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THE EVOLUTION OF THE VAMPIRE "OTHER": SYMBOLS OF DIFFERENCE FROM FOLKLORE TO MILLENNIAL LITERATURE

by
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A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford
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ABSTRACT
The Evolution of the Vampire "Other": Symbols of Difference from Folklore to Millennial Literature
(Under the direction of Dr. Shari Hodges Holt)

With its roots in Eastern Europe and rapidly spreading to Western society in the past few hundred years, the vampire has served as a double for humanity, with the division of self between monstrosity and the human ideal. Vampires in folklore and literature have been a means by which human cultures have identified concepts of human subjectivity (identity), particularly with regard to what various societies have defined as monstrous (being "Othered") within human nature. This study examines how the vampire character evolves throughout the centuries, with a specific focus on the less monstrous contemporary vampires who form hybrid communities with human partners as reflecting a new, more inclusive definition of the human. The vampire, as shown in this paper, eventually becomes the ideal self that humans seek to become. Chapter 1 examines the evolution of the vampire in folklore, representing fear of those who refused to assimilate to cultural norms and symbolizing a host of societal anxieties about sexual, religious, and cultural nonconformity. Chapter 2 of this study examines Bram Stoker's Dracula as the quintessential example of the Gothic literary vampire. *Dracula* expresses the panic experienced in Western cultures during the nineteenth century due to changing definitions of human subjectivity, particularly with regard to class, race, and sexuality. Stoker's vampire embodies the anxieties of Victorian middle-class culture, including

fears of humanity's animal nature, capitalist greed, homosexuality, and female sexuality. Chapter 3 discusses vampire literature of the twenty-first century in which the millennial vampire represents Otherness as a version of humanity's ideal self. In millennial vampire fiction, humans desire allowance into the immortal world, especially the female characters, who no longer fear the vampire's threat. Instead, modern women find their identity and empowerment through the relationships with their vampire partners, finally achieving sexual liberation and fulfillment. This study concludes that the vampire has continued to fascinate us as a symbol of both threatening and ideal concepts of human subjectivity because of its unique dual identity as a being that is undead yet alive.

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Introduction

Petre Toma was an ordinary laborer in the fields of a remote village in southwest Romania. He was considered to have a troubled life, battling illness with a small drinking habit throughout his life. Toma finally succumbed to death in the last month of 2003. However, shortly after his death, the villagers seemed to feel his spirit had not actually died. Toma had become what the Romanians call a "strigoi," or vampire. His sister blamed odd occurrences and illness on her dead brother. She implied the spirit of her brother was returning from the grave to suck the lifeblood out of his relatives. The townspeople agreed the corpse of Petre Toma must be properly destroyed. They reverted to ancient vampire folklore by digging up his body, removing his heart, then shoving a stake through the middle. The body was then covered in garlic, while the heart was burnt and the ashes immersed in water. Within a year, the sick relatives were returned to good health (McLaughlin). Romanians have been haunted by similar vampire stories for centuries and continue to the present day practicing the ancient rituals to rid their villages of the curses brought on by these creatures. The legend of the vampire has been prominent in the human world for millennia. The creature's constantly evolving character has had a significant effect of reflecting humanity's societal norms and beliefs. The vampire's ability to reshape itself continuously according to the time period's values or morals is a key component to the lasting fascination with this creature. With its roots in Eastern Europe and rapidly spreading to Western society in the past few hundred years,

the vampire has come to symbolize human Otherness and connect the corners of the world.

According to J. Gordon Melton, "a common dictionary definition of a vampire is a reanimated corpse that rises from the grave to suck the blood of living people and thus retain a semblance of life" (xxii). However, Melton states that vampires can also be demonic spirits, ghosts, or different species of intelligent life (xxiii). The enduring quality a vampire possesses is its ability to adapt to the time period's beliefs. The mythical being is a double for humanity, with the division of self between monstrosity and the human ideal. Nina Auerbach describes the flexibility of vampires to encompass a culture's values, which allows the vampire character to endure throughout time: "An alien nocturnal species, sleeping in coffins, living in shadows, drinking our lives in secrecy, vampires are easy to stereotype, but it is their variety that makes them survivors" (1). Vampires in folklore and literature have been a means by which human cultures have identified concepts of human subjectivity (identity), particularly with regard to what various societies have defined as monstrous (being "Othered") within human nature. In this study, I will examine how the vampire character evolves throughout the centuries, with a specific focus on the less monstrous contemporary vampires who form hybrid communities with human partners as reflecting a new, more inclusive definition of the human. The vampire, as shown in this paper, eventually becomes the ideal self that humans seek to become.

Chapter 1 examines the evolution of the vampire in folklore. Through these ancient stories, knowledge of the vampire became widespread as the creature captured human interest. Throughout the world for hundreds of years, vampire tales have been

disseminated through different means of storytelling. Traditionally, Eastern European countries have been passing these legends through oral storytelling. Because of the customs and history of the region, vampire folklore first derived from peasant villages. These communities truly believed in the supernatural as a driving force of nature. These vampires are also a reflection of those who rebelled against the Church. The vampire character has its roots in superstitions, for these undead beings were blamed for any unusual activity in the villages. Unnatural deaths or plagues that struck the villages were believed to be the work of the vampire. Therefore, the corpses of suspected vampires were dug up and found to have healthy-looking bodies and fresh blood dripping from their mouths. It was in these ancient communities where the charms and protections to fend off vampires were first created. Crosses, garlic, and wooden stakes were said to ward off and kill the vampire should a person interact with the immortal being. However, the vampire character of ancient folklore would drastically change as its popularity spread to Western culture.

Europeans of the early eighteenth century showed a great deal of interest in the subject of the vampire. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word itself entered the English language in 1734, at a time when many books were being written on the subject, especially in Germany (Barber). The scientific advancements made in Western society during this time period allowed widespread beliefs to be circulated to a much broader audience than ever before. The publication of John Polidori's *The Vampyre* turned the vampire character into a literary phenomenon and is commonly referred to as the origin of the vampire fascination in fiction. Although initially successful because of its link to Lord Byron, this narrative is considered responsible for associating the undead

being from folkloric tales with the conventions of Gothic literature, thereby creating the horrific Gothic character typical of subsequent vampire literature.

In contrast to vampire folklore, the vampire was now being presented as the bloodthirsty aristocratic creature seeking human destruction for survival. Its immense success in Victorian society derives from the panic experienced in Western cultures at this time due to changing definitions of human subjectivity, particularly with regard to class, race, and sexuality. Chapter 2 of this study examines Bram Stoker's *Dracula* as the quintessential vampire novel of this time period. In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, Victorian anxieties regarding capitalistic greed and wealth were at the forefront of individuals' minds and are displayed by the vampire's immense wealth. The animals associated with the vampire in Stoker's novel likewise reflect the possible animalistic nature of humanity, referring to the terrifying evolutionary theories produced by scientists of this time. This advanced society was traumatized by the idea that humans possessed the same basic and instinctual drives of lesser creatures. Another important idea reflected in *Dracula* is the theory of reverse colonization. The Count represented the ancient and primal societies which imperialist Western cultures feared would integrate into their world, spreading their ancient and presumably outdated lifestyles.

One of the most prominent threats to Western culture during this period was the expression of sexuality. Sexual morals were viewed with the utmost scrutiny: women were to remain pure and submissive, for female sexuality was never to be publicized. Even men possessed righteous morals, for the men were viewed as the dominant power in a relationship. Auerbach demonstrates this male dominance when she writes: "…women fill their biological needs, but men kindle emotional complexity. Women exist to be

married or depleted or rescued" (39). Homosexuality and the exhibition of female sexuality were highly immoral, according to the norms of Victorian society. In Bram Stoker's narrative, Dracula and his vampire brides represent the consequences of sexual deviance and the threat posed by such behavior. The Count symbolically exhibits homosexual behavior through his domination over Jonathan Harker. He refuses his brides the ability to kiss and seduce the young Englishman. Furthermore, the vampire brides, and later Lucy Westerna, represent the danger of expressing female sexuality. These women become ravenous beasts once turned to vampires, actively seeking sexual fulfillment, for which they increasingly seek out the destruction of men and even children. *Dracula*'s female vampires showcase the opposite of Victorians' ideals regarding female behavior. The women are primarily monstrous, suggesting the time period's construction of female sexuality as a monstrous threat to the domestic ideal. Essentially, the vampire of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries characterized Otherness as threatening, for the creature represented all the fears of the time period.

The final chapter discusses vampire literature of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with a particular focus on millennial vampire literature. Modern vampire literature sees the emergence of a new type of vampire. This creature has shed its monstrous stereotypes and instead is characterized as more of a romantic hero. Mary Hallab describes this westernized vampire when she writes: "Yet, although no longer the embodiment of pure evil (if they ever were), most modern vampires retain the mystery and erotic power of the old vegetation gods from which they very likely originated" (118). Western societies in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have distanced themselves from their ancestors and harbor more open-mindedness when it comes to the

norms of societal behavior. Such changes are reflected in Anne Rice's *The Vampire Chronicles,* which are among the most widely recognized modern vampire narratives. Her series first began in the mid-twentieth century, with these societal changes heavily reflected in her characters and plots. Anne Rice began to revolutionize modern vampire fiction during the late twentieth century. Her vampires represent a momentous turning point from the vampire as threatening doppelganger to the vampire as an ideal self. The vampire's crimes have significantly lessened, perhaps due to its close interaction and inclusion in human society. The modern vampire represents Otherness as a version of humanity's ideal self with the humans desiring allowance into the immortal world.

In comparison to previous vampire literature, the most prominent difference in modern vampire narratives is the open expression of one's sexuality. Gone is the strict and peculiar moral code, replaced with an open lust for sexuality. The immortal beings are now seeking intimate relationships with human partners, not merely taking victims for feeding. In addition, the victims are willingly succumbing to the vampires in exchange for sexual relationships. The female characters of millennial vampire literature no longer fear the vampire's threat. Instead, modern women find their identity and empowerment through the relationships with their vampire partners. The female vampires of nineteenth-century literature embodied the threat to the restrictive domestic ideal posed by female sexuality, while the domestic partnerships that female characters establish with vampires in contemporary literature become the means of sexual liberation and domestic fulfillment. The power of female sexuality previously represented as monstrous in Bram Stoker's vampire brides now becomes a celebrated ideal in the vampire marriages of millennial vampire fiction. Isabella Swan from *The Twilight Series*

and Gabrielle Maxwell from *Kiss of Midnight* both represent the new norm of sexuality in modern society.

The vampire has continued to fascinate us as a symbol of both threatening and ideal concepts of human subjectivity, embodying various forms of Otherness throughout folklore and literature because of its unique identity as being undead yet alive. Auerbach showcases the progression of vampire literature between the centuries when she writes: "The Byronic Lord Ruthven has something in common with his American cousin today, Anne Rice's Lestat, who preys on 1980s and '90s America. Both are enchanting companions; both are media stars; but each feeds on his age distinctively because he embodies that age" (1). The strong prominence of the vampire character throughout history signifies its continued relevance to humanity's ever-changing societal norms.

Chapter 1:

The Folklore Vampire: The Monstrous Other

According to J. Gordon Melton, "The vampire figure in folklore emerged as an answer to otherwise unsolvable problems within culture. It was seen as the cause of certain unexplainable evils, accounted for the appearance of some extraordinary occurrences within the society, and was often cited as the end product of immoral behavior" (445). The traditional association of evil with vampires began in the ancient tales spread through oral storytelling. The villainous acts of vampires were typically linked to some form of deviant behavior. Melton points out, "The eastern European vampire existed in a village culture as a symbol warning residents of the dangerous and devilish life outside the boundaries of approved village life" (447).

The folklore stories thus represent the Otherness that the vampire embodies as harmful and threatening to the human cultures in which the tales originated. Beginning with these ancient stories, the vampire was viewed as the scapegoat for what society was not willing to accept or understand. According to Matthew Beresford:

> Fear is an important factor in the survival of the vampire because, although the vampire has taken various forms in history, it is difficult to pinpoint one dominant form; fear is the main unifying feature, and therefore can be said to provide the key to the vampire's existence. One might say that fear of the vampire's existence is more important than its *actual* existence; Whether or not

the demonic creature of our worst fears existed in fact, if we only looked into ourselves –and into our society- we should find the demon already there. (10-11)

Human communities have emphasized the importance of assimilating into the social norms of each region throughout the world, and the vampire came to represent fear of those who refused to assimilate, symbolizing a host of societal anxieties about sexual, religious, and cultural nonconformity. Most commonly, ancient folklore associated vampires with recent unusual deaths, including close relatives and suicides, who were believed to have violated Church teachings about the sanctity of life. Vampires have also been linked to deaths in childbirth, gender-related anxieties, and fears of sexual difference. In many vampire legends, sexual deviance was another key component of a person's disposition to becoming a part of the vampire world. Vampire legends were likewise popular in war-torn communities threatened with invasion by other cultures. Behaviors perceived as immoral, sinful, or socially deviant were assumed to influence the individual's soul and afterlife. This belief held by many communities led them to assume that vampires were contagious and the disease of vampirism could be easily spread as both a physical and moral infection.

The vampire legend differed among communities of the ancient world contingent on the region where the stories were passed down through oral storytelling. Matthew Beresford notes, "It is important to understand that there are two types of beings widely denoted as vampires; firstly, the supernatural, inhuman being such as demons or spectres; and secondly the revenant, a human who returns to the world of the living after death" (22). Revenant vampires came to be associated with stories of religious deviance, but the most ancient vampire type, the demon vampire, appeared most frequently in vampire lore

that expressed fears of female sexuality. For instance, vampire tales in Greece first appeared as early as AD 40-120, describing demons that assume the body of a female (Beresford 20). The empusa, as this creature was first known, was described as a "fine bride," one "of those beings whom the many regard as lamias or hobgoblins" (20). The characteristics of the ancient empusa and lamia ensnared young men into temptation, most notably through sexual advances, exemplifying them as demons or spectres because of their deviant female behavior. These creatures represent a form of sexual deviance related to cultural norms of female sexuality, especially since Beresford describes the vampires as demon brides. The empusa symbolizes cultural fears of the woman who violates the domestic codes of a patriarchal society, assuming power through sex and marriage instead of accepting the normally subordinate role of wife. This vampire is one of the earliest examples of how the vampire legend was used to demonize female sexuality in male-dominated cultures dating back thousands of years.

Asian and Eastern European communities had similar vampire legends that expressed anxieties about female sexual difference. The *langsuyar*, the primary vampire figure in Malaysia, is connected with problems in childbirth. This vampire legend originates from the story of a beautiful young woman who had given birth to a stillborn child. While the empusa symbolized fear of female deviance from the role of the submissive wife, this vampire represented Otherness as a threat to the domestic ideal of motherhood, for the woman could not successfully fulfill her role as a mother and therefore became a threat to the families of her community. When the young mother learned of her baby's fate, she clapped her hands, flew away into the trees, and later died,

becoming a demon soon afterwards. After this event, she attacked children and sucked their blood, becoming one of the female vampires of early vampire lore (Melton 357).

This female vampire was said to have a unique physical appearance. She wore a vibrant green robe and possessed long, tapering nails with flowing black hair that concealed a feeding hole in the back of her neck. This feeding hole was how the vampire sucked the blood of her victims. However, the *langsuyar* was able to return to her village after becoming a vampire and lead a relatively normal life. It was only during the night that the female would attack her victims. Malaysians had numerous defensive tactics to ward off the evil being. If needles were placed in the vampire's hands, the woman would be unable to grab a victim before the needles were driven further into her skin. Cutting the hair and nails, then stuffing them into the feeding hole on her neck most commonly defeated the *langsuyar*. This act allowed the vampire to become domesticated once again and become involved in normal human culture (Melton 357). These characteristics of the female vampire indicate that the *langsuyar* symbolizes deviation from traditional feminine gender roles. Once the failed mother becomes a vampire, she victimizes children, suggesting she is a threat to the maternal ideal, the traditional gender paradigm in patriarchal cultures that defines women as valuable only as mothers and nurturers. The fact that the *langsuyar* can disguise herself as a domestic woman while secretly destroying families in the darkness of the night seems to suggest cultural fears of the subversive female desires that may lurk beneath the compliant façade of the domestic woman. The need to transform the *langsuyar* back to the domestic norm, which is accomplished by cutting the sexually symbolic hair and subduing the female demon with the domestic needle, suggests the society's need to control female desire and force it into

domestic paradigms. Women who deviate from those paradigms are considered monstrous and become a threat to the entire community. Furthermore, the female vampire appears in the folklore of other cultures (such as the Jewish legend of Lilith, Adam's first wife) and will reappear in later vampire literature as a symbol of female deviance from normative social concepts of femininity.

The sexual symbolism of vampire folklore is also prominent in the vampire legends of the medieval European communities and villages. Whereas the victims of the Malaysian female vampires were often children or previous family members that had wronged the deceased individual, in Croatia, powerful female vampires specifically chose male victims. These female vampires were given the name "Mora," which translated to "she-vampire." These females were believed to have lived an impious life, predisposing them to the possibility of vampirism. At night, the female creatures would attack their male victims, leaving them distraught and exhausted in the morning. If the Mora were given the opportunity to complete an attack, the Mora's victim usually died (Melton 540). The ensuing terror would spread throughout the communities, unless the Mora was killed with a knife or sharp instrument (540). Although the Mora's vampirism is depicted as a punishment for sexual deviance, this vampire suggests a paradoxical cultural attitude towards women that later reappears in vampire literature. This new outlook comes from the idea that Croatian female vampires are in love with their male victims (540). This female vampire gains power through selecting a man she loves to become her undead mate, foreshadowing the females of millennial vampire fiction, who transform vampirism from a monstrous punishment to an ideal of sexual fulfillment through happy and empowering vampire relationships.

The vampires of medieval and early modern European folklore also symbolized other threats to cherished domestic norms. A dominant Eastern European belief linked the beginning of vampirism to the death of a loved one. According to European legends, these vampires would return from the grave to visit and then attack spouses, immediate family members, or even friendly acquaintances. Some symptoms of the vampire attacks point to the grieving process and include nightmares, apparitions of the dead individual, or even the death of a person close to the recently deceased by a disease. The vampire's actions indicate a type of unfinished business (usually emotional) as the reason for the attacks on the living, such as failure to perform funeral and burial rites to a precision (Beresford 26).

With the rise of Christianity, the ancient belief that vampires were meant to disturb the living also became apparent in legends of revenant vampires, who were often associated with religious nonconformity. On the island of Mykonos, a well-known vampire superstition was the belief that the commission of many sins during one's life causes vampirism (Avdikos 310). According to Evangelos Avdikos, inhabitants of Mykonos believed that "[t]hose who committed plenty of sin in their life do not rest after they die. Instead, they leave their grave and return to the places where they used to spend their time, when they were alive" (310). Since vampires were said to leave their graves during nighttime, this signifies the vampire's relationship with the supernatural world as a sort of ghost or revenant. The vampire, as revenant, is viewed as the evil that will not die, representing "sinful" qualities communities tried to repress but could not eradicate entirely from human nature. Here, the vampire is literally an undead being or resurrected corpse. The undead being as a symbol of sin was evident in its horrifying

characterization. These immortals were said to have large feet and lips, swollen belly, red nails, and long red hair (Avdikos 312). These vampires were described as animal-like in appearance, but were given the ability to transform this beastly appearance into human attributes that were grotesquely exaggerated from the norm. This Greek vampire represents Otherness as a threat to religious and cultural stability. Vampirism was seen as a punishment for deviation from religious codes. The sinful individual punished with vampirism could in turn infect the rest of the community with behaviors and ideologies perceived as evil.

Another widespread belief about the cause of vampirism was the deliberate rejection of the Church's authority in one's life. Because Greece eventually became a Christian country, heresy, which could cause a person to be excommunicated from the Church, became a common cause of vampirism in Greek folklore. This rejection of normative religious practices could result in death, leaving the person to forever stalk in the nighttime like the vampire. The human who was excommunicated and transformed into a vampire would then take vengeance on the Greek community due to rejection by the Church. According to Evangelos Avdikos, "The dead often leave their grave shrouded. They walk up and down the roads at night, enter houses and break whatever they find" (311). These excommunicated vampires were said to disturb private and public places by indulging in antisocial and abnormal societal behavior. The disruptions caused were often loud knocking on doors, shouting, beating, and intimidating any individuals the vampires would encounter while on their nightly prowl. In addition, the vampires would return to their relative's homes and devour the food and beverages (311). These disturbances caused terror throughout the Greek villages and communities because of the

inability to fend off these monsters. This form of vampirism reflected the community's horror at the existence of individuals who defied their society's standards to the extent of being outcast from the Church, damning their own souls and endangering the souls of others. Vampirism as a punishment for heresy relates to the folkloric vampire's function as a symbol for the Otherness of religious deviance, because religion was a key component of ancient societies. Individuals were expected to abide by the religious standards set for the community by the Church and not drift from these norms.

In Eastern European folklore, accidental or traumatic deaths were often characterized as punishments for deviant behavior and were also associated with the ability of a person to become a vampire. For instance, an individual's chances of vampirism rose if he or she committed suicide. Judas Iscariot, the infamous Biblical suicide, is often referred to as the immediate link between vampirism and Christianity through the betrayal of Christ (Beresford 42). The Disciple's disloyalty was viewed as the ultimate act of antagonism to the Christian religion. Judas eventually hanged himself due to the consequences of his actions, leading to another cause for vampirism. As a violation of Christian teachings regarding the sanctity of human life, suicide was considered an immensely evil act among the European communities. Thus, in Eastern European lore, as well as in the vampire legends of Greece, deviance from religion significantly heightened one's likeliness of vampirism (Beresford 23).

The most commonly known vampire folklore is that of the Slavic region in Eastern Europe. The inhabitants of this region believed vampirism was largely due to immoral behavior or involvement in witchcraft. Slavic communities believed that some individuals had the ability to possess two souls. People who were involved in witchcraft

had the ability to leave their bodies in the night and engage in the typical evil activities of the vampire (Melton 560-61). These people were considered living vampires because of their ability to live a normal life, yet secretly indulge in the vampire world. Another terrifying characteristic of the Slavic vampires was their physical appearance. The Slavic vampire appeared extremely normal, for the vampire looked like the typical peasant and could easily resemble any other member of the community. Tracing back to the fear factor proposed by Beresford, the vampire who exhibits normative social behaviors by day while practicing destructive vampire behaviors by night reflects the alarm that a "normal" appearance could hide social deviance. This horrifying suspicion that each human being could potentially be naturally deviant was an enormous threat to the function of society.

Another prominent feature of Slavic vampire folklore is the superstition involved with animals. A person could be doomed to vampirism if an animal (most typically a dog or cat) jumped over the body. In addition, a bird (most importantly a bat) flying over the burial site was also a bad omen that could dispose an individual to vampirism (Barber 33). Conversely, preventing animal contact with a corpse could also result in vampirism. Primitive Slavic societies believed in the importance of the soul being able to escape after death. By keeping the windows and doors closed to prevent animals from accessing the dead body, the soul would no longer be able to break free (Barber 33). The deceased might then assume the vampire's Otherness because the soul no longer had the capability to escape, preventing the deceased from fulfilling the culture's normal burial rites and rituals.

As these legends exemplify, the association of vampires with animals and the ease with which human encounters with animals can result in vampirism suggest that the potential for savage defiance of human social norms lurks beneath the civilized exterior of any individual. These vampire myths again reveal fear as a driving force of society because animals can symbolize threateningly deviant or "inhuman" activities, but they are also a necessity for human survival. Furthermore, later vampire literature will also use the vampire's connection to animals to symbolize humanity's potential for antisocial behavior.

The folklore vampire represented not only sexual, religious, and societal deviance, but also the threat of invasive values from other cultures, symbolized by the spread of vampirism like a disease. The notion of spreading vampirism throughout the villages was a great fear of the Slavic communities. The widely held belief was that once one vampire was created, a plethora of vampires would quickly follow. The most commonly held notion was that vampires would bite their victims and death would soon follow, most often from some type of unknown disease from the region (such as tuberculosis or infections from animals). This type of vampirism took on connotations of cultural infection particularly in societies threatened by war and invasion. For example, the story of the Serbian soldier Arnold Paul became a notoriously famous vampire tale. Due to the infection he received, most likely from an animal, Paul's case became highly popularized as proof that vampires truly existed when the records were published throughout Western Europe (Melton 447). Paul's vampirism became a symbolic connection between the spread of disease and the spread of colonialism because the legend was directly connected to the expansion of the Habsburg Empire. The Habsburg

Monarchy annexed most of Serbia around the beginning of the sixteenth century. These territories were then repeatedly devastated by war and soon became poorly conditioned areas of land. Ensuing problems included poor and nomadic populations, leading the impoverished Serbian regions to turn to the lifestyle of cattle breeding for survival. Many of the native Serbs were recruited by the Austrians to serve as militiamen, most notably Arnold Paul, who was a cattle herder. Shortly after assuming this new occupation, Paul kept mentioning that a vampire had plagued him. He also claimed to have cured himself by eating soil from the grave of the vampire and covering himself in the undead being's blood. A few days later, the Serbian man fell off a wagon, broke his neck, and died.

Only a few weeks after this sudden and mysterious death, several men in the community claimed the dead Paul had plagued them, shortly dying after making these public proclamations. The village quickly became alarmed from these mysterious deaths and sought to open the grave of Paul. Once revealed, it was said that the dead man had fresh blood dripping from his eyes, nose, and mouth, and blood covered the coffin. Convinced that Paul was indeed a vampire, the men drove a wooden stake through his heart, while the dead body was said to have groaned. However, this act ensured the vampire was deceased, and the men performed the same ritual on Paul's supposed victims. It was later revealed that the eating of meat had caused the vampiric state of Arnold Paul. The villagers then believed this action is what caused the "spread" of vampirism to others through consuming the tainted meat from Paul's herd (Melton 447). Much like other folklore legends, the Serb's legend was profoundly linked to the superstitions surrounding a person's predisposition to vampirism. Arnold Paul's vampire story is symbolically connected to his military service to an occupying force against the

interests of his native country. Paul's vampirism represented fear of contamination by other cultures not only within the native Serbian community, but also within more educated Western European communities where this story was accepted as proof that vampires existed. In imperialist European societies, the vampire came to embody the dread of cultural infection through contact with the less developed societies they invaded. As Paul Barber states, "The vampire craze [created by the Paul story] . . . was an early 'media event,' in which educated Europeans became aware of practices that were by no means of recent origin, but had simply been provided, for the first time, with effective public-relations representatives" (5). The popularity of the Paul vampire legend in Austrian media thus reflected anxieties regarding Austrian imperialism for both the native Serbs and the invading Austrians. Paul became an Other when his country was occupied and ruled by the Austrians, leading him to live outside Serbian norms in service to this new authority. The Serbian community now lived under the Austrian way of life and directly answered to them, causing their old way of life to assume the stigma of deviance. The vampire, the undead being caught between the worlds of the living and the dead, therefore became the perfect symbol for the colonial subject caught between native and invading cultures. Vampirism, in this case, seemed to result from the disruption of societal norms caused by war, economic upheaval, and the clash of rival cultures. With the spread of European imperialism in the nineteenth century, the literary vampire would eventually assume similar connotations of imperialist anxieties.

The vampires of folklore are usually characterized as some type of threatening Other, reflecting the negative consequences individuals would face should they go against their culture's conceptions of acceptable behavior. Although each region of Asia

and Eastern Europe had its own folklore traditions and narratives, the vampire lore of these regions would soon reach the Western hemisphere. As seen with Arnold Paul's case, tales of vampirism were soon published and distributed to Western Europe, which would influence the already developing obsession surrounding the vampire character beginning in the eighteenth century. Symbolic features of folkloric vampires, such as religious, social, and sexual deviance, continued to be a concern in eighteenth and nineteenth century vampire literature. The culmination of Victorian societal fears is shown most notably in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

Chapter 2:

The Gothic Vampire: The Monstrous Self

The turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries brings about the rise of Gothic literature. Although the Gothic genre arouses horror for entertainment, the fears evoked through this genre's narratives largely reflect serious social anxieties of the time period. Mary Hallab, a scholar particularly interested in the fascination of vampires in Western culture, writes how the beings were becoming the new symbol to represent Victorian threats and anxieties. "In the nineteenth century, vampires joined ghosts and elves in the search for an Other Reality to counteract the vulgarity, materialism, and crassness associated with the burgeoning of business and industry" (68). Victorian vampires embodied fears not only of developing industrial capitalism, but also the countless scientific advances made throughout the era, which meant having to reject long-held beliefs and ideals, such as humans having ultimate power over all the other creatures. In comparison to their folklore predecessors, nineteenth-century literary vampires also exhibit a new quality of intense sexual attraction, making them effective symbols for forms of sexuality deemed culturally deviant. By symbolically representing such cultural concerns, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* became the quintessential vampire legend of this time period, mirroring the uneasiness of society at the time while laying the groundwork for the future of vampire literature.

The vampire doppelgangers of nineteenth-century literature embodied threatening forms of difference and Otherness which Victorian society was not willing to accept. David Punter, a scholar of Gothic literature, sheds light on the reason vampires were viewed so negatively in literature of this era when he writes:

> The vampire in English culture, in Polidori, in Bram Stoker and elsewhere, is a fundamentally anti-bourgeois figure. He is elegant, well dressed, a master of seduction, a cynic, a person exempt from prevailing socio-moral codes. He thus takes his place alongside other forms of Gothic villain, as a participant in a myth produced by the middle class to explain its own antecedents and its own fears. (119)

Through the vampire Dracula, Stoker embodies the anxieties of Victorian middle-class culture, including fears of humanity's animal nature, capitalist greed, homosexuality, and female sexuality. Carol Senf points out the unique terror posed by the vampire because he cannot influence human beings without their consent, implying that the deviance the vampire represents actually lies within its human victims. This realization poses the larger threat to society because it shows humanity's nature is easily manipulated into deviant and immoral behavior. As Senf asserts, "Dracula's behavior confirms that he is an internal, not external, threat" ("Unseen Face" 427).

The threatening characteristics of this vampire are typical of the Gothic genre, which was growing immensely popular during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Stoker's Dracula is much like other vampires from Gothic literature of the period such as John Polidori's Lord Ruthven and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's Carmilla. Dracula is in essence the stereotypical vampire who seeks human blood for nourishment, not just

craving the blood, but also needing the blood for survival. His residence, Castle Dracula, is modeled after the stereotypical Gothic architecture. Its remote location high in the Carpathian Mountains ensures complete privacy from human interaction. The edifice itself is a reflection of its monstrous resident, "a vast ruined castle, from whose tall black windows came no ray of light, and whose broken battlements showed a jagged line against the moonlit sky" (Stoker 12). The great residence seems devoid of any life and happiness. Dracula also reinforces the ancient folklore tradition of the vampire's association with damnation and hell. Jonathan Harker repeatedly compares the Count to a hellish creature who would intimidate even the most demonic creatures. Stoker relies heavily on folklore legends and traditions when writing of the vampire's destruction, most specifically the crucifix used against Dracula and the stake driven through Lucy's heart by Van Helsing and his company. Although the vampire rarely travels outside his castle, the human folk who reside around Transylvania know of the monster. Therefore, the vampire's reputation has been spread far and wide, for this region of the world is extremely superstitious and respects the established legends of their ancestors. Bram Stoker's Count Dracula thus exhibits the essence of the Gothic version of the vampire character and causes havoc in the society in which he resides. His complete domination reiterates the power he holds over mortals.

However, while drawing on traditional characteristics of vampires from folklore and Gothic literature, Stoker gives Count Dracula particular relevance to Victorian concerns. Because the vampire in Stoker's novel acts as a dark doppelganger for the Victorian characters, the vampire's menacing qualities represent forms of Otherness that the protagonists do not realize are features of Victorian culture and their own

personalities. Carol Senf demonstrates this relationship between Victorians and the vampire when she writes: “Poignantly aware from his own experience that the face of the vampire is the hidden side of the human character, Stoker creates unreliable narrators to tell a tale, not of the overcoming of Evil by Good, but of the similarities between the two” (“Unseen Face” 431). Although the vampire must have permission to influence his victims, his similarity to repressed features of their personalities easily allows him to manipulate these individuals into various relationships. Once obtaining permission, the Count has the ability to extend his authority from one victim to another, suggesting his function as the carrier of collective cultural fears. Stoker wisely characterizes the Count’s targets as seemingly innocent members of Victorian society, but each reflects desires that this time period deemed threatening. The Otherness shown by these characters, possessing the horrific threats posed to society, determines their fate. Again Senf points out, “By the conclusion of the novel, all the characters who have been accused of expressing individual desire have been appropriately punished” (“Unseen Face” 430).

Jonathan Harker is the first human to fall into the preying hands of the cunning vampire. Jonathan’s relationship with Dracula embodies Victorian fears of humanity’s potential savagery and its association with capitalist and imperialist greed, anxieties aroused by the Industrial Revolution, the expansion of the British Empire, and scientific theories about human evolution. The young Englishman is a lawyer who comes to Transylvania to help Dracula purchase an estate in England. As an English solicitor, Jonathan represents Victorian ideals of rationality, law, and order, but his association with the Count in the novel’s early chapters calls into question the strength of these

ideals. The young solicitor arrives at Castle Dracula and quickly begins to realize the imposing danger he has unknowingly cast upon himself. Harker discovers the Count has cunning abilities, which only a vampire could possess. For instance, his power to control the wolves of the night demonstrates a dark kind of power the vampire owns. The wild wolves, which have a dominant presence once Harker arrives in the Carpathian Mountains, are typically associated with villainous creatures. These wild beasts follow the carriage while winding its way up through the mountains to Castle Dracula. The wolves are seeking the foreign human interaction, especially since they are under control of the vampire himself. Jonathan fears these carnivorous creatures, but Dracula admires them, exclaiming, "Listen to them, the children of the night. What music they make!" (Stoker 16). This distinction associates the beasts with nighttime, which is often considered the time of wicked activity. More so, Dracula is quick to distinguish the uneasiness humans feel about the wolves. "Ah, sir, you dwellers in the city cannot enter into the feelings of the hunter" (Stoker 16). He understands the power these creatures hold over the humans due to their primal behavior. The wolves represent the primal nature that the "civilized" Victorian gentleman, represented by Jonathan, defines as "Other" and tries to reject or deny but ultimately cannot escape.

However, Dracula's own wolf-like characteristics reveal that primal qualities reside beneath a genteel surface. While posing as a sophisticated aristocrat, Count Dracula also represents the civilized human's repressed animal nature through his ability to manipulate his physical appearance depending on his appetite. Dracula's protean nature evokes the same type of horror as contemporary evolutionary theories that humans originated from animals. Carrol Fry, a critic focused on the sexual conventions in

Stoker's novel, points out the evolutionary fears when writing, "Darwin's findings caused indignation of various sorts, suggesting, as they do, . . . that humankind evolved from 'a hairy quadruped, furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in its habits, and an inhabitant of the Old World'" (42). Victorian society was terrified to think that the most advanced society on the planet could potentially devolve into some type of animalistic beast. These terrors are especially evident in Dracula's ability to transform into animals, including wolves, rats, and bats. Even in his human form, Dracula exhibits animal characteristics. Jonathan describes his first impression when encountering the unknown carriage driver (later revealed to be Dracula), who has "a hard-looking mouth, with very red lips and sharp-looking teeth, as white as ivory" (Stoker 9), as well as superhuman strength, with a hand "like a steel vice that could have crushed mine if he had chosen" (Stoker 13). When Stoker provides Jonathan the opportunity to study the master of the house carefully, Jonathan writes:

> His face was a strong- a very strong- aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils; with lofty domed forehead, and hair growing scantily round the temples, but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were very massive, almost meeting over the nose, and with bushy hair that seemed to curl in its own profusion. The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy moustache, was 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. For the rest, his ears were pale and at the tops extremely pointed; the chin was broad and strong, and the cheeks firm though thin. The general effect was one of extraordinary pallor. (Stoker 16)

Thus, genteel Dracula is strikingly different than most individuals of the human species. His skin is an almost white-alabaster (a feature that would not have been unusual for aristocrats who did not do manual labor), but the detail given to bestial facial features such as his pointed ears and protruding teeth distances the vampire from the human norm. The Count's ability to masquerade as a gentleman suggests the repressed animal nature that may lurk beneath the genteel Victorian businessman. Dracula is able to serve Jonathan, converse with him on business matters, and treat him as a distinguished guest, all while planning to feast on him as a predatory beast feasts on its prey—subtly suggesting the true atavistic, predatory nature of Victorian business endeavors.

Another prominent animal characteristic Dracula possesses is his agility. The vampire has the ability of quickness, while also exhibiting monstrous movements. Jonathan is shocked and then terrified to learn of his host's power. "But my very feelings changed to repulsion and terror when I saw the whole man slowly emerge from the window and begin to crawl down the castle wall over that dreadful abyss, *face down*, with his cloak spreading out around him like great wings" (Stoker 31). The Englishman had never before seen a human being capable of these movements. He slowly begins to realize the danger of his situation as he pieces together the true identity of Dracula and the vampire's connection to himself. Furthermore, Jonathan later sees Dracula crawling bat-like down the castle walls disguised in Jonathan's own clothing. Dracula is going to town to post Jonathan's letters to the legal firm in London that will allow Dracula to invade England and turn civilized Englishmen into savage vampires. By impersonating Jonathan to carry out his crimes of conquest, Dracula represents the savagery that lurks behind the English law and order represented by the young solicitor.

Despite his animal characteristics, the vampire's powerful connections to the rational, civilized world are evident in the amount of preparation he gives to plotting his victims. He carefully and deliberately chooses his victims, even creating a business relationship with individuals who live extremely distant from his current residence. The vampire is aware that no human being will travel to his residence unless invited for a particular purpose because of the community being conscious of the danger that Dracula poses. Therefore, the Count becomes interested in purchasing an estate in England where he can continue to quench his thirst for power by transforming the English into vampires. Jonathan Harker becomes the perfect victim due to his career as a solicitor. Dracula accomplishes extensive research, gathering information about England and its customs to appear knowledgeable to his new guest. The Englishman is at first impressed by his host's comprehension of his homeland, but then Jonathan quickly realizes the danger he has encountered. Dracula is a demanding businessman who represents the fears of capitalistic exploitation shown by Victorian society. He reflects the anxieties surrounding capitalism by "a continuous growth, an unlimited expansion of his domain: accumulation is inherent in his nature" (Moretti 432). The vampire, as discovered by Harker, has immense amounts of wealth showcased by his furnishings and the gold found in his room. Dracula's threat is also due to his inherent need for power, reflecting the fear that humanity also lusts for such power that could lead to the same destruction shown by the vampire.

Despite being warned away, Jonathan is still drawn to Castle Dracula, and although Dracula lives in savage seclusion, he is drawn to civilized England to fulfill his lust for power. Through Jonathan's legal expertise, Dracula purchases real estate in

England that will allow him to infect the English with his savage vampirism. The fact that legal, capitalist endeavors can so easily be converted to savage conquest suggests the brutality at the heart of England's capitalist and imperialist endeavors. Nineteenth-century British imperialism focused on the global expansion of British power (through colonies and foreign territories), which is emulated by Dracula's desire for conquest. The vampire's ambitions to conquer Western civilization reflect the growing anxieties about colonialism. Dracula's project to turn civilized England into a more primal state rejecting reason is a distinct fear expressed by Victorian society. By the time Stoker had written *Dracula*, Victorian Britain had spread its empire around the known world. The narrative suggests to Victorian readers that "becoming like Dracula, they too would be laws unto themselves- primitive, violent, irrational- with nothing to justify their actions except the force of their desires" (Senf, "Unseen Face" 428).

The fear that Western society could somehow be inferior or mimicked by outsiders is reflected in Jonathan's horrifying discovery about the vampire. Dracula disguises himself as Jonathan not only to pursue his plans of increased wealth and power, but also to satisfy his bloodlust. While wearing Jonathan's clothing, the vampire steals peasant babies from the local village as food for his vampire family, symbolizing the connection between the Victorian businessman's endeavors abroad and the tendency to exploit the helpless. Jonathan expresses his alarm at realizing how he himself is implicated in Dracula's crimes:

> It was a new shock to me to find that he had on the suit of clothes which I had worn whilst travelling here, and slung over his shoulder the terrible bag which I had seen the women take away. There could be no doubt as to his quest, and in

> my garb, too! This, then, is his new scheme of evil: that he will allow others to see me, as they think, so that he may both leave evidence that I have been seen in the towns or village posting my own letters, and that any wickedness which he may do shall by the local people be attributed to me. (Stoker 40-41)

Dracula's ability to mimic Victorian civilization exposes the threat he poses to the society. "To impersonate an Englishman, and do it convincingly, is the goal of Dracula's painstaking research in 'English life and customs and manner,' a goal Dracula himself freely, if rather disingenuously, acknowledges" (Arata 638). Non-Western natives were hardly ever allowed to successfully imitate (or become acquainted with) Victorians without comedy or ridicule. But the vampire repeatedly succeeds in impersonating Jonathan: when he dresses as the Englishman to deliver letters and later in an encounter with the townspeople. The biggest advantage for Dracula is the unhindered power he gains from going unnoticed due to his ambiguous identity. By learning the customs and norms of the culture he wishes to emulate, the Count gains the ability to overshadow his Otherness temporarily. The vampire understands the imperative link between knowledge and power.

Dracula's need for savage conquest is evident in the pride he takes in telling of his past history. He continuously reminds those around him (his future victims) of his esteemed ranking. Jonathan Harker notices how the Count seems to have been present at every historical event of conquest the vampire describes, realizing how old the vampire must be. While Dracula is the primary vampire in Stoker's novel, he has created a peculiar vampire family in which he has complete dominance over the three vampire brides. However, to assert this authority, the women (as well as the rest of his victims)

willingly had to yield to his influence. In addition, he dominates the Slovak and Szgany peasants through the work these individuals provide for the Count. Without these two different races, the Count would have encountered much difficulty traveling from Transylvania to London. Thus, as a figure of sexual, racial, and class domination with aspirations of world conquest, Dracula is an effective embodiment of unrestrained imperial ambition.

The vampire's imperialist connotations are initially hidden beneath his folkloric qualities. At the beginning of the novel, Count Dracula exhibits the traditional vampire's tendency towards seclusion. He has evidently shunned others and kept himself at an immense distance from human interaction for centuries, exhibiting the stereotypical vampire's association with damnation and exclusion from society, However, the vampire's seclusion conceals his secret plans to expand his power by following Jonathan to England. Even prior to invading England, the famous vampire has the unimaginable ability to spread fear in the human society without genuinely interacting with society. His uncanny ability to know about the doings of human society in the part of the world where he resides allows the dominance he exerts over the humans to be profound. His persona is well known throughout the Transylvanian region, and the tales of his terror are widespread throughout the towns. Even more so, the humans have turned (and with much belief) to the ancient folklore's use of charms in attempting some form of protection against this undead being.

The vampire's folkloric connection with Christian iconography also has imperialist implications in Stoker's novel as seen by the reliance on these symbols to overcome the vampiric threat. Victorian imperialist expansion was to some degree

allegedly motivated by the desire to spread Christianity to non-Christian areas of the world. The reliance of the Transylvanian peasants and the vampire hunters on religious symbols to ward off the conquering vampire metaphorically embodies the Victorians' reliance on their Christian goals to mitigate the monstrosity of colonial conquest, thereby justifying brutal imperial expansion. By claiming that their conquest of other nations was motivated by the desire to redeem the world through spreading Christianity, the Victorians could declare that spreading morality, ethics, and virtue was the true motivation for expanding their territories instead of simply selfish exploitation and empowerment. This Christian relationship is especially seen in the effect of crucifixes on the vampire. The inhabitants of the small Transylvanian village rely extensively on Western Christian symbols. The vampires are supposed to be powerless against these religious icons, symbolically suggesting a desire to contain the bloodthirsty urge for conquest through dependence on religious traditions. The community surrounding Castle Dracula has taken extremely cautious measures to ensure against the expansion of the vampire's power. Crosses and crucifixes are seen throughout the area. In addition, the inhabitants are quick to warn visitors and even strangers of the dangers that lie about Transylvania. The woman at the inn first gives Jonathan a crucifix to wear around his neck for protection while on his travel to Castle Dracula. The religious ornaments are visible signs to help ward off evil. Jonathan notes, "By the roadside were many crosses, and as we swept by, my companions all crossed themselves" (Stoker 7). Jonathan is also given garlic, a wild rose, and mountain ash in addition to the crucifix in hopes these items will help save him from the damnation of his host. When Jonathan asks the elderly couple at the inn if they have any knowledge of the Count, the man and woman become

hysterical. “When I had asked if he knew Count Dracula, and could tell me anything of his castle, both he and his wife crossed themselves, and, saying that they knew nothing at all, simply refused to speak further” (Stoker 4). The wife continues to beg the young Englishman not to embark on his journey to Castle Dracula even stating it is the eve of St. George’s Day (the day when all evil things hold power). Jonathan ignores these desperate pleas to remain and continues on his journey, but with a sense of uneasiness. While exiting the train, Harker again encounters the trepidation of the local people.

> One by one several of the passengers offered me gifts, which they pressed upon me with an earnestness which would take no denial; these were certainly of an odd and varied kind, but each was given in simple good faith, with a kindly word, and a blessing, and that same strange mixture of fear-meaning movements which I had seen outside the hotel at Bistritz—the sign of the cross and the guard against the evil eye. (Stoker 8)

Although these charms and warnings are given in hopefulness, ultimately the Count is not deterred by their use. He is confident in his ability to influence and seduce his victims regardless of the measures taken to ward him away. Therefore, the power of Christianity fails to contain the conquering vampire and does not prevent him from preying on the Transylvanian village or invading England. Dracula’s uncanny ability to manipulate both religious and educated victims demonstrates how Victorian society ineffectually clings to religious and rational defenses as a cover for the brutal predatory nature of capitalist/imperialist greed.

Not only does the Christian symbolism shown throughout *Dracula* display the imperialistic authority of Western culture, but also the dual settings of Stoker’s novel

showcase the contradictions of Victorian imperialism. The novel's contrasting settings of England and Transylvania, which are inextricably connected by the invasive vampire despite their apparent opposition, represent Victorian England's fears of "reverse colonization" by their own colonial Other. According to Stephen Arata, whose essay, "The Occidental Tourist," deals with anxieties about imperialism in *Dracula*, England wanted to see itself as the most civilized nation in the world and those less developed countries that England colonized as savage "Others." But when "British culture sees its own imperial practices mirrored back in monstrous form" (Arata 623) through Dracula's attempt to invade and colonize England, the savagery of England's own imperial endeavors is revealed. England is no different from the supposedly savage countries it has defined as Other. England contains the seeds of that Otherness within itself, as is signified by the fears that the ostensibly civilized settings of Western society, such as London, can be penetrated and corrupted by the inhabitants of supposedly savage environments such as Transylvania.

This dynamic in the novel is symbolized through two distinct and differing environments. London represents the human ideals of reason, order, and progress. The English settings are populated by scientists, doctors, lawyers, and teachers who symbolize English logic and civilization. For instance, Jonathan's fiancée Mina is employed as a schoolmistress learning to write shorthand so she may assist Jonathan in his legal endeavors, while Dr. Seward, a successful doctor, is seeking a cure for his mentally ill patients. The society in which these characters live holds reason and knowledge as important values. Contrarily, the wild, natural landscape of Transylvania is the polar opposite of urban London and reflects humanity's primal fears. In contrast to

Britain, this eastern setting is populated by wild animals, monstrous vampires, and uneducated peasants. Here, individuals seem to dress in past fashions and practice ancient customs in everyday life. This society focuses more on superstition, threatening to endanger Western civilization if ever these two societies would blend.

However, the novel implies that these societies have more in common than the English characters wish to acknowledge. Jonathan Harker reveals the anxious feelings made apparent by his understanding that Western culture is not always dominant when he writes in his journal: "It [Jonathan's journal] is the nineteenth century up-to-date with a vengeance. And yet, unless my senses deceive me, the old centuries had, and have powers of their own which mere 'modernity' cannot kill" (Stoker 49). The ease with which the vampire moves between the ancient and modern, savage and civilized worlds demonstrates how they are fundamentally related. The English characters' resistance to admitting the similarities between these worlds makes their civilization vulnerable to attack from without and within. Van Helsing, as both an outsider (a visiting Dutchman) and a Westerner, is an important character who is not limited only to reason and logic even though he is a successful medical doctor educated in these fields. He is quick to point out how London is threatened by Dracula's influence because Western society refuses to be open to the superstitions and legends of the old world. These limitations lead to destruction (as exemplified in Lucy's death because of the lack of diagnosis) because the characters that reflect Victorian society are unable to accept anything outside their norm. Furthermore, Van Helsing leads a group of characters who represent the advanced resources of Western civilization—a school teacher, a lawyer, a doctor, an English lord, and a Texas millionaire. However, it is not until the members of this group

accept the existence of wild, irrational forces within their supposedly rational culture that they are able to defeat the vampire.

In the meantime, Dracula's invasion of England is enabled from without by the English solicitor Jonathan and from within by the English lunatic Renfield. The existence of the mentally unstable within the civilized English environment and the connection of the madman Renfield to the savage vampire suggest that England contains the seeds of savage Otherness within itself, but it unsuccessfully attempts to imprison and repress this Otherness. Dr. Seward's asylum patient, Renfield, shares the same passion for consumption and destruction as the vampire. Eating small creatures (such as flies and spiders) and then later birds, the lunatic parallels the vampire's need for consuming life to provide vitality, strength, and life force. Eventually, Renfield exhibits even more unusual behavior by telling his doctor, "I don't want to talk to you; you don't count now; the Master is at hand" (Stoker 91). The insane patient has no foundation of knowledge to understand Count Dracula has arrived in England from Transylvania other than sharing the vampire's savage desires to conquer and consume all life. Renfield escapes the asylum and even travels to the Count's new residence in England proclaiming:

> "I am here to do Your bidding, Master. I am Your slave, and You will reward me, for I shall be faithful. I have worshipped You long and afar off. Now that You are near, I await Your commands, and You will not pass me by, will You, Master, in Your distribution of good things?" (Stoker 93)

Renfield is utterly obedient to Dracula without any true interaction. The way the lunatic refers to the Count as a sort of evil God demonstrates the power the vampire possesses, paralleling the vampire and the maniac as monstrous Others. The connection between the

Transylvanian vampire and the English madman reveals that the greed, savagery, and irrationality that Victorians would assign to other civilizations lies at the heart of their own society, despite their attempts at repression, control, and concealment.

Dracula represents not only the savagery lurking beneath capitalist and imperialist goals, but also the menace of uncontrolled sexual desire. Dracula's role as the embodiment of various threats that the English did not want to acknowledge within their own culture becomes most evident in a scene of physical intimacy between the vampire and the Englishman Jonathan Harker. The vampire's role as the young Englishman's doppelganger becomes striking when Jonathan is shaving his face and fails to see Dracula's reflection in the mirror. Before this encounter (and prior to Dracula's invasion of England), Jonathan is residing at Castle Dracula. The young solicitor has mistaken the Count for a genteel businessman, remaining unaware of his vampiric nature until this moment. "I had hung my shaving-glass by the window, and was just beginning to shave. Suddenly I felt a hand on my shoulder, and heard the Count's voice saying to me, 'Good morning.' I started, for it amazed me that I had not seen him, since the reflection of the glass covered the whole room behind me" (Stoker 37). Jonathan's first reaction is unsettling because of his shock at the invisible reflection. The invisible doppelganger reflects the unknown aspects of Jonathan's own nature, which the Englishman fails to comprehend. Clinging to the conventions of Victorian society, Jonathan has been unwilling/unable to recognize that the monster is his own reflection and lies within himself. He notes, "The whole room behind me was displayed; but there was no sign of a man in it, except myself" (37). Because Jonathan fails to recognize his own connections

to the savage vampire, he unwittingly facilitates Dracula's invasion of England, thus endangering all of Western civilization.

Not only does the mirror scene showcase the doppelganger relationship between Jonathan and Dracula, but also this incident introduces the sexual tension between the human and vampire. John Allen Stevenson points out the sexual symbolism represented by the mirror scene when he writes: "As we explore vampire sexuality, we will encounter a series of traits that initially assert themselves as foreign or strange but that are revealed as inversions, parodies, exaggerations, or even literalizations" (142). Jonathan's encounter with Dracula at the shaving mirror is a "literalization" of Victorian homophobia. The central anxiety aroused by the scene is that one man (Dracula) will penetrate another (Jonathan). The Englishman is wary when Dracula notices the blood trickling over his chin: "When the Count saw my face, his eyes blazed with a sort of demonic fury, and he suddenly made a grab at my throat" (Stoker 37-38). The Count's desire to claim Jonathan is seen through his natural reaction to lunge for the blood. The vampire's lust for the human's blood represents an entrance into a sexual relationship. Jonathan and the Count would become one should the vampire drink Jonathan's blood. Dracula would have complete power over the young man, creating a final thread to bond the two men physically. The vampire's desire to seduce, penetrate, and drain another male is representative of anxieties about homosexuality felt during this time period. Although Dracula's attack is initially thwarted by the crucifix at Jonathan's throat, the vampire's ability to repress this symbolically sexual yearning does not deny the importance that the homoerotic desire is still present. As Stevenson notes, "What is

frightening about Dracula, then is that his sexuality is simultaneously different and a parodic mirror" (142).

Victorian society expressed the utmost concern about human sexuality. The expression of repressed sexual desire is one of the core threats presented in Stoker's narrative. The threat posed by the vampire is not purely for human blood, but for the desire to control his victim's bodies. Senf asserts that "Dracula is dangerous because he expresses his contempt for authority in the most individualistic of ways-through his sexuality" ("Unseen Face" 428). Count Dracula is similar to Polidori's and Le Fanu's vampires in regards to sexual Otherness. Polidori's Lord Ruthven attacks female victims by luring them sexually. When he threatens to "ruin" Ambrose's sister if Ambrose reveals Ruthven's vampire nature, the implication is that Ruthven's contact with the sister is the equivalent of the kind of promiscuous sexuality that could ruin a woman's reputation in the nineteenth century. Much like the homophobic fears presented in *Dracula*, Le Fanu's *Carmilla* reflects similar fears of lesbianism since the vampire Carmilla claims female victims who love her. Like Lord Ruthven and Carmilla, Count Dracula represents this Otherness of sexual desire because seduction is his preferred method of luring his victims. His most significant threat is his ability to influence his victim's most repressed desires. Senf points out this uncanny ability when she describes how Dracula seduces his victims: "Although perfectly capable of using superior strength when he must defend himself, he usually employs seduction, relying on others' desires to emulate his freedom from external restraints" ("Unseen Face" 427). This issue is clearly evident in the characters Stoker created. Dracula's relationship with Jonathan Harker reflects both the attraction to and the rejection of homosexuality and the consequences of

such behavior in Victorian culture. Likewise, Mina Murray, Lucy Westenra, and the ghostly women in Dracula's castle all display desires which would not have been acceptable for women to express during this time period. The English women demonstrate the ideal of female virtue by attempting to repress their desires, while the three young women in the castle portray an opposing freedom of sexual expression. Count Dracula prompts the emergence of these sexual desires through complete control and domination over his victims.

Christopher Craft, a critic focusing on the sexual symbolism in Stoker's novel, characterizes *Dracula* as "a book whose fundamental anxiety, an equivocation about the relationship between desire and gender, repeats, with a monstrous difference, a pivotal anxiety of the late Victorian culture" (168). This apprehension is shown throughout the novel by the continuous suspense aroused by the possibility of sexual "intercourse." The Count's persistent pursuit of Jonathan Harker is the first sexual threat presented in the novel. Although Jonathan avoids Dracula's initial attempt to drink his blood at the shaving mirror, the homoerotic tension between the characters remains, culminating in a fight between Dracula and the female vampires over possession of Jonathan. The symbolic representation of homosexual desire between Jonathan and Dracula reaches a climax when the vampire brides are at the brink of piercing Jonathan before the male vampire interrupts. Dracula bursts into the tower room and drives the women away from the Englishman. "How dare you touch him, any of you? How dare you cast eyes on him when I had forbidden it? Back, I tell you all! This man belongs to me" (Stoker 53). By claiming Jonathan as his own and stopping the sexual interaction with the women, Dracula reinforces the threat of future homosexual relations. Stoker cleverly narrates the

possibility of a homosexual encounter, but we never actually witness Dracula biting Jonathan. The homoerotic nature of their relationship remains a symbolic threat. Instead, Dracula's homosexual desires are symbolically enacted through his vampire brides who are bonded to him through blood.

Rather than portraying a sexual encounter between the two men, the novel displaces homoerotic desires onto the more conventional heterosexual attraction Jonathan feels for the three female vampires. The Englishman's encounter with the female vampires contains the novel's first explicit expression of sexual longing. Jonathan's sexual desires are first obviously aroused when he finds himself in a hidden room with the vampire brides. "There was something about them that made me uneasy, some longing and at the same time some deadly fear. I felt in my heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me with those red lips" (Stoker 51). Harker's inability to resist the vampires displays not only his openly expressed sexual desires, but also the "thorough subversion of conventional Victorian gender codes, which constrained the mobility of sexual desire and varieties of genital behavior, according to the more active male the right and responsibility of vigorous appetite, while requiring the more passive female to 'suffer and be still'" (Craft 168-69). Stoker allows the female vampires to express (and act on) their sexual desires, while the male victim passively accepts their "kisses." The vampire kiss is the ultimate metaphor for sexual penetration, which is at the forefront of sexual symbolism in the novel.

Individuals, especially women, during this time period were expected to repress these natural desires from the public. Women were not expected to express these impulses, not even to their husbands. Women were viewed as needing to possess the

stereotypical virtue of purity; otherwise, they would be deemed immoral. Stoker uses female characters in *Dracula* to signify the anxiety of Victorian society when females openly expressed sexual desires. By testing the moral code of female characters, Stoker reflects these fears through the outcome allotted to each female character, particularly Mina and Lucy. The "pure woman" is the staple heroine, who is reflected through Mina, while Lucy, a "fallen woman," loses her virtue and becomes an outcast doomed to death (Fry 35). Through vampirism, Dracula takes on the role of the "rake," the seducer who has designs on the female's virtue. The women who receive a vampire's bite (symbolic of sexual intercourse) become "fallen women" and receive the appropriate consequence as would have been deemed fit by Victorian society. However, sexual desires are differentiated between the English women and the vampire brides, one type of sexuality being viewed as acceptable (because the desires are contained within the confines of marriage/engagement) and the other portrayed as unacceptable (because the desires are exhibited outside of marriage). The larger threat is the potential corruption of the English women's purity by turning them into sexually crazed beings.

The vampire brides in Castle Dracula represent this threat of uncontrolled female sexuality as viewed by Victorian society. The danger posed by these women is immediately apparent when Jonathan encounters them in one of Dracula's locked rooms. The women embody the art of seduction in its purest form, for their attractiveness is almost impossible to resist. Jonathan is engaged to Mina, but stands no chance at denying his sexual desire for these women. Because these women are vampires, they represent completely sexual beings who are preying on the model of Victorian virtue. But the vampire brides are controlled by Dracula and ultimately must obey his orders regardless

of their wishes. This domination symbolizes how deviant sexuality is masked in the narrative because the man controls the sexual desires/expression of woman. However, women of this time period had sexual needs much like the men of the time; unfortunately, the women were not allowed to act on these feelings without the approval of their husbands. The vampire brides' sexual Otherness, demonstrated in their liaison with Jonathan despite their vampire husband's disapproval, necessitates their deaths as the only appropriate Victorian response to the threat posed by the expression of female sexuality.

The Transylvanian vampire brides are the first female characters introduced in *Dracula* to deviate from the normal sexual expression of Victorian society. However, the Englishwoman Lucy Westerna is similarly portrayed as an unusually sexual woman, although initially her desires are presented in the context of engagement and marriage. She has three admirable men propose to her in the course of a single day. She describes these men, and their ensuing proposals, in a letter written to her dear friend Mina. Lucy recounts the details with delight while displaying how troubled she became that she had to decline two of the men's offers. However, it is in the retelling of the second proposal that she reveals her deviant behavior from the norm expected of Victorian women. She notes that her suitor's conduct when she rejected his proposal "quite won me, Mina, for it was brave and sweet of him, and noble, too, to a rival-wasn't it?-and he so sad; so I leant over and kissed him" (Stoker 54). This revelation would have been shocking to Victorian readers, especially since Lucy's Otherness is shown through her acting on her sexual needs. She proceeds even further to wish to Mina that a woman could marry more than one man at a time or as many men as would want her (Stoker 54). These feelings

completely go against the accepted Victorian sexual codes. A woman was expected to please her husband, not express her desires.

The negative consequences of Lucy's true sexual desires are presented through her conversion into a vampire. The threatening behavior caused by female sexuality, due to the repression of these feelings, is what weakens Lucy's ability to fight against Dracula's influence. Her body, therefore, is more susceptible to the vampire's power. Victorian cultural norms required Lucy to reject two of her suitors and confine her desire to her chosen fiancé, but her subsequent attraction to the vampire suggests that her lust is merely repressed rather than eliminated. Her illicit sexual desires are symbolically expressed in the clandestine affair she has with Dracula just prior to her marriage, subconsciously allowing him entrance to her bedroom at night and sleepwalking to meet him secretly outside her home. After becoming a vampire bride through death, Lucy has all the loveliness and beauty she possessed prior to the vampire encounter restored to her (Stoker 148). Her transformation into an undead being thus reflects her completion as a fully sexual being. Lucy is more attractive in "death" allowing her to effortlessly seduce her victims (her former suitors), for these individuals are easily influenced by her appearance. Her way of hunting is through kissing, an act for which in her human life she openly expressed pleasure. Therefore, Lucy is inevitably condemned into becoming a vampire and then later destroyed because of the horror posed by female sexuality. The English woman lost her piety and was viewed as inherently evil once undead.

The height of female sexuality portrayed in *Dracula* occurs during the staking of the vampire Lucy, which exhibits Victorian culture's misogyny and the fear of female sexual expression. The violent image of a husband (Arthur) putting his wife "in her

place" as a punishment for acting on her sexual desires suggests male fear of female sexuality and independence. Two primary aspects of the vampire Lucy horrify her fiancé Arthur: her sexual aggression towards him and the other male vampire hunters and her cruelty towards her child victims. Both these features violate the Victorian domestic ideal of the woman as the passive, self-sacrificial wife and mother, giving up her own desires to the needs of her husband and children. The phallic symbolism in the staking process is clear, and Lucy's reactions are reminiscent of a violent sexual encounter:

> The Thing in the coffin writhed; and a hideous, blood-curdling speech 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. But Arthur never faltered. He looked like a figure of Thor as his untrembling arm rose and fell, driving deeper and deeper the mercy-bearing stake, whilst the blood from the pierced heart welled and spurted up around it. His face was set, and high duty seemed to shine through it; the sight of it gave us courage, so that our voices seemed to ring through the little vault. And then the writhing and quivering of the body became less, and the teeth ceased to champ, and the face to quiver. Finally it lay still. The terrible task was over. (Stoker 258-59)

Lucy's sexual threat is shown through her physical reaction. Her body seems to be experiencing sexual pleasure that was denied to her in human life. Once she reaches the height of this pleasure is consequently the moment of violent death.

While Lucy displays the consequences of uncontrolled female sexuality, her female counterpart exhibits the Victorian model of female desire subordinated to duty.

Mina Murray represents the feminine virtues held ideal by Victorian society. Even with a moment of indiscretion, Mina remains the purest female character, which is one reason why she is the only surviving woman throughout the narrative. Whereas the male vampire hunters devote themselves to the fallen Lucy's destruction, Mina's purity is admired and strongly protected by the men. Van Helsing praises Mina for her womanly character when he says, "Believe me, then, that I come here full of respect for you, and you have given me hope- hope, not in what I am seeking of, but that there are good women whose truths may make good lesson for the children that are to be" (Stoker 222). Mina fits into the domestic ideal because of her complete devotion to Jonathan. Opposite of Lucy, she has no other suitors to tempt her sexual desires and therefore exhibits no erotic attraction to other men outside her marriage. Instead, she assumes more of a motherly relationship with Lucy's suitors once Lucy dies. Unlike Lucy's relationships with her suitors, Mina's relationship with Jonathan likewise entirely lacks eroticism. Mina never expresses a physical longing for her fiancé in her diary or letters, and when she marries Jonathan, she acts more as a nurse and housekeeper for him than a sexual partner because he has been physically broken by his adventure at Castle Dracula.

However, while Mina embodies the Victorian ideal of the domestic woman, she also emerges as the New Woman. The New Woman was a new female type gaining popularity in late-Victorian media that imagined women with greater financial and sexual independence than had been allowed by the domestic ideal. George Stade points out that Mina possesses the more "masculine" attributes of the New Woman in comparison to the other female characters: "What above all enables her to resist Dracula, to conquer her own female nature, is that she is not entirely a woman. Morally speaking, the most

important component in her makeup is masculine" (214). Prior to her marriage to Jonathan, Mina is financially independent through her career. She is overwhelmed with work as an assistant schoolteacher and does not have time for leisure activities like her good friend Lucy. Mina is extremely intelligent and knowledgeable within public and professional spheres (for example, she studies train schedules and learns stenography and typewriting). Additionally, she strives to expand her professional behavior when she wants "to do what lady journalists do: interviewing and writing descriptions and trying to remember conversations" (Stoker 70). She is given the intelligence to gather information rather than simply concentrate on her relationship with Jonathan. Although she is planning her marriage to Jonathan, Mina is not interested in living a completely conventional Victorian female role; she is excited by adventure and learning. This thirst for professional rather than domestic skills is what allows her to organize the documentation revealing Dracula's plan of conquest. Her New Woman role is further shown when Van Helsing compliments her by claiming she has a "man's brain- a brain that a man should have were he much gifted" (281). Victorian women were rarely shown as equal to their male counterparts, especially in regards to intelligence. Mina's ability to push beyond the stereotypical gender norms is what allows her character the independence denied to other female characters in the novel.

Most importantly, although Mina is forced into "marriage" with Dracula, her vampire marriage is empowering. This new marriage bond between Mina and the vampire ultimately allows Mina to gain more authority than her marriage with Jonathan, despite the initial suggestions of rape and sexual domination in the vampiric relationship. At first, the vampire marriage seems to replicate the Victorian gender stereotypes of the

dominant husband and the submissive wife. The Count enters Mina's bedroom while she is sleeping, leaving the young woman paralyzed. Dracula then describes his strong desire for Mina, saying how his yearning has been repressed for quite some time. Most significantly, the vampire's words to Mina are similar to conventional marriage vows: "And you, their best beloved one, are now to me flesh of my flesh; blood of my blood; kin of my kin; my bountiful wine-press for a while; and shall be later on my companion and my helper" (Stoker 343). The Count then bends Mina to a wound in his chest to fulfill her transformation into his bride by forcing her to drink the blood from his chest. The female now belongs to the vampire, for his blood runs through her body. The two beings have now been consummated into one. However, instead of being a victim, Mina turns the tables on her attacker, using his own power to hunt him down. Despite the sexual abuse connotations of this scene, Mina acquires special powers from the "contamination" of the vampire blood. Through her growing connection with the vampire, she is gradually transformed and able to direct the male vampire hunters in tracing Dracula's movements. Although Mina enters back into traditional marriage with Jonathan after Dracula's death and becomes (once again) the conventional wife and mother demanded by the Victorian domestic ideal, prior to this occurrence, she participates in activities and demonstrates abilities that Victorian sexual stereotypes usually allotted only to males. Mina's professional knowledge and skills as well as her monstrous connection with the vampire give her the power to hunt down and destroy the monster. Without the female's "monstrosity," the quest of the male vampire hunters would fail. In addition, she even joins the fight against the vampire in the concluding chapter and wields a gun, a traditionally masculine sexual symbol. The revolver she

carries in the final confrontation with Dracula symbolizes her appropriation of male power and the end of her sexual subservience to the vampire. She is the only female character in the novel who successfully resists the vampire and survives the relationship with the monstrous Other.

Despite the active "masculine" role Mina assumes in fighting the vampire, after his destruction, Mina resumes the Victorian domestic role by giving birth to a child. The male characters view Mina's child, who is named after all the male vampire hunters, as the result of the social union between the English to kill Dracula rather than the product of a sexual union between a man and a woman (Senf, "Unseen Face" 430). The child's birth could therefore be interpreted as the reestablishment of patriarchal power after the elimination of the sexual threat represented by the vampire. However, Senf fails to note that the ambiguous identity of the child's father gives rise to speculation that the child could be one of the first hybrid vampires. Mina foreshadows millennial vampire fiction in the sense that her child could potentially be an amalgam of the human and the Other. Because her child was produced after Mina drank Dracula's blood, the child could possibly carry the vampire's blood and could be viewed as the precursor to later vampire children whose hybridity is empowering and celebrated. Hence, although Mina's marriage to Jonathan and her assumption of the conventional domestic role at the end of the novel suggest that Victorians were not yet ready to accept the fully independent, sexually liberated woman, the temporary power Mina gains through union with the vampire and the potentially hybrid nature of her child prefigure the heroines of later vampire fiction who will embrace vampirism as a form of freedom and empowerment. The females of millennial fiction will actively seek marriages with vampires and find

sexual, domestic, and intellectual fulfilment through their relationships with the Other. Although Victorian society was not prepared to allow Mina to embrace her New Woman role completely, she paves the way for women like Isabella Swan and Gabrielle Maxwell to find liberation in the vampire world. Mina therefore acts as a bridge between Victorian and millennial vampires in terms of how they represent sexual Otherness. The power Mina gains as not only a vampire bride, but also a mother foreshadows a greater acceptance of the Otherness of female sexuality in later vampire literature.

Nineteenth century vampiric doppelgangers displayed Otherness as a threat to Victorian society. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* represents the perceived consequences if these differences were deemed acceptable, especially when discussing the threat of human sexuality. Senf summarizes the flaws shown in Stoker's characters when she writes: "The surviving characters remain unchanged by the events in their lives and never come to the realization that their commitment to social values merely masks their violence and sexuality" ("Unseen Face" 430). While the Victorian characters repress the monstrous qualities of their culture, Stoker allows the vampire to reveal the true characteristics of Victorian society through his actions. Dracula displays the horrifying realization that each individual could possess internal desires that could be a threat to cultural norms. According to Senf, the novel demonstrates "the fault, dear reader, is not in our external enemies, but in ourselves" ("Unseen Face" 431). The Otherness of nineteenth-century literary vampires such as Dracula represented features of Victorian culture that Victorian readers perceived as monstrous and did not wish to acknowledge. Victorian society therefore viewed Otherness as a threat, an embodiment of the social anxieties experienced during the time period. However, the end of the next century would prove a

vital turning point in the perception of Otherness. The characters in Victorian vampire fiction maintained their blindness to the flaws in their culture (and themselves) by projecting them onto the monstrous vampire that could then be destroyed. In contrast, the characters in millennial fiction gain insight into the limitations of their culture and therefore gain an acceptance of greater cultural diversity when becoming part of the vampire world. Vampire novels of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries will therefore transform the vampire into a symbol of an ideal rather than a monstrous self.

Chapter 3:

The Millennial Vampire: The Ideal Self

In modern vampire literature, the shift from the vampire's legendary Gothic characteristics to a more romanticized heroism becomes apparent. The twentieth and twenty-first centuries brought about a new version of the classic vampire. This creature distances itself from the dark, horrifying being and grows into a more desirable partner (both romantically and socially) than its predecessors. Moreover, as Danielle Borgia points out, "modern vampire literature cultivates fans by establishing readers' sympathy with the supernatural main characters, as well as providing the sexual titillation of the romance novel" (153). A key component of this adaption from earlier vampire works such as *Dracula* is the portrayal of female characters that have become progressively more welcoming to their predator's sexual aggression and even seem to be willing victims (Borgia 154). According to Borgia, modern vampire narratives deviate from past folklore because of contemporary readers' (especially women's) acceptance and expression of sexual desires. "The simultaneous titillation and discipline of the reader through this lust, while it relates to nineteenth-century English vampire narratives, greatly differs from earlier versions in its portrayals of female sexual agency" (Borgia 158). In modern society, the morals and norms regarding social behavior (especially the expression of sexual desires) have drastically changed from the Victorian mindset. Unlike

the destructive vampires of nineteenth-century literature, modern vampires now reflect this increased acceptance of more open desire.

As was seen in the vampire literature of earlier centuries, the vampire was always the one who attacked because of repressed sexual desires. Instead, now the human poses the larger threat for the modern vampire to have the ability to control his bloodlust because the human now seemingly has control over the vampire's sexual agency. The female characters have been refashioned from being threatened to posing more of a (sexual) threat. Isabella Swan from *The Twilight Series* and Gabrielle Maxwell from the *Midnight Breed* novels actively seek a sexual relationship with their vampire counterparts and are even willing to abandon their identities and constantly risk their lives for a chance to become part of the vampire world. This contrasting presentation of the vampire's romantic characteristics could be associated with the time period's viewpoint of sexuality. Instead of the repressed sexualities that were apparent in eighteenth and nineteenth century works, the modern Byronic vampire is not the main villain who presents danger to those around him. The vampires are the now the victims who are tasked with repressing their desires, while humans seek to fulfill their desires in becoming a part of the vampire world.

The undead being in modern Gothic literature also seems to challenge the vampire's typical association with damnation and exclusion from society. Mary Hallab examines the reasons why the vampire character has continually fascinated human society: "As his popularity has increased, the vampire has become increasingly humanized, increasingly one of us" (132). Contemporary vampires have developed a sense of identity by immersing themselves in human culture and society, shedding the

frightening and villainous behaviors of their ancestors. Vampires in the present time have become socialized in the ways of humans, which are significantly reflected in the vampire's social behaviors (Nayar 65). The domestication of the twentieth and twenty-first century vampires has resulted in a strict moral code, which allows them to coexist with the human population. Contemporary Gothic presentations of vampires have also created divisions among the vampire worlds, with covens and families at battle with one another. The strict sense of hierarchy in the vampire world is still apparent, but the desire for separation from their vampire peers is new to modern vampires and their covens.

Another important development in the modern genre of vampire literature is the intensified human desire to be allowed into this immortal world. The importance, from the human mindset, of the soul and the implications the vampire has for a human's religious beliefs seem to be increasingly downgraded. Hallab recognizes the modern vampire's transformation from a monstrous embodiment of religious fears to an ideal being towards which the human aspires: "Like the folk, we moderns need supernatural beings we can identify with, not vague images of vast incomprehensible abstractions" (133). This shift in modern vampire literature focuses more on the vampire's ability to relate to humans instead of the destruction caused by vampires in previous vampire tales. Society identifies more with vampires in present times because the flaws of the vampire, especially the struggle between his transcendent conditions (being neither alive nor dead), are easily relatable to the imperfections in human culture, but also because the vampire presents a form of the ideal self. According to Hallab, "The modern vampire also crosses boundaries to combine the mystery of the undead with the romance (and nice clothes) of the Gothic villain or the Byronic Hero- or the ambition and arrogance of Faust, or the

grand self-sacrificial suffering of Prometheus, or even more, the healing power of Jesus" (131). Modern vampires, unlike their ancestors, focus on integrating themselves into human society, offering an exemplary model of human behavior. Instead of projecting fear into the world, these contemporary vampires possess a strong moral code and ethics not previously present in depictions of vampires before the twentieth century. This ability to distinguish right and wrong (or even adapt to a new lifestyle such as "vegetarian") allows the vampire to become more humanized.

A major distinction between the Byronic heroes of today and those of yesterday is that the severity of their crimes has significantly lessened, and their capacity for being absolved of them has grown. Edward Cullen of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series and Lucan Thorne of Lara Adrian's *Midnight Breed* novels both exhibit the contemporary mentality of vampires through their constant rejection of the evil of their vampire nature. The two vampires' relationships with their female counterparts showcase how the roles of victim and victimizer have been reversed, for now the vampires are the victims who must fight for control. These new characteristics of the vampire symbolize the evolution of Western culture's viewpoints regarding Otherness and diversity. The modern representation of the vampire embodies the cultural shift in social expectations and behavior. The ideal of a more human vampire unified with a more vampiric human suggests a new tolerance for difference along with a willingness to embrace Otherness as a positive attribute. This dramatic shift in the viewpoint of vampires deals with the modern mindset regarding monstrosity. Millennial narratives do not present the vampire as a dangerous threat to society; instead, the vampire is regarded more as a persecuted Other. Humans can strongly identify with a being that is ostracized due to difference,

making the vampire character less monstrous and more sympathetic. *The Twilight Series* and *Kiss of Midnight* showcase the vampire's desire to embrace and interact with humanity, instead of posing a threat as was previously believed by Victorian society.

The Twilight Series by Stephenie Meyer focuses on the Cullen family, a coven of seven vampires who bring new features to the vampire genre. This family represents the modern reinvention of the mythical creatures. Their lifestyle differs from their Victorian predecessors such as *Dracula*. The family's stark variation from the horror associated with the undead beings is evident in their immersion into human society. The Cullens have adopted a new lifestyle differing from the normal vampire behavior, showing that not all their kind are inherently evil. Stephenie Meyer makes the vampire more sympathetic than its eighteenth and nineteenth century predecessors through the amazing restraint they exercise.

Differing from Dracula and the vampire of folklore, modern vampires adapt to the environment in which they live. Unlike most of their kind, the Cullen coven resides in a permanent residential home, only moving to a new location when necessary to keep their secret that they do not age. Instead of living in the stereotypical Gothic castle in which most eighteenth and nineteenth century vampires reside, Edward and his family live in a conventional upper-middle class home: "The house was timeless, graceful, and probably a hundred years old. It was painted a soft, faded white, three stories tall, rectangular, and well proportioned. The windows and doors were either part of the original structure or a perfect restoration" (Meyer, *Twilight* 321). The Cullen's home suggests the reconstruction of Victorian ideals regarding domesticity. This vampire family highly respects the ideology and importance of personal chastity and moral values. The family

home appears to be inviting and warm, completely open and welcoming instead of a dreaded place. Isabella even registers her shock at the house when she says, "I don't know what I had expected, but it definitely wasn't this" (Meyer, *Twilight* 321). This vampire home offers Bella an appealing substitute for her own broken home, for her mother and father live on opposite sides of the country. Here, the Cullen family lives amicably together as a strong familial unit. Some critics, especially Pramod Nayar, suggest that Meyer is reinforcing the conservative notions of home and family throughout her series. He emphasizes how Meyer is "suggesting a return to the old-style family," which could be an attractive alternative to the modern world where divorce rates and divided families have reached an all-time high (73).

The significance of having a stable home is that vampires are typically known to be nomadic beings, which helps conceal their true identities as nonhumans by keeping the human death toll caused by a vampire to a minimum. The Cullen clan has rejected this migratory lifestyle and willingly chooses to adapt to the human tendencies. This uniqueness is especially apparent when the three vampires encounter the vampire tribe who are playing baseball near their home. Carlisle, the patriarch of the clan, quickly explains (and with a veiled warning) to the three visiting vampires his family's current living situation: "We keep a permanent residence nearby. There's another permanent settlement like ours up near Denali" (Meyer, *Twilight* 377). James and Victoria, the nomadic vampires, are made uneasy by this revelation for it goes against their nature. They have never encountered vampires who willingly interacted with humans. Most noticeable, this choice is extremely dangerous for both the vampires and the human

society into which they integrate, because of the vampire's strong desire and natural instinct for human blood.

To further distance themselves from their killer instincts, this family of vampires does not subsist on human blood, which in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the vampire's natural food source. Alternatively, Edward and his family are "vegetarians" in the sense that humans are not a part of their diet. This choice of nourishment distances the vampires from their monstrous natures and allows them not to live as "demons" (Meyer, *Twilight* 337). As a replacement for human blood, the vampires prefer animals as the desirable choice for a meal, but the predators even keep the killing of these creatures to an absolute minimum. The family's understanding and appreciation of the human population is strikingly different from their kind's viewpoint. Typically, vampires need human blood to survive, but the modern vampires are more environmentally aware and conscious of the consequences of killing innocent humans. Thus, the modern vampires are socially progressive compared to their ancestors. This modern adaptation allows the creatures to dissociate themselves from their monstrous origins. By not killing humans, the vegetarian lifestyle displayed by Edward and his family "allow[s] the identity of a harmless human to return instead of being another victim" (Nayar 68).

The coven of vampires continues to delve into human society with their daily routines and activities. Unlike Dracula who preferred isolation, the Cullens want to be involved in the human environment. The patriarch of the family, Carlisle Cullen, is a doctor at the local hospital. His job is important in the community, and he is respected and admired by his fellow citizens. His community deeply trusts the doctor, which is especially significant given that he is surrounded by human blood on a daily basis.

Carlisle is a particularly strong vampire in that he can overcome the essential characteristic of a vampire's bloodlust. This attribute of the leader of the immortal family differs from the nineteenth-century Gothic vampire who can never resist the temptation of human blood and relies on it for survival.

In addition, the Cullen children also attend the local high school of wherever their current residence is located. This daily interaction between the vampires and other humans is unique to modern vampire literature. Even more so, the vampires are behaving to correspond with the conventional norms of society during the twenty-first century. Edward and his siblings adapt to the human school environment, especially during lunch period. The vampires cannot physically eat human food, nor can they indulge in human blood. This resistance, perfected by self-control, portrays a more humanistic vampire, alluding to a more heroic character type than the villainous vampires of the previous centuries. The Cullens also do not benefit from getting a standard education, for they have already lived through most of the world's history. Nineteenth-century vampires were commonly categorized as very well educated, but none of the modern vampire's predecessors pursued education at the cost of being surrounded by humans every day. This immersion into the local environment allows the vampires to stay in a particular habitat for an extended period of time.

Another distinctive feature of Meyer's vampires is their ability to roam about the world during daylight. In the vampire lore of previous centuries, skin exposure to sunlight would burn and eventually kill the vampire. His skin is extremely delicate to the rays, which inflict horrendous pain and is one of the few ways to kill a vampire. However, in the *Twilight* novels, Edward and his family have a different reaction to the

sun. This significant modification to the vampire legend showcases the uniqueness of the modern characteristics of the immortal being. The Cullens still must be confined during sunny days, but not because of pain or fear of the light. Instead, their skin glistens and glitters, reflecting the sun. Bella notices that Edward's skin "literally sparkled, like thousands of tiny diamonds were embedded in the surface" (Meyer, *Twilight* 260). In contrast to Dracula's representation as an evil version of one's self, Edward's sparkle is symbolic of the modern notion that the vampire represents the ideal self. The vampire's body is almost angelic when the sun hits his body, representing the pure and virtuous morals unique to modern vampires. Furthermore, the vampire's sparkle illustrates how depictions of millennial vampires focus more on the vampire's immortality and less on the being's monstrous danger.

Not only are the social behaviors exhibited by contemporary vampires different from their ancestors, but also the desire for the modern vampire to establish a physical relationship with a human. The blossoming relationship between Edward Cullen and Isabella Swan is the quintessential element of this series, especially in regards to the modern perception of the desire to become a part of the vampire world. Danielle Borgia reminds us, "The symbolism of blood-sucking vampires from early to contemporary tales alludes to forbidden sexualities" (156). Vampirism in the nineteenth century reflected the forbidden sexualities of the era, most predominantly female sexuality. However, Bella's relationship with Edward demonstrates the present time period's anxiety towards female sexual expression has changed, for teenage sexuality has become more open. Edward now seems to embody the previous time period's resistance to open sexuality because of his old-fashioned beliefs. Conversely, the modern vampire literature has a strong

influence from the female counterpart to express her sexuality. Unlike the heroines of nineteenth-century vampire fiction, Bella embodies the new millennium's openness to female sexuality. As Borgia points out, "The *Twilight* series of the millennium, despite its careful censoring of explicit sexuality, portrays its teenage female protagonist as actively seeking to become the vampire's victim based on her sexual desire" (154). Bella, as she is known throughout the series, is an introverted teenage girl who recently moved to Forks, Washington. She quickly catches the eye of the dashing Edward, and soon the desire for the human to become a part of the vampire world becomes a more dangerous threat to the vampire than ever before. Bella is essentially unaware, at first, of Edward Cullen's nature. When she first arrives in Forks, she is the center of attention by her peers at the small local high school. Every student is anxious to meet the new girl, except Edward Cullen, who is Isabella's biology lab partner. When Bella first walks into their biology class, Edward has "the strangest expression on his face- it was hostile, furious" (Meyer, *Twilight* 23). This rejection of admiration bewilders Bella and even disturbs her, leading to her growing fascination with his behavior. Bella further notices that Edward is going to great lengths to distance himself from her: "During the whole class, he never relaxed his stiff position on the edge of his chair, sitting as far from me as possible. I could see his hand on his left leg was clenched into a fist, tendons standing out under his pale skin" (Meyer, *Twilight* 23-24). This first interaction between the two sets the precedent for their entire relationship. She unknowingly poses the most dangerous threat to Edward; her blood and smell are irresistible to him. His unusual behavior leads Bella to become engulfed in the enigma that is her biology partner: "I was consumed by the mystery Edward presented. And more than a little obsessed by Edward himself" (Meyer,

Twilight 67). As Isabella Swan insists on pursuing Edward Cullen to better understand his character, she enters the world of the undead.

Bella eventually succeeds in capturing the attention of Edward Cullen. The two develop a relationship that is anything but conventional and normal. Unlike the female characters of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century vampire tales, Bella poses the larger threat for the vampire. In *Dracula*, it is the vampire's wanton desire for human blood that leads him to seduce and then kill his female victims. In *The Twilight Series*, Bella's desire for a (sexual) relationship puts Edward more at risk than herself. The roles of victim and victimizer have therefore switched, making the vampire less powerful than the human in regards to emotional and sexual dominance. According to Borgia, "Indeed, the disturbing messages of *Twilight* stem from this switch in its characterization of predator and prey: the deadly vampire is the one who deserves the reader's pity, and the woman he imperils is cast as the one who puts him at risk" (154). Bella does not fear Edward or the possibility that he could easily kill her. Her active pursuit of this physical relationship strongly tests Edward's restraint and control of his natural instincts. Edward even acknowledges the personal struggle posed by Bella when he describes her like his "own personal brand of heroin" (Meyer, *Twilight* 268). He understands why he should leave her because of the always-present danger, but it is her desire to be with him that continues to test his being.

While Edward slowly tries to increase physical contact with Bella, she always pushes past his limits to fulfill her desire. Bella continuously forgets Edward is not a normal human being. Her strong longing for him continually overshadows her lack of fear. She throws herself at him, especially when the couple finally establishes the start of

an innocent sexual relationship when they first kiss: "What neither of us was prepared for was my response" (Meyer, *Twilight* 282). This behavior shown by Bella is persistent throughout the series. Her physical reaction to Edward constantly overpowers her mind's warning to the danger of being with a vampire. "I have to mind my actions every moment that we're together so that I don't hurt you. I could kill you quite easily, Bella, simply by accident," Edward tells her (Meyer, *Twilight* 310). It is Edward who consistently keeps thwarting her advances to pursue the sexual relationship. This difference is strikingly dissimilar from earlier vampire tales, for this time, the human is the one who pushes for seduction. Edward even insists that Bella marry him before consummating their love. Nayar points out this difference from earlier vampire narratives when he states: "Restraint from any physical sexual interaction until marriage heavily differs from the typical Gothic genre" (70). In *Breaking Dawn*, the final installment in the series, Edward and Bella finally enter into holy matrimony. Only when the two are bound will Edward fully consent to Bella's physical desires.

Another significant modification to modern vampire literature is the human's willingness to enter into the vampire world. Her Otherness is presented in her desire to abandon her human identity. Bella Swan has been craving to be like Edward since she found out the truth about his identity. Bella's wish to become a vampire is quite divergent from Dracula's female victims. Her sexual desires continuously drive her to pursue Edward, despite the danger involved. The human is prepared to do whatever it takes to become an equal counterpart to her lover. Bella understands the severity of denouncing her humanity, but her desire for Edward makes it clear she is willing to sacrifice her humanity (especially the ability to age and possibly to have children) in order to join him

in immortality: “These spiritual justifications of her Byronic narrative lead Bella to display extreme behavior herself, eventually renouncing her family and friends in her quest to become a vampire and fulfill her dream of the promise of Edward’s eternal love” (Borgia 157). This modern presentation of the female switches the role from victim to threat. Instead of playing the innocent victim, Isabella finds fulfillment in her vampire identity when she freely converts to vampirism, marries Edward, and gives birth to a human/vampire child. However, to contemporary critics such as Lauren Rocha, Bella devalues herself through the stereotypical roles of wife and mother: “Yet in *Twilight*, the female is not shown as empowered, but rather a regressive figure akin to the Victorian ideal of womanhood as well as highlighting repressive beauty ideals and gender norms, creating a backlash against the empowered feminist ideal” (267). Numerous critics view Bella’s gendered roles as reverting back to the Victorian ideals that women should be submissive. Rocha further states Bella is “weak and dependent on men to give her value” (268).

Contrary to Rocha’s viewpoint, Bella’s rejection of the stereotypically demeaning nature of marriage and motherhood empowers her. It is after she becomes a wife and mother that Bella develops her supernatural powers of protection. In *Breaking Dawn*, the young female vampire becomes a shield, a power allowing her to project a mental field protecting her from the influence of the other vampires’ gifts. Furthermore, Bella can extend this field to protect any individual around her. She uses this ability to her benefit and saves her family from the Volturi, who are attempting to destroy the Cullen family and those who support them. Anna Silver, a contemporary scholar who differs from the typical feminist view of *Twilight*, states Meyer changes the domestic role of wife and

mother for Bella, for she exhibits her empowerment after becoming a vampire. Therefore, Silver argues that "Meyer thus proposes that marriage and motherhood provide women with equality that they do not possess as single women. Motherhood becomes a location not only of pleasure and satisfaction but also of power" (123). Because Bella willingly chooses to take on the roles of mother and wife, the female gains power through the fulfillment of marriage and motherhood that she would otherwise not have known.

Stephenie Meyer's reconfiguration of the Gothic vampire displays the evolution of society's beliefs and viewpoints over time. These cultural changes, especially reflected in Bella, demonstrate the desire of Third-Wave feminists to recover "feminine" gender constructs for the purpose female empowerment. Bella achieves self-realization through her roles as wife and mother, gaining more authority than she previously had. This modern adaption of women being Othered shows the strengths of being different and accepting these differences, insisting that women shed the control and oppression typically associated with these gendered roles. By embracing their sexual Otherness and transforming it into a tool of agency through actively pursuing and marrying vampires, women of millennial vampire fiction are accepting the Third-Wave feminist viewpoint and reinforcing its ideals. Additionally, these women are birthing a new hybrid of vampire that represents this tolerance of diversity and Otherness. The modern adaptation of vampire hybridity allows the immortal beings to flourish in the modern world.

The ideal hybrid of human and vampire realms is also central to *The Midnight Breed Series* by Lara Adrian. This series focuses on the Breed and its leader, Lucan Thorne. Much like the vampires in *The Twilight Series*, this coven of vampires demonstrates the modern reinvention of vampire characteristics. Unlike previous vampire

tradition, the Breed is attempting to integrate into human culture and create a stable environment for their kind. Lucan and his brethren further shed the monstrosity typically associated with vampires. Helen Bailie, another critic who researches why vampires have become increasingly popular in modern times, describes modern society's fascination with vampires as a result of their difference from their monstrous ancestors:

> The vampires created by Adrian differ much from their ancient kin as the immortals are described as "…a far cry from the pale, gothic vampires of human folklore. Neither undead nor devil-spawned, The Breed's kind was a hot-blooded hybrid mix of Homo sapiens and deadly other-worlders. The Breed's forebears, a band of alien conquerors who crash-landed on Earth millennia past and who were now long-since extinct, had bred with human females and given their offspring the thirst-the primal need-for blood" (Adrian qtd. in Bailie 142).

The creation of the Breed produces a new outlook on the simple constitution of what is a vampire. Coming from an alien world, these foreign vampires unite with humans. These new characters differentiate themselves from their ancient ancestors because Adrian's vampires become half-human from interbreeding. This new adaption brings the modern creatures even closer to human society and makes this interaction crucial for their survival. These modern romantic heroes of the vampire kind, as seen in *Kiss of Midnight*, result more from the desire to distance themselves from their kind than the need to act on their natural instincts. The Breed distinguish themselves from their monstrous predecessors such as Dracula. Bailie notices that contemporary vampire characters "in the paranormal romances do not originate as products of Satan or some dark force," which is "crucial to the acceptance of the vampire as hero in this genre" (143). Adrian's vampires

originated on an alien world, allowing them to create a completely new identity. Furthermore, the need for humans as a means of procreation, rather than pure nourishment, differs from traditional vampire myth.

Lara Adrian also creates a new twist in the hierarchy of the vampire world. Contrary to typical folklore and more similar to *The Twilight Series*, The Breed actively seeks out their kin for destruction. The Rogues are vampires who succumbed to Bloodlust, a disease contracted from the continuous feeding on human blood. The Rogue vampires lose all self-control and become murderous monsters. Lucan and his peers have devoted their entire existence to hunt down these monstrous vampires. They are even willing to risk their own lives to help humanity. This self-sacrifice strongly contrasts with normal vampire behavior, for these creatures typically seek humans to kill. Adrian has created a new realm where vampires seem to have developed a moral code, by which they strongly abide. Betrayal of this lifestyle results in significant consequences.

The Breed, much like the Cullens, is unique from those of their kind. These vampires are extremely active in destroying the corrupt vampires who kill humans for blood. Lucan Thorne, the leader of the coven of vampires, is a Gen One Breed and warrior. A Gen One vampire is considered by the Breed to be one of the highest distinctions, for these vampires are the first offspring between the alien vampires and the humans. Therefore, Lucan is considered by his peers to have the highest authority because of his esteemed bloodline. Lucan created this coven to start a war against the Rogues, who succumb to Bloodlust, which leads to the merciless killing of countless humans because of the addiction to human blood.

Much like the Cullen family in *Twilight*, The Breed requires interactions with the human world for survival. Although they are not entirely human, the vampires share countless characteristics with humans. Hybridity is essential for The Breed's existence; both the vampires and their female mates exhibit this hybridity. Without the (human) female mates, the vampires cannot reproduce. During an interaction with Gabrielle, Lucan indicates the physical similarities between them: "I assure you, I am not undead. I breathe, like you. I bleed, like you" (Adrian, *Kiss of Midnight* 225). These revelations differ from traditional folklore for vampires do not physically suffer in the same way humans typically do. More importantly, Lucan reveals to Gabrielle that he is not undead, but is a stronger human who cannot be killed as easily as most humans. Also in relation to Edward and the Cullen family, Adrian's vampires, along with their Breedmates, live together in a permanent residence near Boston. This mansion is highly secured and luxurious. Here, the vampires train to fight the Rogues, making this task the top priority of their existence. Another important factor of maintaining a permanent residence is to procreate and produce more warriors. This home allows the human females to maintain a part of their culture and interact with one another. With the human females living alongside the vampires, this modern adaptation suggests that millennial vampires are being domesticated.

Another important similarity of modern vampires is the suppression of the desire for human blood. The Cullen family has adapted a vegetarian lifestyle, only feeding off the blood of animals. Although the Breed does feed off human blood, they, too, reject the excessive need and desire for this nourishment. Instead, the vampires only acquire the bare necessity for survival. A Breedmate eliminates the killing of humans for blood

entirely, for the mate provides the blood necessary for feeding. Savannah, a Breed wife to Gideon, explains to Gabrielle how the conceptions of a vampire's monstrosity are easily debunked: "And vampires don't always kill to feed. In fact, that's rare, at least among the Breed's general population, including the warrior class. It's completely unheard of with blood-bonded vampires, like Gideon and Rio, since their nourishment is provided regularly by their Breedmates" (Adrian, *Kiss of Midnight* 263-64). Unlike Dracula and the folklore vampire, the modern vampire is trying to eliminate the excessive killing of humans for feeding.

Lucan Thorne also becomes the quintessential representation of the romantic hero in modern vampire literature. He continuously struggles to keep Gabrielle Maxwell away from his world, even though she is a special kind of human designated to breed with these vampires. His desire to distance her from the terror of vampires continues the modern adaption that the human is no longer threatened as the sole victim. Gabrielle Maxwell is an established photographer in the Boston area. She lives in a trendy neighborhood, has close relationships with her friends, and vaguely remembers her mother who died when Gabrielle was young. In addition to her successful career, Gabrielle is a Breedmate, "a human gifted with unique blood and DNA properties that complemented those of his kind" (Adrian, *Kiss of Midnight* 50). This uniqueness causes the female to be a "cherished goddess, giver of life, destined to bond in blood and bear the seed of a new vampire generation" (Adrian, *Kiss of Midnight* 50). Although she is entirely unaware of this distinction, her behavior towards Lucan mirrors the desire and attitudes shown by Isabella Swan in *Twilight*. Even though Gabrielle is oblivious to the

fact she actually she belongs in the vampire realm, her relationship with Lucan ensures she will become a part of his world.

Gabrielle Maxwell never truly belonged to the human world, for her life has been abnormal since the beginning. She did not have a typical human upbringing because of the situations into which she was born. Daughter to a teenage mother who became estranged from her shortly after her birth, Gabrielle was shuffled among foster homes. She never developed close relationships with those around her. This childhood and social atmosphere made the young woman keep to herself, which carried on to adulthood. She was able to achieve a prosperous career because of her distinguished talent for photography. She does not photograph any living beings, but focuses on inanimate objects instead. These subjects appeal to Gabrielle because of her preference to be alone and the migratory existence during her younger years. When Lucan begins to reveal the truth about Gabrielle's calling, he finally reveals what Gabrielle has unintentionally understood her entire life: "You've never felt a part of the world you live in because it's not your world, Gabrielle. Your photographs, the way you're drawn to places that house vampires, your confusion over your feelings about blood and the compulsion to let it—these are all parts of who you truly are" (Adrian, *Kiss of Midnight* 295). It is the mark of the Breedmate that seals Gabrielle's destiny to be a part of the vampire world. This union with the vampire is a means for Gabrielle to embrace her human Otherness, which allows her to experience acceptance and belonging while celebrating her uniqueness from other humans. Gabrielle's desire for Lucan Thorne as her mate thus maintains the modern adaptation of the female who switches the role from the victim to the hunter. Gabrielle finds empowerment through her role as Lucan's mate. Much like Bella Swan, the young

woman embodies the Third-Wave feminist movement by adhering to stereotypical women's roles, but finding fulfillment through these gendered roles. More importantly, Gabrielle (much like Bella Swan) chose to integrate her life into the vampire world. Unlike ancient folklore and nineteenth-century vampire fiction, the modern vampire narratives give the females the power of choice to become a part of the vampire world instead of playing victim to the vampires themselves.

Contrary to the typical behavior of a female victim, Gabrielle and Isabella Swan are both extremely independent and strong-minded. Their male counterparts frequently rescue the two women, but the women are also brave enough to fight for the things they hold dearest. Bella continuously seeks out vampires who threaten her family, caring about those she loves more than her own life. The same is seen in *Kiss of Midnight* with Gabrielle. She is constantly tracking down and entering Rogue lairs alone. She witnesses and photographs a Rogue attack outside La Notte nightclub. Furthermore, Gabrielle has an extremely successful career and has provided a comfortable lifestyle for herself. These two women have distanced themselves from the submissive female characters of nineteenth-century vampire fiction. Dracula defined his role as the dominant force over his vampire family by forcing his female mates into submission to his desires. In stark contrast, Edward Cullen and Lucan Thorne allow their mates to use free will about their destiny in the vampire world. Isabella Swan and Gabrielle Maxwell actively choose to establish their own vampire family, finding fulfillment. Both women choose to integrate their lives into this vampire world by free will, which is unique to modern vampire literature. The vampires did not use their power to persuade or force these women to join them; Gabrielle's and Bella's desires led them to choose immortality.

The sexual relationship between Gabrielle and Lucan is present from their first interaction. Gabrielle finds herself extremely attracted to this mysterious detective on her doorstep. When Lucan inquires about her personal life, Gabrielle notices his eagerness to learn she does not have a lover: "Thorne's mouth didn't move, but Gabrielle felt certain she had heard his reply" (Adrian, *Kiss of Midnight* 40). Already the pair is becoming protective of one another, even though they have just met. More importantly, Gabrielle's attraction to Lucan is undeniably present from the first time she encounters him. The couple's unique personalities contribute to their matching. Lucan Thorne represents the positive doppelganger for Gabrielle, serving more as an ideal alter ego than a destructive double. Gabrielle finds fulfillment through her relationship with the Breed leader. Thus while the vampires of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature embodied Otherness as a threat, contemporary vampire doppelgangers symbolize Otherness as an ideal form of the self. This modern version manifests an individual's diversity as acceptable and empowering.

Gabrielle, much like Isabella Swan, is actively seeking to become a part of the vampire realm. She repeatedly witnesses the horror of being a part of this world, but her desire for Lucan overshadows any danger this decision could cause. Her belonging to the vampire world is evident in her natural ability to find their lairs without even knowing these creatures existed. Her natural instincts gravitate towards this hidden world. In addition, Gabrielle and Lucan have an extremely sexual relationship, but her being a Breedmate solidifies her understanding that she is destined to be a part of his world. Unlike Gabrielle's pursuit of the vampire, Lucan is constantly trying to distance himself from her because of their attraction to one another. He understands the risks of her

presence in his life. However, his reluctance endangers him more than her. Lucan begins to miss the Breed's hunt for Rogues every night, and his Bloodlust drastically increases because of the constant presence of Gabrielle's blood. Furthermore, his sexual attraction to her begins to become the most important aspect of his life, not killing Rogues. These influences by the human female pose the greater hazard for Lucan instead of her playing the victim. Gabrielle, therefore, has become a larger threat to the vampire than he is to her. Because Gabrielle is choosing Lucan, the vampire is now becoming the domesticated one. The female is changing the male, instead of the reverse that was typical of vampire narratives before the turn of the millennium.

Twilight and *Kiss of Midnight* both produce new adaptions to the classic vampire myth. The modern vampire is viewed as more of a romantic hero than the threatening monster it was first characterized as being. A unique adaptation of the modern vampire derives from its hybrid mixture of vampiric and human societies. The Cullens and The Breed both have a unique moral code of behavior that is imperative for the vampire to live by, which is strictly followed by both clans of vampires. The crimes of the vampires have lessened, for instead the new immortal beings are more beneficial to human culture and society. Otherness is no longer viewed as a threatening force to humanity, but diversity is accepted and tolerated. Furthermore, these vampires strive to integrate themselves into the human world. Another major distinction is the female victims have become more active in their roles, distancing themselves from the helpless victims portrayed in nineteenth-century stories. The women of these novels are not being assaulted by the Other; they are choosing (and changing) the Other to create a new breed. Their pursuit of immortality suggests the hope that a woman in contemporary society can

have it all. Furthermore, the modern era has allowed the female to openly express her sexual desires, leading these women to find power and fulfillment in their new roles in the vampire world. These modern adaptions are a reflection of contemporary society's viewpoint, which has become more understanding and compassionate towards diversity and Otherness.

Conclusion

The legend of the vampire has been a fascination among humanity for thousands of years. As vampire tales have spread from the oral traditions to the more modern written tales, the mythical creature has changed significantly, especially since its popularity began to rise rapidly in the past few hundred years. However, throughout their evolution, vampires have symbolized the beliefs and fears of particular cultures during specific time periods.

With the oral dissemination of vampire legends, the creature began to gain recognition. Through these legends, vampires were depicted as Others because of abnormal characteristics that differentiated them from the culture and societies surrounding them. Humanity was searching for a reason for catastrophic events and threatening forms of deviance. The vampire was a perfect scapegoat for inexplicable happenings or behaviors perceived as immoral or antisocial, providing an outlet for societal outrage at such atrocities.

As European societies swiftly evolved in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries due to industrial and scientific advancements, the vampire evolved as an expression of more complex cultural anxieties. Newly industrialized Western cultures had a growing fear that the more undeveloped countries would somehow infringe on and destroy their modern lifestyles. Therefore, the primitive, animalistic vampire as a representative of non-Western cultures was characterized as a more monstrous being. The undead being

displayed Otherness as harmful and threatening, especially since the vampire was from the Eastern European world with its supposedly outdated norms. The attributes given to the nineteenth-century literary vampire in works such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* went against the norms of the newly technologized Western world. As an Eastern European vampire invading Victorian England, Dracula thus embodied various perceived threats to dominant Victorian cultural values.

For instance, one of the most widespread horrors in Victorian society was the idea of reverse colonization. As an industrial and imperial power, England had progressed rapidly during this time period while also expanding its empire extensively in other nations, but the English did not want to accept immigration as a two-sided opportunity. The British power was fearful Eastern cultures would immigrate into Western societies and bring with them their ancient traditions or lifestyles. Count Dracula dramatized these fears by representing the threat of Otherness and what would happen to society if these differences were deemed acceptable. The vampire's actions showcase Victorian society's true characteristics. The Gothic novel of the late nineteenth century also presented Victorian readers' fear of their own animalistic natures and the possibility of corruption by capitalistic greed. In addition, Stoker's famous vampire narrative depicted sexuality as a central feature of the vampire's monstrosity, with female sexuality being a major component of the plot. Because Dracula, the vampire brides, and Lucy represent deviant forms of sexuality that Victorian culture attempted to repress, these characters are appropriately punished by the end of the novel. In contrast, Mina and the Englishmen (and the honorary American) showcase the proper morals and behavior valued during this time period. Unlike Stoker's vampires, these vampire hunters are

supplied with positive social characteristics and only act in the appropriate manner. The destruction of the deviant vampires by the conventional vampire hunters suggests that Victorian society was not ready to view Otherness as acceptable, but instead ostracized those who did not fit the acceptable norms.

Changes in societal norms throughout the twentieth century resulted in a new version of the classic vampire character. Vampires in twenty-first-century American vampire fiction have lost much of their monstrosity and have become more integrated into human society, as seen in *The Twilight Series* as the Cullens attend high school and work alongside humans. In addition, the mythical creatures have distanced themselves from their normal appetite for human blood, adopting a vegetarian lifestyle or only taking the necessary amount of blood.

Another modern development is the willingness of the female characters in contemporary vampire narratives to become integrated into the vampire world. Females of millennial vampire fiction are attracted to the vampire world because of its Otherness, and becoming a vampire bride allows them to embrace and celebrate their own female difference. This new attribute is strikingly different from previous vampire folklore or tradition. Their interactions with vampires allow the female characters to express their sexual desires, unlike in prior centuries when female sexuality was feared and oppressed. Although feminist critics have interpreted the heroine's relationship with the powerful male vampire as dramatizing the re-emergence of repressive patriarchal stereotypes of femininity, the heroines of these novels claim new agency by uniting traditionally "feminine" roles with the "masculine" world of the vampire. Reflecting the ideology of Third Wave Feminism, these heroines use the difference of vampirism to become

authoritative wives and parents, equal partners with their male counterparts. Through vampire marriages, these modern women find empowerment in their roles as sexual partners and eventually mothers. Their sexual relationships help define their characters instead of limiting their roles. For modern vampire literature, the vampire therefore functions as more of an ideal Other, instead of the ostracized being of former vampire narratives. The hybrid identity of early twenty-first-century vampires unites the human and vampire worlds suggesting an increasing acceptance of and desire for difference in contemporary culture. For instance, the tenth anniversary of *Twilight* was celebrated with a new edition of the original novel. Titled *Life and Death*, the remake switches the gender roles of the human and vampire, presenting an even more modern adaption than was first published ten years ago.

Because of the popularity of the vampire character, there have been numerous adaptations into film, plays, and television series. These revamps reflect the fascination society has with the idea of Otherness. Humanity continues to find vampires astonishing for they represent countless aspects of ourselves, which we cannot seem to openly express, but are unwilling to deny. Although the vampire has been presented as an ideal Other in turn-of-the-millennium vampire literature, in more recent media adaptations, the vampire has begun to revert back to its monstrous characterization. *The Strain*, a TV series created by Guillermo del Toro, is based on his series of graphic novels. The show follows a monstrous vampire invading Manhattan, using a wealthy corporation's resources to spread an epidemic of vampirism in order to conquer the United States by transforming its citizens into the undead. Dr. Goodweather and his team of experts wage a war to save humanity from the dangers of vampirism. This switch could possibly

indicate that the vampire now represents contemporary versions of the kinds of societal challenges that Victorian culture also feared. Immigration and corporate power (and wealth) are a few topics currently at the center of media debates in Western culture. The cultural anxieties surrounding these issues could be the cause for the most recent turn in the presentation of the vampire. Nonetheless, whether it functions as an ideal alter ego or a threatening doppelganger, the vampire continues to do important cultural work in defining human subjectivity and difference.

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