and his ornate style are distinctly Hammeresque.

[68] Anita Levy, *Reproductive Urges: Popular Novel-Reading, Sexuality, and the English Nation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), p. 168.

[69] A. Gladwell and J. Havoc, 'Introduction: The Erogenous Disease', in *Blood and Roses, the Vampire in 19th Century Literature*, ed. by A. Gladwell and J. Havoc (London: Creation Press), pp. 7-27 (p. 7).

Stoker was inspired by tales of Vlad's fondness for impaling his enemies and subjects.[70] (Miller also highlights psychological criticism's focus on uncovering sexual fears and sexual perversities concealed within the text – another form of hunting the 'real' Dracula.)[71] Having examined Stoker's notes and sources for *Dracula*, she concludes: 'the only significant influence that Vlad had on Stoker's novel was the author's decision to use his name.'[72] She advises scholars against relying on material written prior to the rediscovery and wide dissemination of Stoker's notes for *Dracula* in 1980.[73] These earlier texts are, one might say, 'given from the standpoints and within the range of knowledge of those who made them' (*Dracula,* p. 26) – and yet cannot be relied on implicitly.

Miller's writings testify to the perennial popularity of the Vlad-Dracula connection. In *Dracula* criticism and elsewhere, it is possible to see a wish to reach Dracula personally – beyond Stoker's novel – manifesting in a wish to make the novel 'real', or to step into its pages.[74] The 1972 work *In Search of Dracula: A True History of Dracula and Vampire Legends* by Raymond T. McNally and Radu Florescu is an illustration of this trend (as its title implies – promising both a quest for Dracula, and his true story). McNally recounts his inspiration for the project in terms which imply a wish to merge fiction and reality: 'I had an intuition that if all that geographical data were genuine, why not Dracula himself?'[75] Devendra Varma, in his examination of *Dracula*'s sources, also recounts his own visit to Dracula's castle – a personal and

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[70] Elizabeth Miller, *A Dracula Handbook*, p. 113.

[71] Elizabeth Miller, 'Coitus Interruptus: Sex, Bram Stoker, and Dracula', *Romanticism on the Net*, 44 (2006), <https://www.erudit.org/revue/ron/2006/v/n44/014002ar.html> [accessed 22 July 2016] (para. 3 of 24).

[72] Elizabeth Miller, *A Dracula Handbook*, p. 66.

[73] Elizabeth Miller, 'Back to the Basics: Re-Examining Stoker's Sources for *Dracula*', *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 10 (1999), 187-96 (p. 194).

[74] This wish may manifest itself in the title of the film *Dracula Untold* (2014). However well-known Dracula may be, the prospect of an 'untold' story still has the power to intrigue.

[75] Raymond T. McNally and Radu Florescu, *In Search of Dracula: The History of Dracula and Vampires,* revised edn (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994), p. 2. Google ebook.

ghostly experience complete with mysterious footfalls and sensation of lurking evil.[76] Unearthing the 'facts' in Stoker's fiction, Varma blurs the novel with reality.

In beginning to unearth *Dracula*'s secrets, critics might seek to access information hidden from the novel's author – following Richardson's view that Stoker did not understand the implications of his own writing, a number of critics argued not only that they had discovered the symbolic depth of the novel, but also that Stoker was ignorant of it. Critics have sought an explanation for the work in Stoker's life (Paul Murray's biography, for instance, repeatedly identifies aspects of Stoker's life which may have inspired the novel – for instance, linking Stoker's hasty marriage to that of Jonathan and Mina).[77] This tendency is evident in early psychoanalytic criticism, which treats the novel like a dream or piece of automatic writing, expressing symptoms of Bram Stoker's various psychic ailments. David J. Skal, for instance, describes *Dracula* as 'in part the product of unconscious influences, and not a totally controlled work.'[78] In the late 1980s, Alan Johnson looks back over *Dracula* criticism and argues against this pervasive belief.[79] A significant essay arguing against this assumption is David Seed's 'The Narrative Method of *Dracula*', which asserts that Stoker employs a 'rigorous narrative method', carefully exploiting both his first-person accounts, and the spaces between them.[80] This trend suggests two contradictory impulses – first the impulse to eliminate the writer, who doesn't even

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[76] Devendra P. Varma, 'The Genesis of Dracula: A Re-Visit', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics,* ed. by Margaret L. Carter (Ann Arbor/London: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 39-50 (p. 45) (first publ. in *The Vampire's Bedside Companion,* ed. by Peter Underwood (London: Leslie Frewin, 1975), pp. 53-68).

[77] Paul Murray, *From the Shadow of Dracula: A Life of Bram Stoker* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2004), p. 79.

[78] David J. Skal, *Hollywood Gothic: The Tangled Web of 'Dracula' from Novel to Stage to Screen*, Second Edition (New York: Faber and Faber, 2004), p. 38.

[79] Alan Johnson, 'Bent and Broken Necks: Signs of Design in Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics*, ed. by Margaret L. Carter (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1988), pp. 231-245 (p. 235) (first publ. in *Victorian Newsletter*, 72 (1987), 17-24).

[80] David Seed, 'The Narrative Method of *Dracula*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction,* 40 (1985), 61-75 (p. 63).

understand the work he has produced (and by so doing establish a personal

relationship with *Dracula* or its vampire); second, the impulse to revive the author, to

consider the novel as psychological symptom and use it to hold Stoker (or the late-

Victorian age) to account for perceived hypocrisy and sexual repression.

Criticizing *Dracula* may not only lead to a Van Helsing-style pursuit of the

vampire (and his author) – it may also produce metaphorical vampirism. Judith

Halberstam writes, 'Attempts to consume Dracula and vampirism within one

interpretive model inevitably produce vampirism. They reproduce, in other words, the

very model they claim to have discovered.'[81] In Halberstam's reading, criticism runs

the risk of becoming vampiric, of draining and essentializing ideas such as Jewishness

or perverse sexuality by identifying them within (or feeding them into) Stoker's

novel. If Jewish or anti-Semitic tropes can be identified in the novel, then there is

arguably an even stronger presence of reading and writing as recurring themes.

Dracula is 'about' writing at least as much as it is 'about' Jewishness. Yet

considering reading and writing as themes in *Dracula* risks essentializing the very

fabric of the novel and its criticism (which is dependent on reading and writing).

Criticism is both vampire victim and vampire – essentializing and draining via an

'interpretive model'. 'Vampiric' criticism might potentially be found in other works,

aside from *Dracula*. Reading these works, too, might produce essentialization,

vampirism. *Dracula* is distinctive for offering many points of enquiry: the critic

(reader-writer) is invited in – vampirizing is easy. Alternatively, the critic takes pains

to avoid essentializing or vampirizing writing – resisting any impulse to pin writing

(reading, language) down whilst suggesting that *Dracula* is in part 'about' writing. To

accomplish this is to permit manifold meanings and interpretations to coexist, without

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[81] Halberstam, p. 88.

privileging one. This plurality of meaning is in itself gothic – Judith Halberstam

describes the literary text's production of fear as originating from a 'vertiginous

excess of meaning'.[82] In Halberstam's argument:

> Monsters appeal to readers and consumers because they represent in
>
> their very form the game of reading and writing, rewriting and telling,
>
> telling and interpreting. […] The cannibalism of the Gothic form, its
>
> consumption of its own sources, allows for the infinitude of
>
> interpretation because each fear, each literary source, each desire, each
>
> historical event, each social structure that the text preys upon becomes
>
> fuel for the manufacture of meanings.[83]

Criticism becomes gothicized through connecting itself with *Dracula* – and as

with the concept of reading and writing, once introduced into the 'gothicizing

machine', it is possible to suspect that this gothic aspect was already there, revealed

rather than created by its contact with *Dracula*. Studying the novel reminds the

critical reader that reading and writing are closely tied to both fear and to pleasure –

which as William Veeder observes, has its own place in academic study:

> I believe that as literary critics we tend to be strikingly incurious about
>
> our commitments – why we specialise in a particular author, genre,
>
> period, and why we 'see' different things at different stages of a
>
> project and a life. […] one of these factors, a crucial factor I believe, is
>
> the way pleasure relates to repressed desire. Gothic fiction

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[82] Halberstam, p. 2. 'Within Gothic novels […] multiple interpretations are embedded in the text and part of the experience of horror comes from the realization that meaning itself runs riot.'
[83] Halberstam, p. 34.

aggressively encourages what all art allows: that we build our own

artefact out of the materials provided by the object.[84]

Dracula criticism may betray an insight into the mind and times of the critic, rather

than the substance of the novel, in critical ideas and writing which are, in John Paul

Riquelme's words, 'simultaneously excessive and revealing.'[85] Gothic language and

argument may – as is the case with *Dracula* – suggest more than the writer intends.

The novel extends a stylistic and thematic invitation, and Dracula may be like Dorian

Gray's sins, altering in the view of the beholder. It may be deliberately employed as a

means of making sense of real-world events – for instance, Richard Wasson, writing

in 1966, reads *Dracula* in the light of the recent Second World War, portraying

Dracula as a hostile invader seeking territory and national prestige. Emphasizing

Dracula's connection to Attila (the Hun), he compares the vampire's rhetoric to

'leaders associated with the decline of Austro-Hungarian power'.[86] In Wasson's

analogy, the devastating six-year conflict can be concluded quickly, and with

minimum bloodshed – summarizing the conclusion of *Dracula*, he writes, 'The allies

quickly rout the Austrian.'[87]

Elizabeth Miller suggests that some sexual readings of *Dracula* 'reflect the

late twentieth century's voyeuristic obsession with sexuality in all its forms, coupled

with a determination to project (sometimes in condescending fashion) its own self-

proclaimed sophisticated and liberated views onto a text (and an author) shaped by

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[84] William Veeder, 'The Nurture of the Gothic; or, How Can a Text Be Both Popular and Subversive?', in *Spectral Readings: Towards a Gothic Geography,* ed. by Glennis Byron and David Punter (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 54-70 (p. 64).
[85] Riquelme, p. 414.
[86] Richard Wasson, 'The Politics of *Dracula*', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920,* 9 (1966), 24-27 (p. 25).
[87] Wasson, p. 27.

what is viewed as late Victorian repression.'[88] Similarly, William Hughes argues that

'Modern criticism's preoccupation with sexuality dominates – and indeed inhibits the

development of – the debate on vampirism.'[89] This preoccupation is not only

revealing in itself, it may also offer specific examples of contemporary views which

have the potential to date poorly. One instance of this is the critical view of asexuality

expressed in the writing of Burton Hatlen and Anne Cranny-Francis.[90]

     Dracula serves as a meeting-place for the past and present, a space where

twentieth- and twenty-first-century readers can define themselves against history,

depicting the Victorian era as unenlightened and cruel, the *fin de siècle* as riddled with

fears about change and decline. Robert Mighall notes how modern readers of *Dracula*

(informed by a modern gothic myth of Victorian sexual repression) are more likely to

identify with the vampire than his victims.[91] In criticism, horrifying aspects of

Victorian culture are recalled – for instance, Maria Parson reads Lucy's killing as a

symbolic clitoridectomy (as practised by Dr. Isaac Baker Brown between 1859 and

1866).[92] Elsewhere, David Glover observes modernity's attitude of superiority over

the past demonstrated in film adaptations of *Dracula*. In these new visions, the

Victorian era becomes 'a domain of scandal and error, awaiting exposure by a

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[88] Elizabeth Miller, 'Coitus Interruptus' (para. 7 of 24).

[89] William Hughes, 'Fictional Vampires in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries'.

[90] See Hatlen, p. 93, and Cranny-Francis, p. 71

[91] Robert Mighall, 'Vampires and Victorians: Count Dracula and the Return of the Repressive Hypothesis', in *Varieties of Victorianism: The Uses of a Past*, ed. by Gary Day (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 236-49 (p. 242). Mighall takes the phrase 'repressive hypothesis' from Foucault's *The History of Sexuality: Volume I*, and notes how *Dracula* criticism has 'resisted the implications' of the arguments in this work regarding Victorian sexuality. Criticism of the novel coincided with erotic Hammer interpretations, and similarly 'discovered' erotic meaning in the text – in interpretations of the novel, the vampire offers modern sexual liberation. (Mighall, 'Vampires and Victorians', pp. 241-42). In *The History of Sexuality,* Foucault argues: 'Rather than the uniform concern to hide sex, rather than a general prudishness of language, what distinguishes these last three centuries is the variety, the wide dispersion of devices that were invented for speaking about it, for having it be spoken about, for inducing it to speak of itself, for listening, recording, transcribing, and redistributing what is said about it: around sex, a whole network of varying, specific, and coercive transportations into discourse.' (Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I*, p. 34).

[92] Maria Parson, 'Vamping the Woman: Menstrual Pathologies in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *The Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies*, 1 (2006) <http://irishgothichorrorjournal.homestead.com/maria.html> [accessed 23 July 2016].

franker, more enlightened gaze.'[93]

Chris Baldick and Robert Mighall consider criticism of *Dracula* to be gothic – in a negative sense, and as part of a wider evil. They criticize the 'Gothicising' of the past they perceive in gothic criticism, arguing that a 'Whiggish melodrama of modernity in conflict with the dark age of repressive Victorianism is played out in the pages of *Dracula* criticism.'[94] In their view, the Victorian past is pressed into the sinister, exotic, anachronistic role that Ann Radcliffe would assign to locations like Italy. In this reading, much criticism of *Dracula* depends on a 'melodramatic' view of Van Helsing's team as the villains of the piece.[95] Not only is such criticism, in this argument, based on a semi-fabricated gothic past, it is also infused with fear. Baldick and Mighall argue against the 'anxiety model' in criticism of the late nineteenth-century gothic, particularly *Dracula* – this phrase referring to criticism resting on 'the doubtful assumption that the Gothic writings of the period offer an index to supposedly widespread and deeply felt "fears" which troubled the middle classes at this time.'[96]

Christine Ferguson agrees that *Dracula* criticism's focus on the anxiety paradigm is a drawback. She notes the existence of an 'immense critical industry' around the interpretation of *Dracula.* Ferguson's word choice is 'spawned' – not only is *Dracula* criticism unduly focused on *fin-de-siècle* fear and anxiety, but it also seems to have grown almost monstrously.[97] The *Dracula* industry is gothic (like the *Dracula* machine) – paralleling gothic images of the Victorian manufacturing boom, its dark satanic mills. John Glendenning suggests that the rapid-breeding *Dracula*

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[93] David Glover, *Vampires, Mummies, and Liberals* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 2.
[94] Chris Baldick and Robert Mighall, 'Gothic Criticism', in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by Punter, in *Blackwell Reference Online* [accessed 20 August 2016].
[95] Baldick and Mighall.
[96] Baldick and Mighall.
[97] Ferguson, p. 229.

criticism might reflect, to a jaundiced view, the worst of criticism in general: 'For anyone unsympathetic to literary criticism the *Dracula* industry might well resemble the course of vampiric replication as critics batten upon Stoker's novel in endless feedings'. But he goes on to argue for 'Darwinian evolution in which abundance and competition […] leads to a generally creative and enlightening condensation of understandings.'[98]

This gothic of *Dracula* criticism may create its own reading of the nineteenth century – gothic in its emphasis on fear and its casting of Victorians (like the vampire hunters) in the villain role. As a view of the nineteenth century, this seems somewhat limited, and the responses to *Dracula* in the nineteenth-century press provide one argument in favour of taking a nuanced view of the Victorian state of mind. However, *Dracula*'s gothic view of the nineteenth century, read *as* gothic, offers its own insights and appeal. This appeal might be gleaned from Baldick and Mighall's mention of Ann Radcliffe: the terrors Radcliffe locates in Italy and other exotic, anachronistic places may be dreadful, but they are also very appealing. One reader, Catherine Morland, is famously eager to experience them for herself via a trip to Northanger Abbey. The gothic view of Victoriana can be found not only in *Dracula* criticism, but also in *Dracula* film – and more widely, has flowered in neo-Victorian works of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with their wealth of prostitutes, madhouses, and scandalous secrets.[99] The gothic nineteenth century of *Dracula* criticism has a longstanding attraction, and its appeal may offer a hint about those who shape it in film, literature, and criticism – hinting at a fear and paradoxical fascination. In *Dracula* criticism, the phrases 'good Victorian' and 'proper Victorian'

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[98] John Glendenning, *The Evolutionary Imagination in Late-Victorian Novels: An Entangled Bank* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 135. Google ebook.
[99] Works from the likes of Michel Faber and Sarah Waters draw on Wilkie Collins to produce sensational plots which also provide a critical retrospective on the Victorian era.

recur with almost fetishistic reliability.[100] The arch insistence on goodness and

propriety suggests a definite – and revealing – agenda. These good, proper Victorians

may be a collaboration between the nineteenth century and the twentieth, offering an

insight into modern preoccupations as well of those of the past.

Evidently this phenomenon is not restricted to *Dracula* criticism. Baldick and

Mighall expand their vision beyond Stoker's novel, arguing for a gothic of gothic

criticism. This reach might be pushed further still. William Veeder notes: 'Gothic

texts […] do in hyper-intense fashion what all literary art does to some extent:

provide individual readers with diverse materials that can be experienced according to

the individual's desires.' Just as *Dracula'*s vision of the reading affect has its non-

gothic equivalent, so the gothic side of *Dracula* criticism may suggest a more

widespread feature of criticism – a tendency to work materials according to personal

inclinations, a risk of self-display.

The danger of self-exposure is a gothic aspect of writing facing both

*Dracula'*s narrators and its critics. The occasion when Dracula attempts to decipher

Jonathan's shorthand letter is the first of several incidents in the novel when letters

and other texts are misappropriated or read illicitly. Stoker was interested in codes

throughout his life – such secret writing offers the tempting premise of being legible

and secret at the same time, visible only to friendly eyes (critical writing, of course,

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[100] Instances of the phrase 'good Victorian': Catriona Helen Miller, 'Blood Spirits: A Jungian
Approach to the Vampire Myth' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Stirling, 1998), p. 149
('good Victorian women'); McCrea, p. 265 ('good Victorian husband'); Howes, p. 109 ('good
Victorian women'); Jean Marigny, '*Dracula*: Tradition and Postmodernism in Stoker's Novel and
Coppola's Film', in *Post/modern Dracula: From Victorian Themes to Postmodern Praxis*, ed. by John
S. Bak (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2007), 95-106 (p. 96) ('a good Victorian'). Instances of
'proper Victorian': Zanger, 'Metaphor into Metonymy', p. 17 ('proper Victorian ladies'); Barbara
Belford, *Bram Stoker and the Man Who Was Dracula* (Cambridge, MA.: Da Capo Press, 2002), p. 43
('a proper Victorian reaction'); Jamil Khader, 'Unspeakability and Radical Otherness', *College
Literature*, 39 (2012), 73-97 (p. 94) ('proper Victorian Womanhood'); Pikula, p. 291 ('proper Victorian
ladies').

has its own codes to baffle outsiders).[101] The physical records of the characters'

experiences end the novel locked in a safe, suggesting that this fear has not been laid

to rest by the conclusion of the adventure. This will not be enough to keep their

exploits from radical reinterpretation by generations of *Dracula* scholars.[102] The

sharing of literature can be a perilous – but also a pleasurable process. Mina hesitates

about contributing part of her diary to the collective manuscript – but is rewarded by

Van Helsing's approval and her husband's affection when she does share the pages.

Susan M. Cribb notes the voyeurism in reading the diaries, but argues that typing

removes such intimacy.[103] As the vampire-hunters pool their resources, private texts

are exchanged and made public to a select audience. When Van Helsing encourages

Mina to share her writing he reminds her: 'We have told our secrets, and yet no one

who has told is the worse for it.'[104] His encouragement is not entirely reassuring,

though – to have one's private text read can be a distressing experience (as Jonathan

Harker discovers at Dracula's castle). The safest thing is to pool resources into one

master-narrative, like the round robin submitted by the sailors of the *Demeter*. Like

the vampire-hunters, the sailors choose to collaborate, sharing the burden and danger

of speaking out.

If language is dangerous in its potential for self-revelation, then *Dracula* also

demonstrates the delights of curbing or censoring one's writing. The novel was

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[101] Murray, p. 24. Shorthand in *Dracula* is closely connected with the world of business – Mina learns to help Jonathan in his career – but stenography had earlier encompassed more personal matters. Leah Price writes how Isaac Pitman, inventor of a new method of shorthand in 1837, received shorthand love-letters from a female student of stenography. Pitman had not troubled to teach his wife shorthand, and as a result she was forced to have the incriminating letters translated for her. (In *Dracula* the domestic drama plays out differently – Dracula, the marital interloper, is the one excluded from the code.) (Leah Price, 'Diary: The Death of Stenography', *London Review of Books*, 30 (2008) <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v30/n23/leah-price/diary> [accessed 2 September 2015]).
[102] As Richardson's interpretation was to show, rereadings of *Dracula* may rewrite the text in sexual or violent ways. Metafictional treatments of the novel were to do something similar in the twentieth century – as Chapter Six will demonstrate.
[103] Cribb, p. 134.
[104] Cribb, p. 282.

published at a time when consideration of artistic and literary censorship was a

pressing issue.[105] One of Stoker's contributions to the debate, the essay 'The

Censorship of Fiction', urges for 'restraint' and 'reticence'.[106] Before this, however,

Stoker exults that '[t]here is perhaps no branch of work amongst the arts so free at the

present time as that of the writing of fiction.'[107] Fiction is 'not dependent on the

existence of peace, or the flourishing of trade, or indeed on any form of national well-

being.' It may thrive during times of war or economic hardship. It is also crucial

nourishment, as necessary as 'breadstuffs'.[108] In asserting the importance of literature

before going on to address the 'ethics of art',[109] Stoker displays the same appreciation

for the power of art which one old argument frequently attributes to the censor.[110] The

reverse of this argument is the dilemma confronting those who would promote

fiction's influential power whilst simultaneously arguing against censorship. This

difficulty would be faced a century later by those arguing against suppression of J. K.

Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007). As Henry Jenkins summarises: '[t]he

fundamentalists' claim that fantastical representations of violence or the occult shaped

children's beliefs and actions in the real world. Countering such claims, the books'

defenders were forced to argue that fantasies do not really matter.'[111]

Literature's power mattered greatly to those in the *fin de siècle* who advocated

for its restraint. Nordau, who (as the Introduction showed) was deeply concerned

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[105] See Maggie Kilgour, p. 48.
[106] Bram Stoker, 'The Censorship of Fiction', *The Nineteenth Century and After*, 64 (1908), 479-87 (p. 480).
[107] Stoker, 'The Censorship of Fiction', p. 479.
[108] Stoker, 'The Censorship of Fiction', p. 479.
[109] Stoker, 'The Censorship of Fiction', p. 480
[110] For instance: 'Censors bear witness to the power of the word even more forcefully than writers and readers, because they acknowledge in their fear the possibility of social and individual transformation running through the weave of stories […] Censors will no doubt argue against Auden's dictum that 'poetry makes nothing happen'. They, more than any poet, believe in literature as a force for change.' (Alberto Manguel and Craig Stephenson, 'Dangerous Subjects', *Index on Censorship*, 25 (1996), 8-12 (p. 9)).
[111] Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture* (New York: New York University Press, c. 2006), p. 197, in *ACLS Humanities ebook* [accessed 26 August 2016].

about degeneracy in both art and literature, had a high regard for the writer's potential

influence. In Arata's words, Nordau 'possesses a profound reverence for the power of

literary language, even (or especially) when that language is "diseased."'[112] Stoker's

emphasis on the importance of censorship suggests a similar assessment. Maggie

Kilgour, discussing *fin-de-siècle* anxiety around decadent art, writes that 'Stoker

assumed a role of final frontiersman, protecting both art and society from evil

influences.'[113] But it is possible to simultaneously exult in the power of language, and

enjoy controlling its power. ('Mr Stoker keeps his devilry well in hand', observed the

reviewer of the *Glasgow Herald*).[114] There may be a frisson of enjoyment in the

gothic potential of writing which Stoker presents in *Dracula* and in his essays on

censorship. Writing has the power to transform and corrupt, like the vampire –

working intimately, but potentially influencing many minds. Emphasizing the power

of imagination, Stoker writes:

> Imagination does not appeal to a nation except through its units, and so
>
> must be taken as dealing with individuals only, though its effects may
>
> ultimately become of general, if not universal import. […] It is through
>
> the corruption of individuals that the harm is done.[115]

At the same time, the power to write fiction is potentially sacred – Stoker observes

that Jesus was a storyteller.[116] There must be a dangerous enjoyment in mastering a

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[112] Arata, *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle,* p. 29.
[113] Kilgour, p. 49.
[114] Anonymous, 'New Books of the Week', *Glasgow Herald*, 10 June 1897, p. 10, in *British Library Newspapers* [accessed 6 February 2017].
[115] Stoker, 'The Censorship of Fiction', p. 483.
[116] Arata, *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle*, p. 484.

power that can be so diabolic or divine – in raising gothic horrors and then bringing

them to heel.

Chapter Two

Bodies, Identities, Texts: Lord Ruthven to *Varney the Vampyre*

I. Vampire Bodies, Author Bodies

John William Polidori is now remembered only for his 1819 tale 'The Vampyre',

probably the first vampire story published in Britain. But his unofficial epitaph comes

from a different work, published the same year – *Ximenes, The Wreath, and Other*

Poems. On the title page of this collection of poetry, Polidori quotes lines modified

from Virgil's *Aeneid*:

> Parce pias scelerare manus. Non me tibi Troia
>
> Externum tulit…
>
> Quòd Polydorus ego.

> [Spare me the pollution of your pious hands. Troy did not bear me so
>
> that I should be a stranger to you. …
>
> For I am Polydorus.][1]

The speaker of these lines is Polydorus, the youngest son of King Priam of Troy. The

prince was betrayed and murdered on a failed political mission to Thrace, his body

transformed into a sapling. When Aeneas visits Thrace and begins to gather plants to

use in a religious ceremony, he is astonished to discover that the roots are bleeding.

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[1] David Armitage, 'Monstrosity and Myth in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*', in *Monstrous Bodies/Political Monstrosities in Early Modern Europe,* ed. by Laura Lunger Knoppers and Joan B. Landes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp. 200-26 (p. 221). Google ebook. James Rieger also takes Polidori's epigraph as his epitaph. (James Rieger, 'Dr Polidori and the Genesis of *Frankenstein*', *Studies in English Literature*, 3 (1963), 461-72 (p. 464)).

Polydorus identifies himself and claims a shared nationality with Aeneas – once recognized, he can receive the proper death rites, allowing his shade to reach the underworld.[2]

In adopting Polydorus' words, Polidori makes his own request for recognition. The epigraph becomes a plea for fair treatment of his poetry, rather than his physical body. As Polydorus is identified with his metamorphosed corpse, so Polidori can be identified with his writing (his body of work). He had earlier sought acknowledgement from the Byron-Shelley circle at Villa Diodati – with little success, though the ghost story contest which inspired *Frankenstein* would also provide the germs for his most famous work.[3] A contemporary critic described this group as 'the *Vampyre family*' – a 'knot of scribblers, male and female, with weak nerves, and disordered brains, from whom have sprung these disgusting compounds of unnatural conception, bad taste, and absurdity, entitled 'Frankenstein, or the modern Prometheus,' the 'Vampyre,' &c, &c.'[4] Polidori only ever achieved a questionable membership of 'the Vampyre family', and his life demonstrates another literary fear – the author's dread of producing unworthy work. The *Ximenes* epigraph might be read as his claim to belong to the family of literature, if not to the more exclusive Diodati family – instead of blood, he and the other writers have ink in common.

The story of the publication of 'The Vampyre' illustrates the vulnerability of authorial identity, and the ease with which an author could lose control of their own literary reputation and productions. During the famous ghost-story contest at Diodati

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[2] Failure to bury a corpse could produce vampires as well as ghosts. Polidori's tale makes no mention of this, though its introduction does discuss the staking of a vampire, and of 'corses of those persons who had previously died from vampyrism, lest they should, in their turn, become agents upon others who had survived them'. ('Preliminaries for *The Vampyre*', in *The Vampyre and Other Tales of the Macabre*, ed. by Robert Morrison and Chris Baldick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 235-43 (p. 241)).

[3] A play of his was discussed during a visit by the Shelleys, and according to Polidori's diary, 'all agreed it was worth nothing', quoted in D. L. Macdonald, *Poor Polidori: A Critical Biography of the Author of 'The Vampyre'* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), p. 84.

[4] Contemporary review, quoted in Macdonald, p. 189.

in 1816, Mary Shelley began *Frankenstein* and Byron produced a fragment about two friends traveling in Greece, one of whom would die, after forcing his friend to swear an oath of secrecy about his demise. Later, the dead friend was to reappear, mysteriously alive, and pursue his friend's sister. (Macdonald points out there is no mention in Byron's fragment or the outline mentioning vampirism, but that Polidori maintained that Byron always intended this development).[5] Later Polidori, following Byron's outline, produced a complete tale.[6] His vampire, Lord Ruthven, is not only distinctly Byronic, but shares a name with the Byron character in Lady Caroline Lamb's *roman à clef, Glenarvon* (1816). The story subsequently came into the hands of Henry Colburn, who published it in his *New Monthly Magazine*, describing it as 'A Tale by Lord Byron'.[7] Though it is not clear how the story reached Colburn, Macdonald considers it unlikely that Polidori was responsible. The tale was published as Byron's, almost certainly in order to capitalize on his fame. As a result of this combination of literary influence and commercial unscrupulousness, the work of Polidori and Byron became confused.[8]

The story's ambiguous authorship was exacerbated by the supplementation of other material written by neither Byron nor Polidori. Patricia L. Skarda considers the story's introduction to have been written by Polidori.[9] Morrison and Baldick, however, consider the authorship of the three pieces which precede 'The Vampyre' in the *New Monthly Magazine* as distinct from the tale itself, and suggest that Alaric Watts, *New Monthly* sub-editor, is the most likely author of the note giving background of the vampire and drawing on Robert Southey's extensive footnote to

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[5] Macdonald, pp. 89-90.
[6] Macdonald, p. 97.
[7] Macdonald, p. 177.
[8] Macdonald, p. 178.
[9] Patricia L. Skarda, 'Vampirism and Plagiarism: Byron's Influence and Polidori's Practice', *Studies in Romanticism,* 28 (1989), 249-69 (p. 258).

Thalaba the Destroyer (1801) to furnish the vampire's geographical background and make the vampire more plausible.[10] The fact that the Introduction was not designated 'Ed.' (removing any clue that this material was not Polidori's) in the book version of the story further complicates the story's authorship.

The controversy of 'The Vampyre' illustrates the power and peril facing a poet, like Byron, who was perceived to embody his work. This close identification made for a seductive and marketable author persona – a Byron poem seemed to offer readers a link with Byron himself, even acting as a stand-in for Byron's physical body. But this connection meant that when the work was misappropriated and imitated, Byron's identity might be pirated too. The story of 'The Vampyre' suggests a troubled interrelationship between body, identity, and text – particularly in regard to the commodification of literature (and of author). The embodied author is a commercial author – able to exploit his own persona for financial gain, but also vulnerable to becoming too closely tied to his intellectual product. He may be bled, like a vampire victim, to profit and animate others. This chapter will explore the connection between vampire and commodified author, noting the vampire genre's growing preoccupation with physicality, and increasingly overt displays of both vampire's and victim's bodies. The chapter will also suggest that the pleasures and fears associated with the embodied author are played out in a bloodier, more literal way in James Malcolm Rymer's penny dreadful *Varney the Vampyre*.

Whilst Polidori's unofficial epitaph begs for recognition, Byron's epitaph asks for peace.[11] Neither request proved successful – Polidori remaining obscure, whilst

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[10] Morrison and Baldick, p. 235.

[11] 'Byron's own pleas that his epitaph be *implora eternal quiete*, 'I implore eternal peace', becomes a wry joke worthy of the poet of *Don Juan*. For what history has shown us is that we simply can't leave Byron alone, dead or alive.' (Ghislaine McDayter, 'Byron and Twentieth-Century Popular Culture', in *Palgrave Advances in Byron Studies,* ed. by Jane Stabler (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 130-54 (p. 149)).

Byron is still an object of fascination for readers and critics. Both poets would have been aware that a writer's posthumous reputation was beyond his control, and that fame could easily desert him after his death. Polidori's diary of his travels with Byron records a visit to the poet Churchill's grave. The visitors found the great man's final resting place 'undistinguished from those of the tradesmen near him', its turf turning brown.[12] Polidori inferred that Churchill's friend had set up the monument out of pride rather than true affection, and that 'Churchill owed [...] only to a common hand what the pride of a friend refused – the safety of his burial-place.'[13] Polidori concluded that the tomb offers a sobering lesson for living authors (counting himself amongst this number):

> There were two authors; one, the most distinguished of his age;
> another, whose name is rising rapidly; (and a third, ambitious for
> literary distinction). What a lesson it was for them when, having asked
> the sexton if he knew why so many came to see this tomb, he said: "I
> cannot tell; I had not the burying of him."[14]

The dead author is vulnerable, dependent on the goodwill of friends and strangers. He may hope for an afterlife in the minds of his readers, but cannot count on it. Byron might have responded similarly to this visit. He later recounted the incident in 'Churchill's Grave, a Fact Literally Rendered', where the narrator muses on 'the glory

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[12] John William Polidori, *The Diary of Dr John William Polidori*, ed. by William Michael Rossetti (London: Elkin Mathews, 1911), p. 27, in *Internet Archive* <https://ia800205.us.archive.org/10/items/cu31924013536937/cu31924013536937.pdf> [accessed 10 November 2016].
[13] Polidori, *Diary*, p. 28.
[14] Polidori, *Diary*, p. 28.

and the nothing of a name'.[15] Byron's reflections at Churchill's grave were prescient, as was his interest in the strange fate of Lord Guilford, one of Polidori's patients, who was embalmed and shipped back to England in pieces after dying abroad: 'Conceive a man going one way, and his intestines another and his immortal soul a third!'[16] Byron himself would be embalmed and physically divided, his lungs kept in Greece where he died, the rest of his body returning to England, allegedly against his request.[17] His wish for his paper remains would be similarly disregarded – his memoir would be destroyed at his publisher's house a month after his death.[18]

The vampire, in both Polidori's 'The Vampyre' and its inspiration, Byron's 'A Fragment' (which Byron eventually published in 1819 at the end of *Mazeppa*) is, like the author, dependent on others' goodwill for his afterlife. In spite of his power and apparent immortality, Lord Ruthven, Polidori's vampire, has moments of physical vulnerability, apparently dying when shot. Ruthven has Aubrey swear an oath of secrecy about his death and crimes so as to keep his honour 'free from stain in the world's mouth.'[19] Ruthven also makes the band of robbers responsible for his death expose his corpse to the first ray of the moon.[20] Byron's 'Fragment of a Novel' goes further – the narrator not only has to swear to conceal Darvell's death, he must also fulfil a number of mysterious requests (including burying Darvell in a particular spot). Here, however, there is no need to fear that the deathbed instructions will be disregarded. The vampire defies death and continues to dominate others after his

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[15] Note by Rossetti, *Diary,* p. 28. 'Churchill's Grave, a Fact Literally Rendered' quoted by Rossetti, p. 30.

[16] Quoted in Benita Eisler, *Byron: Child of Passion, Fool of Fame* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 560.

[17] 'There are conflicting accounts of Byron's last words and final wishes but one of the English doctors in attendance reported him as saying: 'One request let me make to you. Let not my body be hacked, or be sent to England. Here let my bones moulder. Lay me in the first corner without pomp or nonsense.' (David Ellis, *Byron in Geneva: That Summer of 1816* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), p. 158).

[18] Eisler, p. 3.

[19] John William Polidori, 'The Vampyre', in *The Vampyre and Other Tales of the Macabre*, ed. by Robert Morrison and Chris Baldick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 1-23 (p. 15).

[20] Polidori, 'The Vampyre', p. 16.

demise by means of words – an oath extracted, in both Byron and Polidori's stories, from his human companion. Here, in fantasy, the word forms an indissoluble tie between living and dead.

The popularity of 'The Vampyre' speedily prompted a theatrical adaptation by Charles Nodier, Pierre Carmouche, and Achille Jouffrey, *Le Vampire* (1820), staged in Paris.[21] This in turn led to the production of several parodies, and the adaptation of Nodier's play into English by James Robinson Planché, who set the drama in Scotland and titled it *The Vampire; or, The Bride of the Isles* (1820). From this point onwards the nineteenth-century theatre returned to vampires again and again, finding them a popular and lucrative addition to the stage.[22] The disposal of vampire corpses would remain a recurring trope in these theatrical adaptations of Polidori's story. In Planché's play the vampire (also a Lord Ruthven) is known to have died at least twice, resurrected both times via moonlight falling on his corpse.[23] At his second death, he has Lord Ronald throw a ring into the sea in order to complete the resurrection ritual.[24] The vampire corpse is also placed in the moonlight in a later vampire play, Dion Boucicault's *The Phantom* (1857) – and by this point the resurrection sequence is shown onstage, instead of merely implied. The scene takes place in spectacular fashion, on the peaks of Snowdon. According to the stage directions, when moonlight touches the vampire Alan Raby's body, 'his chest begins to heave and his limbs to quiver', and Raby gets to his feet, thanking the moon and

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[21] Stuart*,* p. 3.
[22] Stuart, pp. 3-4.
[23] This can be inferred by Lord Ronald's account of Ruthven's 'death', during which Ruthven asks his friend to lay him in the beams of 'yon chaste luminary'. (James Robinson Planché, *The Vampire; or, the Bride of the Isles,* in *Plays by James Robinson Planché*, ed. by Donald Roy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), I. 2).
[24] Planché, *The Vampire*, I. 3.

triumphing over mortality: 'Fountain of my life! once more thy rays restore me. Death! – I defy thee!'[25]

Roxanna Stuart argues that the move of the vampire into the theatre was a flowering of the myth – Ruthven and his descendants were now literally embodied for the entertainment of a fearful and admiring audience:

> The vampire, rising out of folklore as a monster, and passing through
> metamorphosis into a demon lover in Romantic poetry, comes into his
> own only when embodied by an actor on the stage. The living actor in
> relationship to a living audience, like a tiger in the drawing room,
> brings terror and pity to life.[26]

Ronald E. McFarland also emphasizes the vampire's physicality following its adaptation into melodrama. McFarland observes that '[m]elodrama is a theatre of externals', with an emphasis on action and tableau.[27] This stress on 'overt action' is particularly noticeable in Planché's adaptation of the French play.[28] The vampire is also destroyed spectacularly in both versions McFarland examines.[29] Katie Harse suggests that McFarland considers Planché's treatment of 'The Vampyre' an improvement, 'clearer, more aesthetically sound'.[30] Harse, conversely, reads

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[25] Dion Boucicault, *The Phantom* (New York: Samuel French, 1857), I. 5. in *Internet Archive* <https://ia600500.us.archive.org/29/items/phantomdramaintw00bouc/phantomdramaintw00bouc.pdf > [accessed 8 September 2016] 'The Phantom' is a renamed and condensed version of Boucicault's 'The Vampire', which only exists in manuscript form. (See Stuart, p. 3, p. 6).
[26] Stuart, p. 59.
[27] Ronald E. McFarland, 'The Vampire on Stage: A Study in Adaptations', *Comparative Drama*, 21 (1987), 19-33 (p. 25).
[28] McFarland, p. 31.
[29] McFarland, p. 32.
[30] Katie Harse, 'Melodrama Hath Charms: Planché's Theatrical Domestication of Polidori's "The Vampyre"', *Journal of Dracula Studies*, 3 (2001) <http://kutztownenglish.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/jds_v3_2001_harse.pdf> [accessed 25 October 2016].

Polidori's story as deliberately ambiguous, rather than in need of supplementation. Planché 'demystifies the vampire for the audience' by explaining Ruthven's nature, and by showing 'what Polidori merely hints at.'[31]

Nina Auerbach characterizes early vampires as 'semi-phantoms', lacking the gross materiality of Dracula's foul breath and hairy palms.[32] Yet however insubstantial the vampire might appear in the nineteenth-century vampire plays, his body is still a focus of attention. Auerbach points out the invention of the vampire trap to allow the theatrical vampire to disappear dramatically.[33] Perhaps the appeal of this disappearance comes in part from the knowledge that it is a flesh-and-blood actor who seems, impossibly, to vanish. Polidori's Ruthven lacks such physical changeability: even whilst dying a lingering death, there is no change in his 'conduct and appearance' (Polidori, 'The Vampyre', p. 15). In fact, Ruthven's physical sameness is part of what makes him dreadful – he terrifies Aubrey by showing no signs of having died. When they meet again, Aubrey is aghast to see 'the same figure which had attracted his notice on this spot upon his first entry into society' (p. 18). Earlier, Aubrey had watched him, and had seen him attract notice – but Ruthven never does anything extraordinary on the page. He is initially more intriguing because of his unresponsiveness – he observes mirth but cannot 'participate therein' (p. 3), and remains unmoved by the advances of Lady Mercer. In Planché's drama, by contrast, the vampire is capable of striking transformation. Lady Margaret recounts her vision, where the vampire, a 'young and handsome man', unexpectedly alters, its features growing 'frightfully distorted', and acquiring 'the most terrific appearance.'[34] The vampire's body becomes an increasingly vivid spectacle, liable to change,

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[31] Harse.
[32] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves,* p. 21.
[33] Auerbach, p. 23.
[34] Planché, *The Vampyre,* I. 2.

disappearance, miraculous revivals – which by the mid-century take place where the audience can see them.

The vampire's physical monstrousness has also become more literal. This development begins in Planché, where the vampire shifts between human and handsome and demonic and hideous. In Polidori's story, Ruthven's appearance is singular, but not repulsive – it is moral disfigurement which he slowly reveals. The women he has seduced similarly display their vices' 'deformity' (Polidori, 'The Vampyre', p. 7). As the century progresses, however, the vampire's body is increasingly a site of inspection – and of public display. Aubrey closely observes Ruthven, but this is part of a private struggle.

Varney is observed by a much wider audience than Ruthven. More than once he is publicly exposed as a vampire, and forced to flee. (These revelations repeatedly occur at weddings – large, festive community gatherings.) Varney's body gives away his nature far more clearly than Ruthven's or Darvell's do. Though he is just about able to pass in human society, Varney's appearance is often dreadful and corpse-like, looking 'as if just rescued from some charnel-house' (*Varney,* pp. 213-14). When he appears under different aliases, his basic appearance (tall, thin, strange or ugly expression) is provided so that the knowledgeable reader may be able to spot him. Even when Varney is in good looks, his expression is 'handsome' but 'strange' (p. 444). He also sometimes seems unable to eat human food, setting him physically apart from those around him.[35] The literary vampires that succeed him will often demonstrate their true nature either by distinctive bodily quirks or visible reactions to stimuli like religious symbols. Whilst the vampire may achieve power and enjoyment through control of his body's secret – which is also his story – his vampiric symptoms

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[35] When staying at an inn, though 'his horrible nature' means that he only requires human blood, Varney orders food to avoid attracting 'uncomfortable and ungracious remarks' (*Varney,* p. 1041).

can also be a source of danger. Varney's story illustrates this tendency – the display

of his body works against him as well as for him. (Tellingly, in a nightmare, Varney

dreams that he is surrounded by a crowd of 'a hundred grinning faces' (p. 608).)

In *Varney,* the vampire also revives in moonlight – repeatedly. Sometimes this

happens by chance, sometimes by design. On one occasion, Varney deliberately

arranges to be shot by an accomplice. After lying 'dead' for a short while, 'the body

showed evident symptoms of so much returning animation, that it was about to rise

from his gory bed and mingle once again with the living' (*Varney,* p. 371). Varney is

satisfied through scaring his attacker he will have provoked 'a good story in the

town', and by 'enhancing [his] reputation' (p. 371) ensure that the villagers are too

frightened to trouble him. His body becomes a site of gory theatre, which he believes

he can control. This is not Varney's only theatrical moment – in one instance, he

escapes by ducking behind a curtain and apparently dematerializing, leaving his

pursuers 'completely thunderstricken' (p. 309). He is adept at magician-like

misdirection – in one instance tricking his opponents by shooting Dr. Chillingworth

with a pistol that has no bullet and using the diversion to flee (p. 462). He also

employs his own variation on the vampire trap, pressing a bracket to suddenly

collapse part of a table and cause the Admiral to lose his balance – again using the

diversion to escape (p. 343). Varney's opponents may be duped or distracted by such

magic tricks, but there is usually a rational explanation for the vampire's apparent

ephemerality, and he is material enough to be thwarted by mundane obstacles like the

wall of the garden at Bannerworth Hall.[36] He is also opportunistic, capitalizing on

Flora's sleepwalking to pretend that he has mind-controlling powers (p. 213).

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[36] 'They saw it bound from the ground to the top of the wall, which it very nearly reached, and then each time it fell back again into the garden with such a dull, heavy sound, that the earth seemed to shake again with the concussion. They trembled – well indeed they might, and for some minutes they watched the figure making its fruitless efforts to leave the place' (*Varney*, p. 12).

Varney's emphasis on corpses extends beyond moonlight resurrections. At one point in his career Varney is hanged and then revived via a scientific experiment reminiscent of *Frankenstein* (*Varney*, p. 446). Later, Varney hides the corpse of another vampire down an ice well, where moonlight cannot revive it (p. 574). The Bannerworths exhume a corpse in order to search its pockets for property deeds (p. 540). Richard Maxwell, discussing G. M. Reynold's penny dreadful *The Mysteries of London* (1845-1848), observes, 'How often secrets become objects – letters to be opened surreptitiously, scribbled messages dropped accidentally by the road, certificates of insanity covering evil intentions'.[37] Whilst *Varney* is not without such documents, most of its important mysteries are concealed in human or vampire bodies. Sara Hackenberg describes Varney as 'embodied history,' back to haunt the living (initially the Bannerworths, to whom he may be related).[38] In *Varney*, corpses must be 'read' in order to deliver up their secrets. Chillingworth, for instance, possesses the secret of Varney's 'strange distorted look' – it is 'from a spasmodic contraction of the muscles, in consequence of his having being hanged' (p. 446). He is able to instruct the Bannerworths, allowing them to see Varney's past in his physical appearance.

One of *Varney*'s most vivid physical details is that of smell – a characteristic element of the early nineteenth century's Urban Gothic.[39] Rymer uses scent to present decay – a kind of physical intimacy which the novel offers more easily than the stage.

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[37] Richard C. Maxwell, Jr, 'G. M. Reynolds, Dickens, and the Mysteries of London', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 32 (1977), 188-213 (p. 193).

[38] Sara Hackenberg, 'Vampires and Resurrection Men: The Perils and Pleasures of the Embodied Past in 1840s Sensational Fiction', *Victorian Studies,* 52 (2009), 62-75 (p. 71). His significance is wider than this personal relationship, however, and Varney's long history makes both monarchy and republicanism vampiric. (Hackenberg, p. 72). He and the villains of *The Mysteries of London* – 'corporealize the inescapable return of personal and political history' (Hackenberg, p. 73).

[39] 'While in the earlier Gothic the terrors which defied description were usually associated with fearful spectacles […] in Urban Gothic horror is found in the sanitary sphere.' (Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction*, p. 68). Mighall observes that the emphasis on smell was in part a response to real-life concerns over the human filth of the growing city. (Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction*, p. 67).

Audiences could see death in a vampire play, but in *Varney* they could smell it. The most graphic presentation of physical decomposition in a vampire text before *Varney* is in Byron's 'Fragment of a Novel', where Darvell's 'countenance in a few minutes became nearly black.'[40] *Varney,* by contrast, dwells on the stench of the charnel house:

> He now smelt where he was, for there was that fetid smell of death,
> which always hangs about the bone-house, which is a receptacle of all
> the mortal remains of man, which have been once cast into the grave,
> for which their friends have paid large fees – as well as for the
> ceremony, as for the quiet enjoyment of the home of death; but which
> bargain must be continually violated, and the bones of a man's
> ancestor, instead of ornamenting some museum, or his carcass doing
> some good by way of instruction, lie rotting in the grave-yard, till the
> sexton digs up the same ground and takes fresh his fees, but [sic]
> burning the bones of the former (*Varney,* p. 635).

Whilst the dying vampires in Polidori and Byron's stories have their last requests honoured, here the 'bargain' made between mourners and sexton is 'violated' for commercial gain. Varney's body may serve as his prison, punishing him by locking him into an endless cycle of death, resurrection, murder and guilt – but these other unknown bodies are scrambled past all separation, their bones 'mixed together, so that it would have puzzled an angel to have separated them from each other' (p. 635). If the care of vampire corpses in Byron and Polidori's stories reflects the care for the

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[40] Lord Byron, 'A Fragment'. Reprinted as 'Fragment of a Story' in Frayling, *Vampyres*, pp. 126-30 (p. 130).

dead writer's body (and poetry), then this scene of physical corruption and disregard for human remains provides a horrifying metaphor for the potential mistreatment of the writer's corpus after death. Polidori and Byron had already experienced their own symbolic mix-up – their author identities blended (to the delight of neither) in the production of 'The Vampyre'. This misfortune has a grisly kinship to the mingling of bones in *Varney*'s charnel house.

In *Varney,* the victim's body is – like the vampire's body – the subject of considerable attention. The victim's suffering is partly due to the fact that the vampire has obtained private knowledge of her body – he may even know more about her than she knows about herself. Varney knows the secret of his victims' mysterious injuries, and he knows what their blood tastes like. He has illicit access to the bedrooms of a succession of young women. These spaces are private sanctuaries, as is evident when Flora rebukes the mob seeking Varney for trying to force admittance to her room:

> "Are you men, that you can come thus to force yourselves upon the privacy of a female? Is there nothing in the town or house, that you must intrude in numbers into a private apartment? Is no place sacred from you?"
>
> 'But, ma'am – miss – we only want Varney, the vampyre.'
>
> 'And can you find him nowhere but in a female's bedroom? Shame on you! shame on you! Have you no sisters, wives, or mothers, that you act thus?' (*Varney*, p. 518).

The obvious irony is not only that Varney makes a habit of breaking into women's bedrooms, but also that he is currently hiding in Flora's chamber. Such admittance,

usually unauthorized, allows Varney (and the reader) a voyeuristic glimpse of the
sleeping victims' physical charms – as Flora is aware: 'a thought came across her
mind, which at once crimsoned her cheek – she knew she had fainted on the first visit
of the vampyre, and now he, with a hideous reverence, praised beauties which he
might have cast his demonic eyes over at such a time' (p. 128). Whilst in the work of
Byron and Polidori, body secrets (like Ianthe's murder or Miss Aubrey's seduction)
are reported or suggested rather than detailed on the page, by the publication of
Varney there is a definite move towards explicit depiction.

Bodies may contain secrets, but – especially in the vampire's case – they may
also be false or misleading: though Varney seems to move between vampire and
human at will, he sometimes appears unsure of his own nature. After his
transformation he feels a 'horrible uncertainty' (*Varney*, p. 1154) as to what he is. He
earlier tells Flora and her family that he is not certain whether he is a vampire or not
(p. 526). He also swears that he did not drink Flora's blood, and that 'beyond the
fright, she suffered nothing' (p. 526). The reader knows that he is lying – Varney *has*
made an attack, and 'left the tokens of his presence on the neck of Flora' (p. 21). Yet
incredibly, the Bannerworths appear to accept Varney's version of events. Varney's
power to rewrite his own tale is dependent upon his power to make the Bannerworths
forget or disregard the evidence of his secret which they have all seen inscribed on
Flora's body. Rewriting the plot requires rewriting the female victim's body.[41]

Between the publication of 'The Vampyre' in 1819 and the start of *Varney*'s
serialization in 1847, the vampire is increasingly associated with bodies – sensational
and mysterious vampire bodies, ill-treated corpses, beautiful victims. The vampire is
closely identified with its body as identity – and as a result may be scrutinized and

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[41] This is a far easier process than the 'rewriting' of female bodies in *Dracula*.

hunted. If the association between the vulnerable vampire bodies of Ruthven and Darvell can be likened to the vulnerable literary corpus – which is also the author's 'body' for writers like Polidori – then the vampire's increasing embodiment might be compared to the changing relationship between author and text in the early nineteenth century. Vampire and author both undergo a kind of gothic embodiment, a process which may provide an advantage or a risk. The helpless, desirable body of the female victim might also be compared to the embodied author (particularly the phenomenally popular Byron) as a focus of eroticism. The vulnerability of *Varney*'s corpses and female bodies – both, in their different ways, disposed of for profit – also hints at the disturbing potential of commerce to prey on body and identity.

The beginnings of vampire literature in Britain were concurrent with the emergence of the celebrity author. Eric Eisner describes a 'burgeoning culture of literary celebrity' in the nineteenth century, where 'readers responded to writers with powerful feelings of fascination, desire, love or horror.'[42] A psychological closeness – sometimes a disturbing closeness – could now develop between readers and writers. Nineteenth-century readers would pursue writers who sparked their interest, sometimes seeking them out at home – according to Eisner, 'Wordsworth found curious tourists regularly making off with his shrubbery.'[43] In the new environment of literary celebrity, writers could face a loss of privacy, 'fears about the slippage between aesthetic response and consumer demand', and fears of ephemerality.[44]

Andrew Elfenbein considers Byron's career 'a critical turning-point in the relations between author, text, and audience, when the text became not merely an author's product but an eroticized expression of the most authentic depths of his or

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[42] Eric Eisner, *Nineteenth-Century Poetry and Literary Celebrity* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2009), p. 1.
[43] Eisner, p. 4.
[44] Eisner, p. 5.

her personality.'[45] The Byron craze, which followed the publication of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* in 1812, was partially due to the ease with which readers could identify Byron with his texts. Elfenbein points out that 'many supposed that his poems provided an almost unmediated knowledge of his mind. The most secret, intimate aspects of his personality were widely felt to be public property.'[46] Secrets are here situated within the poems, rather than a physical body. Yet Byronism was associated with a particular 'look' – physical manifestations of the Byronic personality.[47]

Responding to Byron's poetry became a physical as well as an intellectual experience. Corin Throsby observes that many of Byron's female fans addressed him by the names of his characters and '[blurred] the distinction between author and text', as well as anthropomorphizing Byron's books – for the courtesan and memoirist Harriette Wilson, the poet becomes a 'literary "lover"' via his poem.[48] Ghislaine McDayter shows how Byron's body was fetishized and fixated upon during his life and after his death, by 'serious' readers and by his fans. Both those who admired and those who disliked Byron's work responded to it as to his physical presence.[49] After the poet's death, Edward Trelawney, a devoted fan, wrote an account of uncovering Byron's corpse to pursue the mystery of his clubbed foot, recounting the moment in language which McDayter points out its 'highly charged to say the least'.[50] In 1938, Byron's corpse was exhumed in response to rumours that the corpse had disappeared

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[45] Andrew Elfenbein, *Byron and the Victorians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 4.
[46] Elfenbein, p. 13.
[47] 'It was not only Lady Caroline Lamb who could be found, as Annabella Milbanke described it in 'The Byromania', 'smiling, sighing, o'er his face/ In hopes to imitate each strange grimace'.' (Elfenbein, p. 5).
[48] Corin Throsby, 'Flirting With Fame: Byron's Anonymous Female Fans', *Byron Journal*, 32 (2004), 115-123 (pp. 117-18).
[49] In McDayter's argument, modern criticism condemns Byron fetishism because of its denied similarity to their own 'desiring gaze' towards Byron's corpus. (McDayter, 'Byron and Twentieth-Century Popular Culture', p. 148). This threatened division between respectable and 'unrespectable' might be likened to the gothic *Dracula* criticism seen in Chapter One.
[50] McDayter, 'Byron and Twentieth-Century Popular Culture', p. 135.

or been damaged. McDayter notes how the diggers discovered 'the remains of a 'remarkably handsome' young man, in excellent preservation.'[51] Byron's corpse, like that of a vampire, retained its power to fascinate.

As Andrew Elfenbein writes, learning about Byron via his poetry 'could be sold as a voyeuristic delight even more powerful than viewing estates.'[52] The text has become a different kind of 'estate' – it is literary property. When identified as the owner of the copyright, the author is entitled to financial profit from their writing. Byron not only comes to embody his texts but in very basic terms, his author-identity (being legally identified as the author of a work) allows him to derive income and reputation from his work.[53] (Due to the circumstances of its publication, Polidori benefitted little in either of these ways from the 'The Vampyre'.)

Aside from enjoying the commercial success that his embodied authorial persona brought him, Byron could affiliate body and poetry in his own thinking, as is suggested in the account of a quarrel he had with Polidori:

> Polidori turning abruptly to him, after having read a great eulogium of
>
> his works, said, 'and, pray, what is there excepting writing poetry that I
>
> cannot do better than you?' Lord B. answered cool[l]y that there were
>
> three things – First, said he, I can hit with a pistol the keyhole of that
>
> door – Secondly I can swim across that river to yonder point – and

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[51] McDayter, 'Byron and Twentieth-Century Popular Culture', p. 133.
[52] Elfenbein, p. 52.
[53] Peter W. Graham notes that Byron displayed characteristic 'mobility' in his attitude to sales: 'Now he's the nonchalant aristocrat who writes for his own pleasure, now the canny best-selling author who gloats over sales – and mocks his gloating as if to disavow it. Now he disdains the critics' notice, now their disdain provokes his savage indignation.' (Peter W. Graham, 'Byron and the Business of Publishing', in *The Cambridge Companion to Byron,* ed. by Drummond Bone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 27-43 (p. 27), in *Cambridge Core* [accessed 15 September 2016]).

thirdly, I can give you a d-d good thrashing. Polidori acknowledged his

excellence by leaving the room.[54]

Not only is he superior to Polidori in his metaphorical, authorial body, Byron also

boasts that he is literally capable of surpassing him physically.[55] Elsewhere, Byron

links sexual and intellectual vigour, for instance in *Don Juan*, where he mocks the

'intellectual eunuch Castlereagh' (*Don Juan*, Dedication). The combination of

physical and verbal mastery is also present in the fictional portrait of Byron, Lord

Ruthven. Simon Bainbridge reads Ruthven's power as stemming from his language

use and mastery of the Byronic code, seducing female victims as Byron 'seduced'

women readers.[56] Byronism, as a phenomenon, was 'perceived to feed off its female

readers'.[57] Bainbridge reads 'The Vampyre' as a presentation of Byron the literary

celebrity as vampire, 'feeding' via fame: 'the commercial system of Byronism and the

egotism of the poet required their hunger to be repeatedly satisfied through the

publication and success of volumes of poetry, and through this process could prolong

their existence for the ensuing months.'[58] This feeding – like Varney's biting of

young women – initially seemed to benefit the 'vampire', but could have unforeseen

consequences.

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[54] Quoted in Macdonald*,* pp. 70-71.
[55] Another version of the anecdote had Byron boasting of being able to write a book which would sell four thousand copies in a day, and to drink four bottles of wine. (Macdonald, p. 70).
[56] Simon Bainbridge, 'Lord Ruthven's Power: Polidori's "The Vampyre", Doubles and the Byronic Imagination', *Byron Journal,* 34 (2006), 21-34 (p. 21).
[57] Bainbridge, p. 24.
[58] Bainbridge, p. 24.

II. Sold to the 'Reading Mob'

Varney is an actor as well as a vampire, first targeting the Bannerworth family with his sinister performance of vampirism. Varney claims that he studied the portrait of Marmaduke Bannerworth and dressed himself accordingly in order to impersonate it (*Varney,* p. 526). He also claims that he is acting out a part for which he seems to have been predestined, declaring his belief in the sincerity of his role: 'I was deceiving no one when I played the horrible part that has been attributed to me' (p. 526).[59] The vampire impersonation he enacts for the Bannerworths becomes less manageable when spread around the wider populace. The spread of the rumour of Varney's vampirism creates his most serious opponent – the mob of enraged villagers.[60] The Admiral points out that the rage of the mob is partly Varney's fault, since he 'took good care to persuade them' (p. 519) that he was a vampire. Varney's attempt to spread fear and superstition has succeeded too well.

Like Varney, Byron initially cultivated a dangerous reputation. Ghislaine McDayter describes how in the early years of his fame, he set out to create a scandalous reputation:

> Frequently manipulating the gothic fantasies which identified him
>
> unproblematically with his heroes, he commissioned paintings of
>
> himself in Oriental military costume, drank wine from a skull in his
>
> notorious 'monk' parties at Newstead Abbey, and made much of his
>
> personal 'curse' – his club foot. More seriously, he claimed on
>
> occasion to have written his Turkish Tales as a calculated move to

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[59] Varney also talks about vampirism in terms of a character he 'enact[s]' in his conversation with the hangman – arguing that it may be truth, rather than a theatrical role. (*Varney,* p. 447).
[60] As the vampire tale grows more popular, the people themselves play a more visible role in the vampire texts. This can be seen in Planché's play, which has a romantic subplot set amongst the servants. Working-class characters are a very visible part of *Varney*.

'seduce' a wide readership already addicted to Oriental and Gothic tales of terror.[61]

Also like Varney, Byron would find his fame moving beyond his own control, and would attempt to disavow his 'vampirism'.[62] Just as Varney's story of vampirism spreads and gets out of hand, so Byron's poetry acquired additional subversive tendencies as it was pirated and circulated outside its first upper-class readership. Varney *starts* the vampire 'fiction' in the Bannerworths' neighbourhood, but it is 'pirated' by the mob, who turn on him, and begin designating other, innocent people as vampires. Jason Kolkey shows how the persistent piracy of Byron's works 'challenged respectable booksellers' defence of politically controversial works that were for audiences sufficiently educated that they would not be lured into rebellion.'[63] Unauthorized reprints were viewed as 'dangerous to property rights and British political stability, potentially corrupting the lower classes and driving legitimate publishers out of business.'[64] Piracy emphasized 'political or sensational content that his legitimate publisher would have preferred to downplay.'[65] Peter W. Graham similarly observes how the change in *Don Juan*'s 'circumstances of distribution' (from legitimate publication intended for moneyed readers to affordable, sometimes

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[61] Ghislaine McDayter, 'Conjuring Byron: Byromania, Literary Commodification and the Birth of Celebrity', in *Byromania,* ed. by Frances Wilson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), pp. 43-62 (p. 48).

[62] 'Having played fast and loose with his critical reputation as a vampiric seducer in his youth, Byron came to actively denounce it in the early years of his residence in Italy, preferring to position himself instead as the victim of vampiric forces. […] this shift in Byron's self-identification from a position of power to powerlessness – from poet-producer to slave of industry – occurred at the very moment when his perceived control over the operations of cultural production started to slip when he left England in 1816, the site of all his literary productivity to date.' (McDayter, 'Conjuring Byron', p. 52).

[63] Jason Kolkey, 'Mischievous Effects: Byron and Illegitimate Publication', *Byron Journal,* 42 (2014), 21-33 (p. 23).

[64] Kolkey, p. 23.

[65] Kolkey, p. 25.

obscenely illustrated pirated edition) moved it from comparative harmlessness to subversion.[66]

Varney is chased by several angry mobs throughout his adventures – these people are brutal, ignorant, and only too ready to believe in superstitious tales.[67] Like the vampire they are 'blood-thirsty butchers' (*Varney,* p. 511) but they lack Varney's focus or comparative finesse. Both fearsome and ridiculous, the mob is also a promiscuous mixture of men and women:

> The crowd […] was of a most motley description, and its appearance, under many circumstances, would cause considerable risability. Men and women were mixed indiscriminately together, and in the shouting, the latter, if such a thing were possible, exceeded the former, both in discordance and energy.
>
> Every individual composing that mob carried some weapon calculated for defence, such as flails, scythes, sickles, bludgeons, etc., and this mode of arming caused them to wear a most formidable appearance; while the passion that superstition had called up was strongly depicted in their inflamed features (pp. 257-58).

Louis James views the mob as a jaundiced view of *Varney*'s popular readership as 'fickle and unintelligent'.[68] (Tellingly, at one point Varney refers to the mob as 'the

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[66] Graham, p. 38.

[67] Their rage is not unjustified, since the gentry – the Bannerworths – prove incompetent in dealing with the vampire threat. *Varney* is full of examples of noble characters failing in their paternalistic role – the Bannerworths are willing to cover up their father's crime and to benefit materially from the murder he committed.

[68] Louis James, *Fiction for the Working Man 1830-1850* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 37. James notes that Rymer tried – and failed – to find literary success with 'middle-class' literary attempts. (James, p. 37).

populace' (p. 515).) According to Louis James, Rymer was contemptuous of both his working-class audience and his writing, advising the author who wished to become popular to 'study the animals for whom he has to cater'.[69]

For his part, Byron began to develop an uneasy, sometimes hostile relationship with the 'reading mob.'[70] His close identification with his poetry led to a fear of losing his authentic self via purchase of the 'Byron' offered for sale in his poetry, and in unauthorized imitations of his work. Jason Kolkey suggests that Byron became frustrated with the fact that his fame meant a lack of freedom over his public persona and political use of his 'name and writing'.[71] Corin Throsby notes how '[w]hen Byron abandoned his gothic style to write his historical plays […] he was attacked by his critics for writing 'inauthentic' works that were not truly Byronic.' [72] Conversely, 'The Vampyre' *was* considered authentically Byronic, despite Polidori's authorship. Goethe deemed it Byron's finest work.[73] As Frances Wilson points out, there was an irony to this situation, as Byron's poetry posited that there was no such 'self' to preserve:

> Byron's fight for recognition of his own originality was ironic because
>
> the poses and masquerades in both his poetry and social circulations
>
> alike mocked the very idea of having an original and unique self to
>
> defend. Not only was he famously chameleon, […] but the layers of
>
> Byron's persona were themselves based upon literary imitations.[74]

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[69] James Malcolm Rymer, 'Popular Writing', *The Queen's Magazine,* 1 (1842), p. 99, quoted in Louis James, p. 37.
[70] This phrase was used by Charles Lamb to describe the reading public. Quoted in McDayter, 'Conjuring Byron', p. 50.
[71] Kolkey, p. 26.
[72] Throsby, p. 116.
[73] Twitchell, *The Living Dead*, p. 107.
[74] Frances Wilson, 'Introduction: Byron, Byronism and Byromaniacs', in *Byromania,* ed. by Wilson, pp. 1-23 (pp. 6-7).

Mario Praz considers Byron's self-presentation as a gothic hero or 'Fatal Man' as a literary imitation: 'The pale face furrowed by an ancient grief, the rare Satanic smile, the traces of obscured nobility […] worthy of a better fate – Byron might be said to have derived all these characteristics, by an almost slavish imitation, from Mrs Radcliffe.'[75] This refers to a passage from *The Giaour*, but Praz plays on the ambiguity of 'his character of Fatal Man' – the description could refer to Byron's character himself, or the character he uses in his writing. Sarah Wootton argues that Praz conflates Byron with his heroes here – whilst Byron may have constructed his own persona with help from Ann Radcliffe and Milton, the fictionalizing process is effectively perpetuated by those who, like Praz, make 'no effort to disentangle the man from the myth.'[76] In a counterpoint to Byron's fans aping his look, Praz imagines Byron practising his expressions in the mirror, the better to play the role of the 'Fatal Man'.[77] Varney, similarly, is influenced by others' stories: in one version of his origin tale, he gets the idea of vampirism after being told 'strange stories of vampires' (*Varney,* p. 526) by a Hungarian. This is likely the same Hungarian vampire who is seeking him – who may also be the same vampire seeking Varney in Chapter 94 – the one who may have transformed him into a vampire in the first place. Varney may have been infected by story and vampirism simultaneously.

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[75] Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, trans. by Angus Davidson (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 68.

[76] Sarah Wootton, *Byronic Heroes in Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing and Screen Adaptation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 44, in *EBSCO Host* <search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1461565&site=ehost-live> [accessed 17 March 2017].

[77] Praz, p. 72. Similarly, Paul Douglass suggests that 'Byron encouraged his readers to imagine him as a composite of the heroes of such novels as Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, William Beckford's *Vathek*, and Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*'. (Paul Douglass, 'Byron's Life and His Biographers', in *The Cambridge Companion to Byron,* ed. by Bone, pp. 7-26 (p. 7) in *Cambridge Core* [accessed 15 September 2016]).

Byron's ambivalence towards his own fame and his identification with his

work is shown in a shift in his self-presentation from vampiric predator to victim of

others' appetites. According to Ghislaine McDayter, as his career progressed,

physical appetite in others, particularly in women, came increasingly to

signify for him the threat of his own consumption, both personal and

poetic. He would not, he said, 'be the slave to any appetite' and while

that included the appetites of his lovers, it referred more particularly to

his adoring 'fans', who were always assumed to be female (or at least

feminised), and who the poet came increasingly to regard as insatiable

beings who fed upon his literary corpus to satisfy their taste for the

Byronic.[78]

Pearson notes that 'Byron recognized the need to appeal to the large and influential

new audience of women readers […] Yet his poems and letters generally show

contempt for women readers.'[79] This fear of female consumption can be seen in his

attitude to his female readers. Eric Eisner, discussing *Don Juan,* comments that

'Byron represents celebrity as locating him within a world of women, where the

audience for lasting fame is represented as firmly male ("Where are the epitaphs our

fathers read?" [4.102]).'[80] Again the fate of the poet's body of work is associated with

his physical burial, and linked here with gendered anxiety. Byron's fear of

consumption conflates physical obliteration with an eroded or inauthentic self.

Embodiment – a source of power for both poet and vampire – can also prove a source

of vulnerability. Lady Caroline had forged Byron earlier, in 1813, when she imitated

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[78] McDayter, 'Conjuring Byron', p. 43.
[79] McDayter, 'Conjuring Byron', p. 36.
[80] Eric Eisner, p. 43.

both his handwriting and his epistolary style in an attempt to get a portrait of him from his publisher John Murray.[81] John Soderholm suggests that even though Lady Caroline subsequently obtained the portrait by other means, Byron was perturbed by the idea that he could be 'forged, and possibly reforged, by another.'[82]

Varney's mob, as we have seen, is made up of a mixture of both sexes – but not only are the women louder than the men, the very existence of the crowd is due to female indiscretion. Doctor Chillingworth's wife has broken her husband's confidence and gossiped about Varney's vampirism to her friends (if Rymer's sarcasm is to be believed, such indiscreet behaviour is typical of women (*Varney,* p. 254).) Varney's story, once it reaches feminine ears, elicits a misguided and violently physical response. During a lull, the uproar is reignited by a chamber-maid's mistaken belief that she has seen a vampire:

> This woman, with all the love of gossip incidental to her class, had,
>
> from the first, entered so fully into all the particulars concerning
>
> vampyres, that she fairly might be considered to be a little deranged on
>
> that head. Her imagination had been so worked upon, that she was in
>
> an unfit state to think of anything else (p. 292).

Like the Byronmaniac, the chamber-maid is overcome by her imagination, 'deranged' by a romantic tale. The mistaken believer in vampires need not necessarily be female: in the French burlesque *Les Trois Vampires* (1820) by Nicholas Brazier, Gabriel Lurieu, and Armand d'Artois, M. Gobetout ('believe-everything') has read too many vampire stories, and under their influence mistakes his daughters' lovers for

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[81] James Soderholm, 'Lady Caroline Lamb: Byron's Miniature Writ Large', *Keats-Shelley Journal*, 40 (1991), 24-46 (p. 24).
[82] Soderholm, p. 33.

vampires.[83] But Jacqueline Pearson notes that in the Enlightenment, 'misreading tends to be gendered as feminine'.[84] Women's reading was also considered primarily physical, rather than intellectual, and could consequently influence both morals and bodily health.[85] In this light, Varney's mob mirrors some of the darker fears attached to female reading. The women are not presented in sexual terms – instead they are pitilessly violent, quite different to Flora, Rymer's picture of idealized womanhood. Later in the novel, women will pursue Varney with a marital objective, but this pursuit will be motivated by money, rather than erotic desire. (Eisler suggests that Byron's own wariness of 'mercenary female[s]' extended even to his own five-year-old daughter Allegra.)[86]

If Varney is to be believed, English society is inordinately fond of money – after coming into an ill-gotten fortune, he reflects, 'Surely, in this country, where gold is loved so well, I shall be able to overcome all difficulties' (*Varney,* p. 575). There is little evidence in the novel to contradict him. Even the virtuous Bannerworths have little compunction about exhuming the man their father murdered, taking possession of the deeds he has with him, and then reburying him, now bereft of property as well as identity and name. They even do further damage to the corpse (now 'one mass of decay') – in a vivid gory detail, the corpse is struck in the ribs with a digger's pickaxe and lifted out of the ground (p. 540). On their way to dig up the body of the nameless man, Henry Bannerworth, Doctor Chillingworth, and Charles Holland disturb a couple of thieves sharing notes about their latest exploits (p. 358) – from its highest to

[83] Gobetout characterises vampire stories as an English fad, and seems to have been reading Byron. In a line of dialogue which was apparently very popular with French audiences, Gobetout declares, 'Les vampires ... ils nous viennent d'Angleterre'. (Leonard Ashley, *The Complete Book of Vampires* (London: Souvenir Press, 1998), p. 37). See also Stuart, p. 56.
[84] Jacqueline Pearson, *Women's Reading in Britain, 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 5.
[85] Pearson, p. 4.
[86] Eisler, p. 702.

its lowest orders, English society is riddled with corruption.

Whilst Byron had to defend his poetic corpus from money-motivated predators, not even Varney's literal body is safe from commercial forces. Doctor Chillingworth reveals that he met Varney before the vampire's acquaintance with the Bannerworths – Varney was condemned to hang for 'a highway robbery of a most aggravated character' (*Varney,* p. 443). Chillingworth, then an ambitious medical student, secretly obtained Varney's corpse, and, in a scene that recalls *Frankenstein,* restored the vampire to life as part of a scientific experiment. Chillingworth's theft of Varney's body from the gallows reflects eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fears of the 'burkers' – body snatchers who would dig up corpses to sell for use in medical dissections.[87] (Chillingworth notes that when he was studying, 'the difficulty of getting a subject for anatomisation was very great, and all sorts of schemes had to be put into requisition to accomplish so desirable, and, indeed, absolutely necessary a purpose' (p. 443).) Sara Hackenberg notes that the illicit corpse trade meant that bodies could be both 'relics of venerated loved ones and commodities in a thriving underground trade.'[88] As Sally Powell observes, the trope of body-snatching and body trading in the penny dreadful is not only a device to produce sensational horror and an expression of anxiety about predatory anatomists, but also suggests a 'growing perception that the sanctity of selfhood is threatened by the aggressive commercial forces generated by the industrial city.'[89]

Powell also points out that fear of the 'burker' was dependent on financial circumstances – the poor were more likely to die alone, and were not as carefully

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[87] Ruth Richardson, 'Bodily Theft Past and Present: A Tale of Two Sermons', *The Lancet* (Medicine Crime and Punishment Supplement), 364 (2004), 44-45 (p. 44).
[88] Hackenberg, p. 65.
[89] Sally Powell, 'Black Markets and Cadaverous Pies: The Corpse, Urban Trade and Industrial Consumption in the Penny Blood', in *Victorian Crime, Madness and Sensation,* ed. by Andrew Maunder and Grace Moore (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 45-48 (p. 46).

buried.[90] As *Varney* demonstrates, the executed criminal was also a likely subject for dissection. This was a common fear for condemned criminals, and murderers would implore execution crowds to protect their corpses from this ignominious fate. Body-snatchers might, like Chillingworth, pose as family members to obtain fresh cadavers.[91] There were stories of cut-up corpses being 'discarded as mere filth' or fed to animals.[92] The hanging is far from being the only moment in *Varney* which recalls the fear of the burkers. The scene in Chapter 45 where the mob exhume Miles the butcher, suspecting him of becoming a vampire, is reminiscent of an incident in Lambeth in 1795, when a distressed crowd, discovering that grave-robbers had been at work and anxious that their relatives' graves might have been desecrated, 'began like Mad people to tear up the ground.'[93] (Rymer's unsympathetic depiction of the mob and Chillingworth's reflections on the necessity of anatomy subjects, taken with the Rymer's musings that the charnel house bodies decompose without 'doing some good by way of instruction' (*Varney,* p. 635), suggest a matter-of-fact attitude to the notion of dissection. At the same time, Rymer is unwilling to forgo the sensational artistic potential of body-snatching, or strip the corpse of its gothic possibilities.) The bodies in the charnel house might be more usefully employed as educational tools – but in this scene they add an evocative thrill to the scene where Varney waits for his enemy's corpse to revive. Rymer has it both ways, criticizing working-class fears of the burkers whilst simultaneously exploiting them for chilling effect.

Varney's history as a highwayman connects him with real-life figures like Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard, whose adventures earned them a place in the penny

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[90] Powell, p. 46
[91] Ian Ross and Carol Urquhart Ross, 'Body Snatching in Nineteenth Century Britain: From Exhumation to Murder', *British Journal of Law and Society,* 6 (1979), 108-18 (p. 109).
[92] Ross and Ross, p. 113.
[93] Quoted in Ruth Richardson, p. 44.

dreadful genre.[94] These works were inspired by the older tradition of the Newgate

Calendar, which reported on actual crimes. Elizabeth Fay Stearns traces Varney's

inspiration to a number of real-life accounts of highwaymen published in the

eighteenth century.[95] Stearns notes that 'Varney […] gives the authentic account of

his life to Bevan, just as many other condemned criminals delivered their life histories

to the ordinaries of Newgate before dying on the gallows.'[96] Stearns recounts how

these criminal biographies were subsequently published as *Ordinary of Newgate's*

*Account*s – allowing the ordinaries to turn the condemned men's stories to a profit.

The system led to criticism that ordinaries obtained these stories by coercion

(threatening criminals with damnation if they did not share their stories), or did not

offer disinterested spiritual advice.[97] Though Varney profits from the mercenary

nature of English society, it also makes him vulnerable – as a condemned criminal,

both his life story and his body are open to financial exploitation.

In addition to its commercialization of corpses, *Varney* demonstrates the

commodification of female bodies via the marriage market, again illustrating English

society's obsession with gold. As Nina Auerbach points out: '[Varney's]

misadventures in the marriage market associate him with parents (and some

daughters) who are subtler, more skilled predators than the vampire-hunting mob.

Next to the sophisticated bartering of polite women – and a Count Polidori who tries

to force his daughter into marriage with Varney – his demonism seems innocent.'[98]

Varney's willingness to buy rather than woo a wife is not an aberration. Even 'good'

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[94] Patrick A. Dunae, 'Penny Dreadfuls: Late Nineteenth-Century Boys' Literature and Crime', *Victorian Studies,* 22 (1979), 133-50 (p. 134).

[95] Elizabeth Fay Stearns, 'Jailbreakers, Villains, and Vampires: Representations of Criminality in Early-Victorian Popular Texts' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Syracuse University, 2013), p. 115 <http://surface.syr.edu/eng_etd/63/> [accessed 6 January 2017].

[96] Stearns, p. 121.

[97] Stearns, p. 117.

[98] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves,* p. 31.

characters are capable of acting similarly – particularly with women of other races. Jack Pringle cheerfully reminds Admiral Bell of his early experience in slave-dealing (or pimping): 'Do you recollect the brown girl you bought for thirteen bob and a tanner, at the blessed Society Islands, and sold her again for a dollar, to a nigger seven feet two, in his natural pumps?' (*Varney,* p. 330). *Varney*'s themes of body loss, body violation, and body commodification can be seen in other penny dreadfuls, like *The String of Pearls* (1846), which has also been attributed to Rymer.[99] *The String of Pearls* shows how male bodies can be commodified or mechanized by the world of commerce.[100]

Commodification was also a source of anxiety for Byron, who became anxious that his popularity might imply a lack of artistic merit. Andrew Elfenbein notes that the 'outcry' following the 1819 publication of *Don Juan* caused Byron some gratification because it proved that he was no crowd-pleasing hack, but 'had become too good for his audience.'[101] The dedication of *Don Juan* (not published along with the anonymous release of the first two cantos in 1819) is combative on the subject of fame and poetic repute – criticizing poets like Wordsworth for their belief that 'poesy has wreaths for [them] alone.'[102] Byron – or his writer's persona – ironically wishes fame and skill to such poets, whilst warning against disdaining the praise of one's contemporaries in favour of future fame:

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[99] Dick Collins, in his Introduction to the Wordsworth edition of *Varney, the Vampyre,* credits Rymer with the authorship of *The String of Pearls.* Dick Collins, 'Introduction', in *Varney, the Vampyre,* pp. xv-xviii (p. xvi).
[100] 'Like many Victorian industrial workers, Ingestrie's entire existence is subsumed by his employment. He is literally imprisoned by his work, experiencing nothing beyond the manufacture of the goods he has been engaged to produce and that he is forced to ingest'. (Powell, p. 52).
[101] Elfenbein, p. 44
[102] Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, ed. by T. G. Steffan, E. Steffan and W. W. Pratt; rev. T. G. Steffan (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1973; revised and repr. 1977), p. 42.

He that reserves his laurels for posterity

(Who does not often claim the bright reversion)

Has generally no great crop to spare it, he

Being only injured by his own assertion.[103]

Relying too much on future appreciation is unwise, but so is unduly running after acclaim in one's own time. Byron criticizes poets like Southey who accept wealth and position in return for lending their talents to ignoble causes. Money seems a cause for inauthenticity, motivating the faking or forging of the self (as it also encouraged others to forge Byron's works).

In *Varney,* money also facilitates falseness – Varney's ill-gotten gains allow him to take on his first disguise (that of a fabulously wealthy baron), and to buy the goodwill of the townspeople he encounters. He is almost able to purchase a new face with his riches, as the house agent Mr Leek reflects that 'handsome is as handsome does' (*Varney,* pp. 568-69) – handsome actions, in this instance, meaning spending money in the neighbourhood, rather than good deeds. Varney's money encourages double-dealing – not only tempting mercenary types like Mrs Williams to try to ensnare Varney into marriage with their daughters, but also leading to frauds like that of Mr Leek, who in his efforts to get Varney to rent Anderbury-on-the-Mount, goes to the extent of having one of his friends impersonate a nobleman who is also interested in taking the house (p. 590). Throughout the novel, money not only prompts characters to falsify themselves, it also provides the means to do so. Varney's transformations (especially his first incarnations as baron and colonel) are facilitated by his ill-gotten fortune.

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[103] Byron, *Don Juan,* p. 43.

Money's most sensational method of corruption in both 'The Vampyre' and

Varney is via gambling – a fascinating means of self-destruction and self-loss which

absorbs and destroys like a vampire. Gambling spoils lives in both 'The Vampyre'

and *Varney*: vampires remain immune, but others are harmed. Ruthven's success in

gambling allows him to make victims of 'the rash youthful novice, or the luckless

father of a numerous family' (Polidori, 'The Vampyre', p. 6). By deliberately losing

to dishonest men, Ruthven also allows the ruthless circulation of money via gambling

to continue. *Varney* similarly demonstrates the evils of gambling, twice showing men

ruined at play. The hangman, who tells his tale in volume two of the novel, was

brought to a gaming house by the mysterious Chevalier St John, 'a man of the world

in every sense of the word, and one that was well versed in all the ways of society'

(*Varney,* p. 410). St John's perfect confidence and sangfroid, as well as his

mysteriousness (he disappears from the hangman's story soon after this description of

him) make him reminiscent not only of Varney, but also of Ruthven. Stephen Knight

observes how the danger of gambling was a serious preoccupation in late eighteenth-

and early nineteenth-century Britain.[104] Bridget M. Marshall notes the association

between gothic villainy and gambling, and the questions which gambling raised for

Enlightenment ideas of 'rationality and will'.[105]

Empowered by his stolen fortune, Varney frequently changes his name,

costume, and history in order to pursue new victims. These shifting roles are forgeries

of a kind – Varney not only rewrites his past to suit his purposes, sometimes

delivering a whole new backstory, he also at times seems to alter the genre of his

book to suit himself. In Chapter 152, the title of which begins 'The devil a monk

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[104] Stephen Knight, *The Mysteries of the Cities: Urban Crime Fiction in the Nineteenth Century* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012), p. 89.
[105] Bridget M. Marshall, 'An Evil Game: Gothic Villains and Gaming Addictions', *Gothic Studies*, 11 (2009), 9-18 (p. 16).

would be', Rymer situates Varney within the older gothic tradition. Varney assumes the role of a villainous monk in the style of Lewis's Ambrosio or Radcliffe's Schedoni. The Varney-as-monk chapters are in a sense a double forgery – Varney 'forges' a new identity, adopting not just a new name but a new lexicon, aping the abbess' callousness and religious hypocrisy – whilst simultaneously altering the character of the novel to include internment in a nunnery, threats of torture, and talk of the Inquisition.

In spite of such forgeries, Varney is never able to achieve a permanent escape from his name and identity. Throughout the novel, he is almost invariably exposed as a vampire before he can achieve his object (marriage or murder). He has the opposite problem to Byron, whose authentic self is called into question by the responses from others – readers, fans, and critics – rather than confirmed. Whilst Varney is responsible for many fraudulent productions, Byron is a victim of imitation and plagiarism.[106] At the same time, he was 'inordinately sensitive to the charge of plagiarism' within his own work.[107] Byron's celebrity shows the author's name (and image, body, 'look') providing additional external significance for a text. Whilst this association could be a source of commercial and social gain, it also laid the author open to forgery and misrepresentation, as unscrupulous figures like Henry Colburn sought to exploit this association to their own ends. Discussing Matthew Lewis's 'plagiarisms', Lauren Fitzgerald argues that the Romantic and gothic combine in the creation of the image of the plagiarist – this figure being the reverse of the Romantic ideal of the original writer or genius.[108] 'Unoriginal' gothic novels provoked anxieties over the decline of public taste, which led to the critics' creation of the villainous

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[106] Frances Wilson notes that Byron inspired an 'extraordinary and unparalleled counter-culture of imitations', which challenged the 'unity and authenticity' of his identity. (Wilson, p. 5).
[107] Skarda, p. 261.
[108] Lauren Fitzgerald, 'The Gothic Villain and the Vilification of the Plagiarist: The Case of *The Castle Spectre*', *Gothic Studies*, 7 (2005), 5-17 (p. 5).

plagiarist figure.[109] Reviewers, using gothic terms in order to decry the gothic, make

the plagiarist into 'a type of gothic villain.'[110] If the plagiarist can be a gothic villain,

the plagiarised can be a gothic victim – Byron, like Varney, plays both roles.

The vulnerability of the embodied self in the face of economic exploitation

and consuming fan attention brings with it the attendant fear that its individuality

cannot be particularly stable to begin with, since it is so easily threatened. Varney

exploits his ability to play different roles, but his identity is also a source of anxiety

for him – he is not, initially, even sure about his own status as vampire. He has to be

explicitly told that this is what has happened to him – and with this explanation comes

a dictation of the role he is to play hereafter, which Varney recounts when revealing

some of his past history at the very end of the novel. In Varney's account, it is this

mysterious voice of his supernatural judge which gives him his new name (*Varney,*

pp. 1151-52). It is apt that *Varney* – written over several years, during which Rymer

experienced bankruptcy which jeopardized his ability to produce new instalments –

shows that Varney, apparently secure in his role as 'author' of his own story, is in fact

a confused and imperilled self. Commercial forces here threaten artistic and bodily

integrity – as also occurs in the story of how 'The Vampyre' came into existence. The

body and identity are both vulnerable in the face of reproduction and duplication.[111]

Polidori's predicament after the publication of his story was exacerbated by the fact

that Byron now existed as both a highly marketable name – a 'personality' or

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[109] Fitzgerald, p. 6.
[110] Fitzgerald, p. 12.
[111] Corinna Wagner argues that early gothic novels like those of Ann Radcliffe challenged
Enlightenment science's idea that the body revealed and was inextricably linked to the inner self.
(Corinna Wagner, 'The Dream of a Transparent Body: Identity, Science and the Gothic Novel', *Gothic
Studies,* 14 (2012), 74-92 (pp. 75-76)).

character existing in portrayals, reproductions, and in the minds of his readers – as well as an individual.[112]

Once 'The Vampyre' was published, Polidori could not attempt to maintain a distinction between Byron's identity and his own as author without laying himself open to accusations of plagiarism or falsehood. By maintaining that the story was his own, he risked appearing to deny or erase Byron's influence, to be coasting on talent which did not belong to him. Conversely, by emphasizing the fact that the story was based on an unfinished tale of Byron's, he seemed to be attempting to 'cash in' on the glamorous Byron association (as Colburn wished to do). The matter was complicated by the fact that Byron initially denied the connection, out of fear of being mistakenly considered the author of the fawning and fictional piece 'Lord Byron's Residence in the Island of Mitylene' by John Mitford, which was included in the book version of 'The Vampyre'.[113] The author identity established by Byron (and yearned for by the less-celebrated Polidori) appears mutable, fragile, subject to the whim of economic forces, which prove capable of combining two author identities against the stated wishes of either.[114] (Author-identity has become detached from talent, since Byron feared being mistaken for the author of poor-quality writing.) A parallel might be drawn with *The String of Pearls,* where human individuality is threatened via transformation into food. If human beings can be reduced to simple sustenance – turned into pies – then how distinct (from animals, from each other) can they possibly have been to begin with?

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[112] As Jane Stabler discusses, Byron's continuing afterlife included featuring in the fictions of others – in characters like Lord Raymond in Mary Shelley's *The Last Man.* (Jane Stabler, 'Introduction: Reading Byron Now', in *Palgrave Advances in Byron Studies,* ed. by Stabler, pp. 1-15 (p. 5)).
[113] Macdonald, p. 185.
[114] The 'still continued fusion' of the minds of the lake poets is presented in *Don Juan* as a source of stagnation and intellectual narrowness – something to be avoided. (Byron, *Don Juan,* p. 42).

The link this chapter has drawn between Byron and Polidori's vampire tales and the later portrayal of vampires in *Varney the Vampyre* shows the development of the vampire story taking place concurrently with the development of the celebrity author. The fact that the Byronic hero is central to the evolution of both vampire and author archetypes is perhaps the reason why the idea of bodies, embodiment, and individuality – along with themes of commercial exploitation – play an important role within both myths.

When considering the modern popularity of the vampire figure – and especially the pervasive popularity of Dracula as a character, and *Dracula* as an inspiration for novel, comic, television and film adaptations – it is interesting to consider the mobility of the earlier vampire archetype in British fiction. Feeding on the Byronic antihero (and his antecedents), the melodrama villain, and the penny dreadful protagonist, the vampire develops during the early nineteenth century into a versatile and marketable archetype. The development of vampire literature demonstrates the permeability and malleability of written texts – uncertain in their creation and antecedents, liable to theft, adaptation, and plagiarism. Perhaps the texts are 'Byronic' in their mobility – this quality, in the sense of avoiding the stasis of one single belief or claim to presenting a single authentic truth rather than a series of poses, being one upon which Byron prided himself.[115] Sarah Wootton notes that in Byron's own work, the Byronic hero was a 'generic shape-shifter', evolving from 'experiments with dramatic verse and narrative poems', and argues that this generic fluidity contributes to the Byronic hero's adaptability to other genres and media. [116] This quality is retained by the Byronic vampire, who is able to take on many guises –

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[115] Elfenbein, p. 44
[116] Wootton, p. 11.

Varney's ingenuity in coming up with new names and stories for himself being only one example.

Within the first half of the nineteenth century, it is clear that the vampire tale has moved away from the aristocratic (and Romantic) gothic, towards a more popular form. The growing visibility of bodies within the vampire genre is an illustration of its growing popularization and vulgarization. Influenced by commercial forces, the vampire becomes an intersection between the elite and the popular. The aristocratic elements in Byron and Polidori's stories – lofty sentiments, the doings of the nobility – are not removed, but they are changed, in some ways enriched by the addition of working class characters, tropes of social mobility, intertextuality, comedy and playfulness, all elements which can be found within *Varney, the Vampyre.* Producers of vampire theatre (and later Rymer) produced works that were adaptations of adaptations, producing an intertextuality which was anxious, admiring, hostile – backward-looking, with one eye fixed on the market. As Byron and Polidori's history demonstrates, writers and editors might be ruthlessly focussed upon turning a profit, imitators and adaptors might be ambivalent as well as admiring. The increasing visibility of bodies within early British vampire literature not only suggests the move of the gothic towards a more democratic form, which would eventually evolve into the sensation novel (which, in David Punter's words, achieves a 'partial domestication of Gothic')[117]. It also demonstrates the birth of certain features of vampire media which are evident in later works, and can even be seen in vampire films, television programmes, and fiction of the present day.

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[117] Punter, *The Literature of Terror*, I, p. 199.

Chapter Three

'Juridically Attested, and by Persons of Probity':

Vampire-Slaying by the Book

I. An Open Verdict and A Wrongful Conviction: 'What Was It?' and 'The Fate of Madame Cabanel'

In British fiction, the vampire is usually an exogenous horror. Both myth and monster have to be imported, since as Carol A. Senf observes, in spite of 'almost universal' belief in vampires, 'England seems to have been singularly free from this superstition.'[1] The Introduction to Polidori's 'The Vampyre' depicts the story moving from East to West, spreading across the globe like a plague. Varney, 'ugly Englishman' (*Varney*, p. 1165) that he is, vividly embodies some of the ugliest aspects of British society. But if Varney is British, his vampire condition is of foreign provenance – perhaps Norwegian (p. 29). Neither Ruthven nor Varney is able to make a permanent home in Britain, though they find victims there.

Markman Ellis identifies a notice in the *London Journal* of March 1732 as the first use of the word 'vampire' in an English newspaper report.[2] The notice was a mixture of summary and translation of 'Visum et Repertum', a report made by a medical officer named Johann Flückinger, the Austrian army surgeon who had investigated the posthumous fate of Arnod Paole, an inhabitant of the village of Medreyga in Hungary.[3] A story spread that Paul had become a vampire and was preying on villagers, and he was accordingly exhumed, staked, and burned. The report

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[1] Senf, *The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century English Literature*, p. 19.
[2] Markman Ellis, *The History of Gothic Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000; repr. 2003)*,* p. 162.
[3] Matthew Beresford, *From Demons to Dracula: The Creation of the Modern Vampire Myth* (London: Reakticon, 2008; repr. 2009) p. 107.

was signed by a group of witnesses – a band of 'good Men', medical and military officials.[4] The newspaper acknowledges that the idea of vampires initially seems 'impossible and even ridiculous', but adds that the account 'is a true Copy of a Relation attested by unexceptionable Witnesses, and sent to the Imperial Council of War'.[5]

In his full account, Flückinger explains that he was despatched to the village in order to investigate the people's complaints of vampirism. He headed an inquiry made up of soldiers and 'the oldest haiduk of the village.'[6] Having heard the testimony regarding Arnod Paole's attacks and the supposed vampire epidemic that followed his death, Flückinger supervised the disinterment and dissection of other potential vampires. His report lists the condition of thirteen corpses, and features medical terminology (internal organs are referred to by their Latin names) alongside recaps of folk wisdom (eating a sheep killed by a vampire is said to cause vampirism).[7] Notably, as Paul Barber points out, the authorities were late to the scene in this case, and Paul had been dealt with several years earlier, though the vampire 'epidemic' was still in progress.[8] Erik Butler notes that following Flückinger's report, news of the affair spread across Europe, travelling via journals and translations. This ushered in two decades of vampire interest, provoking newspaper writings and scholarship.[9]

The authorities had been able to respond more promptly in an earlier outcry of vampirism, which did not attract as much attention.[10] This was the case of Peter

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[4] Extract of a Private Letter from Vienna', *London Journal*, 11 March 1732, in *17th and 18th Century Burney Collection* [accessed 6 February 2017].

[5] 'Extract of a Private Letter from Vienna'.

[6] Johann Flückinger, 'Visum et Repertum', trans. by Paul Barber, repr. in Paul Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 16-18 (p. 16).

[7] Flückinger, trans. by Barber, repr. in Paul Barber, p. 17.

[8] Barber, p. 15.

[9] Butler, *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film*, p. 28.

[10] Butler, *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film,* p. 28.

Plogojowitz, recorded by Imperial Provisor Frombald in 1725. The people of Kisilova

village appealed to Frombald and their village priest to view Plogojowitz's body.

Frombald urged that the 'praiseworthy administration' should be first informed, and

was told that either he attend the villagers immediately and give them legal authority

to dispose of the body according to custom, or they would all leave the village.

Reluctantly, Frombald attended the execution of the 'vampire'.[11] He ended his report

to the 'most laudable Administration' with an anxious plea: 'if a mistake was made in

this matter, such is to be attributed not to me but to the rabble, who were beside

themselves with fear.'[12] Butler notes that Frombald employed Latin, 'the international

language of science and learning', in an attempt to conceal his lack of resource in this

matter.[13]

In Joseph Pitton de Tournefort's *Voyage to the Levant* (1702), another

educated writer describes the 'killing' of a vampire in Mykonos. De Tournefort, who

was scornful of the superstitious proceedings he observed, stated the futility in

stopping the people at their violent work. The executioners, 'infatuated with their

notion of the dead's being re-animated', were not to be swayed with rational

explanations for the supposed outbreak of vampirism.[14] In this case, as in the reports

of Flückinger and Frombald, the accounts do not come from the local people

themselves, but from an observer of higher status. Narrating events is the only real

control which de Tournefort and Frombald have – they are powerless to stop the

people in their violence. Nor may those called in to authorize vampire executions

share the conviction of the 'rabble'. As Butler points out in the case of Frombald,

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[11] Barber, p. 6.

[12] Imperial Provisor Frombald, 'Copia eines Schreibens aus dem Gradisker District in Ungarn' (1725), trans. by Barber, repr. in Barber as 'Peter Plogojowitz', pp. 5-9 (p. 7).

[13] Butler, *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film*, p. 27.

[14] Joseph Pitton de Tournefort, *A Voyage to the Levant*. Extract reprinted as 'A Voyage to the Levant', in *Vampyres,* ed. by Frayling, pp. 87-91 (p. 89).

such authorities do not identify the vampires until prompted. The vampire accounts are stories of authentication and justification – writing at a distance, those recounting the vampire attacks assume authority to determine whether or not the vampire claims are real, or at least the authority to inform others what has taken place.[15]

Ellis recounts how the flurry of interest in vampires which followed the Arnod Paole story led to a European 'craze for vampire scholarship' in disciplines including medicine and antiquarianism.[16] Towards the end of the century, interest in vampires declined, only to be revived in the nineteenth century in the work of antiquarians like John Herman Merivale.[17] This scholarship in turn provided a resource for the Romantic poets in their depictions of the vampire.[18] Here the sources are not only inspiration, but also justification.[19] From its early days, the vampire tale was concerned with the issue of believability, the questioning of narratives. The challenge of credibility was, according to Polidori, a motivating force behind the writing of 'The Vampyre'. In a note published at the beginning of his novel *Ernestus Berchtold* (1819)*, he claimed that he initially began the story at the request of a lady who, having heard Byron's outline, 'denied the possibility of such a ground-work forming the outline of a tale which should bear the slightest appearance of probability'.[20] Using external sources was a strategy which helped an outlandish vampire to gain an 'appearance of probability'.

As the vampire began to feature in prose, the connection with scholarly writing would gradually become more intimate. This tendency is demonstrated most

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[15] These criteria include mention of the witness' education, official position, and good character.
[16] Ellis, p. 168.
[17] Ellis, p. 177.
[18] Christopher Frayling also suggests de Tournefort's *Voyage to the Levant* as a potential source for Byron. Frayling, 'Lord Byron to Count Dracula', p. 88.
[19] For instance, as discussed in the Introduction, Southey backs up his use of the vampire story in *Thalaba* with the quotation of earlier sources.
[20] John William Polidori, 'Note on *The Vampyre*', repr. in *The Vampyre and Other Tales of the Macabre,* pp. 244-45 (p. 244).

clearly in Sheridan Le Fanu's 'Carmilla' (1872), where language of enlightened modern authority is employed to help delineate the archaic and irrational. Legitimate (educated or official) knowledge and folklore begin to overlap in stories of the undead, with a nod to science serving to make superstitious claims more palatable – as was the case in the description of Peter Plogojevich's 'execution':

> Thanks be to God, we are by no means credulous. We avow that all the light which physics can throw on this fact discovers none of the causes of it. Nevertheless, we cannot refuse to believe that to be true which is juridically attested, and by persons of probity.[21]

In the vampire story, official language and an appeal to science are not only employed to add plausibility – the juridical attestation of truth – but also to sanctify violence.

A 'discipline' of vampire study began to develop within fiction, mirroring increased reader familiarity with the myth. Characters and in-text documents offer information on vampires – how to spot them, how to destroy them. As in Foucault's description of the development of disciplines, vampire scholarship begins a process of 'limiting its domain, of defining what it is talking about, of giving it the status of an object' – the subject (here the vampire) consequently becomes 'manifest, nameable, and describable.'[22] As Foucault writes, different 'discursive formations' will make

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[21] Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens, 'Letter 137', *Jewish Letters* (1738-1742), quoted in Augustin Calmet, *Dissertations Upon the Apparitions of Angels, Dæmons, and Ghosts, and Concerning the Vampires of Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia* (repr. as *The Phantom World,* ed. by Henry Christmas, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1850)). Extract reprinted as 'They Opened the Graves' in *Dracula's Guest*, ed. by Michael Sims (London: Bloomsbury, 2010; repr. 2011), pp. 23-24 (p. 24).

[22] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language,* trans. by A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p. 41, in *Social Theory* [accessed 15 February 2017].

different use of writing and transcription techniques.[23] The literary vampire takes

shape as an object of study, shaped by the developing vampire discipline. Originating

in folklore but developing within fictional universes into an alien science, the vampire

discipline illustrates the development of systems of knowledge, and the language

within which they operate. Research of 'real' vampires is an area of expertise that has

no counterpart in the reader's world – it hence exists as a hermetic or model

discipline, without 'real world' applications. Its operations as a discipline are hence

easier to isolate, to view without prejudice. Consequently, the fictional discipline

may illustrate the 'impurity' of the scientific or official languages from which it

borrows, showing them to be biased or morally compromised.

As critics like Fred Botting have observed, the apparently antithetical forces of

gothic and the Enlightenment (which both emerged in the seventeenth century) could

actually draw on a similar set of values. In Botting's view, the gothic assists in the

Enlightenment's self-definition by providing 'a reconstruction of the past as the

inverted, mirror image of the present, its darkness allows the reason and virtue of the

present a brighter reflection.'[24] Conversely, the Enlightenment enabled the creation of

monstrosity by establishing norms for monsters to violate.[25] The gothic tale might not

always espouse Enlightenment values uncritically, however. Robert F. Geary reads Le

Fanu's 'Carmilla' as critical of nineteenth-century rationalism, which is blindly

limited when dealing with the horror of the vampire.[26] The horror of 'Carmilla',

[23] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 58.
[24] Fred Botting, 'In Gothic Darkly: Heterotopia, History, Culture', in *A Companion to the Gothic,* ed. by Punter <doi. 10.1111/b.9780631206200.2001.00003.x> [accessed 29 March 2017].
[25] James P. Carson has argued that 'the taxonomic project of eighteenth-century natural history by its very success created the potential for a new sort of monstrosity' – the violation of these new scientific laws. (James P. Carson, 'Enlightenment, Popular Culture, and Gothic Fiction', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, ed. by John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; repr. 2006), pp. 255-76 (p. 265), in *Cambridge Core* [accessed 13 December 2016]).
[26] Robert F. Geary, '"Carmilla" and the Gothic Legacy: Victorian Transformations of Supernatural Horror', in *The Blood is the Life: Vampires in Literature,* ed. by Leonard G. Heldreth and Mary Pharr (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1999), pp. 19-29 (p. 26).

however, lies at least in part in the account of Carmilla's death – an official document which Laura summarizes. Not only is this the most violent passage in the story, it is also a vivid act of depersonalization. The report reduces Carmilla to a list of physical details, noting vampiric symptoms evident in her flesh and limbs, and recording the burning of her corpse and severed head. In the record she is '[the] body' or 'the vampire', never Carmilla.

The officially-sanctioned killing of vampires may reveal a violent potential within Enlightenment itself. Patrick Brantlinger argues that Enlightenment rationality might be terrifying, pointing to the 'demonically possessed or insane scientist' (like Frankenstein) as an embodiment of Enlightenment rationality 'breaking loose from religion and tradition', and expressing fears of knowledge proving a force for evil and destruction.[27] The language of learning has an affinity with violence and with fiction that shows it in a dubious light. When employed to add plausibility to a gothic tale, scholarly language becomes a literary device. If the language associated with scientific enquiry and scholarly classification can be so easily (and effectively) employed for fiction, perhaps it is not free of artfulness, bias, or irrationality. The myth has adapted to and encroached upon anthropological attempts to classify and contain it.

This chapter concentrates on the vampire's story's relationship with such powerful, official languages, and the authorized narratives they carry and serve. The language of those in power (the educated, those belonging to the establishment) can be employed for irrational or horrifying purposes, suggesting that it is more than simply a transparent conveyance of facts. Use of the 'right' words, by the 'right' people (those with a claim to status, official position, or education) may legitimize

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[27] Patrick Brantlinger, 'Imperial Gothic', in *Teaching the Gothic,* ed. by Anna Powell and Andrew Smith (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 153-67 (p. 155).

violent action. In fiction, the violence sanctified is more sensational than digging up the dead – it is the killing of 'real' vampires. A story of vampirism seeks to first create and then destroy a vampire. The accredited narrator is also the accredited executioner. Knowledge, narrative control, and moral authority combine in the vampire story, and the successful vampire-slayer should possess all three.

Fitz-James O'Brien's 'What Was It?' (1859), subtitled 'A Mystery', begins with a confession from the narrator, Henry Escott, that he approaches his task with 'considerable diffidence.'[28] In a move that will soon become familiar in vampire fiction, and which recalls the doubts surrounding the cases of 'real' vampires like Arnod Paole, Escott anticipates that he will be doubted, but maintains that he has 'the literary courage to face unbelief' (O'Brien, p.179). Escott goes on to describe his encounter with an invisible creature which, it slowly becomes evident, is a vampire – though Escott himself never deduces this. The captured vampire is allowed to starve to death like an exotic pet, its captors remaining to the last 'entirely ignorant of what the creature habitually fed on' (p. 192). Escott knows less than the perceptive reader – from whom the question 'What Was It?' may elicit an informed response. He has written a ghost story, and considers himself 'tolerably well versed in the history of supernaturalism' (p. 181), yet cannot guess the nature of the creature which attacks him (in spite of the fact that it bites him, and cannot consume the food he provides).

The story begins with the potential for a different kind of interpretation – a tale of indeterminacy and psychological horror. Escott has been consuming opium prior to his first encounter with the vampire, making his testimony less credible. He and his friend, Doctor Hammond, usually regulate their drug taking with 'scientific accuracy', steering their talk to 'the brightest and calmest channels of thought'

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[28] Fitz-James O'Brien, 'What Was It?', in *Dracula's Guest,* ed. by Sims, pp. 177-93 (p. 179). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

(O'Brien, p. 182), in order to heighten their enjoyment. On this occasion, however, 'a strange perversity' dominates their thoughts, which move to 'dark and lonesome beds, where a continual gloom brooded' (p. 183). The following apparition might initially seem to be a hallucination – perhaps Escott has suffered a bad reaction to the opium. (The visitation is a great contrast to another supernatural visitor, the monkey which persecutes Mr Jennings in Le Fanu's 'Green Tea': this 'immaterial phantom' is a spiritual, private torment, visible only to its victim.[29] Here, in contrast, the visitation is perceptible to everyone.) Or the creature might be the effect of suggestion, a terrifying resurgence of the dark side of the world which Escott and Hammond have attempted to ignore, proof of 'the proneness of the human mind to mysticism and the almost universal love of the Terrible' (p. 183). The creature, after all, is a malicious reversal of the men's opium pleasures – invisible instead of visionary, grotesque instead of charming, wordless instead of poetic, naked and hideously embodied instead of aery and spiritual.[30] But instead of remaining ill-defined and ambiguous, the monster is solid, and can be witnessed (if not seen) by anyone. Escott begins to take 'a sort of scientific pride in the affair' (p. 189). He is assisted by doctors, rather than clergymen. Science makes the creature less dreadful – it is overpowered, dosed with chloroform, and copied in plaster cast. This prosaic ending moves the vampire story from a fantastic possibility to a matter of classification and science – though in this instance, failed classification and poor science.

Escott is irresolute despite his appeal to science to structure and buttress his narrative. He notes the signs, but cannot act on them, or conclusively finish his story. As a source, he does not measure up to the 'good Men' of the newspaper report – and

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[29] Sheridan Le Fanu, 'Green Tea', in *In a Glass Darkly,* ed. by Tracy, pp. 5-40 (p. 30).
[30] The opium pleasures have a potentially erotic element – the two men remain 'conscious of each other's presence' even in their 'most ecstatic moments'. 'Our pleasures', Escott says, 'while individual, were still twin, vibrating and moving in musical accord.' (O'Brien, p. 183).

as a vampire slayer, he is far behind the Hungarian peasants. [31] Escott's lack of textual

authority translates to an inability to directly end the creature's life. The vampire is a

danger, but Escott does not feel able to complete the task; he lacks the knowledge to

speak decisively about violence: 'who would shoulder the responsibility? Who would

undertake the execution of this horrible semblance of a human being?' (O'Brien, p.

192). Escott aims to offer his reader 'some facts […] which, in the annals of the

mysteries of physical science, are wholly unparalleled' (p. 179). But he cannot shed

any light on these facts – he has discovered that horror lurks in the world, but seems

ill equipped to comprehend or manage it. The vampire has become a matter for

science – but here the investigation peters out. The discipline has not developed

sufficiently to identify the vampire, or to sanction violence against it. Escott cannot

define the creature, so he cannot classify it properly, nor can he kill it. He is also

unable to satisfactorily finish his story. Authority founded upon knowledge of

vampires, and the ability to interrogate and weigh up first-person accounts of them, is

located outside the tale, rather than within.

Undisciplined identification of vampires – made based on unfiltered folk

knowledge, without an interposing presence of knowledge or officialdom – is the

opposite mistake to Escott's. Whilst Escott's treatment of a vampire is ineffective,

unbridled superstition proves actively dangerous. In Eliza Lynn Linton's 'The Fate of

Madame Cabanel' (1880), the story is told by entirely the wrong class of people. Here

a 'vampire' is killed by traditional methods, after the provision of apparently

incontrovertible truth. But the authority for this killing is dependent on folk

knowledge – that of Martin Briolic, the gravedigger. The story takes pains to establish

Martin's authority as ill-founded and dangerous. Eliza Lynn Linton, who was the

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[31] When he acts on instinct, he is decisive and effective, subduing the vampire when it attacks him unexpectedly. It is rational reflection which robs him of these qualities.

author of anti-women polemics like 'The Girl of the Period', had a long career in

fiction and journalism, where she employed an attitude of lofty masculine authority.[32]

Here Linton's narrator adopts a tone of ironic distance when describing the Brittany

hamlet of Pieuvrot:

> Progress had not invaded, science had not enlightened, the little hamlet
>
> of Pieuvrot, in Brittany. They were a simple, ignorant, superstitious set
>
> who lived there, and the luxuries of civilization were known to them as
>
> little as its learning. They toiled hard all the week on the ungrateful
>
> soil that yielded them but a bare subsistence in return; they went
>
> regularly to mass in the little rock-set chapel on Sundays and saints'
>
> days; believed implicitly all that monsieur le curé said to them, and
>
> many things which he did not say; and they took all the unknown, not
>
> as magnificent, but as diabolical.[33]

Monsieur Cabanel is not only the 'sole link between them and the outside world of

mind and progress', he is also '*maire, juge de paix,* and all the public functionaries

rolled into one' ('The Fate of Madame Cabanel', p. 564). He would be the obvious

candidate for the role vampire-detector and vampire-executioner – if there were any

vampire to detect.

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[32] 'We prided ourselves as a nation on our women. We thought we had the pick of creation in this fair young English girl of ours, and envied no other men their own.' (E. Lynn Linton, 'The Girl of the Period', in *The Girl of the Period and Other Social Essays*, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1888), I, pp. 1-9 (p. 2), in *Internet Archive* <https://archive.org/details/girlperiodandot01lintgoog> [accessed 13 February 2017] (first publ. *Saturday Review,* 14 March 1868, pp. 339-40)).

[33] Eliza Lynn Linton, 'The Fate of Madame Cabanel', in *The Vampire Archive,* ed. by Otto Penzler, London: Quercus, 2009), pp. 563-74 (p. 564). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

'The Fate of Madame Cabanel' is the case of a false and unauthorized vampire narrative gaining sway, with tragic consequences. The vampire-hunters may believe themselves to be playing a heroic role, but they are not.[34] Madame Cabanel, an Englishwoman living in Piuvrot, falls prey to a combination of ignorant superstition and sexual jealousy when her husband's former mistress, Adèle, brands her a vampire. Adèle is assisted in this campaign of malice by the superstitious advice of Martin Briocolic, the gravedigger. Martin has skills which he can use constructively, and which position him in harmony with the natural world – he has knowledge of 'the weather and the stars, the wild herbs that grew on the plains and the wild shy beasts that eat them' ('The Fate of Madame Cabanel', p. 565). But his boasted supernatural knowledge is not borne out by the conclusion to the story, which ends with no trace of a 'real' vampire.

It appears that folk knowledge must be passed on to the enlightened and literate for it to be properly employed.[35] Martin's tale of vampires would have been better transmitted to a scholar or folklorist, for in the villagers' hands it is exceedingly dangerous. The vampire is a warning-sign, but it does not threaten supernatural peril – instead it indicates the spread of violent irrationality, the ignorant herd instinct which turns the villagers against Madame Cabanel, and ultimately leads to her death. Apart from Adèle and Martin, the people of Pieuvrot act only from fear and self-defence, believing themselves 'executioners, not enemies; and the executioners of a more righteous law than that allowed by the national code' ('The Fate of Madame Cabanel', p. 571).

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[34] They might like to consider themselves analogous to Woislaw in 'The Mysterious Stranger'. In the narrator's gaze, they more resemble the superstitious people in the early vampire accounts, like Frombald's 'rabble'.

[35] Both *Carmilla* and 'The Mysterious Stranger' show vampires being killed by the noble or educated class, rather than servants or peasants. Folklore informs these killings, but those who slay the vampires do not belong to the peasant class. 'What Was It?' hints at science's rediscovery of the spirit world via séances, but the move has not been decisively made to help Escott and his companions.

As with *Varney,* when the uneducated act against vampires, the behaviour is condemned (perhaps with some alarm at the prospect of the lower orders mobilizing, reaching their own conclusions on a matter and acting on them.) The villagers are less malicious than fearful, adopting an alternative, supernatural law which immediately leads them away from the path of reason, into the woods where – Martin claims – fantastic creatures like the White Ladies dwell. Madame Cabanel asks her persecutors, 'Are you men or children?' ('The Fate of Cabanel', p. 571). In fact Pieuvrot is mired in cultural infancy, and Madame Cabanel becomes ensnared in the villagers' violent fairy tale, taking on the role of both innocent mother accused of drinking her child's blood, and the wicked stepmother. Bruno Bettelheim argues for a kind of imaginative version of the nineteenth-century theory of recapitulation.[36] In his argument, the individual repeats the intellectual development of humanity as a whole – moving from a period of ignorance and consequent insecurity, and a belief in gods, fairy tales, and other '"childish" projections', to 'rational explanations.'[37] Linton may be thinking in a similar fashion here – a belief in fairy tales would then suggest that the villagers have failed to evolve intellectually at a proper rate – they have not developed properly, and have failed to catch up with modernity.[38]

The motif of child death and ended bloodlines can be seen in the dying off of many of the villagers, the death of Adèle's son Adolphe, and the way in which Madame Cabanel's hopes of having a son of her own are ended with her murder. 'The Fate of Madame Cabanel' seems to ally the peasantry with illness – perhaps implying that the pre-enlightenment culture and superstition which these people

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[36] See Chapter Four.
[37] Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 51.
[38] In Linton's scheme, religion may be compatible with modernity, but only in restrained and rational form – Madame Cabanel goes to mass but is not obsessively religious, since her neighbors note that she 'did not know her missel' ('The Fate of Madame Cabanel', p. 565).

embody is constitutionally unsound, and naturally fated to die out. Health and enlightenment appear to go together.[39] The settlement, like Adolphe, is likely to die off without reaching intellectual maturity. Instead of abandoning the vampire tale, the villagers continue to make use of it, eventually to the extent of acting it out. To tell the vampire story seems invariably to become childish, to return to old, inappropriate ways of telling and seeing the world. It is perhaps for this reason that a number of vampire experts are portrayed as 'quaint', like Baron Vordenburg in 'Carmilla'.[40] Alternatively they may be removed in some way from everyday life (like the dead Dr Hesselius), or mythic in their own right (like Woislaw of 'The Mysterious Stranger', whose marvellous prosthetic hand makes him a superhuman figure).

The spread of superstition is connected with the traditionally female spheres of romantic love and childbirth – Adèle's hatred of Madame Cabanel originates in jealousy and misdirected grief over the death of her son. Earlier, her first expression of hatred towards Madame Cabanel is made via housekeeping – the flowers she uses to decorate the room for the newly-wed couple's arrival – heliotrope, scarlet poppies, belladonna, and aconite – flowers with an unspoken message of poison and death. This first gesture is, like the vampire tale, an attack which makes use of traditional knowledge – in this case, the significance of different blooms, and the poisonous properties of local plants. Placid, rational Madame Cabanel does not understand the message or see the danger – whilst Jeanette, the goose-girl, sees their significance immediately. Adèle actively seeks revenge on a woman she believes to have wronged her, and the idea of slaying a vampire is secondary – 'the woman's jealousy, the

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[39] As, in this view, do health and whiteness. Madame Cabanel is a perfectly ordinary specimen of English womanhood, but is depicted as dramatically healthier and prettier than the 'swarthy' Brittany peasants. ('The Fate of Madame Cabanel', p. 565).

[40] Sheridan Le Fanu, 'Carmilla', in *In a Glass Darkly*, ed. by Robert Tracy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 243-319 (p. 316). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

mother's anguish and the terror of superstition, had all wrought in her so that she would not have raised a finger to have lightened her victim of one of her pains, or have found her a woman like herself and no vampire after all' ('The Fate of Madame Cabanel', p. 572). After Madame Cabanel's death, Adèle deliberately holds her torch over her head, 'to show more clearly both herself in her swarthy passion and revenge and the dead body of her victim' (p. 572). Like the mob in *Varney,* Madame Cabanel's persecutors are ruled by superstition and emotion, ignorance and femininity.

Yet Adèle looks to an educated masculine authority – Monsieur Cabanel and the doctor – for moral judgement, perhaps clemency. Though both have previously given way to some suspicion about Madame Cabanel, neither of these men will validate Adèle's actions, and consequently her story remains 'unauthorized' by these representatives of education and official position. Martin's authority, founded upon oral tradition, is no longer sufficient. Undefended by officialdom and scholarly language, the murder of Madame Cabanel cannot be elevated to a vampire execution. Legitimizing the vampire story is, in Adèle's case, a kind of legitimizing of her life. Up to this point, she has enjoyed no official, masculine acknowledgement of her own story: her son by Monsieur Cabanel is illegitimate (and passed off as her nephew), and she is denied any position in his household other than housekeeper. The killing of the 'vampire' Madame Cabanel is an expression of her rage at being displaced by her lover's new wife, of being demoted to being the 'aunt' of her own child – the son who will not inherit his father's name or possessions. Adèle justifies her behaviour as a defence of the claims which have never before been authorized – only to find that her murder, like her son, is denied the legitimizing seal of approval of Monsieur Cabanel – father of the child, and voice of the law.

The narrative suggests that Monsieur Cabanel's responses to Adèle's frantic questioning at the end of the story re-establish correct interpretations of what has occurred, and of the universe the characters inhabit: Adèle must answer to the law, the responsibility for Adolphe's death rests with God, whose will cannot be resisted – and Adèle, who has pleaded for another reading of events, is now an object of her former lover's hate. However, Cabanel and the doctor, representatives of enlightened authority, are scarcely portrayed in a way to encourage confidence. Cabanel is selfish, 'common and unlovely' ('The Fate of Madame Cabanel', p. 564). He is initially brought to suspect his wife of poisoning him and the child, in part due to the doctor, 'a credulous and intensely suspicious man; a viewy man who made theories and then gave himself to the task of finding them true' (p. 569). (This is poor science, and makes the doctor little better than the villagers.) The vampire-hunters are stripped of their undeserved authority, silenced, and condemned – absorbed into the system of official justice. The garde champêtre who seizes Martin commands, 'To prison with the assassins; and keep their tongues from wagging' (p. 573). Yet Martin is not convinced by the alternative version of events, considering himself and his companions to be 'martyrs and public benefactors' (p. 573). Furthermore, though Madame Cabanel is innocent and well-meaning, she is also faintly reminiscent of a vampire. From Adèle's standpoint she is an interloper in the household (as vampires often are). Her drowsy enjoyment of good-health and inactivity whilst the hamlet-dwellers suffer illness also makes her appear parasitical, and dramatically out of sympathy with her neighbours' lives of toil and struggle.[41] (Unusually for a vampire story, it is a lack of drainage which causes the trouble – the hamlet's 'undrained' status may be to blame for the ill-health of its inhabitants (p. 566).) Whilst the rest of

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[41] The vampire superstition is also connected to illness in 'Carmilla' – Laura's father initially attributes the deaths amongst the peasant women to infection by superstitious fear.

the community work, Madame Cabanel enjoys a kind of waking slumber in daylight, an untimely leisure which recalls the vampire's daylight sleep.

'The Fate of Madame Cabanel' shows a failure of the enlightened, rational version of events to entirely replace the violent, uneducated reading. Martin's tale is never fully discredited (at least in his own mind), though he is imprisoned and ordered to be silent. The civilizing power of authority is limited, controlling the prisoner's body but not his mind. As the behaviour of the enlightened authorities of 'The Fate of Madame Cabanel' demonstrates, official versions of events can be compromised, biased, and fallible. Even the worldly, contemptuous verdict of the narrator is not above question. All discourses – and the narratives they carry – are simply discourses, every version of events is simply one version. Language urges violence in these accounts of flawed vampire hunts – the rational ponderings of Escott result in a passive killing, allowing the captured vampire to starve. The superstitious tale telling of Martin sows the seeds of mob violence – a more direct route to the same end. Two accounts of more 'successful' vampire hunts – the elimination of confirmed vampires by accredited authorities – will illustrate the violence that may be present in the language of authority in full operation, in narratives which seek to close down contesting points of view.

II. Caught Red-Handed: 'The Mysterious Stranger' and 'Carmilla'

'The Mysterious Stranger' (Anonymous, 1860) hinges on a diagnosis of vampirism which is borne out by the narrative. In its combination of ritualized execution, a fresh vampire corpse in its coffin, spectacular scenery, and archaic buildings, the tale is both more and less modern than earlier stories like those of Byron and Polidori. The tale brings an element of folklore into literature by depicting the slaying of the vampire as just and feasible – in 'The Vampyre', by contrast, this is never presented as a possibility. In other preceding versions of the vampire tale, like *Varney* and Planché's play, the vampire may die, but not through the direct action of any human character. Here Woislaw tells the vampire story, provides its correct interpretation, and acts with assurance to kill a vampire. 'The Mysterious Stranger' justifies its violence via the vampire story told by Woislaw. This tale authorizes and also contains the violence which must be performed: before the execution Woislaw checks that Azzo, the vampire, is in his coffin, and then closes the lid again – Franziska must drive nails through the coffin lid to impale the body, but the corpse she is wounding remains enclosed and hidden from view (except for the blood which seeps through the wood). Ritual defends Franziska from the full realization of what is happening until the affair is safely over.

A 'true model of the soldier, hardened and strengthened by war with men and elements', Woislaw owes authority to his rank and practical experience (rather than possession of a government or religious office).[42] He has met a vampire before, and has been instructed about the creatures by an old Selavonian who has travelled to Turkey, Greece, and the New World. Woislaw is granted additional authority by the possession of a miraculous prosthetic hand, an ingenious device made of gold, which

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[42] Anonymous, 'The Mysterious Stranger', in *Dracula's Guest,* ed. by Sims, pp. 196-239 (p. 220). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

grants him superhuman strength. The strength of this hand twice convinces vampires that Woislaw is one of them, with Azzo acknowledging him incorrectly as a 'blood-brother' ('The Mysterious Stranger', p. 224). In fact, Woislaw is better at spotting vampires than vampires are themselves. His behaviour throughout the story is like a doctor or proto-psychiatrist: he insists on hearing Franziska's dream in its 'most minute particulars', and has 'met with a similar case before' (p. 221). He stands above vampire and victim, possessing knowledge that they do not. Woislaw offers a kind of assistance which is not offered by either 'Christian doctors' or 'heathen prisoners' (p. 235). Instead he combines both roles, using pseudo-medical diagnosis, prayer, and familiarity with myth to subdue the vampire.

Escott possesses scholarly knowledge (he is well-versed in gothic and fantastic literature) but lacks the insight of folk wisdom. Even when attacked by a blood-drinking creature, his immediate resort is to the tools of science (chloroform, the doctor) rather than the kind of expertise displayed by Woislaw, who combines advancement (his remarkable prosthetic hand) with folk wisdom. He is of superior standing to others who know about the dangers of Klatka, and his class, as well as his knowledge, make him a trustworthy figure. [43] Franziska has lost faith in both 'learned doctors' and 'magic' but is brought to believe in Woislaw because of his association with knightly valour ('The Mysterious Stranger', pp. 225-26). He pledges his honour as a knight that his cure will work, and Franziska interprets his words as a challenge to her courage.

After her escape from the vampire, Franziska is left chastened. She had previously been drawn to Azzo, rejecting the 'humdrum, everyday life of the generality of men', prizing instead the 'new, uncommon, and peculiar', and declaring

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[43] Kumpan, the guide, warns the party not to take refuge in Castle Klatka, but they ignore him, leading to their first encounter with Azzo.

that 'pain may become a pleasure if it saves one from the shallow monotony of everyday life' ('Mysterious Stranger', p. 216). Turning from these Romantic sentiments after her ordeal, she ends by marrying her tame cousin Franz. The prospect of a Polidori-style account of female victimization has been averted by the appearance of Woislaw, whose authority over men, women, and vampires becomes an authority over the course of the story itself – dictating its resolution and its meaning. Franziska initially desires to be 'tyrannized over, and kept under a little' (p. 198) by her future husband. She is brought to accede to an alternative female role (which is restrictive in a different way), changing her headstrong character for a properly feminine 'benevolent softness' (p. 238). Marrying Franz has always been her duty, since it means fulfilling her father's 'darling wish' (p. 198). Franziska's attraction towards a different, fatal alternative to this conventional happy resolution and double wedding is overwritten.

Woislaw's narrative authority faces little challenge from either human or vampire characters, and the vampire's death is presented as unequivocally certain and positive. He is master of the story, unfolding the solution to the mystery of Azzo only after the danger is over – behaving, in fact, like a supernatural Sherlock Holmes. 'The Mysterious Stranger' is set in the early seventeenth century, a deliberate archaism which allows the anonymous author the chance to emphasize the primitive landscape of the Carpathian Mountains, to make the narrative more plausible. The story also hints at the coming of modernity, the end of the 'warlike days' (*Dracula,* p. 54) mourned by Dracula. Franz is a modern man, Azzo is an anachronism – Franziska must learn to accept the one and fear the other, to settle with Franz in a life of proto-Victorian domesticity and good works. Woislaw is halfway between the other two men – he fights the wars which allow Franz's civilizing mission, and interacts on

terms of equality with the anachronistic Azzo. He also acts as a conduit for folklore to move between the past and the present. The old stories, like that of the vampire, carry potential for violence, and should be remembered but mediated by the upper class. Nobles, like Woislaw, are best fitted for interpreting and applying the myth, and directing the violence it prompts.

Like 'The Mysterious Stranger', Sheridan Le Fanu's 'Carmilla' employs a strategy of linguistic mediation between modernity and the folk tale: here a horror story is introduced like a case study, and official language interposes between the reader and the final horror of Carmilla's killing. However, the language of the vampire hunters is rather less effective at concealing and justifying the violence it organizes. The vampire hunters may aim for the authority of Woislaw, but they do not entirely achieve it – nor do they accomplish as unequivocal a success. Unlike 'The Mysterious Stranger', *Carmilla* does not end with a marriage, a happy and dutiful daughter, and a contented father. Marion Carol Zwickel notes that the first-person narrative of 'Carmilla' makes the reader dependent on Laura for information, and as a result, 'Carmilla' is essentially a tale about telling tales.'[44] This process is not a straightforward one. William Veeder similarly points out that 'Carmilla' immediately calls attention to the 'eqivocalities of any first-person narrative' with its introductory discussion of Laura's accuracy as a narrator.[45] Like Escott and Polidori, Laura writes with reader perceptions of her believability in mind.

'Carmilla' is to a considerable extent a tale about different kinds of textual and epistemological authority. The tale is a struggle between two competing stories – the male authorities' account of Carmilla's life and nature, and Carmilla's own

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[44] Marion Carol Zwickel, 'A Narratological Reading Emphasising the Narrator/Narratee Relationships in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, and J. Sheridan le Fanu's *Carmilla*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, West Virginia University, 1995), p. 166.
[45] William Veeder, '"Carmilla": The Arts of Repression', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 22 (1980), 197-223 (p. 200).

account of herself. Laura, the narrator, is left unable to choose one version of events over another – Carmilla, in her thoughts, remains both a 'writhing fiend' and 'playful, languid, beautiful girl' ('Carmilla', p. 319). No form of language is 'pure' or disinterested in 'Carmilla', and narrative control may be used to justify acts of brutal violence. (Notably, the civilized people at Laura's schloss speak a 'Babel' (p. 245) of languages, amusing to strangers but suggesting a lack of clarity of thought and narrative.) Yet the association between linguistic elegance and probity is a false one – Carmilla's mother gains Laura's father's approval because she speaks in 'very pure French' (p. 258). The Mountebank, by contrast, speaks 'execrable French, and German not much better' (p. 268) – and what he says need not be taken seriously. Laura is not alarmed by his reference to Carmilla's 'long, thin, pointed' tooth (p. 269).

The tale begins with male interpretive authority appearing redundant, rather than powerful. As Nina Auerbach points out, the authority of Dr. Hesselius, occult expert, is marginal in this tale:

> *Carmilla* initially seems devoid of authorities; Carmilla is so emotionally direct, so indifferent to occultism, that learned translators seem superfluous. Dr. Hesslius, Le Fanu's guide to the supernatural in other tales, comes on only indirectly, in a brief prologue authenticating the 'conscientious particularity' of Laura's narrative; he plays no rescuing role.[46]

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[46] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, p. 45.

Later Carmilla challenges Laura's father to interpret her, to tell her story.[47] When she vanishes from her room one night, she claims to have no idea of what could have happened. Instead of providing a lie to conceal her guilt, she assumes the role of confused patient, inviting Laura's father to provide a diagnosis:

> Ask what you please, and I will tell you everything. But my story is
> simply one of bewilderment and darkness. I know absolutely nothing.
> Put any question you please ('Carmilla', p. 286).

Laura's father, confident in his own superior knowledge, is happy to shed light on the matter, failing to notice Carmilla's 'sly, dark glance' (p. 286). He has the wrong area of knowledge, and his 'authorized' version of Carmilla's experience is worthless. Carmilla makes a mockery of rational male interpretation by inviting its exercise, confident that Laura's father will be unable to get to the truth of her story. This is quite different to the scene of interpretation in 'The Mysterious Stranger', where Woislaw is immediately able to glean the cause of Franziska's nighttime sufferings. Notably Woislaw is physically strong, able to assist in the remedy his interpretation prompts. Laura's aging father is neither perspicacious nor physically formidable. He must call in reinforcements in order to interpret Carmilla correctly, and kill her. Just as language can sustain violent action, so violence can impose a particular narrative. Interpretative struggles between the characters prefigure physical violence; the verdict

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[47] The interpretation and story-telling are blended in the vampire reports, too – the writers not only tell what happened, but also assess the likelihood that the vampires they describe are real. Dom Calmet declares: 'My design is not to promote superstition or to furnish entertainment for the fond credulity of visionary minds, and such as blindly believe every thing that is told them, as soon they discover any thing in it that is miraculous and supernatural. In short, I write only for reasonable and unprejudiced minds, who examine into things seriously and coolly, who assent not to uncontested truths without considering them, who are capable of doubting when things are uncertain, of suspending their judgement when they doubt, and of rejecting what is evidently false.' (Calmet, pp. iii-iv).

which the General, Baron, and the other vampire-hunters pass on Carmilla is an obvious example.

A large quantity of the information Laura acquires is filtered through her father's authorization – he is the first to read letters and to hear the doctor's verdict. Carmilla, who sometimes takes a maternal attitude towards Laura, is similarly guilty of concealing crucial information. Her promises of a later explanation are not dissimilar to those Laura hears from her father. After irritably asking her not to 'plague [him] with questions', he assures her, 'You shall know all about it in a day or two' ('Carmilla', p. 291). Similarly, Carmilla promises, 'The time is very near when you shall know everything' (p. 276). She provides Laura with some of the facts but not all – she tells Laura of her first time at a ball, without explaining the nature of the 'cruel love' which seizes her on this occasion. Keeping Laura intrigued by mysterious hints, Carmilla nonetheless attempts to enforce her interpretation of events upon her friend when she obliquely describes her intention to subject her to a lingering death:

> Dearest, your little heart is wounded; think me not cruel because I obey
> the irresistible law of my strength and weakness; if your dear heart is
> wounded, my wild heart bleeds with yours. In the rapture of my
> enormous humiliation I live in your warm life, and you shall die—die,
> sweetly die—into mine. I cannot help it; as I draw near to you, you, in
> your turn, will draw near to others, and learn the rapture of that cruelty,
> which yet is love; so, for a while, seek to know no more of me and
> mine, but trust me with all your loving spirit (p. 263).

Before beginning the leisurely feeding process which will end Laura's life, Carmilla does her best to assure Laura – and herself – that her actions are both inevitable and tender, that cruelty may be loving. Her declaration slips from the present into the future tense, becoming a story which she tells them both, heightening the anticipation of her attack. This is not the first instance in which she influences Laura's interpretation of events: earlier, she attempts to guide Laura's perceptions by encouraging her to find the peasants' funeral hymn discordant. The comparison of the vampire attack to the thrill of resisting a current in running water could be extended to Carmilla's role within the story – providing the thrill of resistance to the accepted, authorized flow of the narrative. But at the same time Carmilla steers Laura in a direction of her own.

At the end of the story, the more mutable Carmilla makes a ghostly return in Laura's memory, subject, as we have seen earlier, to 'ambiguous alterations' ('Carmilla', p. 319) – a wistful alternative to the official version of events. But Laura does not receive the whole story from Carmilla, any more than she hears it from her father – indeed, her own narrative may not be entirely reliable, due to bias and repression. She herself raises the issue of the unreliability of memory, the ability of passion to erase factual recollection: 'I suspect, in all lives there are certain emotional scenes, those in which our passions have been most wildly and terribly roused, that are of all others the most vaguely and dimly remembered' (p. 264). There are absences in her account – one example being the moment in which her father reveals that she has a wound from Carmilla's attack. Laura has, apparently, not observed it before, and does not seem able to see it without the doctor's instruction (p. 289). By bringing the mark to light, the doctor and Laura's father fix her in the role of victim and patient, just as they fix Carmilla in the role of monster. Laura's obliviousness also

hints at conscious or unconscious repression and bodily alienation. Laura is the most somatically aware when she is asleep – here she experiences sensations of caresses, physical fear and pain, free from imposed restrictions and the daytime lethargy induced by Carmilla's attacks. The 'facts' of the story are conveyed most reliably in Laura's dreams. Though apparently under Carmilla's influence, the dream or vision also shows Laura quite clearly what is happening: Carmilla is both affectionate and dangerous, and Laura is in danger.

For the doctor, interpretation is also narrative – he first diagnoses, and then relates his conclusions to the patient (or in Laura's case, the patient's father). The medical history is a story which may be kept from the patient. Carmilla, meanwhile, remarks that doctors never did her any good, and keeps the secret of her own medical history for most of the story. 'Carmilla' features doctors and amateur doctors of varying competence, ranging from Laura's father to Doctor Spielsburg, who is able to diagnose Laura's symptoms as a vampire attack. Le Fanu uses the figure of the doctor, the discourse of science, to reveal more about his fictional vampire. Similarly, Carmilla makes use of a scientific narrative to justify her actions, a normal development in a young girl's life:

> But to die as lovers may – to die together, so that they may live
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> together. Girls are caterpillars while they live in the world, to be finally
>
> butterflies when the summer comes; but in the meantime there are
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> grubs and larvæ, don't you see – each with their peculiar propensities,
>
> necessities and structure. So says Monsieur Buffon, in his big book, in
>
> the next room ('Carmilla', pp. 270-71).

In 'Carmilla', science is suspect – easily tainted by bias, hijacked to bolster different narratives. The scientific narrative is compromised by the fact that it is open to the vampire's use – for Carmilla asserts her place and right to exist as a natural creature:

> 'Creator! *Nature!*' said the young lady in answer to my gentle father. 'And this disease that invades the country is natural. Nature. All things proceed from Nature – don't they? All things in the heaven, in the earth, and under the earth, act and live as Nature ordains? I think so.' (p. 270).

Carmilla combines romance with an appeal to scientific male authority – a quotation from Buffon, the famous naturalist, forestalls further argument. She is able to reinterpret educated sources to support her own actions and justify her parasitic existence. Rather than quoting scripture for her own purpose, Carmilla quotes natural history. Science is employed to justify the story Carmilla is telling Laura – and perhaps telling herself, also – a romantic seduction which will end in Laura's death. Science becomes highly questionable – Le Fanu uses it in his sensational vampire tale, Carmilla uses it to defend her supernatural existence. Science is both morally dubious and potentially artistic as a means of interpreting and constructing experience. John Langan observes this tendency in another story from *In a Glass Darkly,* 'Green Tea'. Langan argues that this tale draws on 'Victorian efforts to bring more and more things under the sway of official, institutional knowledge', but betrays 'deep anxiety' that this process of 'exploration and categorization' may reveal only a

void.[48] Langan notes that the medical framework of the tale is 'contaminated' by the ghostly.[49] 'Carmilla' implies such impurity has always existed, there is a gothic affinity between science and supernatural.

Angelica Michelis argues that the vampire story 'cannot be allocated a safe space in culture's categories, it is part of the medical discourse, psychoanalytic theory, criminal history, folklore and literature and thus threatens to dissolute any concept of discrete categories by its contaminating and invasive nature.'[50] Medical science lends itself to description of the vampire: Tamar Heller, for instance, connects vampirism in 'Carmilla' with nineteenth-century pathologization of hysteria, arguing not only that the 'language used to diagnose the female patient' echoes throughout "Carmilla",' but also that 'Carmilla is introduced through the language of diagnosis.'[51] Heller also associates the linguistic treatment of the vampire in 'Carmilla' to nineteenth-century medical writings on anorexia, menstruation, and masturbation.[52] As is the case in *Dracula,* science can be attached to an unscientific, impossible subject – the vampire. Its narrative is, then, not innately truthful, but is tainted with the possibility of gothic darkness. Frederick Burwick points out the crossover between medical case study and gothic text in the nineteenth century and argues that the two genres influenced one another. Noting the advances in psychological study during the Romantic period, Burwick observes that the 'rise of aberrational psychology' saw medical doctors becoming characters in Gothic novels – just as books of mental pathology employed literary technique and reference, drawing

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[48] John Langan, 'Conversations in a Shadowed Room: The Blank Spaces in "Green Tea"', in *Reflections in a Glass Darkly: Essays on J. Sheridan Le Fanu,* ed. by Gary William Crawford, Jim Rockhill, and Brian J. Showers (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2011), pp. 313-32 (pp. 314-15).

[49] Langan, p. 330.

[50] Angelica Michelis, '"Dirty Mamma": Horror, Vampires, and the Maternal in Late Nineteenth-Century Gothic Fiction', *Critical Survey*, 15 (2003), 5-22 (p. 17).

[51] Tamar Heller, 'The Vampire in the House: Hysteria, Female Sexuality, and Female Knowledge in Le Fanu's "Carmilla" (1872)', in *The New Nineteenth Century,* ed. by Harman and Meyer (New York: Garland, 1996), pp. 77-95 (p. 80).

[52] Heller, p. 81, p. 83.

on writers like Shakespeare.[53] He cites Le Fanu's 'Green Tea' as an example of the medical case study becoming a 'fictive genre'.[54]

Helen Stoddart describes Doctor Hesselius as a 'prototype psychoanalyst', and connects his practice with Freud's tendency towards making his case studies into creative works, blurring again the distinction between medicine and literature.[55] She also identifies psychoanalysis as a potentially gothic discipline, allowing transmission of hysteria as Hesselius interprets and retells his patients' stories in *In a Glass Darkly*:

> The patient/layman projects his narrative of events onto the specialist's knowledge and as the specialist reads and rewrites the narrative, a new account of the patient's meaning is projected back, so that, in the end, the boundaries between the two become hopelessly blurred.[56]

Furthermore, Hesselius' scientific expertise is used to produce a gothic effect, and the excuse that the reader will not understand learned medical discussions is used to conspicuously omit various details: 'the privacy of what will become the familiar Gothic element of the 'unspeakable' has safely been shifted into the domain of medical expertise under the Prologue's protective premise that, in effect, we should not have understood it anyway.'[57] Stoddart argues that 'Green Tea', which features such excuses from Hesselius, is 'a fictional precursor to the self-preserving yet

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[53] Frederick Burwick, 'Romantic Supernaturalism: The Case Study as Gothic Tale', *The Wordsworth Circle*, 34 (2003), 73-81 (p. 73).

[54] Burwick, p. 75.

[55] Helen Stoddart, '"The Precautions of Nervous People Are Infectious": Sheridan le Fanu's Symptomatic Gothic', *Modern Language Review,* 86 (1991), 19-34 (p. 20). Robert J. C. Young takes the literariness of psychoanalysis still further, reading *The Interpretation of Dreams* as a gothic novel – a fictional case study in the vein of 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde'. See Robert J. C. Young, 'Freud's Secret: *The Interpretation of Dreams* was a Gothic novel', in *Sigmund's Freud's The Interpretation of Dreams: New Interdisciplinary Essays*, ed. by Laura Marcus (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 206-31.

[56] Stoddart, p. 20.

[57] Stoddart, p. 21.

paranoid reflexes of a not-yet-legitimate medical specialization' – emphasizing the gothic aspect of the developing psychoanalytic field.[58]

Initially, it appears that science and modernity are imperilled in 'Carmilla' – the vampire suggests that it is possible to step backwards into irrational superstition, rather than continue to advance into rational knowledge. Jarlath Killeen comments that the mere expert-verified existence of the vampire is problematic enough: 'If the vampire really exists, is modernity safe from revenants?'[59] As Robert F. Geary notes, the discovery that vampirism is real reverses the distinction between reason and superstition. To avoid destruction requires 'the acceptance of this enlarged yet humbled version of reason, one willing to admit ancient human testimony and the experience of the preternatural'.[60] Yet whilst the vampire-science connection discredits science by showing it to be fallible, gothic, artistic, bloody – as the classifications of Carmilla suggest – it also allows the official narrative to mobilize against Carmilla. General Spielsdorf, a man of scientific method, is humbled into accepting the existence of vampires – but once he has adjusted to this fact, he begins marshalling linguistic and establishment forces against Carmilla. The foreknowledge of the vampire possessed by the doctors who attend Bertha and Laura suggest that this leap is not an impossible one.

'Carmilla' shows vampire authorities relying on scholarly sources as well as first-person accounts. Laura's father and General Spielsdorf are assisted by Baron Vordenburg, who is knowledgeable in the 'marvellously authenticated tradition of Vampirism', and has 'at his fingers' ends all the great and little works upon the subject' ('Carmilla', p. 316). The Baron has the additional advantage of having first-

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[58] Stoddart, p. 21.

[59] Jarlath Killeen, 'In the Name of the Mother: Perverse Maternity in "Carmilla"', in *Reflections in a Glass Darkly,* ed. by Crawford, Rockhill, and Showers, pp. 363-84 (p. 384).

[60] Geary, p. 27.

person accounts of vampirism to peruse. He is the descendent of Carmilla's lover, who was responsible for concealing her body, and who left behind him a confession along with 'tracings and notes' (p. 319) for recovering the hidden corpse. The vampire-hunters of 'Carmilla' also enlist medical and ecclesiastic assistance in their task, and it takes a combination of scholarly expertise and first-person accounts (written and spoken) before Carmilla can be classified and executed. Carmilla is identified with the help of historical lore contained in the 'dirty little book' (p. 313) belonging to the Baron. Amy Leal views the vampire works in 'Carmilla' as 'spoofing the Gothic convention to document and gloss', and argues that the 'folkloric power of undead females and their unholy alliance to the moon gives way to enlightenment thought and scientific reasoning.'[61] I would suggest that just as glossing and documenting are characteristically Gothic activities, so the documentation of 'Carmilla' – lore, legitimate testimony, and legal documentation – is itself gothic, 'dirty' in the vengeance it justifies and the violence it permits. Just as in the vampire diagnoses of 'The Fate of Madame Cabanel', bloodshed and vengeance are inherent in the vampire narrative – all that changes is who is telling the story.

Patricia Coughlan points out that Le Fanu frequently thematizes the shift in discourse which takes place in his ghost stories, with narrators relating geographically and temporally distant material to a 'rational and modern' reader.[62] Here the process is complicated by the fact that the forces that ought to be the most 'rational and modern' behave in a brutal fashion, producing a narrative which is an abrupt shift in discourse from Laura's evocative, emotional style. Nina Auerbach observes how the

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[61] Amy Leal, 'Unnameable Desires in Le Fanu's Carmilla', *Names,* 55 (2007), 37-52 (p. 49).
[62] Patricia Coughlan, 'Doubles, Shadows, Sedan-Chairs, and the Past: The "Ghost Stories" of J. S. Le Fanu', in *Reflections in a Glass Darkly,* ed. by Crawford, Rockhill, and Showers, pp. 137-60 (pp. 140-41).

identification of Carmilla as a vampire not only imprisons her in the role of monster, it also exerts a repressive influence upon the 'unauthorized' aspects of Laura's narrative: 'Laura's point of view shrivels under this invasion of experts and official language, as does the vitality of Le Fanu's story. […] Carmilla has no monstrous life. Diagnosed as a horror, she dies as a presence […] The Carmilla experts dispatch is as characterless as the blob the General sees attacking his daughter.'[63] Kathleen Costello-Sullivan views the vampire, particularly 'Carmilla', as reflecting Victorian ambivalence to new discoveries, 'even while revelling in their accomplishments and scientific breakthroughs, [they] mourned the perceived loss of mystery and wonder that science and materialism were thought to bring.'[64] I would suggest that whilst the official version of Carmilla's death at the end of the story does literally kill the mystery of Carmilla, baldly identifying symptoms like the blood in her coffin before reducing her to a butchered corpse, the writing which records her death produces its own kind of horror and obscurity.

The personality of Carmilla – which Laura has spent several chapters discussing – is absent, though both Laura and the reader know it exists. Women have no voice in the authorized version of events. As Laura Grenfell observes, 'Laura is denied both participation and voice in the proceedings of the Imperial Commission and its judgment that the vampire is the official cause. Women have no voice in the official story.'[65] But Laura and Carmilla have already shown that they have their own voices – making their elimination conspicuous. Carmilla has been shown to be a person, if not a human being – and the account very obviously dehumanizes her. The deliberate omission of emotion and humanity from this scene has its own gothic

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[63] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, p. 46.
[64] Kathleen Costello-Sullivan, 'Introduction: Meet *Carmilla*', in *Carmilla: A Critical Edition,* ed. by Kathleen Costello-Sullivan (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2013), pp. xvii-xxvi (p. xix).
[65] Grenfell, p. 163.

effect. Official language imposes a new kind of veil over horrific events, making them more chilling. In this sense, the distance imposed by the official report is akin to Ann Radcliffe's use of veils to pique reader curiosity and suggest unnameable horrors.

Le Fanu retells the vampire story through the interposing discourse of officialdom – like the accounts of the Hungarian vampire, this story must be made acceptable by this distancing translation into educated discourse. But such writing brings its own horror with it. The official language carries stories, forms a world which allows violent suppression of any resistant stories. 'Carmilla' demonstrates the gothic of the 'official' modes of language and narrative. These discourses, the disciplines they enable, are demonstrably not infallible or pure of ideology, and carry violence with them. Significantly the evidence to convict Carmilla comes in part from a 'dirty little book'. The vampire remains the same as it figures in different discourses, is told via medical diagnosis, official report, or folk tale. The tacit question it poses is whether the current means of determining the world is the correct or final one – might the vampire, which has figured in many different documents, end up figuring in many others in the future? If knowledge is partial, flawed, and developing, if any kind of narrative must, like the diary, be somewhat 'dirty', and if different narratives and forms of knowledge can be used for the same violent purpose, then perhaps there is not a very comfortable distance between the vampire-killers of 'Carmilla' and those of 'The Fate of Madame Cabanel'.

These mid-century vampire tales doubly discredit the language of those in authority by virtue of their position or education. Not only can writing in this mode countenance bloody acts just as surely as any folk or oral narrative, it can also be employed to add vividness to depictions of fictional vampires. Its 'truth', which can be used as mere artistic effect, must surely then be subject to suspicion. Such

suspicion would be exploited vividly in *Dracula,* with its long passages devoted to the

interactions between Seward and Renfield, its very dubious official version of events.

Chapter Four

Art in the Blood: *Fin-de-siècle* Vampires, Heredity, and Tainted Art

I. 'A Decadent Race': 'John Barrington Cowles', *The Parasite,* 'Aylmer Vance and the Vampire', *Olalla, The Blood of the Vampire*

In the vampire tale, subjectivity often appears fluid, permeable, or uncertain. For instance, as Anne Stiles, Stanley Finger and John Bulevich point out, Lord Ruthven is reminiscent of a sleepwalker, reflecting Polidori's interest in somnambulism and its implications for free will.[1] More particularly, the vampire may raise questions about the subjectivity of the writer or artist – 'The Vampyre', with its ambiguous authorship, again offering an example. At the end of the nineteenth century, methods of diagnosing and detecting vampires alter in line with new ideas about heredity, degeneracy, and art. In Alexandra Warwick's words, such narratives reflect the 'problem of whether the "true self" is visible on the body', and fears of not being able to distinguish dangerous individuals (the homosexual, for instance).[2] The folkloric means of identifying vampires become infused with late-Victorian medical science.[3] The folkloric concept of the hereditary vampire reappears in an updated, scientific guise.[4] This vampire, like the degenerate, is born into their condition – like Jessica MacThane in Alice and Claude Askew's 'Aylmer Vance and the Vampire' (1914), who discovers that 'evil is in [her] blood' thanks to the long and cruel history

[1] Anne Stiles, Stanley Finger and John Bulevich, 'Somnambulism and Trance States in the Works of John William Polidori, Author of *The Vampyre*', *European Romantic Review*, 21 (2010), 789-807 (p. 790).
[2] Alexandra Warwick, 'Vampires and the Empire: Fears and Fictions of the 1890s', in *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle*, ed. by Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995; repr. 1998), pp. 202-20 (p. 208).
[3] The classifying of Dracula according to Lombroso's criminal types is a famous example. (*Dracula*, p. 336).
[4] As Doctor Phillips in Florence Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire* will show, science could mingle weirdly with superstition in its treatment of vampire heredity.

of her family, 'a decadent race'.[5] The updated hereditary vampire illustrates a challenge to the freedom of the individual will – compelled into violence by their lineage, becoming both drinker and victim of blood.

The *fin de siècle* also saw the birth of the art vampire.[6] This new subspecies is epitomized by Reginald Clarke from George Sylvester Viereck's *The House of the Vampire* (1907). An 'embezzler of the mind' (Viereck, p. 106), he feeds on creative inspiration rather than blood. Though not always as literally as Clarke, the vampire of the *fin de siècle* is frequently connected with art, providing a focus for those questions about the self which clustered around nineteenth-century creative endeavour – fears of degeneracy, of bad or alien influence, of losing the self to art, of the insecurity of the discrete and original creative mind. Art becomes a fascinating but dangerous conduit between individuals, with potential to threaten both liberty and life. At the same time, it can provide supernatural bonds of sympathy, as in Anne Crawford's 'A Mystery of the Campagna' (1886), where music creates a psychic conduit and gives warning of danger – a telepathic linking of selves which is uncanny but not unfriendly.

Art and heredity overlap in both the figure of the degenerate artist and in the artistic vampire. The former, as characterized by Nordau, is morbidly developed in body and soul, with mind, physical traits, and artistic style all displaying symptoms of an unhealthily formed organism. Like the born vampire, the degenerate artist is both a victim of heredity and a threat to others. The prey of the art vampire may also be physically predisposed via inherited qualities which, like degeneracy, have visible

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[5] Alice and Claude Askew, 'Aylmer Vance and the Vampire', in *Dracula's Guest,* ed. by Sims, pp. 424-55 (p. 431).

[6] I here consider literature in the larger context of 'the arts', as a considerable number of art-vampire works also do. *Trilby, The Picture of Dorian Gray,* and *The House of the Vampire* all consider the arts as allied or related, as well as employing ekphrasis. In *The House of the Vampire,* the sculptor Walkham's synesthesia allows him to perceive music in terms of sculpture. George Sylvester Viereck, *The House of the Vampire* (Charleston, SC: Bibliobazaar, 2008), p. 24. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

signs.[7] This connection of body and soul plays out repeatedly in depictions of art vampires. Not only is the distinction between the two interrogated, but the uniqueness of the individual body or soul is questioned. The vampire expresses fear and excitement attached to the loss or expansion of self that seemed possible at the end of the nineteenth century, and questions of body-soul connection which were now being raised by both science and art.

Dracula, as we have seen, might be considered a kind of art vampire, given his association with the decadent artist figure.[8] This chapter will examine the wider context of fears associated with vampires by blood and vampires by art – and the fearful ways in which these two overlap. The embodied author (as discussed in Chapter Two) now potentially appears as a monstrous fusion of body and spirit – inheritor and reproducer of degeneracy. As in Chapter Three, science appears to discipline art, only to become an aesthetic effect in itself – exploited, imitated or colonized by art. Heredity, especially for those who inherit vampirism, is both medical history and a horror story. Science and art converge in the device of family portraits, a gothic, artistic vision of biological inheritance. The family resemblance provides a means for the questioning of the uniqueness of one's identity. However, as some art vampire tales show, this potentially alarming identity crisis also offers an opportunity for expansion and multiplication of the self. Transposed into the realm of the artistic, the family portrait retains its gothic associations, but can suggest liberation as well as limitation.

At the beginning of 'The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter' (1893), a conversation between Holmes and Watson turns to the subject of 'atavism and

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[7] Nordau also argued that followers of the degenerate artist were hereditarily predisposed – possessing 'degenerate, hysterical, neurasthenical minds.' (Nordau, p. 31).
[8] See discussion of Maggie Kilgour's argument in the Introduction and Chapter One.

hereditary aptitudes.'[9] Holmes credits his detective gifts to a combination of

'systematic training' and his descent from the French artist Vernet, observing, 'Art in

the blood is liable to take the strangest forms.'[10] Crime in the blood will also reveal

itself – it is Holmes's explanation for Colonel Moran's crimes:

> I have a theory that the individual represents in his development the
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> whole procession of his ancestors, and that such a sudden turn to good
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> or evil stands for some strong influence which came into the line of his
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> pedigree. The person becomes, as it were, the epitome of the history of
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> his own family.[11]

As William Greenslade notes, Holmes is drawing on the contemporary scientific

theory of recapitulation, going so far as to claim the idea as his own.[12] Holmes's

words recall Dracula, who carries the entire history of his family within him – but

whilst Dracula recounts his story willingly, victims of heredity have no choice but to

live out their family history.[13]

Holmes's inheritance situates him at an intersection between art and science –

Watson observes that 'like all great artists, [he] lived for his art's sake.'[14] His skills

run perilously close to crime, and to the (sometimes feminized) skill of mesmerism.

Hilary Grimes describes Holmes as 'a kind of medium, able to communicate with

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[9] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 'The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter', in *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Short Stories* (London: John Murray, 1928; repr. 1953), pp. 477-98 (p. 478).

[10] Doyle, 'The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter', p. 478.

[11] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 'The Adventure of the Empty House', *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Short Stories*, pp. 559-82 (pp. 580-81).

[12] William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture, and the Novel, 1880-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 69.

[13] Venereal disease could also be transmitted between generations in this fashion. In Doyle's story 'The Third Generation' (1894), a young man inherits syphilis, an undeserved punishment for his grandfather's libertinism.

[14] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 'The Adventure of Black Peter', in *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Short Stories*, pp. 696-719 (p. 696).

spirits' – an intuitive, feminine role which has the potential to disrupt Watson's 'carefully constructed rational, masculine world.'[15] Stressing Holmes's logic is an attempt to avert this danger. The emphasis that Holmes's skill is the result of heredity also provides a rational explanation. And yet art is a strange thing to have in the blood – an almost decadent linking. The science of blood has been invaded by the aesthetic and uncertain. Blood also plays a double role: explaining away Holmes's apparent mysticism, accounting for criminality and helping to identify malefactors, blood also provides the 'scarlet thread of murder' running through humdrum everyday life – mingling the criminal, artistic, and outré.

The Holmes stories frequently show an interplay between (masculinized) logical science and the (feminized) forces of the artistic, romantic, irrational or grotesque – with the threat that Holmes might be baffled or engulfed by them. This contest is sometimes given human personification: in the Holmes stories and elsewhere, Doyle repeats the pattern of the ascetic man of science being humbled and imperilled by the irrational or sexual in the person of a woman (who herself possesses 'masculine' characteristics or skills). Holmes's experience with Irene Adler is the most famous example, but Doyle's interest in this plot was such that he reuses the basic conceit of 'A Scandal in Bohemia' (1891) in 'The Doctors of Hoyland' (1894). He also employed the theme in two other, more serious works: 'John Barrington Cowles' (1884) and *The Parasite* (1894). These stories both feature powerful, vampiric woman who use their occult powers to exert psychological control over sensitive male scientists. Penclosa, a psychic parasite, dominates those around her using her mesmeric talents. Northcott, another mesmerist, has a 'vampire soul', along

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[15] Hilary Grimes, *The Late Victorian Gothic: Mental Science, the Uncanny, and Scenes of Writing* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011; repr. 2012), p. 56.

with a never-revealed secret that horrifies her fiancés.[16] She represents both a

scientific impossibility, and a conundrum with no solution.[17]

Mesmerism had the ability to merge art and science, and would sometimes do

so deliberately – writers in early mesmeric and phrenological journals exploited

literary rhetoric in order to bolster their arguments.[18] 'John Barrington Cowles' and

The Parasite both feature mesmerism as a performance, blending science and

theatre.[19] Mesmerism could also confuse gender distinctions. Women were considered

good mesmeric subjects, but could also make effective mediums. Martin Willis and

Catherine Wynne write that whilst the mesmerizer was often characterized as male,

'invariably insidious and foreign', manipulating a youthful and docile female subject,

this was not always the case.[20] Helen Sword states that mediumship offered women

the opportunity for both influence and a career, while remaining outwardly feminine

and passive.[21] In *The Blood of the Vampire*, women do not even need genuine

supernatural gifts to profit – Baroness Gobelli is a very successful fraud.

In *The Parasite* and 'John Barrington Cowles', feminine and unscientific

forces threaten the scientist as well as science. Art is a weak link in the characters of

Cowles and Gilroy, a foothold for the irrational to take over. Wynne suggests that a

connection with art makes Cowles desirable – and hence vulnerable.[22] His

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[16] Arthur Conan Doyle, 'John Barrington Cowles', in Arthur Conan Doyle, *Gothic Tales,* ed. by Darryl Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 91-112 (p. 93).

[17] The female vampire whose condition prevents her marriage is a trope also found in *Olalla, The Blood of the Vampire,* and 'Aylmer Vance and the Vampire'.

[18] Ilana Kurshan, 'Mind Reading: Literature in the Discourse of Early Victorian Phrenology and Mesmerism', in *Victorian Literary Mesmerism,* ed. by Martin Willis and Catherine Wynne (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), pp. 17-37 (p. 21).

[19] Catherine Wynne writes, 'On the Victorian stage mesmerists, spiritualists and magicians revealed the permeable boundaries between science and the supernatural.' (Catherine Wynne, *Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 32).

[20] Martin Willis and Catherine Wynne, 'Introduction', in *Victorian Literary Mesmerism,* ed. by Willis and Wynne, pp. 1-16 (p. 8).

[21] Helen Sword, ''Necrobibliography: Books in the Spirit World,'' *Modern Language Quarterly*, 60 (1999), 85-113 (p. 90), quoted in Sarah Willburn, 'The Savage Magnet: Radicalization of the Occult Body in Late Victorian Fiction', *Women's Writing*, 15 (2008), 436-53 (pp. 436-37).

[22] Willburn, p. 228.

appreciation of a painting makes him into an aesthetic spectacle, attracting

Northcott's attention:

> John Barrington Cowles was standing before a picture – one, I think,
> by Noel Paton – I know that the subject was a noble and ethereal one.
> His profile was turned towards us, and never have I seen him to such
> advantage. I have said that he was a strikingly handsome man, but at
> that moment he looked absolutely magnificent. It was evident that he
> had momentarily forgotten his surroundings, and that his whole soul
> was in sympathy with the picture before him. His eyes sparkled, and a
> dusky pink shone through his clear olive cheeks. She continued to
> watch him fixedly, with a look of interest upon her face, until he came
> out of his reverie with a start, and turned abruptly round, so that his
> gaze met hers. She glanced away at once, but his eyes remained fixed
> upon her for some moments. The picture was forgotten already, and his
> soul had come down to earth once more.[23]

Whilst the magic or secretly significant portrait was a long-standing feature of the gothic, the conjunction of vampires and art in the *fin de siècle* suggests a new treatment of this old device.[24] Increasingly, looking at art means being looked at in one's turn. Unlike the private scrutiny of vampire portraits seen in earlier tales like *Carmilla* and *Varney,* here art is viewed in public. Responding to it becomes a performance that may prove dangerously self-revelatory. Producing art has similar

[23] Doyle, 'John Barrington Cowles', p. 93.
[24] Kerry Powell traces the motif of the supernatural picture back to Walpole's 1764 *The Castle of Otranto*, situating Wilde's famous example, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, against a backdrop of works employing a similar device. (Kerry Powell, 'Tom, Dick, and Dorian Gray: Magic-Picture Mania in Late Victorian Fiction, *Philological Quarterly*, 62 (1983), 147-70 (p. 148)).

dangers in *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* where both Dorian and Basil are alarmed at the prospect of the portrait being exhibited. In *The Blood of the Vampire,* Harriet Brandt reveals an affinity for violence when she admires the more bloodthirsty paintings in the Wiertz Museum.[25] Her attraction towards the paintings hints at her parents' bloodthirsty tendencies, and the 'vampirism' they have supposedly bequeathed to her. Art and blood can provide an artistic lineage – Cowles has an 'ancestor' in Velasquez, whom he resembles. Physical, artistic, and spiritual degeneration are linked in writings like Nordau's – and they find a gothic mirroring in vampire tales of this period, which often link art, blood, and spiritual corruption. Sometimes art will behave like blood in these tales – both marking heredity, and providing a means for the vampire to prey on their victim.

Art has a double quality – the picture Cowles studies is 'noble and ethereal', but contemplating it lays Cowles open to dangerous scrutiny. Northcott brings his soul 'down to earth'. This first indication of her talent for debasing her male victims illustrates that pure, passionless science (epitomised by Cowles's earlier ascetic lifestyle) is not impregnable, and that the aesthetic makes men vulnerable to psychic attack. At the same time, Cowles' unscientific tendencies can be read using scientific methods. Doyle's male psychic victims are biologically predisposed to be good subjects – racial and physiognomic science makes them legible as such.[26] Cowles was

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[25] Florence Marryat, *The Blood of the Vampire*, ed. by Greta Depledge (Brighton: Victorian Secrets, 2010; repr 2011), p. 84. Kindle edition. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

[26] This science of physiognomy had some currency in the nineteenth century – Darwin nearly lost his berth on the Beagle because of the shape of his nose. (The captain, Fitz-Roy, a keen physiognomist, believed that this feature betrayed a lack of 'energy and determination' on Darwin's part.) Charles Darwin, *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*, ed. by Nora Barlow (London: Collins, 1958), p. 72. The science took a new phase in the later decades of the 1800s, when Darwin's cousin Francis Galton began to create composite photographs. Galton's composite portraits were made up of several faces laid on top of one another so that the features blended. Hilary Grimes notes that 'Galton was convinced by the scientific necessity and importance of defining types within the human species, and believed that composite photography was the most accurate method of obtaining characteristic humans. He

born in India and has 'ardent tropical' disposition to go with his 'olive, Velasquez-like face.'[27] In *The Parasite,* Professor Gilroy gives the following description of himself:

> I may claim to be a curious example of the effect of education upon
> temperament, for by nature I am, unless I deceive myself, a highly
> psychic man. I was a nervous, sensitive boy, a dreamer, a
> somnambulist, full of impressions and intuitions. My black hair, my
> dark eyes, my thin, olive face, my tapering fingers, are all
> characteristic of my real temperament […] But my brain is soaked with
> exact knowledge. I have trained myself to deal only with fact and with
> proof. […] A departure from pure reason affects me like an evil smell
> or a musical discord. [28]

Trained out of this natural psychic tendency (or so he believes), he nonetheless characterizes 'a departure from pure reason' in aesthetic terms. Later he will blame his subjugation to Miss Penclosa to the fact that he is 'black and Celtic'.[29] Cowles's and Gilroy's racial ambiguity mirrors the alien origins of the vampire women. As Catherine Wynne states:

> It is noteworthy that Penclosa comes from the West Indies while
> Northcott's origins are unknown. Both have colonial or imperial
> affiliations, both also operate as itinerant figures that penetrate the

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maintained that composites would offer limitless possibilities for the scientific community, and for society at large.' (Grimes, p. 50).
[27] Doyle, 'John Barrington Cowles', p. 91.
[28] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 'The Parasite' ([n.p.]: Aeterna, 2010), p. 4.
[29] Doyle, 'The Parasite', p. 22.

confines of the British home and challenge the boundaries of medical

orthodox, race, and class.[30]

Racial ambiguity is combined with the possibility of gender ambiguity: Cowles has

'tender eyes' – a detail which, interestingly, makes him attractive to women.[31]

Becoming an object of Northcott's desire has the effect of feminizing Cowles further,

making him psychologically and physically vulnerable. Again, Cowles's tendency

towards 'feminine' emotion (and by extension, unscientific irrationality) is evident in

his appearance. Gilroy and Cowles combine artistic sensibility, femininity, and subtle

racial difference – which provide Northcott and Penclosa a point of vulnerability from

which to begin their confusion of the boundaries of science, gender, and nationality.[32]

Their power is to seize upon 'weaknesses' in their British male victims – a tendency

towards foreignness, femininity, emotion, art – and exploit it. The men are

'scientifically' marked out as prey for the unscientific vampire.

The vampire can also be the victim of heredity, as is the case in R. L.

Stevenson's 'Olalla' (1885). Olalla, like Jessica MacThane, possesses red hair and

exotic good looks which link her physically to a wicked ancestor. If Olalla resembles

her ancestors in her appearance, perhaps she has inherited spiritual qualities as well –

her individual will is besieged by an oppressive past. Science becomes a ghost story,

and heredity is horror for those who must live it. In Olalla's words, 'those who learn

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[30] Catherine Wynne, 'Arthur Conan Doyle's Domestic Desires: Mesmerism, Mediumship and *Femmes Fatales*', in *Victorian Literary Mesmerism,* ed. by Willis and Wynne, pp. 223-43 (p. 234).
[31] Doyle, 'John Barrington Cowles', p. 91.
[32] The vampire is connected to the mixed race individual in a number of vampire stories. Jessica McThane resembles a European ancestor, Zaida the witch. Harriet Brandt is imagined to be 'whitey-browney'. Marcello in 'A Mystery of the Campagna' is not British, but French-Italian – European, but susceptible and light-minded. This connection is perceptible at least as far back as 'The Mysterious Stranger', where Azzo is described as 'dirty white' ('The Mysterious Stranger', p. 213). Similarly, Laura observes that Carmilla's face 'darkened' ('Carmilla', p. 267) when angry. Even the slightest deviation from Anglo-Saxon stock makes these vampires and vampire victims, in a racist sense, 'dirty whites'.

much do but skim the face of knowledge; they seize the laws, they conceive the dignity of the design – the horror of the living fact fades from their memory.'[33] Art reinforces the dead's hold on the living. The features of Olalla's ancestor, repeated in her portrait, serves as a visible reminder of Olalla's evolutionary prison:

> Others, ages dead, have wooed other men with my eyes; other men have heard the pleading of the same voice that now sounds in your ears. The hands of the dead are in my bosom; they move me, they pluck me, they guide me; I am a puppet at their command; and I but reinform features and attributes that have long been laid aside from evil in the quiet of the grave ('Olalla', p. 189).

This description recalls Pater's Mona Lisa – like the painted woman, Olalla has been dead many times – but she has no control over the process, no ability to set the limits of her own selfhood.[34] Like Jessica MacThane, Olalla may be forced into vampirism – or transmitting vampirism to future generations – against her will.[35] Olalla counts both her mother and brother amongst the 'portraits in the house of [her] fathers' (p. 189). Both resemble her, and imply a dark potential future for her. The Padre reassures the narrator of *Olalla* that save for an external likeness, Olalla has 'not a hair's resemblance to what her mother was at the same age' (p. 194). But the narrator has already observed a similarity: Olla dresses 'with something of her mother's

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[33] R. L. Stevenson, 'Olalla', in *The Merry Men and Other Tales and Fables* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1905), pp. 143-200 (p. 188), in *Internet Archive* <https://archive.org/details/merrymenothertal00stev> [accessed 12 March 2017]. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

[34] 'She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave'. (Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*, in *Walter Pater: Three Major Texts,* ed. by William E. Buckler (New York: New York University Press, 1986), pp. 70-220 (p. 150)).

[35] Olalla herself is not a literal vampire. But whilst vampirism chiefly serves as a metaphor for the decline of a family's bloodline, Olalla's mother does bite the narrator, attempting to drink his blood.

coquetry, and love of positive colour' (p. 176). Olalla's mother may not literally present Olalla's future, but she does illustrate the pitfalls facing Olalla's potential offspring.[36]

The art-heredity connection in 'Olalla' was part of a wider interest for Stevenson. Julia Reid points out how in the essay 'Pastoral' (1887), he 'deployed evolutionist rhetoric to celebrate what he saw as the universal appeal of romance, suggesting that the pleasure derived from this form of narrative was rooted in humankind's primitive heritage.'[37] Stevenson not only attributes enjoyment of reading adventure to inherited memory, but also takes artistic inspiration from his own past, and the stories of the Scottish shepherd John Todd. Stevenson looks back in imagination to the streams he knew in his youth on the Scottish Pentlands. Recollecting one tiny, toy-like river, he finds himself 'condemned to linger awhile in fancy by its shores', and promises that 'if the nymph (who cannot be above a span in stature) will but inspire my pen, I would gladly carry the reader along with me.' [38] Romance and inspiration are linked with the past, offering an invigorating primitiveness – modern readers are still influenced by the blood they share with 'Probably Arboreal' ('Pastoral', p. 104), their common simian ancestor. Stevenson posits that a story's reception 'lies not alone in the skill of him that writes, but as much, perhaps, in the inherited experience of him who reads; and when I hear with a particular thrill of things that I have never done or seen, it is one of that innumerable army of my ancestors rejoicing in past deeds' (p. 102). However he immediately

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[36] Olalla and Harriet exist under the shadow of blood-drinker and 'dutiful child' Bertha Mason, who according to Rochester emulates her parents' intemperance and insanity. (Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (London: Everyman, 1991), p. 69).

[37] Julia Reid, 'Stevenson, Romance, and Evolutionary Psychology', in *Robert Louis Stevenson, Writer of Boundaries,* ed. by Richard Ambrosini and Richard Dury (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), pp. 215-27 (p. 218).

[38] R. L. Stevenson, 'Pastoral', in *Memories & Portraits* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1906), pp. 90-105 (p. 93) in *Internet Archive* <https://archive.org/details/memoriesandportr030751mbp> [accessed 12 March 2017]. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

questions his own conclusion, deciding that he probably owes his interest in shepherding to 'the art and interest of John Todd' (p. 104). Here the success of the tale lies more in the art of the teller than the blood of the hearer.

'Olalla' also deals with a return to a more 'primitive' location and people. The narrator anticipates 'strange experiences' at the residencia – his doctor warns him not to 'romance', promising him instead 'a very grovelling and commonplace reality' ('Olalla', p. 146). In spite of this warning, the narrator hopes for a reinvigorating encounter with the primitive. David Melville considers him vampiric: he is preoccupied with renewing his blood, and delights as Olalla's life enters into his as their relationship develops.[39] The narrator assesses three artistic endeavours in 'Olalla'. The first is Felipe's music, which is simple and immature (Felipe sings falsetto). Pleasing, like birdsong, the song contains little deeper significance. Olalla's artistic endeavour, however, is 'rough but feeling'. Ed Block Jr. draws on Stevenson's friendship with psychologist James Sully, who argued for an evolutionary view of psychology.[40] Block notes that Sully viewed primitive thought as surviving in poetic imagination, with its tendency to personification of nature.[41] Proximity to Olalla, he argues, inspires a poetic, primitive change in the narrator:

> The wounded soldier has been rapt out of his civilized – and inhibited
> – attitudes by his infatuation with Olalla. His description of the
> Spanish countryside shows how, under the influence of sexual
> attraction, his perceptions experience distortions Sully had identified as

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[39] David Melville, 'Tempting the Angels "Olalla" as Gothic Vampire Narrative', *The Bottle Imp,* 12 (2012) < http://asls.arts.gla.ac.uk/SWE/TBI/TBIIssue12/Melville.html > [accessed 9 May 2014].
[40] Ed Block, Jr, 'James Sully, Evolutionist Psychology, and Late Victorian Gothic Fiction', *Victorian Studies*, 25 (1982), 443-67 (p. 444).
[41] Block Jr, p. 450. Sully argued for a theory of dual consciousness, a distinction between critical thought and sympathetic, primitive thinking which projected the self into others, dividing the border between identities. (Block Jr, p. 447).

poetic but also as basically primitive. […] Even more ominous,

however, had been the way in which the narrator marvelled at, as he

accepted, his own loss of speech when brought face to face with

Olalla.[42]

Here primitive, poetic sensations paradoxically deprive the narrator of speech. The

idea of being rapt out of oneself tallies with what R. L. Abrahamson describes as

Stevenson's view of reading as 'some sort of crossing over from the self to the

other.'[43] In 'Olalla,' this adventure appears to have gone awry – the narrator's

encounter with the primitive and romantic is a failed effort at reinvigoration.

The third piece of art that the narrator encounters is the vampire story told to

him by the muleteer. Unlike the narrator of 'Pastoral', he is unimpressed by the rustic

story he hears, dismissing it as 'a new edition, vamped up again by village ignorance

and superstition, of stories nearly as ancient as the race of man' ('Olalla', p. 198). The

vamped, 'vampire' tale is ancient but not restorative – like Olalla's family, its lifespan

has been regrettably expanded, it has become worn out and over-recycled. If Olalla

and her family are degenerate, rather than undeveloped, they cannot offer the vital

narrative food which Stevenson gets from John Todd.

Olalla's biological curse is self-diagnosed. Marryat's Harriet Brandt, on the

other hand, requires medical intervention in order to be designated vampiric. As

Warwick points out, late-Victorian social investigation had become medicalized and

professionalized, and the doctor would be called to settle any 'question of

identification.'[44] The abnormal status of both vampires and other 'deviants' like the

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[42] Block, Jr, pp. 460-61.
[43] R. L. Abrahamson, 'Living in a Book: RLS as an Engaged Reader', in *Robert Louis Stevenson, Writer of Boundaries*, 13-22 (p. 18).
[44] Warwick, p. 208.

criminal and the homosexual was now determined by the medical professional. The 'vampiric, diseased, bad woman'[45] and the biracial individual (united in the figure of Harriet) are marked out by physical stigmata. Harriet's mixed-race heritage, rather than her psychic vampirism, is what jeopardizes her marriage prospects amongst the English. Ralph Pullen flirts with her, but does not consider her as a prospective wife for fear of getting 'a piebald son and heir!' (Marryat, p. 143). Pullen not only stresses the supposed unnaturalness of racial mixing, he also makes all human reproduction bestial. In his efforts to preserve pedigree and racial purity, he has reduced his own nationality to a matter of preserving the health of a prospective litter. Pullen demonstrates how late-Victorian imperial expansion led to a new racializing of the English in an effort to control boundaries and maintain control. [46] Here, as elsewhere in the novel, the English characters' interactions with Harriet reveal unpalatable truths about themselves and their society. English society is organized upon opposition between the 'civilized' and the 'uncivilized', progress and barbarism. Consequently, the prospect of a mingling of races carries with it the possibility of social collapse.[47]

To avoid racial mixing, it is essential that medical science have the skill and authority to recognize Harriet's covert reproductive threat. Doctor Phillips is quick to identify Harriet, and to warn a Captain Pullen against a marriage:

> The girl is a quadroon, and she shows it distinctly in her long-shaped
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> eyes with their blue whites and her wide mouth and blood-red lips!

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[45] Warwick, p. 209.

[46] '[M]any middle-class English*men* in this generation became newly aware of themselves as racialized beings. The representative Englishman questioned his ability to maintain the various boundaries (economic, geographic, gender, sexual, psychological) he created.' Jennifer DeVere Brody, *Impossible Purities: Blackness, Femininity, and Victorian Culture* (London: Duke University Press, 1998), p. 131.

[47] 'The principle of opposition, between civilization and barbarism or savagery, was nothing less than the ordering principle of civilization as such. […] Fear of miscegenation can be related to the notion that without such hierarchy, civilization would, in a literal as well as technical sense, collapse.' (Robert J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire; Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995; repr. 2003), pp. 94-95).

> Also in her supple figure and apparently boneless hands and feet. Of
>
> her personal character, I have naturally had no opportunity of judging,
>
> but I can tell you by the way she eats her food, and the way in which
>
> she uses her eyes, that she has inherited her half-caste mother's greedy
>
> and sensual disposition. And in ten years' time she will in all
>
> probability have no figure at all! She will run to fat. I could tell that
>
> also at a glance! (Marryat, p. 77).

The doctor even claims knowledge of the future, anticipating Harriet's future loss of good looks. More, in spite of his initial claim, he does assert knowledge of her 'personal character'. In this, he echoes contemporary scientific thinking about the way in which blood transmitted mental as well as physical characteristics. As Octavia Davis writes, in contemporary science, blood represented not merely overt physical characteristics, but also hidden characteristics, and qualities of selfhood.[48]

Ardel Haefele-Thomas points out that Doctor Phillips's diagnosis draws upon Jamaican folklore, resulting in 'a weird miscegenation of authority'. [49] Phillips blends his own (white, male, British) authority with *obeah* to achieve his objective – the prevention of a similar blending in the realm of marriage. Moreover, as Davis observes, '[d]espite Doctor Phillips's claim that he could identify Harriet as a "quadroon" at a single glance, the novel suggests that he would never suspect the extent of Harriet's degenerate complexity if he were not privy to the history of the

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[48] 'Darwin's theory of pangenesis, the belief that all cells of the body carry "gemmules," transmitters of inheritable properties, and the popular use of blood as a metaphor for heredity, yielded the common belief that inheritable properties were carried in the blood. [...] At the same time that blood operates as a metaphor for character in eugenics, it also operates as a metaphor for what hides beneath the surface.' (Octavia Davis, 'Morbid Mothers: Gothic Heredity in Florence Marryat's *The Blood of the Vampire*', in *Horrifying Sex*, ed. by Bienstock Anolik, pp. 40-54 (p. 42)).

[49] Ardel Haefele-Thomas, *Queer Others in Victorian Gothic: Transgressing Monstrosity* (Wales: University of Wales Press, 2012), p. 98, p. 110.

Brandt family.'[50] Phillips is also deeply partial, giving advice to Harriet with the intention of benefiting his friends, and immediately sharing the details of the interview. When vampirism is equated with sexually transmitted disease, his action in spreading the rumour of Harriet's 'infection' appears grossly indiscreet.[51] Medical science is not only partial and unethical, it is also tinged with the occult and the irrational, enlisting superstitious beliefs, and rationalizing the concept of psychic vampirism. Harriet is helpless against the (perhaps mystical) force of heredity, but also defenceless against science, and the authority of a self-interested medical man to define and delimit her identity. Harriet never has a chance to decide for herself what she is. As with John Barrington Cowles, Professor Gilroy, Jessica MacThane and Olalla, her blood marks her out for a vampiric narrative.

Harriet has no family portraits aside from the unflattering sketch Doctor Phillips makes of her parents' characters. Whilst her appreciation of violent paintings does recall her bloody lineage, her affinity for music contributes to a perilous conduit between Harriet and English society. With a voice that is described as 'heavenly' (Marryat, p. 42), Harriet entrances every listener – even Elinor, who dislikes her. Unaware of who is singing, Elinor declares, 'I should like to be lulled to sleep each night by just such strains of those' (p. 42). Whilst Harriet sings, even her enemy can consider her in an erotic or maternal role – prefiguring the danger she poses for racial mixing. Harriet's musical skills cause a dilemma for those who hear her – how can lovely and spiritual music possibly originate from someone who is personally objectionable and racially other? As Sarah Willburn points out, novels like *The Blood of the Vampire* 'essentialize certain occult powers as racial attributes. […] Race is

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[50] Davis, p. 44.
[51] See Warwick, p. 210.

integral to novelistic depictions of spiritual power.'[52] Art becomes tinged with

mesmeric art and the occult when it is produced by a racial 'other' – a similar

association can be seen in the music of the Jewish Svengali in *Trilby*.

Music acts as a universal spiritual currency in *The Blood of the Vampire*. The

novel's characters are frequently working at cross-purposes – even friends and

spouses sometimes have radically different sympathies. (The self-interestedness of all

the characters – even virtuous ones, like Margaret Pullen – suggests that Harriet's

'vampiric' nature is hardly unique in English society.) Yet music has the power to

produce unity. When Harriet sings at the Baroness's house, she concludes her

performance with 'a merry little tarantella which made everyone in the room feel as if

they had been bitten by the spider from which it took its name, and wanted above all

other things to dance' (Marryat, p. 135). Music bites like a spider – or a vampire –

spreading sympathy between human beings. As long as the tarantella lasts, the

different subjectivities of Harriet's listeners are in accord.

For Harriet, aesthetic and artistic appeal are integral to the possession of a

subjectivity at all – at least in the eyes of those around her. Her beauty and

musicianship (and her money) make her human and sympathetic to her English

acquaintances. Without these gifts to offset her 'undesirable' ancestry, she would lack

even a tenuous claim to equality. This is vividly illustrated by the changing views of

Anthony Pennel, her eventual husband. Drafted in to bring an end to the unsuitable

relationship between Harriet and his cousin, Ralph Pullen, Anthony feels no

compunction about Harriet's potential sufferings, which he considers of minor

significance compared to the (white, English) Elinor Leyton's:

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[52] Willburn, p. 450.

Would the young lady have hysterics he wondered, or faint away, or

burst into a passion of tears? He laughed inwardly at the probability!

He felt very cruel over it! He had no pity for the poor quadroon, as

Doctor Phillips had called her. It was better that she should suffer than

that Elinor Leyton should have to break off her engagement (Marryat,

p. 127).

Pennell muses that Harriet's 'brazen' (p. 127) behaviour has deserved this

discomfiture – but this is an afterthought. Harriet's chief crime is being a mixed-race

woman who presumes to pursue a relationship with an Englishman. Before meeting

her Pennell imagines her as a 'specimen' (a primitive anthropological curiosity) with

'thick lips and rolling eyes' (p. 126). Harriet's ancestry, he assumes, will reveal itself

in physical unattractiveness, which in turn will make her suffering comic. After

seeing Harriet, Pennell experiences a complete reversal of opinion, and blames Ralph

for the affair. It is Ralph who points out his cousin's hypocrisy: 'much of your

sympathy and respect she would command if she were ugly and humpbacked' (p.

144).

Harriet displays a vampire-like mutability in her physical appearance (which

changes according to her environment) and in how others perceive her. Halfway

through the novel, Margaret Pullen displays 'a woman's dull appreciation of the

charms of one of her own sex' when she dismisses Harriet as '[n]ot at all pretty, but

nice-looking at times' (Marryat, p. 117). But in fact female characters have not been

slow to notice Harriet's beauty. Earlier on, Margaret herself reflects that 'Harriet

Brandt was handsome – growing handsomer indeed every day […] and that her

beauty, joined to her money, would render her a tempting morsel for the men and a

formidable rival for the women' (p. 40). The Baroness, too, perceives that Harriet is good-looking, and sure to attract masculine admiration (p. 37). Margaret Pullen's response to Harriet is the most intriguing – abroad, away from male supervision, she finds Harriet attractive. After returning to England, having been warned away from Harriet by a male medical authority, Margaret's view is reversed.

Harriet's music and aesthetic appeal combine to open an illicit conduit – a dangerous affinity between her and the respectable English. This sympathy is partially sexual – Harriet is credited (or blamed) for provoking lust in the men she encounters. In Pennell's words: 'Miss Brandt possesses the kind of beauty that appeals to the senses of animal creatures like ourselves' (Marryat, p. 138). His attraction is her fault. H. L. Malchow observes that the late nineteenth century saw a 'general anxiety about self and self-control.'[53] One area in which this fear manifested, Malchow argues, was in 'neo-Malthusian and social Darwinist racist constructions of social, cultural, and biological degeneration.'[54] Harriet's beauty makes her a challenge to masculine self-control, just as her very existence gives the lie to ideas of English selfhood preserved from any overlap with a foreign 'other'. Malchow writes that 'the late-nineteenth-century [gothic] stories frequently revolve around the preservation of one's individual identity, the conscious self, from disintegrating internal conflict […] or from alien pollution'.[55] This kind of anxiety about the preservation of selfhood 'provoked a more intense awareness of the "unnatural" in human relationships – including racial "miscegenation".'[56] Harriet's appeal extends to women as well as men – she attracts almost every major character in the novel, reaching beyond the literal fear of 'miscegenation' to present a menace to society as a whole.

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[53] H. L. Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 126
[54] Malchow, p. 126.
[55] Malchow, p. 127.
[56] Malchow, p. 127.

Closeness to Harriet is identified as a risk because of her psychic vampirism –
but she presents another risk, threatening British identity with an unacceptable
resemblance. Harriet's appeal to those around her is really less a case of the lure of
the exotic (though her male admirers consider this the case) but of like calling to like.
Ardel Haefele-Thomas points out that Harriet illustrates how the British characters are
'hypocritical and unsympathetic to marginalized people': her racist sentiments about
darker Jamaicans shows how she has internalized the prejudices of her father's
people.[57] Not only is English society racist and intolerant, it also operates on fakery
and deception. Malchow points out how *The Blood of the Vampire* 'is full of false or
secret identities, of pretension and fraud. Harriet's passing for white is only the most
dangerous instance of these.'[58] Most obvious amongst such deceivers is the Baroness
– boot merchant, social climber, German aristocrat by marriage, and fraudulent
medium. Elinor prides herself on her aristocratic birth, but is also so poor that she has
'not a sixpence to give away' (Marryat, p. 9), placing her assumption of superiority on
rather shaky foundations. Money is a preoccupation of this society. Whilst Harriet
sings to please those around her, her audience equate her performance with financial
value. Twice her admiring English listeners remark that she might make her living
with her voice (p. 42, p.135).

Harriet's experiences also bring to light the sexual hypocrisy of the English
culture into which she is inducted. The mere existence of a mixed-race individual
inevitably illustrates the venality of white British imperialists. Malchow observes that
'half-breeds were visible reminders of what came to be felt in the nineteenth century
to be a white fall from grace.'[59] It is not merely Harriet's father who has fallen from
grace in fathering a child with a woman outside his own race. Other characters are

[57] Haefele-Thomas, p. 98, p. 110.
[58] Malchow, p. 171.
[59] Malchow, p. 177.

both sexually predatory and devious – contrasted with the Baroness or Ralph Pullen,

Harriet appears naïve rather than calculating. The Baroness encourages Harriet's

affair with Ralph, despite knowing that he is engaged, because she wants to take

revenge on Elinor. Ralph courts Harriet without intending to marry her, and keeps his

engagement to Elinor a secret. He has earlier got into a 'scrape with the laundress's

girl at Aldershot' (Marryat, p. 119). He also treats women as being interchangeable,

regarding them all with 'the same languishing, tired-to-death glance' (p. 44).

Closeness to Harriet is dangerous because just as she reveals the racism and

callousness within English society, she is also too close to the other women of the

novel. Octavia Davis notes how Harriet's 'vampirism' actually reflects – in

exaggerated fashion – contemporary views of women of child-bearing age, who were

seen as being 'dependent upon [their] environment for energy.'[60] In Davis's

argument, it is only Harriet's blood which exacerbates this process.[61] The potential

unattractiveness in Harriet's future (as claimed by Doctor Phillips) also implies a

changeability which is perceivable in women's bodies generally – transformed by the

experiences of childbearing and growing older. The potential for altering with age is

common to all female characters in the novel – but Harriet can be singled out for open

hostility.

According to Hammack, *The Blood of the Vampire* draws upon 'theories of

hybridity that were inherent in the pseudo-scientific concept of imaginationism,

otherwise known as maternal impressions.'[62] A child could be marked or disfigured

by fears and fantasies of the mother experienced during pregnancy or conception –

thoughts would become flesh. If, as Hammack suggests, Margaret Pullen is punished

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[60] Davis, p. 45.
[61] Davis, p. 45, p. 51.
[62] Brenda Mann Hammack, 'Florence Marryat's Female Vampire and the Scientizing of Hybridity', *Studies in English Literature*, 48 (2008), 885-96 (p. 888).

for her attraction to Harriet by her baby's death, then motherhood must permanently weaken the boundaries of the self – there is no guarantee of the containment of unspeakable desires, even after mother and child are physically separated. Like Dorian Gray's portrait, the child bears visible traces of secret transgression, threatening the idea of a distinct self. The vampire, the mixed-race individual, the woman and the mother are all physically fluid, malleable, or uncertain, confusing self and other, internal and external.

Harriet's 'animalistic' nature also finds reflection elsewhere. As Brenda Mann Hammack points out, Marryat uses contemporary ideas about animal-human hybrids in her novel, reflecting anti-feminist arguments about women's primitive nature.[63] Harriet is also a 'half-breed', of mixed white and black ancestry, and hence has an additional hybridity – and presents a dangerous attraction for white men in the novel, as a potential mother of further mixed-race children. Hammack states that Marryat may have drawn on the French anthropologist Paul Broca, who suggested that racial 'mongrels' lacked physical and mental vigour, and had a marked tendency to crime.[64] But if Harriet is a hybrid, she is not the only one: Eleanor is a 'bear' (Marryat, p. 61), the Baroness is an 'elephant' (p. 21), Margaret Pullen's daughter is a 'lamb' (p. 80), and the men emerging from their bathing machines resemble either 'peeled shrimps' or 'bears escaped from a menagerie' (p. 26). Harriet, whose 'animal' characteristics are emphasized, performs a scapegoat function by carrying the bestial stigma for all of society – she is cast into the role of animal-human hybrid so that others may be assured of their own humanity.

Pullen blames Harriet for the attraction she exerts over him, but her music is not a siren song – in fact she is as much victim as predator in their relationship. Music

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[63] Hammack, p. 886.
[64] Hammack, p. 890.

is tied to Harriet's wider attractiveness – she is a beautiful, wealthy 'morsel' who shows up the ugliness of English attitudes to race, gender, and money. Uncertain about herself, and lacking authoritative knowledge of her own story, Harriet raises questions about the identity of the society she enters – its racial 'purity', its moral standing. The self-image of the nation is threatened by a reminder of the negative qualities it displaces onto Harriet and then rejects. Sian Macfie argues that the narrator 'colludes' with the racist and misogynistic views presented by the characters of the novel.[65] She cites Pennell as an in-text rebel whom the '"official" narrative' is unable to repress, providing 'the subtext like the voice of the novel's unconscious', and undercutting Marryat's own view.[66] Yet the narrative is not unequivocally approving of characters like Doctor Phillips and Elinor, who comes in for her own share of criticism – she is condemned for not being demonstrative enough, just as Harriet is criticized for being too demonstrative. In this society, there are many ways for a woman to fail. More, Pennell himself, though apparently an enlightened humanitarian and proto-feminist, reflects complacently that Harriet is capable of acting 'like the patient Griselda' (Marryat, p. 180) towards him. After their marriage he feels 'as though he had captured some beautiful wild creature and was taming it for his own pleasure' (p. 179). Even this 'enlightened' man still thinks of Harriet as an animal.

Heredity provides an ostensibly rational, scientific explanation for the existence of vampires. At the same time, its signs may be confused or ambiguous. Phillips's reading of Harriet is biased; Cowles's 'tropical' disposition is a case of nurture rather than nature. Whether accurate or not, heredity exerts a terrible pull,

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[65] Sian Macfie, '"They Suck Us dry": A Study of Late Nineteenth-century Projections of Vampiric Women', in *Subjectivity and Literature from the Romantics to the Present Day*, ed. by Philip Shaw and Peter Stockwell (London: Pinter, 1991), pp. 58-67 (p. 62).
[66] Macfie, p. 64

threatening the individual will and making the science narrative gothic. The innocent suffer via artistic channels – family portraits, an affinity for the artistic – which reveal a vulnerability that ultimately relates to the blood. Art can reveal secrets of the body, and has the ability to muddle distinctions by revealing affinities – between itself and science, between different races, genders, and generations.

II. Dangerous Art: 'A True Story of a Vampire', *Trilby, The Picture of Dorian*
Gray, The House of the Vampire, **'A Mystery of the Campagna'**

Art could serve as a site of danger, providing visible signs of leanings towards
vampirism and loss of self-government. It could manifest as an aspect of vampirism,
raising ambiguities about the selfhood of the vampire. Art permits an expansion and a
loss of the creative self that may be horrifying – but also empowering. Vampirism, in
this context, may be dreadful but also a potential expansion of experience. The
connection between vampirism and art – and in particular, vampirism and
aestheticism – is a perceptible trend in the *fin de siècle*. In 1897, *Punch* personified art
itself as a vampire, using a parody of Kipling's famous poem to skewer the baffling
vagaries of modern painting:

> A chap there was, and he went to stare
>
> (Even as you and I!),
>
> At *technique* and tone, and some whispy hair.
>
> What they meant he knew not, nor did he care;
>
> But all who were 'in it' *had* to go *there*-
>
> (Even as you and I).[67]

Here again art has become a public, fashionable pursuit. In this spoof the performance
of cultural appreciation is faked, because for the 'fashionable philistine',
understanding modern art is as unfeasible as winning the heart of Kipling's femme
fatale.

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[67] 'The (Art) Vampire', *Punch*, 10 July 1897, p. 2, in *19th Century UK Periodicals* [accessed 6
February 2017].

In fiction, art could become a force of physical and psychological predation, as is the case in Eric, Count Stenbock's story, 'A True Story of a Vampire' (1894). The vampire, Count Vardalek, becomes the guest of a family living in Styria – the narrator recounts how her twelve-year-old brother, Gabriel, was enthralled by Vardalek's gift for music. On hearing Vardalek play for the first time, he is immediately overcome, 'his eyes dilated and fixed, his form quivering.'[68] Vardalek (a rather reluctant vampire), responds, 'Poor Child! You have the soul of music within you.'[69] Gabriel is another congenital art victim, like Cowles and Gilroy, and though 'praeter-human, something between the animal and the divine', is vulnerable to the cosmopolitan Vardalek because of his love of music.[70] Here no literal bloodshed is necessary – Vardalek immediately appears more youthful after merely feeling Gabriel's pulse, and drains his energy further via their musical connection. Art becomes a substitute for bloodshed, acting as a spiritual drain, and bringing physical decline. Like Carmilla, Vardalek feels affection for his victim, and he agonizes over causing Gabriel's death – but this will not stop him feeding. He plays Chopin to lure the sleepwalking Gabriel to him, and music aids him in absorbing the boy's life to prolong his own. Joe Law notes that in *fin-de-siècle* fiction, piano-playing was associated with effeminacy, homosexuality, and danger, and 'musical' be a coded indicator homosexual tendencies.[71] The artist as vampire reflects contemporary fears about decadent art – in degenerationist thought, the aesthete was allied with morbidity, gender confusion, and psychological dysfunction.[72]

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[68] Eric, Count Stenbock, 'A True Story of a Vampire', in *Dracula's Guest*, ed. by Sims, pp. 312-22 (p. 319).

[69] Stenbock, p. 319.

[70] Stenbock, p. 316.

[71] Joe Law, 'The "Perniciously Homosexual Art": Music and Homoerotic Desire in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and Other *Fin-de-Siecle* Fiction', in *The Idea of Music in Victorian Fiction,* ed. by Sophie Fuller and Nicky Losseff (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 173-96 (pp. 181-83.)

[72] Greenslade, p. 217.

Artistic creation emerges in the art vampire tale as a mysterious process, potentially morbid or supernatural. Anne Crawford's 'A Mystery of the Campagna' (1886) includes the psychic transmission of a melody at the point of the composer's death. The friends Detaille and Marcello are physically separated, but share art via psychic communion. This artistic uniting of two male psyches is pitted against the sinister art and heterosexual romance offered by the vampire muse – an ancient femme fatale who serves as inspiration for Marcello's sculpture, but ends in claiming his life. As with 'John Barrington Cowles', the arrival of a woman and heterosexual desire threatens not only closeness between men, but also the male love-object's existence – and again, art makes men vulnerable: Marcello takes the vampire-haunted house in the Campagna to compose an opera in peace. He also rejects many safer prospects for aesthetic reasons, citing the possibility of their bad influence on his art – yellow paint would hinder his second Act, for instance.[73]

Art and vampirism overlap, but are not blended entirely – Detaille hears the funeral march (and later sees Marcello's phantom), but there is no implication that this phenomenon is caused by the vampire. Instead, art offers a channel for the sharing of thoughts between two artists and devoted friends. Verspertilia, the vampire muse who preys on Marcello, is inimical to art even though she exploits it: first she serves as subject for Marcello's sculpture, but later she draws him away from creativity. His friends discover that he has stopped composing under her influence. For art to be preserved, it must be kept pure from this perilous, enervating influence. Vespertilia offers an art of failure, incompletion, foreignness, and morbidity. Like Jessica and Olalla, she is red-haired and has Mediterranean origins. From Sutton's description of her luxuriant tresses, 'soft crimson lips', and 'breast of living pearl'

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[73] Anne Crawford, 'A Mystery of the Campagna', in *Dracula's Guest,* ed. by Sims, pp. 242-78 (p. 244). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

(Crawford, p. 274), she is reminiscent of a pre-Raphaelite femme fatale. Crawford connects the vampire with this Italian-influenced school of art, and the dead or dangerous women who sometimes formed its subjects.

The narrative is begun by the French Detaille, but is later taken up by the English Sutton. Both men are conscious about the national characters they believe themselves to embody. The French, in Sutton's view (and apparently in Detaille's also) are yielding, emotional, and effeminate (Crawford, p. 243, p. 265). Whilst Sutton is wearied by sitting by Detaille's bedside, Magnin, another friend, cares for him 'as tenderly as a woman' (p. 261). Sutton does participate in this community of all-male care and affection, but covertly: he puts a cushion under the sleeping Magnin's head (p. 264). Sutton attributes Marcello's erratic behaviour to his nationality: 'I said to myself that the mixture of French and Italian blood was at the bottom of it; French flimsiness and light-headedness and Italian love of cunning!' (p. 259). Non-English blood is connected with emotional and artistic susceptibility – Detaille hears Marcello's funeral march, Marcello is prey to the vampire. Sutton's approach to art is different. A writer, he takes an almost scientific attitude to his work. He notes down the melody Detaille sings in his delirium, and scandalizes the nun nursing Detaille with his apparent callousness – he comments that she could not know that for writers, 'all is grist for our mill, and that observation becomes with us a mechanical habit' (p. 254). Sutton's action could be interpreted as decadent – prioritizing art over human welfare. He, however, characterizes it as the almost scientific nature of the writer's calling, emphasizing his dispassionate stance as witness. Art, if not pursued with discipline, is a place where the horrifying or irrational – like Vespertilia – can creep in. Sutton's English blood and consequent level-headedness allows him to avoid being overmastered by art or emotion.

Art vampires and vampiric art could make the process of creation a threat to the artist's self – artistic creation and the sharing of influence are presented in an enigmatic, dangerous light. One of the most famous late nineteenth-century explorations of the troubled intersection between art and the individual is George du Maurier's bestseller *Trilby* (1894). Not a literal vampire tale, *Trilby* nonetheless shares a concern with art and influence with contemporary art-vampire narratives. Svengali has several similarities with Dracula – hypnotic power, ability to inspire both attraction and repulsion in his female subject, and association with anti-Semitic stereotype.[74] It is not clear whose music it really is that enthrals the audiences of Europe – Trilby's or Svengali's. On the first revelation of Trilby's musical gifts, Little Billee exclaims: 'Think of all she must have in her heart and brain, only to *sing* like that!'[75] Art becomes a proof of substance, of spiritual and intellectual depth – and yet Trilby is unconscious and under Svengali's control as she sings. (Svengali claims another musical 'voice' as his own earlier in the novel: 'c'est comme si c'était *mois* qui chaintais' (Du Maurier, p. 28), he says of his student Gecko's violin performance).

Jonathan J. Grossman argues that Du Maurier (a longstanding critic of aestheticism) contrasts two kinds of art in *Trilby* – the classical style, and the performative, 'contemporary aesthetic mode', represented by Svengali, whose art 'is pure performance, unrelated to any natural reality.'[76] Whilst Svengali is not a direct portrait of Wilde, *Trilby* 'helped to construct a perspective from which to condemn Wilde as artist-villain by imagining the villain-artist Svengali as a demon of influence

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[74] Nina Auerbach, for instance, connects Dracula, Svengali, and Freud, pointing out their hypnotic or quasi-hypnotic power over their female subjects. (Nina Auerbach, *Woman and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982) p. 16).
[75] George du Maurier, *Trilby* (London: Osgood, McIlvaine, 1895), p. 329. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.
[76] Jonathan H. Grossman, 'The Mythic Svengali: Anti-Aestheticism in *Trilby*', *Studies in the Novel,* 28 (1996), 525-42 (p. 527).

[…] He hypnotizes Trilby […] turning her into a zombie of pure performance.'[77] Art and hypnotism combine to threaten the selfhood, not only of Trilby, but of society more generally, since through his pupil, Svengali is able to influence a wider group – the audiences of Europe. Trilby's singing provokes an emotional outpouring which is close to madness – audiences forget decorum and shower her with riches, stripping themselves of adornments in order to gift her with 'watches and diamond studs and gold scarf-pins' (Du Maurier, p. 250). Audience response becomes a spectacle in its own right – a heartfelt performance, quite different to the pretentious appreciation of Bach shown by some musical devotees at the Mechelen Lodge concert.[78] The impossibility of the reader hearing Trilby's voice makes the reaction of her audiences crucial, since like Dorian Gray's portrait, this fictional art cannot be enjoyed directly. The listeners' response becomes part of 'experiencing' Trilby's performance – like the first audience of *Lady Windermere's Fan,* Trilby's audience are themselves subject to scrutiny.[79]

If it is employed wrongly, art in *Trilby* has a dangerous, hypnotic power, which threatens the integrity of the discrete, individual self. As Roger Luckhurst writes, Victorian suspicion of mesmerism was partly because to nineteenth-century thinking, 'any practice which appeared to surrender the will […] was tantamount to inviting non-being.'[80] Trilby's trance state is disturbing in the same way – and it throws into doubt Little Billee's first reaction to her performance. It is not in fact certain that Trilby has anything in her brain and heart whilst she sings – or if she has any self left at all. Like *The House of the Vampire, Trilby* makes the mechanics of

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[77] Grossman, p. 536.

[78] *Trilby*, p. 241. According to the narrator, when enjoying – or pretending to enjoy – Bach, those who wish to demonstrate their own superior taste can adopt a gaze of 'stony, gorgon-like intensity'.

[79] Wilde famously congratulated this audience of the St James's Theatre on the 'great success of [their] performance'. Ellmann, p. 346.

[80] Roger Luckhurst, *The Invention of Telepathy, 1870-1901* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 96.

artistic creation mysterious – particularly performance, which becomes an uneasy yoking together of the physical and the spiritual.

Whilst Trilby's body makes music in her psychic absence, elsewhere this kind of separation proves impossible. Svengali's unprepossessing physical presence and musical gifts cannot be divided, and so the artists must tolerate his obnoxious presence in their studio. Svengali's Jewishness also makes him objectionable – but even here there is ambiguity. The narrator claims that Jewish blood is beneficial to the artistic temperament – but according to the narrator, such blood should be heavily diluted. Human bloodlines are playfully likened to dog breeding and wine making; there are hereditary tendencies which go into the creation of an artist. Svengali and Little Billee have Jewish blood, Trilby has innate physical qualities that make her fitted to produce music – her mouth, for example, which is like 'the dome of the Panthéon' (Du Maurier, p. 71). *Trilby* asks the importance of the body (and blood) to the creation of art, and the question of how much of the self goes into the act of creation. Trilby creates great music though hypnotized and unaware, whilst Little Billee paints great paintings whilst depressed, and suicidal. If these two can create whilst impaired in mind or heart, how much of themselves can really be found in the work they produce? The novel does not deliver an unequivocal solution, perhaps because none is possible.

This interplay of physical and the spiritual is also demonstrated in *Trilby*'s blending of scientific theory and aesthetics. The novel not only allies beauty with character worth, it also gives this linking a scientific, evolutionary stamp of authenticity. Little Billee follows his exclamation on Trilby's heart and brain with a declaration of her beauty: 'And, O Lord! how beautiful she is – a goddess!' (Du Maurier*, p. 329). Trilby's beauty crowns and validates her unseen inner graces.

Earlier on, her appearance has already served as a barometer for her spiritual state.

After being shamed by Little Billee for modelling nude, she becomes newly

respectable, electing not to pose anymore. Her inner transformation is paralleled by an

outer one: she becomes thinner, loses her freckles, grows her hair long, and gains 'a

new soft brightness' (p. 128) to her eyes. Trilby alters to meet her English friends'

approval. Du Maurier's description of her eyes implies that she possesses an innate

responsiveness to hypnotism or outside influence: 'They were stars, just twin grey

stars – or rather planets just thrown off by some new sun, for the steady mellow light

they gave out was not entirely their own' (p. 128). Even before coming under

Svengali's sway, she has reflective potential.[81]

Art and science come especially close in their viewing of female bodies in

Trilby. Little Billee, who is the most passionately vocal in his response to women who

meet (or do not meet) his artistic standards, is gifted with a 'quick, prehensile,

aesthetic eye' (Du Maurier, p. 17). The addition of 'prehensile' to the aesthetic

suggests the monkey's prehensile tail, and hence an earlier stage of human evolution.

(Whilst the 'prehensile eye' is a striking and unusual conjunction, the 'prehensile tail'

was a commonplace phrase by the late nineteenth century.)[82] Little Billee's

'prehensile, aesthetic eye' combines the instinctive and the sophisticated, the

primitive and the refined. He has been naturally fitted to discern natural fitness in

others, gifted by heaven with an eye of truth.

Though Little Billee 'knew by the grace of Heaven what the shapes and sizes

and colours of almost every bit of man, woman, or child should be (and so seldom

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[81] Like Cowles and Gilroy, she is a good potential hypnotic subject. (Hypnotism, again, is allied with art.)

[82] The concept had even made its way into puns: 'You very often hear people speak of a story as one that "quite lays hold of you." Is that what is meant by a prehensile tail?' ('Cuttings from the "Comics"', *Blackburn Standard and Weekly Express*, 3 October 1891, p. 2, in *British Library Newspapers* [accessed 6 February 2017]).

are)' (Du Maurier, p. 17), his aesthetic disapproval is chiefly directed towards women (and himself). Human ugliness in *Trilby* combines aesthetic offence with a warning of an evolutionary dead-end. Little Billee reacts with horror to the news that his old friend Zouzou is to marry an American millionairess, 'so lamentably, so pathetically plain that it would be brutal to attempt the cheap and easy task of describing her' (pp. 333-34). Du Maurier does illustrate her, however. His picture is not as sensationally repellent as Little Billee's assessment, possibly because no human figure could encompass all the evolutionary pitfalls which Little Billee ascribes to Miss Hunks. In his view, 'the able-bodied man who marries a woman like that for anything but pity and kindness – and even then – dishonours himself, insults his ancestry, and inflicts on his descendants a wrong that nothing will ever redeem – he nips them in the bud – he blasts them for ever!' (p. 336). Looking at Miss Hunks with his artist's eye allows Little Billee to see the danger she presents for the race if she passes her physical disadvantages on to her children. (Like Doctor Phillips, he assumes the authority to look at a woman and see into her biological future.)

Women chiefly set the tone for future offspring; men are not considered in terms of being fit or unfit fathers. Little Billee dismisses himself as a 'shrimp' (Du Maurier, p. 257), and consequently an undesirable matrimonial prospect, but this does not rule out his producing healthy offspring, and he is generally accepted as good-looking.[83] There is, however, an implication that high art produces sterility. Little Billee is physically fragile and dies prematurely, and Svengali cannot even produce fictional children. When he lies to Trilby that he has a wife and three children, he also tells her that the children are probably not his own. Meanwhile Taffy, the mediocre artist, marries and has children. Though Little Billee's sensitivity to female ugliness is

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[83] Little Billee and his friends muse 'what splendid little Wynnes, or Bagots, or M'Allisters might have been ushered into a decadent world for its regeneration' (Du Maurier, p. 339) if Trilby had married one of them.

presented as extreme, his reasoning is not portrayed as incorrect. At the end of the

novel, the narrator reveals that there aren't any children from the marriage between

Zouzou and Miss Hunks, 'and *that's* a weight off one's mind!' (p. 429). Laura

Vorachek views Little Billee's impassioned reaction to Miss Hunks as 'a critique of

artificial social pressures to maintain or improve status through marriage.'[84] In

Vorachek's argument, those seeking to marry are naturally drawn to the fittest

partners – that sexual selection ought to be allowed to continue without interference in

individual choice. If they are not hampered by prudery, or concern for wealth and

status, men will select the most physically attractive – and hence most genetically

suitable – bride.[85]

Fads in female beauty – like the considerations of social class – also have an

element of artificial social imposition. Trilby is perfectly formed, but her ideal

physical appearance is not in fashion at the time the novel is set.[86] Trilby epitomizes

both healthy sexual attractiveness, and appeals to healthy art like Little Billee's – the

aesthetic and sexual are united in their appropriate evolutionary prospect. Svengali, by

contrast, offers art which is unhealthy: not only does his collaboration with Trilby

conclude with the deaths of both, but his aesthetic appreciation of Trilby carries a

taint of sickness and morbidity from the beginning – he raves over Trilby's 'beautiful

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[84] Laura Vorachek, 'Mesmerists and Other Meddlers: Social Darwinism, Degeneration, and Eugenics in *Trilby*', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 37 (2009), 197-215 (pp. 209-10).

[85] *Trilby* does acknowledge the existence of children born outside wedlock, like Trilby's mother, and illegitimacy has the potential to create odd connections between the high and low of society. Trilby is related 'on the wrong side of the blanket' (Du Maurier, p. 401) to the Duchess of Towers, who resembles her. High and low may not be so very different – but Little Billee and his friends ultimately fall back into their own class circle. For them the ultimate (if not the first) romantic destination is a wife who combines sexual attractiveness, maternal fitness, and acceptable social standing. (This is the lucky Taffy's situation at the end of the novel). The trio of artists are tinged with conventional considerations of 'respectability' too – Taffy cannot confirm that Trilby is entirely 'suitable' to marry Little Billee, whilst Little Billee himself jeopardizes his engagement by writing to inform his mother, essentially an act of self-sabotage. Trilby's art, like her aristocratic connection, has the power to confuse social distinctions – the Duchess would be glad to know La Svengali. But this confusion cannot be maintained: Trilby dies, and society's laws continue unchanged.

[86] Trilby meets both Little Billee's platonic ideal *and* the temporary fashions of Du Maurier's time. Her physical perfection is ironically undercut by this ironic implication that 1890s beauty standards just happen to coincide with a timeless ideal.

bones' (Du Maurier, p. 130). But though Svengali alone voices his admiration in terms of death and decay, this response to her skeleton is shared by the other artists:

> Also, she grew thinner, especially in the face, where the bones of her cheeks and jaw began to show themselves, and these bones were constructed on such right principles (as were those of her brow and chin and the bridge of her nose) that the improvement was astonishing, almost inexplicable (p. 126).

Trilby's beautiful skeleton shows that she has absolutely nothing to hide – not only is she beautiful without her clothes, she is beautiful without her flesh. The artistic eye can appreciate her in either state. There is a family resemblance between Svengali's predatory, morbid art and that of Little Billee. Trilby's biological fitness for a subject of art may lay her open to exploitation, from others aside from Svengali. Emma V. Miller and Simon J. James argue that by Du Maurier's reasoning, 'the preternatural perfection of Trilby's feet weds her to a particular biological destiny' – that of aesthetic object and artistic prop – a state that is not genuinely free, since her feet cannot be 'put to their proper use' and remain admired.[87] Trilby's aesthetic, evolutionary destiny appears to imprison her – Svengali's making a 'slave' (p. 357) of her is perhaps only an extreme instance.

Though the novel does not settle how much of Trilby goes into her performances, it does establish that Trilby's singing is the genuine article – able to elicit emotional and intellectual response from audiences. The truth of her voice is made clear, even after her ability to sing has disappeared:

[87] Emma V. Miller and Simon J. James, 'A Body Undressed for Text: *Trilby* in Parts', *Feminist Theory*, 17 (2016), 83-105 (p. 99)

nothing but the truth could ever be told in that 'voice of velvet,' which

rang as true when she spoke as that of any thrush or nightingale,

however rebellious it might be now (and for ever perhaps) to artificial

melodic laws and limitations and restraints. The long training it had

been subjected to had made it 'a wonder, a world's delight,' and

though she might never sing another note, her mere speech would

always be more golden than any silence, whatever she might say (p.

382).

Though Trilby's beautiful voice is a result of 'long training', it is innately truthful.

Truth and beauty are here united – and apparently exist even in the art of Svengali and

Trilby, which is tainted by sickness and exploitation. The difficulty of Trilby's art is

how to reconcile its disparate elements; body and soul seem out of harmony.

The dangers of art appreciation, and the performative, revelatory nature of

audience and critical response find another gothic treatment in *The Picture of Dorian

Gray* (1890). Dorian Gray, like Northcott, is not a literal blood drinker, but could

likewise be described as a 'vampire soul', enjoying youth and pleasure whilst

bringing disaster to his closest companions. His curiosity about experience manifests

in 'mad hungers' (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*, p. 125), and his fashioning of his own

life into a work of art is balanced by the wrecked lives of others. As Dorian

accumulates aesthetic experiences, Wilde piles up a great wealth of descriptive riches

– the 'wonderful stories' (p. 132) which accompany the jewels give way to stories of

historic crimes, which are heaped up as if they too form part of Dorian's collections.

These are succeeded by a list of the ruins Dorian has left in his wake – Basil's recital is intended as a reproach, but Dorian's crimes accumulate in a style which recalls his earlier acquisitions. Wilde makes the reading of this list, too, into an aesthetic pleasure, a balance between a profusion of names – details interspaced with intriguing silences (like the nature of Lady Gloucester's 'terrible confession' (p. 148)). For Dorian and for Wilde's reader, the aesthetic and the criminal overlap.

Words have a great power in the novel, particularly for Dorian. He marvels at their power to 'give a plastic form to formless things' (*Dorian Gray,* p. 18) – like Dracula, they move between form and formlessness, solidity and intangibility, giving shape to what was hidden. Words may also drain life away – after his confession to Dorian, Basil feels a sense of loss, musing, 'Perhaps one should never put one's worship into words' (p. 113). Epigrams and quotations circulate here as written texts do in *Dracula* – Dorian, Basil and Lord Henry are all given to quotation, Lord Henry is quoted at least a dozen times in the novel, chiefly by Dorian. (Indeed both Dorian and Basil quote Lord Henry *to* Lord Henry, creating a cycle of words.) Friends also quote and pass on literature to one another – most significantly, when Lord Henry lends Dorian a novel after Sibyl's death.

Dorian's identification with this novel's hero leads him to imitate his literary inspiration in finding further literary and historical alter egos – he is doubly inauthentic, since his idea of expanding his 'lives' via his fictional and historical kin is inspired by another's thought. Like Olalla and Trilby, Dorian's self is scattered throughout multiple images of himself. Olalla's family portraits reiterate her own bind to heredity, whilst Dorian both finds and extends himself in art, contemplating his own family portraits and wondering what qualities he has inherited – before expanding his gaze to consider his historical predecessors. The art becomes part of

Dorian's enjoyment of multiple lives.[88] Linda Dryden points out that he chooses 'the illusion of drama' over genuine feeling: 'The narrative of Sibyl and her tragic death is critical in establishing the detachment that Dorian cultivates throughout the remainder of the story.'[89]

Dorian shares this tendency to shape life after art with Sibyl's family. Whilst Sibyl's mother enjoys playing out melodramatic scenes in private life, Lord Henry comforts Dorian by urging him to think of Sibyl's suicide as 'a strange lurid fragment from some Jacobean tragedy' (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*, p. 100). Wilde implies that Mrs Vane finds a similar consolation for her daughter's loss – an inquest report records that she was 'greatly affected' (p. 121) when giving evidence. Mrs Vane may suffer whilst also taking artistic and emotional nourishment from her daughter's death. The crucial difference seems to be that Mrs Vane's art is lower in the cultural hierarchy, and less tastefully rendered. Dorian is not unique in his artistic 'feeding' on death. Wilde speculates that in all pleasures, 'cruelty has its place' (p. 124) – this may also be true for artistic pleasures amongst the rest. The merging of art and life in Sibyl's death requires a sacrifice. The lower-class connection is rejected by the educated and upper-class Dorian and Lord Henry. The women 'laughing in the pit' (p. 79) in the seedy theatre where Sibyl acts have an echo of the heartless, laughing vampire women at Dracula's castle – 'devils of the Pit' (*Dracula,* p. 75). Like the vampire women, they prompt an affirmation of the distinction between the protagonist's class and the degraded other – Lord Henry, hearing Dorian claim that

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[88] 'He used to wonder at the shallow psychology of those who conceive the Ego in man as a thing simple, permanent, reliable, and of one essence. To him, man was a being with myriad lives and myriad sensations, a complex multiform creature that bore within itself strange legacies of thought and passion, and whose very flesh was tainted with the monstrous maladies of the dead' (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*, p. 139).

[89] Linda Dryden, *The Modern Gothic and Literary Doubles: Stevenson, Wilde and Wells* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), p. 130..

Sibyl's acting makes the masses seem 'the same flesh and blood as one's self',

responds, 'Oh, I hope not!' (p. 79).

Art in the vampire stories of the *fin de siècle* is often a space where identities

merge and blur. In *Dorian Gray* and *The House of the Vampire* this identity confusion

is obvious – as Dorian sits for his portrait, for instance, he also serves as raw material

for Lord Henry's psychological experiment in influence – a hypnotic blend of art and

science:

> There is no such thing as a good influence, Mr Gray. All influence is
>
> immoral – immoral from the scientific point of view […] to influence a
>
> person is to give him one's own soul. He does not think his natural
>
> thoughts, or burn with his natural passions. His virtues are not real to
>
> him. His sins, if there are such things as sins, are borrowed. He
>
> becomes an echo of some one else's music, an actor of a part that has
>
> not been written for him (*Dorian Gray*, pp. 24-25).

Lord Henry and others are fascinated by Dorian's openness to influence, his reflective

qualities – he is not merely a Narcissus figure himself, but is a cause of narcissism in

others. Basil creates an idealized image of him and worships it.[90] Dorian is like

Dracula in his emptiness – like the vampire, he is fed and animated by others. (He is

full of Lord Henry's words and phrases, for instance, imbibing and reiterating them.)

Grossman argues that whilst *Trilby* makes art's taint of inauthenticity a

compromising quality, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* refrains from a straightforward

condemnation of influence. Grossman reads Lord Henry's warning against influence

as being undercut by the novel's argument that 'identities are always constructed by

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[90] Others also look at Dorian and see their own ideal – an aspect of themselves reflected (pp. 125-26.)

influence', including self-influence.[91] Influence need not be immoral if there is no 'originality' to be overridden. The novel also suggests the possibility of choice in influence. Noting that for a long while Dorian 'could not free himself from the influence' of the book Lord Henry lends him, the novel qualifies this statement immediately: 'Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he never sought to free himself from it' (*The Picture of Dorian Gray,* p. 123). A light-hearted parallel to Lord Henry's 'corruption' of Dorian comes when Mr Erskine playfully warns Lord Henry that if anything happens to the Duchess of Harley (whom Lord Henry has advised to repeat her past follies in order to recapture her youth), Lord Henry will be 'primarily responsible' (p. 42). This casual sketch of Dorian's fate makes it more difficult to directly link Lord Henry's words and Dorian's acts. Dorian takes joy in self-fashioning and self-multiplication, using materials drawn from literature, the past, and his own family. Like the Duchess, he chooses to heed Lord Henry's words. The idea that influence results in an irresistible compulsion into a certain course of action appears unsophisticated when linked to the Duchess's future transgressions. Erskine's reasoning is too humourously simplistic to be taken literally. Later, whilst in pursuit of evil, Dorian deliberately rejects the view of his actions being out of his control – he seeks rebellion, which requires free will.[92]

Art offers the potential for the artist, as well as the consumer, to expand into other lives. Wilde identified each of the central characters of the novel as a facet of his own personality.[93] His public author persona was not his exclusive domain, however. It could be adopted by others, who would also connect art to the idea of

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[91] Grossman, p. 536.

[92] Wilde writes that 'the passion for sin' may sometimes dominate a person to the extent that they 'lose the freedom of their will' (*The Picture of Dorian Gray,* p. 185). Free will, if it remains, only gives spice to evil deeds – but it is this latter prospect that Dorian seeks, craving Lucifer-like 'disobedience' and 'rebellion' (p. 185).

[93] Edmund White, 'Introduction', *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* pp. vi-xvi (p. vi).

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vampiric influence. Talia Schaffer views *Dracula* as Stoker's response to Wilde's trials and imprisonment.[94] Earlier, and more explicitly, Rosa Praed's 1885 vampire novel *Affinities* included such an obvert portrayal of Wilde as 'moral vampire' that Praed's publisher advised her to alter her character.[95] Wilde's author-persona was open to adaptation and reimagining by other writers – in a similar fashion to those spiritualists who sought to access posthumous works by Wilde via automatic writing. As Elana Gomel notes, 'Oscar Wilde wrote his last book twenty-four years after his death' via a medium's automatic writing.[96] In the public debate over the book's authenticity, Gomel traces a conflict between the author as 'personality', and author as mere 'discursive construct', arguing that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* 'parallels in its uncanny and violent plot the uncanny and violent metaphors that cluster around the death of the author.'[97] Artistic creation 'indicates a split between two concepts of subjectivity: the physical subject, rooted in the limited and mortal body, and the textual subject, infinitely reproducible and potentially immortal.' The vampire, of course, is also both infinitely reproducible and immortal – though less passive than the author as textual subject, who – as the case Gomel describes shows – could not physically defend their immortal 'self'.

A notable example of Wilde's literary afterlife (and the unauthorized use of his persona) is George Sylvester Viereck's *The House of the Vampire* (1907). The vampire of the novel, Reginald Clarke, is a man with his own 'art lineage', resembling 'a Roman cardinal of the days of the Borgias, who had miraculously stepped forth from the time-stained canvas and slipped into twentieth century

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[94] Schaffer, pp. 388-89.
[95] Andrew McCann, 'Rosa Praed and the Vampire-Aesthete', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 35 (2007), 175-187 (p. 176).
[96] Elana Gomel, 'Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and the (Un)Death of the Author', *Narrative*, 12 (2004), 74-92 (p. 74).
[97] Gomel, p. 75.

evening-clothes' (Viereck, p. 11). Clarke's artistic lineage also includes Oscar Wilde, who exerted a strong influence upon Viereck. Viereck was a propagandist and journalist, a literary and political 'lion-hunter' who interviewed some of the most notable men of his day.[98] His interview subjects included George Bernard Shaw, with whom he enjoyed a long, though not always harmonious, professional friendship. Shaw was one of the few who did not denounce Viereck for his loyalty to Germany throughout the First and Second World Wars (his espousal of the German cause eventually led him to a defence of Hitler). In interviews, Viereck had a tendency to pass off Shaw's views as his own, displaying the same relaxed attitude to authorial identity (and integrity) as his art-vampire Clarke. In fact, Viereck and Shaw agreed on the artificiality (or at least createdness) of the author persona.[99] Viereck wrote openly that his authorial persona was based on both Wilde and Shaw – insisting that '[it] is not really impertinence. It is either a literary pose or a defense mechanism.'[100]

Wilde had been dead for seven years by the time that *The House of the Vampire* was published. It was not Viereck's first literary reanimation of Wilde – he had published an essay in *The Critic* in 1905 entitled 'Is Oscar Wilde Living or Dead?'[101] Joseph Bristow describes the article as being 'as if Viereck were trying to will the Christ-like Wilde back to life to make the world repent for its wrongdoing.'[102] (Bristow notes that Viereck's literary resurrection attempt was not unique, citing an instance in 1908, when 'the *Los Angeles Times* devoted a full-page spread to apparent

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[98] John V. Antinori, 'Androcles and the Lion Hunter: GBS, George Sylvester Viereck, and the Politics of Personality', *Shaw*, 11 (1991), 149-68 (p. 151).
[99] 'Both men were keenly aware that they were playing to an audience. Shaw once observed that "the celebrated G.B.S. is about as real as a pantomime Ostrich. ... I have played my game with a conscience. I have never pretended that G.B.S. was real: I have over and over taken him to pieces before the audience to shew the trick of him."' (Antinori, p. 166).
[100] Antinori, p. 167
[101] George Sylvester Viereck, 'Is Oscar Wilde Living or Dead?', *Critic*, 47 (1905), p. 87, qtd. in Joseph Bristow, 'Introduction' in *Oscar Wilde and Modern Culture*, ed. by Joseph Bristow (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press), pp. 1-45 (p. 26).
[102] Bristow, p. 26.

sightings of Wilde on the West Coast' – perhaps inspired by Lord Henry's comment

in *Dorian Gray* that Basil, presumed dead, may have ended up in San Francisco.)[103]

In *The House of the Vampire,* Viereck's depiction of Clarke's dazzling intellect,

conversational prowess, and later disgrace are clearly reminiscent of Wilde's:

> The glamour of Clarke's name may have partly explained the secret of
>
> his charm, but, even in circles where literary fame is no passport, he
>
> could, if he chose, exercise an almost terrible fascination. […] Many
>
> years later, when the vultures of misfortune had swooped down upon
>
> him, and his name was no longer mentioned without a sneer, he was
>
> still remembered in New York drawing-rooms as the man who had
>
> brought to perfection the art of talking. Even to dine with him was a
>
> liberal education (Viereck, p. 12).

Though Viereck mentions a fall from grace in Clarke's future, he chooses not to show

the vampire's downfall – Clarke ends the novel in the ascendant. In fiction it was

possible for Viereck to freeze Wilde at the moment of his triumph, and preserve him

forever against his future disgrace (rather as Dorian Gray's good looks are preserved

via portrait.)

      Viereck's hijacking of Wilde is particularly apt, as *The House of the Vampire*

deals with the troubling indeterminacy of the artist and artistic imagination – and

more generally, with the permeability of the human consciousness. Viereck's Wildean

vampire, Reginald Clarke, is a celebrated writer, and arbitrator of literary taste – he is

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[103] 'Oscar Wilde Alive?', *Los Angeles Times*, 22 November 1908, quoted in Bristow, p. 26.

also an art vampire, a master-plagiarist who is gifted with the ability to steal creative gifts and inspiration, absorbing ideas and psychological gifts from those around him. Ethel, Clarke's former lover and victim, warns his new prey, Ernest, that 'thought is more real than blood' (Viereck, p. 88). Like the human body, the human mind may be influenced or exploited. Ernest does not need to write his words down for his thoughts to be drained away by the art vampire. Clarke is in a sense an automatic writer – but unlike the medium who claimed to have accessed the spirit of Oscar Wilde, his inspiration is drawn from the living, not the dead. The vampire plot allows Viereck to consider contemporary thoughts on automatic writing, authorship, and the science of self in a fresh way, stressing the potential horror of permeable boundaries of self and author. Clarke's significantly-named victim, Ernest Fielding, finds that his play has been stolen from his mind and written down by the art vampire, who then takes credit for the achievement.[104] When Fielding is eventually convinced of what has happened, Clarke attacks him again, draining him of all mind and selfhood, leaving him a 'gibbering idiot' (p. 110).

The human consciousness is not only vulnerable to Clarke's psychic threats, but also to external influence of more mundane kinds. When Fielding first visits Clarke's apartment, one of the first ideas which Clarke steals from him is, appropriately enough, a reflection upon influence: '[a] man's soul, like the chameleon, takes colour from its environment. Even comparative trifles, the number of the house in which we live, or the colour of the wallpaper of a room, may determine a destiny' (Viereck, p. 21). Whilst Clarke glories in his kinship with Shakespeare, Ernest finds in the shadow of the great poet both influence and fear. The artistic self which may expand via influence, companionship with others, is also

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[104] The play is, in Viereck's summary, a mixture of Wilde's *Salomé* and 'The Birthday of the Infanta', compounding the sense of artistic theft. (See Viereck, p. 43).

susceptible to domination – as Dorian sways Basil, so Shakespeare may exert a terrible influence on later poets. To Ernest, Shakespeare is 'the mighty master of song, whose great gaunt shadow, thrown against the background of the years has assumed immense, unproportionate, monstrous dimensions' (p. 20). The earlier artist inspires both fear and desire – Viereck, in a work saturated with Wilde's influence, divides this ambivalent feeling into two. Clarke takes and is influenced with impunity, claiming all ideas as his own. Ernest fears both influence and loss of individuality.

Clarke and Dorian are both connoisseurs of aesthetic objects who prey upon artists. Like Dorian, Clarke has a fatal allure for both male and female artists – in *Dorian Gray* it is Sibyl Vane, Basil Hallward, and Alan Campbell whose artistic talent is spoiled due to proximity to the psychic vampire. (Alan Campbell is another scientist-artist – a talented musician who abandons music after his quarrel with Dorian). These three, like Ernest Fielding, lose mastery of their art before they lose their lives. They are Dorian's three most prominent victims, and their sufferings are most explicitly portrayed, serving as marking points for Dorian's moral descent. Dangerous to all who meet him, Dorian is particularly fatal for artists.[105]

Of Dorian's three spoiled creatives, Sibyl Vane alone appears happy to have been deprived of her skill – she exults in the fact that she is no longer able to act convincingly because she has experienced the reality of romantic love. But without her skill, she no longer attracts Dorian – just as Clarke's victims are of no use to him once he has made their artistic gifts his own. Dorian's reaction to Sibyl's loss of acting ability contains disappointment at his own loss of vicarious glory. Lord Henry adopts a conventional pose when he remarks to Dorian, 'I don't suppose you will

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[105] Two, Basil and Sibyl, become subjects of art, where before they had been active creators. After his murder, Basil becomes a 'thing' (*The Picture of Dorian Gray,* p. 155), and is sketched by Dorian in a reversal of their earlier relationship (p. 159). Sibyl 'plays Juliet like a wooden doll' (p. 82), and quotes the Lady of Shalott, having grown 'sick of shadows' (p. 84) – she is now a subject of tragic art, not its producer.

want your wife to act' (*The Picture of Dorian Gray,* p. 82). Dorian's reproach to Sibyl

suggests otherwise, however: 'I would have made you famous, splendid, magnificent.

The world would have worshipped you, and you would have borne my name' (p. 85).

Dorian has not only lost his chance to show Sibyl off to his friends, he has also been

balked of the opportunity to exhibit her to the world – giving his name, like Svengali,

to a female artist. Meanwhile, her contact with Dorian turns Sibyl into a kind of

vampire in her turn – when speaking Shakespeare's words, her voice 'took away all

the life from the verse' (p. 80).

Sibyl tired of inauthenticity – Clarke never does. Nor does he regret his lack of

control over his nature. Whilst Dorian chooses to believe himself a rebellious sinner,

rather than compelled by his own nature, Clarke has made peace with being

compelled into vampirism. His only regret is that he cannot protect Ethel from his

vampiric powers. The fact that his genius is counterfeit does not trouble him –

dismissing the charge of vampirism, he claims that he is an elect soul, chosen to better

mankind by absorbing the intellect of others:

> In every age […] there are giants who attain to a greatness which by
>
> natural growth no men could ever have reached […] to accomplish
>
> their mission they need a will of iron and the wit of a hundred men.
>
> And from the iron they take the strength, and from a hundred men's
>
> brains they absorb their wisdom. Divine missionaries, they appear in
>
> all departments of life. […] In art they live, the makers of new periods,
>
> the dreamers of new styles. They make themselves the vocal sun-
>
> glasses of God. Homer and Shakespeare, Hugo and Balzac – they
>
> concentrate the dispersed rays of a thousand lesser luminaries in one

singing flame that, like a giant torch, lights up humanity's path

(Viereck, pp. 72-73).

In both novels, art illustrates the transitive nature of human subjectivity and artistic inspiration – where does it come from, what is the relationship between artist, subject, and audience? The image of the secure artist figure is entirely destabilized. Clarke simultaneously promotes the concept of artist as elect, and the notion that ideas and creations transcend the individual artist or thinker.

Art plays a significant and ambiguous role in much of the vampire literature of the late nineteenth century. A positive force in its ability to evoke and transmit emotional experiences, it can easily become dangerous, vampiric, a means to the enslavement or the dissolution of the self. Art and blood intersect in *fin-de-siècle* writing – particularly writing of the *fin-de-siècle* vampire, which becomes modern in its focus upon heredity – a new kind of blood-dependency. Vampires become vampires unwillingly, due to the corruption of their race and the taint of their blood. The newly troubled relationship between soul and body is epitomized in *fin-de-siècle* depiction of the vampire. The vampire's all-encompassing ability to express fears of both old and new, scientific and artistic, foreign and familiar, come to the fore in this period. Art and blood combine to show a fear of the endangered subject – imperilled through new discoveries in science, and new attitudes in art. The *fin-de-siècle* vampire becomes the perfect literary device for exploring the question of the self, the difficulty in determining where humanity begins and ends. Though the self-extension and self-diffusion offered by art vampirism is ambivalently portrayed, it does offer a means of dealing with, and thriving within, changing conceptions of the self, and the individual artist.

Chapter Five

Sluts and Playboys: Gothic Adaptation in the *Dracula* Films

I. 'The book which had frightened him with its visions': *Nosferatu* **(1922) and**

***Dracula* (1931)**

     Dracula found its way into cinema in the early twentieth century, adapted for

the big screen in F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (Film Arts Guild, 1922) and Tod

Browning's *Dracula* (Universal Pictures, 1931). The *Dracula* films that followed

would define themselves against their cinematic predecessors as well as the novel.

Judith Buchanan writes that from its beginnings, the film industry 'offered a product

whose viewing pleasures were partly to be found specifically in active and judicious

comparison' – comparison between cinema and lived experience, and between cinema

and other 'known cultural works and styles of artistic address.'[1] Audiences would

soon have the option of comparing a *Dracula* film not only with Stoker's novel and

its stage incarnations, but also with earlier cinematic adaptations.[2] Adaptation of

Dracula quickly became an adaptation of (or adaptation against) other cinematic

treatments of the novel, as well as the source text. Peter Hutchings notes that Terence

Fisher's *Dracula* (Hammer Studios, 1958) 'both responded to and differentiated itself

from the commercially dominant Universal approach'.[3] Fisher made a deliberate

effort to present Dracula as attractive and urbane – undercutting audience

expectations in the process. In Fisher's words, audiences 'thought they were going to

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[1] Judith Buchanan, 'Literary Adaptation in the Silent Era', in *A Companion to Literature, Film, and Adaptation,* ed. by Deborah Cartmell (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010)*,* pp. 17-32 (p. 20).

[2] Films like Browning's and Badham's would build on the 1927 stage adaptation by Hamilton Deane and John L. Balderston. See James Craig Holte, *Dracula in the Dark: The Dracula Film Adaptations* (Westport, CT: London, 1997), p. 35, p. 54, p. 78.

[3] Peter Hutchings, *Hammer and Beyond: The British Horror Film* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 115.

see fangs and everything. They didn't, of course. Instead they saw a charming and extremely good-looking man with a touch, an undercurrent, of evil or menace.'[4]

For the reader, a 'pure' encounter with *Dracula* would eventually become impossible. Alain Silver and James Ursini note that Bela Lugosi's 1931 portrayal of Dracula retroactively dominates the popular imagination, so that a reader 'may try to visualize Stoker's own version of the character […] only to have the image of Lugosi […] force its way in.'[5] Silver and Ursini credit the Hammer cycle of *Dracula* films with establishing the vampire film as a distinct genre. They point out that '[n]inety per cent of the vampire films produced to date throughout the world have been made since the Hammer *Dracula.*'[6] If Fisher's adaptation precedes ninety per cent of existing vampire films, it precedes close to one hundred per cent of *Dracula* criticism – and a significant proportion of all vampire novels in English, too.[7] The readings of *Dracula* offered by film adaptations are works of criticism in themselves; they offer rewritings of the original story to appeal to later audiences, they 'correct', reshape, and reinterpret. These rewritings serve as an index to changing tastes and terrors over the past century as they cluster around *Dracula*'s central elements of sex and death, and also provide an interposing lens through which later readers – and critics – will inevitably read the novel. However, *Dracula* is not necessarily a novel that encourages 'innocent' reading. (This is certainly not suggested by *Punch*'s review of *Dracula,* quoted in Chapter One – few of the novel's first readers would have been likely to identify themselves with the credulous 'Noodle'.) *Dracula* exploits the

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[4] John Brosnan, *The Horror People* (London, 1976), quoted in Hutchings, p. 115.
[5] Alain Silver and James Ursini, *The Vampire Film: From 'Nosferatu' to 'Bram Stoker's Dracula'* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1993), pp. 60-61.
[6] Silver and Ursini, p. 123.
[7] The Google Books ngram viewer, a search engine which tracks frequency of word usage in Google Books' various online corpora, suggests that the occurrence of 'vampire' in works published in English has more than quintupled between 1960 and 2008:
<https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=Dracula&year_start=1960&year_end=2017&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2CDracula%3B%2Cc0> [accessed 16 January 2017].

pleasures of prior or privileged knowledge, and genre familiarity – making it an excellent prospect for repeated adaptation.

Early cinema frequently turned to adaptation in an effort to escape its less-than-respectable associations with fairground and vaudeville.[8] Though *Dracula* might not offer the cultural cachet of a work from a prestigious author like Dickens, the tie to the more established medium of the novel could still mitigate the moral dubiousness of the new cinematic medium (which was to be fenced in with censorship in the Motion Picture Production Code of 1930).[9] The supernaturalism of the vampire plot could also guard against accusations of immorality. Harry M. Benshoff notes that that in the early twentieth century, 'when narrative cinema began to explore the monstrous, the gothic literature of the nineteenth century was pressed into service.'[10] Benshoff notes that monsters, particularly vampires, 'continued to be linked with homosexuality during the early years of the twentieth century.'[11] As Rhona J. Berenstein points out, film censorship led to a similar coding of sex and violence in the early part of the century, blurring the distinction between the vampire's attack and the vampire's seduction.[12]

Though the connection to Stoker's novel might provide a shield of legitimacy, the film adaptations were by no means slavishly subordinate to the earlier work. Discussing the critical treatment of film adaptations, Thomas Leitch observes that 'studies of adaptation tend to privilege literature over film', focusing on canonical authors (a standard against which the adaptation must be judged) and, by centralizing

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[8] Robert Giddings, Keith Selby, and Chris Wensley, *Screening the Novel: The Theory and Practice of Literary Dramatization* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 9.

[9] Considering Stoker's writing on censorship in 'The Censorship of Fiction' (1908) and 'The Censorship of Stage Plays' (1909) he might have approved of the Production Code.

[10] Harry M. Benshoff, *Monsters in the Closet: Homosexuality and the Horror Film* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 20.

[11] Benshoff, p. 20.

[12] Rhona J. Berenstein, *Attack of the Leading Ladies: Gender, Sexuality, and Spectatorship in Classic Horror Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 83.

the author, emphasizing 'literature as a proximate cause of adaptation that makes fidelity to the source text central to the field.'[13] The exceptions are films 'based on distinctly less respectable sources, like monster movies.'[14] Perhaps this attitude – that the horror novel is less 'respectable', and hence warrants less delicate treatment than the 'classic' – in part accounts for the freedom with which *Dracula* has been adapted. Brian McFarlane notes:

> much of the dissatisfaction which accompanies the writing about films adapted from novels tends to spring from perceptions of 'tampering' with the original narrative. Words like 'tampering' and 'interference', and even 'violation', give the whole process an air of deeply sinister molestation, perhaps springing from the viewer's thwarted expectations relating to both character and event.[15]

This gothic relationship between adapted text and adaptation rarely appears in criticism of the *Dracula* films – the 'sinister' is found elsewhere, in visions of Victorian repression. The films are repeatedly presented (and present themselves) as rescuers, in a sense that Leitch describes: 'a film adaptation can pose as a *liberation* of material the original text had to suppress or repress.'[16] This can include freedom from technical restrictions, or freedom from social censorship – these adaptations celebrate 'not so much cinema's essentially visual properties as its contemporary freedom from earlier norms of censorship and decorum'.[17] Leitch's description recalls

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[13] Leitch, p. 3.
[14] Leitch, p. 97.
[15] Brian McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996; repr. 2004), p. 12.
[16] Leitch, p. 98.
[17] Leitch, p. 98.

the 'Gothic' of *Dracula* criticism discussed by Chris Baldick and Robert Mighall, and

the 'repressive hypothesis' discussed by Robert Mighall.[18] Adapting *Dracula,* this

chapter will show, has been portrayed as a process of liberating it from a dark,

repressive Victorian era – and yet simultaneously, the adaptation process may reveal a

resemblance between modernity and the past. In this chapter, I will suggest that

Dracula continues to offer a vision of the gothic of textual relationship as literature

interacts with a new medium. Stoker's novel – with its strands of sex and violence, its

self-consciousness about writing and telling, its questioning of influence and identity,

its keen interest in developing technology and media translations, its fearful and

fascinated looking towards the past – may reveal a gothic of adaptation, and the

ambivalence, sometimes violence, with which the modern creator regards their

predecessors.

The move of the vampire into film is marked in Henry Kuttner's short story 'I,

the Vampire' (1937). Here a vampire, the Chevalier Pierre Fusain, is so enamoured by

the beauty of Hollywood actresses that he travels to Los Angeles and is cast as a

vampire in a film.[19] The Chevalier resembles Lugosi's Dracula with his 'impeccable

evening clothes', slicked-back hair, and striking eyes – like 'dark pools of ink'.[20] The

Universal *Dracula* is also referenced when it is revealed that the Chevalier is to be

given the 'kind of build-up Universal gave Karloff for *Frankenstein.*'[21] Like the

Chevalier, Lugosi was hyped as a 'real' vampire: during filming of *Dracula,* the

Hollywood Filmograph gushed: 'So horrible is this grotesque monster that everyone

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[18] See Chapter One.

[19] Arthur Lennig points out that this blurring of vampire character and actor would be replicated in real life, as Lugosi became identified with his famous role, eventually being buried in his Dracula cape. (Arthur Lennig, *The Immortal Count: The Life and Films of Bela Lugosi* (Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010), p. 13).

[20] Henry Kuttner, 'I, the Vampire', in *Weird Vampire Tales*, ed. by Robert Weinberg, Stefan R. Dziemianowicz and Martin H. Greenberg (New York: Random House, 1992), pp. 207-22 (p. 210).

[21] Kuttner, p. 208.

on the Big U lot is terrified whenever Bela Lugosi emerges from his dressing room…Child prodigies scamper into prop rooms…even hard-riding cowboys stand at the heads of their trembling steeds.'[22] The Chevalier – a vampire pretending to be an actor pretending to be a vampire – observes, 'we all serve the dark god of publicity.'[23] Kuttner's tale offers a very early example of an idea that would later be adopted by film itself – the affinity between the vampire and the cinema.[24] Mart, the narrator, has seen many washed-up actors end up in 'Poverty Row and serials', perhaps ending up 'dead in a cheap hall bedroom on Main Street, with the gas on.'[25] Film, like the vampire, can utterly consume its victims.

In Kuttner's story, cinematic technology fails to accomplish a smooth translation of the vampire – the Chevalier cannot be captured onscreen (an early instance of this convention, which is an updated version of Stoker's original plan of having Dracula impossible to capture via painting or photograph.) Furthermore, the Chevalier has no intention of actually appearing in the movie, and has merely used the production to gain proximity to his victims. Film exposes the truth of the vampire, but cannot reproduce his image. Kuttner finally restores preeminence to the page – impossible to capture on film, the vampire's story can only be told via written narrative.

The translation of the vampire to the screen had already succeeded, however, in Murnau's *Nosferatu*, though writing maintains a spectral presence. Like Murnau's earlier work, *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari* (1920)*,* the film employs a literary

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[22] *Hollywood Filmograph,* October 11 [1931(?)], quoted in David J. Skal, *Hollywood Gothic*, p. 187.
[23] Kuttner, p. 210.
[24] For instance, Stacey Abbott connects the vampire in *Nosferatu* with the technology of film. Just as 'Dracula emerges as a product of the technological union of the documents', Orlok 'is similarly an embodiment of technology, his vampirism emerging through the filmic process itself.' (Stacey Abbott, *Celluloid Vampires: Life After Death in the Modern World* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), p. 45).
[25] Kuttner, p. 209.

framing device to lead a viewing audience into a story of the supernatural.[26] Here it is the narrator, who records the events of the film in his diary.[27] *Nosferatu* also makes use of another book – *Of Vampyres, Gastlie Spirits, Bewitchments, and the Seven Deadlie Sins* – which Hutter discovers in his inn bedroom. This text provides Hutter with information about vampires (which he ignores) and later informs Nina of how to defeat the nosferatu. The book seems to have a mind of its own – at the inn Hutter laughingly throws it aside, but in Orlock's castle he discovers it in his luggage. (The 1979 Werner Herzog remake adds a scene of Harker taking the book away with him.)[28] In the castle Hutter reads the book again – this time without derision. The text has moved from the general to the particular, addressing him directly: 'Take heede that his shadow not encumber thee like an incubus with gruesome dreams'. Back at home, Hutter makes Ellen promise 'not to touch the book which had frightened him with its visions', blaming it for raising the horrific sights which beset him at Orlock's castle. The book is dreadful because it has the power to evoke visual terrors – as *Dracula* serves as inspiration for *Nosferatu*'s spectacle.

Kevin Jackson argues that the film's use of framing device confuses a secure concept of authorship: 'In the French prints, a title tells us that we are reading extracts "From the diary of Johann Cavallius [in some versions: "Carvallius"], Able Historian of his Native City of Bremen". This is pure invention.'[29] Enno Patalas notes that in Murnau's title-list, the diarist is unnamed: 'His signature is three crosses ("three properly painted graveyard crosses" are specified in the title-list), a voice from

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[26] Other documents like the *Empusa*'s bill of landing, Hutter's letters to Ellen, and the newspaper notice of the plague are, like the diary pages, displayed in close-up, allowing the audience to read them.
[27] Though the first known film adaptation of *Dracula,* the work was pre-empted in its use of the character by the 1921 film *The Death of Drakula.* This Hungarian film's plot centred upon a 'mad musician who believes he is Dracula.' (Skal*, Hollywood Gothic,* p. 299.)
[28] Not even those making *Nosferatu* can offer a solution: Henrik Galeen, screenwriter of *Nosferatu,* wrote in the script where Hutter rediscovers the book in his knapsack: 'Did the inn-keeper's wife put it there?' (Henrik Galeen, quoted in Lotte H. Eisner, *Murnau* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1973), p. 115).
[29] Kevin Jackson, *Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 43.

beyond the grave.'[30] The diarist has been obliterated by death, symbolized by the graveyard crosses, and only his words survive – available to be appropriated by anyone (Stoker's words proved similarly vulnerable). It is unsurprising that the film should trouble the notion of authorship – a concern which is of prime importance in the novel *Dracula* – for the creation of a film must inevitably be a collaboration, one which is far more overt than the collaboration which takes place between author and pre-existing texts.[31]

Nosferatu's use of intertitles, Judith Mayne argues, reveals the potential inadequacy of the written word. She identifies a number of ambiguous discrepancies between intertitles and onscreen images, which suggest that *Nosferatu* presents narration, and language generally, as inadequate.[32] Supernatural in its powers, dubious in its origins, and fallible in its attempts to present reality, the written word is an ambivalent presence in *Nosferatu*. The film adds another sinister text to its story, one not found in *Dracula* – the strange coded letters written by Knock to Orlock. These are indecipherable to Hutter and to the audience, and might be assumed to be meaningless – conveying a sense of exclusion and secrecy, rather than any legible information. However, Albin Grau, the set designer for *Nosferatu,* actually inscribed the letters with 'a complex synthesis of cabbalistic and astrological symbols that Nosferatu would take as favourable auguries for his purchase of the house.'[33] The text has a meaning, but not one that is comprehensible to the average viewer – the audience must look elsewhere to find out what is going on. Language does not convey meaning, but occludes it.

[30] Enno Patalas, 'On the Way to *Nosferatu*', *Film History,* 14 (2002), 25-31 (p. 26).
[31] The *Dracula* films expose the collaborative, cumulative nature of the gothic in particular.
[32] Judith Mayne, 'Dracula in the Twilight: Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922)', in *German Film & Literature: Adaptations and Transformations,* ed. by Eric Rentschler (New York: Methuen, 1986), pp. 25-39 (p. 33, p. 34.)
[33] Skal, *Hollywood Gothic,* p. 87.

Terence Fisher's *Dracula* (Hammer Studios, 1958, titled *Horror of Dracula* in the USA in order to distinguish it from the Lugosi film), made a similar use of secretive writing. As Dracula dies, he collapses onto a floor decorated with Latin and Greek inscriptions, and zodiac symbols. Real languages and signs are used as a display of secrecy, not as communication. Earlier, a close-up of Dracula's crest appears, complete with Latin inscription. Regardless of the correct translation of *fidelis et mortem,* audiences might well have understood enough of the motto to get a sense of faithfulness and death. The message is vague and garbled – it seems that there is a meaning present but hidden, intelligible to those who possess the right skills.

Not only does *Nosferatu* demonstrate the potential for the uncanny in the written word – the medium of its origin – it also troubles the novel's authority. Murnau and his assistants adapted *Dracula* without securing permission from Florence Stoker. Wayne E. Hensley suggests that this was legally unnecessary, and Murnau would have been within his rights to use the novel exactly as written.[34] Nonetheless, the studio was nonetheless prosecuted by Mrs Stoker, and eventually lost, leading to a court order for the destruction of most copies of the film. Like the vampire, *Nosferatu* takes without asking permission. In the context of the film's history, the careful framing device of the diary seems unnecessary, facetiously deferential. *Nosferatu* does not need to follow *Dracula* – it can use and discard material as it requires, and does not require prior knowledge of the novel to be understood.

Like *Nosferatu,* the 1931 *Dracula* reflects its source novel's preoccupation with writing. It is bureaucracy that first puts Renfield in harm's way – he cuts himself

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[34] Wayne E. Hensley, 'The Contribution of F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* to the Evolution of *Dracula*', *Literature Film Quarterly*, 30 (2002), 59-64 (p. 61).

on the paperclip attached to Dracula's legal papers. The film also recalls the novel in its use of religion, quoting the Bible along with Shakespeare and other texts. In *Dracula*, the fight against the vampire is presented in a religious context; Van Helsing uses sacred objects alongside other weapons, essentially clipping and pasting what he needs, just as Mina does with her scrapbook.[35] Similarly, the 1931 *Dracula* makes use of Biblical paraphrase in the scene where Renfield describes a conversation with Dracula. According to Renfield, Dracula made him the following offer: 'Rats, rats, rats, thousands, millions of them, all red blood, all these will I give you, if you will obey me.' Renfield either misses how closely Dracula's words resemble Satan's in Matthew 4. 9, or is unable to profit by the textual warning. The film makes use of the crucifix (along with wolfsbane), but there is little sense of an overarching religious theme.

The film adopts and accentuates *Dracula'*s scrapbook approach to other textual sources, too. The arrival of the *Vesta* and her crew of corpses is announced via a newspaper headline – the next shot is of a paragraph later in the same article, describing Renfield's madness and treatment in Doctor Seward's Sanatorium. Clearly the article continues past this point, but it is off-screen – the viewer is only provided with the salient details). Newspaper reading occurs again later in the film, both amongst the masters and servants – below stairs, Martin the attendant reads a newspaper account of Lucy's child abductions to his fellow Sanatorium workers. Either via selection of individual sentences, or by staged scenes of reading, the film gives the audience less free rein than the novel reader – it is important to see the connections between disparate plot elements quickly, because of the film's stricter time constraints. The film's treatment of its written texts allows less opportunity for

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[35] 'Catholic theology [is] treated as no more than a 'game', consisting of a set of arbitrary rules capable of being endlessly reworked and reinterpreted'. (Mark Knight and Emma Mason, *Nineteenth-Century Religion and Literature: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 193).

distraction, or readings which wander. Extraneous detail (like the humorous digressions of the article regarding the missing wolf) must necessarily be eliminated.

The film also mirrors *Dracula*'s reflection of new ways of disseminating information – from the speed of newspaper articles and telegrams to the visibility and immediacy of a camera shot. In effect, the film treats *Dracula* rather as *Dracula* treats its sources. It also privileges film over reading as a means of gaining valuable information. The film begins with a tourist reading from a guidebook – recalling Harker's travelogue at the beginning of the novel. Unlike *Nosferatu*, here the peasants, rather than a book, are the first source of information about the vampire – there is a sharp distinction between the practical wisdom of the superstitious locals and the superficial book learning of the tourists. At the mention of Walpurgis Night, the peasants in the carriage cross themselves, whilst a tourist looks scornful. Not only does the guidebook only discuss the scenery rather than providing any more pertinent information, there is also an additional note of absurdity from the fact that the visitor is reading a description of a landscape she could see with her own eyes through the carriage window (her fall in the carriage suggests the inadvisability of concentrating exclusively on written sources).

II. What to do with the women?: *Dracula* **(1958),** *Dracula* **(1979), and** *Bram*

Stoker's Dracula **(1992)**

As the story of *Dracula* becomes better known to audiences, less explanation

of the vampire is required. In Terence Fisher's *Dracula* (1958), this familiarity

contributes to John Van Eyssen's portrayal of Jonathan Harker. This version of the

character begins roughly where his novel counterpart finishes – informed about

vampires, and dedicated to hunting Dracula.[36] Not only does the film parallel

audience's prior acquaintance with the vampire, it also acknowledges earlier

adaptations. Holmwood, whom Van Helsing tutors in vampire lore, begins with his

own expectations, believing that vampires (like Lugosi's Dracula) could change

themselves into wolves or bats. Van Helsing responds that this is a 'common fallacy'.

Van Helsing, unlike his novel counterpart, is a proficient user of modern technology,

employing a phonograph to keep his notes on vampires. This scholarly approach

alternates with another kind of knowledge, however: the scene following Van

Helsing's note-taking shows Dracula's arrival in Lucy's bedroom. This encounter has

no dialogue, and implies a prior understanding between the two – an expectant Lucy

has already prepared by opening the window and removing the cross from her neck.

She has no need for words – written or spoken – to instruct her. The understanding

she shares with Dracula is intimate and instinctual. The site that offers the most direct

knowledge of the vampire is not the study, but the bedroom.

This development is even clearer in John Badham's *Dracula* (Universal

Pictures, 1979). Here the female characters demonstrate an innate understanding of

Dracula which the male characters can neither share nor exploit.[37] Mina is

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[36] His fatal misunderstanding is not that Dracula is a vampire, but that *Dracula* is a film – and the
film's plot will not allow the monster to be killed until the finale. Later vampire hunters – like *Buffy,
the Vampire Slayer* – would have greater understanding of this point. (See Chapter 6).
[37] By contrast, Mina's psychic bond to Dracula is used by the men in Stoker's novel.

instinctively drawn to the shore when Dracula's ship is wrecked. Lucy speaks

Romanian with him.[38] When, invited to dance, Dracula tells her, 'I hardly know you',

Lucy smilingly responds, 'Nonsense'. Male-dominated, book-based learning is

superseded by emotional and sexual understanding – the love-bond which Dracula

and Lucy share. This bond allows Dracula to find and rescue Lucy from the asylum,

and helps Lucy to intuit that Dracula may have survived at the end of the film. The

male characters must struggle to acquire crucial knowledge – Van Helsing has to rely

on a book detailing vampire bats to solve the mystery.[39] Dracula deliberately

mistranslates the meaning of 'nosferatu' (claiming it means 'not dead', rather than

'undead') and claims to be unable to decipher the ship's log – effectively eliminating

an important source of textual information for the men. Meanwhile the viewer's

acquaintance with Dracula, like Lucy's, is independent of scholarship. Looking for

Dracula in books becomes a secondary means of obtaining information. (Information

gleaned from cultural assimilation – adaptations blurring into one – is, in a sense,

analogous to psychic or supernatural knowledge. Like the psychic, it is possible to

'just know' about Dracula – that he always wears a cape, or is allergic to garlic –

without being able to give an explicit source for this knowledge.) Book-study

becomes a laborious alternative to the short-cuts enjoyed by Dracula and his victims –

analogous to the comparatively lengthy process of reading the novel, as opposed to

the more immediate experience of viewing the film. Dracula is now a creature of

popular culture, the kind of knowledge that can be assimilated almost unconsciously,

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[38] Whilst Ellen and the other heroines share an unspoken bond with the vampire, here there is also conversation. Like classic heroes of literature (Darcy or Rochester) Frank Langella's Dracula offers stimulating conversation. Lugosi's Dracula speaks only to entrap his future victims, whilst talking frankly only to Van Helsing; Lee's Dracula never talks to any female characters in the 1958 film.
[39] The medical competence on display is also very poor.

and which is frequently associated with the female.[40] (Though, like Dracula, it may not always have women's best interests at heart.)[41]

Film nurtured an eroticized vampire-female victim connection which gradually transformed Dracula, in T. J. Ross's phrase, into 'a Don Juan with fangs'.[42] Carol A. Senf observes that 'as Dracula himself becomes more and more sensual, so do his victims.'[43] Adapting *Dracula* became an act of rewriting focused upon women, and female physicality. Bela Lugosi, famously adulated by women after his performance as Dracula, declared in an interview:

> it is women who love horror. Gloat over it. Feed on it. Are nourished
>
> by it. Shudder and cling and cry out – and come back for more.
>
> *Women have a predestination to suffering.*
>
> It is women who bear the race in bloody agony. Suffering is a
>
> kind of horror. Blood is a kind of horror. Therefore women are born
>
> with a predestination to horror in their very blood stream. It is a
>
> biological thing.[44]

Christopher Lee commented that Dracula had to have 'an erotic element about him

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[40] Andreas Huyssen writes of 'the notion which gained ground during the 19th century that mass culture is somehow associated with woman while real, authentic culture remains the prerogative of men.' (Andreas Huyssen, 'Mass Culture as Woman: Modernism's Other, in *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, c. 1986), pp. 44-62 (p. 47), in *ACLS Humanities E-Book* [accessed 12 January 2017] (first publ. in *Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture,* ed. by Tania Modleski (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 188-207)).

[41] Hutchings comments in regard to the Hammer films, 'it is important to realise that Dracula does not represent liberation per se but rather that he attempts to place these women within a different power hierarchy, where they have power over mortal men but are subservient to him.' (Hutchings, pp. 118-19).

[42] T. J. Ross in *Focus on the Horror Film*, ed. by Roy Huss and J. J. Ross (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 50, quoted in Carol A. Senf, 'Brides of Dracula: From Novel to Film', *Studies in Popular Culture,* 7 (1984), 64-71 (p. 68).

[43] Senf, 'Brides of Dracula: From Novel to Film', p. 68.

[44] Gladys Hall, 'The Feminine Love of Horror,' *Motion Picture Classic*, January 1931, quoted in Lennig, p. 61.

[…] Women are attracted to men for any of hundreds of reasons. One of them is a response to the demand to give oneself, and what greater evidence of giving is there than your blood flowing literally from your own bloodstream. It's the complete abandonment of a woman to the power of a man.'[45] It became widely accepted both that Dracula must be attractive to women, and that this attractiveness offers an insight into female desire. Though critical of overt, uninhibited female sexuality, the *Dracula* films from 1958 onwards are designed with an eye for women's pleasure, offering Dracula as a figure of simultaneous fear and attraction. In an interview with *Playboy,* Frank Langella, who played Dracula in Badham's film, remarked: 'vampires are sexy to a woman perhaps because the fantasy is similar to that of the man on the white horse sweeping her off to paradise'.[46] Like Lee, Langella takes Dracula's allure for women as a given. In such descriptions, women appear both monolithic in their desires, and in need of explanation – and their fantasies have a simple real-life equivalent. To understand Dracula is to have a privileged understanding of the character, and his appeal for women. In an effort to appeal to audiences, the original novel is doubly rewritten – not only is Dracula's theatrical allure promised, his sexual attractiveness is also retroactively emphasized within Stoker's novel.[47]

Cynthia Freeland describes Langella's Dracula as a 'playboy foreign aristocrat' – an enticingly exotic alternative to Lucy's dull fiancé, Harker.[48] The 'playboy' aspect of Langella's portrayal is crucial, as, like Lee, he is tasked with embodying an object of desire without becoming demeaned or subordinated. (As

[45] Leonard Wolf, *A Dream of Dracula: In Search of the Living Dead* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), p. 178, quoted in Carol A. Senf, *The Vampire in Nineteenth Century English Literature*, p. 165.

[46] M. Rosen, '20 Questions Interview,' *Playboy*, August. (1979), quoted in Maria Mellins, *Vampire Culture* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 70-71.

[47] As Rhona J. Berenstein observes, Browning's *Dracula* was marketed like a romance in 1931 (the film was released on Valentine's day), and women were perceived to have a romantic interest and a kinship with the monster. (Berenstein, p. 12, p. 66).

[48] Cynthia Freeland, *The Naked and the Undead* (Colorado: Westview Press, 2000), p. 134.

Mary Ann Doane observes, presenting a male object of desire does not subvert the

association of looking with male power, but instead simply indicates an aberration

whilst keeping the existing relationship of dominance and subordination intact.)[49] An

emphasis on Dracula's masterful treatment of his love interests (and an emphasis on

their number) makes his role as object of desire more palatable – the comments from

Lugosi, Lee, and Langella all suggest such an instinct. Dracula is a playboy, not a

gigolo – an epicure of female beauty, rather than a mere spectacle.

As is the case in Stoker's novel, the women also offer a battleground for the

past and present. In Stoker's novel, Lucy and Mina serve as bones of contention

between Dracula and the human men. In the screen adaptations, sexuality (particularly

female sexuality) serves as a site where modern filmmakers can wrangle with their

Victorian forbears. Jay Scott, in a contemporary review of the 1971 *Dracula*,

attributes to Badham the 'desire to achieve a definitive, psychologically exact reading

of the legend', and suggests that audiences are 'ready to view the un-dead remains of

[their] Victorian heritage sans blinders.'[50] The adaptation implicitly improves upon

the original text, rewriting it with psychological truth and sexual honesty – the film, in

this reading, becomes more authentic than the original text, and so displaces it.

Discussing the film's ending, which does not follow the book, the review continues:

> [t]he departure is meant, I think, to signify that Stoker and the cultural
>
> prejudices he propounded were wrong, that nothing can (or should) kill

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[49] 'The male strip-tease, the gigolo – both inevitably signify the mechanism of reversal itself, constituting themselves as aberrations whose acknowledgement simply reinforces the dominant system of aligning sexual difference with a subject/object dichotomy. And an essential attribute of that dominant system is the matching of male subjectivity with the agency of the look.' (Mary Ann Doane, 'Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator,' in *Film and Theory: an Anthology* (London: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 495-509 (p. 498) (first publ. *Screen*, 23 (1982), 74-87)).
[50] Jay Scott, 'Sex and Death: Langella's Such a Compelling Dracula, You Know Why Women Are Drawn to Him', *The Globe and Mail*, 14 July 1979, p. 31. Accessed via Factiva <https://global-factiva-com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/redir/default.aspx?P=sa&an=glob000020011126db7e06gy9&cat=a&ep=ASE> [accessed 6 January 2017]

the carnivore in all of us. People who think that legends must be

honored will be annoyed, but the fact is that the movie is right, the

legend wrong.[51]

Like Richardson, and many subsequent critics of the novel, Scott assumes that Stoker

was likely unaware of the psychological and sexual implications of his work.[52] By

rewriting the original story, the filmmakers can be more authentic than the author,

displacing Stoker by claiming to access what the novel is 'really' about, and giving

voice to themes that Stoker was too benighted or repressed to pursue frankly. Sexual

authenticity makes an adaptation more 'authentic' than the original. A similar focus

can be seen in a number of critical examinations of the novel *Dracula* from the same

time period. There is a sense in which psychology especially is used to 'catch out'

Bram Stoker and his Victorian audience. Scott's review, with its emphasis on right

and wrong, has a curiously old-fashioned ring to it – discussion of the 'right' way to

write about sex has taken on a moral flavour. The values Scott decries are perhaps

merely reversed, rather than abolished.

The Badham adaptation makes claim to social progressiveness – showing

Dracula falling in love with the modern and free-spirited Lucy, who confidently

pursues relationships with both Jonathan Harker and Dracula, and intends to make a

career in law. Though Scott reads this adaptation as a corrective rewrite of the

Victorian original, as Cynthia Freeland points out, the film's progressiveness only

exists within certain limits, paying lip service to female liberation while suggesting

that a woman like Lucy 'just needs a properly masterful man' – Freeland also notes

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[51] Scott, p. 31.
[52] See Chapter One for discussion of this issue.

that Lucy's career aspirations are quickly forgotten.[53] The film reproduces *Dracula*'s

technique of celebrating one exceptional woman, whilst stressing that she is atypical.

According to Dracula, Lucy is 'stronger than most women' – hence she is worthy of

his love. This dubious compliment is not far removed from Van Helsing's praising

Mina for having a 'man's brain' (*Dracula,* p. 281). Female strength or excellence is

still an aberration. Ultimately, the film's 'progressiveness' hinges on its depiction of

female sexual relationships. Lucy and Mina discuss women's rights in a lighthearted

fashion – Lucy insists that they should 'have some influence, some say on things',

and the pair laughingly agree 'we are not chattels', but there is little discussion of the

restrictions placed upon women in nineteenth-century society. The film presents

patriarchal society as unattractive, but ultimately unthreatening. Yet this may in fact

be its most incisive illustration of patriarchal control – those upholding it (Seward,

Van Helsing, Harker) do not need to be remarkably evil, dynamic, or intelligent,

because they are operating within a system which is weighted in their favour. Nor do

the men consciously have to espouse ideas of repression and confinement. Here

patriarchy is upheld not by malevolent villains, but by well-meaning dullards. Love,

not law, ultimately offers Lucy a means to the 'influence' she craves – as Dracula's

bride, she will be supernaturally powerful, transferred to a higher plane.

Writing about Badham's film, Wood identifies the 'ultimate horror' of

Stoker's novel as female sexuality, sketching a Victorian era which unequivocally

condemned female sexual pleasure:

Only two options could be permitted: women must be either asexual,

passive, and pure, or sexual and degraded. Stoker enlists Mina as an

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[53] Freeland, p. 136.

accomplice in her own continued repression: she is horrified at her

own 'contamination' by Dracula, and actually makes the men […]

promise to cut off her head and drive a stake through her heart if they

cannot prevent her from becoming a vampire.[54]

One uncomfortable aspect to this interpretation is that it is a feminist reading which

hinges on falsifying a female character's testimony. Mina is an 'accomplice' (sexual

repression is a crime), too inhibited to know any better. Consequently her distress

after her encounter with Dracula is a prudish reaction, a kind of buyer's remorse. In

such a reading, a male character is more cognisant of a female character's desires than

she is herself, and must enlighten her, whether she likes it or not. (Dracula, like

Lugosi, Lee, and Langella, has a privileged understanding of women. To play Dracula

involves performing possession of this knowledge.) Naturally the statements and

actions of a fictional woman cannot be considered in the same light as those of a non-

fictional one, and *Dracula* actively invites questioning of narrative reliability –

indeed, it depends for much of its effect on the possibility that its narrators may be

lying, mad, deluded, or abruptly silenced by death. There is, however, a disconcerting

familiarity about arguments that Mina 'really wanted' Dracula to drink her blood. It is

another uncanny effect of reading *Dracula* to observe a rhetorical similarity between

antithetical groups.

Another difficulty is that nineteenth-century sexuality is, like Dracula, at risk

of being reduced to a stereotype. The Victorian sexuality of *Dracula* is rewritten in a

way which privileges modern attitudes whilst emphasizing the separation between the

two periods. In fact, Wood's arch description is not entirely accurate. In a famous trial

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[54] Wood, p. 373.

of 1886, Liverpool gynaecologist Francis Imlach was sued by a Mrs Casey, a patient

on whom Imlach had performed an ovariectomy and removal of Fallopian tubes. Mrs

Casey complained that the operation had caused her to suffer a loss of sexual feelings.

The trial contributed to a debate later raised by the surgeon Robert Lawson Tait, who

delivered a paper in 1888 claiming that female sexual feelings were not, as was

widely believed, dependent upon the womb.[55] One of Tait's listeners, after hearing

Tait's report on women who had experienced hysterectomy without loss of sexual

feeling, suggested 'that women might simulate orgasms out of a natural desire to

retain the affections of their husbands.'[56] As Mason points out, this remark would

imply 'that a wife's orgasm was very important for a Victorian husband, and even that

a woman who had not experienced orgasm might have known enough to simulate one

convincingly'.[57] The adapting of *Dracula,* and of Victorian sexuality, serves as an

occasion to make a forcible divide between modern sexual mores and those of the

past – in spite of certain similarities between the two. The Victorian becomes the

'other' that refuses to go away. Wood argues that the Badham adaptation of *Dracula*

reveals the end of the myth's usefulness:

> The Count has served his purpose by insisting that the repressed cannot
>
> be kept down, that it must always surface and strive to be recognized.
>
> But we cannot purge him of his connotations of evil – the evil that
>
> Victorian society projected onto sexuality and by which our
>
> contemporary notions of sexuality are still contaminated.[58]

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[55] Michael Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 175-76.
[56] Mason, p. 176.
[57] Mason, p. 176.
[58] Wood, p. 377.

As Wood points out, 'Victorian' attitudes to sex and women appear to be quietly alive and well in modern adaptations of *Dracula* – modernity is 'contaminated'. (Or, like Mina in the novel, 'unclean'.) The attempt to wall off Victorian backwardness fails, because of the uncanny resemblance with modernity. Repeated adaptations of *Dracula* hints at an unwillingness, or an inability, to shake these attitudes off. Adaptations which purport to draw a distinction between 'backward' sexual and social mores and those of the present day may instead reveal a likeness.

In Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), the modern and the Victorian again interact via treatment of female sexuality. The film was originally called *Dracula: the Untold Story*, suggesting both the 'untold' parts of Stoker's novel, which had been neglected by other film adaptations, and the 'untold' aspects of the historical Dracula's history – aspects which Stoker himself might have omitted.[59] Coppola commented: '[a]side from one innovative take that comes from history – the love story between Mina and the Prince – we were scrupulously true to the book.'[60] The adaptation is authentic to Stoker's book, perhaps *more* authentic to the historical Dracula than the novel. By including the romance, Coppola in a sense precedes Stoker, showing material that predates his novel.

James V. Hart, author of the screenplay, stresses the importance of female response to *Dracula.* Arguing that prior to Coppola's film, the 'real *Dracula* had never been done', he emphasizes the uniqueness of *Bram Stoker's Dracula* in terms of Dracula's role as romantic hero:

none of the previous film incarnations had done justice to Stoker's

unnerving, sexually charged novel and its tragic hero. For *Dracula* to

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[59] Silver and Ursini, p. 155
[60] Francis Ford Coppola and James V. Hart, *Bram Stoker's Dracula: The Film and the Legend* (London: Pan, 1992), p. 3.

be done right on the screen, it needed a magnificent production on an

epic scale, and a reading that reached to the heart of the character's

seductiveness. Women more than men have tended to read *Dracula*

and other vampire stories, and to understand the vampire's attraction.[61]

As Thomas Austin points out, Hart exaggerates the romance elements in *Dracula*, as

well as effectively rewriting a number of earlier screen versions.[62] Women understand

Dracula because they read the novel, but their response is sexual, rather than

intellectual.

The ambivalent relationship between novel and film adaptation is frequently

bound up with questions of authenticity – here, this becomes sexual authenticity. Such

attitudes accord with Michel Foucault's notion that in modern societies, sex becomes

'*the* secret.'[63] Foucault writes that gradually 'the oddities of sex' became '[i]mbedded

in bodies, becoming deeply characteristic of individuals.'[64] A person's sexuality

might, to such thinking, be considered their 'solution' – *the* secret of their character.

Sexuality also becomes *the* secret of Stoker's novel. What is 'really' going on in

Dracula is tied to sexuality – an authentic film rewrite is one that accesses this truth

and reveals it – by identifying it as the truth behind female response to the book, and

focusing on a historical love story as the real 'untold story' of Dracula.[65]

Hart insists that the food for his interpretation is present in the original novel:

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[61] James V. Hart, 'The Script That Wouldn't Die', in Coppola and Hart, pp. 6-9 (p. 6, p. 7).
[62] Austin, p. 119-20.
[63] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I: An Introduction*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 35, in *Social Theory* [accessed 15 February 2017].
[64] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I: An Introduction*, p. 44.
[65] Thomas Leitch, commenting on titles like *Bram Stoker's Dracula* and *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994), argues that 'These titles, which might be taken to imply unusual fidelity to the novels at hand, announce instead that the author and the author's world have become part of the subject along with the events of the novel.' (Leitch, p. 108).

Hart found the germ of the sympathetic character – and of his

redeemer – in the original novel. 'If you look at Mina in Stoker,' he

has said, 'her whole view of this creature changes once they share

blood. Much of what she says in the film is right out of Stoker; she

even gets Van Helsing to admit that he respects and admires this

creature, which is right out of Stoker, too. So Mina changes, she has

sympathy for this creature they are hunting. And that spoke to me

when I was trying to figure out what to do with the woman

characters'.[66]

As with the 1979 Badham adaptation, the introduction of a love story is a rewriting

that both liberates and confines the female characters. Hart interprets Mina's empathy

for the Count as an indication of affection, rather than altruism – in this reading, Mina

pleads for Dracula out of romantic love, rather than charity and forgiveness. The

change makes her more human, less angelically disinterested – but her liberation only

takes her as far as romantic and erotic fulfilment. Freed from the pedestal she

occupies in *Dracula,* she now participates in a love story and nothing else. The

analytic and editorial skills she demonstrates in the novel are downplayed, just as

Lucy's career ambitions in the Badham *Dracula* are forgotten after she meets the

Count. Mina is shown typing, but this activity is implicitly confining, mundane,

antithetical to sexual fulfilment – Mina is soon distracted away from her dutiful work

by the illustrations of *Arabian Nights*. (Lucy playfully chastises Jonathan for 'forcing

[Mina] to learn that ridiculous machine' instead of forcing her 'to perform

unspeakable acts of desperate passion on the parlour floor'.) Hart's vision of Mina's

[66] Quoted in Thomas L. Reed, Jr, "'Belle et le Vampire': Focus and Fidelity in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*", *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 38 (2010), 289-310 (p. 295).

character has the effect of writing out both her intellectual gifts (the brain-work she does to resist Dracula in the novel is omitted) and high moral standing (since her pity for Dracula is written as erotic, rather than empathetic.) Hart's revision appears an attempt to reach both the 'truth' of the novel, and the 'truth' of Mina's character, both of which are centred on sex and romance. (What else to 'do with the woman characters'?)

Vera Dika argues that Mina is empowered by Hart and Coppola's changes, since she is permitted an unprecedented amount of freedom of sexual expression without punishment.[67] Heidi Kaye suggests that not only has *Bram Stoker's Dracula* taken up a new hero – Dracula – but it has also adopted a new antagonist: '[s]exuality is not the villain […] repression is.'[68] (As in Scott's review of Badham's *Dracula,* a villain is still necessary, and again it is repression – by implication, Victorianism. This reversal may imply that Stoker's nineteenth-century structure survives intact; the ideas are slightly different but the mechanism is the same.) Yet the film's espousing of sexual freedom is actually rather limited, as Kaye goes on to clarify: '[s]ex divorced from love is still punished in Lucy, but romance underpinning bourgeois gender roles is presented as a different matter.'[69] (Dracula is not punished for engaging in sex divorced from love.)[70] Unlike the women of the 1958 and 1979 adaptations, Lucy is left confused and distressed after her encounter with the vampire, begging Mina not to tell anyone about what has happened. Her mood here presents a striking contrast to her earlier flirtatious behaviour – this humbling of her cheerful

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[67] Dika, p. 394.
[68] Heidi Kaye, 'Gothic Film', in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by Punter <doi. 10.1111/b.9780631206200.2001.00017.x> [accessed 14 November 2014].
[69] Kaye, 'Gothic Film'.
[70] Jonathan Harker is punished for his infidelity with Dracula's brides by the addition of a sexual assault plot, which Hart does not discuss here. In a departure from the novel, in the film Harker is given back to the brides and subjected to violent, sexualized blood-drinking. But this punishment, unlike Lucy's, isn't fatal.

sexual confidence is the first of the punishments that the film deals her. David Glover points out Dracula's 'adherence to an all-too-conventional double standard' in his treatment of Mina and Lucy – he romantically woos one, whilst sampling and discarding the other.[71] And as in the 1979 *Dracula,* the first, 'disposable' woman bears the punishment when the other disappoints Dracula. In the Badham version, Dracula seeks out and bites Mina after seeing Lucy kissing Harker. In Coppola's film, Dracula makes his final, fatal visit to Lucy after Mina leaves him and returns to Jonathan. In spite of the tie between Dracula's treatment of her and his relationship with Mina, Lucy's experiences are written as a punishment for her sexual adventurousness:

> Hart jokingly calls Lucy a victim of 'Unsafe vampire sex…and Lucy is a spoiled prattler […] with what is almost a modern approach to her sexuality […] Lucy is basically a quick snack in fast food for Dracula. I think Lucy pays for her unsafe vampire sex, her brazen attitude towards the world. She's spoiled, she's rich and she can do anything she wants. Mina represents the other side of Victorian womanhood, all corseted up tight. She is suppressing her sexuality, where Lucy is flaunting hers. Lucy pays the price for her wanton ways. Just like any woman today who has sex with multiple partners and is not practising safe sex is going to pay a price."'[72]

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[71] David Glover, 'Travels in Romania: Myths of Origins, Myths of Blood', *Discourse*, 16 (1993), 126-44 (p. 131).

[72] Henry Sheehan, '"Trust the Teller": Henry Sheehan Talks with James V. Hart about Dracula', in *Film/Literature/Heritage: A Sight and Sound Reader*, ed. by Ginette Vincendeau (London: BFI Publishing, 2001), pp. 271-73 (p. 273).

Here the novel is rewritten in Hart's summary. The claim that Lucy can 'do anything she wants' is not true of her situation in Stoker's novel – Mrs Westenra exerts oppressive financial control over her daughter, hampering her free choice of husband. Some, like Carol A. Senf, have attributed Lucy's sleep-walking to a wish to escape the confinement of her existence.[73]

In *Bram Stoker's Dracula,* social complexities – especially those facing women – are given the shorthand of sexual repression.[74] Hart characterizes such repressiveness as an innate part of Victorian culture, whilst simultaneously demonstrating how repressive mores relating to female sexual behaviour are still alive and well in the 1990s.[75] (His linking of sexual repression with the wearing of the corset is also interesting, given contemporary nineteenth-century attitudes to fashionable tight-lacing, and women's own feelings about corsetry.) As with Wood's discussion of the 1979 *Dracula,* writing about and adapting the novel seems to lead easily to writing about – and in some sense adapting – the Victorians. Nineteenth-century treatment of female sexuality becomes a point of contact and contest between modern filmmakers and the original source material. But in the case of *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, writing which aims to distinguish between modernity and Victorianism can end in confusing this distinction. Coppola himself characterized Lucy as 'vixen, leering, slut[ish].'[76] Significantly, this characterization includes a negative reference to looking – in a female character, a rebellious act when unchecked. (In Coppola's

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[73] Senf, *The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century English Literature,* p. 66.

[74] Foucault suggests that '[s]omething that smacks of revolt, of promised freedom, of the coming age of a different law, slips easily into this discourse on sexual oppression.' This allows the linking of 'revolution and happiness' or 'revolution and pleasure'. (Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I*, p. 7). Foucault, significantly, titles Part One of this work 'We Other Victorians'.

[75] A slight 'Victorianism' creeps into this depiction of the importance of safe sex. More, whether 'brazen' or devoted, the onus of sexual health is placed on women. Reed interprets the film as arguing for monogamy and faithful love as an antidote to the AIDs crisis. This remedy, in *Bram Stoker's Dracula,* depends on 'the ability and willingness of a loving woman to embrace someone who is (temporarily at least) as far from the sweet young Prince she originally fell for as he could possibly be.' (Reed, p. 297).

[76] Coppola and Hart, p. 119.

film, Lucy frankly enjoys sizing up her three suitors, chatting to Mina about each man's sex appeal.) Discussing cinema's historic characterising of the gaze as male (both from the external position of the audience watching the film, and within the film itself as male characters observe women), E. Ann Kaplan observes that when a woman reverses this structure by looking at men with sexual desire, '[s]he nearly always loses her traditionally feminine characteristics in so doing – not those of attractiveness, but rather of kindness, humaneness, motherliness. She is now often cold, driving, ambitious, manipulating, just like the men whose position she has usurped.'[77] The vampire Lucy would certainly fit with this description.

Bram Stoker's Dracula archly apes 'Victorian' attitudes towards sex – for instance in Van Helsing's declaration that Lucy is at risk of becoming 'the devil's bitch' – but the boundaries of this pastiche are open to confusion. How, for instance, to read Van Helsing's declaration that Lucy is 'not a random victim attacked by mere accident' but 'a devoted disciple'? Perhaps there is a thrill in 'trying on' Victorian prudery and misogyny – like Victorian corsets and bustles – whilst purporting to decry it. As Mighall suggests, the connection of the vampire and sex is not a modern insight, but a long-established link:

> The nineteenth century produced the erotic 'meaning' of vampirism, a
> discovery we delight in claiming as our own. For Victorian
> sexologists, the vampire was a 'pervert' or the pervert was a vampire.
> But then, for many modern critics, the 'poloymorphous perversity' of
> the vampire guarantees its 'subversiveness', and therefore its (and our)

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[77] E. Ann Kaplan, *Women & Film* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 29.

non-Victorian liberatory/libertated status. The poles are reversed: we

merely celebrate what they denigrated.[78]

Garrett Stewart views Coppola's use of the history of cinema and its technology as a

way to enjoy the past whilst celebrating modernity: 'Cinema promotes its own

representational agenda by recovering the naive raptures that greeted its arrival on the

scene of mere photography. […] The technological form of retrospect infiltrates its

content, just as a contemporary social or psychosexual vantage invades and revises

the past. The modernist "make it new" has become a postmodernist revamping: the

resuscitating of history in an image of the present – and of the present's own image

systems.'[79] Playing with self-consciously 'Victorian' attitudes to sex and women

allows the resemblance to come to the fore.[80]

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[78] Mighall, 'Vampires and Victorians', pp. 246-47.
[79] Garrett Stewart, 'Film's Victorian Retrofit', *Victorian Studies*, 38 (1995), 153-98 (pp. 194-95).
[80] A reading of Coppola and Hart's *Bram Stoker's Dracula: The Film and the Legend* suggests an uncanny echo of Victorian racial attitudes as well. When describing the search for actresses to play Dracula's brides, Coppola comments that the women would have to be 'ethnic types'. The actresses who were eventually cast had 'very exotic looks'. (Coppola and Hart, p. 64). This may be a case of playfully entering the Victorian mindset – Jonathan Harker certainly thinks of the people he encounters on his travels as both 'ethnic' and 'exotic'. Perhaps, however, the ease with which these concepts are available to those adapting *Dracula* suggests that Harker's way of thinking is not entirely alien to modern minds.

III. Genuine Fakes: *Bram Stoker's Dracula* **(1992) and** *Shadow of the Vampire* **(2000)**

The *Dracula* films suggest a gothic strand to the adaptation process –
discrediting the written word and making it mysterious or uncanny, or providing a site
for conflict between modernity and the past. *Dracula* films may promote themselves
as being simultaneously more and less authentic than Stoker's novel – resisting the
text and the culture which produced it, whilst at the same time aiming to access the
sexual, psychological, and historical 'truths' which had escaped Stoker. In both *Bram
Stoker's Dracula* and E. Elias Merhige's *Shadow of the Vampire* (Lions Gate Films,
2000), authenticity also becomes an artistic effect, and originality becomes highly
questionable.

Bram Stoker's Dracula presents itself as being more authentic than previous
adaptations due to its inclusion of previously neglected material from the novel –
claiming to serve the book better than these predecessors, even as it alters the genre of
its source material to produce a new work. Coppola also quotes from history, making
use of Vlad Tepes' story and working his conflict with the Turks into the vampire
origin story. The film is not so much an adaptation of *Dracula* as of a glossed edition
of the novel – Leonard Wolf's *The Annotated Dracula,* an extensively footnoted
version of the original novel.[81] Thomas Elsaesser points out how this version of the
novel tallies with the nature of Coppola's film:

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[81] Wolf published this extensively footnoted edition in 1975. According to Elizabeth Miller, the work
featured 'over 600 notes with maps, drawings and photos, as well as a potpourri of material for trivia
buffs.' (Miller, *A Dracula Handbook*, p. 163). Wolf revised the work as *The Essential Dracula* in 1993.
Along with background information like a recipe for paprika chicken, Wolf also uses his footnotes to
act as his reader's guide, directing their attention and suggesting future plot developments, for instance
when discussing Mrs Westenra's behaviour: 'A close reader will watch carefully the role she plays in
the subsequent action. Notice how Mrs Westenra's every action puts Lucy in further danger.' Bram
Stoker, *The Essential Dracula,* ed. by Leonard Wolf (New York: Penguin, 1993), p. 157.

Even the sources […] confront one with a commentary on a
commentary, whose *mise-en-abyme* structure can be celebrated as the
film's particular authenticity, itself only heightened when one realizes
how replete with citations to other films Coppola's adaptation of Bram
Stoker's novel is: at the last count, no less than sixty titles.[82]

Dracula, whether novel or film, is saturated in earlier incarnations and visions. What
both Coppola's film and Wolf's annotated version demonstrate is the impossibility of
encountering the story in its 'pure' form – both footnoted page and quotation-suffused
film offer a visual representation of the extensively written-upon *Dracula*.

As Dika observes, the promise of a return to the beginning of the Dracula
myth, before film adaptations, is cheated – instead, Coppola presents a postmodern
Dracula, where the 'original' is inaccessible.[83] Demonstrating this point, Coppola's
film vies with its novel source for narrative authority – as Jonathan Bignell points out,
the blurb of the film's novelization confuses different sources of authorship:

The 'legendary evil' is that of Dracula, whose origins are lost in
'legend' and whose evil is 'as old as time itself'. But historically the
story's literary origins are relatively specific, having existed for 'more
than a century' as an 'unforgettable classic', evidently a reference to
Stoker. And yet the film is authorised by the name of its director,
Coppola, and the authority of the film as proper conduit of the story is
proclaimed by the blurb on the back of the Columbia Tristar videotape

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[82] Thomas Elsaesser, 'Specularity and engulfment: Francis Ford Coppola and *Bram Stoker's Dracula'*,
in *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema,* ed. by Steve Neale and Murray Smith (London: Routledge,
1998), pp. 191-208 (p. 197).
[83] Dika, p. 388

of the film, which announces that 'Coppola returns to the original

source of the Dracula myth, and from that gothic romance, he creates a

modern masterpiece'. Coppola's role as author is also emphasised by

the inclusion of the photographs which supplement the 1992

novelisation.[84]

Authorship, as the birth of vampire literature had demonstrated, could be a highly

unstable role. *Dracula* has been adapted many times – altered by repeated revisions.

Austin points out how the film retroactively adds cultural authority to the novel upon

which it builds and which it rivals for authority. In an effort to capitalize on the film's

popularity, Penguin not only released a mass-market paperback edition of *Dracula* at

this time, but also added the novel to its Penguin Classics line, granting the work a

new level of literary respectability.[85] Here the film is not only influenced by the book,

but vice versa. The written word is not stable or unchangeable, but can be repackaged

as a 'classic'.

As Margaret Montalbana observes, Coppola's film responds not only to

Stoker's novel, but also to previous *Dracula* adaptations, and audience reaction 'is

conditioned and inflected by encounters with these other texts as well.'[86] Kim

Newman reads this as an attempt to 'invalidate all versions of *Dracula* but Stoker's

and [Coppola and Hart's] own' – an attempt which is ultimately unsuccessful, since

'the strength of the fictions that cluster around Dracula lies in their diversity.'[87] Ian

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[84] Jonathan Bignell, 'A Taste of the Gothic: Film and Television Versions of *Dracula*', in *The Classic Novel: From Page to Screen,* ed. by Robert Giddings and Erica Sheen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 114-30 (p. 120).

[85] Thomas Austin, *Hollywood, Hype and Audiences: Selling and Watching Popular Film in the 1990s* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 125-26.

[86] Margaret Montalbana, 'From Bram Stoker's *Dracula* to *Bram Stoker's "Dracula"'*, in *A Companion to Literature and Film,* ed. by Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 385-98 (p. 386)

[87] Kim Newman, 'Bloodlines', in *Film/Literature/Heritage*, ed. by Vincendeau, pp. 97-101 (p. 98).

Sinclair is also critical of this tendency towards quotation and homage, considering it symptomatic of a modern lack of originality.[88] Similarly, Richard Dyer describes the film as 'post-modern allusionism, a welter of things to make reference to without any of them mattering much.'[89] But the viewing or reading mind is inevitably characterized by its own 'allusionism' – personal associations, links with other works.[90] Other *Dracula* interpretations are inescapable. *Bram Stoker's Dracula* demonstrates that purity – whether regarding a *Dracula* film or the original novel – is impossible. Dracula consists not only of Stoker's version, but also of the later iterations of the story – Coppola's film acknowledges that adapting the novel is inevitably an adaptation of these later visions.

Visiting Dracula's castle, Jonathan Harker observes a picture of his host painted in his pre-vampire days, and notes that he sees a 'family resemblance'. The family resemblance is elsewhere in Oldman's depiction of Dracula – for instance in his utterance of two of Bela Lugosi's best-loved lines, 'I am Dracula' and 'I never drink…wine.' Coppola's references to earlier *Dracula* adaptations extend beyond the portrayal of the vampire himself: the film's production designer was told to make the set 'look like any other Dracula movie – and to make it strange.'[91] The desired effect seems to be a postmodern uncanniness – the trappings of a traditional *Dracula* film, but 'strange', typical and familiar settings repurposed into something new.

This power of quotation is also evident in the film's treatment of historically accurate detail– making films about a far-distant historical period allows Coppola to

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[88] 'But does it suffice, this fin-de-siècle retread? We have lost our nerve, and seem incapable of breeding our own nightmares. We live in an age of plagiarism and theft, dignified as "post-modernist".' (Ian Sinclair, 'Invasion of the Blood', in *Film/Literature/Heritage*, ed. by Vincendeau, pp. 101-03 (p. 104)).

[89] Richard Dyer, 'Dracula and Desire', in *Film/Literature/Heritage*, ed. by Vincendeau, pp. 91-97 (p. 94).

[90] Chapter Six will address how this process now occurs online – links between different texts become hyperlinks.

[91] Coppola and Hart, p. 43.

show both extreme precision and deliberate anachronism, the selective participation in a time period (rather like the vampire). For instance, the film's preoccupation with the development of cinematographic technology is demonstrated in its choice of date – 1897 – which allows the introduction of the cinematograph. In contrast, the beautiful costumes are designed for aesthetic power rather than historical accuracy – Mina wears exquisite bustle dresses that are nearly a decade out of style, whilst Dracula first appears dressed in terrifying red armour, and later in a long scarlet robe, which streams behind him like a river of blood. In spite of the film's supposed aim to tell the 'true story' of Dracula, historical accuracy and inaccuracy both become techniques to be employed in the service of a deeper artistic authenticity. Ken Gelder, noting *Bram Stoker's Dracula*'s use of old-fashioned visual effects, rather than a reliance on computer animation, argues that '[a]uthenticity is a kind of special effect in Coppola's film'.[92] The nineteenth century had become a story and myth in its own right – and like *Dracula,* was viewed through an intervening lens of adaptation and rewriting.

The cinema, the postmodern, and the gothic have a similar ability to extract, quote, and rewrite, transforming both earlier works of art and historical fact into new fictions. As Coppola's use of the cinematograph demonstrates, cinema has the power to transform itself into stories along with other histories (both real and imagined). This story-generating power, which was suggested earlier in the century in 'I, the Vampire', emerges in full force in Coppola's film – which itself generated fresh narrative in Kim Newman's story 'Coppola's Dracula' (1997), a fictionalized account of the making of Coppola's film. This production takes place in a universe in which vampires exist openly – Coppola even has a vampire, Kate Reed, present to assist with filming. Fictional and real-life characters mingle in this account of a non-existent

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[92] Ken Gelder, *New Vampire Cinema* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 3.

film, which is a shadow twin to *Bram Stoker's Dracula.* Reed's reflections on Dracula summarize the ambiguous role of the vampire in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* – the question of whether he means a great deal of different things, or nothing at all:

> Dracula meant so much to so many. She wondered if there was anything left inside so many meanings, anything concrete and inarguable and true. Or was he now just a phantom, a slave to anyone who cared to invoke his name? So many causes and crusades and rebellions and atrocities. One man, one monster, could never have kept track of them all, could never have encompassed so much mutually exclusive argument.[93]

Bram Stoker's Dracula, with its plethora of quotations and external references, reality and fakery, seems to want to have it both ways – and in this moves close to Stoker's novel, and the echoing emptiness of Dracula's character.

Like *Bram Stoker's Dracula,* E. Elias Merhige's *Shadow of the Vampire* (2000) exploits cinema's ability to quote and recreate pre-existing material (both historical and fictional), and to spin myths around its own creation. The film is a fictionalized account of the making of *Nosferatu,* and operates on the premise that Max Schreck, the actor who played Count Orlock, was an actual vampire. Merhige's film combines footage from Murnau's original with scenes which have been reshot, blurring the distinction between the two works – it is not always possible to distinguish easily between Murnau's material and Merhige's – for instance when the vampire is filmed examining the miniature of 'Ellen':

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[93] Kim Newman, 'Coppola's Dracula', in *The Mammoth Book of Dracula,* ed. by Stephen Jones, (London: Robinson, 2011), pp. 112-61.

'There's a scene in the film,' [Merhige] says, 'where you have

Malkovich saying to Willem [Dafoe, who plays actor Max Schreck],

"Look, Count, what is it? It's a locket." And he looks over to the locket

and that locket is from 1921. That was from *Nosferatu*. But then

Willem picks it up and, as he picks it up, we move from 1921 to the

year 2000.'[94]

In Merhige's account, the combining of different shots – and the cinematic quotation

of Murnau's work – allows the filmmaker to defy the limits of time, moving

instantaneously between 1921 and 2000. As Sadoff observes, 'Merhige's film shows

[…] that cinema creates its cultural authority through citation, an aesthetic form of

technical reproduction.'[95] John Callens notes that *Shadow of the Vampire* makes

many references to other works in different media, including films, theatre, literature,

opera, and painting.[96] The film seems to eat up any other medium that crosses its path

– rather like Murnau's film ends up consuming the lives of many of its cast and crew.

Shadow of the Vampire's power via citation is amplified by the possibility that its

viewers may not have seen *Nosferatu,* or may only have seen a few key scenes, rather

than the entire work. In this, *Nosferatu*'s afterlife recalls that of *Dracula,* which is

also increasingly encountered via quotation or imitation. It is feasible to become

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[94] Brian Pendreigh, 'Back from the Dead', *Guardian,* 4 July 2000
<http://www.theguardian.com/film/2000/jul/04/artsfeatures> [accessed 12 May 2015].
[95] Dianne F. Sadoff, *Victorian Vogue: British Novels on Screen* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. 127.
[96] John Callens, '*Shadow of the Vampire*: Double Takes on *Nosferatu*', in *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance,* ed. by Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), pp. 195-205 (p. 195).

familiar with these before experiencing the original work – indeed, many may feel no

need or inclination to seek out the original work at all.[97]

According to Sadoff, the process of reimagining a film like *Nosferatu* reveals

that there is no 'original' film at all – instead, like all works of art, it is innately

unstable and intertextual. The film 'acquires authenticity of a postmodern kind by

acknowledging that the genuine is a fabrication, a reproduction rather than a return to

or revival of an original.'[98] Presenting itself as a genuine fake, *Shadow of the Vampire*

deliberately confuses ideas of originality by having a vampire portraying a vampire

onscreen. Appropriately, this idea has its own long tradition: 'I, the Vampire' beats

this film by several decades, and the idea that Max Schreck himself might be a

vampire had been voiced in the 1950s by Ado Kyrou in *Le Surréalisme au Cinema*

(1952).[99] In *Shadow of the Vampire,* this conceit both adds and subtracts meaning:

instead of an actor pretending to be a vampire, Schreck is now a vampire pretending

to be an actor pretending to be a vampire. More, the fact that the film is a remake adds

a new dimension of meaning: Willem Dafoe is an actor pretending to be a vampire

pretending to be an actor pretending to be a vampire. However because, within

Shadow of the Vampire, Max Schreck really is a vampire, *Nosferatu* also becomes

less – documentary, rather than fiction. (The beginning intertitles describe *Nosferatu*

as 'the most realistic vampire film ever made'. Later, Murnau defends his cooperation

with Schreck by claiming that he did it 'for science'). Similarly, the film is an

adaptation of an adaptation – remaking *Nosferatu,* itself a remake of *Dracula. Shadow*

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[97] This kind of familiarity can produce anxiety or cultural gatekeeping from those who *have* experienced the original – for instance fans of a novel expressing contempt for those who 'only' enjoy its film adaptation.

[98] Sadoff, p. 127.

[99] Thomas Elsaesser, 'No End to Nosferatu', in *Weimar Cinema: An essential Guide to Classic Films of the Era*, ed. by Noah Isenberg (New York: Columbia University Press, c. 2009), pp. 79-94 (p. 90) in *MyiLibrary* [accessed 12 January 2017]

of the Vampire glories in this hall-of-mirrors effect, blending the original and inauthentic beyond recall.

Unlike *Bram Stoker's Dracula* and many previous *Dracula* adaptations, there is less focus here on the sexual potential of the vampire myth, and there is no special understanding here between the vampire and his final victim. Greta is a bargaining-chip between director and vampire, a lure for Schreck rather than a love interest – though he is attracted to her, she feels no reciprocal draw, and has to be drugged in order to submit to his attack at the end of the film.[100] Schreck claims that he acquired his vampirism from a woman – a former lover who transformed and then abandoned him. He quotes from Tennyson's 'Tithonus', aligning himself with the man who was loved by a goddess, and gifted with immortal life but not immortal youth. But he is vague and forgetful about his own history – the manufactured story in Stoker's novel is far stronger and more enduring. Cinema replaces sex-induced vampirism as the most certain way of achieving immortality. *Shadow of the Vampire* moves beyond a rewriting of its source material (the novel *Dracula,* the film *Nosferatu,* even the nineteenth century itself), and employs the vampire as a way of exploring the nature of cinema and adaptation. Consequently, the affinity and special understanding in *Shadow of the Vampire* exists not between vampire and woman, but between vampire and director. Ken Gelder points out that 'Murnau is himself vampirish, bringing his cast to life, sucking the life out of them, ruthlessly exploiting them for various special effects.'[101]

Shadow of the Vampire turns filmmaking into a site of confused humanity. The film opens with a shot of a human eye, before turning to the eye of the camera. Then the audience sees what the camera sees – Greta in her role as Ellen. This is

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[100] In the original script, Greta was to have been a reincarnated lost love (like Mina in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*). See Callens, pp. 198-99.
[101] Gelder, *New Vampire Cinema*, p. 12

quickly succeeded by a shot of Murnau, dressed like a scientist in a white coat and goggles. The effect of the goggles is to transform the human eye into a flat, glassy black circle – making it resemble the camera lens shown a few seconds before. Murnau is almost at one with his vampiric device. Merhige himself observed that 'the cinema is a vampire – the camera reduces its subject to a shadow, it takes away the flesh and blood.'[102] There is also an affinity between vampire and director which grows more pronounced throughout the film – one instance of this is the way that the director role seems to lack clearly defined boundaries. Though Murnau oversees the making of his film like a combination of dictator and mad scientist, his role as supreme artistic controller is not impregnable – he is unable to keep reality (the local woman who intrudes into a shot) and external influences (Schreck's demands) out of the making of the film. Creating the picture is a work of pragmatism as well as creative vision. At the film's climax, Murnau asks his producer, Grau, to return the wooden stake to the shot, to symbolize Ellen's futile endeavour – but Grau has already been killed by Schreck and is unable to oblige, ironically leaving Murnau's vision of failure imperfectly realised.

Michael Atkinson, in his review of *Shadow of the Vampire*, complained that Murnau had been presented as 'a stereotypical director-as-dictator'.[103] The trope of the director behaving badly in pursuit of his art had, by 2000, proved popular enough to become a cliché. Linda Badley reads *Shadow of the Vampire* as exploring the darker, gothic aspects of auteurism, and argues that the film demonstrates viewers' yearning for an auteur figure, even following Barthes' pronouncement of the death of

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[102] Elias Merhige, 'Director's Commentary', *Shadow of the Vampire*. Dir. Elias Merhige, Lions Gate Films, 2000. DVD: Universal Studios Home Video, 2001, quoted in Andrew Brooks, 'The Tyrant Motif and *Nosferatu*: 1922, 1979, and 2000', *Postscript*, 23 (2005-2006), 89-101 (p. 100).
[103] Michael Atkinson, 'A Bloody Disgrace', *Guardian*, 26 January 2001 <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2001/jan/26/culture.features2> [accessed 2 June 2015].

the author. 'Repression, it seems, has made the collective heart grow fonder.'[104]

Similarly Merhige describes his portrayal of Murnau as 'director as God, as the

ringmaster with his flea-circus' – essentially, the godlike author/auteur who is

supposed to have been eliminated.[105] *Shadow of the Vampire* expresses the enduring

attractiveness and repellence of the auteur figure; the film cannot resist noting in its

introductory intertitles that with *Nosferatu,* Murnau will '[establish] himself amongst

the greatest directors of all time' – in spite of the resulting deaths amongst his actors

and crew.

In its exploration of the complexities of cinematic creation, *Shadow of the

Vampire* transforms Murnau, as well as Schreck, into a monster. Merhige was explicit

about his intention to repossess the past for a new purpose: 'You can't enslave

yourself to repeating what historians have said about Murnau […] I think that in order

to invigorate a time that's in the past, you need to breathe life into it by digesting it

completely and making it your own.'[106] Like *Bram Stoker's Dracula, Shadow of the

Vampire* swallows up its origins. Michael Atkinson lamented how the film

'manipulates and manhandles the legend of Murnau', who was 'by all accounts a

perfectly decent, disciplined professional', rather than the martinet portrayed by John

Malkovich.[107] Murnau's 'legend' has been rewritten for artistic purposes – the

director finds a fictional parallel in those characters in Merhige's film who are

devoured by Schreck in the course of production. Atkinson regrets that *Shadow of the

Vampire* fails to deliver the 'true story' of Murnau's life, and argues that the fictional

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[104] Linda Badley, 'The Darker Side of Genius: The (Horror) Auteur Meets Freud's Theory', in *Horror Film and Psychoanalysis: Freud's Worst Nightmare*, ed. by Steven Hay Schneider (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, c. 2004), pp. 222-40 (p. 2260, in *ACLS Humanities E-Book* [accessed 15 May 2015].
[105] Merhige, 'Director's Commentary', quoted in Brooks, p. 97.
[106] Pendreigh.
[107] Atkinson, 'A Bloody Disgrace', *Guardian*, 26 January 2001 <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2001/jan/26/culture.features2> [accessed 2 June 2015].

Murnau resembles not his real-life equivalent, but director Werner Herzog

(responsible for the *Nosferatu* retelling *Nosferatu the Vampyre* (1979).) According to

Atkinson, Herzog's famous excesses in pursuit of cinematic excellence included

insisting on having thousands of rats painted to achieve the required shade of grey for

the film – and subsequently releasing them into the city of Bremen. Andrew Brooks

similarly characterises the power struggle between Murnau and Shreck as 'a scenario

not far removed from the experiences of many directors, and in fact the case on the set

of Herzog's *Nosferatu* (Herzog).'[108]

For Merhige's purposes, Murnau's 'true story' (as much as this can be said to

exist) becomes irrelevant because he serves in *Shadow of the Vampire* not merely as

himself, but as an embodiment of a predatory but enticingly outrageous excess of

artistic creation. (Herzog's releasing of the rats is selfish, but also makes a good

story.) *Shadow of the Vampire* demonstrates the ease by which a human being

becomes translated into fiction, and rewritten. This was not the first time that Murnau

received such fictionalizing treatment. In his memoir, his brother is quoted in an

anecdote about the young Murnau's attraction to girls, rewriting Murnau as

heterosexual.[109] Murnau also engaged in his own form of rewriting, changing his

surname from Plumpe. Cinema, with its great power to quote, to provide convincing

visuals, to blur different kinds of footage and different genres and time periods, has an

even stronger power to fictionalize real life.

Shadow of the Vampire was intended by its writer, Steven Katz, to be 'just a

really great vampire flick'.[110] Katz felt that Merhige emphasized the film-conscious

elements of the script:

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[108] Brooks, pp. 96-97.
[109] Robert Plumpe Murnau, 'My brother Wilhelm', in Lotte H. Eisner, *F. W. Murnau* (Paris: Le Terrain Vague, 1964; repr. London: Martin Secker & Warburg, 1973), pp. 13-17 (p. 16).
[110] Quoted in Gelder, *New Vampire Cinema*, p. 10.

'We used to fight like hell when I'd say it was a vampire movie, and

he'd say, 'No, it's not.' So when they started shooting it, he and

producer Nic Cage, with a lot of influence from John Malkovich […]

shifted the thrust of the movie. […] they stripped away a lot of the

layers of horror I had and made it a sort of art film about the nature of

creativity and the relationship between the director and his film, which

I had in the script, but as subtext only.'[111]

This account of artistic differences is fitting, given that the film itself is about a

struggle for control of a film. (Eventually Schreck tells Murnau, 'This is hardly your

picture any longer'.) Both versions of the film depend upon different kinds of

referentiality – to the vampire film genre (*a* 'vampire flick'), or to filmmaking as an

artistic process. In one sense these diverse aims are both covered by *Shadow of the*

Vampire, since the vampire film throws into clarity the self-referentiality not only of

its own genre, but of the cinema generally. All films, to an extent, are concerned with

'recognition'.[112] The vampire film merely takes this quality a little further, making it

more overt, as Ken Gelder recognizes, stressing the 'self-citational' nature of vampire

films.[113] What is more, *Shadow of the Vampire* reveals, like *Bram Stoker's Dracula,*

that originality and authenticity can serve as mere effects, film techniques like many

others: 'Like *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *Shadow of the Vampire* transports itself back to

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[111] Quoted in Gelder, *New Vampire Cinema,* p. 10.
[112] Freeland, in her discussion of *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, argues that Mina, when attending the cinematograph with Dracula, is active rather than passive because she is able to remember and recognize Dracula – just as the audience recognize and respond to him. (Freeland, p. 141).
[113] Gelder, *New Vampire Cinema,* p. 30.

an 'original' cinematic moment in order to manufacture an authenticity effect which in this case is a kind of macabre tribute to Murnau and silent film-making.'[114]

The *Dracula* film adaptations illustrate the change and growth not only of the Dracula myth on film, but also of filmmaking and critical preconceptions growing up around the novel. Critics and filmmakers alike use the novel as a site for exploring relationships with the past, and writing and rewriting these relationships via portrayals of women and female sexuality. The films illustrate a trend which can also be seen in a number of critical pieces – a focus on unmasking the Victorians as repressed hypocrites, and privileging modernity as more liberated and enlightened. However, adaptations repeatedly fail to break down the notions of 'right' and 'wrong' female sexuality, exposing a linguistic and conceptual poverty when they attempt to write positively about women pursuing extra-marital sex, or displaying strength or 'empowerment'. Discussion of *Dracula* reveals the longevity of outmoded and nonsensical ideas about 'sluttishness'. Purporting to escape 'Victorian' notions of sex as sinful or negative, these films sometimes end in capitalizing on this very conceit, portraying Dracula as a purveyor of guilty pleasures, 'the darker side of sex'. Modern readers and viewers of *Dracula* are unable – and unwilling – to entirely abandon this framework which characterizes sex between willing adults as being tinged with wickedness. Rather as Scott keeps certain Victorian conceptual mechanics in place in his review of Badham's *Dracula,* so 'Victorian' ideas about sex are repurposed, not eradicated. This attitude – like the concept of 'puritanical' nineteenth-century sexual mores – cannot be proposed as a universal attitude about sex (a very unlikely prospect), but its popularity in the *Dracula* films suggests it is popular enough to be saleable to film audiences.

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[114] Gelder, *New Vampire Cinema*, p. 10.

In the *Dracula* films, it is women who may end in paying the final price. The female scapegoat is needed in order that the other woman may survive. In *Bram Stoker's Dracula,* Lucy must be designated a 'slut' so that Mina – though an adulterous wife – is able to enjoy sex without stigma.[115] *Dracula* illustrates the workings of a system of thought with which society is still grappling, and from which it does not entirely wish to be extricated. It is within this framework that the films and the criticism produced contemporaneously with them struggle for authenticity, and control. By the time *Shadow of the Vampire* is reached, the vampire's female victim is no longer a site of interpretational contest between original text and adaptation – instead, the contest has shifted closer to the figure of the author/auteur, and the cinema itself. Steven Katz, the screenwriter, explicitly created the character to explore the ambivalent attitudes which artists inspire in their audiences:

> One of the things I was thinking about when I started writing the script was how we sort of beautify artists in our culture, yet artists often turn out to be gigantic disappointments as human beings. […] You meet artists that you've always admired, and they turn out to be just gigantic assholes. I wanted to show here that an artist could behave in a way that was unconscionable.[116]

The difficult and ambivalent relationship explored in the film is here with the artist – and the idea of an artist – rather than with women. In Katz's description, the artist is

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[115] The 'slut' is a useful bogeyman, like the New Woman in *Dracula* – by identifying it as something external and separate, women are free to enjoy sex without fear of being tarred with the same brush, just as Mina can make active use of her mental abilities because she is emphatic about not being a New Woman.

[116] Renfreu Neff, '*Shadow of the Vampire*: Renfreu Neff Talks With Steven Katz', *Creative Screenwriting*, 8 (2001), 22-25 (p. 25).

both compelling and dangerous, like the vampire. The wickedly alluring figure here is not the vampire playboy, nor the sexually liberated 'slut', but the filmmaker-auteur – the temptation to seek out a central author figure and originator for a piece of work, just as originality and authenticity seem increasingly doubtful.

Chapter Six

Our Vampires Are Different

ɪ. Worlds of Tropes: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Twilight*

The vampire has the power to mesmerize and enthral, to sap their victim's will and drain their energy – in fact, to produce an effect similar to television. Unable or unwilling to resist its lure, the viewer may be tempted to 'binge' – to consume television series recklessly (and often late into the night). Vampiricaly addictive, television has also offered a new arena for vampire fictions, like Joss Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003). Focusing on *Buffy* and on Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series, this chapter will examine the gothic of reading and writing in postmodernity which these late twentieth- and early twenty-first century vampires illustrate. The vampire, as depicted in these popular series, encapsulates the pressures and pleasures of writing where originality has become impossible, and texts are 'impure' – derivative, or commercialized. Both *Twilight* and *Buffy* affirm, in their different ways, the power of this 'impure' narrative to shape reality. In these modern vampire tales, this potential has a potential that is positive as well as fearful.

In 2004, a group of *Buffy* fans launched TV Tropes, an online resource for 'a giant list of all the recurring themes, ideas, and conventions from pop culture that they were discussing.'[1] The website, which expanded to include a multitude of other media, now offers an extensively hyperlinked breakdown of film, literature, and other

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[1] Annalee Newitz, 'Behind the Wiki: Meet TV Tropes Cofounder Fast Eddie', *io9*, 24 February 2010 <http://io9.com/5479423/behind-the-wiki-meet-tv-tropes-cofounder-fast-eddie> [accessed 20 December 2015].

media into 'tropes' – recurring plot devices, character archetypes, and themes.[2] Along

with illustrating *Buffy*'s richness in tropes, the site also illustrates the extensive

'tropification' of the vampire story. The page 'Our Vampires Are Different' (a subset

of 'Our Monsters Are Different') covers a wealth of different treatments of the myth.[3]

The trope, in its traditional literary context a figurative device, here denotes the

building blocks of fiction – and extends its reach beyond assorted media to 'real life'.[4]

TV Tropes' homepage acknowledges this move, offering a definition of the trope as

fictional shorthand:

> Merriam-Webster defines trope as a 'figure of speech.' For creative
>
> writer types, tropes are more about conveying a concept to the
>
> audience without needing to spell out all the details.
>
> The wiki is called 'TV Tropes' because TV is where we started. Over
>
> the course of a few years, our scope has crept out to include other
>
> media. Tropes transcend television. They reflect life. Since a lot of art,
>
> especially the popular arts, does its best to reflect life, tropes are likely
>
> to show up everywhere.[5]

An earlier version of the same page characterized tropes as 'devices and conventions

that a writer can reasonably rely on as being present in the audience members' minds

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[2] TV Tropes describes itself as 'The All-Devouring Pop-Cultural Wiki', hinting at its exhaustiveness and endless powers of consumption. The site behaves like both the gothic forest and the gothic monster, enveloping the visitor and consuming their life (at least a few hours of it). (TV Tropes, *Welcome to TV Tropes* <http://www.tvtropes.org> [accessed 1 June 2016]).
[3] TV Tropes, *Our Vampires Are Different* <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/OurVampiresAreDifferent> [accessed 14 June 2016].
[4] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, TV Tropes' use of the word is modern but not unprecedented – *OED* identifies a usage (in the sense of theme or motif) dating from 1975. (*Oxford English Dictionary* [online], 'trope', [accessed 16 January 2017]).
[5] TV Tropes, *Welcome to TV Tropes* <http://www.tvtropes.org> [accessed 28 March 2017].

and expectations.'[6] The trope is a narrative shortcut, already familiar.[7] This introduction effectively suggests a semiotics of narrative, where tropes behave like a code or language. The skill of a writer lies in novel treatments of these codes – using the same language to say something new.

Graham Allen points out that following Saussure's identification of the linguistic sign as a 'non-unitary, non-stable, relational unit', the literary sign can be considered as part of a distinct synchronic system.[8] Consequently, 'the literary work can now only be understood in a comparative way, the reader moving outwards from the work's apparent structure into the relations it possesses with other works and other linguistic structures.'[9] This kind of comparative reading is actively invited by *Buffy*. The show is set in a world of monsters, fairy tales, and figures of speech become real. Buffy's super strength and ability to defend herself and others from vampires gains meaning from a viewer's familiarity with horror tropes.[10] Joss Whedon explained the creation of Buffy as his reaction to 'the little blonde girl who goes into a dark alley and gets killed in every horror movie.'[11] Whedon intended to subvert this idea, to

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[6] TV Tropes, *Welcome to TV Tropes* <http://www.tvtropes.org> [accessed 12 January 2016].

[7] As the appeal to Merriam-Webster suggests, the site is run from North America, and is used primarily by English-speakers in the US and Britain – consequently, the media covered skews towards that produced in English. When tropes are extended to 'real life', a Western, Anglophone vision of the world is imposed on reality. US and British users compete to claim media territory. (TV Tropes, *TV Tropes Customs* <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Administrivia/TVTropesCustoms> [accessed 16 June 2016]).

[8] 'Authors of literary works do not just select words from a language system, they select plots, generic features, aspects of character, images, ways of narrating, even phrases and sentences from previous literary texts and from the literary tradition. If we imagine the literary tradition as itself a synchronic system, then the literary author becomes a figure working with at least two systems, those of language in general and of the literary system in particular.' (Graham Allen, *Intertextuality,* Second Edition (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 11).

[9] Allen, p. 12.

[10] Wes Craven's 1996 horror-comedy *Scream* operates in a similar way, featuring characters who are familiar with other horror movies, and can recognize and comment on the tropes and clichés of the genre.

[11] Joss Whedon, Audio Commentary: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Season One, DVD, 'Welcome to the Hellmouth' and 'The Harvest', 2001, quoted in J'annine Jobling, *Fantastic Spiritualities: Monsters, Heroes and the Contemporary Religious Imagination*, (London: T&T Clark, 2010), p. 203.

'create someone who was a hero where she had always been a victim.'[12] Buffy the

hero will have additional significance amongst viewers who recognize the trope, who

know that Buffy's fictional forbears are victims.[13] The show's very first scene sets the

tone for this reversal: a couple have sneaked off to a secluded location, the girl says

she hears something and her male companion dismisses her fears. A savvy viewer

will recognize this set-up for a monster attack – *Buffy*'s twist is that in this scene, the

girl and the monster are one and the same.[14]

As well as proposing a language of pop cultural motifs, TV Tropes' homepage

also suggests an overlap between the fictional and the real. On the site, 'real life'

becomes another medium, listed alongside film, television, and literature as a field for

tropes – allowing for a tropification of reality, a thematic alignment of fiction and

fact. One such example is the 'Apocalyptic Log' trope – a record that charts its

author's imperilment and death.[15] In this trope listing, *Dracula*'s first-person accounts

of characters facing mortal danger (like the account of the captain of the *Demeter*) are

catalogued alongside real life examples like Scott's diary from 1912. The living

person's record is classified into a literary device, a subgenre – and real and fictional

document can have a similar resonance. Here, assorted forms of the 'apocalyptic log'

demonstrate the uncanny or poignant tendencies of the written document – or other

record – that survives its author's demise.

The extension of the trope's applicability beyond figurative language can also

be found in the 'Four Master Tropes' of Kenneth Burke. Burke's master tropes are

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[12] Whedon, Audio Commentary: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Season One, DVD, 'Welcome to the Hellmouth' and 'The Harvest', quoted in Jobling, p. 203.
[13] See TV Tropes, *Slashers Prefer Blondes* <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/SlashersPreferBlondes> [accessed 8 June 2016].
[14] 'Welcome to the Hellmouth', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Charles Martin Smith, written by Joss Whedon, Season 1, episode 1. First broadcast 10 March 1997.
[15] TV Tropes, *Apocalyptic Log* <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/ApocalypticLog> [accessed 7 June 2016].

metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony, and he argues for 'their rôle in the discovery and description of "the truth."'[16] According to Burke, the master tropes all have their literal or 'realistic' applications: metaphor is the equivalent of perspective, metonymy of reduction, synecdoche of representation, and irony of dialectic.[17] By transplanting his master tropes into the 'real world', Burke is able to compare the experience of natural phenomena with the experience of a piece of art:

> Sensory representation is, of course, synecdochic in that the senses abstract certain qualities from some bundle of electro-chemical activities we call, say, a tree, and these qualities (such as size, shape, colour, texture, weight, etc.) can be said 'truly to represent' a tree.[18]

The trope has the power to reveal facets of life, almost to bestow additional layers and complexities of existence. Burke writes in regard to perspective (his 'real-world' equivalent to metaphor): 'we could say that characters possess degrees of being in proportion to the variety of perspectives from which they can with justice be perceived.'[19] The more perspectives from which something can be considered, the more being it possesses. This process is reminiscent of Dracula's longevity and power as a fictional character: considered by thousands of different writers over more than a hundred years, more facets have been revealed about – or bestowed upon – him, giving him a wonderfully varied and enduring life which extends far beyond Stoker's novel.

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[16] Kenneth Burke, 'Four Master Tropes', in *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkley: California University Press, 1969), pp. 503-17 (p. 503) (first publ. in *The Kenyon Review,* 13 (1941) 421-38).
[17] Burke, p. 503.
[18] Burke, p. 508.
[19] Burke, p. 504.

As a motif, and as an instance of intertextuality, the trope can conversely appear a repressive or stultifying force. Barthes writes:

> Although entirely derived from books, these codes, by a swivel
> characteristic of bourgeois ideology, which turns culture into nature,
> appear to establish reality, 'Life'. 'Life' then, in the classic text
> becomes a nauseating mixture of common opinions, a smother of
> received ideas.[20]

However, where tropes are restrictive, their taxonomy can be employed to question received ideas and attitudes. In 2012, TV Tropes's removal of pages mentioning rape (in order to conciliate advertising sponsors) led to criticism from those who considered the tropes pages as an effective way to collate disturbing tendencies in modern media. Identifying patterns might prove a way to resist the 'smother of received ideas'. This task is important because, as Barthes states, culture becomes nature.[21] More, these stultifying codes might be used – via reversal and other forms of play – to propose new forms of media, and society – a critique from within, as is Whedon's stated goal in creating *Buffy*.

This kind of writing becomes more likely as tropes and works of fiction accumulate. Whilst Burke proposes four master tropes, TV Tropes hosts thousands, with additions made regularly. Though it shares Burke's application of literary device

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[20] Roland Barthes, *S/Z* (1974), quoted in Allen, pp. 86-87.
[21] Feminist-aligned pop culture site *The Mary Sue* summarizes this issue: 'TV Tropes isn't *just* a repository of fan clichés and geek trivia. The categorization of tropes that hurt, marginalize, and perpetuate victims of rape and rape culture – particularly women – is *incredibly* important in a cultural moment where debate about sexist tropes is greater than it ever has been. It's impossible to engage in intelligent debates about issues like sexism in video games or rape tropes in YA fantasy without having clear, accessible examples of *what* those harmful tropes look like.' (Aja Romano, *TV Tropes Deletes Every Rape Trope; Geek Feminism Wiki steps in* (26 June 2012) <http://www.themarysue.com/tv-tropes-rape-articles/ > [accessed 15 January 2017]).

to reality, the site's manifold tropes are perhaps more closely related to the 'intertextual frame' described by Umberto Eco in his essay on *Casablanca*: 'stereotyped situations derived from preceding textual tradition and recorded by our encyclopaedia.'[22] Two of the examples Eco gives, 'Drunkard Redeemed by Love' and 'the Evil Nazi' would fit easily onto the site.[23] Eco argues that *Casablanca* achieves cult status because it is made out of archetypes/intertextual frames, its characters living 'no "real" life but life as stereotypically portrayed in previous films.'[24] Eco applies this assessment of *Casablanca* to later cinema:

> What *Casablanca* does unconsciously, other movies will do with
> extreme intertextual awareness, assuming also that the addressee is
> equally aware of their purposes. These are 'postmodern' movies,
> where the quotation of the topos is recognized as the only way to cope
> with the burden of our filmic encyclopaedic expertise.[25]

The 'burden of our filmic encyclopaedic expertise' is particularly heavy for the vampire of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century – resulting in a focus on originality (or its lack), one of the central preoccupations of postmodernity.[26] Awareness of pre-existing fictional vampires is written into late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century treatments of the myth.[27] The vampire is inevitably and often

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[22] Umberto Eco, 'Casablanca: Cult Movies and Intertextual Collage', in *Travels in Hyperreality,* trans. by William Weaver (London: Picador, 1987), pp. 197-211 (p. 200).
[23] Eco, 'Casablanca: Cult Movies and Intertextual Collage', p. 200.
[24] Eco, 'Casablanca: Cult Movies and Intertextual Collage', p. 208.
[25] Eco, 'Casablanca: Cult Movies and Intertextual Collage', p. 209.
[26] Linda Hutcheon, 'Beginning to Theorize Postmodernism', *Textual Practice*, 1 (1987), 10-31 (repr. in *A Postmodern Reader*, ed. by Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheon (Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp. 243-72 (p.251).
[27] Often an earlier vampire text serves as an explicit reference point – as with Steven King's 'Salem's Lot* (1975)*, which is a response to *Dracula,* imagining what would happen if the Count appeared in nineteen-seventies America rather than *fin-de-siècle* London.

overtly intertextual, since the fact of other fictional vampires must be confronted (this becomes a more pressing concern as time passes and vampires accumulate.) The vampire text cannot function separately from other texts as a closed system. If, in Judith Still and Michael Worton's words, 'the work of art is inevitably shot through with references, quotations and influences of every time', then this is particularly true here.[28] More, the intertextual role of the reader in 'cross-fertilisation of the packaged textual material' is paramount in the vampire text – where the reader's expectations and familiarity with other vampires must be borne in mind by the writer.[29] The reader may find the text enriched by reference to other fictional vampires and vampire tropes. They may reject genre conventions which have grown stale, or conversely may object to unprecedented additions to vampire lore.[30] The vampire is situated in a perpetual dialogue between repetition and novelty, and as such is one of the most tropified monsters on the TV Tropes site.[31]

Writing in the cultural environment described by Eco requires taking into account the knowing audiences, who (like the users of TV Tropes) are able to relate a piece of media to thousands of others, to cross-reference quickly, widely, and irreverently. For the postmodern vampire story, this knowingness is inescapable. Quotation and other forms of reference become a strategy for pleasure and for survival, allowing a new piece of art to negotiate with its peers and forbears. The interaction with older texts sometimes becomes overt and aggressive, as vampire

[28] Judith Still and Michael Worton, 'Introduction', in *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, ed. by Michael Worton and Judith Still (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), pp. 1-44 (p. 1).
[29] Still and Worton, p. 1.
[30] Critics of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series, for instance, might insist that 'real' vampires don't sparkle, as Meyer's vampires do.
[31] Elsewhere, vampires have received dedicated treatment in Robert Carlisle's Motif Index for the Vampire in Folklore, Literature, and Film. Following folkloric classification of motifs like Stith Thompson's 1932 *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature,* this online resource is in the process of collecting vampire reference from film, folklore, and literature. (Robert Carlisle, California State University, Bakersfield, *Motif Index of Vampires* <https://www.csub.edu/~rcarlisle/Vampire_Motif/Vampire_Motif_Start.html> [accessed 4 June 2016]).

media attempt to make space for themselves by pushing back against other examples

of the same genre. The TV Tropes page 'Your Vampires Suck' lists instances of such

competition.[32] Authors may promote their own vampires by suggesting that they are

more dangerous, attractive, powerful, or 'realistic' than their predecessors. The

situation recalls the rivalry between novel heroines that Jane Austen describes in

Northanger Abbey:

> I will not adopt that ungenerous and impolitic custom, so common
>
> with novel writers, of degrading, by their contemptuous censure, the
>
> very performances to the number of which they are themselves adding
>
> […] Alas! if the heroine of one novel be not patronized by the heroine
>
> of another, from whom can she expect protection and regard?[33]

Austen comically sketches an intellectual climate where novels are despised, whilst

'worthier' reading material like the *Spectator* is valued. Respectability becomes a

zero-sum game – there is only one novel worth perusing, and it is the one the reader is

currently holding. 'Your Vampires Suck' implies a similar contest between vampires

– a struggle for distinctiveness and the right to be taken seriously. Joan Ormrod's

discussion of the Federal Vampire and Zombie Agency (FVZA) website (dedicated to

a fictional vampire and zombie hunting organization, the site is essentially a non-

linear piece of online storytelling) is one instance of the privileging of one vampire at

the expense of another. The site's 'viral vampire' is distinguished as superior to the

vampires of *Twilight* and those of Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* – fans of

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[32] TV Tropes, *Your Vampires Suck*
<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/YourVampiresSuck> [accessed 18 June 2016].
[33] Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (London: Penguin, 1994), p. 24.

these works are dismissed as 'immature and female'.[34] (Associating a work or genre

with the feminine being, as ever, a sure way to discredit it.)[35]

Sometimes the conflict takes a literal turn. Buffy's first major opponent is the

Master, who resembles Count Orlok – pale, bald, pointy-eared and demonic, a

repulsive vampire of the old school. In his first onscreen appearance, he rises

gradually from a pool of blood – defying gravity, as Orlok does when he rises from

his coffin. Buffy comes to fight him dressed in sacrificial white, accepting the terms

of the prophecy which decrees he will kill her – reminiscent of *Nosferatu*'s Ellen,

another martyr to the vampire's bite. Both Ellen and Buffy save their communities by

fulfilling the conditions of an archaic text – Buffy, however, reinterprets the text,

finding a loophole. She 'dies', but is revived after a couple of minutes. When the

Master protests that her death was written, Buffy retorts: 'What can I say? I flunked

the written.'[36] After the Master is killed, his acolyte 'the Anointed One' is despatched

by Spike, who announces: 'From now on we're going to have a little less ritual, and a

little more fun around here.'[37] Stacey Abbot argues that 'the vampire and Slayer are

intrinsically linked […] when Buffy undermines prophecy and destroys the Master

[…] she calls forth a modern vampire to take his place.'[38] Refusing to play out the

role of film's first ever vampire victim, Buffy rejects this antique mode of vampirism,

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[34] Joan Ormod, 'Pa/trolling the Borders of the Federal Vampire and Zombie Agency Website: Realism, Gender, Authenticity', in *Fanpires: Audience Consumption of the Modern Vampire*, ed. by Gareth Schott and Kirstine Moffat (Washington, DC: New Academia, 2011), pp. 33-53 (p. 42).

[35] Nicola Humble notes how association with the feminine reader has long threatened to banish 'literary' works to the dreaded domain of the bourgeois and 'middlebrow'. (Nicola Humble, 'The Reader of Popular Fiction', in *The Cambridge Companion to Popular Fiction*, ed. by David Glover and Scott McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 86-102 (p. 93), in *Cambridge Core* [accessed 27 January 2017]).

[36] 'Prophecy Girl', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 1, episode 12. First broadcast 2 June 1997.

[37] 'School Hard', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by John T. Kretchmer, written Joss Whedon (story) and David Greenwalt (teleplay), Season 2, episode 3. First broadcast 29 September 1997.

[38] Stacey Abbott, 'A Little Less Ritual and a Little More Fun: The Modern Vampire in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer the Vampire Slayer*', *Slayage*, 1.3 (2001) <http://www.whedonstudies.tv/uploads/2/6/2/8/26288593/abbott_slayage_1.3.pdf > [accessed 14 June 2016] (para. 24 of 32).

clearing the stage for something new. At the same time, Buffy fulfils the prophecy by

sticking to its exact words, but twisting its meaning – a traditional storytelling

technique in itself (dating back at least as far as Croesus's meeting with the Delphic

oracle.) *Buffy* breaks from tradition whilst retaining its ties to a plethora of earlier and

contemporary texts.

The privileging of one vampire at the expense of another can manifest in more

overt criticism – like Anne Rice's verdict on the vampires of *Twilight*:

> Lestat and Louie [sic] feel sorry for vampires that sparkle in the sun.
> They would never hurt immortals who choose to spend eternity going
> to high school over and over again in a small town – anymore than
> they would hurt the physically disabled or the mentally challenged. My
> vampires possess gravitas. They can afford to be merciful.[39]

Here, Rice essentially writes a miniature fiction – for a moment, two fictional

universes overlap, so that Rice's vampires can weigh up Meyer's and find them

wanting. Rice (arguably the most influential living writer of the vampire genre)

establishes a boundary between her works and those of a popular newcomer, and

between her vampires and Meyer's – despite potential points of comparison.[40]

In Rice's miniature fiction, Lestat and Louis refrain from a physical contest

with the Cullen family – in the fan-made video 'Buffy Versus Edward', however,

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[39] Anne Rice, Untitled Facebook post, 28 October 2011,
<https://www.facebook.com/annericefanpage/posts/10150436358660452> [accessed 14 June 2016].
[40] Louis and Edward's introspectiveness and ambivalence about their vampirism, for instance, or both
series' portrayal of Europe as enervated and decadent.

characters from two different vampire stories do engage in a physical fight.[41] The remix splices together scenes from *Buffy* and the *Twilight* films in order to create a new narrative in which Buffy meets and stakes Edward. The video's creator, Jonathan McIntosh writes that the video was created explicitly to critique *Twilight*'s portrayal of male/female relationships.[42] McIntosh is not a disinterested critic – he describes himself as a *Buffy* fan who only encountered Meyer's series by chance. In mocking *Twilight*'s treatment of gender, McIntosh ignores elements of *Buffy* which might threaten the distinction between the two series – for instance, the fact that two of Buffy's love interests are vampires. Ostensibly a feminist hero, Buffy is also a woman who dates men who kill women. (One of these, Spike, has killed two previous slayers – and brags about the fact immediately after sleeping with Buffy).[43] For the *Buffy* fan (perhaps also for Rice) Edward Cullen is the inferior alternative, the wrong sort of vampire. This unsatisfactory vampire can be used to affirm the feminist credentials or 'gravitas' of other vampires.[44]

Twilight itself, which ignores many vampire conventions and introduces new lore (vampires sparkling in sunlight, for instance), must still define its undead against their literary kin. In *The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner* (2010), the vampire Bree

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[41] Jonathon McIntosh, *Buffy Vs Edward: Twilight Remixed -- [original version]*, online video, YouTube, 19 June 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZwM3GvaTRM> [accessed 14 June 2016].
[42] 'My re-imagined story was specifically constructed as a response to Edward, and what his behaviour represents in our larger social context for both men and women. More than just a showdown between The Slayer and the Sparkly Vampire, it's also a humorous visualization of the metaphorical battle between two opposing visions of gender roles in the 21ist [sic] century.' (Jonathan McIntosh, 'What Would Buffy Do? Notes on Dusting Edward Cullen', <http://www.wimnonline.org/WIMNsVoicesBlog/2009/07/01/what-would-buffy-do-notes-on-dusting-edward-cullen/> [accessed 14 June 2016]).
[43] 'Wrecked', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Solomon, written by Marti Noxon, Season 6, episode 10. First broadcast 27 November 2001. Both Spike and Angel are far more likely to choose female victims. Paul D. Sapiro's analysis reveals that Angel bites four men and six women onscreen, whilst Spike bites two men and ten women. (Paul D. Sapiro, 'Someone to Sink Your Teeth Into: Gendered Biting Patterns on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* – A Quantitative Analysis', *Slayage*, 7.2 (2008) <http://www.whedonstudies.tv/uploads/2/6/2/8/26288593/shapiro_slayage_7.2.pdf > [accessed 14 June 2016] (para. 22 of 29)).
[44] Vampire 'facts' can be fiercely guarded, as on FVZA site, where vampire details derived from media are derided and dismissed as false by site members. (Ormrod, pp. 41-42).

insists, '[e]veryone knows that old-timey vampires had to stay in coffins during the day […] To keep out of the sun. That's common knowledge'.[45] Traditional vampire tropes are dangerously misleading here, keeping Bree ignorant of her own abilities. Similarly, Bella compares what she knows about the Cullens with what she reads and remembers from other sources, but cannot reconcile the two. Later she learns that it is the legends that are wrong. Edward amusedly dismisses several popular conventions (like the idea that vampires sleep in coffins) as myth.[46] Though bookish, Bella gets little assistance in her researches from vampire literature – despite the fact that a number of works from the genre could offer her some clues about the Cullens. (For example, like Meyer's vampires, Dracula is able to venture outside in sunlight.) Instead, Bella finds insight from 'classic' literature (for instance, she gains insight into her romantic situation from reading *Wuthering Heights*).[47] Not only are the works Bella reads of higher literary status than *Dracula* and its ilk, they throw light chiefly on the romantic aspect of the series, rather than its horror – Meyer sets Bella and Edward alongside Cathy and Heathcliff, rather than Mina and Jonathan (or Mina and Dracula), and Edward is privileged as the perfect romantic hero, rather than the perfect supernatural horror.

The metatext provides a means of creative competition for vampire media – either singling out a particular take on the myth for criticism (as Rice and McIntosh do in their miniature crossover fictions) or commenting on vampire tropes in general (as Meyer does). Modern audiences are reliably told to dismiss the vampire knowledge gleaned from other works – 'Our Vampires are Different'. *Buffy* maintains its freshness by producing a double subversion. When Xander asks Buffy about killing vampires, he runs through a list of traditional weapons ('crosses, garlic, stake

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[45] Stephenie Meyer, *The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner* (London: Little, Brown, 2010), p. 38.
[46] Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* (London: Little, Brown, 2006; repr. 2009), p. 162.
[47] Stephenie Meyer, *Eclipse* (London: Little, Brown, 2009)*,* p. 517.

through the heart') for her to confirm or reject.[48] Buffy agrees that all of these are effective, along with '[f]ire, beheading, sunlight, holy water, the usual.' The show acknowledges that there is a 'usual' vampire, and works with some familiar aspects of this archetype rather than setting out to discredit it at every turn. Popular culture *can* provide a useful guide to vampires in *Buffy* – in spite of what some vampires might claim. Visiting a nightclub for human admirers of vampires, Angel derides its patrons as '[c]hildren making up bedtime stories of friendly vampires to comfort themselves in the dark.' But his insistence that the club patrons don't know anything about real vampires – not even how they dress – is immediately undercut by the appearance of a vampire 'fan' wearing an identical outfit to his. Angel – when in possession of his soul – is a friendly vampire, or close to it. (Cordelia compares him to 'a care bear with fangs.')[49] His insistence on rejecting fairy tales for the 'reality' of vampire existence should recall the fact that 'not like a fairy tale' has become a cliché in itself. 'Our Vampires Are Different' implies this homogenization of reversal – 'not like a fairy tale', not being like other examples, is now a trope in itself. *Buffy* acknowledges this by reversing expectations again – *not* not like the fairy tale – as with Angel's encounter with his sartorial twin.

In Buffy's world, there are a lot of vampires – along with a lot of other supernatural creatures. The demon realm has its own customs and conventions, its own society, even its own bar. As a result, not only is Buffy's task never-ending, but the vampire becomes a routine phenomenon.[50] By Season Three, Buffy sits studying

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[48] 'The Harvest', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by John T. Kretchmer, written by Joss Whedon, Season 1, episode 2. First broadcast 10 March 1997.

[49] 'Halloween', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Bruce Seth Green, written by Carl Ellsworth, Season 2, episode 6. First broadcast 27 October 1997.

[50] Earlier examples of the vampire story frequently feature only a single vampire. Even when pre-Dracula tales do feature plural vampires, cooperation or comradeship between them is rare. The 'circle of semi-demons' that Dracula attempted to found in Victorian London has found its realization in fictions like *Buffy*. Here the vampire is so commonplace that it is occasionally used to highlight the strangeness of another plot development – as in the episode 'Go Fish', where Angel's attack highlights

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for exams in the graveyard as she waits for the undead to appear.[51] Gert Magnusson identifies *Buffy*'s numerous run-of-the-mill vampires as a flaw, arguing that the vampires' numbers 'make them into stereotypes, as they don't get an individual voice or thought. […] the anonymous vampires are insignificant to the narrative'.[52] In the twenty-first century, however, the dangers of stereotyping or insignificance threaten all vampires. *Buffy*'s booming vampire population reflects an intertextual vampire society which is far larger, and inescapable. The nameless vampires are significant in the Sisyphean task that they present to Buffy, and in what they bring to the story played out in the foreground – that of Buffy, her friends, and certain exceptional vampires. The vampire society, which is a popular trope of more recent vampire fictions (the vampires of *Twilight* being a famous example), provides a backdrop for the narratively significant vampires – often superior to the average vampire of their fictional universe.[53] Angel from *Buffy* is one such example – his evil deeds make him infamous, being cursed with a soul makes him unique.[54]

As the demon and vampire society of *Buffy* illustrates, the show is a fictional universe which explicitly draws upon earlier works, both inside and outside the vampire genre.[55] This treatment of the vampire is not unprecedented by any means – a much earlier example is *The Vampire's Victim*, a Christmas burlesque staged in 1887, which had Victor Frankenstein (a breeches role) meeting a vampire (though not

the fact that it is something else (not a vampire) responsible for the disappearance of the school swim team. ('Go Fish', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Semel, written by David Fury and Elin Hampton, Season 2, episode 20. First broadcast 5 May 1998).
[51] 'Band Candy', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Lange, written by Jane Espenson, Season 3, episode 6. First broadcast 10 November 1998.
[52] Gert Magnusson, 'Being a Vampire Sucks: Regarding the Anonymous Vampires in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*', *Slayage*, 9.1 (2011) < http://www.whedonstudies.tv/uploads/2/6/2/8/26288593/magnusson_slayage_9.1.pdf> [accessed 14 June 2016] (para. 13 of 13)
[53] This technique sometimes involves making the vampire very old and powerful (like Genevive in *Anno Dracula*), giving the vampire special gifts, a unique destiny, a romance (often with a human being). Vampire-hybrids also occur, like the vampire-human Renesmee in Meyer's *Breaking Dawn.*
[54] At least until Season Seven.
[55] It is also based on revision of an earlier film, written by Whedon: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Fran Rubel Kuzui (20th Century Fox, 1992).

Dracula).[56] The tendency is now widespread enough to have been noted by TV Tropes – where it is described under the trope heading 'All Myths Are True'.[57] Two recent works which also use vampire literature in combination with other fictions are Kim Newman's *Anno Dracula* (1992) and its sequels, and Alan Moore's comic series *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (1999-present). Both of these repurpose elements of *Dracula* and other works of fiction in ways ranging from the respectful to the violently revisionary.[58] Each is packed with references, some only very fleeting. The effect is a buffet that combines dozens of different fictions, all sharing the same text space – there are stories going on everywhere. *Anno Dracula,* packed with fictional vampires, also features Doctors Jekyll and Moreau, and ends with the news that although Dracula and Jack the Ripper have both ceased to present a threat, a new monster – Hyde – is now terrorizing London.[59]

Buffy's fictional world is similarly packed with story, combining folklore (the Season Five episode 'Hush', with its fairy tale villains the Gentlemen) and horror (famous terrors referenced include *Dracula, Frankenstein, The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, The Creature From the Black Lagoon,* and *IT*). However, *Buffy*'s monsters are very likely to be mythic or folkloric beings (witches, trolls, gods) rather than discrete, single-authored literary figures. More, the iconic monsters that do appear (like Frankenstein's monster and Mr Hyde) may not cameo as themselves, though their stories are recognizable. When a classmate of Buffy's drinks a chemical compound in order to become more virile, and inadvertently brings out an aggressive

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[56] Stuart, p. 173.

[57] TV Tropes, *All Myths Are True* <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/AllMythsAreTrue> [accessed 20 June 2016].

[58] Both of these works begin in the late 19th century, and though they continue into the modern era, they include Victorian characters (Newman's Kate Reed, Moore's Mina Murray) as they do so. The Victorian crossover is particularly popular, with other recent examples including the film *Van Helsing* (2004) and TV series *Penny Dreadful* (2014-2016).

[59] This technique is similar to the 'mashup', where two or more pieces of music or other media works are combined.

and bestial side, Mr Hyde is never mentioned, though his presence is felt.[60] Similarly, *Frankenstein* is used twice – first in Season Two, and then again in Season Four.[61] Fictional characters fragment, appearing in different guises and formations, present even when unnamed. *Buffy* is a world where stories and media make up the stuff of everyday life, embedded, though not always recognized – as in the viewer's world. This universe of malls, sleepovers, homework and fast food is shot through with horrors and fantasies.[62] Richard S. Albright observes that Buffy's fantastic universe is tied to the viewer's via a 'sharing of imaginary works'.[63] The works which form Buffy's cultural frame of reference are familiar to the viewer and present in the real world. Fiction allows a blurring of fictional and real worlds – viewer and character have seen some of the same films, have comparable frames of cultural reference – in a sense, shared fictions add plausibility.

Many characters of *Buffy* are avid consumers of various media. In one scene Xander and Willow kill time by challenging each other to identify film quotations.[64] The game ends when Willow chooses 'Use the Force, Luke' – a quotation so well known that Xander refuses to dignify it with a response. References to characters like Scully (from *The X-Files*) and Dumbledore (from *Harry Potter*) become shorthand.[65] Jesse Saba Kirchner comments that such references 'are sometimes so casual that the

[60] 'Beauty and the Beasts', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by James Whitmore, Jr, written by Marti Noxon, Season 3, episode 4. First broadcast 20 October 1998.

[61] 'Some Assembly Required', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Bruce Seth Green, written by Ty King, Season 2, episode 2. First broadcast 22 September 1997. 'Goodbye Iowa', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Solomon, written by Marti Noxon, Season 4, episode 14. First broadcast 15 February 2000.

[62] Moore's world could be characterized as the world of fiction, a universe where all stories are true. Newman's is more concerned with the point where real life 'personalities' and fictional characters interact – Florence Stoker meeting Arthur Godalming, for instance. Celebrities like Oscar Wilde and Marlon Brando become fictional characters in their own right.

[63] Richard S. Albright, '"[B]reakaway Pop Hit or . . . Book Number?": "Once More, with Feeling" and Genre', *Slayage*, 5.1 (2005) <http://www.whedonstudies.tv/uploads/2/6/2/8/26288593/albright_slayage_5.1.pdf > [accessed 14 June 2016] (para. 4 of 28)

[64] 'When She Was Bad', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 2, episode 1. First broadcast 15 September 1997.

[65] The online 'language' of gifs is reminiscent of TV Tropes' 'language' of literary motifs.

pop culture terms have become literally a part of the language; yet they often require a complex understanding of the reference.'[66] Such playfulness is often extended to include 'respectable' literature. At one point, Buffy quips, 'The girl would make Godot look punctual.'[67] In another episode, Buffy thinks she may have seen Death, and Xander warns her not to play chess with him ('the guy's, like, a whiz') – a reference to Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* (1957).[68] Like TV Tropes, *Buffy* suggests a reading and referencing style that – though non-academic, not 'legitimate' – could potentially be applied to any work.

TV Tropes is postmodern in its consideration of 'high' and 'low' culture side by side, its serious treatment of non-serious media. 'Fast Eddie', the site's co-founder, insists: 'One of our big rules and principles is that there's no such thing as notability. There is no work that's not eligible to be written up on the site.'[69] As a result, new links and affinities are identified between cultural properties both 'high' and 'low'.[70] Henry Jenkins describes how fan culture features a similar concept of the erosion of barriers between high and low culture, with 'low' culture being given fans' painstaking attention, as if it were a worthy object of study. Jenkins draws Bourdieu's observation that the mixing of high and low taste is a sacrilege for those who possess 'legitimate' culture.[71] Bourdieu's description of hierarchies of taste in the 1970s

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[66] Jesse Saba Kirchner, 'And in Some Language That's English? Slayer Slang and Artificial Computer Generation', *Slayage*, 5.4 (2006) <http://www.whedonstudies.tv/uploads/2/6/2/8/26288593/kirchner_slayage_5.4.pdf> [accessed 14 June 2016] (para. 47 of 56).

[67] 'Enemies', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Grossman, written by Douglas Petrie, Season 3, episode 17. First broadcast 16 March 1999.

[68] 'Killed By Death', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Deran Sarafian, written by Rob Des Hotel and Dean Batali, Season 2, episode 18. First broadcast 3 March 1998.

[69] Annalee Newitz, 'Behind the Wiki: Meet TV Tropes Cofounder Fast Eddie', *io9,* 24 February 2010, <http://io9.com/5479423/behind-the-wiki-meet-tv-tropes-cofounder-fast-eddie> [accessed 20 December 2015].

[70] As a result of contributors' efforts, *Twilight* is cross-referenced with manifold other fictions, including *Richard III,* Keats' "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer", and *Pirates of the Caribbean.* See TV Tropes, *Artistic License: History* <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/ArtisticLicenseHistory> [accessed 13 June 2016].

[71] Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers,* twentieth anniversary edition (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 17.

identifies the juxtaposition of works found in the art museum as both creating and

publicly exercising 'correct' aesthetic judgement, prioritizing form and technique

over function and theme.[72] TV Tropes does the opposite, functioning like an online

'art museum' – only created with the popular (rather than the 'legitimate') 'aesthetic'

as its organizing principal. (The site is constructed as a wiki – an online database that

can be edited by anyone – there is no limit to the potential number of curators or

contributors, and no need to discriminate between works included.)[73]

Whilst the fan text and the popular one are not identical, there is considerable

overlap between them – most obviously, 'popular' works are more likely to attract a

devoted following, to inspire behaviour which could be considered 'fannish'.[74] Via

the TV Tropes treatment, 'fan' or 'popular' media can be created out of 'legitimate'

ones – almost the opposite of the museum that Bourdieu describes.[75] Narrative and

characterization details are more frequently pinpointed than stylistic ones, and

consequently there is a 'subordination of form to function', in Bourdieu's phrase (this,

he argues, is characteristic of the 'popular aesthetic').[76] What happens is more

detailed than how it happens. Hence the fan or popular visualization of the media

discussed, and hence also the move from the figurative to the narrative interpretation

of the trope. Any piece of media can be added to TV Tropes' online museum – and if

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[72] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. by Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1984; repr. 1996), p. 30.
[73] Anyone can set up this kind of site, and it is commonplace for popular fictional series to have a dedicated wiki. *Harry Potter, Buffy,* and *Twilight* are three examples of series with fan-created wikis.
[74] Critics differ as to whether fan and 'normal' media consumption are connected. But Fiske argues that fans differ from regular readers 'in degree rather than kind', and display tendencies which are evident in 'normal' viewers, only in a more pronounced way. (John Fiske, 'The Cultural Economy of Fandom', in *The Adoring Audience; Fan Culture and Popular Media*, ed. by Lisa A. Lewis (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 30-49 (p. 46)).
[75] 'Objects previously treated as collectors' curios or historical and ethnographic documents have achieved the status of works of art, thereby materializing the omnipotence of the aesthetic gaze.' (Bourdieu, p. 30).
[76] Boudieu, p. 31.

they can undergo such treatment then there may be a kernel of the popular lurking even in works of 'high' culture.

Dracula characterizes Lucy Westenra's transformation from human to vampire as an abrupt shift in character and morality. When transformed, she becomes 'a nightmare of Lucy', her newly wanton appearance 'a devilish mockery of Lucy's sweet purity' (*Dracula,* p. 256). As many have pointed out, however, the seeds of Lucy's alteration are hinted at in her human character.[77] A similar likeness exists in *Buffy*: when Willow remarks with disgust that her vampire self is 'evil and skanky', and 'kind of gay', Angel has to refrain from revealing that hidden aspects of a human's character may reveal themselves in their vampire incarnation.[78] Lucy and Willow seem to have an innate potential for vampiric excess. This kind of alteration could be compared to the transformation which makes a 'popular' text out of a 'classic' via a particular mode of reading. The 'devilish mockery' of popularization suggests an affinity between 'popular' and 'classic' works – both of which can be added to a page of TV Tropes. Elsewhere, Kristina Deffenbacher and Mikayla Zagoria-Moffet observe how the publishing industry capitalized on *Twilight*'s popularity by releasing tie-in versions of 'classics' mentioned in the series, including *Wuthering Heights* and *Romeo and Juliet*.[79] The vampire, popular connection between these canonical texts and *Twilight* can be exploited for economic gain – whilst the popular text 'vamps' the established cultural property, the reverse may also be true. (As Deffenbacher and Zagoria-Moffet highlight by their linking *Twilight* to *Jane Eyre*

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[77] Her wish for three husbands is an oft-cited detail. Anne Cranny-Francis writes that this comment from the human Lucy 'signifies the sensuality which characterizes Lucy as a vampire.' (Cranny-Francis, p. 67).

[78] 'Doppelgangland', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 3, episode 16. First broadcast 23 February 1999.

[79] Kristina Deffenbacher and Mikayla Zagoria-Moffet, 'Textual Vampirism in the *Twilight* Saga: Drawing Feminist Life from *Jane Eyre* and Teen Fantasy Fiction', in *Bringing Light to* Twilight, ed. by Giselle Liza Anatol (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 31-42 (p. 31).

– an unnamed intertext – the association between popular and classic extends to sharing and overlap of themes and relationship dynamics.)[80]

The metamorphosis from human to vampire might also be compared to the transformation which 'original' texts like *Dracula* experience when their characters and situations are used for derivative or fan works. In a change which parallels the character shift often depicted in the human to vampire metamorphosis, these works often feature sexual or violent themes (*Anno Dracula* deals with the Ripper murders, for example), whilst also implying an affinity between original and derivative text – almost, at times, a 'devilish mockery.'[81] Perhaps, Newman's novel speculates, Seward always had the potential to become a vicious killer of women, just as Lucy always had the potential to become a vampire *femme fatale*. (After all, he contemplates killing the vampire Lucy with 'savage delight' (*Dracula,* p. 253).) *Dracula* is altered by contact with the later text. In the case of fanfiction, this kind of affinity can provide legal protection, as Rebecca Tushnet points out – 'fair use' can be ruled in a case of underlying subtext.[82] The source text may also provoke a rewrite – setting right of 'wrongs', supplying deficiencies.[83] For instance, *Twilight*'s reticence about the details of Edward and Bella's sex life provides inspiration for fan writers. Drawing on Barthes' *Le Plaisir du texte*, Malin Isaksson suggests that it is *Twilight*'s very chasteness which inspires the graphic sex scenes in its fanfiction – a pleasurable

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[80] Deffenbacher and Zagoria-Moffet, p. 31.

[81] The text is a place where modernity can enter into a dialogue with the past, as Judith Still and Micahel Worton point out. A literary imitation written at a later date (like *Anno Dracula*) can become 'a tension between two idiolects and two or more sociolects.' (Still and Worton, p. 7). This kind of repurposing may provide commentary not merely on a particular work, but on the society which produced it. Sexual and violent revisions of nineteenth century work may display elements of hostility, or punishment (Two of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*'s scenes of rape/attempted rape are played for comedy, as a deliberate affront to Victorian prudery).

[82] Rebecca Tushnet, 'Copyright Law, Fan Practices, and the Rights of the Author', in *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World,* ed. by Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington (New York: New York University Press, 2007), pp. 60-71 (p. 62).

[83] *Twife or Death* – a lesbian rewrite of *Twilight* discussed in more detail later in this chapter – is one such instance.

reading against the grain.[84] According to this argument, *Twilight*'s silence is provocative, and the novel is implicated in the sexually-charged fanfiction rewrites of its story.[85] This kind of reversal is also present in depictions of the vampire transformation, accompanying the character development that leads to vampire Lucy or vampire Willow – the frisson of alteration, the 'good' woman turned 'bad' – or the chaste text turned lascivious.

Aside from introducing new elements of sex and violence to the source text (or revealing them), the fan treatment may also discredit it artistically. Drawing on Wolfgang Iser, Cornel Sandvoss associates fandom with 'normalization' – 'ideational activity to align the Otherness encountered in the text, its alien elements, as closely with our past experience as possible.'[86] Normalization strips a text of its literariness and ambiguity, eradicating the distance between text and reader (since the text has been altered to conform to the reader's experience.) What follows is an unquestioning acceptance of the status quo.[87] More, since fan objects are rooted in consumer capitalism, this kind of narcissistic engagement leads to 'further integration of the self into a one-dimensional society'.[88] Sandvoss stresses that it is reading processes which create fan texts, and hence '[w]hat comes to function as a fan text to one reader may still possess literary qualities to another reader'.[89] From Sandvoss' argument, part of what bestows literary qualities on a work is the way in which it is read. Conversely, the fan reading could drain a text of its literariness. Whilst not every text will become

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[84] Malin Isaksson, 'Telling New Stories? *Twilight* Fan Fiction Pairing Bella and Alice', in *Finding the Plot: Storytelling in Popular Fictions,* ed. by Diana Holmes, David Platten, Loïc Artiaga and Jacques Migozzi (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 292-305 (p. 203).

[85] *Twilight* has its own transformed fan-written equivalent in E. L. James's bestselling *Fifty Shades of Grey* (2011) and its sequels. The series was first shared online as *Twilight* fanfiction before being altered for traditional publication.

[86] Cornel Sandvoss, 'The Death of the Reader? Literary Theory and the Study of Texts in Popular Culture', in *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World,* ed. by Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington (New York: New York University Press, 2007), pp. 19-32 (p. 29).

[87] Cornel Sandvoss, *Fans,* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), pp. 143-44.

[88] Sandvoss, *Fans*, p. 163.

[89] Sandvoss, *Fans*, p. 144.

widely popular in the way that Sandvoss describes, few works are entirely 'safe' from the kind of reading he associates with fans. The fanfiction website AO3 (Archive of our Own) hosts stories written around a wide array of literature, TV programmes, and films – 'literary' and canonical texts amongst them. Virtually any work may inspire fanfiction, a rewriting which treats it like a fan text.[90]

The 'literary' text would appear to have most to lose from association with the popular – the connection may have dangers for the popular text too, however. This occurs with the strange link between *Twilight* and Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955). In *Breaking Dawn* (2008), Meyer characterizes the love between the werewolf Quil and the three-year-old Claire as platonic: Quil will wait until Claire is sexually mature to pursue a romantic relationship.[91] Yet, as one reader pointed out, the conjunction of the names Claire and Quil recalls Clare Quilty – the paedophile who is Humbert Humbert's opponent.[92] The similarity might be a strange coincidence or a deliberate allusion – an acknowledgement of the implications of the relationship as an attempt to neutralize them. The *Lolita* connection would then be an intertextual clue to show the attentive reader that Meyer has anticipated this darker reading – consequently the implication is neutralized. If Meyer has seen the implication but continues to depict

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[90] The Archive of Our Own <http://archiveofourown.org> [accessed 6 January 2017]. The complicity of fanfiction rewrites of fan texts like *Twilight – Twife or Death* and others – could be connected to the normalizing urge. Like those demanding action figures of female film characters, such groups demand media which reflect their experiences – challenging corporations to provide products, to allow participation in commodified narratives.

[91] Meyer, *Breaking Dawn,* p. 57. This relationship is an example of imprinting, a phenomenon which occurs between Meyer's werewolves and their ideal mate. A species of love at first sight, imprinting causes the 'imprintee' (probably female, since werewolves are usually male and the imprinting process is geared towards the breeding of stronger wolves) to become the centre of the werewolf's existence. This phenomenon can exist between an adult and a child – but in this circumstance, the werewolf's love will be paternal, fraternal, or friendly until the child is grown.

[92] This connection was raised by a commenter on the blog of Cleolinda Jones, who has written comic recaps of the *Twilight* novels and the majority of the film adaptations. The internet facilitates a kind of reading which allows such connections (whether deliberate or accidental) to be brought to light – search engines and searchable electronic texts permit repeated words and phrases to be pinpointed more easily.
(Cleolinda Jones, *SHOCK GASP*, 31 Aug 2010,
<http://cleolinda.livejournal.com/900887.html?thread=55230231#t55230231> [accessed 19 December 2015]).

the connection between Clare and Quil favourably, then clearly it is not a 'correct' interpretation. In any case, 'incorrect' interpretations of the relationship are not so easily banished, and the intertextual association between 'legitimate' and 'popular' culture troubles the popular text. Bakhtin writes that 'dialogic relationships can permeate inside the utterance, even inside the individual word, as long as two voices collide within it dialogically'.[93] The intertextual relationship between two works makes the conjunction of two names the focus for dialogue, for an entire argument – two words become a bone of contention between the novel's version of the relationship, and the alternative view of those readers who consider it disturbing. Intertextual reference – even an accidental one – can transform the text.

It can also change the reader. Like modern internet users – who might reference cult material like *The Princess Bride* and *Monty Python* along with more recent works – Buffy and her friends have decades of pop culture at their disposal, and treat even the most august classics with irreverence. Media references not only proves mastery of a text, whether legitimate or popular, it also demonstrates mastery of social codes, and membership of the group. Not 'getting' references demonstrates an uneasy social standing. Anya (a former demon) initially struggles, failing to grasp many of the pop cultural allusions which the others trade. When fighting with Buffy, Anya complains that she doesn't follow all of her friends' references – a longstanding grievance, and showing the isolation resulting from a lack of shared culture. ('One of your little pop culture references I don't get').[94] In spite of this complaint, the show suggests that there is no real restricting of cultural properties to the human or the non-evil. In Season Six, the affable demon Clem calls over at Spike's crypt for an evening

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[93] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984; repr. 1999), p. 184.

[94] 'Selfless', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Solomon, written by Drew Goddard, Season 7, episode 5. First broadcast 22 October 2002.

in with hot wings and *Knight Rider* marathon.[95] Adam is familiar with the Beatles (he

enjoys 'Helter-Skelter').[96] Despite his contempt for Andrew, Xander inadvertently

bonds with him over a shared interest in comic books:

ANDREW Man, this place gives me the creeps. It's like in *Wonder Woman*, issue

297/299 –

XANDER 'Catacombs' – yeah, with the skeletons.

BOTH That was so cool.[97]

Shared references may prove disturbing, because they trouble the distinction between

'good' and 'evil' – consuming media is normal, human behaviour. If demons and

other evil creatures make similar references, perhaps they have a degree of normality

or humanity about them. Perhaps, if not good people, they at least have the potential

to become so – as is the case for Spike and Andrew. (Fans are perhaps being flattered

that their culture – rather than 'high' culture – is here an indicator of worth.) This

sharing also implies lack of control, however – culture cannot be safely consumed

only by the right sort of people, in the right sort of way.[98]

 Buffy not only quotes and alludes to other works, but also deliberately echoes

itself – as well as making use of its long lifespan to exploit its history for jokes

referencing earlier episodes. This self-referential quality encourages attentive viewing

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[95] 'Seeing Red', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Steven S. DeKnight, Season 6, episode 19. First broadcast 7 May 2002.

[96] 'The Yoko Factor', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Grossman, written by Douglas Petrie, Season 4, episode 20. First broadcast 9 May 2000.

[97] 'Bring on the Night', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Grossman, written by Noxon and Petrie, Season 7, episode 10.

[98] *Twilight* would irritate fans of the band Muse for similar reasons. Some regarded the use of Muse's music in the *Twilight* films as a kind of 'selling out'. Such fans considered listeners who discovered the band via *Twilight* to be interlopers, and regarded the series as culturally inferior to Muse's work. (Rebecca Williams, '"Anyone who Calls Muse a Twilight Band will be Shot on Sight": Music, Distinction, and the "Interloping Fan" in the *Twilight* Franchise', *Popular Music and Society*, 35 (2013), 327-42 (p. 334, p. 337)).

(and the kind of detailed breakdown which happens online on sites like TV Tropes).[99]

In Season Seven, the arc words 'from beneath you it devours' are repeated by various characters – causing their ominousness to accumulate. When Faith switches bodies with Buffy, she reveals what has happened to the audience by using her catchphrase, 'five by five'.[100] Small linguistic details can reveal important information, whilst ironic echoes can produce humour, as in the exchange between Buffy and Warren (temporarily super-powered via the magical orbs of Nezzla'khan):[101]

WARREN Say goodnight, bitch.

BUFFY *(Smashing the orbs)* Goodnight, bitch.[102]

In the final season, the Scoobies fight against violent misogyny in the form of Caleb, the former preacher who assists the First Evil. When Caleb is introduced, he initially appears in the role of rescuer – rescuing Shannon, a potential slayer, from the Bringers. The first indication that Caleb is evil is when he calls Shannon a whore.[103] Nathan Fillion, who plays Caleb, does not alter voice or demeanour – the lexical choice alone serves as the first danger sign for Shannon and the viewer that Caleb's friendly appearance is deceptive – an indication that something is very wrong. Misogynistic language is a danger-sign – and yet Willow, Buffy, Xander, and Anya have used similar terms themselves. Buffy and Willow call other women –

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[99] Fan sites like Buffyguide list both continuity references and intertextual allusions to other works. Buffyguide <http://www.buffyguide.com> [accessed 22 June 2016].

[100] 'This Year's Girl', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Douglas Petrie, Season 4, episode 15. First broadcast 22 February 2000.

[101] The obvious symbolism is highlighted by a remark from the infatuated Andrew: 'I can't wait to get my hands on his orbs'. The toxic masculinity embodied by Warren – like the magical orbs – is both ludicrous and highly dangerous. And yet by making Buffy a literal ball-breaker, the show cannot entirely escape ambivalent attitudes towards female strength.

[102] 'Seeing Red', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Steven S. DeKnight, Season 6, episode 19. First broadcast 7 May 2002.

[103] 'Dirty Girls', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Drew Goddard, Season 7, episode 18. First broadcast 15 April 2003.

particularly love rivals – variations of 'slut', for instance. Willow chooses this line of attack for love rivals Cordelia, Verucca, and Faith. Buffy uses this criticism on herself when rejecting a potential outfit ('Hi, I'm an enormous slut!').[104] In her role as surrogate parent, she levels similar criticism at Dawn for her choice of clothes.[105] Everybody shares the same references. A moment of endearing fallibility in a jealous female character is presented as alarming in a male character. *Buffy* audiences, however, are encouraged to remain attuned to the significance of individual words and phrases – and so uncomfortable parallels can be drawn, some of which may not be intentional.

Buffy's evil creatures' enjoyment of popular culture extends to vampire literature – this is a world in which vampires read about other vampires, where celebrity undead are aspirational figures. The novels of Anne Rice repeatedly act as a reference point. Angel tells Spike that he fools Buffy with a 'puppy-dog, 'I'm so tortured' act'.[106] Spike is amused that 'people still fall for that Anne Rice routine'. (Nonetheless, Angel's 'routine' is genuine, since he has a soul, and is tormented by memories of his earlier crimes. The apparent mockery is actually homage.) *Buffy*'s interactions with Anne Rice's vampires might sometimes be described more as 'Our Vampires Suck' than 'Your Vampires Suck' – in this universe, there are vampires who would like to be as glamorous as Rice's versions, but fail to measure up. When Buffy meets Dracula, she asks whether he is actually *the* Dracula, or whether 'it's just a fanboy thing', adding that she has fought 'more than a few pimply overweight

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[104] 'Welcome to the Hellmouth', *Buffy*, dir. by Charles Martin Smith, written by Joss Whedon, Season 1, episode 1. First broadcast 10 March 1997.
[105] 'Him', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Drew Z. Greenberg, Season 7, episode 6. First broadcast 5 November 2002.
[106] 'School Hard', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by John T. Kretchmer, written Joss Whedon (story) and David Greenwalt (teleplay), Season 2, episode 3. First broadcast 29 September 1997.

vamps who call themselves Lestat.'[107] (Here is both the comical concept of a vampire

failing to live up to Lestat's glamour, *and* the submerged joke which is the idea of

Rice's elegant vampire afflicted with acne and obesity.) One of the ways in which

Buffy often produces humour is the failure of people or events to meet generic

standards. (As the *Westminster Gazette* journalist in *Dracula* writes, there is an 'irony

of grotesque' in 'comparing the reality and the picture' (*Dracula,* p. 188).) The

paradox is that a universe can consist of stories without necessarily behaving like a

story. To believe otherwise is an indication of immaturity. (More shades of

Northanger Abbey here). Albright identifies the evil trio in Season Six as characters

who are particularly dedicated to attempts to make reality imitate art.[108] Andrew

compares them to comic-book supervillain Lex Luthor, making their incompetence all

the more comic and pathetic.[109] Unlike *Buffy*'s earlier villains, the trio lack power and

grandeur – three mortal men, rather than vampires, super-advanced robots, or gods.

Linda Hutcheon defines parody as 'imitation characterized by ironic inversion,

not always at the expense of the parodied text.'[110] *Buffy* walks a line between

privileging and mocking its own vampires when it relates them to other vampires – a

parody which is more complex than simple denigration. Similarly, Kenneth Burke

distinguishes 'romantic irony' – an irony of superiority, directed from outside – from

'[t]rue irony', which is 'humble irony [...] based upon a sense of fundamental kinship

with the enemy, as one *needs* him, is *indebted* to him, is not merely outside him as an

observer but contains him *within*, being consubstantial with him.'[111] This species of

irony is perhaps characteristic of much vampire literature – at least that which enjoys

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[107] 'Buffy vs Dracula', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Solomon, written by Marti Noxon, Season 5, episode 1. First broadcast 26 September 2000.
[108] Albright, (para. 4 of 28).
[109] 'Gone', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by David Fury, Season 6, episode 11. First broadcast 8 January 2002.
[110] Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody* (London: Methuen, 1985), p. 6.
[111] Burke, p. 514.

its close association with its predecessors. It also dates back to the Victorians –

Sherlock Holmes' criticism of Dupin being a notable example. In *A Study in Scarlet*

(1887), Holmes dismisses his literary forbear as 'a very inferior fellow' – affronting

Watson, who enjoys the Dupin stories – and dismisses the detective's mind-reading

trick as 'very showy and superficial.'[112] But in 'The Adventure of the Cardboard Box'

(1892), Holmes replicates this same trick (and now Watson is the sceptical one).[113]

The 'Your Vampire's Suck' trope is often used playfully, subverted, or doubly

subverted. (TV Tropes lists a number of different usages).[114] In Kim Newman's *Anno*

Dracula (1992)*,* Lord Ruthven makes a speech dismissing his literary descendants'

intellectual capabilities and fitness for government.[115] This long list, clearly the result

of extensive submersion in the vampire genre, is playfully critical but simultaneously

suggests an affection for the long tradition of the undead – and invites the reader to

enjoy a game of spot-the-reference. Newman's description of this speech similarly

implies enjoyment rather than serious hostility.[116] The novel is dependent on the

works which have gone before, even whilst it pretends to disparage them.

Like Lestat, Dracula has an admiring following amongst both the vampires

and humans of *Buffy*.[117] Buffy refers to him as 'Count Famous', Spike dismisses him

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[112] Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet,* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1982), p. 25.
[113] Arthur Conan Doyle*,* 'The Adventure of the Cardboard Box', in *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Short Stories* (London: John Murray, 1928; repr. 1953), pp. 923-47 (p. 925).
[114] TV Tropes, *Playing With/ Your Vampires Suck* <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/PlayingWith/YourVampiresSuck> [accessed 17 June 2016].
[115] Kim Newman, *Anno Dracula* (London: Titan, 2011), p. 68. Kindle ebook. Ruthven's list combines vampires from twentieth-century sources and earlier, and is both playful and – in the context of the novel – clearly biased, as Ruthven has no interest in acknowledging a rival. The speech also has a neutralizing effect, though: Varney has been packed off to India, Carmilla is still dead, and whilst in Braddon's 'Good Lady Ducayne' the vampire is rather clever, here she has 'not an ounce of brain'. (Newman, *Anno Dracula,* p. 68).
[116] 'I enjoyed cramming in as many previous vampires as possible, to the extent of writing a speech which finds Ruthven nastily listing all his peers and being rude about them.' (Kim Newman, *Anno Dracula: The Background* <https://johnnyalucard.com/non-fiction/articles/anno-dracula-background/> [accessed 20 June 2016]).
[117] Dracula is often portrayed approvingly by later re-imaginings of the character. It is the novel *Dracula,* Stoker, and Van Helsing and the rest, who are likely to be treated antagonistically. For instance in Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian,* Dracula is a powerful figure, whilst Stoker, unlike

as a 'glory hound', and gripes that (in true prima donna fashion) Dracula has special living requirements: 'his luxury estate and his bug eaters and his special dirt'.[118] Dracula's fame has caused him to forget his old rivals (like Spike), and forget where he comes from (as indeed the figure Dracula has become disconnected from his original novel.) Worse still, Dracula's popularity has taught human beings too much about vampires and how to kill them.[119] Buffy herself has learned about Dracula from film, rather than literature. Not only do works outside *Buffy* provide accurate information about vampires, but the pop cultural version of Dracula proves the most exact. In their final fight, Buffy stakes him – and stakes him again when he rematerializes, telling him contemptuously: 'You think I don't watch your movies? You always come back.'[120] The films are part of Dracula's power – he keeps coming back because people keep making films about him. *Dracula*'s substance is partially due to his many fictional incarnations – *Buffy* acknowledges the snowballing of his character, the legitimacy of alternate interpretations and adaptations. Even if he is staked onscreen, his countless other fictional incarnations give him many other lives. (One of these incarnations, the Count from *Sesame Street,* is referenced in this episode – vampires like Dracula are familiar and beloved, entertainment even for children, and far too widely embedded in culture to be removed.)

'Buffy vs. Dracula' offers the same kind of enjoyment with which modern readers and viewers will slot existing characters into other fictional templates. Here, instead of arguing which Hogwarts house the *Buffy* characters would be in or which

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Kostova's academic heroes, engages in 'chaotic note taking', and 'innocent dabbling in the occult'. (Elizabeth Kostova, *The Historian* (London: Time Warner Books, 2006), p. 698).

[118] 'Buffy vs Dracula', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Solomon, written by Noxon, Season 5, episode 1.

[119] The episode's writer, Marti Noxon, is playing with the 'Your Vampires Suck' trope here – *Dracula* is not dismissed as inaccurate, but *too* accurate – making it a useful manual about vampire-killing.

[120] 'Buffy vs Dracula', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Solomon, written by Noxon, Season 5, episode 1.

Disney princess they resemble, episode writer Marti Noxon asks which *Dracula* characters Buffy and her friends are most like.[121] Buffy is a composite, playing both Dracula's enthralled victim and his antagonist. Giles takes the Jonathan Harker role, and Xander is Renfield. Once liberated from Dracula's thrall, Xander is disgusted with this, resenting it as a reflection on his character and standing in the group. The brief alignment of fictional universes allows *Dracula* to throw light on the newer fiction in comic and serious fashion. Dracula's words prompt Buffy to seek a deeper understanding of her role as Slayer.

Stoker is perhaps the first writer of vampire literature to touch on the issue of celebrity. In her examination of Dracula's alignment with mass culture, Jennifer Wicke notes the 'tabloidization' of the vampirized Lucy Westenra as she takes on a new life in newsprint as the 'Bloofer Lady'.[122] (Interestingly the *Hampshire Telegraph* review of *Dracula* is formatted rather like a news story).[123] Paul Féval's *La Ville-Vampire (Vampire City)* (1875) recruits the author-persona of Ann Radcliffe as a character – but *Dracula,* for the first time, approaches modern notions of celebrity. The novel anticipates later vampire uses of celebrities and historical personages in its reference to Ellen Terry – *Dracula* not only suggests 'real-life' inspiration for its own writing, it also prefigures use of the real people in later vampire works. In his preface to the Icelandic translation of *Dracula,* Stoker commented: 'Both Thomas Harker and his wife – who is an extraordinary woman – and Dr. Seward are my friends.'[124] Stoker insisting that Mina and his other characters are real and that he knows them is

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[121] This technique is also not dissimilar to the 'what character are you' quizzes which pervade the internet – there are dozens currently online for many different fictional properties, *Buffy* amongst them.

[122] Wicke, p. 474.

[123] 'Vampires in London. Mediæval Horrors Up To Date', *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, 10 July 1897, p. 12, in *British Library Newspapers* [accessed 6 February 2017].

[124] Stoker and Ásmundsson, *Powers of Darkness,* p. 63.

paralleled by works like Newman's, which exploit the same concept.[125] Dracula as celebrity in *Buffy* works not only because of his global recognition, but also because his role in the novel recalls the celebrity persona: he is elusive, magnetic, much talked about even in his absence. Modern communication technology allows word of him to spread. Van Helsing and his team track his movements obsessively, reading all they can about him and his past life. His life and influence extend far beyond his physical life and death. Some, like Renfield, may be absolutely overpowered, falling entirely under his sway and being moved to violent acts as a result.

In *Buffy,* as elsewhere, Dracula embodies the already written – a celebrity vampire, whose power within the younger text is bound up with his influence outside the text.[126] The strong and famous vampire is a strong and famous story – he has accumulated significance as adaptation follows adaptation. Like many celebrities, he does not travel light – his arrival in Buffy's universe is comically signposted by the appearance of a sinister old castle in Sunnydale. The issue is highlighted by Riley, who comments on the arrival of a 'big honking castle' – a castle which, impossibly, has never been noticed before. Dracula brings his castle, his rainy weather, his earth, and his idiom with him – two kinds of plot arrive at once. The strong famous vampire dominates the story which encloses him (he has a transformative effect on the characters of *Buffy,* for instance) but the newer story also draws significance and weight from the earlier incarnations of the character. Newman's Kate Reed reflects on

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[125] *Anno Dracula* includes historical celebrities like Oscar Wilde. *Buffy* similarly references celebrities like Martha Stewart (a witch, apparently.) ('Wrecked', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Turi Meyer, written by Noxon, Season 6, episode 10.) As a real person who is also fictional, the celebrity is a liminal figure, like the vampire.

[126] *Anno Dracula* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* both keep him at a distance in different ways, as a character whose narrative weight would overbalance the story if he were not carefully used. He is not named in *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* Volume 2, but the terrifying Hyde tells Mina he suspects she has met someone even worse than him – she agrees. (Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill, '2: People of Other Lands', *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen Volume 2* (DC Comics, 2003). Originally published in single magazine form in *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen Volume 2* #1-6, 2002-2003).

how many Draculas there are: 'There was the Dracula of the histories, the Dracula of

Stoker's book, the Dracula of this film, the Dracula of the Transylvania Movement.

Dracula, the vampire and the idea, was vast.[127] Dracula may contain too much to

mean anything, but he is at the same time massively significant: 'Huge, enormous.

Like the elephant described by blind men.'[128] His power and symbolic weight in

Newman's *Anno Dracula* universe and in *Buffy* derives from his significance outside

such fictions.[129] His supreme supernatural power, his specialness, is drawn from the

intertextual web of meaning which accompanies him from text to text.

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[127] Kim Newman, 'Coppola's Dracula', in *The Mammoth Book of Dracula*, ed. by Stephen Jones (London: Robinson, 2011), pp. 121-61 (pp. 116-17).
[128] Newman, 'Coppola's Dracula', p. 154.
[129] Similarly, Buffy and her friends are able to draw upon their friendship as a mystical force because their relationship is at the show's core, narratively powerful. In season four, their friendship allows them to form a magical quadrity – merging their essences and skills in order to defeat Adam.

II. Remixing and Rewriting in *Buffy*: Change the Story, Change the World

In a culture suffused with vampire stories, the conflict and cooperation between vampires of different fictions offers a vivid and concentrated vision of creativity at a time of unprecedented quantities of available media content. The vampire, inescapably associated with the story which has already been told, the phrases which have already been uttered, illustrates the need for acknowledging what has gone before, and reconfiguring it in novel ways.

As a famous and popular myth, a supernatural creature gifted with powers of metamorphosis, the vampire functions like an internet meme in combining variation and familiarity. In its original conception, the meme was similar to the gene – able to replicate itself like a gene, but not dependent on human reproduction – again, this is similar to the vampire, which reproduces itself via infection – going viral. The term was originally coined by Richard Dawkins to designate 'a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation' – ideas which are self-replicating, passing easily from human to human.[130] The meme is an idea which wants to survive.[131] As Olivia Solon notes, the internet meme differs from its original version in that 'there is no attempt at accuracy of copying; internet memes are deliberately altered.'[132] The balance is in combining alteration with repetition – keeping the formula the same, whilst changing the ingredients slightly. Knobel and Lankshear observe that memes

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[130] Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, Second Edition (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 192.

[131] 'But if we consider culture as its own self-organizing system – a system with its own agenda and pressure to survive – then the history of humans gets even more interesting. As Richard Dawkins has shown, systems of self-replicating ideas or memes can quickly accumulate their own agenda and behaviors. I assign no higher motive to a cultural entity than the primitive drive to reproduce itself and modify its environment to aid its spread.' (Kevin Kelly, *Out of Control: The New Biology of Machines, Social Systems, and the Economic World* (1994; repr. and published on author's website), p. 306, <http://kk.org/mt-files/books-mt/ooc-mf.pdf > [accessed 16 January 2017]).

[132] Olivia Solon, 'Richard Dawkins on the Internet's Hijacking of the Word "Meme"', *Wired*, 20 June 2013 <http://www.wired.co.uk/article/richard-dawkins-memes> [accessed 15 June 2016].

survive via 'mutations', and the ability to be modified or remixed.[133] Whilst a joke or image can be reblogged or repeated extant, more long-lived memes are often deliberately expanded upon or modified. Linda Hutcheon argues that Dawkins' concept of memes could also be applied to stories, which survive via adaptation:

> stories also are ideas […] Some have great fitness through survival (persistence in a culture) or reproduction (number of adaptations). Adaptation, like evolution, is a transgenerational phenomenon. […] Stories do get retold in different ways in new material and cultural environments; like genes, they adapt to those new environments by virtue of mutation – in their "offspring" or their adaptations. And the fittest do more than survive; they flourish.'[134]

The vampire story is well adapted for this kind of online adaptation – it is inevitably both different and the same, variation on a popular theme. It can be combined with other genres and tropes, moved from Stoker's Transylvania to other locations. (Indeed, *Dracula* is about such a relocation.) The meme has its own gothic potential – not only does it have the power to travel extensively and rapidly ('the meme travels fast', one might say), it can also be incomprehensible to those who don't have enough context to grasp the joke. The vampire is similarly a mystery to those who can't read the signs.

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[133] Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear, 'Online memes, affinities, and cultural production', in *A New Literacies Sampler*, ed. by Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear (London: Peter Lang, 2007), p. 209, quoted in Bronwyn T. Williams, *Shimmering Literacies: Popular Culture & Reading & Writing Online* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), p. 67.
[134] Linda Hutcheon with Siobhan O'Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation*, Second Edition (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 32.

The meme forms part of a wider online culture of crossover. Many internet users – particularly those involved in fandom – delight in combinations (particularly unexpected ones), connections between disparate media, and jokes which hinge on the concept of old meets new, high culture meets low.[135] The joy of recognition (particularly recognition of beloved or nostalgic properties) is combined with the joy of alteration and incongruity, and enjoyment of unexpected parallels. 'Buffy vs. Dracula' offers viewers a similar kind of enjoyment. As Matthew Pateman points out, much of *Buffy*'s humour comes from its juxtapositions of generic codes.[136] When Dracula visits Sunnydale and makes Xander his Renfield, two codes battle it out as Xander tries to fight off Dracula's influence:

XANDER Okay, let's do it. And no poofing. Come on, puffy shirt. Pucker on up, cause you can kiss your pale ass –

DRACULA Silence.

XANDER Yes master. No, that's not –

DRACULA You will be my emissary, my eyes and ears in daylight.

XANDER Your emissary?

DRACULA Serve me well. You will be rewarded. I will make you an immortal. A child of darkness that feeds on life itself... on blood.

XANDER *(catching DRACULA's accent)* 'Blood'? Yes! Yes! I will serve you, your excellent spookiness.

(DRACULA frowns)

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[135] Like vampire, the internet meme has a particular appeal for teenagers and young adults.
[136] Matthew Pateman, '"You Say Tomato": Englishness in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*', *Cercles*, 8 (2003) 103-13 (p. 105).

XANDER Or master. I'll just stick with master.

DRACULA You are strange and off-putting. Go now.[137]

Even when under Dracula's thrall, Xander's idiolect asserts itself. The conjunction of two stories, two linguistic styles, produces a comic hybrid, a funny piece of horror – 'excellent spookiness'.

Karen Eileen Overbey and Lahney Preston-Matto consider Buffy's language to be a source of her power, identifying her with the speech act.[138] Throughout the show, a loss or change of speech is often of paramount importance. More seriously than Dracula's linguistic sway over Xander is the episode 'Hush', where the entire town losing their voices warns of the arrival of the Gentlemen.[139] Overlap of linguistic styles can also show camaraderie and shared aims, as is the case with Buffy and Principal Wood in Season Seven:

BUFFY My guess—it's that seal thing in the basement. It's like all the hellmouth's

energy is trying to escape in that one little spot, and it's getting all—

ROBIN WOOD Focusy.

BUFFY Careful. You're starting to speak like me now.[140]

Adopting Buffy's way of speaking means espousing her cause.

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[137] 'Buffy vs Dracula', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Solomon, written by Noxon, Season 5, episode 1.
[138] Karen Eileen Overbey and Lahney Preston-Matto, 'Staking in Tongues: Speech Act as Weapon in *Buffy*', in *Fighting the Forces; What's at Stake in Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, ed. by Rhonda V. Wilcox and David Lavery (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), pp. 73-84 (p. 83).
[139] 'Hush', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer,* dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 4, episode 10. First broadcast 14 December 1999. There is a parallel to *Dracula* here – when the narrators of Stoker's novel stop narrating, it is likely because they have died. Even without the Gentlemen's attacks, the Sunnydale residents clearly suffer without their voices – Buffy has to break up a fight at one point.
[140] 'Storyteller', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Marita Grabiak, written by James A. Contner, Season 7, episode 16. First broadcast 25 February 2003.

Bakhtin views the novel as being characterized by 'a diversity of social speech types […] artistically organized.'[141] *Buffy,* though not a novel, exploits the use of heteroglossia. The show is characterized by meetings of various distinct ways of speaking – archaic forms of English, Latin and other ancient languages, the language of adults like Joyce and Giles, the language of Buffy and her friends. All of these forms of speech (and viewpoints) can carry truth, and all are fallible – it is by combining them that a total view of the show and its events is reached. This tendency is literalized in the climax to the episode 'Primeval', where the super-powerful 'combo-Buffy' speaks ancient Sumarian and modern English at once, using the voices of Buffy and her friends.[142]

Characters or conversations frequently move between generic codes – often abruptly, for comic effect. Though – like Xander's conversation with Dracula – this can betray outside influence, it can also be part of the natural state of affairs. Many of the show's villains are able to change register as easily as the heroes – Mayor Wikins, 'big bad' of Season Three, being one example. Idiolect can carry genre with it – the Mayor's combination of malevolence and folksy geniality marks him out as a genre crossover. He may be a murderous villain, but to Faith he also plays the part of a father. Their exchange after he gifts her with a new apartment demonstrates this intersection of roles:

FAITH Thanks, Sugar Daddy.

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[141] Bakhtin, 'Discourse in the Novel', p. 262.
[142] 'Primeval', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer,* dir. by James A. Contner, written by David Fury, Season 4, episode 21. First broadcast 16 May 2000

Mayor Wilkins Now, Faith, I don't find that sort of thing amusing. I'm a family

man. Now, let's kill your little friend.[143]

This kind of crossover often features in *Buffy*'s reversal or undercutting of tropes,

including vampire tropes. It also perhaps offers a point of resemblance to the real

world. The show's comedy comes from incongruity, but also recognition of this

incongruity. For *Buffy*'s characters, as for the show's viewers*,* crossover – assorted

stories and genres – are the stuff of real life, real people.

Bakhtin proposes the concept of 'language as a world view', language which

is 'ideologically saturated'.[144] As a result of this association between language and

understanding of the world, centralizing language works to centralize opinion.

Conversely, language could be used to diversify visions of existence. In her study of

fans and fandom, Camille Bacon-Smith points out how '[t]hrough narrative, language

gives us the fundamental power to create reality'. [145] In Bacon-Smith's view, the

storytelling shared by female *Star Trek* fans allowed them to share experiences and

impose aesthetic order on those experiences, gradually developing a distinct

worldview. In *Buffy,* this link between language and reality is taken further – here it

may shape not only worldview, but also the world.

Buffy's world is made of language, as figures of speech become real. Tracy

Little argues that *Buffy* is postmodern in the way it uses metaphor. Instead of merely

functioning as 'fiction that represents something else', *Buffy* makes the metaphor

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[143] 'Doppelgangland', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 3, episode 16.
[144] Bakhtin*,* 'Discourse in the Novel', p. 271.
[145] Camille Bacon-Smith, *Enterprising Women; Television Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), p. 292.

real.[146] Instead of functioning as a way to 'speak about the realities of life', the device becomes actual – and frequently attacks the main characters.[147] Buffy not only has to deal with the real-world problem of seeing her boyfriend behave coldly after they sleep together, she also has to confront the problem of having him become a soulless, murderous vampire – literally as well as metaphorically, he is no longer the man she fell in love with. Fiction and metaphor acquire a life of their own. Little continues:

> Thus the metaphor is made literal – high school really is hell – but that is not the worst thing about high school for Buffy and her friends. What this procedure serves to do is to take the metaphor further than simple correspondence. While fighting demons and the forces of evil is by no means easy for Buffy and her friends, it is by no means the toughest problem that they have to deal with. In this sense the metaphor has the ability to say the unsayable, thus haunting us with the idea that the metaphor and the reality may not really be that far apart. Metaphor thus embodies Baudrillard's concept of the simulacra: the idea that the copy – in this case the metaphor – is more real than the original.

Buffy's metaphors are often real, living entities – Buffy and her friends live alongside and interact with fairy tales and figures of speech. As the unruliness of the show's magical and demonic elements demonstrates, these metaphors can be difficult to control. The vampire is ideally suited for the embodiment of the metaphor which

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[146] Tracy Little, 'High School is Hell: Metaphor Made Literal in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*', in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Philosophy; Fear and Trembling in Sunnydale*, ed. by James B. South (Open Court, 2003, Chicago), pp. 282-93 (p. 286).
[147] Little, p. 286.

eclipses an 'original meaning', because it has long been used to make metaphors

visual, physical, and bloody (particularly metaphors of transfer and consumption.) As

Dracula's descendent, *Buffy* expands on the older work's use of monstrous

metaphor.[148] The vampire, in both cases, is a metaphor which eclipses what it

signifies – or, free-floating and untethered, suggests the obliteration of any 'original'

at all.

In Baudrillard's view, the image has replaced the real in postmodern

culture.[149] His argument is that the image first reflects reality, then masks it, then

masks its absence, then exists without any reality whatsoever, as 'its own pure

simulacrum'.[150] But Linda Hutcheon points out that any idea of the 'real' as

something originally accessible without representations is highly questionable: 'there

is nothing natural about the 'real' and there never was – even before the existence of

mass media.'[151] Hutcheon argues that postmodernity is rather an awareness that

systems of representation 'do not *reflect* society so much as *grant* meaning and value

within a particular society.'[152] The postmodern view would be that 'social life is too

complex and variegated to be grasped except through imaginary models – that is,

through ideological constructions which are not primarily cognitive, but symbolic and

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[148] *Dracula*'s metaphors, too, can become monstrous, via Van Helsing's occasional butchering of English. He tells Mina that she has 'a brain that a man should have were he much gifted' (*Dracula,* p. 281), making her a brain-thief (taking the brain a man perhaps ought to have received – 'should' has a double meaning), as well as a kind of Frankenstein's monster, assembled out of pieces of male and female bodies. In the same speech, Van Helsing declares 'the milk that is spilt cries not out afterwards', making a common aphorism bizarre and disturbing. (Lucy is a kind of spilt milk, now no longer able to cry out, a perverse vampiric mother, her milk-white purity 'sullied' by contact with the vampire.) Most vivid of all is when Van Helsing recounts his visit to Doolittle's Wharf, and summarizes the speech of the captain of the *Czarina Catherine*: 'the captain tell him that he had better be quick – with blood – for that his ship will leave the place – of blood – before the turn of the tide – with blood' (p. 378).

[149] 'Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal.' (Jean Baudrillard, 'The Precession of Simulacra', in *A Postmodern Reader,* ed. by Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheon (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp. 342-475 (pp. 342-43) (first publ. in Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulations,* trans. by Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), pp. 1-75)).

[150] Baudrillard, pp. 346-47

[151] Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1989; repr. 1991), p. 33.

[152] Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism*, p. 8.

affective.'[153] Stories are sense-making tools, constituting life – a world like Buffy's, made of other myths and stories, brings this explicitly to the fore.

Frederic Jameson portrays culture under capitalism not as autonomous, but all-encompassing (though now all social life is no longer 'real').[154] When fictions are extensively commercialized, demanding a story is similar to demanding a product – to exist, there must be something to buy. For similar reasons, there has been increasing pressure on toy manufacturers to produce books, films, and action figures that appeal to girls as well as boys. Objecting to the lack of such products is a sort of 'complicitous critique', in Hutcheon's phrase.[155] Consumers are aware of their participation in a commercialised system, but will work within it to achieve positive objectives like representation.[156] Fans may also demand stories which reflect their desires and lived experience – and make them, if not provided. For instance, *Twife and Death* remedies *Twilight*'s shortage of lesbian romance.[157] To speak of their own

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[153] Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheon, 'Preface to Part III, Entanglements and Complicities', in *A Postmodern Reader*, ed. by Natoli and Hutcheon, pp. 299-311 (pp. 302-03)

[154] '[T]o argue that culture is today no longer endowed with the relative autonomy it once enjoyed at one level among others in earlier moments of capitalism (let alone in precapitalist societies) is not necessarily to imply its disappearance or extinction. Quite the contrary; we must go on to affirm that the dissolution of an autonomous sphere of culture is rather to be imagined in terms of an explosion: a prodigious expansion of culture throughout the social realm, to the point at which everything in our social life – from economic value and state power to practices and to the very structure of the psyche itself – can be said to have become "cultural" in some original and yet untheorized sense.' (Fredric Jameson, 'From *Postmodernism, Or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*', in *The Postmodern Reader*, ed. by Michael Drolet (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 189-202 (pp. 198-99)).

[155] Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism,* p. 2.

[156] This viewpoint is summed up by Rebecca Brand, in her discussion of *Credible Likeable Superstar Role Model*, her feature documentary about an attempt by performance artist Bryony Kimmings and her nine-year-old niece Taylor's creation of a fictional female role model. (Rebecca Brand, '"If she can't see it, she can't be it": why media representation matters', *Guardian*, 12 November 2013 <http://www.theguardian.com/women-in-leadership/2013/nov/12/media-representation-matters> [accessed 22 June 2016]).

[157] This lesbian rewrite combines *Twilight* and Meyer's gender-altered *Twilight* rewrite *Life and Death* (2015), and has a virtually all-female cast. A collaborative work, produced by several writers, *Twife or Death*'s writers claim to 'edit out the abusive parts, add in more diversity'. (Twife or Death, *PSA* <http://twifeordeath.tumblr.com/psa> [accessed 21 June 2016]). The appeal of *Twilight* seems so strong that it appeals even to readers who are alienated by its lack of diversity and its portrayal of romance – instead of producing original fiction, the writers of *Twife or Death* are 'fixing' *Twilight* to make it a work that more accurately represents their experiences.

experience and fantasies, these fans must speak commodity, writing within the *Twilight* franchise.[158]

The story or image of reality might be arbitrary, instilling meaning rather than merely revealing it – but *Buffy* suggests that this state may have a liberating potential. Buffy is able to perceive the arbitrary, made up (fictional) rules governing her universe, acknowledge their arbitrariness, and change them. For *Buffy*'s first two seasons, episodes usually begin with a voiceover recitation of the show's central myth: one girl in all the world has been chosen to fight vampires. Season Seven sees Buffy realize that this choice was arbitrary.[159] In the final episode, she and Willow change the story and change the world: all potential slayers are given the strength to fight vampires, and Buffy is no longer alone. The episode title, 'Chosen', implies the reversal that has taken place. Buffy (and the First Slayer) were 'chosen' without any reference to their wishes. But Buffy offers the potential slayers an opportunity to choose, rather than be chosen: 'in every generation one slayer is born because a bunch of men who died thousands of years ago made up that rule'. The rule governing Buffy's destiny (and the TV series) is made up, and so can be changed. Buffy's voiceover accompanies a montage of potential slayers all over the world receiving their powers. Buffy ends her speech by addressing both the newly empowered girls, and implicitly the viewer (especially the female viewer): 'Make your choice. Are you

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[158] As Rosemary J. Coombe writes, 'the texts protected by intellectual property laws *signify*: they are cultural forms that assume local meanings in the lifeworlds of those who incorporate them into their daily lives. Circulating widely in contemporary public spheres, they provide symbolic resources for the construction of identity and community, subaltern appropriations, parodic interventions, and counterhegemonic narratives.' (Rosemary J. Coombe, *The Cultural Life of Intellectual Properties: Authorship, Appropriation, and the Law* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), p. 7).

[159] 'Get it Done', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by Douglas Petrie, Season 7, episode 15. First broadcast 18 February 2003.

ready to be strong?'[160] Rather than finding the recognition that the rules governing her universe aren't 'real' a painful one, Buffy here finds it liberating.

This final change in the story is a triumph, the summit of the other rewrites and attempted rewrites which occur throughout the series. The central *Buffy* universe is always open to being altered or reset, as Anya establishes – via a wish, someone could create any sort of world they chose.[161] This is what happens when Cordelia wishes that Buffy had never come to Sunnydale, conjuring up a dark alternate version of the familiar *Buffy* continuity.[162] This change reverts to normal at the end of the episode, but David Kociemba argues that this is the first of several episodes to bring 'productive instability' to *Buffy*'s fictional universe, making the show's storyline only one alternative amongst many: 'This genre exposes ideology by asking us to think about how we normally see the world, which raises doubts about the inevitability and naturalness of the status quo.'[163]

The series is self-conscious about its own rewriting process, as is demonstrated when Buffy hallucinates that she is a mental patient who has imagined all her friends and adventures. Her doctor comments on the show's events as if they are hallucinations – implicitly, as if they were fictional creations:

> Buffy inserted Dawn into her delusion, actually rewriting the entire
>
> history of it to accommodate a need for a familial bond. Buffy, but that
>
> created inconsistencies, didn't it? Your sister, your friends, all those

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[160] 'Chosen', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 7, episode 22. First broadcast 20 May 2003.
[161] 'Superstar', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Grossman, written by Jane Espenson, Season 4, episode 17. First broadcast 4 April 2000.
[162] 'The Wish', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Greenwalt, written by Marti Noxon, Season 3, episode 9. First broadcast 8 December 1998.
[163] David Kociemba, '"Where's the Fun?": The Comic Apocalypse in "The Wish"', *Slayage*, 6.3 (2007) <http://www.whedonstudies.tv/uploads/2/6/2/8/26288593/kociemba_slayage_6.3.pdf > [accessed 6 Jan 2017] (para. 4 of 23).

people you created, Sunnydale, they aren't as comforting as they once

were, are they? They're coming apart.[164]

The stress of rewriting Buffy's story brings about the death of its hero – and threatens
to end the story entirely.[165] This fictional world is unstable – even the past is not safe
from intrusion and alteration.[166] Rewriting in *Buffy* can be a dangerous process, and
must be undertaken responsibly. Buffy's fate is revised when she is resurrected at the
beginning of Season Six – but not only does this experience prove deeply traumatic, it
also causes a fissure in the line of slayer succession, which allows the First Evil to set
its plans in motion.[167]

Buffy's Season Seven antagonist Caleb represents the danger of having the
wrong person telling the story. Throughout this season, words are repeatedly
associated with evil weapons. The First tells Andrew to stab his friend Jonathan with
the phrase 'drive the words deep into him'.[168] The murder weapon bears a magical
inscription, making it literally both words and knife. Caleb enjoys referring to his
words in terms of weaponry to 'Helpless Girl', the image of an earlier victim:

HELPLESS GIRL I heard you speakin' tonight. Preachin'. I felt your words go straight

to me.

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[164] 'Normal Again', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Rick Rosenthal, written by Diego Gutierrez,
Season 6, episode 17. First broadcast 12 March 2002.
[165] The writing of Dawn into the story ultimately leads to Buffy's death, since Buffy sacrifices herself
to save her sister.
[166] For long-running serialized fictions, particularly comic books, the 'retcon' may be employed in a
similar fashion to change backstory. Convenient for writers, they may result in readers 'losing' beloved
characters and plots, which writers will decree 'non-canon' – in other words, within the current status
quo of this fictional world, they never 'really' existed.
[167] 'Showtime', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Grossman, written by David Fury, Season 7,
episode 11. First broadcast 7 January 2003.
[168] 'Storyteller', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Grabiak, written by Espenson, Season 7, episode 16.

CALEB Well, the truth is like a sword, isn't it, girl? Cuts deep.[169]

Unusually for a villain character on *Buffy,* Caleb is also given a voiceover, which ends the episode. Allowing Caleb to dominate the narrative enforces the dire situation confronting Buffy – she and her team have just sustained a bruising defeat in their battle with Caleb, and face an uncertain future. An earlier example of hostile voiceover is Angel's from Season Two, which again marks a significant development in Buffy's story – Angel's new role as evil killer is cemented when he kills Miss Calendar, Buffy's teacher.[170] Kociemba writes, 'Angelus seizes the place constructed by artistic conventions of the series. For the first time, a villain has power of voiceover, enabling him to serve as the storyteller, the narrative guide.'[171] Controlling the story means controlling the world. The play of idioms is threatened by language which dominates others and urges violence.

The First evil is able to imitate any dead person, aping both physical appearances and linguistic styles for its own purpose. Its imitations are not seamless, however – when it takes on the appearance and apes the distinctive speech patterns of Drusilla, Spike taunts it that Drusilla was 'crazier'.[172] During this encounter Spike sometimes addresses the First as if it is Drusilla, but is never seduced into believing in the illusion, or in agreeing to work for the First's cause. Instead, he exploits the impersonation for humour:

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[169] 'Dirty Girls', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Gershman, written by Goddard, Season 7, episode 18.
[170] 'Passion', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Ty King, Season 2, episode 17. First broadcast 24 February 1998.
[171] David Kociemba, '"Over-Identify Much?": Passion, "Passion," and the Author-Audience Feedback Loop in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer'*, *Slayage*, 5.3 (2006) <http://www.whedonstudies.tv/uploads/2/6/2/8/26288593/kociemba_slayage_5.3.pdf> [accessed 14 June 2016] (para. 20 of 39).
[172] 'Bring on the Night', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Grossman, written by Marti Noxon and Douglas Petrie, Season 7, episode 10. First broadcast 17 December 2002.

THE FIRST (AS DRUSILLA) Do you know why you're alive?

SPIKE Never figured you for existential thought, love. I mean, you hated Paris.[173]

Spike triumphs over the First in verbal contest by exposing the limitations of its mimicry and using the imposture as material for his own wit. The First abandons its attempt at ventriloquism and lapses into outright irritation as its attempt to win Spike's loyalty fails. Spike's knowledge of Buffy's faith in him is the truth that allows him to withstand the First's temptation to evil and its shape-shifting magic.[174]

Buffy does impose some limits on the power that magic has to rewrite reality: magical deaths, like Buffy's, can be undone – but as Willow learns when her girlfriend Tara is murdered, non-magical deaths cannot. Willow embarks on a bloody campaign of revenge – an attempt to change the story of what has happened, to make the world fairer through Warren's execution. Her friends decide that whilst her motive is understandable, her actions – and willingness to alter the universe via magic – are unacceptable:

BUFFY We can't control the universe. If we were supposed to then the magic wouldn't change Willow the way it does. And we'd be able to bring Tara back.

DAWN And Mom.

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[173] 'Bring on the Night', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Grossman, written by Noxon and Petrie, Season 7, episode 10.
[174] The First is incorporeal, relying on others to execute its evil purposes. Its imitations are literally lacking in substance. It is dependent on words and appearances to persuade its followers – and it is in this arena that Spike defeats it.

BUFFY There are limits to what we can do. There should be. Willow doesn't want to

believe that. And now she's messing with forces that want to hurt her. All of

us.[175]

The laws of Buffy's universe are the laws of both magic and fiction – both are

rewriting powers that have warping potential if misused. This kind of transformation

has the ability to render the story unrecognisable, turn it into something new.

(Fanfiction has the same ability – if the characters are too far distant from their

recognisable incarnations, the story may lose effectiveness, and the protagonists be

deemed 'OOC' (out of character) by readers.) Within the reality of the story, such

transformations may threaten the fictional universe's recognisability or even its

existence. Cordelia's wish that Buffy had never come to Sunnydale is one such

instance – the magic rewrites reality so that Cordelia and the rest of the main cast are

killed off.

Buffy's dance between what is possible and what is impossible for the power

of the rewrite recalls Frank Kermode's discussion of Sartre. Kermode highlights how

reality never closes down its possibilities in the way that fiction does. For the novelist,

'every choice will limit the next ' – in reality, this is not the case.[176] Kermode

discusses the concept of *mauvaise foi,* the acceptance of what has already been

perceived, and rejection of the arbitrariness of meaning:

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[175] 'Villains', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Solomon, written by Marti Noxon, Season 6, episode 20. First broadcast 14 May 2002.

[176] 'It sounds good to say that the novelist is free; that, like the young man who asked Sartre whether he should join the Resistance or stay with his mother, he can be told "You are free, therefore choose; that is to say, invent." We may even agree that until he has chosen he will not know the reasons for his choice. But there is in practice this difference between the novelist and the young man as Sartre sees him: the young man will always be free in just this degree; whether he stays with his mother or not, his decision will not be relevant to his next decision. But the novelist is not like that […] every choice will limit the next. He has to collaborate with his novel; he grows in bad faith. He is in a world in which past, present, and future are related inextricably. And which must inevitably come to an end.' (Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966; repr. 1968), p. 141).

The absurd dishonesty of all prefabricated patterns is cardinal to
[Sartre's] beliefs; to cover reality over with eidetic images – illusions
persisting from past acts of perception [...] to do this is to sink into
mauvaise foi. The expression covers all comfortable denials of the
undeniable – freedom – by myths of necessity, nature, or things as they
are.[177]

Buffy's rewritable universe plays with the idea of an alternative – when there is an
option (good or evil) it is possible to take both routes via the introduction of an
alternate universe.[178] Willow can be both a vampire and not a vampire. A number of
other universes also exist alongside Buffy's, including 'The World Without Shrimp',
and 'The World With Nothing But Shrimp'.[179] Whilst the arbitrariness of significance
is celebratory – as in Buffy's sharing of her power at the end of the series – it can also
be a source of distress, and limits must be imposed. The curtailment of Willow's
powers is essential for maintaining a coherent narrative – Buffy's world, unlike the
viewer's, must be limited, the story must end somewhere, there must be some myths
of necessity, nature, or things as they are. Yet in spite of this ultimate parting of ways
between art and world – which by Kermode's account is inevitable, no matter how
much a novelist may wish otherwise – the vampire does suggest a 'storification' of

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[177] Kermode, pp. 133-34.

[178] *Twilight* treats such possibilities differently. Alice Cullen sees future outcomes, which gradually
narrow down as characters make their decisions. Meyer characterizes her writing process in a similar
way – a gradual filtering out of alternate possibilities. Notably even when the universe is changed –
when Bella becomes Beau and Edward Edythe (in *Life or Death* (2015)) – the ultimate fates of hero
and heroine remains the same. Meyer's rewriting asserts control, the primacy of the central
relationship. (Stephenie Meyer, *Frequently Asked Questions: Breaking Dawn*
<http://stepheniemeyer.com/bd_faq.html> [accessed 23 December 2015]).

[179] In the episode 'Triangle', it is established that there are a number of alternate universes, including
the Land of the Trolls, the Land of Perpetual Wednesday, and the Crazy Melty Land. ('Triangle', *Buffy
the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Christopher Hibler, written by Jane Espenson, Season 5, episode 11. First
broadcast 9 January 2001).

reality, a world which is suffused with tropes and fictions, and may be shaped by the same means.

A consideration of the vampire in the fictions of recent decades demonstrates that the vampire is, as ever, a device which allows for the playing out of the submerged or unspoken.[180] As a strong, pervasive trope, an epitome of intertextuality, the vampire is a vivid embodiment of the experience of living and writing against the backdrop of more texts than have ever existed before. The vampire story can be both predatory and loving towards its 'victims', the earlier media upon which it feeds. The relationship may combine a fierce struggle for originality with devoted and attentive reading. Like the vampire, the vampire story may be drawn to kill and eat those it loves.

Intertextuality which manifests as the influence of one writer on another can be productive but also create uneasiness. Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* addresses the issue of how poets relate ambivalently with their predecessors, misreading earlier poems in order to create their own work: 'The largest truth of literary influence is that it is an irresistible anxiety: Shakespeare will not allow you to bury him, or escape him, or replace him.'[181] (This is not the only moment in Bloom's preface where influence merges with revenance.)[182] Falling under the sway of an earlier author is a cause for ambivalence – and yet exerting influence is, in Bloom's view, the only reason for writing in a culture where originality is no longer possible.[183] (The vampire exists only to feed and create more vampires, who vampirize others in their turn.) The

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[180] Lucy Westenra's vampiric transformation justifying her execution, allowing for the satisfaction of the complex love and hate felt towards her by her suitors, for instance.

[181] Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, Second Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. xviii.

[182] 'strong poems are always omens of resurrection. The dead may or may not return, but their voice comes alive, paradoxically never by mere imitation, but in the agonistic misprision performed upon powerful forerunners by only the most gifted of their successors.' (Bloom, p. xxiv).

[183] Allen, p. 136.

intertextual has also been associated with the erotic – Judith Still and Michael Worton identify this tendency in Barthes's *The Pleasure of the Text,* arguing that it offsets the conflict sketched by Bloom: 'Barthes's eroticisation seems to deny the aggression emphasised by Bloom […] Barthes agrees that all narrative is necessarily Oedipal, but defuses that situation of violence.'[184] Barthes's account of reading one text according to another is one of enjoyment, not conflict: 'I savor the sway of formulas, the reversal of origins, the ease which brings the anterior text out of the subsequent one.'[185] In fact, Bloom's characterization of the anxiety of influence includes images of consumption, conflict and love. He modifies his earlier idea of Shakespeare devouring Marlowe and his influence 'the way a whale scoops up a minnow', by suggesting that this was followed by an 'extraordinary case of indigestion.'[186] His concept of influence anxiety following 'strong misreading' – and the creative response which follows – contains both love and ambivalence towards earlier works:

> What writers may experience as anxiety, and what their works are
> compelled to manifest, are the consequence of poetic misprision, rather
> than the cause of it. The strong misreading comes first; there must be a
> profound act of reading that is a kind of falling in love with a literary
> work. That reading is likely to be idiosyncratic, and it is almost certain
> to be ambivalent, though the ambivalence may be veiled.'[187]

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[184] Judith Still and Michael Worton, 'Introduction', in *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices,* ed. by Michael Worton and Judith Still (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), pp. 1-44 (p. 20).
[185] Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text,* trans. by Richard Miller (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975), p. 36.
[186] Bloom, p. xxi.
[187] Bloom, p. xxiii.

The vampire, which often combines eroticism and violence, embodies the concept of intertextuality with ease. This may be why the vampire works well as an image of intertextuality, as opposed to Frankenstein's monster – despite the monster's literal creation out of borrowed material. The vampire, unlike the creature, is also capable of being altered or nourished by its victims – the transfer here goes both ways, whilst the monster's manufacture out of corpses only works in one direction. The vampire embodies the combination of love and antipathy which characterizes intertextual reference; it allows for easy intermingling of different selves; it is 'natural', not manmade – as intertextuality is an inevitable factor in creative production; perhaps most importantly its attack is two-sided, changing both vampire and victim. Also, the vampire often plays the roles of both parent and love object – the early author both prompts the later work, and, as in Bloom's account, is an object of desire.

Mary Orr writes, 'anti-models are not necessarily breaks, but links within more complex meshing of influences to form 'traditions' within a tradition. These may actually strengthen rather than weaken the genre's or plot's ability to survive.'[188] This might be applied to the vampire genre in the modern day, where reversals of tropes and conventions energize the well-travelled vampire myth. The vampire story is perennially a story about a myth that predates the novel, play, or story in which it currently features. The genre's crowdedness invites anti-models, as does its natural retrospective tendency. Umberto Eco writes:

> I think of the postmodern attitude as that of a man who loves a very
> cultivated woman and knows that he cannot say to her 'I love you

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[188] Orr, p. 87.

madly', because he knows that she knows (and that she knows he

knows) that these words have already been written by Barbara

Cartland. Still, there is a solution. He can say, 'As Barbara Cartland

would put it, I love you madly'. At this point, having avoided false

innocence, having said clearly that it is no longer possible to speak

innocently, he will nevertheless have said what he wanted to say to the

woman: that he loves her, but he loves her in an age of lost

innocence.[189]

The vampire is well suited to this age of lost innocence, as the already said is an

unshakable companion – perhaps in fact the vampire has never been innocent, it has

always been conscious of what has already been written. To speak of varied fears and

desires in the cultural environment of the already said and already written, the

vampire is the perfect vehicle – the trope which has already been said and written

many times before. This is a case of wooing not – like Olalla – with pre-used eyes, but

with pre-used tropes and phrases. Whilst Olalla is repelled by this loss of originality,

in the postmodern expression of love that Eco describes, the second-hand aspect has

become a part of the message.

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[189] Umberto Eco, *Reflections on 'The Name of the Rose'*, trans. by William Weaver (London: Minerva, 1994) pp. 67-68, quoted in Allen, p. 195.

Conclusion

Dracula describes the books in his library as 'friends' (*Dracula,* p. 31). Yet his definition of friendship, as Jonathan Harker quickly learns, is a predatory one. The books, like Jonathan himself, will be exploited for the information they possess and then discarded. Friendship is generally an uncertain quantity in *Dracula,* in fact. The term – which is often used ironically – can encompass exploitation, hostility, or violence, and can shade into romance or eroticism.[1] This ambivalent vision of friendship parallels the uneasy relationships between readers, writers, and texts present in vampire tales, a mirroring which predates *Dracula*. 'The Vampyre' begins when Aubrey has just discovered that apart from the atmospheric flickering of candles (which is owing to 'want of snuffing' rather than ghosts), 'there was no foundation in real life for any of that congeries of pleasing pictures and descriptions contained in those volumes, from which he had formed his study' (Polidori, 'The Vampyre', p. 4). It seems that Aubrey has escaped from these enticing but unreliable companions – but just at the point when he is 'about to relinquish his dreams' (p. 4), he encounters Ruthven, a supernatural creature more dangerous than the ghosts he has learned to disbelieve. Aubrey's supernatural reading does not protect him from the vampire, but nor does putting his romantic notions aside – he has merely exchanged one treacherous friend for another.

Ruthven not only takes over the books' role as a dangerous companion, his powers of attack also work in a literary fashion. In his account of Ruthven's wooing

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[1] Van Helsing, like Dracula, uses 'friend' as a term of address to an excessive extent. Seward ironically refers to Renfield as his 'friend' on several occasions. (Suggesting an affinity Seward will not acknowledge.) Phyllis A. Roth argues that covert hostility and rivalry underlies the humans' declarations of friendship, masked by 'over-compensation' in the form of 'constant, almost obsessive, assertion of the value of friendship and *agape*'. (Roth, p. 60.) The network of blood finds a parallel in a network of mutual friends – a six degrees of separation which facilitates the assembling of the narrative as well as the resistance to Dracula.

of Miss Aubrey, Polidori ironically summarizes the working of the Byronic seduction
– which might take place in print or in person:

> His tongue had dangers and toils to recount – could speak of himself as
> of an individual having no sympathy with any being on the crowded
> earth, save with her to whom he addressed himself; – could tell how,
> since he knew her, his existence had begun to seem worthy of
> preservation, if it were merely that he might listen to her soothing
> accents. (Polidori, 'The Vampyre', pp. 21-2).

Though they are both bad companions, Dracula and Ruthven differ in their
dangerousness, as Auerbach points out.[2] The two also suggest different forms of
reading experience – *Dracula* leaves his books behind him, appears in hints in the
tabloids, demonstrating a kind of distanced reading that parallels his more distant
form of friendship. Ruthven, by contrast, remains with Aubrey until the end. He
victimizes society on a one-to-one basis – one unlucky gambler or ruined woman at a
time. Dracula, with his associations with bureaucracy and mass readership, reaches
further, expanding his influence via subordinates.

As *Dracula* and 'The Vampyre' imply, and as these chapters have suggested,
writing – like the vampire – can prove unsettling company. From Ruthven onwards,
the vampire trope provides a vivid metaphor for the fearful aspects of living with
letters: the gothic of reading and writing, and the gothic of criticism; the gothic of the
author role and its commercialization; the gothic of the literature of authority, those

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[2] She points out that whilst Ruthven is in a sense a reflection of Aubrey, Carmilla and Varney have
similarly 'reflective' qualities, whilst Dracula is blank and impersonal, different to these 'earlier,
friendlier vampires'. Dracula shows indifference to the vampire tradition of intimacy. (Auerbach, *Our
Vampires, Ourselves,* p. 63, p. 64).

official narratives of establishment and learning; gothic literature alongside gothic art

as a dangerous influence and sharing of individual selves; the gothic of adaptation and

its potential to reveal modern resemblances to a 'dark' past; the gothic of living and

writing in the context of postmodernity, alongside an unprecedented wealth of texts.

By the twenty-first century the writer of the vampire story is, like Olalla, forced to

employ recycled elements, haunted by the past and by family resemblance. The

precise anxieties that the vampire represents vary widely – as the different literary

'friendships' shown in *Dracula* and 'The Vampyre' demonstrates. The kind of unease

associated with text relationships varies too – Dracula and other vampires express a

number of different literary dreads in different eras. But the vampire offers a

consistently convenient metaphor for writing, particularly in its gothic aspects.

Erik Butler ties the vampire to the concept of figurative language:

"Vampire" is a metaphor run amuck. Metaphors, though a familiar

figure of language, always signify in excess of what they mean. [...]

Metaphor – and indeed all figural language – serves to convey

meaning; however, it does so by leaping and bounding across

otherwise separate spheres of signification, short-circuiting the fields

of difference that hold in place the two items being equated.[3]

Symbolizing, amongst other things, communication and textuality, the vampire

becomes an instance of writing representing itself. The vampire reveals the

complexities in the relationships between human and writing, text and text. The

irruption of the vampire (a story, a creature found in fiction and folklore) into the

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[3] Butler, *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film*, p. 5

reality of fictional characters allows for a gothic presentation of the relationship with texts. A textual encounter (like a vampire encounter) results in an exchange. The vampire allows for depictions of ways in which this exchange might go awry: influence turning dangerous, the self of the reader or writer being threatened, the work being misappropriated. Language itself may be traitorous, making the exchange of information uncertain. Christine Ferguson argues that *Dracula* deliberately questions the reliability of words as signifiers, reflecting contemporary anxieties clustering around the 'function, status, and essence of language'.[4] The vampire functions well as a metaphor for textual interaction because it always provides an exchange of energies, an exertion of influence, and a confusion of the boundaries of the self.

George Poulet characterizes reading in terms of consciousness-sharing between author and reader – a sensation which resembles the relationships frequently existing between vampires and their victims. Reading is 'a way of giving way not only to a host of alien words, images, ideas, but also to the very alien principle which utters them and shelters them.'[5] The author of these alien words may, more uncannily still, be dead, since Poulet argues that (like vampirism) the book allows the preservation of an identity from death.[6] Walter J. Ong similarly observes, 'One of the most startling paradoxes inherent in writing is its close association with death.'[7] He continues by noting that paradoxically, 'the deadness of the text, its removal from the

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[4] Ferguson, p. 232.

[5] Georges Poulet, 'Criticism and the Experience of Interiority', in *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, ed. by Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore, M.D.: John Hopkins Univeristy Press, 1972) (repr. in *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern: A Reader*, ed. by Seán Burke (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), pp. 101-07 (p. 105).)

[6] Poulet, p. 106.

[7] 'This association is suggested in Plato's charge that writing is inhuman, thing-like, and that it destroys memory. It is also abundantly evident in countless references to writing (and/or print) traceable in printed dictionaries of quotations, from 2 Corinthians 3:6 […] and Horace's reference to his three books of *Odes* as a 'monument' (*Odes* iii. 30. 1), presaging his own death, on to and beyond Henry Vaughan's assurance to Sir Thomas Bodley that in the Bodleian Library at Oxford "every book is thy epitaph".' (Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Routledge, 1988; repr. 1993), p. 81).

living human lifeworld, its rigid visual fixity, assures its endurance and its potential

for being resurrected into limitless living contexts by a potentially infinite number of

living readers'.[8] The vampire may easily be associated with textual relationships

failing, the process going wrong – but when reading is considered in such terms, even

its 'correct' operation seems uncanny. The vampire trope's focus on consciousness-

sharing and return of the dead make it a vivid metaphor for the relationship between

reader and text.

David Punter writes, 'in the context of the modern, Gothic is the paradigm of

all fiction, all textuality.'[9] He stresses that 'Gothic is "forever" caught in the act;

caught in the act of creating, or recreating, other books.'[10] If this is the case for the

gothic as a whole, it is especially true for the vampire text. Rebecca A. Pope, for

instance, reads *Dracula* as illustrating a parasitism characteristic of the novel genre:

> As a discourse that lives off other discourses, *Dracula* represents the
> novel as a parasitic and appropriating genre and offers vampirism as a
> model. The resonance extends further: the novel consists of a series of
> texts which are, to use the characters' own term, 'knitted' together, and
> to piece together, as in patchwork, is to 'vamp.' This modelling of the
> genre as a vamping together of different discourses attributed to
> different voices neatly anticipates and illustrates Bakhtin's sense of the
> novel as a composite of different discourses and 'languages' –
> ideological languages, for example in dialogical rather than

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[8] Ong, *Orality and Literacy,* p. 81.
[9] David Punter, *Gothic Pathologies: The Text, the Body, and the Law* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), p. 1.
[10] Punter, *Gothic Pathologies*, p. 2.

hierarchical relations to each other.[11]

Dracula, by this account, becomes a concentrated vision of the medium as a whole –
the horror story exploits a pre-existing potential for gothic relationships – the
vamping and parasitism of the novel. The novel also exploits the association between
writing and death noted by Ong and Poulet. Characters write immediately before or
after near-death encounters (Lucy and Jonathan) or leave writing to speak for them in
the event of their deaths (Lucy and Van Helsing).

Though *Dracula* works well as a focus for wider arguments about vampire
literature, I suggest that it also has a claim to epitomize the gothic of writing which
recurs throughout the vampire genre. If the relation with the past and with earlier
stories and texts is key to this gothic, then this 'family resemblance' is vividly clear in
Dracula. Stoker's novel, in this sense, provides a centre point for other vampire
media. More, its long shadow over subsequent vampire stories may strengthen the
association between vampire and text – its repeated rewritings and inescapable
intertextuality encourage this association, as does its influence as *the* vampire novel.
The novel's appeal may lie partly in its relationship with texts, their pleasures and
dangers. *Dracula* has earned popularity due to its emphasis on themes of sex and
death, the complicated attraction and repulsion which both are capable of inspiring (in
the novel's characters, perhaps in reader and author as well.) But the novel offers a
view of these elemental human concerns at second hand – filtered through writing
which calls attention to itself, its potential unreliability, the filter it imposes over
events.

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[11] Pope, p. 199.

Dracula presents the attractiveness about reading about sex and death – the mediated experience. The novel discusses the fear and desire accompanying reading about fear and desire – writing, in this context, is not merely a means to an end. Dracula changes form within the novel, animated by the blood and fear of different characters – he appears differently to Jonathan, Lucy, and Mina, embodies different fears and desires. While the precise nature of what animates him may alter, Dracula still remains a dreadful force. Similarly writing in *Dracula* – whatever its purpose – has the potential for dreadfulness in its own right, independent of the message it carries. (And so apparently innocuous documents can become ominous – the business letters from Dracula's solicitor to arrange delivery of his boxes of earth; the notice of the escaped wolf in the *Pall Mall Gazette*; even Mina's affectionate letters to Lucy of the 17th and 18th September – left unopened due to Lucy's terminal illness.) Depiction, rather than content, has its own danger, as is suggested by Stoker's writing on censorship. It is not what one feels but what one writes which is dangerous and potentially deleterious for the reader:

> No one has power to stop the workings of imagination, not even the individual whose sensoria afford its source. But the individual producer or recorder can control his own utterances; he may have to feel, but he need not of necessity speak or write. And so individual discretion is the first line of defence against such evils as may come from imagination – itself pure, a process of thought, working unintentionally with impure or dangerous material.[12]

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[12] Stoker, 'The Censorship of Fiction', p. 482.

It is writing which Stoker empowers as a dangerous influence, and which he argues must be restrained by author reticence. *Dracula*'s word, which is constructed and conditioned by language, makes the importance of linguistic control of critical importance – controlling the writings means protecting the world.

But as Chapter One suggested, dread of writing's power may be accompanied by enjoyment. Words' power make them epic as well as terrible, and offer a frisson of potential wickedness – as Lord Henry remarks in *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* 'nothing makes one so vain as being told that one is a sinner' (*The Picture of Dorian Gray,* p. 99). Kilgour comments: 'For some of us, Stoker's fantasy of art's power to save the world by reconstructing differences is now replaced by a new dream of art's potential to save the world by deconstructing them.'[13] The vampire story, as told in *Buffy*, appears to offer a qualified version of the same vision – acknowledging commercialization and lack of originality in beloved cultural properties, but simultaneously arguing for powerful, transformative fictions. *Buffy*'s narrative is ultimately changed by magic – Willow's spell. The change is quite in keeping with the show's mythology, which has long considered vampires alongside manifold other supernatural creatures. This development is not by any means exclusive to *Buffy,* but is true of many of the most influential vampire novels, films, and TV series of the present day, including *Twilight*.

In one sense this is a return to the vampire of folklore, which was sometimes considered alongside witches, and executed in the same way.[14] Vampire magic has appeared in tales like 'Carmilla' (Carmilla's impossible shape-shifting and inhabitation of dreams) and *Dracula* (Dracula's family have attended the Devil's school of magic, the Scholomance, and the vampire is introduced alongside witches

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[13] Kilgour, p. 58.

[14] Calmet, for instance, considered the vampire alongside other fantastic beings like devils and angels.

and werewolves). Now, however, magic may be a more overt element to the story; the vampire is more likely to be overtly fantastic – or scientific. The vampire strays into fantasy or science fiction, sometimes existing as a component of a larger mystical fictional world (in *Harry Potter,* for instance, vampires exist alongside dozens of other fictional creatures and peoples.) The fusing of the vampire with magical fantasy perhaps allows for a hopeful, transformative view of fiction – like the modern vampire, writing may be just dangerous enough to be enjoyable. Yet wariness is still important in modern textual experience, which is very hard to escape – what Dracula's characters share with Buffy's characters, and with the modern reader, is a knowledge that we inhabit a storified world.[15]

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[15] 'Storify', interestingly, is also a social media service which allows users to create 'stories' out of entries made on twitter and other platforms. The website's blurb – 'Craft authentic stories with content from your team and community' – would probably have appealed to Mina Harker and her fellow vampire hunters. (Storify, *Storify · Make the web tell a story* (website homepage) [n.d.] <https://storify.com> [accessed 23 December 2016]).

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'Halloween', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Bruce Seth Green, written by Carl Ellsworth, Season 2, episode 6. First broadcast 27 October 1997

'The Harvest', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by John T. Kretchmer, written by Joss Whedon, Season 1, episode 2. First broadcast 10 March 1997

'Him', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Drew Z. Greenberg, Season 7, episode 6. First broadcast 5 November 2002

'Hush', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer,* dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 4, episode 10. First broadcast 14 December 1999

'Killed By Death', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Deran Sarafian, written by Rob Des Hotel and Dean Batali, Season 2, episode 18. First broadcast 3 March 1998

'Normal Again', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Rick Rosenthal, written by Diego Gutierrez, Season 6, episode 17. First broadcast 12 March 2002

'Passion', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Ty King, Season 2, episode 17. First broadcast 24 February 1998

'Primeval', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer,* dir. by James A. Contner, written by David Fury, Season 4, episode 21. First broadcast 16 May 2000

'Prophecy Girl', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 1, episode 12. First broadcast 2 June 1997

'School Hard', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by John T. Kretchmer, written Joss Whedon (story) and David Greenwalt (teleplay), Season 2, episode 3. First broadcast 29 September 1997

'Seeing Red', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Steven S. DeKnight, Season 6, episode 19. First broadcast 7 May 2002

'Selfless', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Solomon, written by Drew Goddard, Season 7, episode 5. First broadcast 22 October 2002

'Showtime', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Grossman, written by David Fury, Season 7, episode 11. First broadcast 7 January 2003

'Some Assembly Required', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Bruce Seth Green, written by Ty King, Season 2, episode 2. First broadcast 22 September 1997

'Storyteller', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Marita Grabiak, written by James A. Contner, Season 7, episode 16. First broadcast 25 February 2003

'Superstar', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Grossman, written by Jane Espenson, Season 4, episode 17. First broadcast 4 April 2000

'Ted', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Bruce Seth Green, written by David Greenwalt and Joss Whedon, Season 2, episode 11. First broadcast 8 December 1997

'This Year's Girl', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Michael Gershman, written by Douglas Petrie, Season 4, episode 15. First broadcast 22 February 2000

'Triangle', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Christopher Hibler, written by Jane Espenson, Season 5, episode 11. First broadcast 9 January 2001

'Villains', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Solomon, written by Marti Noxon, Season 6, episode 20. First broadcast 14 May 2002

'Welcome to the Hellmouth', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by Charles Martin Smith, written by Joss Whedon, Season 1, episode 1. First broadcast 10 March 1997

'When She Was Bad', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. and written by Joss Whedon, Season 2, episode 1. First broadcast 15 September 1997

'The Wish', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Greenwalt, written by Marti Noxon, Season 3, episode 9. First broadcast 8 December 1998

'Wrecked', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Solomon, written by Marti Noxon, Season 6, episode 10. First broadcast 27 November 2001

'The Yoko Factor', *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, dir. by David Grossman, written by Douglas Petrie, Season 4, episode 20. First broadcast 9 May 2000

Films

Bram Stoker's Dracula, dir. by Francis Ford Coppola (Columbia Pictures, 1992)
   [DVD]

Dracula, dir. by Tod Browning (Universal Pictures, 1931) [itunes download]

Dracula/Horror of Dracula, dir. by Terence Fisher (Hammer Film, 1958) [itunes
   download]

Dracula, dir. by John Badham (Universal Pictures, 1979) [itunes download]

Nosferatu, dir. by F. W. Murnau (Film Arts Guild, 1922), The Masters of Cinema
   Series, Eureka Entertainment 2007 [itunes download]

Shadow of the Vampire, dir. by E. Elias Merhige (Lions Gate Films, 2000) [DVD]