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The Real World is Where the Monsters Are

*The Monstrous Body in the Victorian Fin-de-Siècle
Gothic*

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The Monstrous Body in the Victorian Fin-de-Siècle Gothic

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Victorian Fin-de-Siècle Gothic

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Abstract

This thesis explores the issue of the Victorian monster and its evolving body during the fin-de-siècle in three novels, namely Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), H. G. Wells' *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1896), and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). The purpose of this thesis is to explore the literary monster as a cultural mirror that reflects societal fears and anxieties. Within these three novels, I argue that it is able to discern a subtle transition in the anxieties that these monsters reflect, and, consequently, how the body of the monster changes accordingly.

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And to my mom. Thank you for introducing me to the magical world of literature. I would not be here had it not been for your gentle brainwashing at a young age and your continued support. Thank you.

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Introduction

Monsters are our children. They can be pushed to the farthest margins of geography and discourse, hidden away at the edges of the world and in the forbidden recesses of our mind, but they always return.

(Cohen 20)

Monsters are real, and ghosts are real too. They live inside of us, and sometimes, they win.

Stephen King

Monsters have been an intrinsic part of society for as long as Man has been able to express himself. Whether they have been tangible monsters that threaten our existence or the fictitious monsters from myths and art, monsters play a vital role in how a society understands itself and the world in which they live. Within literary fiction, the monster offers its own body up to function as something between a mirror and blank canvas: it simultaneously reflects the collective fears of a society at a specific moment of time, as well as paints its body with the sins of that same society. Monsters are, therefore, a glimpse into the very period and place they were created. The monster has, conventionally, been both physically and morally monstrous. However, in the Victorian era, the lines between monsters and Man became much more blurred. Though the monster would still possess characteristics that marked it as such, Victorian literature expanded upon the idea of what could be perceived as monstrous and the possibility that one could still be perceived as being monstrous regardless of their physical appearance. Consequentially, the fear of the monster evolved into fear of the unknown rather than the hulking figure of Frankenstein's Creation. However, this led to a new conundrum: how to recognise the monster?

This thesis argues that it is possible to discern a shift in the appearance of the literary monster as the focus transferred from the implicit threat of the lower classes into the external threat of foreign invasions and reverse colonialism. Within the thesis, I will focus on works written within the Gothic genre of the fin-de-siècle, exploring the contemporary political landscape and how it has affected the monsters created during this era. The interest of monsters magnified by the end of the Victorian era as societal structures and ideas stood under direct threat from new sciences, an economically stronger working class, and

movement in national borders through colonisation that had reached its zenith; the issues the Victorians faced were now related to maintaining systems and hierarchies. This triggered a series of monsters to appear. Through the monster, the Victorians created a physical being to mirror societal anxieties and, appropriately, rid the world of it. All three novels I have chosen, allude to a fear of a degenerative force. In *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, the degenerate Mr Edward Hyde is representative of the corrupting forces of an immoral working class which threatens the stability to the established bourgeoisie. In both *The Island of Dr Moreau* and *Dracula*, the monsters reflect an external threat that threatens the British Empire from the outside with invasion and pollution of the pure blood of Englishmen. Within these novels, the literary monster becomes not merely a fiction of imagination but rather a representative of more omnipresent fears that society has as a collective whole; the monster, as a physical manifestation of these fears, becomes a safe place in which these fears can be realised before ultimately be disposed of.

My thesis consists of four main chapters: Chapter One explores the theoretical aspect of the monstrous, as well as the grotesque. My reason for including the grotesque is due to its close connection to the monstrous. Indeed, the two are often mistaken for one another, and it is therefore my aim to differentiate between the two in addition to demonstrate how the two can both work together as well as transform into the other. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the Victorian era's own understanding on the monstrous and the grotesque and how they interacted with these concepts.

In Chapter Two, I will analyse *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, published in 1886 and thus the earliest of the three novels. Unlike the two other novels, *Strange Case* does not entail an overt monstrous shape but rather explores the idea of the monster as something that is intrinsic within all as part of human *duality*. This duality, when given free reign, has the ability to become so overtly monstrous that it physically manifests itself upon the face of Edward Hyde. In this chapter, I will argue that, though both Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde are portrayed as two separate entities, they are, in fact, one and the same. Hyde is not, as most often presumed, an "alter-ego" or "separate personality" but is rather a bodily disguise that allows Dr Jekyll to live out his dark desires without fear of recognition or consequences. By allowing himself to indulge in these hedonistic urges, Jekyll dooms himself as his body becomes destabilised by his criminal behaviour.

Chapter Three looks at Wells' novel *The Island of Dr Moreau*, where animals are elevated into human beings and humans devolve into bestial behaviour. Somewhat similar to *Strange Case*, *The Island of Dr Moreau* deals with a dual monstrosity though not contained

within one singular body; the Beast Men, whose physical deformities render them awe inspiringly grotesque, are the initial, natural horror upon the island, though their monstrosity is swiftly replaced by the doctor's own unethical experiments and cruel intentions. The novel is an interesting one as it explores what it entails to be seen as a monster to a much greater extent than any of the other novels within this thesis, and which explores the "invisible" human monster to a much greater extent. In this chapter, I will argue the implications Dr Moreau's monstrous behaviour has on Victorian civilisation and illustrates the fear that such immoral behaviour could still occur and be encouraged within the centre of sophisticated society.

Chapter Four will look at Bram Stoker's immortal monster *Dracula*. The vampire is, perhaps one of the most well-known and beloved monsters, with modern fiction such as *The Vampire Diaries* and *Twilight* still managing to draw a vast audience into the world of vampirism. Though *Dracula* cannot rightly be christened the "original", he is nevertheless one of the most notorious of the vampire legends and novels. It is through *Dracula* that many of the key tropes of vampirism and the vampire were established, such as their fear of the cross and other religious relics, his relation to nocturnal animals, and the iconic stake through the heart trope. Though human in stature, the Count provokes a primal instinct within those he meets, indicating the corruptness that lies within his body. Within this chapter I analyse the transgressing nature of the Count's body and how it plays into the idea of the monstrous body. Here, I argue that *Dracula* illustrates the fear Victorians had of the pollution of English blood through the Count's transgressing, hybrid body.

These three novels, though quite different in their illustrations of the monstrous, all express the same fear of degeneration of the Victorian society. Within these novels, the literary monster focuses its destructive forces towards the English way of living, whether that be through class contamination, the pollution of the Victorian body, or outside degenerative forces that pushes back towards England's borders. This thesis will follow a chronological order, thus allowing me to use *Strange Case* as a linear starting point by which the other novels will be compared to. Through these three novels, it is possible to discern a shift in the monstrous body, from the class-specific monster within *Strange Case*, to the more colonial oriented monsters presented by *The Island of Dr Moreau* and *Dracula*. Here, *Moreau* functions as a bridge between the two other novels, encapsulating both the pseudo-science of *Strange Case* as well as the hybridity of *Dracula*. Finally, *Dracula* illustrates the late-Victorian monster's final form, fully realising the hybrid monster's potential and the Victorian fear of subjugation.

1 Theory

Introduction

This thesis explores the ways in which late nineteenth century Gothic fiction engaged and reflected upon the theories of the grotesque creation of monsters that functioned as a fundamental cornerstone for the genre. The focus of this thesis will revolve around Great Britain during the fin-de-siècle, during which there was a “prevalent feeling [of] imminent perdition and extinction” (Nordau 2), as the golden era was coming to an end. During such tumultuous times, the grotesque and the monster thrives. An extensive number of important Gothic monsters arose during this particular era, running unchecked on the pages of Gothic fiction. The conception of the monster reflects the era in which it was conceived in terms of socio-historical fears and anxieties. In this thesis, I will explore the fundamentals of these literary monsters: the aspects that transform them into grotesque or monstrous figures and the fears that they project through their Otherness.

Monster Theory

The word “monster” is omnipresent in everyday language all over the world, most often applied when trying to describe whatever a person finds to be terrifying, loathsome, or dangerous. It can, however, also be used in terms of awestruck appraisal of a person that seems almost “non-human” in either strength or mental capacity: “(s)he’s a monster”. As a term, “monster” is very abstract, as it can be used when referring to a multitude of subjects. There are supernatural and mythical monsters, such as the hydra or vampire, and there are human monsters that commit heinous crimes such as Hitler, Stalin, or Ted Bundy. Similarly, there are those that are categorised as monsters by their physical abnormalities or birth defects and were to be found in nineteenth century freak shows. There are supernatural, human monsters such as the witch and the necromancer, who appear as normal human beings but hide an evil, magical inner nature. Consequently, monsters cannot be categorized as something entirely imaginary nor something that is entirely of this world but must be placed somewhere in between the two. The monstrous shows clear signs of transcending that which is normative or normal human “evil”, but they are still recognisable as something that belongs of this world.

Etymologically, “monster” stems from the Latin root of *monere* which means “to warn” or “to portend” (Beal 6-7). The Latin *monstrum* refers etymologically “to that which reveals, that which warns, a glyph in search of a hierophant” (Gilmore 9). *Monstrum* is

furthermore connected to the verb *monstrare* which means “to show” or “to reveal”. Ancient Romans tended to use the word *monstra* when discussing all abnormal phenomena that were regarded as being warnings or omens from the gods, thus showing how the word not only pertains to that which is monstrous but has also a root in Roman religion which thought that celestial tempers and intentions could be read through appearances in nature (Gilmore 9). This belief carried through to the fourteenth century when Pierre Barsuire wrote that “monsters are creatures from outside, beyond, or contrary to nature... Such things therefore are called monstria, from monstrando either because they show or signify some future event or because they exemplify some moral or spiritual flaw” (quoted in Friedman 116). Today, both the semantic and religious overtones of the monster are lost. Modern, “imaginary” monsters are made to be as grotesque, as gargantuan and as abhorrent as possible, and are most often used within the horror movie genre. A good example is one of the latest blockbusters, *IT*. Based on the novel of Stephen King, the alien monster “It” terrorizes children by taking on the physical appearance of their worst fears, “flavouring” their flesh with fear before eating them. In modern times, there is now an additional emphasis on the psychological monsters of reality, as serial killers and crime shows have reached an all-time high (Cooper). Series such as “*Mindhunter*”, “*Hannibal*”, and “*Making a Murderer*” have become extremely popular and never before have we shown as much interest in the psychology behind these “monsters” as now. The appeal of the monster is, perhaps, greater today than ever before.

The idea of the monster exceeds the limits set in its etymological origins and is rather seen as an *idea* more so than something that can be found by facts alone. Every society has their own idea of what a monster is, and they have additionally played a vital role within each these societies. Monsters originate either mythology and folktales, or they are the outcome of discord within a society. As societies are constantly evolving, and shown by the broadness of the etymology, monsters are extremely diverse in their appearance and vary from time and place. Thus, that which was considered either monstrous or a monster a few centuries ago might not apply today¹. As such, when encountering a monster, it is important to keep in mind

¹ A good example of this shift in monstrosity can be found in the Victorian freak shows that exploited individuals who suffered from either birth defects, bodily anomalies or racial difference. As they were not considered to be completely human, these unfortunate individuals were categorized as being monstrous and accordingly placed within the confines of the freak show. In modern society, this would be entirely unacceptable as we now have a much greater understanding and acceptance of racial diversity, as well as the knowledge of how most disabilities occur. With all technological, scientific (and perhaps moral) development that has occurred just the last century, society today is, or aiming to be, all-inclusive and accepting of all bodies and ethnicities, and not differentiate between that which is “normal” and “abnormal”.

the changing norms and expectations that come with every new time period and every society. Therefore, it is best to avoid broad generalizations of what makes a monster, such as “monsters always have x” or “monsters look like y” and the like. As monsters are social constructions they refuse to yield to generalisations regarding their appearance. They do, however, share a number of “qualities” that make them appear as monsters.

Asa Mittman proposed that the monster becomes a monster the moment affective vertigo is interpreted as existing within the diverse category of things that do not fit. In simpler terms: a monster becomes a monster the moment it is called a monster. This formulation is, however, extremely broad, as it does not take into account individual fears and phobias and could therefore mean to include nearly everything and anything. Nevertheless, Mittman provides an explanation as to how something can be perceived differently at individual moments in time and by different individuals, as he argues that monstrosity is “rooted in the vertigo of redefining one’s understanding of the world” (Mittman 7-8). Judith Halberstam went further than Mittman in narrowing down a “universal” monstrosity, arguing that monstrosity “(and the fear it gives rise to) is *historically* conditioned rather than a *psychological* universal” (Halberstam 6, emphasis added). Thus, according to Halberstam, what is considered to be a monster is entirely dependent upon the history of the society in which it appears and what that particular society has been conditioned to fear². Here, Halberstam is in keeping with the first thesis presented by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen³ that states that the “monster’s body is a cultural body” (Cohen 4). By this, Cohen argues that the monster is the physical embodiment of the fears, desires and anxieties of a certain time and place, encapsulated within one singular monstrous body. However, though the monster functions

² Examples of historical monsters are such monsters as the Native American “Wendigo” and the Inuit “Qalupalik”. The Wendigo was a monster that was said to look like a starved man, with ribs poking through the skin and hollow cheeks, and had an innate lust for human flesh. These monsters typically appeared when winters were particularly harsh or long. Most likely, the Wendigo myth originated from starved human beings that were so desperate for food that they turned to cannibalism. The Wendigo thus offered a more “comfortable” explanation, turning them into monsters in order to exclude the possibility that man can turn into something as bestial and *monstrous* as a cannibal. The Qalupalik, as opposed to the Wendigo, functioned more as a cautionary tale for children; it was said that the Qalupalik lay waiting for unsuspecting victims in the water, dragging them underneath and drowning them. It would announce its presence by making an eerie, distant hum underneath the water, or it could be heard tapping its fingers under the ice. Probably, the Qalupalik was therefore used as a caution for children in order to keep them from harm’s way by keeping them from straying too close to the water’s edge or too thin, cracking ice.

³ Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s book *Monster Culture (Seven Theses)* covers the seven qualities, as understood by Cohen, that all monsters share. These theses are: the monster is a cultural body; the monster always escapes, the monster is the harbinger of category crisis; the monster dwells at the gate of difference; the monster polices the borders of the possible; fear of the monster is really a kind of desire; the monster stands at the threshold of becoming.

almost as a window into a culture and is thus somewhat of a reflection of the period in which it lives, still it dwells at the gates of difference, continues Cohen, as it is “difference made flesh” (7). The fears and anxieties mentioned in the previous theses all revolve around, or so Cohen argues, the monster’s role as the “dialectical Other or third-term supplement, the monster is an incorporation of the Outside, The Beyond – of all those loci that are rhetorically placed as distant and distinct but originate Within” (Cohen 7). Looking at the two theses together, there is a clear connection between the two though there arises an emphasis upon the “Within”; though the monster might arise from the Outside of society, it is entirely dependent upon the creation of a Within in order to exist at all; without the “monsterification” by a society or a Within, there would be no monster nor an Outside. An example of this process, within the aesthetic arts, is that of King Richard III of England; his unpopular image was exaggerated by the arts in which he was depicted as “deformed, unfinish'd sent before my time / Into this breathing world, scarce half made up” (Richard III, 1.2.20-21). This unflattering depiction, as written by Shakespeare, was meant to indicate Richard’s lacking morality and functioned as a foreshadowing of his heinous crimes against his own family⁴. By creating the evil and deformed Richard, Shakespeare creates a political monster on which the people can lay blame as well as justify the rise of the Tudor dynasty, as they freed England from the grips of this monstrous king. Another example within the corporeal world is given by Cohen: that of the persecution of the Jews as they steadfastly refused “assimilation into Christian society, Jews have been perennial favourites for xenophobic misrepresentation, for here was an alien culture living, working, and even at times prospering within vast communities dedicated to becoming homogeneous and monolithic” (Cohen 8). By threatening to destroy not only individuals but also the very society in which that individuality is constituted and allowed, the monster inevitably needs to be destroyed in order for that society or culture to remain whole. Therefore, the monster does not belong to itself; it is created, and

⁴ Richard III was ascribed the blame of killing his two nephews, commonly known as the “Princes in the Tower”, as they were the rightful claimants to the throne after the death of Richard’s own brother, King Edward IV. This has, to be fair to Richard, never been fully established though he is the most likely candidate in the question of the “disappearance” of the princes. It was popular belief that Richard was, indeed, deformed in some way, either through a hunched back, a misshapen head due to a difficult birthing, having a limp, etc. In modern times, it has been established that Richard did indeed have scoliosis and that his spine therefore had an unnatural curve to it. However, the unflattering depiction of him by Shakespeare was, most likely, due to political dispute, as the newly established Tudor-line needed to establish the history of their reign. As history is written by the winners, it would therefore follow that Richard III (predecessor of Henry Tudor) would be depicted as a gruesome, monstrous dictator who would ruin England had it not been saved by the glorious (and awe-inspiring) Tudors.

exists, for the sole purpose of projection and unification *against* itself. The monster offers its body up as a readable surface upon which society can lay all of its own fears and, consequentially, rid itself of it by destroying it.

When meeting that which is monstrous, the onlooker experiences a dual, contradicting feeling of both revulsion and desire stemming from the monster's ability to live completely unencumbered by societal norms and regulations of the individual. This feeling of desire stems, according to Halberstam, from the hidden longing for release from the "constraints of an ordered life" though they simultaneously fear it as it "reveals the flimsy nature of human identity" (Halberstam 112). The monster, in its abject behaviour against society, has the ability to live out that which is taboo, that which is abhorred by society, whether that be murder, cannibalism, incest...that which is monstrous is nearly always linked with forbidden practices or desires. However, this desire is problematic for the subject (onlooker) as it threatens their own position within the "order of things". By permitting the subject to acknowledge this pull of the forbidden that the object indulges in, it threatens to make them into something like the object (monster) and consequently no longer classifiable as "normal" as it "is a breach of the law that automatically stands outside the law" (Foucault 56). The vast spectre of emotions within the subject causes, according to Foucault, the subject's response to be either outward violence or pity of the object. Violence towards the monster stems from the need to destroy whatever causes discomfort or that which makes the subject question either society as a whole or their own place within it.

The monster's freedom from society consequently means that it refuses to be classified as anything *known* within said society. Had it *belonged*, it would not have been deemed monstrous as it would then be within the realm of the possible and "normal". However, in order to be "classified" as a monster, it has transcended to such a level of otherness that it is no longer recognisable as anything that is previously known, thus refusing to participate within a Linnaean classification. The monster is a hybrid whose incoherent body resists "attempts to include them in any systematic structuration" (Cohen 6) and is therefore such a dangerous entity, as it is a being that is suspended between forms that threatens to disintegrate distinctions.

Monsters have been part of human society for a long time, serving to speak to humans on a primal level through cautionary tales or horrifying myths that aid in the survival and social cohesion within a culture. An exact definition of what a monster is or, rather, what it should look like, is near impossible as illustrated above and one must therefore rather focus on certain other characteristics. In this thesis, I will focus my attention mainly upon the

physical characteristics these monsters possess and the implication of these. Furthermore, I will explore the connection between the internal and external of the monster, whether exterior appearance can be any indication of an internal monstrosity.

The Grotesque

The monstrous, being a complex and multifaceted thing, is often taken for or confused with the idea of the grotesque, which shares a multitude of characteristics with the monstrous. Though very similar and several aspects, the overall effect they produce are vastly different: whereas the monstrous produces an instant reaction of fear and loathing, the grotesque is invariably linked to laughter, whether humorous or terrified. However, both terms can intermingle with the other as the “aesthetics of the grotesque are to a certain extent the aesthetics of the monstrous” (Hugo 41), and both have thus the capacity to convert into one another by either the addition or removal of laughter. As with the monstrous, the grotesque is undeniably abstract in nature as it too belongs within the realms of the aesthetic. Aesthetics, as previously discussed, is extremely individual and dependent upon the socio-historical context within a society, which maps out both the normative and the different. Both terms are liminal subjects that push the meaning of what can be deemed “normal” within a society; the grotesque is often excessive in its proportions, yet still within the ranges of the possible, and as such still very much familiar to the audience. Though the grotesque might push the boundaries of both the possible and of society as the monstrous does, the potential danger the grotesque poses is quite easily neutralized by means of laughter. Whether the laughter stems from a place of hilarity or from self-defence, the laugh itself means that the grotesque is restrained and placed within an inferior echelon by the those that laugh.

Whereas the monstrous does not evoke any reactions of hilarity nor is it as easily defeated as the grotesque, the grotesque, though frightening, uncanny or otherwise uncomfortable to the reader, is imbued with qualities that alienate it from normality though still existing within the realm of possibility. As such, the grotesque can be classified within a normative system, whilst the monstrous is alienated to such an extent that it cannot easily be categorized as neither human nor beast. As it functions as the “dialectical Other or third-term supplement, the monster is an incorporation of the Outside, the Beyond – of all those loci that are rhetorically placed as distant and distinct but originate Within” (Cohen 7). This particular aspect of the monstrous makes it into a powerful political weapon as it has the ability to further feelings of xenophobia whilst simultaneously creating a united front *against* such beings of otherness. The grotesque, whilst *different* in nature does not exceed into the realm

of otherness. As the grotesque and the comical often occur within the same sphere and in combination with each other, the grotesque lacks any direct, intentional malefaction against society nor is it completely apart from it. As such, the grotesque can often be utilized as an almost theatrical prop, transforming the subject into something comical and/or places it within a submissive role in its interaction with the normative. However, the grotesque can transform into the monstrous the moment the laughter disappears, and it has deviated too far within the liminal to be recognized as anything but a monster; or, in the more straightforward answer given by Mittman: the moment it is called a monster.

Unlike the term “monster”, “grotesque” did not appear as a word within the English vocabulary until the sixteenth century and, accordingly, has a much shorter, though no less significant, history than the monster. The term first appeared within the Italian language sometime during the fifteenth century when a series of ancient frescoes were discovered within some caves in Italy. These frescoes were called *grottesco*, stemming from the Italian word *grotto* (cave), and depicted a series of “risqué” images of human, animal and vegetable aspects converted into a new hybrid being. These frescoes inspired several Renaissance painters, most prominent amongst them Raphaël, who experimented with this new stylisation of humans. After a while the term and artform spread to other European cultures, particularly Germany and France, from whence the term *grotesque* comes. As it spread, the term took on a new meaning and extended to include that which not specifically illustrative and was also applied to non-artistic concepts as well. Rabelais was one of the first to apply the term “grotesque” to the human body during the sixteenth century. Within the work of Rabelais there was no mention of animalistic nor vegetative aspects included within the “grotesque body”: the body could be grotesque in and off itself, without any additives. The fifteenth century saw a rise in “grotesque writers”, the most well-known amongst them being Shakespeare and Boccaccio, both of whose comedies often included characters of a grotesque nature functioning as a comedic relief, such as the exceedingly fat and vulgar Shakespearean character Falstaff; his excessive body and wit pushed him into the liminal field of what is considered normative yet toeing the line in order to function as a comedic character rather than a grand, monstrous shadow.

According to literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin, the grotesque emerges within the safe limitations of the carnivalesque. As the carnivalesque has the ability to temporarily invert its own reality through destabilizing a closed, hierarchical society, the grotesque has the opportunity to materialize within comfortable borders. These comfortable borders meant that this state of being would come to an end and reverse back into the familiar and already

established; it also means that the audience is able to *laugh* and enjoy the strange and grotesque as it does not pose a threat to the established. Much like the monstrous, the grotesque is entirely dependent upon the time and place in which it is created as it cannot be defined in “ahistorical isolation” (Edwards 22-23) as it needs to be understood in and off its own time, otherwise the image of the grotesque will disappear. For Bakhtin, laughter had the power to transform, as laughter “liberates not only from external censorship but first of all from the great internal censor; it liberates from the fear that developed in man during thousands of years: fear of the sacred, fear of the prohibitions, of the past, of power” (Bakhtin 94). The grotesque, as I have mentioned, opens the possibility for a covert social criticism; much like a good comedian in modern society, the grotesque delivers a form of criticism that edges on impertinent yet is received as humorous rather than scolding. This is the power of laughter that Bakhtin mentioned as it does not create any “dogmas and [cannot] become authoritarian” (Bakhtin 95).

However, though laughter is a vital point of the grotesque, it furthermore carries a much more ominous undertone which could, in turn, draw forth an involuntary, defensive laugh *against* the grotesque rather than laughing *at* it. Wolfgang Kayser, in an attempt to classify the grotesque, went further than Bakhtin’s carnivalesque and stated that the grotesque will always appear, to a varying degree, in combination with laughter, whether that be voluntary or not, genuine or protective. The latter, Kayser emphasized, stemmed from the eerie nature of the grotesque itself which could shock the audience into a defensive stance against the confronting nature of the grotesque. This, according to Kayser, differentiated the grotesque from other subcategories of humour, as the grotesque is neither exaggerated buffoonery nor ludicrously fantastic. The “grotesque”, he claimed, “is constituted by a clashing between form and content, the unstable mixture of heterogeneous elements, the explosive force of the paradoxical, which is both ridiculous and terrifying” (Kayser pp. 53). As the grotesque is found within the fine balance between two opposing forces, the true depth of the grotesque is only achieved, Kayser continues, by the confrontation between the grotesque and its clear opposite, the sublime (58).

If the grotesque appears in relation to the sublime, then there needs to be an understanding of *what* the sublime entails in order to discover what it is contrasted against. Yet again, we are posed with the issue that the sublime is an abstract term that is not clearly defined. Immanuel Kant claimed that the sublime should be seen as a “presentation of an indeterminate concept of reason” (Kant 90-1), meaning that the sublime transcends beyond the realms of aesthetic and into reason. Furthermore, the sublime is often connected with

contradicting emotions, as it evokes both awe as well as fear at its own sublimity; pain as well as pleasure. The sublime gained particular interest from the Romantics, particularly the poet William Wordsworth is best known for his work on the sublime who vocalized the emotions brought forth by the sublime in several poems such as in *Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey*⁵. The idea of the *sublime body* has always been connected within the popular imagination as being *whole* and *pure*; within medieval Christianity, the body was created in the image of God and thus connected to the “bodily perfection of the single progenitor” (Shilrick 53); within a modern timeframe (after the Industrial Revolution), the sublime body is still connected to the idea of being *whole* and *pure*, however the religious aspects are cast away and replaced by the *natural order*. The “central idea was that progress and improvement are natural and proper” and consequently new conceptions of “race, biology and hierarchy amongst human beings” (Robb and Harris 167) were now utilized to explain the human body, as well as the differences found in other races or deformed individuals. The sublime body became the image of containment, “the ultimate boundary” (Halberstam 7). It is unblemished, untarnished and whole, complete.

Following Kayser’s logic, the grotesque would then mean anything that goes against the completeness of the skin: “the grotesque body is not separated from the rest of the world. It is not a closed, complete unit; it is unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits” as the “apertures” of the body, “the open mouth, the genital organs, the breasts, the phallus”, discharge fluids that flow in and out, to and from other bodies (Bakhtin 26). These areas of the body all share the same quality of breaching the skin, either by erupting or by appearing as a tear in it. Shildrick argued that these areas as “breaches in the body’s surfaces – points of vulnerability for us all – such sites, in their evident or supposed difference, mark an uncertainty about the putatively self-contained human being” (Shildrick 52). Here, she touches upon the feelings of uncertainty the grotesque body can evoke within individuals, as the grotesque has the ability to make individuals question their own “self-containedness”. Bakhtin added another aspect to these specific parts of the body, as they are not only points of vulnerability but parts that can also either devour or discharge matter. Therefore, Bakhtin argued, that surfaces that can potentially become grotesque are inherently connected to ideas of life and death; the dual lifegiving and devouring qualities of these organs, and the focus they are given within the grotesque narrative, means that, according to Bakhtin, the grotesque

⁵ Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood, / In which the burden of the mystery / In which the heavy and weary weight / Of all this unintelligible world, / Is lightened (37-41)

body no longer is in possession of a complete, individual body but has been reduced to mere “orifices and convexities” which followingly creates “another, newly conceived body”. As such, the grotesque body becomes a “transition in a life eternally renewed the inexhaustible vessel of death and conception” (Bakhtin 318).

The eerie nature of the grotesque, as mentioned by Kayser, stems from Freud’s theory of *das Unheimlich*. *Das Unheimlich*, according to Freud, refers to the ‘class of the frightening which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar’ (Freud 220)⁶; by this, Freud means that *das Unheimlich* constitutes of that which has previously been repressed but has now been reawakened and come to haunt us. The term itself has been inadequately been translated into English as the “uncanny”, which alludes to that which is “strange or mysterious, especially in an unsettling way” (“Uncanny”, n.d.). A better translation would, perhaps, be the “unhomely”, which gives a much more accurate representation of the feeling of familiarity this feeling evokes within the individual as it is the “return of repressed events, memories, and fantasies – the encounter with one’s own most intimate fears” (Grunenberg 213). This translates into the idea of the grotesque, as, according to Thomson, the grotesque is the

expression of the estranged or alienated world, i.e. the familiar world is seen from a perspective which suddenly renders it strange (and, presumably, this strangeness may be either comic or terrifying, or both). The grotesque is a game with the absurd, in the sense that the grotesque artist plays, half laughingly, half horrified, with the deep absurdities of existence. The grotesque is an attempt to control and exorcise the demonic elements in the world (Thomson 18).

Here, Thomson incorporates Freud’s idea of the uncanny as a metaphorical nudge into the realm of the grotesque, where familiarity is transformed into strangeness and therefore needs to be “controlled” by rendering it absurd through laughter.

⁶ Julia Kristeva based her theory of the abject on Freud’s “Uncanny”. In her theory, Kristeva labels the abject (or subjective horror) as that horror filled feeling when an individual either is confronted by or experiences what Kristeva calls “corporeal reality”. By this, Kristeva means the mental collapse in the distinction a person has of the Self and Other. The example most often used is that moment when a person is confronted with the sight of a human corpse, as the corpse will be both alien (object) as well as familiar (resembling the subject), thus creating strain upon the subject’s feeling of Self.

The Victorian Interest in that which is Grotesque and Monstrous

According to Thomson, the grotesque within art and literature is especially prevalent within societies or eras that are marked by “strife, radical change or disorientation” (Thomson 11). By the end of the century, Great Britain was marked by the feeling that a great era was coming to a close: Queen Victoria was nearing the end of her reign; the British Empire’s expansion had halted and was being gradually surpassed by new “upstart” countries such as the United States and Germany. As such, the *fin-de-siècle* within Victorian England was especially intrigued by that which was grotesque as well as the monstrous. The former was, however, treated as a scene of morbid curiosity and entertainment whereas the latter was regarded with fear and trepidation. This was in reaction to the apparently “failing standards” expected of and by the Empire. There was a prevalent fear of reverse colonialism, meaning that they feared the consequences of their own imperial actions against their colonies and would now suffer the repercussions. Xenophobic anxieties revolved around the idea that the colonies would move towards the British Isles, intermix with the British themselves and thus “pollute” the pure, British blood. Therefore, when signs of “otherness” were detected within an individual, they would, ideally, be placed within a “safe environment” in which the Other would no longer pose a threat to normal society; oftentimes, this meant the freak show. Within the freak shows of nineteenth century England, the spectators were encouraged to regard the “objects” as entirely other to themselves, creating a clear distinction between “them” and “us”; *they* were spectacles to be seen, inferior to us, the complete, human onlookers. As freaks (and monsters) are results of socio-historical anxieties and interests, the division between the “them” and “us” took on a cultural, racial, national or historical significance, linking cultural otherness and monstrous form (Shildrick 24-25).

Victorian Britain was insatiable in both its consumption and its productions of spectacles of freakery. This was only furthered by Queen Victoria’s own interest in the subject of the strange and the occult. Within the upper classes of society, occultism saw a significant rise in popularity during the reign of Victoria, who would often seek out mediums or other occultists in order to keep in contact with her own beloved Arthur⁷⁸. The term freak,

⁷ After his death, Victoria kept his death mask and a cast of his hand. Additionally, guests were still required to sign Arthur’s guest book as well as hers, as if he were still alive. His rooms were kept as they were upon his death and new clothes were laid out each day for him (Rex Factor: Victoria).

⁸ In fact, when Victoria wished to see previous Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli upon his deathbed, his reply was “Why should I see her? She will want to give a message to Albert”. (“Benjamin Disraeli: Famous Last Words.” Historical Articles and Illustrations, 15 Apr. 2011, www.lookandlearn.com/blog/6698/benajmin-disraeli-famous-last-words/)

on the other hand, was not used as an indication of bodily anomalies until the mid-eighteenth century, though the tradition of displaying “monsters” and grotesque figures for gain has a much longer history. For those few children and adults who were able to survive their own “monstrous” birth, self-display was often a common strategy of subsistence (Shildrick 23). Though the term was coined during the eighteenth century, the freak shows reached its absolute zenith during the nineteenth century, though it had almost disappeared entirely again by the 1950s⁹. At the Victorian freak show, “crowds came to gasp with horror and to admire, to be frightened and amused” (Shildrick 23) in a safe environment, where they, metaphorically, could conquer the monster by laughing at it or overcoming their own questions as to normative form and identity. “In Britain, the exhibition of bizarre curiosities—some living, some dead, some animal, some human—was a thriving industry throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” (Sweet 140) and it appeared as if England was filled with freaks during the nineteenth century, such as Joseph Merrick, the “Elephant Man”; Charles Stratton, best known as “General Tom Thumb”, who was a personal favourite of Queen Victoria herself and appeared several times at the royal courts (Tromp 6); Julia Pastrana, “The Nondescript”; and Krao Farini, who was dubbed “The Missing Link”, suffering from hypertrichosis and as such considered to be an earlier link in Darwin’s evolution scheme.

With the increasing import placed upon outer appearance, and even more so upon the recognition of those of “inferior birth”, the pseudo-science of physiognomy became increasingly more popular during the nineteenth century. During the Victorian period, there was a “shared fascination with the science of crime and the physiognomy of degeneration” (Pick 163). This interest can only have been inflamed by the notorious serial killer Jack the Ripper, whose murders in Whitechapel were covered nationwide, and instilled both fear and excitement within the inhabitants of London. The Whitechapel murders in addition to the fear of a degenerating nation caused British citizens to take an interest in physical appearance and the idea, or hope, that degeneration and crime could be read in a person’s appearance, thus providing a means by which to differentiate between “us” and “them” as well as give the “us” an advantage against the “them”. Therefore, physiognomy became generally accepted. The

⁹ By which time, it had been replaced by the horror genre in movies, where prosthetics, special effects and cinematics were able to give the audience the satisfaction of feeling both delightfully frightened and superior, without exploiting the “real-life monsters” of the world. In today’s society, modern freak shows still exists though disguised under the term “art”. Displays such as Karl Grimes’ *Still Life* in the 90s and the museum *Body Worlds* have caused great debate as to whether this can be considered science, art, or a still existing exploitation of the weaker and voiceless.

practice of physiognomy has been in place since ancient Greece¹⁰, but not until the nineteenth century did it become a “popular science”. Through the study of physiognomy, theorists “attempted to relate features, such as the spacing of the eyes and the shape of the forehead, to what were assumed to be relatively enduring aspects of character, such as honesty, forbearance, and intelligence” (Collins 251). Initially, the theory of physiognomy was intended to be used in criminological fields of work and performed by skilled experts. However, with the publication of *Criminal Man* by Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso, “physiognomic identification of criminal stigmata... [turned] into a playful amateur pastime” (Karschay 52-3). Lombroso’s aim was to categorise criminals, both with regard to their appearance as well as their crimes, attempting to find a link between the two. According to Lombroso “there is nearly always something strange about [criminals] appearance. It can be said that each type of crime is committed by men with particular physiognomic characteristics” (Lombroso 51). Facial features, physical defects, tattoos, and mental capabilities were all documented and compared, collectively creating the complete study of the *Criminal Man*. Here, the reader could find common denominators amongst thieves, arsonists, murderers, *habitual* murderers, and born criminals. These stereotypical appearances were typically used in literature of the fin-de-siècle, marking the villain as a Lombrosian criminal, clearly indicating the debauchedness of the character through its physical appearance.

Gothic fiction has provided authors with an imaginative way of addressing temporary fears and anxieties for centuries and it is no wonder that the Gothic monster saw a new upswing in popularity during the fin-de-siècle. During this time, the scene of terror changed within the Gothic, from a physical landscape to the human body itself. This reflected the current interest in human physiology and the study of anatomy, physiognomy, and degeneration. Novels published during this time period, such as *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, and *The Great God Pan*, all explore the limits of the human mind and body, depicting them as mutating, developing, corrupting and decaying. This significant change illustrates the Victorians’ own interest in new theories, such as evolutionary theory, new areas of science, such as psychology, and new national borders, as in colonial expansion. New impulses such as the freak shows and Jack the Ripper, though

¹⁰ The treatise of *Physiognomonica* is the earliest written paper discovered upon the subject of physiognomy. It has previously been claimed that this treatise was written by Aristotle, but this has been questioned by later historicists. It is, however, estimated to have been written around the time of 300 BC.

treated as popular entertainment, forced the Victorians to re-evaluate their own assumptions of the human body and mind; expanding their understanding of the human limitations and contemplate whether their assumptions of British superiority were, indeed, correct.

Conclusion

Both the grotesque and the monstrous have a long and complicated history that is in a constant state of flux and intermingles with each other, making it difficult to differentiate between them. This makes both terms hard to pin down into one singular, *aesthetic* interpretation that could be applied to every century. However, this means that, in order to explain and differentiate between the two, one has to look at a more collective, psychological explanation behind the terms. Whereas the grotesque is invariably linked to laughter, the monstrous is completely void of any humour as it poses a direct threat, either through destruction or subjugation, to the audience. The grotesque is more easily rendered harmless as it is placed within an inferior position compared to the audience through the power of laughter, yet it still maintains its position *within* society. Monstrosity, on the other hand, belongs to the *outside* and does not *belong*. In my thesis, my main focus will be on both the grotesque and the monstrous as explained above, though the monstrous will, inevitably, be the more predominant term. At the centre of this thesis will be the features that transform certain characters into either grotesque or monstrous, or both, forms. Additionally, I will illustrate the possible shift that occurred during the end of the nineteenth century, degenerate aestheticism evolved from an interior position to an exterior one.

2 *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

Introduction

As a novel, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is one of the forerunners of the dual natured Gothic character and is seen to be mirrored in other works such as *The Picture of Dorian Grey* and *The Beetle*. The degenerative nature of Edward Hyde encapsulates all the Victorian fears of a “marauding and immoral underclass and a dissipated and immoral leisure class” (Arata 1995, 235). Much like *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, the sins of Henry Jekyll are written upon the visage of Edward Hyde, marking him as the fearful Other that causes Enfield to take a “loathing to my gentleman at first sight” (*Strange Case* 9). Hyde’s appearance is up for interpretation as Stevenson encourages the reader to impose their own prejudices upon him thus fully realising Hyde as an abstract, culturally designed entity. Hyde does not illustrate as apparent monstrosity as he maintains his humanoid shape and does not cross over into the realm of zoology or of the incorporeal. He does, however, embody all that is “wrong” and “evil”. What is, perhaps, the most remarkable about him is the effect he has on others and his ability to bring to light the degenerative nature of others; Utterson and Enfield are both high-standing men of late-Victorian society, yet they too show signs of having a dual nature that opposes the previous supposed image of them looking “singularly dull” (8). Though all characters are depicted of being of a questionable character that have degenerative urges, it is only the Jekyll-Hyde union that is portrayed as being monstrous. Through their monstrous union, Victorian England is both criticised and warned of the dangers they themselves pose to society by alluding to the intrinsic monstrous nature that resides in humanity as a whole.

Transformation

Though the reader is never presented with an exact description of Mr Hyde, it is clearly indicated through the observations of others that he is a remarkable figure of clear deformity. From the few, and rather non-descript, descriptions of Hyde, we gather that he is a man of short stature with an exceedingly mean look about him. The few times Stevenson gives a more comprehensive description of Mr Hyde, he is said to be “pale and dwarfish” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 17) and “[p]articularly small and particularly wicked-looking” (22). In fact, Mr Enfield states that: “He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable... He must be deformed somewhere... although I couldn’t specify the point. He’s an extraordinary looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way” (12). Though it is true that none of the other

characters are ever illustrated to any great extent, this does not have as great an impact on the reader as the lack of visual markers of Hyde. Much like in *Dracula*, the appearance of the “truly British” characters are either completely lacking, merely described by two adjectives. Otherwise, their personalities are entirely dependent upon their occupation and social standing. In that regard, Hyde is given much more in terms of characterisation, yet this causes the reader to notice the absence of the concrete, much more so than the satisfaction of a good character depiction.

As Hyde is depicted in general, degenerate terms, the reader must themselves impose their own prejudices upon Hyde, filling in the blanks themselves. The reader is, however, given certain guidelines in terms of Hyde’s degenerative nature; whether by mere impression or from actual ocular proof, Hyde is said to resemble something much more simian than the average English man. Utterson went so far as stating that Hyde “seems hardly human! Something troglodytic, shall we say?” (17). The approach taken by others when describing Mr Hyde places him in a position of something of a Darwinian throwback, which is very much in keeping with the late-Victorian obsession with evolution and degeneration, as well as with their general anxiety that the latter could and would occur within their own society. The impression left on Utterson is that Hyde can be considered to be more simian than human and highly emphasises the primitive nature of Edward Hyde as something that can be reminiscent of both something primitive as well as racial prejudice. It does, however, mirror the popular science of physiognomy developed by criminologist Cesare Lombroso a decade earlier. Within the study of criminal anthropology, or physiognomy, Lombroso documented and categorized a number of characteristics that marked the appearance of the criminal, giving a physical indication of their criminal behaviour, additionally he categorized the markers into such categories as to indicate their crime. Whilst “offenders may not look fierce,” Lombroso argued, “there is nearly always something strange about their appearance” (Lombroso 51). This phrase is mirrored in *Strange Case* as there *is* something strange about Edward Hyde. There is *something* that makes Hyde appear atavistic, yet precisely *what* that something is, is omitted from the text.

Unlike the tall and “upright” Henry Jekyll, Mr Hyde shrinks in stature and resembles the hulking troglodyte, thus reflecting his own perverted inner nature. Though Hyde’s appearance is mainly kept within generic degenerate terms, his main attribute that is continuously emphasised is his short stature. He is shown to be both “dwarfish” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 17) and “[p]articularly small and particularly wicked-looking” (22). When he transforms into the shape of Edward Hyde, Jekyll’s clothes no longer fit his small stature

forcing him to change into something that is more befitting of Hyde's appearance. The changing of clothes, when combined with the fact that Hyde is much closer to the ground, not only differentiates between the two but also emphasises Hyde's much lower social standing; Hyde's body does not belong to anything relating to Dr Jekyll but must be removed to the back streets. Furthermore, the emphasis on his "dwarfish" stature equates Hyde to something belonging to the Victorian freak show where he can safely be regarded, rather than allowing him to roam the streets of London freely. According to Carole Silver the dwarf is a threatening entity due to their "grotesque materiality, their physical ludicrousness combined with their "primitive" sexuality... Perceived as disgusting phallic figures, they suggest the grotesquerie of the erotic" (Silver 128). Hyde's transgressions remain unknown and whether they included acts of sexual indiscretions are left entirely up to the imagination. The fact remains, however, dwarves "appealed to the Victorians as markers of the dangers of sexuality" (Morgentaler 205). By categorising Hyde within this group that was perceived as physically degenerate, the text associates him simultaneously with mental degeneracy. His dwarfed stature places him, both physically as well as metaphorically, beneath the other characters, accentuating his marginalised existence.

In his wonderment about the character Hyde, Utterson applies a similar anthropological analysis as Lombroso's. Utterson's analysis of Hyde is reinforced by the analysis given to him by Enfield previously, when Enfield tells him about the encounter he had with Hyde where he trampled a little girl. By Enfield's description, Utterson is told that Hyde "must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point" (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 11). Mr Enfield termed Mr Hyde's trampling of the child as "hellish to see" and that Hyde appeared non-human but rather like some "damned Juggernaut" (9). It is therefore no wonder that Mr Enfield claims that he taken "a loathing to my gentleman at first sight" (9) and it appears as if this initial loathing paints the entire character of Mr Hyde in the eyes of both Enfield and Utterson. Though it is later revealed that their revulsion of Hyde is justified, and could as such be read as good base instinct, it does appear to affect the way in which Enfield describes Hyde as being "deformed"; although Hyde is early on depicted as having a deformed or skewed morality, it is never stated that he is outwardly deformed. Yet, Enfield is adamant about Hyde being of a deformed nature as he is shown to be of a criminal disposition and following Lombroso's theories: "he must be" (11).

The idea of degeneration is furthermore emphasised by Lanyon, who further mirrors the Lombrosian conceptualization of the degenerate criminal. In an attempt to discover what

is the matter with his “his colleague” who he felt sure was “insane” (43), he internally reflects upon the case, applying a medical dialogue to his musings: “The more I reflected, the more convinced I grew that I was dealing with a case of cerebral disease” (44). The diagnosis of “cerebral disease” is an interesting one, as it is highly indicative on a dual level that it has to do with a disease of the head or the brain. Firstly, the term is applied to diseases that affect the brain such as dementia, brain cancer or mental disorders. Though most of these diagnoses belong within the modern medical history, by the end of the eighteenth century the study of psychology was beginning to emerge as a legitimate practice and as such a fascination of the study of abnormal behaviour became much more clinical. As Lanyon fails to document any visual defects upon Henry Jekyll, his only possible conclusion would be that the disease is something that is invisible to the eye. However, as the novel places a high emphasis upon finding *visual* defects within Hyde’s abnormalities, it is possible that Lanyon here refers to the Lombrosian theory of phrenology, or craniometry, which is the method of “studying cranial anatomy as indicative of intelligence, personality, and temperament” (Egerton). In one of his studies, Lombroso examined sixty-six craniums of convicted criminals in search of “cranial abnormalities”, which would prove the degenerate and regressive nature of the born criminal. Lombroso found that a “very high percentage... have submicrocephalous or small skulls” and stated that a high percentage of criminals had common characteristics of “savage people” and likened their craniums to “primates and carnivores” (Lombroso-Ferrero 12). Looking at Lombroso’s understanding of cerebral abnormalities, it is very much like the descriptive terms applied to Edward Hyde in terms of troglodytic appearances. The allusion to Hyde is furthered when Lanyon’s attention is diverted to him instead of Jekyll:

“I was struck besides with the shocking expression of his face.... This bore some resemblance to incipient rigor, and was accompanied by a marked sinking of the pulse. At the time, I set it down to some idiosyncratic, personal distaste, and merely wondered at the acuteness of the symptoms; but I have since had reason to believe the cause to lie much deeper in the nature of man” (44-5).

Again, the indescribable quality that Hyde possesses is demonstrated by Lanyon, who fails to recognise the defect or source of his immediate dislike of the man. In his failure to diagnose him with anything concrete, unlike Jekyll’s supposed “cerebral disease”, Lanyon concludes that the reason must lie deeper: within the soul, of which medicine can tell very little, yet which clearly presses outward, affecting the appearance of the degenerate Mr Hyde.

The belief that Hyde’s appearance originates from a sense of impurity, is further demonstrated by Jekyll himself, whose own opinion of Hyde (or rather, himself) is fraught of contradictory thoughts. His initial reaction to his transformation is awe at the novelty and

sweetness of it whole: “I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness... an unknown but not an innocent freedom of soul” (50). His initial reaction seems in keeping with the fascination of the monster as argued by Cohen: the monster evokes a feeling of desire as it opens the possibility of escapist fantasies. In Hyde, Jekyll finds the opportunity to live vicariously through the monster as himself yet avoid the consequences of it for himself. As Cohen notes, the “linking of monstrosity with the forbidden makes the monster all the more appealing as a temporary egress from constraint” (Cohen 17). It is this fantasy of escape that has so greatly allured Dr Jekyll into splitting his own body; though Jekyll initially hoped to remove himself from this monstrosity residing within him, he does not appear to oppose the change that has overcome him as states that he is as “delighted” as if he had indulged in wine (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 50). However, regardless of his joyous reception of his situation, he still calls it the “evil side of my nature” (51). This then, would seem to argue the point that Jekyll is still separated enough from Hyde that he can name him such as from an outside observer. Furthermore, Jekyll mirrors Utterson’s Lombrosian analysis of his own alter ego, stating that “[e]vil... had left on that body an imprint of deformity and decay” (51), though, unlike Enfield and Utterson, he does not feel any repugnance. Again, deformity is mentioned in connotation with Hyde, though still not expounding upon it, merely stating it as a descriptive in itself. Jekyll does, however, add a new descriptive to Hyde, that of “decay”. This might seem a very strange thing to say about a person, and what springs to mind might be much more on the same line as the modern zombie. However, what Jekyll is commenting upon is an inner rottenness that pushes outward, drawing upon the ideas of Lombroso that the criminal mind leaves a physical imprint upon the appearance of the criminal himself. Jekyll even states that “evil was written broadly and plainly on the face [of Edward Hyde]” (51), treating the skin as a literary work upon which sins can be freely written¹¹.

Jekyll leans further into his own degenerate nature by naming his own alter ego, *Mr Edward Hyde*, further emphasising the degeneration that has occurred within his body by

¹¹ As I have previously mentioned, the idea of inner corruptness marking the face was not a new one, though we can see many similarities between the *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and the Oscar Wilde’s novel *Dorian Grey*. Both Edward Hyde and Dorian Grey are character shrouded in mystery and are never truly explained as phenomena but are rather demanding to be accepted as is. Furthermore, both novels deal with the idea of dual selves where neither character is shown to be able to live with these split personalities, and both resort in desperate measures in order to separate the two identities: Jekyll attempts to entirely rid himself of his own “evil” persona whereas Dorian projects all his sins unto his portrait, thus attempting to distance himself from his own personality. And finally, both characters claim that it is due to the crippling demands from society that they cannot truly express their entire self, duality and all, and which thus forces them to reject one part or the other.

removing his multiple prefixes of “M.D., D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., &C”¹² (13). The loss of his numerous doctorates indicates that the regression that occurs when Mr Hyde is in charge of the body is not merely physically and mentally, it is also reflected within his status within society. By removing the multitude of prefixes, Stevenson indicates that Jekyll undergoes not only a physical metamorphosis but an additional degeneration of social status. This, however, means that Hyde, by being of the lower classes, has a much greater freedom than what the doctor has. As a part of the lower classes, Hyde easily blends in with the lower and darker areas of London, the areas which the reader can assume that Jekyll traversed during the late hours of the day, when he still was “just” Jekyll. Hyde’s appearance functions as the perfect disguise which allows him to carry out his evil desires and hedonistic wants, without it affecting the doctor’s reputation. Thus, Hyde prevents the possibility of a decline in social status that Jekyll risked by giving in to this hidden part of himself that has been, up until Hyde’s emergence, forced to live in the shadows, both literally and figuratively as he lived within the hidden part of Jekyll’s mind and had to creep along the shadowed buildings of London when allowed free reigns to roam the streets and seek out his hidden “pleasures” (48). The reader can be assured that Jekyll *did* indulge his peculiar proclivities as he himself states that “I was no more myself when I laid aside restraint and plunged in shame, than when I laboured, in the eye of day, at the furtherance of knowledge” (48). From this last statement, it can be concluded that Mr Hyde has been a vital part of Jekyll’s life even *before* the experiment took place. Subsequent to the experiment, however, the line that previously divided them has become much more indistinct; whereas Jekyll had previously been able to remain as a complete entity which merely changed location, so to say, during the night, has now become two wholly separate identities, each complementing their respective social spheres.

It is made clear that there is a physical transformation that occurs, yet it is not made as clear whether the transformation extends to the psyche as well. As the two gradually become inseparable from each other, it poses the question whether they were truly two or whether Hyde is merely a physical manifestation of a disguise concocted by Jekyll to allow himself to indulge in his own desires. Jekyll adamantly argues that he is entirely separate and cannot be held accountable for Hyde’s actions, attempting to convince the reader, and himself, that they are separate beings that just happen to share a collective memory. However, Jekyll himself

¹² Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Civil Law, Doctor of Laws, and Fellow of the Royal Society.

tells of an occurrence when he was unable to recognise Hyde within himself until he had *physical* proof of the fact that Hyde is, supposedly, in charge:

I smiled to myself, and, in my psychological way began lazily to inquire into the elements of this illusion, occasionally, even as I did so, dropping back into a comfortable morning doze. I was still so engaged when, in one of my more wakeful moments, my eyes fell upon my hand. Now the hand of Henry Jekyll (as you have often remarked) was professional in shape and size: it was large, firm, white, and comely. But the hand which I now saw, clearly enough, in the yellow light of a mid-London morning, lying half shut on the bed clothes, was lean, corded, knuckly, of a dusky pallor and thickly shaded with a swart growth of hair. It was the hand of Edward Hyde. (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 54)

The passage further indicates the degenerate nature of Hyde, firmly establishing him as belonging to the lower classes as a manual labourer; his hands are no longer the “comely” and “white”¹³ ones that belong to Henry Jekyll, but are rather the more muscled and tanned hand of a manual labourer. At this moment of truth, *Hyde* exhibits a frantic frame of thought that seems entirely too “Jekyll-esque” to be considered fully Hyde. The entire scene appears to be indicative of that it is, in fact, Dr Jekyll who is the one that is in control of both the body and the mind: controlling the body of Hyde as if it were his own. According to Martin Danahay “Dr. Jekyll’s [sic] experiment turns his body into a piece of clothing that he believes he can put on or taken off at will, so that bodily identity itself is unstable Hyde” (Danahay 25). This scene functions as the climax of Jekyll’s retelling of his story and the moment the reader must question the existence of Hyde and whether he might, in fact, be truly a human shell for Jekyll to occupy and live out is his darker desires. It is at this point of proper amalgamation that Hyde becomes a direct threat both as a whole against society and directly to Jekyll’s own existence. By lazily laying in Jekyll’s room, indulgently exploring his own body, Hyde is besmirching the “decent furniture” with his own disproportionate, working-class body (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 54). Whilst both Jekyll and Hyde have previously done their utmost to remain fully separate and maintain their position within their own separate sphere, Hyde is now occupying the very space Jekyll has termed holy to himself.

Within this unification, Jekyll is consequently transformed into the monster that he himself created; much like Dr Frankenstein, Jekyll becomes appalled at his own creation the moment it awakens. In *Frankenstein*, this moment is marked by the monster’s reanimation, which leads Dr Frankenstein to flee the room in a frenzy; within *Jekyll and Hyde*, this

¹³ The use of the adjectives “white, and comely” (Stevenson, *Jekyll and Hyde* 54) gives the impression that Jekyll’s hand, and, in effect, his personality, is more deeply connected to the feminine than Hyde.

moment is signalled as the instant Jekyll recognises *himself* as the monster. It is after this incident that Hyde transforms into something much more monstrous than he already was and eventually ends up killing the old Sir Dancers Carew. In his retelling of this hedonistic and sadistic murder, Jekyll slips up, yet again, using the first personal pronoun: “[w]ith a transport of glee, *I* mauled the unresisting body, tasting delight from every blow; and it was not till weariness had begun to succeed, that *I* was suddenly, in the top fit of *my* delirium, struck through the heart by a cold thrill of terror” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 56, emphasis added). Previously, Jekyll has claimed himself to be entirely absent from Hyde’s evildoings, and argues his innocence. Yet in this section, he apparently admits to the awakening of his own “spirit of hell” (56), further establishing his own mind within Hyde.

Though the reader is never privy to Hyde’s thought or his movements in general, Hyde is shown, in his final moments, to have a clear connection to Jekyll who has, seemingly, “abandoned” Hyde. However, the scene does not match the uncouth and atavistic Edward Hyde that the reader has come to expect. The entire novel, Jekyll and the other gentleman have done their utmost to cast Hyde as the atavistic monster that is an incomplete human lacking in both gentlemanly conduct and a normal human nature. When the body of Hyde is found, however, Utterson and Poole find that there is a “good fire glowing and chattering... the kettle singing... the things laid out for tea: the quietest room... the most commonplace that night in London” (39). The stage that these images create is much more suitable to a proper gentleman, like Dr Jekyll, than to the likes of a delinquent as Hyde has been portrayed as. Up to now, Hyde has been portrayed to belong to the lower classes, been alluded to have a manual labourer’s body, and shown to lack an overall gentlemanly persona (which is exactly why Hyde was created initially). Yet, Hyde seems very comfortable within Jekyll’s apartment, as he, apparently, has set the table, made himself tea and ensured that the fire is burning strong. It is established that it is, in fact, Hyde and not Jekyll that is doing all these gentlemanly things as prior to breaking in the door, Utterson and Poole have agreed between themselves that it is Hyde’s voice that they hear and not Jekyll and that Jekyll was “made away with eight days ago” (35). Furthermore, Jekyll has, according to his own “suicide letter”, left the body and given in to Hyde, insinuating that he is no longer there. Then, accordingly, it must be Hyde that has prepared Jekyll’s apartment into such a homey and comfortable environment for himself.

According to Arata, the changes in both Jekyll and Hyde are indicative of “how carefully Stevenson has blurred the boundary between the two identities. It is Jekyll who is now blasphemous and who violently berates the man at Maw’s, Hyde who sets a quiet tea

table and cries to heaven for mercy” (Arata 1995, 243). However, this is not entirely the case; the connection between Jekyll and Hyde has been fraught throughout the entire novel, neither one wishing to admit that the other exists within the same body as them. Based on Jekyll’s account of Hyde’s behaviour and his occasional slip-ups when using pronouns, it might be argued that Hyde is, as Danahay argued, a disguise created by Henry Jekyll. The shape of Mr Hyde is to Dr Jekyll what the portrait is to Dorian Grey; Hyde is a means to give in to hedonism and violence, a surface upon which Jekyll can paint his own sins without them affecting his own appearance. The loss of control that Jekyll experiences is caused by the pleasure he himself feels at the sins committed whilst in the shape of Hyde, this, in turn, makes his original body unstable. The “suicide” Jekyll discusses in his last letter is rather an abandonment of his own original body; here, Jekyll surrenders his previous life and condemns himself to the body of Edward Hyde. “Will Hyde die upon the scaffold? Or will he find the courage to release himself at the last moment? God knows; I am careless” (62) but he refuses to live out his life as a “double-dealer” (48). The wails heard from Hyde after Jekyll’s surrender is Jekyll’s own realisation of what he has done, what his choices entail and the course of action he must now undertake.

Arata argues that Hyde has, in essence, become a gentleman, having learned from Utterson and Lanyon and imitating their behaviours, such as sitting “all day over the fire in the private room, gnawing his nails” (59). Though Hyde’s behaviour, such as biting his nails, sounds very much like that of Utterson’s, there does not seem to be enough evidence that points to Hyde having had the time to observe Utterson’s nail biting or other “gentlemanly” conduct. Arguably, he shares a common memory with Dr Jekyll, but would he not then imitate the behaviours of Dr Jekyll rather than an acquaintance of his. Rather, it is much more likely that it is Jekyll that shines through here; in an attempt to recreate his *own* well-known sphere of comfort, Jekyll has prepared all the comforts of *home* and the familiar, even donning the clothes he wears as Dr Jekyll, yet *he* no longer fits in. Jekyll has become “wrong” and misplaced within his own home by the alterations of his own body, and, as such, he has lost an important aspect of himself: the reputable and much more likeable body of Dr Henry Jekyll, M.D., D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., &C. In his spiritual suicide, Jekyll has given up his own body in preference to that of Hyde’s, as his own body has become so unstable and seeped in the sins committed by Hyde that the two have become inseparable. However, the extent of the loss felt by Jekyll goes beyond what he himself expected as he deems himself “careless” (62) to what happens next, yet Poole’s account of the what follows after Jekyll’s “suicide” shows that “Hyde” has been “[w]eeping like a woman or a lost soul” (38). Additionally, Poole

unknowingly indicates that Jekyll-Hyde has been desperate to regain his “original” body by recreating the potion as Poole states that the “drug is wanted bitter bad, sir, whatever for” (35). “It is in connection with this suicide theme that the surnames Jekyll and Hyde take on strong symbolic overtones. Mr. Hyde is the figure of the deadly evil which hides in the soul of each of us and contains the seeds of our spiritual and psychological destruction; and the name Jekyll (Je = French, I; kyll = kill) suggests the self-destroyer” (Egan 30). Their combined, dual suicide completes the fusion between Jekyll and Hyde, marking their final unity and demonstrates the inevitable fate of those that attempt to live a double life.

The *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* has a double ending, both of which end with the suicide of either Dr Jekyll or Mr Hyde, completing the predetermined fate which both have been moving towards. The suicide of Hyde fits into his narrative as the indecent monster that, somehow, needs to be conquered and either “exiled or destroyed” (Cohen 16). Both deaths are, however, anticlimactic in nature, especially in the case of Hyde; whose death at his own hands takes away from the cathartic ending in which Utterson would bring the monster to justice. By the end of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, however, Jekyll himself, who claimed that his “good qualities” remained “unimpaired” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 53) by the wrongdoings of Hyde, has become infected by the sins committed by Edward Hyde as shown by his loss of control over the reversion into the body of Hyde. Both *bodies* have become marked. Their combined endings add to the sense of impurity and degeneration that besmirches the both of them, further marking their dual body as sinful and, in effect, monstrous.

Duality

Man, claims Dr Jekyll, “is not truly one, but truly two” (48), and through the duality of Dr Jekyll, Stevenson creates a literary canvas upon which he can debate the dual nature of man by asking whether man truly *is* two or simply one, as was the doctrine before the nineteenth century. Most will likely recognise within themselves that they have one “external” projection of themselves and one “private”, yet this seldom poses a problem for the general population. Furthermore, the idea of the sinister alter ego was not a new one when Stevenson wrote *Strange Case*. Stevenson’s novel, however, differs vastly in its exploration of the dual nature of humanity by expanding it to society as a whole, as it is hinted at that all characters within Stevenson’s novel have a hidden, darker persona. Stevenson has even given London a double identity, as the respectable streets of high society are shown to exist alongside the more

dubious streets of London, where squalor and violence are more a part of daily life. The danger of a double life is not only x to Hyde, but extended to the entirety of London city,

So far, I have disregarded, to a certain extent, the duality of Jekyll and Hyde, as well as the fact that they are both in a symbiotic relation as both Jekyll *and* Hyde. Can one say, as Jekyll himself states that man “is not truly one, but truly two” (48), or are they one and the same, as I have argued for previously. Jekyll and Hyde seem extremely inconstant in how they regard each other, at times shown to embrace their dual nature, whereas at other times they appear to deny the other completely. At the time of the first metamorphosis, Jekyll seems entirely aware of the change that has come over his body, stating that “I felt younger, lighter, happier in body” (50). This recognition of the change within his body means that Jekyll, or as he is now called: Hyde, indicates that he is entirely aware of a before and after, meaning that Jekyll still remains sentient whilst within Hyde’s body. There is no lapse of amnesia when they transform as they have “memory in common” (55). Furthermore, Jekyll claims to notice a “heady recklessness” (50) within himself, which would indicate that the metamorphosis has marked his mental state as well, making him not only younger in body but in mind as well, proffering Jekyll with the heady recklessness that usually denotes the youthful. However, Jekyll appears to contradict himself in his tale of his first transformation, as he continually uses the first personal pronoun “I”: “I stole through the corridors... I saw for the first time...” (51). The use of the first personal pronoun goes against the idea that Jekyll “had now two *characters* as well as two *appearances*, one was wholly evil, and the other was still the old Henry Jekyll” (52, emphasis added). The clear contradiction appears most clearly within the following paragraph quotation.

The pleasures which *I* made haste to seek in my disguise were, as I have said, undignified... But in the hands of Edward Hyde, they soon began to turn towards the monstrous. When *I* would come back from these excursions, *I* was often plunged into a kind of wonder at *my* vicarious depravity.... Henry Jekyll stood at times aghast before the acts of Edward Hyde.... It was Hyde, after all, and *Hyde alone, that was guilty*.... And thus [Jekyll’s] conscience slumbered. (53, emphasis added)

Jekyll’s depiction of the events is fraught with dissonance between the two personalities; initially, Jekyll talks of his own pleasures and his excursions and his “vicarious depravity”, yet he shifts dramatically within a mere few sentences and states that Henry Jekyll felt horrified by the actions of Edward Hyde, as if Edward Hyde’s pleasures and depravities are entirely disconnected from Jekyll’s own. Stephen Arata, however, claims that Hyde does not indulge in any vices that Jekyll does not also enjoy (Arata 1996, 40); what differentiates them is the manner in which they seek out their own enjoyment: whereas Jekyll felt the need to

“conceal [his] pleasures” and thus committed himself to “a profound duplicity of life” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 48), Jekyll does not feel any qualms about indulging into “vicarious depravity” (53).

As previously discussed, the relationship between Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde is a symbiotic one, in which one is shown to be equally as dependent upon the other; both are contingent upon the other to function as a “mask”, and it is shown that when the one “dies”, the other is soon to follow. Both identities are given an entire persona, with differing physical qualities, arguably a different personality, as well as different identifying names. In essence, they should be considered, as Jekyll argued, as *two*. However, the problem still remains that though the transformation between the two personas affects the body in a physical way, they are both housed within the same body. Therefore, however much they may differ, however much the body might transform, Jekyll and Hyde are *one*. As such, their co-existence is somewhat similar to that of conjoined twins: though they are considered to be two separate individuals, they share one body. Dr Jekyll himself commented upon this fact, alluding to a twin existence, as he hoped that, should his experiment be successful and he is able to split the “primitive duality of man... the unjust might go his way, delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright *twin*” (49, emphasis added). In this quotation, Jekyll hints at the existence of an unseen twin within himself that holds all the negative qualities which he wishes to expel from himself, regarding this twin as both *a* part of himself whilst simultaneously *apart* from himself. During Stevenson’s lifetime, the conjoined, American twins Chang and Eng Bunker were internationally renowned, travelling the world during their childhood, displaying their anomaly. What was most peculiar about the twins, was that they were sufficiently independent from each other that they were recognized to be two fully separate individuals; in other words, they were *two* people in *one* body¹⁴. Though fascinating in their anomaly, one of the main reasons the Bunker brothers garnered so much attention was due to their transgression of western ideas of individuality and identity. Their “corporeal doubling in which both bodies are visibly human is highly disruptive to western notions of individual agency and personal identity” (Shildrick 56). This idea of a dual identity within a single body, such as the Bunker brothers, is very much like the doubling of Jekyll and Hyde;

¹⁴ Their individuality went so far as to allow them to marry two separate women and each father several children with their own wife. Furthermore, they were known to have differing personalities and, in later life, Chang who was known to be moodier the two became an alcoholic whereas his twin did not. Chang also suffered a paralytic stroke in 1870, but his brother did not. The two died some four years later, Chang preceding Eng by a few hours, not unlike Jekyll and Hyde whose existences are linked to the other’s.

though separate, they share a transformative body in which both “identities” are housed. The questionable nature of Jekyll’s identity makes him a potential site of monstrosity, as he pushes the borders placed around the idea of individuality and identity.

During the Victorian period, the image of the male body was that of a complete and utter wholeness. The upper classes needed to withstand the scrutiny of their peers and keep up the image of the contained and pure body of the aristocrat, and must, as such, conceal their pleasures like Dr Henry Jekyll experienced. Though the Victorian woman is most often regarded as the most contained and subjugated subject, the male body needed to uphold a certain decorum as well and needed to withstand “that hard law of life” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 48)¹⁵, both in terms of physical and mental purity. During the Victorian age, the connection between the body and mind was widely discussed and popularised through the work of criminologist Lombroso and through the developing study of psychology. The innate focus on the “organic unity and self-completion of the skin” (Shildrick 51), supplemented by the conviction that the body and the mind were interrelated and afflicting upon each other, meant that any signs of deviancy from the normativity could classify a person as being either monstrous or “other”: something to be evade. These social changes meant that what was deemed appropriate behaviour as well as how the social classes were made up changed to such a degree that the Victorian gentleman suffered from an identity crisis. The introduction of new technology made clothing much cheaper and made it possible for the lower classes to buy produce that previously had been unique to the upper classes. This meant that what was previously used to recognise both the gentleman as well as the manual worker were gradually becoming redundant. According to Wendy Katz, Stevenson and his contemporaries were confronted with the issue of defining what was deemed appropriate behaviour additionally to class standing due to the changes within society. In his essays, Stevenson ascertains that what it means to be a gentleman is hard to pin down. However, he does maintain the belief that class status and the body were intimately connected. In his essay “The Character of Dogs”, Stevenson is able to safely discuss the male body and the connection it has to class by transposing his attention to the “canine cavalier” (Stevenson, *The Lantern-Bearers and Other Essays* 185). According to Stevenson,

“To follow for ten minutes in the street some swaggering, canine cavalier, is to receive a lesson in dramatic art and the cultured conduct of the body; in every act and gesture

¹⁵ Stevenson is most likely referring to Romans 7:14-25 here, in which the dual nature of man is discussed: the internal battle between the body and the soul: “For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me”.

you see him true to a refined conception; and the dullest cur, beholding him, pricks up his ear and proceeds to imitate and parody that charming ease. For to be a high-mannered and high-minded gentleman, careless, affable, and gay, is the inborn pretension of the dog” (ibid.).

Though it is dogs that are being discussed, it is made quite clear that, according to Stevenson, being a gentleman is a matter of conduct of the body. In an earlier essay, “The Truth of Intercourse”, Stevenson deliberated on how to read the body as “we have legible countenances, like an open *book*; things that cannot be said look eloquently through the eyes; and the soul, not locked into the body as a dungeon, dwells ever on the threshold with appealing signals” (95, emphasis added). Through Edward Hyde, Stevenson demonstrates how the body can speak louder than any words and he appears to suggest that the body can be used as evidence in class distinctions as it can easily be read as a literary text¹⁶.

The dual nature of Dr Henry Jekyll is reflected in his lodgings, which is shown to have an important role in its owner’s duplicity. The house acts as if it were two separate entities, mirroring the “fractured identity of its owner” (Halberstam 68). The house of Dr Jekyll is located in a “square of ancient, handsome houses” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 17), indicative of Jekyll’s own “large fortune” (47) and alludes to an ancient family line which would be indicative of high-standing nobility. The entrance of the house “wore a great air of wealth and comfort” (18) as would be befitting a doctor of high social standing. The entrance Mr Hyde is seen to utilize, however, is much more sordid and “lower-class”, appropriate for his “Mr” prefix. The entryway of Edward Hyde is located in a “certain sinister block of building... [which] bore in every feature, the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence” (8); the deterioration and neglected façade of Hyde’s entrance neatly symbolizes and reflects the corrupt and degenerate Hyde, similarly to how the main house of Henry Jekyll reflects the respectable and prosperous-looking doctor. Upon the door of Jekyll there is, most likely, a knocker upon the door as Mr Utterson comments upon the absence of both “bell [and] knocker” (8) on the door of Edward Hyde, but easily knocks upon the door of Henry Jekyll

¹⁶ Though claiming that the body is easily read as a literary text, in *Strange Case* Stevenson makes it difficult for the reader to understand what he means all the time, inserting the “strangeness” of the case into the linguistic text itself. The linguistic strangeness occurs as early as in the very title of the novel: *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. The lack of a definite article means that it is “‘Strange Case,’—a wholly disconnected imaginary succession of events—not ‘The Strange Case,’ implying a certain experimental knowledge” (Dury 34). He additionally plays with the use of prepositions rendering the language unfamiliar and unexpected, as prepositions are rarely interchanged nor display much variation within the standard English language. But in *Strange Case* “the pleasure of interpretation is combined with the production of a feeling of uncanniness from words that seem both familiar and unfamiliar” (Dury 35).

(18); the absence of the knocker signifies Hyde's social distancing and his lack of desire to interact with others and adds another means of separating himself from society. To the casual observer, the two buildings are two separate housings due to the intricate layout of the surrounding streets; however, like its owner, the building is two parts of a whole, deceiving the onlooker into seeing two separate housings where there truly is one, as with Jekyll-Hyde's body. By adding the dual building, Stevenson implies that a respectable façade does not exclude the possibility of lurking dark secrets, and that the two frequently appear in close proximity of each other.

Similarly to the dual nature of buildings, the other male characters appear to show signs of being of a more dubious character than what they publicly display, indicating that they are not that unlike Henry Jekyll after all. When Mr Enfield gives his account of his first encounter with the devious Mr Hyde, he informs Mr Utterson that he was "coming home from some place at the end of the world, about three o'clock of the black winter morning" (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 9). Though Enfield never divulges his exact location, nor does he elucidate his reason for being out and about so late, it does seem to indicate that Mr Enfield is not as innocent as he would like to portray. During his late encounter with Mr Hyde, Mr Enfield imparts upon Hyde the wisdom that "gentlemen may sin so long as appearances are preserved" (Arata 1996, 192), as Jekyll previously did and as Mr Enfield, supposedly, did at that moment. Similarly, Utterson's own moral character is shown to be slightly equivocal; though he is "austere with himself; drank gin when he was alone, to mortify a taste for vintages; and though he enjoyed the theatre, had not crossed the doors of one for twenty years", he is known to have an "approved tolerance for others" (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 7). Simultaneously appearing to abstain from alluring, hedonistic behaviour much like a recovered alcoholic, yet seemingly living vicariously through other's lack of moral backbone or rather admires their freedom as he sometimes wonders "almost with envy, at the high pressure of spirits involved in their misdeeds" (7). This last "occupation" of Utterson seems to be entirely out of place with what a respectable gentleman ought to be. However, it speaks of a deeper nature within, according to Stevenson, all, even the upper classes, which is naturally fascinated with the *idea* of sinning and those that commit them. As Cohen argues, the monster attracts because it is innately linked to forbidden practices, which is the source to "potent escapist fantasies; the linking of monstrosity with the forbidden makes the monster all the more appealing as a temporary egress from constraint" (Cohen 17). The enactment of these practises, models Hyde into the embodiment of the bourgeois readership's "worst fears about marauding and immoral underclass and a dissipated and immoral leisure class", Stevenson

manages to turn the class discourse of atavism and criminality back on the bourgeoisie itself (Arata 1995, 235-36). For though the other male characters attempt to disassociate themselves from Mr Hyde and marking him as an atavistic, monstrous “Juggernaut” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 9), according to Arata, they recognise him as being one of their own; though the sins committed by any of the characters remain a sordid mystery, it is clear that they do sin and that these sins, whatever they may be, are reflected back at them by Mr Hyde’s own conspicuous appearance and behaviour.

Though the focus of the novel remains upon the mysterious sinful nature of Edward Hyde, it becomes clear that Hyde is, in fact, not that different from the average nobleman. As mentioned previously, the remaining male characters invariably show signs of that they too are “committed to a profound duplicity of life” (48). Mid-century mental scientists studied the phenomenon of the double personality or double consciousness; founder of the Society of Psychical Research, Frederic W. H. Myers, aspired to investigate whether the mind could possibly exist outside the limits of the individual body. In his essay on dreams, Victorian psychologist James Sully noted that

“Psychology has of late occupied itself much with the curious phenomenon of double or alternating personality. By this is meant the recurrent interruption of the normal state by the intrusion of a secondary state, in which the thought, feelings, and the whole personality become other than they were. This occasional substitution of a new for the old self is sometimes spontaneous, the result of brain trouble; sometimes it is artificially brought about in specially susceptible persons by hypnotizing them.” (Block 451)

The idea of a dual nature was further reflected within the Gothic genre, as shown in *Strange Case*, but Stevenson’s plot was echoed a decade later by author Richard Marsh in his novel *The Beetle*. Here, the idea of the “double life, the carefully concealed depravity, of Victorian men” (Hurley 143) is retold by eminent politician, Paul Lessingham; in the eyes of the public, Lessingham is in possession of an iron self-command as well as enjoys a pristine reputation, yet he admits that “in all our lives there are episodes which we keep to ourselves” (Marsh 571). These “episodes”, as Lessingham calls them, are reputation destroying to the Victorian gentleman, should they be brought to the attention of the public, yet they “all” partake in it. In his novel, Richard Marsh highlights the same issues that Stevenson brought attention to a decade earlier: that man, at least to some degree, is in fact “truly two” (*Strange Case* 48), and that the Victorian gentleman is even more so.

Hyde becomes a much greater threat due to his origin as a high socialite and appears to evoke powerful emotions of a dubious nature within those he meets. By Jekyll’s own

admission, he has always had a darker side which he did not feel could be shown to the public and must therefore be hidden away in the dark. Similarly, Enfield is shown to be wandering the streets during the hours of dark in which Jekyll himself would venture out to indulge his darker side, before Hyde was conceived. Utterson, though not as overtly displayed to have an inner darkness does feel emotions of hatred and violence when meeting Hyde and is additionally extremely moderate with himself and denies himself the pleasures or indulgences of life which he enjoys. This adamant denial of any hedonistic feelings, though admirable in high society, does seem to allude to a shady past in which his desires were rampant. Somewhat like a recovered alcoholic, Utterson abstains from any of feelings of pleasure, yet he surrounds himself with men that are spiralling downwards. Both Enfield and Utterson appear to reflect a Henry Jekyll during different points of his life or shows alternative endings. Enfield, who meanders about night time London reflects the covert nature of a younger Henry Jekyll that would hide his shameful pleasures during the night; Mr Utterson, whose meandering days appear to be over, portrays a different ending to that of Henry Jekyll, had he successfully managed to hide away and repress his inner Edward Hyde.

Edward Hyde and Others

The danger of Mr Edward Hyde lies in his reflective nature, as he evokes an inner degeneration within his onlookers, mirroring his own atavistic nature. In his meeting with others, Edward Hyde leaves the beholder confused as to how to describe Hyde, though the impression he leaves behind is of an unexplainable and indescribable degeneracy. This unexplainable aspect of Hyde impresses the beholder to such a great extent that he is affected *emotionally* much more than intellectually, as if by meeting Hyde, the dormant instincts of primitive man is awakened within the onlooker. When Hyde is in the presence of others, they instinctually develop a strong dislike for him, though apparently without a well-warranted explanation, for he is an “extraordinary looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way” (12).

Like Jekyll, London and its people are shown to have a darker, more ominous side, as illustrated by the building in which Jekyll-Hyde resides. Though in the case of the people, it does not seem to be properly brought to the light of day until confronted by Edward Hyde. Jekyll notes that all men are dual in nature and though his experiment is, somewhat, successful upon his own duality, it appears as if his experiment is transmitted unto those that meet him. Jekyll notes that “when I wore the semblance of Edward Hyde, none could come near to me at first without visible misgivings of the flesh” (51). Jekyll’s observation of the

effect Hyde has on others, is mirrored throughout the plot, as all that meet Hyde or has a chance encounter with him display a visceral distaste for him. Often, this distaste is, much like Hyde's appearance, is indescribable. The very first encounter with Edward Hyde is depicted by Mr Enfield, who applies some unusual language in order to describe this peculiar man and is clearly painted by prejudice from the start. The first impression Mr Enfield has of Mr Hyde, at "three o'clock of the black winter morning (9), is that he tramples a child in the street. According to Mr Enfield, it was "hellish to see. It wasn't like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut" (9), yet the child was "not much the worse, more frightened" (9). Regardless of the lack of consequence to Hyde's "hellish" actions, the onlookers are outraged, they had to keep the "women off him as best we could, for they were as wild as harpies" (10). Enfield's use of allusions such as "Juggernaut" and "harpies" implies a non-human or dormant animalistic nature within the human, in both Mr Hyde as well as the surrounding crowds.

The atavistic nature of Hyde makes him appear as a Darwinian throwback, or a "missing link" in the evolutionary chain, which could be used to explain the ferocity with which he is met by others. Charles Darwin published *The Descent of Man* a decade before *Strange Case* was conceived, in which Darwin concluded that humankind had "descended from a hairy, tailed quadruped" which was itself "probably derived from an ancient marsupial animal" (Darwin 930-31). Through his publication, Darwin denies that particular specialness that mankind had previously enjoyed; Edward Hyde, as a troglodytic creature himself, reminds the onlookers on their own distant evolutionary inheritance. The ocular "proof" of Darwin's theories causes an extreme anguish within the observer of Hyde, as their own human nature is being questioned. Ironically, the wish to deny and destroy the evidence of an evolutionary lineage causes the onlooker to revert into a more primitive specimen, relying on primitive instinct and destructive behaviour. Within the mind of Mr Hyde's audience, "the split between the 'civilised' left... [and] the 'primitive' right hemisphere" (Marshall 28) is incited in meeting with Edward Hyde. What Hyde demonstrates is that the "monster's destructiveness is really a deconstructiveness" (Cohen 14-15) as he threatens to deconstruct the collective narrative of Victorian England that they are a highly evolved and sophisticated people, freed from their simian progenitors. However, as demonstrated by the women at the square, whose humanity has nearly left them and been replaced by a primal fury that is like that of a harpy, Hyde's degeneration extends unto others, displaying their own instinctual cruelty.

The novel does not present the reader with an apt or concise description of Edward Hyde, but what is highly emphasised, however, is the impression he leaves or, rather, the effect he has on others. Whilst the women in the square go into a near bestial frenzy, trying to get their hands on Hyde, the servants at the house of Dr Jekyll showcase a similar animalistic instinct when in contact with Edward Hyde as they “stood huddled together like a flock of sheep” (*Strange Case* 34). Even the more “levelheaded” man, the professional male, is affected by Hyde’s reflective cruelty; when first meeting Mr Hyde, Enfield can report that “Sawbones¹⁷ [turned] sick and white with the desire to kill him” (9). While Stevenson emphasises the degenerative qualities of Mr Hyde, Hyde reflects the degenerative characteristics of a society based on the repression of the bodily appetites and application of manly self-control. As Hyde’s very existence betrays the inner nature of Victorian society, he becomes a severely confrontational figure that must be “perhaps ritually destroyed in the course of some official narrative, purging the community by eliminating its sins. The monster's eradication functions as an exorcism and, when retold and promulgated, as a catechism” (Cohen 18). However, both Jekyll and Hyde commit suicide thus depriving the narrative of a cathartic moment, as in *Dracula* where the Count is destroyed. In doing so, Stevenson creates a very different narrative as it further establishes the Jekyll-Hyde symbiosis as a degenerate one as well as it accentuates the idea that degeneracy is not so easily destroyed by society; it continues to live on in within the other characters, brought to light by the monster, Henry Jekyll.

Conclusion

The degenerate nature of Mr Hyde is characterised by an unspeakable impurity that makes him near impossible to explain save for the repeated comment of his troglodytic and atavistic appearance. The heavy emphasis lies on Hyde’s animalistic nature that renders him near bestial in meeting with others, and which additionally awakens a primeval instinct of fear and revulsion within those that come into contact with him. The appearance of Edward Hyde reflects the Victorian obsession with evolution and degeneration, through which all the fears and anxieties of a corruption of the English blood created the “monster” Hyde. This is further in congruence with Lombrosian theory on physiognomy in which psychological anomalies and criminality is firmly connected to one another, and through which a criminal nature could be detected upon the visage. As represented by Edward Hyde, however, man has a dual nature

¹⁷ “Slang for a doctor, especially a surgeon” (Stevenson, *Strange Case* 9, footnote 9).

to him that enables him to present an air of respectability and purity to the public whilst simultaneously partake in sinful behaviour in the darkness of the night. The idea of the dual soul, however, went against Victorian (and Christian) ideas of the unified and complete human soul; the mere existence of Edward Hyde, then, contradicts the safe, “normal” way of thinking and embodies all the Victorian fears of degeneration and the blemished, dual soul. It is clear that the Jekyll-Hyde symbiosis is exceedingly threatening to the Victorian bourgeoisie which both fears and rejects the immoral underclass yet is simultaneously shown to be drawn in by it, though keeping it in the dark corners of London. Victorian socialites should be able to “pass” within the lower classes but it should never occur the other way around, as in the case of Mr Hyde, nor should they be affected by the lower classes when out in the public, as in the case with both Enfield and Utterson whose primal reaction to Mr Hyde very much mirrors the atavistic rage Hyde portrays when killing Sir Danvers Carew. In doing so, Stevenson creates a narrative in which the monster is not only out there on the streets of London, it is inside everybody.

3 *The Island of Dr Moreau*

Introduction

The eponymous antagonist of Wells' novel *The Island of Dr Moreau*, has created the impossible by humanising animals by means of both hubris and hybrids. By altering both their minds and their bodies, he hopes to achieve his goal of creating a new human race that is removed from pain and other such weaknesses that mankind succumbs to. His Frankensteinian creations, with their disproportioned limbs, furry ears and mouths like muzzles, are arguably one of the most graphic and grotesque representations of the degenerate in late-Victorian Gothic fiction. The Beast Men are created degenerate and set up to fail as the humanised animal will still remain an animal at heart. As the novel progresses, however, what emerges is the dormant animalistic instincts within Man himself. This fear of the animalised human stems from England's expansion into new and "exotic" lands, in which the colonisers were confronted with new and unknown ways of living, some of which were more closely connected to nature than what Victorian deemed "natural" for civilised men. The colonial expansion led to a rise in new social issues and fears as to how the colonised countries could affect the colonisers in return. Medical studies of the eighteenth- and nineteenth centuries were focused around the dangers of white colonisers living in tropical climates (this included the Americas). Tragically ironical, given that the white coloniser introduced fatal diseases such as cholera and smallpox to the "new world", medical authorities claimed that colonised lands had the ability to transmit disease unto the colonisers; these "climatic symptoms were thought to explain both the 'natural' regressiveness of indigenous people and the dangers to the not-sufficiently disciplined colonizer" (Weaver-Hightower 138). It was argued that as "animals deteriorate because of the American climate, so too do human beings" (Street 97). This anxiety is mirrored in *The Island of Dr Moreau*, as all the "complete" men upon the island are all shown to regress to something more abhuman than human, whether that be through science without ethics, dipsomania, or physical deterioration. The idea of the monster is explored extensively in *The Island of Dr Moreau*, as the distinctions between the civilised and uncivilised become blurred, as well as the distinction between monstrous appearance and monstrous nature. The body and the mind are shown to be as flexible as the differentiation between Man and Beast and both are susceptible to the deteriorating forces of nature.

Hybridity

Much like *Dracula*, *The Island of Dr Moreau* transgresses the limits of the skin, both animal and human, combining the two into one *incomplete* fusion. Unlike the Count, however, the Beast Folk by themselves do not pose much of a threat, as they do not possess the intellect nor the appearance to pass as something fully human. Furthermore, the Beast Folk are limited to a singular, secluded space without the prospect or ambition to extend their reach into other territories. Their existence *does*, however, pose a significant threat to the understanding of what humanity actually is and what it means to be human. This reflects similar concerns as *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* as the fear of degeneration and the idea that inhuman, impure beings could occur from within rather than from the outside.

Whereas Mr Hyde leaves the impression of being malformed, the Beast Folk leave no doubt as to their misshapen, trans-species body. According to Darwinism, evolution means the elimination of gratuitous aspects of a species so as to increase the chances to survival, therefore, malformation of the body becomes as an indication of a “lesser” breed that is not well-acclimated for living. Though uncomprehensive of what he is actually observing, Prendick establishes from his very first encounter with one of the Beast Men that they are inherently misshapen in some way. Unlike Mr Hyde, whose deformity is left somewhat unclear, Prendick seems acutely aware of the shortcomings of the beings he encounters: “[h]e was, I could see, a misshapen man, short, broad, and clumsy, with a crooked back, a hairy neck, and a head sunk between his shoulders... and had peculiarly thick coarse black hair” (Wells, *Moreau*, 9). Much like Edward Hyde, the person described here seems to belong further back on the Darwinian evolutionary tree, as the creature does not appear to fit with the idea of the evolved and sophisticated “upright man”. However, Prendick goes on: “[t]he facial part projected, forming something dimly suggestive of a muzzle, and the huge half-open mouth showed as big white teeth as I had ever seen in a human mouth. His eyes were blood-shot at the edges, with scarcely a rim of white round the hazel pupils” (Wells, *Moreau*, 9). Whereas Mr Hyde is reminiscent of something more troglodytic and thus still within the realms of the “somewhat possible”, this being shows signs of not belonging to the human evolutionary chain at all but alludes to something that could be read as more canine rather than human. The mouth transgresses the human limitations as it is “suggestive of a muzzle” as well as possessing “big white teeth” as Prendick has never “seen in a human mouth”. These absolutely contradictory facial features and body composition give a clear indication of something that is not entirely human and immediately puts Prendick on his guard as he put out his “hand... to fend him off” (9) in fear of physical contact with this disturbing creature.

The amount of disfigurements portrayed upon the face of the creature functions as a mirror as to his interior nature, which is, ultimately, animal.

As malformed as the creature on the *Ipecacuanha* is, the reactions he awakens in others is much more indicative of his disfigured body than the physical descriptions given. Much like Mr Hyde, the creature M'ling impresses upon his viewer that his deformity extends further than his outward appearance. Though still passable as something human, M'ling is recognised as something liminal and as such provokes a dual reaction within most. Prendick's reaction to him is that of disgusted disbelief, as he is "astonished beyond measure at the grotesque ugliness of this black-faced creature" (10). However, Prendick simultaneously expresses awe at the sheer grotesqueness of the figure in front of him, which draws him in with its "ugliness" and causes him to "stare at him almost against my will" (9). Though Prendick shows strong reactions of both awe and repugnance, the crew of the *Ipecacuanha* appear much more vehement and physically expressive in their reactions to the being. Rather than be intrigued by his unusual nature, as Prendick appears to be, the crew cannot bear to have him near them and chase him away and beat him when given the opportunity. The captain, whose own mental degeneration due to his alcoholic tendencies and crass behaviour does not endear him to the reader, expresses his displeasure most audibly: "he's a devil, an ugly devil. My men can't stand him. I can't stand him. None of us can't stand him. Nor you either" (13). Prendick further emphasises M'ling's diabolical aspect by stating that "it gives me a nasty little sensation, a tightening of my muscles, when he comes near me. It's a touch... of the diabolical" (Wells, *Moreau*, 33). Thomson argues that "the experience of amusement and disgust, laughter and horror, mirth and revulsion, simultaneously, is partly at least a reaction to the highly *abnormal*" (Thomson 24). Even though M'ling does not provoke any feelings of mirth or laughter, he does instil a sense of *awe* that is contrary to his grotesque appearance. As such, Thomson's argument stands, though partially revised; as the grotesque is inherently connected to laughter, M'ling does not fall solely into the category but transcends the grotesque and meanders into the realm of the monstrous where laughter and amusement is absent and replaced with sheer horror and revulsion. Even here M'ling falls into a liminal state of existence as he cannot easily be placed into either category, grotesque or monster, but must be situated somewhere in between.

The human body is shown to be an object of contest as it is both considered to be the most physically appealing shape and evolutionary most perfect, yet also the one body upon which deformity and transgression is most clearly shown and the most threatening. The opposing reactions demonstrated by the characters on the ship showcase this exact

paradoxical experience when confronted with the abnormal. As demonstrated by both Kayser and Cohen, the contradictory feelings that both the grotesque and the monstrous give rise to creates an internal tension as the object in question exceeds the realms of what is considered to be normative or, as is the case with the monstrous, even possible. This internal tension provokes a primal urge to destroy the object that is the cause for this discomfort. As a subject of liminality, M'ling's appearance is both uncannily familiar yet simultaneously one of vast difference. From the humanisation of animals, Moreau creates something that is uncanny in nature as it attempts to pass as human but does not fully achieve to do so. Though the human body is considered by Moreau as the more appealing form to the "artistic turn of mind" (Wells, *Moreau*, 71), the Beast Men do not fulfil this idea of "perfection" that is seen in the human body. Rather, the grotesque body of M'ling portrays an important aspect of the grotesque within literary texts as the body often depicts its boundaries

(including boundaries between the body and the outer natural world, and between the body's inner and outer spaces) as more fluid than those of the "Modern" body. The grotesque body's surface... naturally reflects its interior, blurring distinctions between inner cavities and outer surfaces, as 'outward and inward features are often merged into one' (Weaver-Hightower 142-43).

The bodies of the inhabitants of the island of Dr Moreau *does* reflect their interior: their hybrid nature is palpable in their outward appearance and as such invoke this feeling of revulsion and confusion within Prendick. Though M'ling is one of the most successful experiments of Dr Moreau, he still invokes a feeling of strangeness within Prendick that he cannot entirely place and forces him to re-evaluate M'ling place in the human world.

The Beast Men, whose very name illustrates their profane conjointness, fail to achieve any sense of classification and are thus denied status as neither human nor animal. The issue of categorisation is crucial when looking at the monstrous, as they defy the very notion. Upon closer inspection of other, less successful experiments, Prendick fully recognises the bestial taint upon the human-like bodies of the Beast Men:

I perceived clearly for the first time what it was that had offended me, what had given me the two inconsistent and conflicting impressions of utter strangeness and yet of the strangest familiarity... [They] were human in shape, and yet human beings with the strangest air about them of some familiar animal. Each of these creatures... had woven into it... the unmistakable mark of the beast (Wells, *Moreau*, 34).

Here, Prendick comes upon the problem of categorisation, as he can clearly see both Man and Beast within these creatures, yet he cannot place them within a safe parameter. The issue of categorisation was especially important during the Victorian era. It had become an intrinsic part of their culture and become a means by which to compare everything else to the "ideal":

Humans who are not male, white, and bourgeois have often been categorized as boundary figures, not quite fully human but nonetheless sufficiently human that they cannot be relegated to an entirely separate category of being. Animals, in contrast... are traditionally viewed as occupying a sufficiently separate category that our many uses of them as resource are not considered abuses or morally significant (Vint 91).

The Beast Folk are, at their centre, animals. They have been pushed into the realm of humanity by Moreau's torturous experiments and are additionally given a number of laws by which to abide in order to recreate a semblance of a civilised society and thus maintain their newfound "humanness". Nevertheless, the measures taken to ensure a human society becomes counterproductive when applied to the Beast Men as their attempt at being human further emphasises how far they are from being truly human; as they are clearly not passable as human beings it can be concluded that they *cannot* be humans by that very fact. Their lack of human intelligence and independent thought is furthermore proof of that fact, by Prendick's own understanding of humanity. Furthermore, if non-male, non-white, non-bourgeois humans fall under the category of "not quite" human, then the Beast Men are even further pushed to the boundaries of humanity (as well as that of animality).

Within *The Island of Dr Moreau*, the human form, and especially that of the Western Man, is placed on a pedestal within both evolutionary as well as Christian creationist theory, yet it simultaneously displays the Victorian fear of infection from the savage colonised lands. According to Prendick, the Beast Men are much more human than animal as they possess those inherent qualities that are connected to being human: they walk upright on two legs, talk, and have creating abilities. Ipso facto they "were men" (Wells, *Moreau*, 65). Simultaneously they are "little better than [idiots]" (53) and are "ugly [brutes]" (33) thus taking away their human "elevation". Within the doctrine depicted by Prendick, the human body and mind are so far separated from every other living being that the very idea that something other than a human should be able to replicate it, is ludicrous. Applying Christian ideology, Man was created in the image of God, and is, as such, both closer to God as well as placed above and separate from all of God's other creations. This elevation from nature's grasp means that the replication of it becomes impossible as human superiority is kismet at its most absolute. Transgressing this would instantly be considered as blasphemous. By refusing to believe that Dr Moreau has managed to recreate the human shape from an animal template, and rather choosing to believe that they have been "infected by some bestial taint" (64-5), Prendick displays his own fear of "colonial degeneration" (Weaver-Hightower 137). Nineteenth-century medical studies "focused on describing the dangers of white colonisers living in 'tropical' climates" (137) as they had problems acclimating to the climate. What is

more, it was generally believed that the colonised lands could actually transmit diseases unto the colonisers themselves; as if the lands themselves were infectious, transforming Western gentlemen into uncivilised indigenes. Symptoms of this “infection” by the land included lethargy, sickness and even “mental or racial degeneration. These climatic symptoms were thought to explain both the ‘natural’ regressiveness of indigenous people and the dangers to the not-sufficiently disciplined colonizer” (138). As Weaver-Hightower points out, had Prendick’s initial convictions been correct, then the source of this bestial and savage infection would stem from the only two civilised Westerners.

The untarnished and unblemished body of the Western male sets the limits of what can be conceived as being fully human and, as such, any contamination to the “purity” of the male body becomes a monstrous violation. Though the idea of hybridity as a form of the monstrous is not a new one, the Beast Men transgress any limits set by earlier examples of human-animal fusion. Bakhtin stated that the “combination of human and animal traits is, as we know, one of the most ancient grotesque forms” (Bakhtin 316), which is clearly shown in ancient mythology in which such hybrids were commonplace¹⁸. However, as argued by Noël Carroll, “monsters... breach the norms of ontological propriety presumed by the positive human characters in the story. That is... it would appear that the monster is an extraordinary character in our ordinary world” (Carroll 16). Mythological creatures do not appear as extraordinary *within* the mythology, but when they are placed within the “real” world, such as the Beast People, they would fall under Carroll’s category of the extraordinary within the ordinary. Though they have been “elevated” in status from beast to quasi-human, they do not fall, fully, into either category. The Beast Men are somewhat reminiscent of something from a tragicomedy from Greek mythology, be that a satyr or a centaur, or any other of the multitudinous hybrid beings of mythology. The difference, however, lies in the ability to categorise them; the beings from Greek mythology, though hybrids, have clear dividing lines between the human and animal part: the upper portion of the body, most importantly the head, is human, whereas the lower section, legs and genital area, is animal. As such, there is a “fluid” integration of the human and bestial: they have the mental capacity of a human but the

¹⁸ The centaur of Greek mythology was a wise being that had much knowledge of medicine and science and as such was considered to be more human than animal in its intellect (centaurs played a vital part in Greek mythos as they were often depicted in the legends of heroes. The most pronounced was the centaur Chiron, who was considered to be the wisest and most just of the centaurs, played tutor to several of the Greek heroes, most notable amongst them Achilles, Jason, Perseus and Heracles). The satyr, however, is depicted as being much more animalistic in its nature as it is inherently hedonistic and is constantly shown to chase pretty women.

hedonistic appetites of an animal. The Beast Men do not have this benefit, as their integration of animal and human flesh is all-consuming. Though Moreau has done much work on the mind, the heads of the Beast Men shows that their intellect is far from human as the face is still marked by their animal origins.

The existence of the Beast Men is that of an unnatural in-betweenness that is unbeneficial to all involved as they function as unanswerable questions rather than subjects advantageous to society. Building on the theories of Edward Said, Homi Bhabha discusses hybridity in terms of a beneficial “third space”. Within this “third space” of Bhabha, new ideas and cultural forms can emerge from the benefit of a multicultural merging. Bhabha describes this liminal third space as a stairwell of "in-between the designations of identity" where the

“temporal movement and passage that it allows, presents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (Bhabha 1994, 4)

Hybridity does, however, have a darker side to it as it can disturb “fixed racial, ethnic and national categories” (Weaver-Hightower 141), and as such it can be perceived by the individual as personally frightening as well as culturally threatening as it has the capability to shake the fixed system. In his analysis of the grotesque, Leonard Cassuto argues that hybridity disrupts the need humans have of categorising the world: “The organisation that [categories] provide lies at the heart of order,” he argues, “for without categories the essential distinctions (e.g., good and evil, us and them)—the ones that give rise to further divisions—would not be possible” (Cassuto 8). This then, lies at the heart of *The Island of Dr Moreau’s* tragical Beast People: their inability to be categorised by others, and by themselves, places them within a liminal space from which they cannot escape. They place themselves somewhere between beast and man (i.e. Beast Men), though what that space in-between actually *is*, is not made clear. Furthermore, they are not accepted by the humans they aim to be like but are scorned and chased away for their indefinability. Men are frightened by their presence as they are met by an unknown entity that disrupts their own perception of their existence. When confronted by a Beast Man, men immediately “haze the poor devil” (Wells, *Moreau*, 13) in an attempt to rid themselves of the eerie existence of something uncategorised. On the *Ipecacuanha*, the last connection to the civilised world, Beast Men are not that free “third space” that Bhabha discusses, but rather the unwelcome brother of both man and absurdity.

Degeneration

The combination of hybridity and the violation of humanity makes the Beast People the obvious monsters; both their appearance and their behaviour are all indicators of a lower form of life that is both beneath the human being as well as a threat towards it, due to the implication it has on humanity's understanding of itself. Much like the creature of Dr Frankenstein, the Beast Men are created monsters, made at the hand of a degenerate human, not devolved into monstrosity. Their monstrosity stems from human intervention and the perversion of science. As the story progresses, it becomes clear that degeneration does not escape the humans but actually appears to stem from them, infecting both each other and the Beast Men.

Societal structure is under direct threat by the Beast Men's imitation of civilised society, thus indicating that being civilised is not something that is intrinsic but rather learnt *behaviour* and thus separate from "good breeding". And, as such, alluding to that this behaviour can be unlearned as well, implying that Western society could collapse should this occur. The Beast Men are, in and of themselves, fear inducing as they are both physically repulsing and force man to pose the question whether it is possible that a new and better human race could arise. It is, however, their reproduction of Western civilisation and its implication of what civilisation actually entails that is truly threatening to Victorian society as a whole. As previously mentioned Prendick initially believes them to be degraded human beings that had suffered the "most hideous degradation it was possible to conceive" (49) as they have had their bodies tainted by lower forms of life and have been reduced to something that is lesser than the humans they once were. They do, however, still possess an inherent sense of humanity, according to Prendick, as they are capable of talking, "build houses, cook" and such (65). It seems entirely unlikely to Prendick that something other than a human being is capable of such intellect or civilised behaviour. Upon discovering that the Beast Men are, in fact, not the degraded remains of humans to animal experimentations, but rather the "elevated" forms of animals that are humanised, the implication of this "humanisation" becomes much more sinister. Though the Beast Folk are reshaped to look more humanoid, their human nature is *learnt*, their presumed humanity is a performance, rather than instinctual.

"They build themselves their dens, gather fruit and pull herbs – marry even. But I can see through it all, see into their very souls, and see there nothing but the souls of beasts, beasts that perish – anger, and the lusts to live and gratify themselves" (Wells, *Moreau*, 77)

Here, Moreau implies that their portrayal of such human habits such as marriage and creation is a mere façade. The interior remains entirely beast, even though they pretend to be otherwise. He calls their existence a “mockery of a rational life” (ibid.), a mimicry of what they have observed and learned from Moreau, yet they are “[c]omplex, like everything else alive” (ibid.). The implication that humanity is something that can be learnt, means that there is no inherent quality that humans possess that makes them stand above lower forms of life such as animals. Though gifted with rational such as not seen in animals, society is not something that comes instinctually but is rather taught. As indicated by Wells, learnt behaviour *can* be unlearned if not continuously reinforced by an exterior authority. By illustrating the fragility of learnt behaviour, and the inclusion of societal norms within these learnt behaviours, in addition to the consequent reversion of the Beast Men, *Moreau* implies that this is not necessarily a unique occurrence but something that could happen even in the centre of civilisation.

Functioning as a substitute of Victorian society, the reversion of the Beast Men is an indication of what could happen to humanity when removed from societal restrictions and regulations, by which their animalistic heritage will bleed through the sophistication and corrupt even the most evolved being. Moreau seems to be undetermined regarding the Beast Men, yet his explanation of their mental capacity leaves the possibility that the Beast men are, in fact, close to human in nature but that they are lacking in social awareness and proper understanding of concepts such as shame and ostracising, as this is only provided by Moreau and not entirely amongst themselves. Left to their own devices, the Beast People gradually forego their inhibitions and they steadily revert back to the animal they were before. This is most clearly shown by the reversion of M’ling, whose sophistication and willingness to serve makes him into one of Moreau’s more successful experiments. He does not interact with the other Beast Men but stays on the compound of Moreau and is most often seen to be around the humans of the island. He is even shown human dexterity in handling weapons, unlike any of the other Beast People. His successful humanity means that M’ling is the only Beast Man that is given an actual human name, albeit one of “oriental” origin and not something more “sophisticated”, English sounding names such as James or William. All the other Beast Men are given much more descriptive and succinct names such as “Dog Man”, “Grey Man”, and “Wolf Brute”. Both denoting their origin of species and their inferior position that prohibits them from acquiring a complete identity as an individual. However, even M’ling’s well-repressed animalism begins to return after he has had a taste of blood. He rapidly foregoes his human weapon in preference of his own teeth, and begins to affiliate himself much more

closely with his “kinsmen” and sleeps on the beach rather than return to the enclosure. Even though he is killed by the other Beast Men whilst protecting Montgomery, M’ling’s animalistic regression suggests that even the most sophisticated and humanised animal will still be an animal, nonetheless. Through M’ling it is implied that the borders of Man and Beast is much thinner than what Moreau believes it to be. However, this also suggests that Man himself, if cut off from a civilising influence and removed from an authoritative system, can revert to something more depraved and subhuman.

Moreau’s rather cynical theory of humanity creates an impossible standard by which none could possibly be considered human, not even the educated Englishman. Moreau has a radical understanding of what it means to be fully human, one which makes it near impossible to achieve the criteria of full “humanness”, even for English Prendick. According to Moreau, as “long as visible or audible pain turns you sick, so long as your own pains drive you, so long as pain underlies your propositions about sin... you are an animal” (71-72). Pain, according to Moreau, is instinctual and a remnant of a time when Man was less advanced and when pain was designed and purposeful for humanity’s survival. As evolution continues its process of eliminating redundancies, pain will eventually become eliminated in the process, as rational and intellect will take its place. Moreau’s *idée fixe* seems to be a twisted re-telling of Wells’ own thoughts on the subject. In his essay “The Province of Pain”, Wells argued that “the end of pain, so far as we can see its end, is protection. There seems to be little or no absolutely needless or unreasonable pain in the world, though,” (Wells, *Early Writings*, 195). Wells goes on: the “lower animals, we can reasonably hold, do not feel pain because they have no intelligence to utilise the warning; the coming man will not feel pain, because the warning will not be needed” (198). Though Wells supports the application of vivisection in the pursuit of scientific knowledge in this particular essay, he presents a much more troubling aspect of the issue within *Moreau*. Furthermore, this extreme concept of pain being linked to something that is subhuman means that none of the characters can be classified as being a fully evolved human being as “all humans have remnants of the animal within them, and therefore all will go to the House of Pain” (Snyder 236). Though the pain is, supposedly, designed and meaningful in the process of burning “out all the animal” (Wells, *Moreau*, 77) in order to reproduce a rational being, the Beast Men will, inevitably, feel pain, as “all are intended to fail the test of the Law” (Snyder 237). If all the subjects are predetermined to fail, then the pain of the operation in itself becomes redundant, as it does not appear to achieve what Moreau supposedly strives for. According to Elena Gomel, it is the “pain of surgery, rather than the resulting modifications, ... [that] interests him most” (401). Though Moreau

gives a very rational and inspiring account of the redundancy of pain within a human, as well as give “proof” by driving a knife into his own leg without pain, his theory goes against another part of human nature: sympathy toward suffering. Prendick falls “victim” to sympathy when he hears the humanised puma’s cries:

It was as if all the pain in the world had found a voice. Yet had I known such pain was in the next room, and had it been dumb, I believe – I have thought since – I could have stood it well enough. It is when suffering finds a voice and sets our nerves quivering that this pity comes troubling us. (Wells, *Moreau*, 34)

Following the logic of Moreau, through his sympathy for the puma’s pain, Prendick portrays his own link to animality and, according to Sherryl Vint, “his link to female sentimentality”¹⁹ (Vint 90), and as such making Prendick into something that is doubly subhuman. The combination of pain in addition to sympathetic sentiment to it, means that none of the novel’s characters can be classified as fully human. This further implicates that humanity at large is not immune to the ways of nature but still remains, at heart, an animal.

The experiments of Dr Moreau combine science and religion and results in a demonstration of the fragility of humanity, rather than its strength. When Prendick believed the Beast Men to be transformed humans, he felt pity towards them for their degrading “bestial taint” and consequent enslavement (Wells, *Moreau*, 65). After learning of their transforming from animals into humanoid figures, however, his vocabulary changes drastically, as they are now “foul creatures” (69) and an “abomination” (73). Though the creatures are, hierarchically, lower than the complete man, their implication of what it means to be human makes them a threat towards the established doctrine of evolutionary science. Within evolutionary discourse, the human is “seen as the creature unique in its possession of rationality, is situated at the end point of an evolutionary process” (Pak 29). As a natural process, evolution is tied to the idea of industrial and social *progress* and as such functions to “distance humans and their civilisation from their natural original domain” (30). Moreau, however, undermines this natural process and recreates the biblical creation of man, with himself in the role as God. As such, the idea that something that has not naturally evolved into

¹⁹ The nineteenth century saw a rise in antivivisectionist sentiment, which was predominantly led by women. According to Coral Lansbury, women were drawn to this particular movement as it created a space in which women were given the opportunity to express their own anxieties about the status of women and their bodies, in addition to the animals’ welfare. “Many contemporary antivivisectionists compared the fate of the suffering animal to the suffering of women under that hands of surgeons whose practices seemed not so far removed from those of vivisectionists” (Vint 90). Especially women of the lower classes were targeted for such inhumane treatments and operations without the benefit of chloroform.

the sophisticated and rational being that is the human, infringes upon the idea of man as being somewhat separate from nature. The creations of Dr Moreau demonstrate the fear that human civilisation and civilised society is something that is both artificial and staged and not, as has been comfortably assumed, inherent²⁰. As such, the fear of the creatures further develops into a fear of humankind and the possibility that every human has the potential to revert to more atavistic forms of humanity. This anxiety of degeneration in *The Island of Dr Moreau* demonstrates, to paraphrase de Beauvoir, that one is not born a human but becomes one.

Though the Beast Men are the monsters of the story through their uncategorical, grotesque appearance and hybridity, it is implicitly alluded to that the truly abhuman character is Dr Moreau himself. The initial details of Dr Moreau's somewhat dubious career paints him as a misunderstood, sympathetic character whose scientific career ended as a result of "the silly season" and sensationalism (Wells, *Moreau*, 30). Prendick claims that it "was not the first time that conscience has turned against the methods of research" and that Dr Moreau was accordingly "howled out of the country" and the case dubbed "The Moreau Horrors" (30). From Prendick's understanding of the "Moreau Horrors", he sees Moreau as the intellectual victim of mass ignorance and an almost medieval fear of scientific advancement. This is somewhat followed up by the well-rationalized explanation given by Moreau when discussing his experiments. He appears well reasoned and cogent, yet "his explanation of his research is chilling – it could have been uttered by the Nazi Dr Mengele" (Ringel 69). Moreau's operations are inherently linked to blood, pain, and death. Pain, according to Moreau, is the "mark of the beast" (Wells, *Moreau*, 73) within both man and animal. It is something that must be overcome and removed entirely from a being in order for it to be completely removed from the "intrinsic" (72) and to further perfect evolution. By own confession, Moreau has "never troubled about the ethics of the matter" (73) and continues his experiments and operations without any feelings of remorse, giving the appearance of having no conscience. Stiles argued that "Moreau's appalling indifference suggest 'the complete absence of moral sense and of sympathy' that Lombroso associated with moral insanity" and it is this "overdeveloped rationality" that is "the monstrous presence on the island" (Stiles 139) and

²⁰ Countering the argument that the Western man runs the risk of degenerating when separated from the civilised world are novels such as Edgard Rice Burrough's character Tarzan. Though being stranded alone on an island as a child, Tarzan, or Lord Greystoke, still manages to retain his European heritage and bloodline, which transcend even his simian upbringing. Regardless of his absence from the human world, he still displays an inherent sense of European honour and justice. "Being 'civilized' in Burroughs's fantasy is an innate quality that natives could never really acquire but that disciplined white men could never really lose..." (Weaver-Hightower 136).

not his hybrid experiments that have become fully dependent upon him. Moreau's callous and simplified, pragmatic opinion of humankind combined with his immoral experiments replaces his position as misunderstood scientist into a monstrous being. Moreau appears as a Edward Hyde *within* the body of Henry Jekyll, disguising his rotten interior behind an unaffected exterior, thus becoming the most dangerous monster upon the island.

Religion is treated as something that truly differentiates the humans from the beasts, at least in the eyes of the Beast Men, further imitating the import Victorians placed on their own faith. Like their imitation of human habits, human religion has become a cornerstone in the Beast People's lives. Much like the manner in which they make a "mockery of a rational life" (Wells, *Moreau*, 77), the religion of the hybrids is a polluted version of Western Christianity in which Dr Moreau has become both the Maker, Ruler, and Punisher:

His is the House of Pain.
His is the Hand that makes.
His is the Hand that wounds.
His is the Hand that heals (57).

Within this theological doctrine, Moreau has replaced God the Creator, reshaping animals into his own image and learning them right from wrong. By positioning himself as a "god of the island" (Ringel 69), Moreau ensures both a cohesiveness within the society of the Beast People as well as it establishes his own authority over them. In this regard, Moreau appears very much like a feudal monarch, dictator, and pope, all at once. According to sociologist Émile Durkheim, religion has three major functions within a society: it creates social cohesion, social control, and it provides meaning and purpose to answer any existential questions. In their repetitive chant of the Law, the Beast Men are provided with all three of these aspects. Furthermore, the Beast Men have understood their law as being vital in their classification as "men". When Prendick is introduced to their community, it is made clear by Ape Man that he will not be accepted as being human until he has learnt the law: "It is a man. He must learn the Law" (56). Though Prendick labels the prohibitions mentioned by the Law as being "act of folly" (57) as well as the entire event as an "idiotic formula" and the "insanest ceremony" (Wells, *Moreau*, 56) he has ever attended, he does recognise it *as* a ceremony and one that is vital to their society. As stated by Sherryl Vint, it is "obedience to the law, the performance of the chant – that makes one a man; before Prendick engages in this symbolic performance, his status is unresolved for the beast men, despite his morphology" (Vint 93). These rules or norms, that the Beast Men so desperately attempt to abide by, are what are essential in what is considered to be a human being. However, through the re-enactment of

civilised society and the organisation of a collective religion and living facilities, Wells further emphasises the question whether not all civilisation is something that is artificially created.

The inevitably fallacy of the Beast Men makes them, ironically, even more humanlike, as they emulate the human fallacy that is preached in religious doctrine. However, this humanness displays both the threat towards civilisation as well as civilisations threat towards itself. In their chant of the Law, the Beast People place limitations upon their behaviour, as any law in any society would do. These limitations are indoctrinated by Moreau in an attempt to prevent his experiments from reverting into their original shapes:

Not to go on all-Fours; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?
Not to suck up Drink; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?
Not to eat Fish or Flesh; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?
Not to claw the Bark of Trees; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?
Not to chase other Men; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men? (57)

Despite their clear animal physical characteristics, the Law prohibits any animal-like behaviour, imposing upon the Beast People human norms of what is deemed socially acceptable behaviour. By repeating the rhetorical question of “are we not men”, the Beast Men are attempting to reaffirm their own humanity and thus prevent them from reverting to animal instincts such as to go on all-fours. However, the “stubborn beast flesh grows, day by day, back again” (Wells, *Moreau*, 75), and their chant of “are we not men” becomes a rhetorical question in which the answer is clearly “no”. According to Bruce Clarke, the

demand placed upon the Beast People to deny their animal origins parodies the moral conflicts of a “humanity” constructed on Modern essentialist premises of a human sociality outside of nature, premises that remain tied to the very theological essentialisms the modern Constitution purportedly displaced (Clarke 50).

And as Snyder argued, they are all predestined to fail. Prendick notes that the “Law they were perpetually repeating, I found, and – perpetually breaking” (Wells, *Moreau*, 80). They do, however, achieve through ritual communication a semblance of what Moreau attempts to recreate through his surgical experiments: the reproduction of the human. And it is this fact which, ultimately, makes them such a monstrous figure within the Victorian Gothic. Their reproduction of humanity takes away the import that the Victorians placed within themselves: both their intellectual superiority as well as their moral. It threatens the hierarchical standard that had become expected by the average Victorian by which their dominant position has become jeopardised by their own colonising hand.

By placing himself at the centre of the Law, he has displaced himself even further from the centre of civilised society by continuously blaspheming against the cornerstones of Christianity: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me”. These intrinsic values that are placed in Western society, function as a glue that holds that society together as well as placing it in a superior role by having divine purposefulness placed upon them by an almighty God. Going against these means being ostracised, as Moreau was, and condemned as sinful and *abhuman*. Moreau goes further in his critique against Western religion by claiming that he has had no hand in the creation of the Law but rather lays the blame upon Christianity itself: “I fancy they follow in the lines the Kanaka missionary marked out” (77). Nevertheless, he is shown to have a much closer relationship with the law than what he admits to Prendick. Though claiming to he takes “no interest in them” (*ibid.*) he does act as the reinforcer of the Law, punishing those that transgress the rules with the House of Pain, which functions as a form of a perverted reinvention of the Christian idea of hell. When the Law is broken, Moreau calls to him the Sayer of the Law, clearly familiar with his authority as a priest-replica and asks him to recite the litany. When the Sayer reaches the commandment that has been broken, Moreau stops him, and encourages the Beast Men through rhetoric to affirm the inevitable fate of the one that breaks the law: ““Who breaks the Law –’ ... ‘– goes back to the House of Pain, O Master”” (91). When asking this question, there appears to Prendick to be a “touch of exultation in [Moreau’s] voice” (*ibid.*). As Pak states: “[t]hroughout the text Moreau uses language that puts him in an uneasy alignment with God” (Pak 29). Whether Moreau has created the Law and denies it to Prendick, which, according to Snyder “given the things to which he admits with equanimity, is a strange sticking point” (Snyder 227-28), or it has been almost “naturally” created by the Kanaka missionaries, the instructions given by Montgomery, and the injunctions that Moreau attempts to imprint within their minds, the fact remains that Moreau does not discourage the Beast Men from deifying him within their religious doctrine and as such is in complete opposition to Victorian England’s ideas of morality and humility towards religion.

Moreau’s attempt at recrafting animals into human forms and replacing hedonistic instincts with Western doctrine of self-control and restraint, highlights Moreau’s own corrupted self rather than prove the success or failure of his experiments. Though Prendick has an instinctual reaction to the Beast Men’s deformed, fused nature, this also applies to Moreau. After having been told of his numerous experiments and having heard the callousness with which Moreau speaks of them, Prendick “shivered” when he “looked at him, and saw but a white-faced, white-haired man, with calm eyes. Save for his set tranquillity and

from his magnificent build, he might have passed muster among a hundred other comfortable old gentlemen” (78). The shiver Moreau produces within Prendick stems from the fear of Moreau’s unremarkable features; though the doctor shows symptoms of suffering from Lombroso’s moral insanity, none of these appear as physical marks upon his body. Save for his own notoriety, Moreau would have been able to traverse the streets of polite society without anyone realising his moral depravity; whereas Mr Hyde is able to wear the skin of Dr Jekyll and walk the streets of upper-class London without detection, Dr Moreau would not have to depend upon a disguise in order to blend in.

Montgomery’s own degenerate nature has made him susceptible to the influence of the Beast Men, rendering him into something that is much more akin to the island’s natives than the Englishman he originally is. Similarly to Dr Moreau, Montgomery has also been driven out of England due to an indiscretion that was significant enough that he cannot even imagine returning to England again. Drawn in by Moreau’s own degenerative influence, Montgomery has remained in his service for ten years, during which his only interaction has been with either the Beast People or with other debauched company such as the crew on the *Ipecacuanha*. What Montgomery’s sins were whilst in England remain unknown to the reader and must therefore be left to the imagination, but it can be concurred that it must have been a scandal of great magnitude for him to actually leave the British Isles. Though he does not show any outward signs of depravity, Montgomery has still maintained his degenerate ways even after leaving England. Abusing both alcohol as well as the Beast Men, his behaviour clearly indicates an internal moral decay. Furthermore, in contrast with Moreau, who regards the Beast Men with contempt, Montgomery “had been with them so long that he had come to regard them as almost normal human beings” (82). This process of normalisation happens to Prendick as well, as his “eye became habituated to their forms” to such an extent that after a while he “even fell in with their persuasion that my own long thighs were ungainly” (81). Montgomery’s own acclimation to the Beast People, however, may have gone too far, as Weaver-Hightower argues that it is possible that Montgomery’s depravity has extended into him having sexual relations with the Beast Folk (Weaver-Hightower 169). Whether Montgomery goes as far as Weaver-Hightower suggests is uncertain, he is, however, both volatile and violent. His apparent sympathy for the Beast Men does not prevent him from hurting them, yet he spends most of his time there, attempting to “transform the Beast People into docile Fridays” (Bozzetto et.al. 37). Montgomery’s own degenerate behaviour has caused him to be close the bridge between Man and Beast even further than Moreau’s experiments. As his “open and undisciplined” body had made “vulnerable to the island’s infectious

savagery” (Weaver-Hightower 143), Montgomery has become “in truth half akin to these Beast Folk, unfitted for human kindred” (Wells, *Moreau*, 109). Already susceptible to degenerate behaviour due to his alcohol abuse, the island and its inhabitants has turned his mind into something akin to itself.

As the Beast Folk are, like the Frankenstein monster, created as something that is abhuman, their monstrosity does not extend into the realm of degeneracy themselves as they are already created degenerate due to their animalistic nature. The human characters are, however, shown to display symptoms of being of a degenerate nature, whether that be Dr Moreau’s unethical experiments that does not appear to serve any purpose except his own entertainment, or a weak moral character such as Montgomery that causes him to turn to alcohol and beating those that are weaker. Degeneracy shown to draw in degeneracy and augment it, especially when unchecked.

Mark of the Beast

Though the Beast People are impure hybrids that cannot be categorised as either Man nor Beast, and as such live within a monstrous limbo between the two worlds, the nature of degeneration extends from the Beast Men and onto all the human characters of *The Island of Dr Moreau*. Having been exiled from London, Moreau takes refuge on an island where he continues his condemned experiments. Similarly, Montgomery too has become “an outcast from civilization” (Wells, *Moreau*, 15), whereas Prendick undergoes a physical deterioration during his stay on the island. Following his ordeal upon the island, Prendick has become unable to return to the polite society of London. Curiously, Prendick claims that is not due to his own degeneration that he cannot stand the metropolitan centre, but rather a fear of the degeneration of Western society. Having lived with the Beast People for several months, the borders between island and metropolitan London have become blurred to such a degree that Prendick no longer has the ability to separate the two. Beast People and Englishmen have become synonymous in the mind of Prendick.

Though Prendick appears to be the moral compass of the novel as well as the “norm” by which everything else is compared, he, too, is shown to be susceptible to the corrupting forces of the island. In fact, his regression occurs even before he lands on the island of Dr Moreau; the first chapter of the novel takes place on a dinghy after a shipwreck, which functions as a foreshadowing of what is to take place later, and it is here that Western morality is first transgressed. The lack of food and water in addition to the removal of any moral authority, results in the inevitable loss of moral doctrine as on the sixth day “Helmar

gave voice to the thing we all had in mind” (4). Up until this point, the crew had not spoken to each other but the “first use of language s quiet and limited, but the topic is cannibalism. Immediately the use of language is directed towards survival, but at the cost of civilization” (Cross 39). It is firmly established within Western civilisation that Man does not eat Man and doing so is considered both savagery and the ultimate taboo. However, certain animals exist to be sustenance for humans as they are ranked below humans. As Bonnie Cross states, by even considering cannibalism “the survivors of the *Lady Vain* have lowered their fellows from personhood to a potential meal” (ibid.). Though he initially vehemently disagrees, Prendick does admit to having thought about it himself as well as his attempt to come to the aid of Helmar, whether to help him from the sailor or aid him in killing the sailor, is ambivalent. The choice of cannibalism is taken from him when both of his boat mates fall overboard, yet the argument could be made that this event is a mere illusion or necessary amnesia: the narrative of the story is, admittedly, unreliable due to the distance between the “writing” of the events and their occurrence, in addition to the dubious state of the narrator’s mind both at the time of the events and subsequently. Prendick did admit that he had already been “thinking strange things” (ibid.) as well as having considered cannibalism himself; it could be argued, therefore, that the two other passengers did not merely fall “upon the gunwale and rolled overboard together” (5) but were victims of Prendick himself. The issue of cannibalism is continued even after Prendick is rescued from the dinghy but functions to further differentiate between Prendick and the Beast Men. Onboard the *Ipecacuanha* Prendick is given a “dose of some scarlet stuff, iced. It tasted like blood, and made me feel stronger” (6). The combination of the blood as well as the mutton that he ingests, is a sign of his recovery. However, according to Snyder, it is a “vexed” choice (Snyder 216) as the Beast Men on the island are prohibited from eating either meat or fish. Prendick’s own easy consumption of these exact forbidden foods marks him as being part of a class of humanity even further away from the Beast Men; he is, first and foremost, a complete, undiluted human, but he also is not a slave to the Law and victim of these same weaknesses as the Beast Men. Though he has had a near brush with, or potentially acted upon, cannibalism, Prendick does not have any qualms about eating the mutton as, in his mind, it is so far removed from himself that it does not occupy anything other than sustenance in the mind of Prendick. By the logic of the Beast Men, then, Prendick is more animal than even them due to his failure to adhere to the very principle that keeps them “human”.

Though Prendick refuses to reinstate himself as the new “God” of the island after Moreau’s death, he still continues the blasphemous upholding of the Law, indicating his

continuous moral decline. When Dr Moreau is killed and the religious authority is consequently removed from the island, the moral authority dies with him; seeing their physical god die and their inability to understand abstract constructs such as the one Prendick propositions, the Beast Men are quick to deteriorate into their animalistic instincts. The explanation offered by Prendick is continues to play on the Christian ideas of God, stating that Moreau has “‘changed his shape – he has changed his body... He is... there’ – I pointed upward – ‘where he can watch you. You cannot see him. But he can see you. Fear the Law’” (Wells, *Moreau*, 104). This deliberate reinvention of the ascension of Jesus, and blatant usage of Christian ideas for self-benefit is further indication of Prendick’s devolving into similar patterns as Moreau. Prendick defends his own actions by making a differentiation between himself and the beast men, arguing that “only a man can tell a lie”. By equating the act of lying with begin a complete human, Prendick appears to have lost the moral compass and authority that he had previously steadfastly maintained and as such removes himself further from the civilised society from whence he came.

Prendick’s degeneration is fully realised upon returning to England, when he is yet again placed under the scrutiny and compared to other “sophisticated” Englishmen. For ten months Prendick stayed with the Beast People after the deaths of Moreau and Montgomery, fighting against the degenerating force of the island and its people. Gradually, however, both the Beasts and Prendick himself undergo deteriorating changes; the Beast People’s psyche revert back to that of animals whereas Prendick, initially, seems to solely undergo a physical transformation:

“My clothes hung about me as yellow rags, through whose rents glowed the tanned skin. My hair grew long, and became matted together. I am told that even now my eyes have a strange brightness, a swift alertness of movement” (Wells, *Moreau*, 125).

This description of Prendick is reminiscent of that of M’ling when he is first introduced; they both have a dark, tanned face; thick, matted hair; and both possess that “animal swiftness” (9) that keeps them alert of their own surroundings. Like the natural progression of evolution, these changes come about “slowly and inevitable” (125), however evolution “as a natural process is tied to the concept of industrial and social progress, and initially works to distance humans and their civilisation from their natural original domain” (Pak 30), and in this case the opposite is true. Initially, Prendick does not show any signs of a moral or mental corruption by the Beast Men, though he gradually begins to look more like them. It is not until he is faced with civilised society that it becomes clear that he is not unmarked by his stay upon the island: “I was almost as queer to men as I had been to the Beast People. I may have caught

something of the natural wildness of my companions” (Wells, *Moreau*, 132). Again, Prendick applies a medical language of infection and disease, as if the “foulness of the Beast Monsters” (131) were a transmitted disease that could infect anyone and everyone: “[t]hey say that terror is a disease” (132). Furthermore, he continues to label what Moreau did to the animals “the degradation of the Islanders” (132), in spite of his evidence to the contrary that there were no islanders to be degraded by the experiments of Dr Moreau. The “islanders” were humanised animals, a process which can hardly be called degradation of the animals as it would contradict his previous opinion. Weaver-Hightower argued that Prendick’s language betrays a “need to maintain that fantasy to explain his own conversion to a wild man, to blame someone else for his degeneration and not own up to his own flaws” (Weaver-Hightower 140). Furthermore, as Prendick was never personally “infected” by Moreau’s tainting experiments but could only have “caught” it by association with the island and its human-animal inhabitants. His conversion into something alike a wild man, suggests that his simply being on the island and surrounded by degenerate beings was enough for him to become a degenerate being himself.

The mark of the beast still remains in him, even after he has separated from its influence. However, he now sees the same mark within others as well:

I could not persuade myself that the men and women were I met were not also another, still passably human, Beast People, animals half wrought into the outward image of human souls; and that they would presently begin to revert, to show first this bestial mark and then that. (132)

Even religion has lost its meaning and become polluted to Prendick. Having seen the perverted version imitated by the Beast Men, religion, too, has become synonymous with after having seen the effect the Law had on the Beast Men. It seems like Prendick has taken in more of Moreau’s doctrine that “links the experience of pain, which is driving force that underlines humanity’s own interpretation of divine laws, explicitly with religion. So long as the fear of hellfire drives humans, then even their religious worship signifies their animal nature” (Snyder 223); the London preacher has become synonymous with the Ape Man, and the preaching has become “Big Thinks”. “Just as Gulliver is no longer able to see humans as rational creatures after his sojourn with the Houyhnhnms” (Vint 94), Prendick is unable to see his fellow humans as such. After having spent such an amount of time with humanised animals, whose behaviour showcases all the base denominators that labels a person as human, has rendered humanity a questionable concept. He has seen the descent of man and seen the animal that lies beneath the surface of us all, that last bit of our evolutionary forefathers that

still has not left the human body. Both traumatized and reshaped after his time upon the island, Prendick's fear of his own contamination of the "natural wildness" (132) is displaced unto humanity as a whole as he has been made aware of that congenital capacity of monstrosity within each of us. It brings to mind the last words of Kurtz: "the horror! The horror!" (Conrad 84).

Conclusion

Of *The Island of Dr Moreau*, Wells said that "it is written just to give the utmost possible vividness to that conception of man as hewn and confused and tormented beasts" (quoted in Asker, 25). Much like Stevenson used dogs to critique the Victorian theatre of display in his essay "The Character of Dogs", Wells uses the Beast Men to showcase the fragility of humanity and the even frailer instalment of civilisation. By transforming beasts into humanoid figures with quasi-human intelligence and exposing the bestial nature that resides within Man, the novel systematically tears down the ideas of superiority and divine purposefulness that has generally been assumed by humanity, and even more so by the colonising Victorian. The idea of the complex human being and sophisticated society are shown to be artificial constructs created by Man himself, rather than something which is inherently human. This shakes the foundation upon which Victorian doctrine is built, in which the Western Man is so far removed from the wiles of nature that he has become its *master* rather than its subject. The slow realisation of Prendick that Man and Beast is not that far removed from one another as he had previously wished to think, is a dark comment on the bestial quality which still resides within human nature; Wells proposes that humanity still retains that part of its evolutionary predecessor that was more bestial and, even more controversial, can even now revert back to its darker ancestry. *The Island of Dr Moreau* shows that monstrosity is not as removed from humanity as one would like to believe, but rather something that resides within humanity as a whole, even that person that has the "touch almost of beauty that resulted from his set tranquillity and from his magnificent build" and that could have easily passed "among a hundred other comfortable old gentlemen" (78). Like Dr Jekyll, Dr Moreau shows that moral depravity is something that can occur within the depths of civilised society, and though it can be expelled, it will always return in some shape or another.

4 *Dracula*

Introduction

Much like Dr Jekyll, whose body houses a dual nature, that of the ostensibly “good” Dr Jekyll and “evil” Mr Hyde, so does the body of Dracula hold more than one nature. Dracula’s body is one that is constantly changing, transcending all the natural laws of human biology, both in terms of physiological capacities and in its ability to alter its own appearance at will. Whereas Dr Jekyll is restricted to transforming into only one body, that of his alter-ego which is therefore part of Dr Jekyll’s own makeup, Dracula undergoes a series of metamorphoses during the novel. His transformations moving between both animate and inanimate shapes, old and young, and, to a degree, between male and female. Due to his degenerate nature, Dracula’s appearance reflects his inner makeup. His constant transgressions and crimes against humanity leave their mark upon the body, much like the painting in *Dorian Grey*. Like Dorian Grey, the Count is able to “fake” his own normativity, making him “by far the most dangerous” (Rentoul xi) as he blurs the line between health and sickness, morality and degeneracy. Though Harker’s initial description of Dracula would have placed him “within degeneracy’s purlieu” (Arata 1996, 20), the Count is a master at manipulating and disguising himself from the view of others, thus making him an incredibly deadly predator that is free to hunt in both the woods and wilderness of Transylvania as well as in the modern cities of England. Interestingly enough, the marks of the Count’s face do not appear in the same capacity upon the face of the female vampire. Her degeneracy is marked in a manner that is quite different than the male Count, but no less monstrous or horrible. Hers is, perhaps, even more so as she is transformed from a virtuous, passive woman into a sexual, fleshy being that has an insatiable appetite. Within *Dracula*, the idea of the monster is much more individual specific than the previous novels, as it focuses all of its attention towards Count Dracula and his corrupting influence upon the pure-blooded English. Upon entering England, the Count threatens to destabilise the “natural order” of the Empire and its inhabitants; subverting the superiority of the British and challenging fixed gender roles.

Fear of the Unknown

The foreigner is usually treated with suspicion as he is an unknown entity and the unknown is an unpredictable facet. By given him specific markers that differentiate him from the “ideal”, the threat of the foreigner is, somewhat, neutralised as it alerts his surroundings of his position. This is a gradual process, meant to create a barrier between the “other” and the

collective “us”. It is through this process of othering, that monsters are most likely to occur. Here, all foreigners are marked as being intrinsically different from the remaining British characters, yet it is only the Count that is portrayed as a monstrous figure. Whilst the Count and Dr Van Helsing are given lengthy descriptions as well as recognisable patterns of speech, the remaining characters are given sparse descriptions, if any. In doing so, they are separated from each other into two factions: the safe and familiar, and the threatening of unknown.

In order to create an illusion of a barrier between the “native” and the “foreigner”, Stoker takes great care in describing both Count Dracula and Dr Van Helsing as opposed to the single-lined, general descriptions given to the native English-speaking characters. Stoker appears immensely preoccupied with painting the setting of the novel, yet the novel’s characters are rarely given the same level of attention, with the exception of the Count and the Doctor; the native English-speaking characters are merely characterised either by mannerism, profession or outwards impression of health. Any true account as to their appearance is presented in generic terms, such as Lucy who looks “sweeter and lovelier than ever” (63), Mina who is a “sweet-faced, dainty-looking girl” (194), or Harker who is “so thin and pale and weak-looking... only a wreck of himself” (99). The lack of attention given the English characters, forces the reader to think within normative, generalized terms as to what they look like, thus creating the mental image of the archetypical Victorian solicitor, lord, doctor, woman.... The foreigners, however, are given every ounce of attention that the British lack, as to the way they look, talk and act. In doing so, Stoker mirrors Harker’s own enthusiasm for that which is different and strange, noticing all the peculiarities within his own alien characters and thus marks them as being different from the others. By foregoing the descriptions of the English characters and focusing his attention on the foreigners, Stoker underlines the difference between the two factions, illustrating the amount of attention the foreigner is given when entering England.

When it comes to the foreigner, space matters, as it can be the discerning factor in who is an ally and who is an enemy. Whereas Van Helsing originates from the close and familiar Netherlands²¹, Dracula springs forth from much farther and wilder regions, well-protected from Western influence and interference as shown in its inaccessibility with modern

²¹ Notably, the Netherlands themselves were colonisers for several centuries, the first one being Ghana which became an established colony in the 16th century. Other notable colonies included Brazil, Sri Lanka and Suriname. The Netherlands, much like the British Empire, gradually lost their territories, though their last colony, Dutch New Guinea, was retained until 1962. The Netherlands have previously enjoyed a close bond to England and its royalty, as William of Orange became King William III of England, Scotland and Wales in 1689-1702.

transports. Unlike the English characters, the foreigners are given in-depth descriptions with additional eccentricities as well as mannerisms that make them stand out more prominently and appear more alien as opposed to the native Englishmen. Both Dracula and Van Helsing speak in a marked manner. The former speaks with a clear understanding of the grammatical structure of the language, but with signs of having learned from either academic or older texts, therefore using a language that is not in keeping with the Victorian vernacular. Additionally, he has a “strange intonation” (22) that he aspires to perfect during Harker’s stay. Notably, Dracula endeavours to perfect his English in order to fully pass as an English gentleman, yet he is seldom heard to speak after leaving Transylvania apart from a few short lines when he is driven away from his estate, therefore whether his speech pattern has changed much or become more modern is hard to say. Dr Van Helsing, however, though possessing a quite rich vocabulary, shows clear signs of being a non-ethnic speaker of the language through grammatical mistakes in his sentence structure: “Were fortune other, then it were bad for those who have trusted, for I come to my friend when he call me to aid those he holds dear” (106). By adding these vernacular differences, the foreigner is singled out as an anomaly and more of a spectacle to be observed and analysed.

The Count and the “good Doctor” are given similar aesthetic descriptors, which equalises the two in terms of both intellect as well as in their Othering. There is, however, something about the appearance of Dracula that makes him an ominous presence and marks him as distinctly evil, whereas Dr Van Helsing is perceived as an ally. Both are shown to have a profound intellect, reflected by their broad foreheads which was believed to be symptomatic of noble stature as well as great intellect (Collins 255). Whilst the Count’s forehead is “loft” and “domed” (Stoker 23), Van Helsing’s is of a “noble” quality and is “indicative of thought and power” (163). Furthermore, both characters possess eyebrows that are both rather large and bushy, in addition to a strong jawline. Whilst the shape of the head of Dracula and the Doctor looks alike, the central elements of the face differs: the eyes, nose, and mouth. This, according to Bakhtin, is where the grotesque will most likely be found. The Count has a “high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils” (Stoker 23) as well as “very bright eyes that seem red” (17) that have the ability to blaze “with a sort of demoniac fury” (31). Van Helsing, on the other hand, has “[b]ig dark blue eyes [which] are set widely apart” as well as a “good-sized nose, rather straight, but with quick sensitive nostrils” (163). By adding these key components to the two characters, the reader is suddenly presented with two vastly different personas as reflected by their facial features; the eyes and nose of Van Helsing bring symmetry and a sense of great sensibility to his features, whereas the Count’s face is instantly

transformed into something much more bestial. Bakhtin argued that the grotesque always seeks out that which protrudes from the body, that which “seeks to go out beyond the body’s confines” (Bakhtin 316). Margrit Shildrick went further in her understanding of the facial orifices as potential sites of monstrosity: she argued that the orifices of the body are places of great vulnerability in individuals as they, as argued by Bakhtin, breach the surface of the body. Furthermore, as they are in violation of the containment of the body, these “mark an uncertainty about the putatively self-contained human being” (Shildrick 52) and the connection between bodily orifices and their potential for contamination is quite explicit. Whilst Van Helsing is elevated into a sympathetic creature, the Count’s appearance marks him as something more degenerate.

The mouth of Dracula is given special attention as it is through the mouth that his true moral depravity can be read. According to Bakhtin, the mouth is the organ that has the ability to render the “world apart” (Bakhtin 281), as it marks a “triumph over the world” (281) as man can devour without being devoured himself. In the case of Dracula, his mouth is arguably that which is the most inhuman about his appearance as the old man that meets Jonathan Harker and it is exactly this organ that possesses the greatest transgressive ability, as the reader is later shown. The Count has a mouth that is “fixed and rather cruel looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth; these protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years” (Stoker 23-4). Though the description of the mouth functions as a foreshadowing of the Count’s character and the crimes he is about to commit, the description additionally shows an underlying prejudice towards the Count’s moral character; the use of the word “cruel” in this particular instance appears to be more of an observation coloured by psychological reasoning rather than actual ocular proof, creating a visual manifestation of Harker’s unease regarding the Count. In the mouth Harker augurs the Count’s true nature very much in keeping with Lombroso’s theory on degeneration and criminality, as Lombroso’s habitual murderer often have “a cold, glassy stare and eyes that are sometimes *bloodshot* and filmy... their *canine teeth very developed*, and their lips thin. Often their faces contract, *exposing the teeth*” (Lombroso 51, emphasis added). According to Lombroso, crime could be found within the animal kingdom which was facsimiled by the human degenerate as well, such as the torture of prey, murder and such. The close connection between primitive instinct and the human degenerate meant that their appearance would consequently reflect this animalistic behaviour. In the case of Dracula, Lombroso’s theories are understood very literally as the Count’s mouth is not merely an indication of an atavistic criminal mind but rather demonstrates the Count’s hybridity, much like the Beast Folk from

The Island of Dr Moreau. Whilst the Count has the ability to sufficiently pass as a human being, his mouth and eyes betray his close connection to the animal within.

In addition to giving the Count a much more ominous appearance and provides him with, quite literally, a wolfish smile, his teeth become a symbol of his outwards hostility towards all he meets. His sharp canines are the Count's most dangerous weapon with their ability to both take and give life. With their capacity to injure and draw blood, the image of the teeth is transformed from simple dentition to sharpened daggers. If read in this fashion, then the Count, by displaying his teeth/knives, shows an outward aggressiveness towards Harker upon first meeting him, as the showcasing of the teeth can be understood as his openly displaying a deadly weapon at all times, which would be interpreted as a threatening message by most. In fact, during Harker's first meal at Castle Dracula, there is a segment where in quick succession Harker comments on the Count's smile which displays even more of his protuberant teeth before the wolves outside begin to howl, upon which Dracula comments "you city dwellers in the city cannot enter into the feelings of the hunter" (24). The howling of wolves further emphasises the Count's own hybrid nature, signalling the threat he himself poses. Furthermore, it links Dracula's mind closer to that of the wolf, as if he were a part of the pack mentality and consequently more animal than human. Primal instincts are seen to be transferred unto Harker upon meeting the Count, as his "fight or flight" instincts are awakened, and he has a physical reaction to the Count's presence as a "horrible feeling of nausea came over [him]" (24). The entire body of Dracula, through an intermingling of animalistic qualities, has become a weapon. By emphasising his close proximity to the wolf, Dracula is, consequently, gradually stripped of his humanity.

Eating, drinking and consuming becomes intermingled with Dracula's sexual nature, making these natural instincts both perverse and a scene for horror. By means of the mouth, Dracula comes full circle in the process of inverting human nature as he has managed to rejuvenate himself by, evidently, consuming the lives of others²²:

"and then I saw something which filled my very soul with horror. There lay the Count, but looking as if his youth had been half renewed... the mouth was redder than ever, for on the lips were gouts of fresh blood, which trickled from the corners of the mouth and ran over the chin and neck... the burning eyes seemed set amongst swollen flesh, for the lids and pouches underneath were bloated. It seemed as if the whole awful creature were simply gorged with blood; he lay like a filthy leech, exhausted with his repletion" (53).

²² Additionally, he lays himself to rest, so to speak, within a very shallow grave, which, ironically, is usually dug by murderers in order to dispose a body though not having the care, or time, to dig a deeper, less suspicious one.

The mouth is, again, given special attention. The blood trickling from the mouth localises the object of horror and marks the mouth as the root all the evil the Count possesses. Here, the mouth is recognized as Bakhtin's all-consuming mouth that transforms the other features into a mere framework which encases the wide-open bodily abyss (Bakhtin 317). Furthermore, Bakhtin argued that, in its extreme form, the monstrous (or grotesque) body does not present as an individual body but consists of "orifices and convexities that present another, newly conceived body. It is a point of transition in a life eternally renewed the inexhaustible vessel of death and conception" (318). It is at this moment that Harker truly ceases to understand the Count as a human being, rather recognizing him as an "awful *creature*", thus degrading him from something that is entirely human and into something more in keeping with the Count's primeval nature. From the horror that is the Count's mouth springs forth the image of the bloodsucking leech²³ reducing the Count to just a mouth and teeth. The leech, being of a parasitical nature, is, according to historian Daniel Pick, indicative of degeneration (Pick 173), which seems to be in keeping with Harker's judgment of the Count's nature. When a leech attaches itself to a host, it swells in size as it is filled with the blood of its unwilling host until it finally detaches itself when it has had its fill. In the case of Dracula, he has surpassed mere satiation and went on to over-indulging in the blood of, presumably, young women. Harker uses terms like "swollen", "bloated", and "gorged with blood", indicating the Count has partaken in a veritable feast of blood, drawing the life-force from an unknown multitude of women. The forcible taking of blood from young women, combined with the ingestion of the blood, reinforce the image of the Count as a sexual deviant that inverts the natural order of human behaviour.

The image of the bloated leech within the coffin raises again similarities to Bakhtin's argument on excess and bodily disproportions as fundamental attributes of the grotesque and monstrous (Bakhtin 303). The Count, refraining from normal human sustenance, draws life force from the blood of unwilling victims, and, in this case, to such an extent that his body has been both rejuvenated from the amount of life yet at the same time horribly disfigured through bloating due to the excess of it. The Count's bloated visage could be said to bear similarities to a corpse, which would be fitting due to the Count's "Un-Dead" state, that has lain in water for a period of time. The amalgamation of eating and drinking, in addition to his preferred source of nutrition, adds to a monstrous image of Dracula as the "body transgresses

²³ Interestingly, in Hebrew mythology, the *alukah* is a vampire that is sometimes said to be able to shapeshift into a wolf. The word "*alukah*" can literally be translated into "leech".

here its own limits: it swallows, devours, rends the world apart, is enriched and grows” (Bakhtin 281). When Dracula feeds, or, as in this case, gorges himself, he literally grows in the sense that he reclaims parts of his lost youth, discarding his ancient body and creating a new one that is both less conspicuous yet more horrible than the previous. By destroying the natural progression of life and death, Dracula obliterates his remaining link to humanity, further displacing him into the realm of the unnatural.

By branding both the Count and Mina, it simultaneously binds them further together in addition to marking them both as unclean creatures that are doomed to live on the peripheries of sophisticated society. In a desperate attempt to “rid the world of such a monster” (54), Harker strikes the Count with a shovel, thus making a “deep gash above the forehead” that does not appear to vanish with neither time nor by supernatural means. This is remarkable as the Count has previously shown his own ability at camouflaging his own appearance as well as being able to transform it. Regardless of these abilities, the Count does not seem to be able to rid himself of this mark upon his forehead, as it is depicted much later in the novel by both Dr Seward and Mina Harker, who both impress upon it as a significant mark of identification: “the instant we saw we all recognized the Count – in every way, even to the scar on his forehead” (247). As the mark does not disappear as the novel progresses, John Stevenson suggests that it should be understood as something *textual* rather than a physical entity, something that should be read (Stevenson 141). As such, the mark is transformed into something reminiscent of the Mark of Cain that is branded upon a person in order to identify them as someone that is untouchable, one who is both a “fugitive and vagabond” (Genesis 4.12). Much like Cain, Dracula is a nationless wanderer, who literally carries his home with him in the shape of a box filled with soil. Whereas Cain’s descendants are not afflicted by their father’s mark²⁴, the mark of Dracula is shown to be transmittable, much like his own vampiric infection. It is later imprinted upon the face of Mina when a Sacred Wafer is placed on her forehead²⁵ it “seared it... as though it had been a piece of white-hot metal” (Stoker 258-59). Whereas the mark upon Dracula marks him as being a defiling entity, Mina’s mark

²⁴ According to the Genesis, the line of Cain *did* end with the Genesis flood narrative, of which only Noah, his sons and their wives were the sole survivors. Whether the line of Cain was still cursed for their ancestor’s fratricide or whether they were simply grouped together with rest of humanity that had become corrupt and sinful, is unclear.

²⁵ The marking of Mina’s forehead is remarkably reminiscent of the accusations made by Hamlet against his own mother Gertrude, in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. In it, Hamlet accuses his mother of a such a crime that marks her face as a sinner: “Such an act / That blurs the grace and blush of modesty, / Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose / From the fair forehead of an innocent love, / And sets a blister there” (3.4.41-45).

receives an additional significance as it has a clear sexual connotation in addition to be a mark of degeneracy. Upon finding her with the Count, the Company finds the two placed upon the marital bed of her and Jonathan Harker. This particular setting forces the allusion of a rape in addition to a defilement of the marital bed. This imagery is reinforced when Mina cries out “Unclean, unclean” (248), calling forth the image of the grief-stricken rape-victim who feels defiled and weak whilst simultaneously lamenting her own degenerate nature as she can no longer “touch [Harker] or kiss him no more” (ibid.) as she will now imminently become a degenerate, sensual being like Lucy and the female vampires before her. This statement is, furthermore, a quotation from the Bible²⁶. The entire Biblical quotation foreshadows Mina’s inevitable facial marking, thus branding her as a tarnished woman. The mark, consequently, becomes like that of the Count and of Cain: a means for others to see her shame and in order to warn them of her harmful nature. As such, the mark gives the Company more of an advantage against the negative influence of the vampire. In the case of Mina, her scar gives the Company a further purpose to hunt down the Count as it is a constant reminder of her own sacred desecration, as well as it is evidence of Harker’s cuckolding. Upon the Count, the scar functions as something demobilizing with regards to his powers, as it will always disrupt his attempt to “pass”, giving the Company a target at which to aim, so to speak, as well as marking him as inherently different.

As argued in the “Theory” chapter, the grotesque has the ability to evolve into the monstrous when the grotesque loses its comical relief and becomes a symbol of opposition instead of their expected subservience. In the case of Dracula, there is no hint of him functioning as a comical relief, nor does he appear to play a submissive role. Van Helsing, on the other hand, becomes somewhat more of a grotesque figure. His continuous grammatical errors, his overt display of emotions, as well as his invariable honesty and cynical observations, transforms him into an object of hilarity. Furthermore, though he is the unelected leader of the hunt of Dracula, Van Helsing was *summoned* to England by the English, thus placing the doctor into a semi-servitude position. Whereas Dracula asserts his dominance from the very beginning, as he is *Count* Dracula, living in *Castle* Dracula, thereby associating him to old nobility and old money. In terms of his claimed aristocracy, the Count himself boasts of being of an “old family” (29) and that “[w]e Szekelys have a right to be proud” (33), demonstrating the value he places in the importance of *blood*, or, maybe more

²⁶ Leviticus 13:42-45: " But if he has a reddish-white sore on his bald head or forehead, it is a defiling disease breaking out on his head or forehead... Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of their face and cry out, 'Unclean! Unclean!'"

accurate, the *purity* of blood. In both these statements, Dracula empowers his own perceived worth and, not so subtly, places him in a higher social standing than Jonathan Harker, the recently admitted solicitor. Consequently, the Count can only be read as a monstrous figure of grotesque proportions that are to be found in those orifices named by Bakhtin.

Animality

Margrit Shildrick argued that the skin marks the limit of the embodied self and as such it is the potential site on which “transgressive psychic investments” becomes evident (Shildrick 51). She concludes that, therefore, any compromising of the “organic unity and self-completion” of the skin could potentially become a signal of monstrosity. Shildrick’s focus is mainly revolved around the freakshows of the nineteenth and early twentieth century and here references to bodily anomalies such as missing or additional limbs, growths, congenital disorders etc. However, by applying the same theory to the body of Count Dracula, whose body is not even contained to one singular entity²⁷, it creates a much darker image of the Count’s trans-species transformations as it shatters the idea of the *completed self*. The transformation between different species tears apart the human skin, reforming it into an entirely different shape than its original form, making it appear entirely non-human and monstrous. Human monstrosity has previously been regarded, especially by Christian theologians, as divine judgment or, by prejudiced theorists, as miscegenation, where the afflicted human is being punished for their sinful or biological transgressions. Consequently, the afflicted become something less than human, being of a defective mental and/or physical capacity and therefore easy to undermine and exploit. Dracula’s anomalies, on the other hand, grants him a vast amount of power rather than weaken him. Though hindered by certain laws of nature than bind him, such as only having the ability to transform at dawn, noon or dusk, and being unable to cross running water at either high or low tide, Dracula’s perceived

²⁷ There have been myths and stories on trans-species transformations for centuries, the oldest amongst them are to be found in Greek mythology and epic poems such as the Mesopotamian *Gilgamesh*. In these stories, transformations into different animals was usually a power instilled within the gods who could thereby change their appearance at will, the Greek god Zeus being the most imaginative with regards to disguising himself in order to “woo” his women taking the form of, amongst others, a bull, a swan, and a golden shower. Humans have been known to transform into animals, though usually this was seen as a punishment by the gods, such as King Lycaon who was transformed into a wolf by the God Zeus for serving him Lycaon’s own son at a feast. Lycaon is considered to be one of the first recorded werewolves. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the guardian Humbaba is able to change his face, causing humans to fear him. Humbaba was brought up to be a terror to all human beings. Through trickery and cleverness, the title-hero Gilgamesh decapitate Humbaba and put his head in a leather sack, the iconography of which is to be found in a parallel story in Greek mythology where the demigod Perseus decapitates the gorgon Medusa and takes her head with him in a sack.

monstrosities grant him greater powers than any other human being, thereby becoming an anomaly *from* the anomaly. By the end of the fin-de-siècle, the British Empire was about to be surpassed by upstart countries who experienced a boom in industrialisation and economy. Dracula's excessive amount of power in combination with his high intellect and ruthless stratagem, could be argued to allude to symbolise the emergence of one of these countries, threatening to conquer the Empire, disrupting its stability. By placing these qualities within a monstrous shape, such as Dracula, it can be destroyed; in killing the Count, the Company symbolically eliminates all that which threatens the Empire, ensuring the safety of its borders and people from such exterior monsters such as the bloodsucking vampire that could bleed the Empire dry.

Dracula's arrival is veiled in mystique and intrigue, showcasing the Count's uncanny ability at disguising himself, concealing the threat he himself poses. As the *Demeter* unwittingly carries Dracula towards the port of Whitby, a thick impenetrable mist follows it, "so dank and cold that it needed but little effort of imagination to think that the spirits of those lost at sea were touching their living brethren with the clammy hands of death" (Stoker 76). This ominous statement is proven to be an accurate prediction of the incoming *Demeter's* fate, as it is later discovered that the ship is manned by the dead, having found land as by a miracle. The "clammy hands of death" have indeed claimed the life of the entire crew it seems, save for the immense "dog" that "sprang up on deck from below... making straight for the steep cliff, where the churchyard hangs over the laneway... it disappeared in the darkness, which seemed intensified just beyond the focus of the searchlight" (78). From the obscure and dark circumstances, seeped in death and tragedy, it is generally accepted that this marks the arrival of the Count Dracula. It is also accepted that the recorded "dog" is, in fact, Dracula in one of his animal hides. Here, Dracula here takes advantage of a double deception, tricking the onlookers twice over; nowhere in the novel is it indicated that the Count has any real connection to the domesticated dog, rather "he can command the meaner things: the rat, and the owl... and the wolf" (209). It would therefore be more likely that the journalist was mistaken and that what he believes to be a dog, is in actuality a wolf. As we have previously seen, the Count is an expert at disguise and trickery, previously easily posing as Harker. In this case, Dracula is able to manipulate both his surroundings and the immediate bystanders, preventing them from recognizing the immediate danger that they find themselves in. What they see, is the accumulation of a multitude of "identities" that aid in the concealment of the Un-Dead nature of Dracula. Like his human figure is meant to conceal his true nature, Dracula's other shapes are meant to aid in his continued stratagem of deceit and deception.

Additionally, this adds to the conception of the Count as an invading war-lord that has come to invade the British Empire.

Dracula equates himself to the Vikings, both in bloodthirstiness and in his threat as an invading force. In one of his discussions with Harker, Dracula reminisces with Harker about his ancestral home and the bloodline from which he stems. Here, the Count mentions several historically “blood thirsty” people, amongst them the Berserker²⁸. The berserkers were a branch of Viking warriors that were said to be especially vicious and deadly, donning the hides of predators, most often those of bears and wolves from whence the name “berserker” stems, translating into “bear’s skin”. Dracula’s referencing of the berserker becomes significant when seen with regard to his arrival at Whitby²⁹ harbour, as it becomes the final clue as to Dracula’s motive to. Much like the Vikings of history, the Count arrives by means of sea, taking the locals entirely by surprise and catching them unprepared to defend themselves. Furthermore, the Count also dons the hide of a wolf. The historical berserker donned the skins of these animals in order to benefit from the beasts’ strength and bloodthirsty mentality. The Count, however, is able to fully transform into this very beast, deriving all the “benefits” of the animal. The Count’s connection to the ancient Berserker is further emphasised when the reader is made aware that there has been escape from the London Zoological Gardens: a wolf by the name of Bersicker (129). The berserker from history was considered to be a beast of a man, more animal than human in their frenzy and physical prowess; Dracula’s animality becomes two-folded in its power as it gives him both power as well as an apt disguise from those around him. Though the wolf disguise might not be the most inconspicuous and well-adapted to the urban cities of England, it is arguably the

²⁸ The earliest surviving reference to the term ‘berserker’ can be found in *Haraldskvæði*, written in the late ninth century by the skald Thórbiörn Hornklofi. This skaldic poem was later preserved by the Icelandic author Snorri Sturluson in the *Ynglinga saga*. In the *Ynglinga saga*, Sturluson reports that “his Odin's men rushed forward without armour, were as mad as dogs or wolves, bit their shields, and were as strong as bears or wild bulls, and killed people at a blow, but neither fire nor iron told upon themselves” (Sturluson ch.6). In Hornklofi’s original work, they are labelled as *Ulfheðnar*, which directly translates into “men clad in wolf skins”. The berserker is mentioned in several other sagas and poems, other than those of Hornklofi and Sturluson, more often than not portrayed as violent barbarians that loot, plunder, and kill indiscriminately. One of these occur in the *Egils saga*, in which the grandfather of the main character was called Kveld-Ulf. This literally translates into “evening wolf”, which is most often understood as to him being a werewolf. Kveld-Ulf’s son, called Skalla-Grímr, was said to be a warrior berserker. Both father and son were depicted as being quick-tempered and vicious (traits passed on to Egil himself), Skalla-Grímr was even said to commit the horrible crime of infanticide. Egil, himself, having inherited these vicious and bestial moods from both father and grandfather, supposedly attacked his opponents with his teeth, even ripping out another berserker’s jugular vein out with his bare teeth, much like a predator.

²⁹ Incidentally, Whitby suffered from Danish Viking raids between 867-70 and was burned down by Norwegian Vikings during the reign of King Eystein I of Norway, 1103-1123.

most significant in its narrative function. In England, wolf-sighting would be a rare occurrence, but Dracula derives from “wolf country” (282). As Dracula stalks his prey by means of concealment, it follows that he should be able to take the form of a powerful predator that has the ability to move without detection or awaking suspicion, yet still maintaining the power to wreak havoc on those who unknowingly cross his path. Upon his arrival to England, his appearance as a wolf exceeds merely the need to cloak his identity but becomes a symbol for the havoc he would be able to wreak.

Whilst the transgressive nature of his trans-species transformations tears apart Dracula’s unity, his ability to alter his shape into matterless mist utterly annihilates it. In itself, mist is a transformative entity, as it can alter its shape, opaqueness, and size. Like fluctuating water, mist is not hindered by solid objects but finds a way to merge around it or creep between small cracks in the stone, such as when the Count enters through the joinings of Mina’s bedroom door. Thus, mist has, in theory the ability to pass through almost any object that should meet its path. This, in practice, is not entirely possible as mist is reliant upon certain laws of nature and only occurs under certain circumstances. These laws, however, do, yet again, not apply to the Count. The Count is seen to retain his own will, even when without a physical body to contain it within, and is thus able to will the mist into moving places where it should not be able to. This is noted by Mina, though she herself is unconscious of the danger it poses, whilst looking out the window, that a “thin streak of white mist, that crept with almost imperceptible slowness across the grass towards the house, seemed to have a sentience and a vitality of its own” (226). Again, the Count is able to mask his own appearance and make it into something that appears as non-threatening to the onlooker. Such is also the quality of mist as it has the ability to blur the eyesight of those who behold it, hindering from knowing what lies beyond or within, such as the ship and the vampire. In her diary entry, Mina, unknowingly, identifies the problem with the Count’s flexible body: how do you catch mist? As a formless matter, the Count obliterates every inch of himself, tearing apart his own skin until there is nothing left but a sentient mist that cannot be caught.

The Female Vampire and Sexuality

The female vampire is an interesting juxtaposition to the cruel and monstrous-looking Count: where he is thin and hard, these women are endowed with womanly voluptuousness; whereas the Count has a mouth that repulses, the female vampire has soft, kissable lips that invite men to come closer. The female vampire is exceedingly different from the “original” Dracula, both

in appearance as well as in behaviour. This does not, however, make her any less of a potential threat nor does it make her any less monstrous. Her monstrous nature stems from her blatant sexual expression, which places her in stark contrast with the “ideal woman” of Victorian society. The allure of the female vampire stems from her innate sexuality, that makes her both an alluring temptress as well as an impure wanton woman. The female vampire’s perceived aggressive sexuality equates female sexuality in general to monstrosity. The portraying of female bodily autonomy as a fleshy, insatiable monster that preys upon men and children alike, illustrates Victorian anxieties of the emerging “New Woman” and what significant consequences she would mean to both family and society.

Whereas Dracula clearly signals a certain sense of monstrosity in his outward appearance, making his prey cower from him, the female vampire does not possess the same markers as their maker, though that does not take away from their ability to horrify their surroundings. At first glance, the female vampire, or *vampirella* as Karschay calls them, are exceptionally beautiful women that possess a sexual magnetism that proves to have a near hypnotising effect on the men they encounter. Harker describes one of Dracula’s brides as having a “deliberate voluptuousness” that he finds to be both “thrilling and repulsive” (Stoker 45). However, though they are physically attractive and inviting, there is something exceedingly wrong in the eyes of Harker. According to him: “Mina is a woman, and there is nought in common. They are devils of the Pit!” (55). This exclamation of disgust indicates that there is something that is an unknown: the women are something that is entirely unfamiliar to the Victorian Jonathan Harker. This is both exhilarating and repulsive in its novelty. As he describes them, Harker uses a vast arrange of contradictive descriptors as he both admires and fears them simultaneously, displaying his frazzled mind when faced with such obvious sensuality: “There was something about them that made me uneasy, some longing and at the same time some deadly fear” (42). There is something oddly reminiscent of the mythology of the Greek siren³⁰ in Harker’s description of the female vampires at Castle Dracula, as their beautiful exterior works as a camouflage for their monstrous nature and deadly intent. It is not until they are angered that their “demonic” power shines through as they are suddenly transformed into something bestial with “teeth champing with rage” much like an angered animal (43). As opposed to the Count, the women do not carry obvious

³⁰ The female vampire also closely resembles the *wila* (or *vila*) of Slavic mythology and folklore; somewhere between a fairy and a ghost, the *wila* takes the form of a beautiful woman that would sometimes dress in the nude in order to entice men that crossed her path, though she is said to be able to shapeshift into a snake or a wolf. One should not anger a *wila*, however, as they are ferocious beings that will always seek vengeance against one who has wronged them.

portrayals of their own degeneracy but merely exude an air of “wrongness”, there is something amiss in their beautiful visage, something that does not seem natural. Additionally, the female vampire does inherit the animalistic side of Dracula, that transforms her beautiful face into something much more hellish and bestial, revealing her primal nature. The combination of primal instincts as well her supernatural beauty, transforms the female vampire into a hedonistic predator that contradicts her Victorian counterpart.

Through her overt sexuality, the female vampire has the ability to emasculate her male victims. As is the case with Dracula, the mouth of the female vampires is given central stage in Harker’s description taking great care to the mouth’s movements and actions, finding that the greatest horror stems from the mouth of the fair-haired woman. As Harker remains frozen in a paralyzing sense of ecstasy and anticipation, he allows the fair-haired vampire to advance upon him, smelling her breath that is both “honey-sweet” but with a “bitter offensiveness, as one smells in blood” (42) underlying the sweetness, her breath reflecting her beautiful exterior that hides a rotting interior. In the following paragraph, the words “lips” and “teeth” are repeated a number of times, reducing the woman into just a pair of lips and sharp teeth much like the Count. However, unlike the Count, the woman’s lips and teeth appear to be both a promise of great pleasure and pain, wrapped into a “languorous ecstasy” (43). In the case of Dracula, Harker’s instant reaction is a combination of repulsion and aggressiveness, resulting in him striking the Count over the forehead in a desperate attempt to rid himself of the being that so haunts him. In his first meeting with the women, Harker’s instantaneous reaction is much more passive and effeminate, as he remains lying in bed letting the women have their way with him and even finding a near masochistic sense of pleasure in it. When confronting the fair-haired vampirella, Harker notes that she seemed familiar to him as she had appeared to him in “connection with some dreamy fear” (42). In psychoanalytical terms, what Harker experiences is the return of something which has been long repressed in body and mind, yet has still remained active in both. Within this section, Harker displays an innate fear of women and their sexuality as represented through the sexualized orifice that is the mouth. The mouth, in psychoanalysis, has been connected to the mythical theme of the *vagina dentata*. As the name might suggest, the *vagina dentata* is the male fear that the female genitalia possess the ability to devour him. This ability would result in his imminent castration or death, should he attempt to have intercourse with her. According to Jill Raitt, the *vagina dentata* “visualizes for males, the fear of entry into the unknown, of the dark dangers that must be controlled in the ambivalent mystery that is woman” (Raitt 416). In the subconscious, the mouth and the vagina become interwoven and connected to one another, thus making both a potential threat

to the man's manhood and masculinity. However, Harker seems content with relinquishing his own power and masculinity, allowing the female to become the masculine, aggressive transgressor and instigator of the intruding act of biting³¹. As with the Count, the mouth of the female vampire is highly emphasised. However, the mouth of the vampirella is equated to her genitalia, as in keeping with her sexual nature, evoking the imagery of the *vagina dentata* as an actual possibility. This, in addition to her aggressive provocative behaviour, incapacitates men, rendering them incapable of assertive action as well as taking away their masculine virility.

Already displaying sexual tendencies whilst living, Lucy is left susceptible to the influence of the Count. As the first (reported) victim of Dracula upon his arrival to England and becomes the scene of a battleground between the Count and the Company of Light, though the latter is ultimately doomed to fail due to the questionable nature of Lucy. Karschay argued that the "self can only be invaded by the Other once the self has betrayed a desire to let the Other in" (Karschay 160). Whether Lucy allowed or desired the Count to turn her, we cannot know for a certain as the reader is not privy to Lucy's thoughts except for in her few letters and her memorandum, in which she clearly portrays great fear and distress at her situation, fearing for her life and soul, begging to God to help her. Though Lucy is clearly loved by all the men that come into her life and outwardly displays a façade of innocence and purity, Lucy is shown to be *generous* in her love. She laments that they cannot "let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her" (Stoker 60). She does, however, follow this statement with the "correct" response of "this is heresy, and I must not say it" (*ibid.*). It is, nevertheless, her abundance of love and underlying passions that makes her all the more susceptible to the Count. Karschay further argued that the Count chooses his victims based on their own "innate biological and psychological potential of savage reversal" (Karschay 160). As she slowly deteriorates, Lucy is finally bound to all three men she previously wished to marry; she receives blood transfusions by all the men she loves, even Van Helsing opens his veins and gives up his "masculine essence" (Dijkstra) in an attempt to save her. Even before she has become a bloodthirsty woman, she craves the blood of others in order to sustain

³¹ In "The Dialectic of Fear", Franco Moretti goes further in the analogy of biting, claiming that when an infant is toothless it appears to be content with merely suckling at its mother's breast. However, once it begins to develop teeth its first aggressive instinct manifests itself in it biting the mother's nipple. As the child develops and is instilled with the rules and norms of society and what is acceptable behaviour, the child begins to fear the memory or fantasy of biting its mother's breast. This, according to Moretti, in turn leads to a fear of repercussion of its own "cannibalism", therefore coming to fear the female mouth (and in turn the vagina). (Moretti 80).

herself, binding herself to the men in her life through the sharing of their “bodily fluids”. Her voracious appetite has been previously hinted at by Stoker when she and Mina eat at a “sweet old-fashioned inn” where they would have “shocked the ‘New Woman’ with our appetites” (Stoker 86). Anna Silber pointed out that “since vampires are defined by their monstrous appetite for human blood, obviously symbolizing erotic appetite, Mina and Lucy’s large appetites hint at the same sorts of desires, albeit genteelly repressed” (Silver 129). After her death, her fiancée, Arthur Holmwood, notes that he felt as if “they two had been really married, and that she was his wife in the sight of God” (Stoker 157) after he gave her his own blood, thus binding their bodies together. What Lord Holmwood is unaware of, is that three other men have also donated their blood to Lucy’s body. Thus, following Lord Holmwood’s own logic, and, as later commented by Van Helsing, “this so sweet maid is a polyandrist” (158). Her wish to be married to three men reflects the Count’s own polyamorous relationships, as he already has, or has had, a relationship with the three female vampires remaining at Castle Dracula who still remain with him as companions. Lucy’s wish to be married to three men marks her as an indecent woman and thus she is consigned to live her afterlife as a lusting and bloodthirsty woman.

The body of the female vampire overflows with femininity and a “fleshiness” that contradicts the Victorian womanly ideal. In her sickbed, slowly but steadily deteriorating into the degenerate vampire, Lucy’s health fluctuates between anaemic and sickly to being full of health and appetite. The latter does not, however, indicate a recovery of her previous innocent self but rather becomes an indication of her own degeneration. In one of her letters to Mina, Lucy happily exclaims that “I have an appetite like a cormorant, am full of life, and sleep well... Arthur says I am getting fat” (Stoker 101). This appetite is not solely reserved for food, but rather for other bodily fluids like the blood transfusions she receives from the men. Bram Dijkstra states that “Stoker leaves not the slightest doubt about the fact that these transfusions should be equated with a sexual union between Lucy and her donors” (Dijkstra 344). Thus fed by the “seed of four men” (345), Lucy is transformed into a sexualized body that expresses a nymphomaniac need to consume both body and blood. Her body reflects her internal urges as her “sweetness was turned to adamantine, heartless cruelty, and the purity to voluptuous wantonness” (Stoker 187). As her transformation leaves its mark upon her body, Lucy develops into something of a copy the Transylvanian women whose own blatant sexual nature is both exhilarating and horrible to Harker; their bodies portraying both an excessive fleshiness and a cold hardness. The excess portrayed on Lucy’s body mirrors that of the Count after his rejuvenating “gorge feast”. He, too, became a bloated and excessive figure, though

whereas Lucy's "bloating" brings something of overflowing femininity into her frame, the Count's resembled that of a decaying corpse. She no longer resembles the Victorian ideal of the frail and sexless woman, but returns to something more atavistic, more akin to a Roman statue of Venus, delightfully sensual in her voluptuousness yet cold in her marble figure. Furthermore, Lucy is depicted by Dr Seward as being reminiscent of the gorgon Medusa³² after she has mutated into the fleshy she-vampire:

"the eyes seemed to throw out sparks of hell-fire, the brows were wrinkled as though the folds of the flesh were the coils of Medusa's snakes, and the lovely blood-stained mouth grew to an open square... If ever a face meant death – if looks could kill – we saw it at that moment" (188).

Medusa has long been a (tragic) figure of female monstrosity and has been used by Freud in psychoanalysis as a metaphor for the castration complex, where the phallic image of the snakes becomes an image for the mother's lost penis. However, Barbara Creed notes that Freud ignores a crucial aspect in the Medusa myth, as he disregards her as a representation of the vagina dentata, where the open mouth and fangs of the snakes represent another kind of castration fear entirely. In the case of Lucy, it appears to be the latter fear that is present within the men. Their fear of Lucy and her mouth can only be remedied by the utter destruction of the gaping Medusa whose sharp teeth usurps the "function of penetration that Van Helsing's moralized taxonomy of gender reserves for males" (Craft 119-120). As such, the "fleshiness" of the female vampire must be destroyed in order to reinstate order.

Through the symbolic rape of Lucy, she returned to the submissive and anaemic woman that does not pose a direct threat to the patriarchal structure. Marie Mulvey-Roberts argues that the procedure performed on the Un-Dead body of Lucy is doubly monstrous as it both signifies a rape as well as the surgical procedure of clitorrectomy. Her argument follows the Victorian idea that hypersexuality in women could be cured by means of a clitoridectomy or a hysterectomy, which she claimed functioned as a sexual lobotomy for the Victorian woman. As Lucy is depicted as being overtly sexual and the image of "voluptuous wantonness" such a surgical practice would indeed be a "viable options" if we were to accept Mulvey-Roberts' argument. However, though clitoridectomies still occurred during the fin-de-siècle, the last (known) clitoridectomy in England occurred in the 1940s, the practice had

³² In the 1992 Francis Ford Coppola movie *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, the image of the Medusa is repeated in the female vampire. In the movie, during Harker's encounter with the three women, one the women's hair is transformed into snakes, coiling around her as she looks down upon him. More covertly, Lucy's burial attire (very similar to a wedding gown) consists of a great headpiece that has spike-like accessories, framing her face, creating a parallel between her and the Transylvanian vampirella.

been on a steady decline (Sheehan 14-15; Duncan 143). I would therefore argue against Mulvey-Roberts' clitoridectomy claim as I do not find that there is enough evidence in the case of Lucy, though she could possibly be considered a "candidate" for the operation. Where I do agree with Mulvey-Roberts, however, is in her argument for the rape of Lucy. As her body changed, her previously untarnished body becomes the scene where all her repressed sexual feelings are put on display as her "sweet purity" is turned into something "carnal and unspiritual" (Stoker 187). Lucy's reclaiming of her dormant sexuality becomes a threat to the men as she has suddenly become something that acts on its own impulses and wants, and has therefore become entirely unpredictable and uncontrollable. Accordingly, she must be stopped as a "woman is better dead than sexual" (Craft 122). Thus, in a dual move of castration and execution, Lucy is "set free" by a phallically shaped object that penetrates her body multiple times before her head is, in a final move of passion, cut off. As pointed out by Mulvey-Roberts, Lucy's final moments bears a great resemblance to woman in the sexual ecstasy of a climax, rather than a woman brutally murdered (for a second time):

"The Thing in the coffin writhed; and a hideous, blood-curdling screech came from the opened red lips. The body shook and quivered and twisted in wild contortions; the sharp white teeth champed together till the lips were cut, and the mouth was smeared with a crimson foam... [Arthur's] untrembling hand rose and fell, driving deeper and deeper the mercy-bearing stake... The great drops of sweat sprang out on his forehead and his breath came in broken gasps" (Stoker 192).

Once Lucy is safely dead, she undergoes a second transformation, but this time to a much safer and known image of womanhood, for though the "traces of care and pain and waste" return yet again to her face, "these were all dear to us" (ibid.). In the eyes of the Company, the anaemic and wasted body is to be preferred over the fatty body she possessed as a vampire. She now, finally, resembles the ideal Victorian woman that is both properly passive and slender, her body finally reconciled with her proper, submissive position as a woman. "In the same way that women's bodies (and minds) were smothered and fixed under the corset of beauty standards, Lucy is literally killed and immobilised into a beautifully emaciated image that pleases male eyes" (Domínguez-Rué 304). By reclaiming their lost penetrative power through the brutal staking of Lucy, the men restore the "natural" order in which they are the sole benefactors.

The female vampire, being of a hedonistic and sexual nature, is accordingly punished for her indiscretion through her inability to carry or create offspring of her own. At the time of *Dracula's* conception, during Queen Victoria's reign, there occurred a new age of domesticity where the women were removed from most of the public sphere and the ideal woman should

be the very image of motherhood, respectability and family. With Queen Victoria, there emerged a new image of the “great mother”, both within and outside of the home³³. Mina Harker is often described by the men as being the most ideal woman and the “light of all lights” (Stoker 165). Her nurturing nature sets her apart from the other women within the novel as she is depicted as being the perfect mother to all. She herself comments on the fact, stating that “women have something of the mother in us that makes us rise above smaller matters when the mother-spirit is invoked” (203). This, however, does not apply to the female vampire, whose maternal instincts, when compared to those of Mina Harker’s, are shown to be directly contradictory to Mina’s ideal. When Mina is confronted with a, albeit full-grown, “child”, her immediate response is to embrace and comfort “as though he were [her] own child” (ibid.). Though the female vampire attempts to imitate Mina’s maternal display of holding the child to their breast, is not able to keep up the false picture of motherhood, as “[w]ith a careless motion, she flung to the ground, callous as a devil, the child that up to now she had clutched strenuously to her breast” (188). The inverted image of the mother is further emphasised by the female vampire’s perversion of breastfeeding; as opposed to the normative motherly feeding of the child, transferring life, the female vampire suckles the blood of the infant and thus draws the life force from the child rather than nurturing it. Additionally, there does not appear to be any kind of connection between the child and the female vampire, as they do not appear to repeat victims, rather choosing a new victim every night, repeating their pattern of kidnap and release nightly. This is demonstrated through the news clipping from the Westminster Gazette which reports that all of the children that went missing were all found “early in the following morning” (159). In contrast, the Count is shown to revisit his victims time and time again, until they finally succumb to his influence and become vampires themselves. Accordingly, the female vampire seems entirely “unfit” to either reproduce or care for any other living being, foregoing the Victorian ideals of what a woman ought to be and rather living entirely hedonistic and self-serving. The female (vampire) body is followingly rendered entirely non-productive³⁴ through its own innate sexuality, thus making

³³ Victoria herself was a mother of nine as well as being described as the “mother of the nation”.

³⁴ Mina Harker is also made sterile whilst in the presence of the threatening shadow of the vampire. It takes her (and arguably Jonathan Harker) nearly a year before they are able to conceive a child, who is born on the annual anniversary of the Count’s (and Quincey Morris’) death. The reason for this lack of a child in the marriage is “blamed” on both Harker and Mina by different critics and both sides have their merits. Harker’s fear of women and the dangerous vagina (dentata) due to his encounter with the women in Transylvania would explain his hesitancy to enter into the marital bed in all senses of the word, though they are said to share one. He is also said to have been immensely incapacitated by his travels, looking older and much frailer, and his manly virility is only returned to him once Van Helsing confirms his experiences to be true. It is, however, also possibly that there lies something of

her, in the eyes of society, a leech twice over as a non-productive woman does not have a place in the proper Victorian home.

Classical gender roles are reversed in the vampire body: as the female vampire displays primal, male sexual tendencies, so does the Count display undeniably feminine aspects with regards to his own biological nature. As discussed, the Count is shown to be completely freed from female intervention with regards to childbearing, him being both the impregnator as well as the nurturer. This image of the nurturer is furthered through the vital scene between him and Mina. Here, the count plays both the part as violator yet also displaying a forced sense of motherhood. Dr Seward likens the Count to a “child forcing a kitten’s nose into a saucer of milk to compel it to drink” (Stoker 247), recalling Van Helsing’s account of the Count having a child brain. However, the image evoked in the mind of the reader is much more likely to be that of a mother feeding her child. Like the female vampire, the Count clutches the woman to his breast in a motherly impulse to feed. As the Count is feminized in this image, it therefore becomes notable that he is the only one shown to be able to reproduce his own form. Whereas the female vampire appears completely sterilised by her own vampiric nature, the Count makes up for it through his own interlacing femininity and masculinity, amalgamated within one single body. The Count, though portrayed as being both of a hedonistic and aristocratic nature, does not share the female vampire’s “punishment” for such behaviour, as he is shown to procreate his own species all on his own; he is both mother and father, carrier, creator and protector. As such, the Count is completely freed from the need of a woman in order to reproduce, possessing complete autonomy over both himself and his offspring. This freedom from women, however, does have the consequence that these inherently female powers are transfused over to the Count himself, thus transforming him into a hybrid between man and woman: Hermaphroditus personified. On this bizarre power, Karschay postulated that though “the vampire’s power to biologically foster his own un-dead race, *Dracula* links degeneration with unnatural procreation and (arguably) perverse forms of sexuality” (Karschay 126). Yet although Karschay is undoubtedly correct, it is necessary to point out that it is important to differentiate between the female and the male vampire in this instance, as there is a clear inversion of sexuality and biological roles that occurs in the vampire that differentiates it from humans to a greater extent. The female vampire stands out as entirely Other as she is neither passive nor fertile, thus making her something that is both

the degenerate within Mina Harker which renders her incapable of conceiving yet accepting of the vampire’s kiss, as Karschay argues that *Dracula* only chooses his victims who contain, like himself, the innate biological and psychological potential of savage reversion (Karschay).

perverse and unnatural. As she is a woman that is both sexual and not able to carry a child, she is deemed unproductive to society and a hinderance. Whereas the male vampire is able to foster his own race through un-phallic acts of sexuality; his bite being the penetrative force whereas the sharing of his own blood becomes the symbol of spilling life-giving bodily fluids. These two combined, result in the metaphoric “newborn child” that is both impulsive, egocentric and entirely hedonistic. Thus, in a perverted inversion of the immaculate conception, Dracula is able to transform virginal women into wanton seductresses that prey upon the innocent child.

The male vampire, though sexual in nature, is much more covert in his outward expression, choosing to act by means of deceit and disguise. The female vampire, on the other hand, is not so subtle; her blatant sexuality combined with her ethereal appearance draws the male gaze towards her, transforming her into a mythological creature such as a siren that lures men in with false pretence. Her effect upon men is shown most clearly by Harker’s submissive, emasculated behaviour to them, though the rest of the Company also express similar concerns as to their sexual behaviour. These fears accumulate into the violent destruction of Lucy’s body which brings back the sickly, sex-less, and *non-threatening* woman they all loved. Whereas the Count poses a threat to the Empire at large, the female vampire threatens the patriarchal system through her sexual liberty and abstinence of children. As illustrated through Lucy, this cannot go unpunished but must be destroyed.

Conclusion

The body of the vampire is shown to be both fluid and strangely disembodied; his body has the ability to change its shape, species, and even matter. It is continuous flux, transcending the laws of nature and the human skin. This fluidity is, furthermore, illustrated by the gendered differences between the male and female vampire and the amalgamation of both femininity and masculinity within the same body. Count Dracula’s atavistic nature and numerous transgressions are written upon his face, even leaving behind a permanent scar, thus marking him as a contaminating being. The face of the female vampire, however, does not show any such signs; hers is the most unnatural beauty and overt sexuality that simultaneously invites in and repulses the Victorian male. Though exuding a certain kind of “wrongness”, the female vampire is not understood within the same monstrous terms as her maker. Hers is a sexual transgression that is illustrated through her wanton behaviour, much more so than through her physical body, though that too has become overtly sexual in appearance, exuding corporeal desire. The traditional gender roles are torn apart by the vampire, as the male vampire is

shown to be reproductively independent from the female vampire and can sire “children” without the female womb; whilst the female is punished for her sexuality by being denied any maternity, causing her to become a non-productive member of Victorian society and rather an obstacle that must be destroyed. Upon entering England, the Count threatens to take all these degenerative forces with him; polluting British blood and transforming the asexual, innocent Victorian woman into a gaping void of wantonness, lined with teeth that emasculate the Victorian male. As an invading force, the vampire threatens to disrupt the safety and comfortable *idée fixes* that Victorian society craved: national superiority and the submission of the female body.

5 Conclusion

I began this thesis by explaining how the monster is an intrinsic part in our understanding of a specific time period as they function as a societal mirror on which fears and anxieties are painted, and how they were especially prominent during the fin-de-siècle when the British Empire was struggling to maintain its superior position. During the end of the Victorian period, I argue that the monster underwent a significant change, as the literary monster evolved from an internal, national fear of the degenerative force of the lower classes, into the external, international fear of reverse colonialism and the fall of the prevailing Empire. The intention of this thesis was to illustrate this transformation by observing the bodily changes that the monster underwent and the significance of these.

In the chapter of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, both identities of Henry Jekyll are depicted as being monstrous, both individually as well as combined; Hyde is a malformed dwarf, whose inner corruption and evil nature leaks out and affects his appearance, whereas Henry Jekyll is a dual natured member of the upper classes who cannot control his own hedonistic urges and desires. The Industrial Revolution was a catalyst for British expansion and meant that produce and products became more affordable. This meant that the lower classes were suddenly able to afford that which had previously been exclusive to the upper classes. The idea that the lower classes could now more easily traverse the streets of the upper classes, like Jekyll-Hyde, became a genuine fear amongst the upper classes. Furthermore, it was feared that the sophisticated gentleman could fall into sinful behaviour and consequent degeneracy when interacting too much with the degenerate lower classes. The dual Jekyll-Hyde becomes a physical manifestation of the Victorian anxieties about the parvenu and more simple lower classes, as well as their individual fear of their own possibly degenerative impulses.

In *The Island of Dr Moreau*, the threat has moved from an internal to an external one. Though the setting is an unnamed, remote island, the society that is reproduced on this island is a clearly modelled on Victorian society. The idea that a civilised society such as the Victorian one could be replicated by something as abhuman as the Beast Folk, threatens all Victorian ideology of being superior within both the human and the animal world. Man is placed in a category of its own, in which he is master as well as master of his own race, in the case of the normative white, Victorian male. However, Moreau's experiments illustrate how fragile this superiority truly is, and that Man is not exempt from the influence of nature nor is society exclusively human. All characters are affected by the island's degenerative force,

foregoing civilised behaviour for the more hedonistic and atavistic. The degenerative effect of the island illustrates the Victorian fear of their own colonies and the influence they could have upon their pure-blooded Englishmen, in addition to the fear of a decline could be possible in even the most civilised societies: England.

Much like *The Island of Dr Moreau*, *Dracula* is representative of an external fear that reflects the fear of reverse colonialism. The distant foreigner has become a monstrous human hybrid that transgresses all the limits of both the skin and of science. Even more alarming, the Count transgresses the limits of national borders as well and has the possibility to easily come *into* England as well as leave it, without much notice. The fear *Dracula* instils upon his victims, that he can enter unnoticed and pollute his victims' blood with his own, reveals Victorian specific fear of reverse colonialism. The general anxiety was that, as the Empire had occupied other countries, the natives of these would colonise the Empire in return, by entering the borders and interact with the pure-blooded English. As is the case with the Count, this does not result in a positive outcome, according to the Victorian, as it has the potential to destabilise the nation as a whole. Furthermore, the vampire inverts all traditional gender roles, creating sexual, barren women that emasculate the English gentleman, and men who are reproductively independent from women. The fears induced by *Dracula* reflect fears of a foreign invasion as well as a loss of bodily autonomy. Additionally, the fear *Dracula* instils takes on a gendered quality, as his female victims are transformed into hypersexualized subjects, contrasting heavily against the demure, obedient object that is expected of the Victorian woman. Therefore, the general anxieties presented within *Dracula* consist of both a fear of a foreign invasion and accordingly the pollution of the pure English race, as well as the fear of a new age of sexually aware and active women that preys upon and emasculates men.

All three novels in this thesis, allude to a fear of a degenerative force that threatens the superiority of the British Empire, whether that be a threat to its people or to the Empire itself. The monstrosity of Edward Hyde revolves around the fear of the lower classes and their ability to successfully transgress into upper class society, due to social changes within England during that time. Whereas Hyde is representative of the corrupting forces of an immoral working class which threatens the stability of the bourgeoisie, *Moreau* and *Dracula* are demonstrative of invasive forces that threaten British society as a whole and endanger the purity of the English blood by their polluting influence. Within these novels, the literary monster becomes not merely a fiction of imagination but rather a representative of more omnipresent fears that society has as a collective whole; the monster, as a physical manifestation of these fears, becomes a safe place in which these fears can be realised before

ultimately be disposed of. The thesis focuses on works written within the Gothic genre of the fin-de-siècle, exploring the contemporary political landscape and how it has affected the monsters created during this era. The short period in time in which the bodily shape of the literary monster changes, signifies the rapidly altering society in which it was conceived. Within a short decade, the monstrous shape transformed from the dual natured Jekyll-Hyde, into the hybrid and transformative body of the Beast Folk and Dracula. What these monsters illustrate, through their bodily structures, is the shift in attention within Victorian society; by the end of the nineteenth century, Victorians became much more concerned with the external influences that were pushing in from their colonies, rather than be concerned with their own social classes.

Monsters give us a unique insight into a society at a specific period in time and can help trace societal development through their own evolving nature. As stated by Cohen, the monster always returns; they change, evolve and adapt, but they always manage to return within the popular imagination. The monster has an enduring importance in all cultures, as shown when looking at societies long gone as well as our world today. The monster's protean nature is a key facet to its existence and reverberates throughout the ages. Since its conception, the monstrous has shaped the way we humans view the world and these ideas continue to haunt us, from our past into the present. Monsters illustrate our demons from the past and can help us understand how they can come back to haunt us again.

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