THE CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSGRESSION OF BOUNDARIES
IN LATE VICTORIAN SUPERNATURAL LITERATURE

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Elizabeth Grace Armstrong
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ABSTRACT

THE CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSGRESSION OF BOUNDARIES
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This thesis explores the different forms of losing control in Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, and how the characters in these texts react to losing control. Forms of losing control include hedonism, sleep, influence, insanity, and ignorance. I discuss how control is related to humanity and losing control is related to monstrosity. The monstrous characters are the most out of control and the unambiguously human characters are the most controlled. As loss of control is monstrous, the human characters are compelled to distance themselves from the dark, out of control, parts of their identities. They put up boundaries between the good, controlled and civilized, and bad, out of control and savage, parts of themselves and are successful when these boundaries remain intact or are re-established. These characters come to violent
ends, due to murder or suicide, when the boundaries separating the good and bad come
down and cannot be reconstructed. The human characters in all three texts refuse to ac-
cept the monstrous parts of themselves. They fragment their identities and other the
monster rather than confront their unified selves. This fear of unity is an underlying
theme in each text and points to that same fear in Victorian society.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: FRAGMENTATION

OF THE SELF

Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* seem to deal with monstrosity in very different ways, but all three texts make losing control monstrous and in all three texts, the plot is driven by fear of the unification of man and monster. On the surface, *Dracula* is very different from *Jekyll and Hyde* and *Dorian Gray* as it is about humans hunting a monster that is housed in a separate body, but *Dracula* has the same fear of losing control that drives the other two texts at its heart. There are many different ways to lose control in these novels. I will be focusing on how the monster itself represents a hedonistic loss of control in that the most monstrous being is the most out of control. Vampires are defined by a lack of self-control and the unending desire to consume. Dorian and Mr. Hyde are monstrous because they do not control themselves, even murdering people when the urge strikes them. I will also be focusing on how the loss of separation between the man and the monster, or in some cases, between man and an outside influence, is its own form of losing control. In these novels, to be a human and not a monster, one must be in control of him or herself. This is why the characters spend so much energy denying that they have lost control and fearing others who lose control; they do not want to be, or associate with, monsters.
I claim that Hedonism, while classically seen as the pursuit of pleasure, becomes a form of losing control and a justification for that loss of control. Oscar Wilde, in his relationship with Walter Pater’s aestheticism, explores the hedonistic way of life in *Dorian Gray*. The monstrosity of hedonism shows up in all three texts, but it is most directly discussed in Wilde’s novel. Dorian Gray devotes his life to the “New Hedonism” that Lord Henry advocates for (Wilde 46). In the novel, as Alex Murray points out in his article “Acquiescing into a Facile Orthodoxy?”, “art [is] framed as an independent sphere, without the necessity for social, moral, political or ethical responsibility” (325). Art becomes an uncontrolled space through this philosophy. This philosophy is complicated by the blurring of life and art in *Dorian Gray*. Dorian pursues pleasure throughout his life, as he is a Hedonist, but he places his life in the realm of art to avoid responsibility for his immoral pursuits. If responsibility is considered unnecessary, then a follower of this version of Hedonism can do whatever he desires without having to think about the consequences. By making art an independent sphere, Wilde is recreating “the early writings of Pater” that “celebrated the autonomy of art” and “advocated a life of sensual experience over that of bourgeois Victorian rationality” (Murray 325-26). This philosophy is explored in Pater’s work *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, which he later changes because “it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall” (Pater 233). Even Pater eventually sees that his aestheticism must be toned down or it could be harmful for his followers; it is as if Pater recognizes the monstrosity of uncontrolled, unbalanced Hedonism. He does not advocate for an all-consuming and uncontrolled approach to aestheticism and even moves back towards “a reunification of the aesthetic with the social, moral, political and ethical” (Murray 325).
This is one example of the “measured and rational side” of Pater’s aestheticism (Murray 326). Unlike Lord Henry’s hedonistic approach to life, Pater’s “call to experience and sensual pleasure was countered with an almost militaristic appearance and sense of discipline” (Murray 326). In Wilde’s novel, Lord Henry advocates for, and Dorian Gray lives by, a hedonism that goes “beyond Pater’s restrained aestheticism” (Murray 326). As Alex Murray astutely puts it, “Lord Henry’s version of Pater’s philosophy” is “reckless Hedonism requiring nothing of . . . self-discipline and morality” (328). This “New Hedonism” goes unchecked by discipline or responsibility and is therefore uncontrolled (Wilde 46). The philosophy that Lord Henry vouches for, but does not participate in, encourages the follower to fulfill every desire, which can easily lead to over-consumption; if the pursuit of pleasure is the only goal in life and there are no restraints, then there is nothing to stop a Hedonist from gorging himself on pleasure. This could also describe the monsters in Stoker and Stevenson’s work: a complete lack of self-discipline and morality. Dr. Jekyll in particular uses hedonistic language to describe his sensations in the form of Mr. Hyde. The vampire is a hedonistic monster in that it is defined by over-consumption, the fulfillment of all desires to excess. Dorian, Jekyll-Hyde, and Dracula all represent the monstrosity of losing control over one’s desires, but Dorian and Jekyll-Hyde in particular will not own their desires. Dorian and Jekyll-Hyde devote themselves to the pursuit of new sensations and refuse to take responsibility for their actions, which is what Lord Henry’s version of hedonism endorses. Their lives are hedonistic because, in pursuing pleasure, they have no self-control and because they justify that lack of control by isolating themselves from morality. Lack of morality and losing control become a loop, one fueling the other with no hope of breaking the cycle. I
claim that this refusal to take responsibility for their actions is a way for the characters to
deny that they are monsters. The human characters in all three novels are compelled to
deny that they have lost control, that they are monstrous.

I see the “dual-brain theory,” a separation of the bad from the good, as another
form of this same denial (Stiles 884). According to Anne Stiles’ article “Robert Louis
Stevenson’s *Jekyll and Hyde* and the Double Brain,” the idea of the “dual personality”
was of great interest to many late Victorian scientists (879). At the time Stevenson was
writing *Jekyll and Hyde* there were “scientific views that the left and the right
hemispheres [of the brain] not only differed in their abilities, but also…exhibited
contrasting desires and moral inclinations” (882). The “dual-brain theory” in particular
“posited that the left and right hemispheres of the brain could function independently”
(884). In this theory, “the left brain was associated with masculinity, whiteness, . . . logic,
intelligence, humanness” while the right brain was associated with “madness, emotion,
and animality” (884-5). The left brain is the house of control and order and the right brain
is the house of chaos; the people who are marked as right brained are lacking in self-
control and are inferior to the left brained people. The right brained are also associated
with animality as opposed to humanness, which makes animality the opposite of
humanness and makes the right brained less human.

These attempts to cleanly split the good from the bad within the human body
come at the same time as the revealing of “man’s animal origins” (Elbarbary 113). Samir
Elbarbary notes that, “the main periodicals of the period…aimed to tell the unvarnished
truth about the ugly and frightening realities of man’s nature hidden behind an attractive
façade” (113). The concept that under layers of civilized order there was still an animal in
everyone makes that civilized order seem false; the animal is the true man and the order
and control is the “façade.” This runs counter to the dual-brain theory, which posits that,
like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, man is truly civilized and truly animal at the same time.
This theory denies that man’s civilized nature is false. I see the dual-brain theory as
encapsulating the struggle in Victorian science between accepting the origins of humanity
and turning it into an inhuman monster. In an age where the primitive origins of humanity
were coming to light and there was a legitimate fear of man’s secret savage nature, some
Victorians became interested in sealing the savage part of humanity in its own part of the
brain, even theorizing that healthy people have “two perfectly formed brains” (Stiles
884). This theory allows people to be both the animal and the human instead of an animal
masquerading as a human or a human who could easily degenerate into an animal.
Animality becomes monstrous when it is made the opposite of humanity; it becomes
something to deny and something to run from. I see the removal of the animalistic part of
humanity to its own part of the brain as an attempt to escape it. Everything that is coded
as “right brained” is something to run from, to be afraid of. I claim that loss of control
falls under the right brain as it can be associated with many of the types of people who
were considered to be dominated by the right brain, including “women, savages, children,
criminals, and the insane” (Stiles 885). These groups of people are associated with less
self-control and less control over their minds, especially in the case of the insane.

The dual-brain theory enforces the distinctly negative connotation attached to
losing control in that it is related to right brained people: savage, criminal, insane, or
overly emotional people. It also distances those considered left brain dominant, white,
intelligent, men, from the possibility that they could lose control. This would be
comforting for those who are in control of their minds and bodies, but would be terrifying for those who fear they are losing control. To lose control would be to shift from left brain dominant to right brain dominant; this is what Anne Stiles argues happens to Dr. Jekyll when Mr. Hyde begins to grow in strength. While I do see this as a valid argument, I see another connotation to losing control related to the dual brain theory that Stiles does not explore. When a character loses control, the boundary between good and evil, civilized and primitive, breaks down. It is this unity of monster and man that is most terrifying.

In the following three chapters, I will use the dual-brain theory as a frame for the three texts I am discussing. As the theory denies the unity of monster and man, so do the characters and, in the case of Dracula, the text does as well. In Dracula, the monster inhabits a body that is separate from the human bodies, which supports the distinction between monster and man and differentiates Dracula from the other two novels. Stiles’ article is exclusively exploring the connections between Stevenson’s Jekyll and Hyde and the dual-brain theory, but I see this type of thinking, this emphasis on duality and the attempt to separate the good from the bad in Bram Stoker’s Dracula and Oscar Wilde’s The Picture of Dorian Gray as well. While I cannot claim that there is explicit evidence that Stoker and Wilde were influenced by the dual-brain theory in particular, I do see evidence that the characters in all three novels have the strong desire to separate the good from the bad, the controlled from the uncontrolled, the human from the animal and that when the divide becomes blurred, the characters experience the most distress. They are terrified of identifying as or with the animalistic, out of control monster. In the novel Dracula, the human characters react to the monster that is housed in its own body by
killing it. In *Dorian Gray* and *Jekyll and Hyde*, the main characters are faced with the monstrous part of themselves and this causes them to commit suicide. Underlying the violence in all three novels is the characters’ desperate desire to “other” the monster.

Of the three monsters, Dracula is the most explicit “other” in his total monstrosity and lack of humanity, but he is also intimately connected to humanity and the human characters. In Judith Halberstam’s article “Technologies of Monstrosity,” she describes Dracula as “otherness itself, a distilled version of all others produced by and within fictional texts, sexual science, and psychopathology” (334). Dracula is a creature that, in the terms of the dual-brain theory, is completely dominated by the right brain; the monster is completely lacking in self-control and, as Halberstam points out, he is associated with the criminally insane as well as animals, children, and prostitutes, but it is stated in the novel that Dracula was once “a most wonderful man” (Stoker 397). If it is possible for good people to become monsters, then the monster is not so different from the human. If it is possible for the monster to influence the human, then the human could be at fault for being open to influence. If it is possible for the human to be driven mad, to lose control of his or her mind, is the human really so different from the out of control monster? Halberstam argues that Dracula is the ultimate foreigner, but I see this foreignness as superficial; there are moments in the text where human characters are forced to associate with the monster, when they are connected to it or relate to it in some way, and they see the monster as something that any good person could become. The vampire overwhelms the boundary between right brain and left brain, between foreign and native, when it connects with the human characters.
Dorian Gray and Dr. Jekyll both distance themselves from the monsters that they become, as if they are the left brained spectators watching the right brained actor. Dr. Jekyll tries to become a literal spectator in his attempt to split himself into two people and Dorian Gray treats his life as if it is a work of art. Within them, they experience the same revulsion that the vampire hunters of *Dracula* experience and the same out of control, hedonistic hunger that the monster experiences. These two reactions cannot be reconciled, so they must be moved as far from each other as possible, thus Jekyll and Dorian attempt to become the actor and the spectator. Both characters find the position of the spectator ideal because it allows them to enjoy their dark pleasures and not take responsibility for them. They put up walls between the different parts of their lives and between the private and the public, they hide their secrets in the darkest corners they can find, because as long as no one knows their secret, they can pretend that they are not really monsters. The supernatural monsters live in the closed off places, the rooms with no windows and locked doors. This serves the dual purpose of protection and in the case of Dr. Jekyll and Dorian Gray, it allows them to “other” the monstrous parts of themselves.

Part of othering the monster for these characters is maintaining control over the boundaries between the human and the monster. For Dr. Jekyll and Dorian Gray, this means keeping their two lives separate from each other and keeping their secrets private. As long as no one knows their supernatural secret, they can pretend that it is not real, that they are not the monster. Jekyll and Dorian are so invested in disassociating themselves from their monstrosity that they delude themselves into thinking that they can stop being monsters if they want to, that they are still in control of their lives. They try to convince
themselves that they are in control and that they can stop doing horrible things whenever they want and that they are not defined by their actions; if they can control their actions then they are not truly monsters. In each character’s recognition that he is not in control is also the recognition that he is a monster, as monstrosity becomes defined by losing control. In *Dracula* this same principle is true, so when characters lose control, especially when Dracula has control over them, they become desperate to get their control back, to remain human. In the case of Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker, losing control to the monster equals entering the ambiguous space between human and monster, where the boundary is no longer as clear. For the characters in all three texts, othering the monster requires a clear and stable boundary between human and monster.

There are many ways for the boundary between human and monster to become unstable. One major way to destabilize the boundary is for a monstrous, outside force to influence a human subject. In *Dracula*, this outside force is the monster itself. The vampire connects to the humans it feeds on and is able to enter their brains and control them. With Lucy Westenra in particular, Dracula brings out a latent part of her being as his influence transforms her into a monster. In *Dorian Gray*, when Lord Henry Wotton influences Dorian, he takes on Lord Henry’s values and professed way of life. Lord Henry’s influence on Dorian brings out a dark and immoral part of Dorian, just as Dracula’s influence does in Lucy. As the monster’s influence finds its twin inside the human characters, it becomes less clear where humanity ends and monstrosity begins. While Jekyll-Hyde is not subject to the influence of an outside force in the same way as Dorian Gray or Lucy Westenra, he does experience a traumatic destabilizing of boundaries.
For the characters in all three novels, particularly Jekyll-Hyde, boundaries become less distinct when they are alone. There is an unreality to what happens when the characters are isolated from one another and often characters want to believe that the supernatural, which is always connected to the monstrosity, is not real. The boundaries between right and wrong and between the real and unreal can become hazy when the characters are alone. In Stoker’s novel, the characters are more open to influence when they are isolated in some way; at times, different characters experience extreme physical isolation, isolation through sleep, or isolation from group knowledge. Jekyll-Hyde creates his drug in isolation and, as the story goes on, Jekyll-Hyde tries to isolate himself completely. Dorian locks his portrait as far from prying eyes as possible. For the characters, the boundaries between the human and the monstrous begin to crumble when they are alone. As the characters lose more and more control over themselves or their situation, they become more monstrous. The monsters in all three texts are hedonistic in their monstrosity; they display very little self-control.

As the characters themselves struggle with the idea that they could become or have become monsters, the text struggles with this same idea. All three texts support that any person, even the most moral or innocent person, can become a monster. It no longer matters where the character is located as all three texts “[bring] the terror of the Gothic home” (Arata 621). At the same time the monsters that different characters become are so monstrous, so supernatural, that the reader cannot relate to them. As Judith Halberstam points out in her book, Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters, “gothic fiction is a technology of subjectivity, one which produces the deviant subjectivities opposite which the normal, the healthy, and the pure can be known” (2).
The monster is the opposite of humanity and is therefore distant, separated into its own category. Yet, at the same time, the late Victorian Gothic genre reveals “the entanglement of self and other within monstrosity and the parasitical relationship between the two. The one is always buried in the other” (Halberstam, *Skin Show*, 20). The monster is only superficially the opposite of humanity. Under the surface of the genre, monstrosity is part of humanity and vice versa; they blend into each other, particularly in these three texts. When one aspect seems dominant, the other is still present in the characters.

While the three texts I will be discussing are not generally placed together in the Gothic genre, my definition of the late Victorian Gothic makes this label equally applicable to all of them. My definition is derived from Kelly Hurley’s definition of the late Victorian Gothic that she explains in her book, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the Fin de Siecle*. She is discussing other Gothic texts, but her analysis of the Gothic genre itself directly applies to my argument. Hurley shows that the turn of the century Gothic replaces “a unitary and securely bounded human subjectivity” with “one that is both fragmented and permeable” (3). As the characters in all three texts struggle with fragmentation and permeability in different forms, I argue that all three texts are essentially Gothic. Hurley goes on to say that the Gothic “subject” is often “in danger of becoming not-itself, becoming other” (4). The characters in the texts I am discussing, Dr. Jekyll, Dorian, and the Harkers, have othered the monstrous parts of themselves and, in this way, are constantly struggling against “becoming” and accepting their darker natures. These characters are specific examples of the Gothic subject that is “fractured by discontinuity and profoundly alienated from itself” (Hurley 6). Many of the characters in the texts I am discussing attempt to alienate themselves
from their monstrous aspects. These texts are Gothic in that they explore characters who are fragmented and who often willfully fragment themselves further by constructing barriers between the good and bad parts of themselves. I argue that the success of these Gothic characters rests on their ability to maintain those barriers, keep the good and the bad separate from each other, and maintain the illusion of distance from the monster.

In my second chapter, I discuss how superficial the distance between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is in Stevenson’s novel. Jekyll-Hyde is so afraid of facing his unity that he puts up mental and physical boundaries between Jekyll and Hyde and he puts up boundaries between his secret unity and the public sphere. Windows and lack of windows emphasize the importance of boundaries for Jekyll-Hyde. These boundaries cannot keep Jekyll and Hyde separate and the physical walls cannot keep the public out of the private. These boundaries also allow Jekyll-Hyde’s denial of unity to remain intact. I argue that Hyde is so frightening while being difficult to describe because he is a part of Jekyll and not his own individual and because Hyde represents the possibility of any man losing control; this indicates both that Jekyll and Hyde are not actually separate and that despite Jekyll-Hyde’s secrecy, Hyde’s existence is intolerable to all those who see him and there are no boundaries that can keep Jekyll-Hyde’s secret from being publically revealed. Jekyll-Hyde kills himself to avoid confronting his unified, monstrous self.

In my third chapter, I discuss how Dorian loses his self-control due to influence and his monstrous devotion to “New Hedonism” (Wilde 46). The boundary between Lord Henry and Dorian Gray crumbles immediately as Lord Henry brings out the worst in Dorian through his influence. Lord Henry’s influence causes Dorian to wish for a connection with his portrait and the boundary between his soul and his portrait is
crossed. Dorian lives his life confusing life and art in order to distance himself from his monstrous actions. He lives a hedonistic lifestyle, negatively influencing others and living without control. This lack of control makes Dorian a monster, but he refuses to accept his monstrosity. He holds on to the illusion of control until it becomes clear to him that it is an illusion. Dorian reaches the point where he cannot accept what he has become and, despite his awareness that the portrait houses his soul, he attacks the portrait and kills himself.

In my fourth chapter, I discuss how the human characters in Dracula are more afraid of losing control over themselves and the crumbling of boundaries than they are of losing their lives. Dracula and all of the vampires represent the ultimate loss of control and they have the ability to transfer their loss of control to any human; there is no concrete boundary between vampires and humans. It is this ability to influence even the best of men that terrifies the human characters in the novel. Other moments of fear and danger also come down to a loss of control. Jonathan Harker nearly loses his mind when he feels he has lost control. Lucy Westenra transforms into a vampire because of her lack of control. Mina Harker is influenced by Dracula and loses her control over her body when she is cut off from the strength and control of the band of vampire hunters. The human group’s reaction to the out of control vampires who can bring out the worst in anyone is to control them through killing them. They then go back to the status quo and pretend that their battle with a hedonistic monster never happened.

In this thesis, I argue that all of these aspects of each text are about boundaries creating an order. Without the boundaries, there is no order. Without order, it becomes impossible to tell what is superior or inferior, what is human or monstrous. I claim that
this is why the main conflict in these three novels arises when boundaries are crossed or there is a loss of control. Boundaries are maintained through control. Boundaries and control keep the structure of society in place and without them there is no order. Dracula crosses boundaries in many different ways: he crosses from his old country to England, he gets into the minds of his victims, he invades their bodies and their thoughts to control them, and he infects them to turn them into vampires. Dr. Jekyll tries to create a boundary between two different parts of himself and fails. Dorian tries to separate himself from traditional morality by treating his life as if it is art. The human characters all want the monster to be separate from them. The characters try to put up boundaries: against Dracula, between Jekyll and Hyde, between Dorian and his soul, between the private and the public. Isolation creates a kind of boundary. When something is isolated, there is a boundary around it until it is integrated. In these three novels, for a conclusion to be reached, the human/monster hybrid must die or boundaries must be re-established; this seems to be the only possible resolution.
CHAPTER II

“HE, I SAY—I CANNOT SAY, I”: THE RESISTANCE OF UNIFICATION IN

*THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*

Anne Stiles argues that Robert Louis Stevenson was influenced by the “dual-brain theory” while writing *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and that “Jekyll’s madness” stems from “hemisphere imbalance” where one brain overpowers the other (885-86). Stevenson may have been inspired by this theory, but there are moments in the story where Jekyll and Hyde are not so separate as the theory would suggest. Jekyll experiences satisfaction through Hyde and feels pleasure at getting away with a double life. As Elaine Showalter notes in her essay “Dr. Jekyll’s Closet,” Jekyll’s creation of Hyde comes from “his need to pursue illicit sexual pleasure and yet live up to the exacting moral standards of his bleak professional community” and not from his wish to stop feeling those illicit desires (70). I posit that Jekyll’s madness comes from trying to divide himself at all and that he is not successful in his attempt; he is caught between wanting to indulge in a dark and hedonistic lifestyle and resisting that these desires are a genuine part of his unified self. In this story and in *Dracula* and *Dorian Gray*, it is unacceptable to admit to being one man with both moral and immoral desires, one man who is not in perfect control of himself. Instead, Jekyll makes that part of himself into a
monster. Unlike the humans in *Dracula*, Dr. Jekyll cannot destroy the monster without destroying himself. He is just as unified as Dorian Gray is in Oscar Wilde’s novel and is just as desperate to distance himself from his actions. It may have been Stevenson’s intention to follow the guide of the dual brain theory, but as the theory is an artificial way to separate civilized man from animal man, the “creation” of Mr. Hyde is an artificial way for Dr. Jekyll to distance himself from what he desires. Both the theory and Mr. Hyde are similarly artificial because the scientists created the dual-brain theory for the same reason that Jekyll creates Hyde: to separate the good from the bad using a false distinction.

Dr. Jekyll’s identity hinges on the false distinction between Jekyll and Hyde and as the distinction deteriorates the character becomes less stable; he seems to need a barrier between his consciousness and his desires. In Elaine Showalter’s essay, “Dr. Jekyll’s Closet,” she reads Jekyll’s desires as homosexual in nature and Stevenson’s story as “the discovery and resistance of the homosexual self” (69). While I am not focusing on the possible homosexual aspect of the story, the essence of discovery and resistance is integral to my argument. Whether Dr. Jekyll is homosexual or not, he does discover his imperfect, unified self and he reacts to this discovery by resisting it to the point of attempting to split himself into two people. As the barrier between these two “identities” breaks down, Jekyll “gradually comes to understand that Hyde is indeed part of him” and therefore his immoral desires are a part of him (Showalter 74). Nearing the end of the story, as Jekyll and Hyde blur into each other and Jekyll-Hyde loses control of himself, the outside world, led by Mr. Utterson, tries to discover that Jekyll is Hyde and Jekyll-Hyde resists this discovery. Even as the artificial barrier between Jekyll and Hyde
dissolves, Jekyll-Hyde would rather destroy himself than be forced to acknowledge that he is both a man and a monster.

As in the other two novels, a key element of the release of the monster in the man is the seclusion of the character. Jekyll and Hyde favor isolation throughout the novel both to protect the secret that Hyde is a part of Jekyll and because isolation allows Jekyll to be who he really is: both Jekyll and Hyde. Dr. Jekyll tries to separate himself into a left brain, Jekyll, and a right brain, Hyde, but he can only keep this up as long as there is a separation between the public and the private. As he loses control, Jekyll becomes more and more private. The lack of windows in Hyde’s residence and Jekyll’s laboratory signal this increased need for privacy and the importance of separating the public from the private; this is, like the dual-brain theory, a constructed separation and it cannot hold up under scrutiny. Dr. Jekyll’s withdrawal from society is contrasted with the importance of friendship for the doctor’s close friend and lawyer Mr. Utterson. Friendship is so closely associated with humanity and warmth that Dr. Jekyll’s isolation itself takes on an inhuman quality. Jekyll turns inward and away from humanity while Utterson uses his friends to discover Jekyll’s secret; Jekyll-Hyde destroys himself as Utterson, representing the public and the left brain, comes crashing through the door, uniting the private and the public, and revealing that there is no true separation between Jekyll and Hyde.

Mr. Utterson comes to represent the kind of man Dr. Jekyll could have been if he had not given in to his desires. Utterson seems to be the perfect Victorian man. He is described as “lovable” and “at friendly meetings . . . something eminently human beaconed from his eye” (Stevenson 7). While the character is “austere with himself,” he
has “an approved tolerance for others” and is often “the last good influence in the lives of
down-going men” (7). Mr. Utterson seems to be more human because of his love for his
fellow man and at the same time, he remains morally upright because he does not allow
his friends to negatively influence him. He influences other people but they do not seem
able to influence him. Unlike Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Utterson does not seem to have any
shameful desires and he therefore has no need for solitude in the way that Dr. Jekyll does.
While Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Utterson are both bachelors, the way that they go about their
lives are very different; Mr. Utterson lives a very open life and Dr. Jekyll closes himself
off from his friends. Mr. Utterson is so devoutly puritanic in his own habits that he seems
capable of being friends with any man and maintaining his spotless reputation. Mr.
Utterson is completely in control of himself and seems to have absolutely nothing to hide;
this is highlighted by his love of company. In this novel, friendship displays the height of
goodness and humanity. Mr. Utterson places a high and prominent value on friendship,
making him the face of civilized humanity in the novel.

Mr. Utterson is so perfect and moral that it seems like “he has almost a dread
of the fanciful, a fear of the realm of the anarchic imagination” (Showalter 71). He will
not even go to the theater even though he enjoys theater (Stevenson 7); he seems to
monitor himself closely at all times. Although Mr. Utterson seems like a perfectly moral
man, he does have “an unconventional side to keep down” (Showalter 71). He continues
to associate with men who have been forsaken by their other friends and at times he
“[wonders], almost with envy, at the high pressure of spirits involved in their misdeeds;
and in any extremity inclined to help rather than reprove” (Stevenson 7). Showalter reads
this as Utterson’s “repression [of] and fantasy” involving homosexuality, but in this
reading I think Showalter’s view of Utterson also supports his more general longing to lose control (71). He is so controlled at all times that he seems to both envy those who lose control and to be terrified of the possibility. While he usually allows his friends to “go to the devil in [their] own way,” when it comes to Dr. Jekyll and his relationship with Mr. Hyde, Utterson is unable to leave it alone (Stevenson 7). When he learns of Mr. Hyde’s terrible reputation and his connection to Dr. Jekyll, specifically that Hyde will inherit Jekyll’s estate, “it [offends] him both as a lawyer and as a lover of the sane and customary sides of life, to whom the fanciful was the immodest” (Stevenson 13). Something about the relationship between Jekyll and Hyde strikes Utterson immediately as “madness” and leading to “disgrace” (Stevenson 13).

Mr. Utterson does not know very much about Mr. Hyde when he begins having horrible nightmares about Hyde and his relationship to Jekyll; in relation to Utterson’s lack of knowledge about Mr. Hyde, his reaction seems extreme. Mr. Utterson’s dreams give Mr. Hyde a supernatural monstrosity; Hyde is powerful and mysterious. The dream version of Hyde slips “stealthily through sleeping houses” and terrorizes Dr. Jekyll (Stevenson 15). Utterson describes dream Hyde as “a figure to whom power was given” and Dr. Jekyll “must rise and do its bidding” (15). This seems to be a particularly important fear for Mr. Utterson; he does not dream about Hyde murdering Jekyll, he dreams of Hyde controlling Jekyll. He seems to have an innate understanding that Hyde would not murder Jekyll, that there is a connection between the two figures that he does not yet fully understand. Utterson feels so compelled to learn more about Hyde that he stalks him; in Utterson’s search for “reason,” he names himself the “Mr. Seek” to Jekyll’s “Mr. Hyde” (15). In giving himself this name, Utterson creates a
relationship with Mr. Hyde that is hinted at in Utterson’s nightmares. Mr. Utterson seems to recognize part of himself in Mr. Hyde and this disturbs him. While it is not stated explicitly, Mr. Utterson is both intensely afraid of and fascinated by Mr. Hyde.

Utterson’s fear of and fascination with Hyde mirrors his everyday life; he stays in severe control of himself while associating with men who are losing control. This mirroring reveals why his “imagination” is “engaged or rather enslaved” by Mr. Hyde and his relationship to Dr. Jekyll (Stevenson 14); Mr. Utterson sees what he fears inside himself in the relationship between Jekyll and Hyde. He sees that Jekyll is not in control of his relationship to Hyde and that as Jekyll has disappeared from public life, Hyde has emerged; Jekyll has been replaced by Hyde. Mr. Utterson fills the role of the vampire hunters in *Dracula* as Jekyll-Hyde fills the role of the hedonistic, out of control monster. Utterson sees in Jekyll-Hyde his own fear of losing control and his reaction to that fear is to become obsessed with Mr. Hyde, to become a detective searching for clues to what has happened to Dr. Jekyll and what binds him to Mr. Hyde, and finally to hunt Jekyll-Hyde until the monster has nowhere to go. Mr. Utterson is not conscious of Hyde as a part of Jekyll for most of the novel, but on a deeper level Utterson seems to be aware that Hyde is a symbol of Jekyll’s ruin. Utterson thinks of Hyde in relation to Jekyll and not as an autonomous person.

One aspect of Mr. Hyde that marks him as a part of Dr. Jekyll instead of an autonomous person is his appearance, or more accurately, the common reaction to his appearance. Many people throughout the novel have trouble describing Mr. Hyde. He is not an individual, whole man. Hyde is a part, the most monstrous part, of Dr. Jekyll. In the first few pages of the story, Mr. Enfield tells Mr. Utterson that Mr. Hyde is “an
extraordinary looking man, and yet [he] really can name nothing out of the way” about Mr. Hyde (Stevenson 12). Despite being able to “see [Mr. Hyde at] this moment” in his mind’s eye, Mr. Enfield “can’t describe him” (12). One of the most disturbing aspects of Utterson’s nightmares about Hyde is that “the figure had no face by which he might know it” (15). Hyde’s dream face “baffled him and melted before his eyes” (15). Utterson feels a “singularly strong, almost an inordinate, curiosity to behold the features of the real Mr. Hyde” (15). He thinks that “if he could but once set eyes on [Mr. Hyde], he thought the mystery would lighten . . . as was the habit of mysterious things when well examined,” but when he does meet Hyde, Mr. Utterson is just as perplexed as he was before (15). He tries to reconcile Hyde’s describable traits and the “impression of deformity” that the man gives off and he finds himself unable to do so (17). Mr. Utterson cannot “explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing, and fear” that he feels for Mr. Hyde (17). Hyde is symbolic of the worst part of a good man. Irving Massey states in his article, “The Third Self,” that “evil follows from the good” and the two are not actually separate from each other (59). Utterson’s unexplainable loathing and fear of Mr. Hyde comes from his subconscious recognition that Hyde is a part of Jekyll and that he has the potential for evil if he were to let go of his strict self-control. All of this translates into an obsession with Mr. Hyde that leads Mr. Utterson to discover as much as he can about the monstrous man.

Mr. Utterson desperately wants to differentiate himself from the monstrous Mr. Hyde; he does this by reinforcing his humanity through his friendships with other men. Mr. Utterson learns about Mr. Hyde, in part, through his friends; Utterson seems to gain strength through his bonds with other men and at times feels “a longing for advice”
When Mr. Utterson decides that he must learn more about Dr. Jekyll and his relationship with Mr. Hyde, he turns to his friends for knowledge, which is a form of strength in the novel. He first hears of Mr. Hyde’s exploits through his friend Mr. Enfield during their Sunday walk, which is “the chief jewel of each week” (8) for both men. When Mr. Utterson wants to learn more about Dr. Jekyll, he turns to his friend Dr. Lanyon; Stevenson stresses that the two men are “old friends” (13) and that the friendship between Mr. Utterson and Dr. Lanyon is “reposed on genuine feeling” (13). It seems important that Mr. Utterson is getting his information from close friends and not just acquaintances; he gets his strength from the true bonds of friendship. As we also see in *Dracula*, the only way to fight a monster is to gain knowledge about the monster, as this makes the monster more real, therefore enforcing the distinction between monster and man. Mr. Utterson uses his friendships to gain the knowledge he needs to unravel the mystery surrounding Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. In the build up to the final showdown between Mr. Utterson and Mr. Hyde, Utterson feels that “never in his life had he been conscious of so sharp a wish to see and touch his fellow-creatures” (33). I interpret Utterson’s “sharp wish” for human connection as a wish to reinforce his humanity as opposed to Hyde’s monstrosity. As Utterson’s fear of Hyde comes from his fear of his own potential for monstrosity, Utterson is reassured that he is a good man by connecting with other good men. By being social, Mr. Utterson embodies the opposite of Mr. Hyde’s self-inflicted isolation.

As friendship is connected with moral goodness, seclusion is connected with moral depravity. When Mr. Utterson and Mr. Enfield pass Mr. Hyde’s residence, the most remarkable feature is the lack of windows in the front of the building. Mr. Hyde’s
residence is described as a “sinister block of building” that “showed no window” over the front door, just “a blind forehead” (Stevenson 8). The descriptions of buildings often focus on the windows or the absence of windows. Mr. Hyde cuts himself off from the human world by occupying a space where it is difficult to see in or see out; Mr. Hyde is able to isolate himself in the middle of an urban environment through his choice in living quarters. His residence also shows “the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence” and is “equipped with neither bell nor knocker” (8). It is immediately obvious to any passer-by that this man does not want to talk to, let alone be friends with, anyone. While Dr. Jekyll is trying to protect himself by setting up this place for his alter ego, he is actually calling attention to himself. The message that this building sends to Mr. Utterson is that Mr. Hyde is not a normal human being, but reinforces the belief that he is a dangerous individual. Mr. Hyde’s residence stands out just as much as Dracula’s fortress of a castle does and is itself a kind of fortress against prying eyes. In both cases, the opening conflict of the story comes from a human character noticing that there is an especially defined boundary between the monster and the outside world. This immediately sets the monster apart from humanity and makes the human characters uneasy.

A lack of windows, dirty windows, and the shutting of windows continue to be a symbol of the unnatural and sinister throughout the novel. When Utterson visits Dr. Jekyll in his laboratory, he is struck by “a distasteful sense of strangeness” as he enters the “dingy windowless structure” (25); the space was “once crowded with eager students” but now is “gaunt and silent” (25). The doctor’s “cabinet” is attached to the laboratory and has “three dusty windows barred with iron” (25). In the space where the doctor actually performed his horrible experiments, there are no windows at all. This is the only
space in the entire novel where there are absolutely no windows. While people used to fill the laboratory, a representation of society, now Dr. Jekyll performs his experiments alone and unchecked. In the doctor’s cabinet, where he tells Utterson that he “will never set eyes on [Hyde] again,” there are windows that connect the doctor to the outside world and to his humanity, but these windows are dusty and barred (25). Dr. Jekyll’s laboratory shows that he wants to isolate himself from friendship as both Jekyll and Hyde.

Windows serve as a connection to humanity when they are clean or open and when they are shut or absent that connection is broken. Later in the novel, Utterson and Enfield try to talk to Dr. Jekyll through the doctor’s window, but at this point the doctor has almost no control over when he will transform into Mr. Hyde and the two men see “an expression of...terror and despair” on the doctor’s face before “the window [is] instantly thrust down” (32). In a rare moment of human companionship between Dr. Jekyll and his old friends, the doctor loses control and cannot allow his friends to see this loss of control, so he severs the connection between them. As the monstrous part of him takes over, he is no longer able to connect with other people, even when he wants to. In another moment where a window is related to human connection, a woman at her window oversees Mr. Hyde’s violent murder of an innocent man. The woman sees clearly through her window, as the world is “brilliantly lit by the full moon” (21). Before she witnesses the murder, she is looking through her window and never felt “more at peace with all men or thought more kindly of the world” (21). The window serves as both a tool for surveillance and as a connection to humanity. Humans are drawn to windows and monsters hide from them.
Windows are treated as a physical manifestation of transparency to other people; a transparency or openness in that one has nothing to hide from others seeing in through a window and in that one can see out of a window and connect with humanity, as the witness does. Windows also allow for the witness to corroborate that an event truly occurred and make the event more real. Dr. Jekyll actively sought out places without windows when he was looking for an outlet for his dark urges; he uses a laboratory without windows and he finds a residence for Mr. Hyde that has no front window. Jekyll-Hyde can continue to believe that he is two separate beings as long as there is no witness to the change; the one moment where there is a witness to his transformation marks Jekyll-Hyde’s deteriorating separation and his loss of control over the change. The lack of windows is isolating and protects Dr. Jekyll’s secret alter ego, but it also isolates Dr. Jekyll from human friendship. In Dr. Jekyll’s creation of a potion that releases Mr. Hyde, he is trying to turn off his feelings of conscience and empathy toward other people. His turn toward the monstrous is a turn away from human compassion and away from guilt for misconduct. As becoming a monster means becoming less human, it is intimately connected with a self-isolating withdrawal from society. This fits in well with the dual-brain theory in that as the Mr. Hyde identity grows stronger, the Dr. Jekyll identity grows weaker and Jekyll cannot control the transformation from one to the other; he must close himself off from society because he could transform at any moment.

As Anne Stiles says, Jekyll-Hyde is experiencing an “imbalance” that destroys him, but what frightens Jekyll-Hyde the most is that he cannot control the change any longer (885). Jekyll-Hyde requires the freedom to choose between Jekyll and Hyde. He becomes at turns depressed and terrified when he feels that he is stuck being only Jekyll
or Hyde. When he goes for months without taking the form of Hyde, he feels “tortured with throes and longings” to become Mr. Hyde (56) and when he is trying to get access to his potion and turn back into Dr. Jekyll, he feels “the horror of being Hyde” (59). This seems to corroborate his earlier statement that he is “radically both” Jekyll and Hyde, that he is two separate beings, but this is not the only way to view his dissatisfaction (49). Jekyll-Hyde is not happy being Jekyll or Hyde for too long because neither identity allows him to be who he truly is: Jekyll-Hyde. He is so unhappy being Dr. Jekyll and only Dr. Jekyll because that is not who he is.

There are moments throughout the novel that suggest an underlying unity in Jekyll-Hyde. When Mr. Utterson intentionally runs into Mr. Hyde, the fiendish man is afraid of Mr. Utterson at first and will not “look the lawyer in the face” (Stevenson 16); when Utterson asks to see Hyde’s face, “Mr. Hyde [appears] to hesitate, and then, as if on some sudden reflection, fronted about with an air of defiance” (16). It is as if Mr. Hyde momentarily forgets that Mr. Utterson will not recognize him and then, when he remembers his disguise, he revels in the fact that Utterson can have no idea that Hyde is Jekyll. Later, when Dr. Jekyll is starting to lose his control over the transformation, he does not fully realize that he should be Jekyll when he is in the form of Hyde until he looks down at his hand (54). He feels that the fact that he is in the wrong room as an “illusion” and looks at Hyde’s hand in Jekyll’s room “for near half a minute” before “terror” overtakes him (54). In both of these moments, it seems that being Hyde does not feel so different from being Jekyll or, more specifically, Jekyll is still present in Hyde. The distinction between Jekyll and Hyde is a construction that comforts Dr. Jekyll, but as these moments in the text show, it is not real. The unity of Jekyll-Hyde grows more
pronounced as the story moves toward its conclusion, but it is there from the beginning. There is never a true distinction between Jekyll and Hyde, only the illusion of one.

As the illusion of distinction is shattered, Jekyll-Hyde switches back and forth between the first and third person when talking about Mr. Hyde. At one point, Dr. Jekyll is walking in the park when he feels the “nausea and . . . shuddering” of the change into Mr. Hyde (58). When the pain subsides, he says that “I began to be aware of a change in the temper of my thoughts” (58). The thoughts may have changed, but as he refers to himself in the first person, they are still his thoughts. The two personas become more and more mixed as Jekyll-Hyde loses control and “the pangs of transformation [grow] daily less marked” (60). Nearing the end of the story, Jekyll-Hyde admits that when he refers to Mr. Hyde, he uses the third person because he “cannot say, I” (59). Ed Cohen articulates this moment well in his article “Antimonies of Masculinity” when he says that Jekyll-Hyde’s confession “serves as the elusive point of juncture between Jekyll and Hyde, linguistically effecting the slippage that the narrative repeatedly attempts to signify but cannot since it is constrained to maintain the distinction between the ‘two’ characters” (195). The word “slippage” is particularly apt in this case as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde lose any remaining pretense to separation and slip into one unified being. I also find Cohen’s use of the term “constrained” to describe the text interesting; if Stevenson was using the dual-brain theory as a model for the story, as Anne Stiles argues he was, he would have indeed been “constrained to maintain the distinction” between Jekyll and Hyde because the theory supports the distinction. Still, through the use of first and third person pronouns, Stevenson reveals the unity of Jekyll-Hyde.
Massey comments on the underlying unity of Jekyll and Hyde when he argues that “it is not because the evil in Jekyll has overwhelmed the good that Hyde can no longer return to the form of Jekyll; it is because all progress or descent toward unity is a one-way process” (59). He goes on to say that “hell is the loss of duality, not the victory of evil over good” (59). While unlike Massey, I do see Dr. Jekyll as overwhelmed by his darker nature, I agree that Jekyll-Hyde is moving toward unity throughout the story as his constructed barriers between Jekyll and Hyde and between the public and the private break down. Dr. Jekyll’s belief that he can separate himself into two beings is a “protective delusion” (Massey 59). Jekyll-Hyde fights his unity, or “singleness,” by constantly “dodging back into the falsehood of duality” and the falsehood that his identities are separate (Massey 59). Hell is not just “the loss of duality,” it is losing the illusion of a barrier between good and evil and the recognition that animal man and civilized man reside in a unified brain (59). If Jekyll-Hyde fully allowed himself to recognize his unity, he would have to take responsibility for Hyde’s actions and own his immoral desires. This recognition goes counter to Dr. Jekyll’s true purpose in creating Mr. Hyde.

While Dr. Jekyll’s stated purpose in his experiments is the “separation” of good and bad “identities,” his true purpose seems to be to gain the ability to let go of control and indulge his desires for immoral things with no consequences or guilt (49). Dr. Jekyll does not want to ruin his reputation and his alter ego allows him to release the evil part of himself and keep his reputation intact. Although Dr. Jekyll is not described in childish terms, as Dracula and Dorian Gray are, his wish for complete satisfaction of his “impatient gaiety of disposition” (47) and his “imperious desire to carry [his] head high,
and wear a more than commonly grave countenance before the public” (48) is a wish to have the gravitas of a responsible adult without earning it, an inherently childish wish. Dr. Jekyll does not wish to “grow out” of his predilection for immoral pleasures; he does not set out to create a potion that will rid him of temptation or quiet the monster within him. He does not seem to recognize the complete stifling of the immoral part of him as an option. Even before Dr. Jekyll creates his alter ego, he is “committed to a profound duplicity of life” (48). Dr. Jekyll sets out to escape the “almost morbid sense of shame” (48) that comes with the conflicting desires for moral goodness and immoral pleasures. He sees the shame and the possibility of “disgrace and penitence” as his problem and the solution is the “separation” of “the unjust” and “the just” (49). He thinks that he experiences the solution he is looking for in the release of Mr. Hyde, but this is never a true separation of the just from the unjust. From the initial release of Hyde, Jekyll enjoys what it feels like to “be” Hyde. He describes feeling “something strange in [his] sensations, something indescribably new and from its very novelty, incredibly sweet” (50). This particular passage connects Dr. Jekyll’s new form with the life philosophy that Dorian Gray adopts: New Hedonism.

Dr. Jekyll seems to follow Lord Henry’s advice to Dorian Gray as he moves through the night as Mr. Hyde and enjoys satisfying his most immoral urges. He describes feeling “a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a mill race in my fancy, a solution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul” (Stevenson 50). As I have discussed previously, Lord Henry’s New Hedonism is a freedom from morality. As the sphere of art is separated from obligation, Dr. Jekyll separates himself from obligation through the creation of Mr.
Hyde as an identity. Dr. Jekyll seems to have convinced himself that he wanted to become truly good by removing his bad tendencies, but what he really wanted was the ability to indulge the pleasures he is ashamed of without remorse. He admits that “Jekyll . . . projected and shared in the pleasures and adventures of Hyde” (55). As Jekyll-Hyde inhabits his new identity he feels “tenfold more wicked” and “[exults] in the freshness of these sensations” (50). Jekyll-Hyde’s use of the term “sensations” is particularly reminiscent of Pater and Wilde, as both men encouraged the seeking out and enjoyment of new sensations. Hedonism is defined by the search for pleasurable sensations. Jekyll-Hyde lets his pursuit of pleasure consume him and he loses control of his desires, just as Dorian Gray does. He is very similar to Dorian in his joy at releasing the monster inside himself without restraint. He displays his similarity to Dorian Gray when he moves a mirror into his room “for the very purpose of these transformations” (50). He is fascinated in his own transition from man to monster and back again. Jekyll enjoys getting to be both Jekyll and Hyde. He is much happier as Jekyll-Hyde, his true identity, than he ever was attempting to be only Dr. Jekyll, when he lived a life of “nine tenths…effort, virtue, and control” (51). He describes himself as diving “headlong into a sea of liberty” when he transforms into Mr. Hyde (52). He focuses on the freedom he feels as Mr. Hyde; it seems that this freedom to indulge his darkest urges is worth the pain that Hyde causes others. His pleasures go from “undignified” to “monstrous,” but Jekyll does not stop transforming into Hyde (53).

Dr. Jekyll, like Dorian Gray, is able to distance himself from his crimes instead of taking responsibility for them and this shows both that he has relinquished control over his own actions and that he does not want to own his monstrous desires.
While he felt “an almost morbid sense of shame” (48) when he indulged his immoral desires as Dr. Jekyll, he merely feels “a kind of wonder” at Hyde’s horrible actions (53). Even though “Henry Jekyll stood at times aghast before the acts of Edward Hyde,” he does not seem to feel shame or guilt in the beginning, but treats these actions as the actions of someone else (53); since “the situation was apart from ordinary laws” Jekyll feels a “relaxed . . . grasp of conscience” (53). The supernatural aspect to Dr. Jekyll’s situation makes it seem less real to him and this allows him to separate himself from the actions of Mr. Hyde. The doctor shields himself from guilt by saying that “it was Hyde, after all, and Hyde alone, that was guilty” (53). It is as if Jekyll-Hyde is trying to convince himself that he is not Hyde and only Hyde is guilty. Jekyll-Hyde clings to the illusion of a boundary between Jekyll and Hyde. He is also desperate to believe that he is still in control of Hyde and that he can stop transforming into Hyde if he wants to stop.

Dr. Jekyll tries multiple times to convince Mr. Utterson that he is in control of his relationship with Mr. Hyde, but he is not successful in convincing his friend or in convincing himself. When Mr. Utterson first brings up Mr. Hyde with the doctor, Jekyll replies that “the moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr. Hyde,” but at the same time asks Utterson “to help [Mr. Hyde] for [his] sake, when [he is] no longer here” (20-1). The only way Mr. Utterson would truly believe that Jekyll was in control of Hyde would be if Jekyll removed Hyde from his will, but the doctor refuses to do this. In Jekyll’s conflicted response to Utterson’s concerns, the doctor claims that he can sever his connection to Hyde whenever he wants, but in reality Hyde is a part of who he is and Jekyll is addicted to releasing the monster inside of himself. When the doctor does choose to abstain from releasing Hyde, he makes this choice “with some unconscious
reservation” and keeps Hyde’s clothes and residence (56). Jekyll seems to foresee his own loss of control in making Mr. Hyde the sole inheritor of his possessions; even at this early stage, Jekyll’s control is merely illusory. After Hyde murders a good man, Sir Danvers, Dr. Jekyll promises that Hyde “will never more be heard of,” (25) but has “lost confidence” in himself (26). He had tried to give up Hyde and was “true to [his] determination” for two months before he “in an hour of moral weakness . . . swallowed the transforming draught” (56) and the result of this moment of weakness is Hyde’s murder of Sir Danvers. Dr. Jekyll “chose the better part and was found wanting in the strength to keep to it” (55); this is what causes his loss of confidence in himself. Dr. Jekyll knows that he is not in control of the monster within him; he is “slowly losing hold of [his] original and better self, and becoming slowly incorporated with [his] second and worse” (55).

Even as Mr. Utterson is breaking down the door to reveal the unity of his two identities, Jekyll-Hyde tries to keep the two identities separate. He retreats to his laboratory where there are no windows to make his last stand. He cries out for Mr. Utterson to “have mercy,” not in reaction to violence against his body or punishment, but in reaction to Utterson’s “demand to see [Jekyll] . . . if not of [his] consent, then by brute force” (Stevenson 38). At this point, the reader can assume that Jekyll-Hyde is prepared to end his own life, as he is dead by the time the door is smashed in, so he is not asking for Utterson to spare his life or to be lenient in his punishment. Jekyll-Hyde is asking Mr. Utterson to spare his privacy, to spare his secret. The character holds on to his privacy until the very last moment. It is as though his will to keep his secret hidden is even infused into the door, which “was tough and the fittings were of excellent workmanship”
(38). As long as Jekyll-Hyde can keep his unity a secret, he can remain the good Dr. Jekyll and the evil Mr. Hyde, therefore retaining one human identity that is entirely separate from the monstrous one. When the door comes down and the public enters the private space, making it real, Jekyll-Hyde is just a monster. Jekyll-Hyde’s unity is made even more explicit when Utterson and Jekyll’s servant, Poole, come across “a pious work, for which Jekyll had several times expressed a great esteem, annotated, in his own hand, with startling blasphemies” (40). Dr. Jekyll’s letter to Mr. Utterson is one last attempt to separate himself from Mr. Hyde, as his body lies dead in Hyde’s form while wearing Jekyll’s clothes (39). He writes that he has “disappeared” instead of writing that he is dead (41). Mr. Utterson must read further to find out that Jekyll and Hyde are the same man.

In Stevenson’s story, it is as if Dr. Jekyll has read about the dual-brain theory and wants it to be true. As Dorian would like to believe that if he stabs the portrait that houses his soul, he will keep on living and as the band of vampire hunters would like to believe that Dracula is not a reflection of the darkest part of themselves, Dr. Jekyll wants to believe that the monstrous part of himself can be separated out and released or caged at will. He wants to believe both that he can control it and that he does not have to take responsibility for it, since Mr. Hyde is not who Dr. Jekyll is. Jekyll-Hyde shrinks behind the boundaries that he has created until he is caught in the laboratory where he first released Hyde. Jekyll-Hyde’s last act as the final boundary breaks down is to commit suicide. He is not capable of confronting his true, unified self.
CHAPTER III

FASCINATION AND TERROR: THE EFFECTS OF INFLUENCE AND HEDONISM IN *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*

Boundaries are often crossed or blurred in Oscar Wilde’s *Picture of Dorian Gray* and, like *Dracula* and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, it is this crossing and blurring that creates problems for the main character. The first, and most important, blurring of a boundary is Lord Henry Wotton’s influence on Dorian. In allowing Lord Henry to influence him, in becoming an “echo” of Lord Henry, and in living a hedonistic life, Dorian loses control of himself (Wilde 40). Dorian’s lifestyle is characterized as uncontrolled and predatory; he toys with people, poisons them with his influence, and then discards them. The way influence works in this novel is very similar to vampirism in *Dracula* in that the influencer crosses the boundary between himself and his target of influence, enters their mind, and changes them irrevocably. It is Lord Henry’s influence that brings Dorian’s monstrous aspect to the surface and as he allows this influence to dominate him, he becomes a hedonistic monster. At the same time, Dorian is not a vampire, he is still a human man. He feels the pull of guilt and responsibility and responds by creating a distance, a boundary, between himself and his monstrous actions like Dr. Jekyll does. While Dorian does not live in a remote castle and
he does not turn away from all of his friends, his true self, the picture of his soul, is just as isolated as Dracula and Dr. Jekyll and since no one can see it, it doesn’t feel real to Dorian. The boundary between his body and his soul allows him to become the spectator of his soul’s corruption. Boundaries and control become very important to Dorian as he fights the realization that he has no control and is therefore a monster. These constructed separations collapse over the course of the novel and Dorian finally confronts his own monstrosity. When Dorian sees himself as he truly is, both man and monster, he kills himself. It is intolerable for Dorian to feel what is left of his humanity and goodness blur into his monstrosity.

Dorian constantly struggles between denying and exploring the darker aspects of his being. In Philip Cohen’s *The Moral Vision of Oscar Wilde*, he describes how Wilde’s own moral dilemma filters through *Dorian Gray*. Wilde wishes for “a different moral order” in which he could “indulge his own sexual preferences without guilt” (128). Wilde’s personal struggle with his discovery of his homosexuality is reflected in Dorian’s swings from “guilt,” a form of acceptance, to “rebellious denial” (128). Dorian feels that Lord Henry’s influence brings out an aspect of himself that was already there, which corresponds with Wilde’s homosexuality, but Dorian rejects responsibility for his actions over and over again. The character tries to use New Hedonism to give his immoral actions a scientific objectivity. He practices “deliberate confusion of the real and the unreal” to avoid the reality of his actions (137). Also, he allows Lord Henry to influence him; he gives up his self-control. The control that Dorian does exhibit tends to revolve around separating the proper and improper parts of his life. Dorian’s journey throughout the novel is defined by his simultaneous exploration and rejection of the ugly part of
himself that make him, as P. Cohen points out, both the actor and the spectator of his own life (138). This is made explicit in Dorian’s relationship with the portrait that houses his soul. Cohen argues that Dorian uses “the portrait to transcend the morality of his era,” but I see Dorian’s relationship to the portrait as more complicated than that (128). He tries to avoid responsibility and guilt that are wrapped up in traditional morality, but he also wants to be a good person and not a monster. As Bram Stoker makes Dracula into a seemingly foreign monster, Dorian acts at times as if his own portrait is foreign to him. He is caught in the same trap as Dr. Jekyll and Jonathan Harker, among others, in that he is both terrified and fascinated by the darkest part of himself. Dorian is able to live as both monster and man as long as he feels that he has some semblance of control. It is when he realizes that he does not have control that the final barriers dissolve and he destroys himself.

The first barrier to dissolve is between Dorian and Lord Henry when the older man initiates his influence on Dorian. In the novel when a character is influenced by something or someone outside himself this act of influence is given a sinister quality; the influencer becomes a predatory figure and this figure prays on the people he influences. Amanda Anderson puts it well when she says “Wilde . . . holds a notion of seduction as sinister, surreptitious influence, especially of one personality by a powerful other” (164). Lord Henry deliberately influences Dorian, making the beautiful young man into an experiment, but Dorian is unable to control or reject Lord Henry’s influence. When Dorian Gray is first introduced, he is uncorrupted. Lord Henry describes Dorian as having “youth’s passionate purity” and as “unspotted from the world” (Wilde 39). Dorian’s face has a quality “that [makes] one trust him at once” (39). Dorian’s outer
appearance seems to reflect his innocence. Lord Henry remarks to Dorian that as soon as he laid eyes on the young man, he could see that Dorian was “quite unconscious” of his own beauty and his potential (46). Dorian is the perfect prey for Lord Henry, he is asleep to his own power and Lord Henry is very predatory in his aim to awaken Dorian to the fleeting power of youth and beauty. Basil tells Dorian to disregard what Lord Henry says because Lord Henry is “a very bad influence” on people, foreshadowing the negative influence Lord Henry will have on Dorian (Wilde 40). When Dorian asks Lord Henry if he is a bad influence, the lord’s response is that “all influence is immoral” because “to influence a person is to give him one’s own soul” (Wilde 40); by Lord Henry’s own logic, if he is guilty of influencing other people, than he is an immoral person. Later, when Lord Henry is thinking about influencing Dorian, he brings up his definition of influence again. To influence someone is “to project one’s soul into some gracious form” and “to convey one’s temperament into another as though it were a subtle fluid or a strange perfume” (60). Lord Henry seems to truly believe that to influence someone is immoral and that it makes the influencer into the puppeteer or conductor while the influenced person becomes the puppet or instrument. Lord Henry goes so far as to relate Dorian to an instrument when he compares talking to him to “playing upon an exquisite violin” (60). Lord Henry is not interested in being friends with Dorian Gray; he aims “to dominate him” (61).

Wilde’s depiction of Dorian Gray’s adoption of Lord Henry’s ideas about life and Dorian’s simultaneous decent into immorality seems to corroborate Lord Henry’s theory that an influenced person is dominated and that “all influence is immoral” because of this domination (Wilde 40). In the chapter immediately following Lord Henry’s
determination to dominate Dorian through his influence, Dorian is parroting Lord Henry’s views. In Dorian’s conversation with Lord Henry’s wife, she recognizes “one of Harry’s views” coming out of Dorian’s mouth and she goes on to say that she “always hears] Harry’s views from his friends” (Wilde 70). Dorian tells Lord Henry himself that he is “putting…into practice” one of Lord Henry’s “aphorisms” and that Dorian puts into practice “everything that [Lord Henry says]” (Wilde 71). As Lord Henry had hoped, he gets “to hear [his] own intellectual views echoed back to [him] with all the added music of passion and youth” (Wilde 60). Dorian is devoting himself to doing what Lord Henry encourages him to do, therefore allowing Lord Henry to control him. Dorian admits that he does everything that Lord Henry says; this is a form of losing control or giving control to another person and their ideology. Dorian seems to accept and put into practice everything that Lord Henry says without questioning it (71). Dorian is a very young man and this puts him at a disadvantage because all he can contribute to the relationship is his youth and beauty. This relationship is not a sharing of ideas between two men, there is no back and forth to the dialogue, it is an older man dominating a younger man. When Dorian opens his mouth and Lord Henry’s words come out, it becomes clear that Lord Henry has been successful in his domination of Dorian Gray. It seems that Dorian is so utterly fascinated by Lord Henry and so subject to his influence that Dorian would do anything Lord Henry said, no matter how immoral.

This loss of control is even greater and even more immoral because Lord Henry’s ideal way of life is to follow the “internal ethical programme” of New Hedonism that “asserts the primacy of a doctrine of pleasure that absolves individuals from the ordinary responsibilities for their actions” (Gillespie 145). This gives the search for
pleasure despite the consequences a respectability that counterbalances the inherent selfishness of such a life. Lord Henry makes the New Hedonism sound like a courageous way to live when he says “live the wonderful life that is in you! Let nothing be lost upon you . . . be afraid of nothing . . . there is nothing you could not do” (Wilde 46). When put this way, it sounds like the only way to really live. Yet, as Dorian follows Lord Henry’s New Hedonism, he does not feel absolved from responsibility. He spends a lot of energy trying to avoid responsibility by shifting it to outside forces and using his chosen way of life to defend his actions. New Hedonism and the portrait work in the same way in the novel because both allow Dorian to indulge every urge without feeling responsible, or at least they provide means for Dorian to avoid responsibility.

Dorian’s hedonistic way of life is childish in its rejection of responsibility; he is just as out of control, and therefore monstrous, as Jekyll-Hyde and Dracula. Responsibility is a sign of maturity; adults are expected to be responsible for their actions, but children are not. Dorian Gray is often described as child-like and his refusal to take responsibility for his actions can also be seen as a refusal to take on the duties of an adult. Dorian is like a child in that he has no self-control and he does not seem capable of taking responsibility for his actions. For Dorian to take responsibility for his deeds throughout the novel, he would have to accept that he is in control of his life and reject the domination of outside influences. Dorian’s way of life, New Hedonism, allows him to act as a dark and dangerous version of a child and Dorian’s dark childishness is monstrous. An adult who never grows up, who is completely autonomous with a seemingly endless supply of money, who feeds their various appetites without end, and who hurts other people without thinking is a monster. Dorian Gray allows himself to
become this monster and Count Dracula and Dr. Jekyll display this same kind of monstrosity, a lack of responsibility and the excessive consumption of pleasurable sensations. Dr. Jekyll in particular, as a human/monster hybrid, feels guilt for his actions and spends a lot of mental energy convincing himself that he does not have to be responsible for his actions. Hedonism is essentially the opposite of a responsible life; it allows the follower to indulge all of his desires. In this way Hedonism does not change the follower, it allows him to express his whole self without controlling it.

Lord Henry’s influence has a profound and immediate effect on Dorian, but he feels that this influence is bringing out something already within himself; Dorian’s feeling that Lord Henry is bringing out a dormant part of him is substantiated by the homoerotic subtext in their relationship. Within the first few pages of Lord Henry and Dorian’s meeting, he becomes “conscious” of the “fresh influences” that are affecting him, “yet [these influences] seemed to have come really from himself” (42). Dorian feels that Lord Henry has “touched some secret cord [within him] that had never been touched before” (42). Lord Henry has explained things that Dorian had already felt “in his boyhood,” but had not understood (42). This part of Dorian lay dormant before Lord Henry began talking to him, but it was there before they met. Dorian and Lord Henry’s first meeting is characterized by the image of Lord Henry waking the sleeping Dorian Gray. Dorian is “suddenly awakened” (Wilde 44) to an immoral part of himself by Lord Henry. It is implied here that if there was nothing in Dorian for Lord Henry’s influence to latch onto, Dorian would remain unaffected.

While Lord Henry has a great effect on Dorian, he seems to believe, as Dorian does, that he is just bringing a part of “the real Dorian Gray” to the surface (Wilde 51).
Jeff Nunokawa in his essay “The Importance of Being Bored” explains that “Lord Henry endorses every feeling, thought, dream, and impulse, rather than any in particular” to hide “the love that dare not speak its name” under “the big tent of Desire” (158). When thought of in this way, New Hedonism is a justification for Dorian to be his whole self and satisfy all of his desires, even the homosexual ones. Lord Henry forces Dorian to recognize all of his desires, moral and immoral, and in recognizing them, Dorian finds that he cannot un-recognize them. He feels that Lord Henry, like the portrait, has revealed “him to himself” (44) and because Lord Henry’s words are in harmony with something inside Dorian, he “[can]not escape from them” (42). Lord Henry’s influence works in the same way as Dr. Jekyll’s potion; it enhances the urges that are already there. Because Dorian feels that Lord Henry’s influence is enhancing instead of creating the darkest part of his being, he is immediately disturbed by and afraid of Lord Henry’s words and his own reaction to them. The innocent and young Dorian finds Lord Henry “absolutely fascinating” but is also “afraid of him, and ashamed of being afraid” (Wilde 44). It is as if Dorian can already sense that his fascination with Lord Henry will put his innocence in danger, but this fear does not make sense to Dorian on a conscious level, so he sees it as irrational and is ashamed of it.

Dorian’s simultaneous fascination with and fear of Lord Henry is reminiscent of Lucy Westenra’s reaction to her encounters with Dracula in Stoker’s novel. She is terrified, but she cannot explain why she is scared or what she is scared of; she is full of “vague fear” (Stoker 241). When Dorian first meets Lord Henry, he also feels a fear that he cannot explain. This is significant because both Dorian and Lucy feel fear in reaction to an influence. In Lucy’s case, this influence controls her and is killing her. In Dorian’s
case, he seems frightened because of his intense fascination with Lord Henry. Both characters are scared of the blurring of boundaries and the loss of control. Lucy writes of being frightened of “the harsh sounds that came from I know not where and commanded me to do I know not what” (Stoker 262). She is afraid because she does not know what is going on and therefore cannot stop it and because she is being “commanded” to commit different actions; Dracula has established a connection with her, crossing the boundary between them, and she is not in control of her own body. Lucy is being changed through influence and she cannot fight the influence. Dorian also feels “altered” by influence, but in his case the influence is “[revealing] him to himself” (Wilde 44). As Lord Henry reveals to Dorian the most mysterious and secret parts of himself, he also establishes an intimate connection with the person he influences. Like a man who has been “suddenly awakened,” Dorian cannot go back to sleep regarding the secrets Lord Henry has shared with him (44). He cannot resist Lord Henry’s influence and this is very frightening for him. This influence leads Dorian to lose control of himself and commit horrible actions.

Dorian, like Dr. Jekyll, spends a significant amount of time in the novel trying to distance himself from his horrible actions because he does not want to admit that he is capable of doing monstrous things, that there is a sort of “Mr. Hyde” within him that is reflected in his actions and in the portrait of his soul. When Dorian feels remorse or guilt for the things he has done, he does his best to force these feelings out of his mind. Dorian treats his own life as if it is art in a consistent attempt to distance himself from his actions. Philip Cohen describes Dorian’s attempts to treat life as art as a “deliberate fragmentation of the self through split consciousness” (138). Dorian attempts the same type of rationalization that Dr. Jekyll uses in *Jekyll and Hyde*: he tries to split himself into
separate beings, one that does the action and one that watches the action. As the physical consequences of what he has done reside outside of his body, Dorian can treat his own actions as a kind of performance. Dorian “divides into contemplative and active halves, becoming distributed between participation in life and observation of that involvement as though it were art” so that he can “avoid responsibility for participation in life” (P. Cohen 138). This is related to the idea that art is separate from morality. As the portrait takes on the qualities of a living being, Dorian’s body becomes unchanging, like art, and this allows Dorian to treat his “participation in life” as an art form and therefore separate from morality and responsibility. Life and art switch with his life becoming art and his portrait representing real life consequences to his soul. This disconnects Dorian’s actions from their consequences and creates a boundary between Dorian’s body/actions and his soul.

Dorian first splits himself when he hears of Sybil Vane’s suicide. At first Dorian seems to take responsibility for Sybil Vane’s suicide when he says that he has “murdered Sybil Vane” (Wilde 128) by rejecting her love and being “terribly cruel to her,” (132) but he almost immediately emotionally detaches himself from her suicide by treating it “like a wonderful ending to a wonderful play” (130). He turns a real-life tragedy into an “extraordinarily dramatic” (Wilde 128) experience that, according to New Hedonism, has the same value as a piece of art in that the event provides new sensations. His distancing from his actions seems to be triggered by the change in the portrait as he treats his first great sin in the novel as art. At the same time, he fears becoming a monster now that he knows he can get away with anything. Dorian recognizes that the combination of the portrait and New Hedonism put his soul in danger and that “there is nothing to keep [him] straight” (Wilde 129). He worries that he is “heartless” (129) and
that Sybil’s suicide “does not affect [him] as it should,” (130) but he buries these worries by displacing responsibility for these actions. He tells himself that “his choice” to be a good or an evil person has “already been made” by the circumstances in which he finds himself (135). Dorian believes that since “the portrait [is] to bear the burden of his shame,” (135) he is not capable of choosing to resist the temptation to do terrible things. He lets go of all self-control and responsibility in this moment because he knows that he can do what he wants without consequence, that there is no one to hold him responsible for what he does or who he affects.

A major turning point in the story is the section in which Dorian has seen the first change in the picture; it is this realization that the picture will hold his sin and age coupled with the influence of the “poisonous book” that Lord Henry sends Dorian that seems to send him down the path of hedonism and turns him into a monster (156). Wilde writes that “the heavy odour of incense seemed to cling about [the book’s] pages and to trouble the brain” (156) as if the book itself is a drug, like opium.¹ He later describes “the odour” of opium as “heavy and persistent,” like the odor of the book (219). The book produces “a form of reverie, a malady of dreaming” in Dorian much like opium; he is “unconscious of the falling day and creeping shadows” as he reads the book (156). This description of the book as a drug puts Dorian in a passive position. Dorian tells Lord Henry that he was “so fascinated” by the book that he “forgot how the time was going” and that this is Lord Henry’s fault for sending Dorian the book (157). Dorian in this way blames Lord Henry for influencing him through the book. This is one of many moments

¹ The “heavy odour of incense” is also related to religion (156). In a way, Dorian is reading the book he will devote himself to and it becomes a holy book for him.
where Dorian does not take responsibility for his own actions; he blames the book and Lord Henry, with his “subtle poisonous theories,” for making him late and implicitly acknowledges Lord Henry’s influence over him and Dorian’s lack of control over himself (121).

The next chapter seems to connect the decadent book’s influence over Dorian, and therefore his lack of control over his life, with his loss of humanity and transformation into a monstrous being. Dorian “could not free himself” or “never sought to free himself . . . from the influence of this book” (Wilde 158). He reads about the main character’s “sudden decay . . . with an almost cruel joy”; Dorian seems to value his own beauty more because of the book and his fascination with his physical beauty is tied to the “corruption of his . . . soul” (159). He allows the book and Lord Henry to influence him and seems “to have almost entirely lost control” over his “various moods and changing fancies” (158). This chapter marks the first mention of rumours about Dorian’s “mode of life” (158). As Dorian loses control over his “moods” and “fancies,” he also begins to lose control over the boundary separating his respectable life from his immoral life. People say “the most evil things about him,” and his friends wonder about his “mysterious and prolonged absences” (158-59). While one life bleeds into another, Dorian enjoys the “sharpness of the contrast” between his body and his portrait (159). This contrast allows Dorian to maintain the illusion of control. He examines the portrait with a “monstrous and terrible delight” (159). Like Jekyll-Hyde, Dorian derives pleasure from living both a moral and an immoral life without any public consequences. As he subscribes to New Hedonism, anything that is pleasurable is exempt from the constrictions of morality.
Dorian lives a life of hedonistic excess so intense that it is monstrous. The desire for experiences and pleasure “which Lord Henry had first stirred in him . . . seemed to increase with gratification” (160). Dorian is never satisfied; “he had mad hungers that grew more ravenous as he fed them” (160). The description of Dorian Gray’s lifestyle in this chapter emphasize his search for new sensations; he is dominated by his senses and his passions through a worship of “a new Hedonism” (162). Dorian’s life is a constant “search for sensations” that are “new and delightful”; to achieve this, he “[adopts] certain modes of thought . . . [and abandons] himself to their subtle influences” until he has “caught their colour” and he is “satisfied” (163). It is as if Dorian is draining a mode of thought or experience of its sensation; he is consuming sensations as he is a consumer of goods. Once Dorian is “satisfied” by the mode of thought he has momentarily adopted, he “[leaves it] with . . . curious indifference” (163) and moves on. Dorian does not seem to have any deep, true feelings for anything other than the book that shapes his life. He allows the book to influence him to the point where “the whole book seemed to him to contain the story of his own life, written before he had lived it” (158). In this way, the book has a strong influence over how Dorian lives his life.

Once Dorian has been influenced by Lord Henry and the book Lord Henry gave him, Dorian becomes a bad influence on other people. As Lord Henry was the predator and Dorian was his prey, Dorian becomes the predator as he influences other innocent people, perpetuating the connecting between influence and ruin. Basil Hallward confronts Dorian about his reputation for becoming friends with people and ruining them. He asks Dorian why his “friendship [is] so fatal to young men” (183) and gives multiple examples of highborn young men who were once Dorian’s friends who either killed
themselves or are shunned by society. Dorian is known as “a man whom no pure-minded girl should be allowed to know, and whom no chaste woman should sit in the same room with” (183). Dorian’s friends, male and female, “seem to lose all sense of honour, of goodness, of purity” and Dorian’s friendship nurtures “a madness for pleasure” in his friends (184). This is reminiscent of Dorian’s first meeting with Lord Henry, in which the lord told Dorian that, “the only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it” (41). Dorian has taken what Lord Henry said to heart and he has become a cruel and inhumane man because of it. Basil begs Dorian to let his “wonderful influence . . . be for good, not for evil,” (185) but Dorian seems to use his influence on others as Lord Henry used his on Dorian, to dominate the people who are fascinated with him. In Dorian’s spread of influence he is more like Count Dracula than Dr. Jekyll; his influence has a powerful effect on other people and is linked to the spread of madness. From Basil’s description of Dorian’s friends, it seems that few of them are able to resist his influence and they lose control of themselves. As Dorian becomes like Lord Henry, Dorian’s friends become like him.

Wilde’s depiction of Lord Henry’s influence on Dorian Gray and Dorian’s influence on others is completely negative and is portrayed as uncontrollable. Lord Henry’s influence works its way into Dorian and he cannot fight the power of his influence or control its effect on him. While Dorian’s beauty does influence Basil’s art, Basil’s positive friendship does not seem to influence Dorian. The trail of influence throughout the novel is marked by ruined people and suicide; it is not a positive thing. Lord Henry’s thoughts on influence seem to put into words one of the central themes of the novel, that to be an influence on someone is always immoral (Wilde 40). As Lord
Henry notes in his discussion of influence, it turns the influenced person into “an echo of someone else’s music” (Wilde 41); as Dorian does to others what Lord Henry did to him, he becomes an echo of Lord Henry. Dorian kills himself when he finally sees that he will never change because he is not in control of himself. His devotion to New Hedonism and to Lord Henry’s domination has destroyed his ability to control himself. Dorian ends his life by aiming at his soul and plunging a knife into his own heart in a kind of veiled suicide (Wilde 264). While the reader does not see Dorian’s followers commit suicide, the reader does see what causes one of them to commit this act. When Dorian forces Alan Campbell to make Basil Hallward’s body disappear, Campbell feels “dominated” by Dorian (Wilde 208). In helping Dorian get away with murder, Campbell becomes an accessory to the crime. When Dorian forces Campbell to help him by threatening to reveal a secret from their shared past, Campbell sees that as long as Dorian Gray lives, he will never have full control of his own life (Wilde 205). Both Dorian and Alan Campbell kill themselves when they come to the realization that they are not in control of themselves.

When Dorian is forced to look at what his influence has done to others, the consequences of his hedonistic lifestyle, and at the wreck his soul has become, he is faced with his monstrosity and displaces responsibility for what he has become; even when he finally allows another person to see his soul with him, making it real, he finds a way to avoid responsibility for what he has allowed himself to become. As Dorian allows Basil to see his true self, he is removing himself from the isolation that protected him from society’s judgment and punishment and that allowed him to live in denial. This confrontation with the portrait is entirely different from the moments where Dorian
inspects his portrait alone; when he is alone, he experiences great hedonistic pleasure in comparing his youthful face with his aging portrait, but as Basil looks at the portrait from a moral point of view, so does Dorian. With Basil looking at his soul with him, Dorian is confronted with reality and he cannot handle it, so he kills Basil. Dorian’s murder of Basil is one of two moments where Dorian completely loses control; the other is when he destroys himself through attacking the portrait. As Basil calls Dorian’s soul “an accursed thing” and his life an “evil” one, “an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward” comes over Dorian (Wilde 191). He displaces the “unwavering judgment” he feels coming from the portrait onto Basil (P. Cohen 118). As P. Cohen explains, Dorian “forces Basil into the role of God . . . and he blames the divine surrogate for his evil nature rather than accepting responsibility for it himself” (125). Basil represents multiple things in this moment; he is the painter of the portrait and the only person, outside of Dorian, who can see the portrait. Basil comments that “only God” can see the soul and Dorian responds by showing his soul to Basil, making Basil into God (186). Dorian points out Basil’s “ideal” on the portrait, proving to Basil that this grotesque piece of art is indeed his work (190). Despite Dorian’s attempts to “[burden]” Basil by making him “share [his] secret,” he does not feel triumphant in sharing it (186). Basil’s response is to pray for “repentance,” which Dorian refuses to do. The suggestion of repentance seems to trigger his rage; he refuses to feel responsible for the state of his soul. This is another moment where hedonism trumps morality for Dorian.

Although Dorian acts in many ways as a hedonistic monster, he does at times feel guilty about what he has done and, as he becomes more desperate for control, he tries to change and be a better person. After Dorian has killed his friend Basil Hallward and he
is no longer threatened by James Vane, he tries to convince Lord Henry, the man partially responsible for what Dorian has become, that he is in control of himself and that he can change into a better man. He tells Lord Henry that he has “done too many dreadful things” and that he is “not going to do any more” (Wilde 248). He even feels that because of his recent “good action” that he has already started to “alter” into a better version of himself (248). Dorian seems to feel more civilized and capable of change when he is not being threatened, but this is an illusion and Lord Henry tells him as much. As he has had a great effect on Dorian, Lord Henry knows that his wish to change is superficial and that Dorian’s “pleasure” from refraining from ruining a country girl is based in the “novelty of the emotion” and is not a sign of deeper personal change (249). This truth is further enforced when Lord Henry brings up Basil’s disappearance and Dorian seems irritated and bored by the topic, but not upset. Dorian himself wonders “how it was that he could discuss [Basil’s disappearance] so calmly” (250). This thought is reminiscent of his worry that Sybil’s death did “not affect [him] as it should” have (130). In trying to distance himself from responsibility for his actions, Dorian has distanced himself from his humanity. As Dorian tries to convince Lord Henry that he is in control of himself, he is also trying to convince himself. Under Dorian’s surprise that he can talk calmly of Basil is the knowledge that he has not and cannot truly change. When Dorian asks Lord Henry if “a man who has once committed a murder could possibly do the same crime again,” (252) he is also asking himself if he can control himself anymore. Lord Henry responds by saying that “anything becomes a pleasure if one does it too often” (252); this is a particularly hedonistic response in that it disregards the immorality of murder and equates it with any other “method of procuring sensations” (252). There seems to be no
action evil enough to be unjustifiable by Lord Henry’s version of hedonism that has flowered in Dorian Gray.

Dorian has a more difficult time than Lord Henry in justifying immoral actions as appropriate when done in the name of New Hedonism. As Dorian has wielded the knife that killed his friend, he can no longer separate himself from the consequences of his actions like he did before. Dorian does horrible things to people throughout the novel, but he does not want to admit that he is out of control and therefore a monster. Like Dr. Jekyll, Dorian is afraid of what he has become. Even after Lord Henry has told Dorian that “life is not governed by will or intention,” (255) he still insists that he is “going to be good” and is “a little changed already” (257). He blames Lord Henry for “[poisoning him] with a book” (257); even as Dorian tries to reclaim control, he shifts the responsibility for his actions to Lord Henry and the book he gave him. As Dorian continues to flee responsibility, he confirms that he is still allowing Lord Henry’s New Hedonism to influence him, as it is a justification for not taking responsibility for one’s actions. Dorian struggles between wanting to be a truly good person, in which case he should take responsibility for his actions and assume control over his life, and rejecting responsibility for what he has done and how monstrous he has allowed himself to become.

It is this struggle between duty and the monstrous hedonism that Dorian has given his life to that destroys him. He clings to the idea that he can, and has already, changed for the better until he looks his own soul in the face and sees undeniable proof that it is not true. Once he has seen that despite his efforts he is just as rotten as he was before he decided to be good, he tries to stab the portrait and ends up stabbing himself in
the heart; although it is not directly stated that he is committing suicide, a “self-murder,” his awareness of the connection between the portrait and himself hangs over the character’s decision to destroy the portrait (P. Cohen 123). He “punishes himself by an act characteristic of the very immorality through which he has tried to escape judgment” when he commits suicide (P. Cohen 127). In Dorian’s wish to destroy the portrait, he also wants to “kill the past” and “kill this monstrous soul-life” and be “free” and “at peace” (Wilde 263). He calls the portrait his “conscience” as well as his “soul-life” (263); these particular terms show his understanding that the portrait is a part of him, that the portrait houses his soul. The term “at peace” (263) calls to mind death, as dead people are often described as “at peace.” At the same time, Dorian is so desperate to distance himself from what he has done and from taking responsibility that it is unclear whether he is in his right mind when he stabs the portrait. He feels the portrait judging him, calling for him “to give himself up and be put to death” (Wilde 262). Dorian recognizes that “it [is] his duty to confess to suffer public shame, and to make public atonement,” (Wilde 262) but he is not willing to take on his duty. Dorian’s entire way of life has been built on escape from duty and responsibility, which the portrait allowed him to maintain. Dorian’s suicide, like Dr. Jekyll’s, is a final attempt to separate himself from his actions.

Dorian comes to “loath” his portrait and his soul’s corruption, but this loathing comes from his fear that he will always be a monster and that he cannot change (Wilde 260). His fear of his monstrosity and his hope that he can change come to the surface in the moments before Dorian looks at his portrait for the last time. He hopes that he can “become pure” and “expel every sign of evil passion from the face” of his soul in the portrait (261). Dorian does not focus on what he has done, he focuses on how he can
change his future; as long as Dorian hangs on to the illusion of control, he is not really a monster. His fear of his monstrosity comes through in his hope that his portrait, “the hideous thing that he [has] hidden away,” will “no longer be a terror to him” (261). He hopes that the portrait has changed because he is afraid of his monstrosity. When Dorian sees that the portrait is “more loathsome” than it has ever been, his fear of his monstrosity is confirmed and this fear seems to transform into hatred and rage (261).

Dorian Gray seems to stab his portrait to get rid of the last “bit of evidence” that he is a monstrous man (Wilde 263), or at least that is what he says when he contemplates destroying it, but Dorian’s paranoia is coming from a more personal place. It is his fear of what he has become that drives him to stab his own soul and kill himself. Once Dorian recognizes that he has become a monster and that he cannot change, he can no longer stand to look at the portrait. At the end of novel, he hates the portrait and therefore he hates himself; the separation between his body and his soul has deteriorated. It is this fear of the self becoming the other that drives the violence in all three novels. Jekyll-Hyde commits violence against himself and the vampire hunters kill Dracula and the vampires he has created. Dorian is another example of a character driven by fear to commit violence against the monster.
CHAPTER IV

“LONGING AND DEADLY FEAR”: THE BATTLE FOR BOUNDARIES AND CONTROL IN BRAM STOKER’S

DRACULA

In Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, the human characters are consumed by fear, but they are not so much afraid of confronting the monster that terrorizes them as they are afraid of losing control of themselves or their situation. As in Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the characters tend to lose control when they are isolated. The characters are most vulnerable to losing control of themselves due to a vampire’s influence when they are physically alone, asleep, or isolated from knowledge. Before the vampire is revealed as real, the human characters are more isolated from each other and from knowledge. After the existence of the vampire is confirmed, the human characters are more afraid of what the monster, Count Dracula, represents and what his influence can bring out in themselves than their own death. In fact, true death is seen as a controlling force that the humans exert on the vampires and that the vampires secretly desire in order to achieve peace. Like Dr. Jekyll and Dorian Gray, vampires do not want to be monsters, but it is inherent in the monster to lack self-control. Count Dracula and vampires as a whole are at times described as children or as animals and are connected to prostitutes and the insane;
they are the ultimate out of control being. The vampire as a type of monster is defined in
the novel by “excessive consumption,” (Halberstam, “Technologies” 342) which can be
seen as a form of losing control; it is implied that people over-consume because they
cannot stop themselves, they cannot hold back. The vampire can be seen as a hedonistic
monster in that it cannot resist temptation and its appetite cannot be sated.

Many critics, particularly Judith Halberstam in “Technologies of
Monstrosity,” have seen Dracula as the ultimate foreigner, a “composite of otherness”
(334) I see the othering of Dracula as a distancing from personal loss of control, making
the worst impulses of humans into an inhuman monster. This is an example of how the
supernatural managed Victorian “anxieties . . . by reframing these within the non-
realistic, and thus more easily distanced, mode of gothicity” (Hurley 6). Halberstam
argues that “the otherness that Dracula embodies is not . . . universal,” that “the others
Dracula has absorbed” are specific groups of people, but I see Dracula’s otherness as
both specific and universal (“Technologies” 335). In Dracula’s ability to cross the
boundary between himself and his human prey/enemy, he blurs the distinction between
foreign and native, good and bad, controlled and uncontrolled. I do not deny that Dracula
reflects “historically specific contours of race, class, gender, and sexuality,” but unlike
Halberstam, I think that Dracula’s boundary crossing/blurring makes him both specific
and universal (“Technologies” 335). There is a distancing from the personal in Dracula’s
inhumanity, but there is also an intimate quality to the relationship the monster has with
the humans in the novel; it is when the human characters are the most open to influence,
the least controlled, that Dracula can enter their heads, which implies that control is the
key to being a good person and not a monster. The fact that Dracula can cross the
boundary between him and the human characters is one of his most frightening abilities. As in *Jekyll and Hyde* and *Dorian Gray*, when the boundary between good and evil breaks down, when the characters question their own control and their own goodness, they experience the most distress. With the character of Lucy Westenra in particular, Dracula’s influence brings out a pre-existing aspect of her being, but the text makes it clear that Dracula is capable of influencing even the best of men and women and that the monster himself was at one point a good man (Stoker 397). The vampire breaks down the boundary between evil and good, showing that one can come from the other; this makes his foreignness superficial.

While Dracula’s origins can be seen as markedly foreign, his travel from a classic Gothic castle to the heart of London also arguably represents the move of the Gothic genre from its traditional location to the more modern and urban world, hinting at the monstrosity that exists in reality.¹ In this interpretation, Count Dracula is not so much foreign as he is the physical manifestation of the intimate, one could say native, fear of losing control and becoming a monster. As Dr. Jekyll and Dorian Gray simultaneously refuse to control their terrible appetites and attempt to distance themselves from their darkest aspects, *Dracula* seems to show both the monster that a person can become and make that monster unrecognizable as a human. While the human band that confronts Dracula is in many ways the monster’s opposite, any one of them could become like the monster and their fear of becoming like him, losing control, drives them to re-establish

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¹ Dani Cavallaro discusses this in *The Gothic Vision* when she points out that the idea that monsters could be anywhere “gained considerable weight in the nineteenth century” (172). She references Max Nordeau in particular, a contemporary of Stoker’s, who argued that “the urban context itself breeds depraved creatures” (172). By the end of the nineteenth century, monstrosity was no longer confined to remote areas and anyone could be a monster.
his superficial foreignness by forcing him back to his country and exterminating him and all his kind. “The heroes rise up to destroy Dracula” and the hedonistic lack of control he represents “so that they can return to trains that run on time, to afternoon tea served by Mina in a pleasant English house,” to controlling the dark parts of themselves (McWhir 32).

Jonathan Harker seems to be set up as Dracula’s opposite in the introduction of the character. From the first few pages of the novel, Harker is established as a logical, moral, and modern character; he is “tidy” and “organized” and uninterested in lustful pursuits (McWhir 31). As this is a business trip, Harker fills the role of the professional. He is very proud to be a “solicitor” as opposed to the “solicitor’s clerk” he was until recently (Stoker 163). In Amanda Anderson’s book, *The Power of Distance*, she points out that “the professional tended to represent the distinct promises of modernity” in Victorian culture, including “knowledge” and “comprehension” (4). Harker shows his interest in gaining knowledge, often through writing, and in modernity throughout his introduction. His first entry in his diary begins with dates and times and the fact that “the train was an hour late” (Stoker 151). He complains that “the further east you go the more unpunctual are the trains” (Stoker 152). Within the first few paragraphs, he mentions consulting “books and maps” in preparation for his trip, as “some foreknowledge of the country could hardly fail to have some importance in dealing with a nobleman of that country” (Stoker 151). He feels that this foreknowledge may give him an advantage when he is in “an unknown place to meet an unknown man” (Stoker 155). He decides to write down his experiences so he can give Mina Murray, his fiancée who later becomes his wife, every interesting detail (Stoker 151). Harker seems to have no major flaws; he is
moral and logical. He is going to marry the woman he loves and is not tempted to commit adultery. He is so uninterested in the women he encounters that he comes off as cold at times.

Harker displays what Anderson calls a “critical distance” in his observations of Eastern European culture (4). He is so distant at times that he displays an “underdevelopment of . . . the faculty of sympathy” (Anderson 11). He talks briefly and disdainfully of the women in Transylvania as “pretty . . . but . . . clumsy about the waist” (Stoker 152); he is detached from his surroundings and seems to be conducting a scientific study of the people, rather than communicating with them. He notes that “the usual peasant dress . . . [is] almost too tight for modesty” (Stoker 153); this observation seems to “[objectify a facet] of human existence” (Anderson 6). While Jonathan enjoys the scenery and the food of his travels, he does not seem truly distracted by anything; he seems fairly detached from his surroundings. This detachment highlights Jonathan’s mental and physical control of himself; he personifies critical distance “in the most stern of moral terms: as duty, restraint, and self-command” (Anderson 11). In this way he is reminiscent of Mr. Utterson from Stevenson’s novel; Jonathan’s logic and morality are very important to him. He finds it more difficult to hold onto this detachment, a form of control, as he gets closer to, and finally crosses the boundary into, Dracula’s castle.

What Jonathan seems to fear more than anything else while he is stuck in Dracula’s castle is losing his sanity, his control over his mind; he uses writing in his journal as a way to hold on to his sanity. His one wish is that “whilst I live on here…that I may not go mad, if, indeed, I be not mad already” (Stoker 180). He does not ask God to protect his life but instead he asks that “God preserve [his] sanity” (180).
becomes disoriented through his isolation from all living people and through staying up late at night talking to the Count and sleeping late into the day; he feels that “this strange night-existence is telling on [him]” and that “if there were anyone to talk to” his situation would not be as frightening (Stoker 171). All Jonathan has to battle his slipping grasp on reality is his journal; he feels that to keep control of his mind, his “imagination must not run riot with [him]” and “if it does [he is] lost” (171). When he starts to feel “unhinged” he “turn[s] to [his] diary for repose” (Stoker 180); “the habit of entering accurately” in his diary is what keeps him sane (180). As long as he can keep a record of what is happening to him, he feels that he still has some control over his life. Jonathan’s use of his diary represents his “aspiration to a distanced view” that would allow him to look scientifically and objectively at his situation (Anderson 6); this distanced view seems to be equated with sanity. Jonathan becomes obsessed with “[putting] down every detail in order” (Stoker 189) and seems to believe that by doing this, he can get closer to the truth and closer to “proof” (183). This implies that Jonathan believes that what is happening to him is real and that he needs to prove this to himself and possibly to other people. Even though Jonathan is alone in Dracula’s castle and is essentially helpless, he “must know the truth” (183). Knowledge and sanity are the most important weapons Jonathan has against Dracula in that they keep him in control of his own mind.

As Jonathan values control and therefore sanity, and is defined by those values, Dracula is defined by his direct link to insanity. Halberstam makes the essential

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2 It is possible that Dracula is trying to disorient Jonathan on purpose to make him easier to control. The vampire is most powerful, and humans are easier to influence or feed on, in spaces where the real and the unreal are blurred. It is when the vampire is confirmed as real that the humans can confirm their humanity and separate themselves from the monster. As long as Jonathan remains disoriented and alone, he cannot confirm what is real and what is a figment of his imagination or a sign of his crumbling sanity.
point that the insane human, Renfield “is viewed as crazy when he acts like Dracula (when he feeds upon other lives), and Dracula is implicitly insane because his actions are identical to those that keep Renfield in the asylum” (“Technologies” 342). Both Dracula and Renfield could be described by the term that Dr. Seward comes up with for Renfield: “zoophagous (life-eating) maniac” (Stoker 209). This “diagnosis made by Seward on Renfield connects the pathology of one to the other” (Halberstam, “Technologies” 342). Halberstam goes on to argue that the connection between Dracula and Renfield also makes “a pathology out of the threats posed to rationality by excessive consumption and its relation to particular social and sexual habits” (“Technologies” 342). In this way, Dracula is a hedonistic monster and vampirism represents overconsumption in many different ways. While it is not clear if overconsumption causes monstrosity or vice versa in Dracula, it is clear that the two cannot be separated. To be a monster is to over-consume. Dracula is a monstrous version of Renfield’s insanity, which makes sanity Dracula’s opposite. As long as Jonathan Harker can stay in control of his own mind and desires, he remains the opposite of Dracula.

Jonathan’s mental and physical control is threatened when he encounters the female vampires who inhabit Dracula’s castle; this frightens him more than his encounters with Dracula because it blurs the boundary between him and the vampires. The immoral and uncontrolled female vampires are sexually aggressive and non-
maternal, like the cultural image of prostitutes. He falls asleep in a place that he describes as “where, of old, ladies had sat and sung and lived sweet lives whilst their gentle breasts were sad for their menfolk away in the midst of remorseless wars” (Stoker 181). He lets his guard down, and “[places] himself in the position of the imagined fair lady,” because of the illusion of safety in this feminine room (Garrett 124). He repeatedly describes the female vampires that appear in this room as “voluptuous” (Stoker 181); he feels a “longing and at the same time some deadly fear” of these women (181). The longing Jonathan feels seems to not only accompany his fear but cause it as well. He feels the same crisis of conscience that Dr. Jekyll and Dorian Gray feel: he desires and detests the monster simultaneously.

Part of the female vampires’ danger is that the victim feels desire for them. Jonathan feels “a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss [him] with those red lips” (Stoker 181). The vampires do not say that they are going to bite Jonathan, they say that they are going to kiss him (181); this creates an explicit connection between sucking blood and a sexual act. Their feeding seems to be more than just the consumption of food, there is a sexual aspect to it as well. The female vampires anticipate feeding as if it is the

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3 Although there was no “one single code of sexuality” (Walkowitz 5) or “unitary Victorian culture” (Walkowitz 5) in Victorian times, the dominant culture did identify prostitutes as “the primary source of disease and pollution” (Walkowitz 5) in London, much like a vampire spreading the disease of vampirism. The prostitute was made “literally and figuratively . . . [into] the conduit of infection to respectable society” and “an object of class guilt as well as fear” (Walkowitz 4). The double standard that “only prostitutes spread venereal disease, not the men who used them” (Logan 63) makes men, in a way, victims of “female corruption” (Logan 68) and forms an artificial boundary between men and women. Along with this revulsion towards prostitutes, there was also a “surreptitious fascination” (Logan 91) with them. The concept of the prostitute did not fit well into the “narrowly defined gender system” that “the Victorian sexual ideology was heavily invested in promoting” (Logan 70) and “was a disturbing conundrum for Victorian moralists” (Logan 61). This “unresolved sticking point in Victorian sexual ideology” (Logan 67) resisted categorization and this resistance seemed to increase the dominant culture’s desire to categorize it. Stoker simplifies the issue by making “sexual aggressiveness,” (Logan 67) a characteristic of prostitutes, one aspect of the vampires, especially the female ones.
most pleasurable act that they can experience, making the pursuit of food into the pursuit of pleasure. For the vampire, feeding is hedonistic and animalistic. Jonathan describes the blond vampire that nearly bites him as “both thrilling and repulsive” and “like an animal” (182). He tries to other the vampires in calling them animals, despite his desire for them. After Jonathan’s encounter with the female vampires, he feels that “Dracula is less dreadful [than the female vampires are] because Jonathan views him only with fear and repulsion that are not monstrously mixed with the longing and thrill the women inspire” (Garrett 125). It is as if Jonathan is afraid that the female vampires will seduce him into becoming a monster and, as Dracula does not possess this ability with Jonathan, the female vampires are more frightening. When Dracula arrives and keeps the female vampires from killing Jonathan, he offers them a child to feed on instead, once again invoking the stereotypical image of the prostitute “that couples sexual deviancy with an absence of maternal values” (Logan 71). The vampires are so monstrous that they feed on children. It is this scene that convinces Jonathan that his self-control is truly in danger. While the female vampires do not feed on him, they do influence him by bringing his primal sexual desire to the surface. After this scene, Jonathan is no longer the opposite of the vampires; he sees that they can bring out monstrous desires in him and that he has the potential to become one of them.

After Jonathan’s encounter with the female vampires, the encounter that blurs the boundary between him and them, he tries to reassert his control over the situation through writing. Writing is a powerful tool against Dracula as it would reveal the reality of Dracula’s existence and shift the balance of power in Jonathan’s favor. Dracula has a very negative and aggressive reaction to Jonathan’s attempt to send a message. When
Jonathan attempts to send a letter to Mina written in shorthand, Dracula finds and retrieves the letter. When Dracula sees that the letter is not written in plain English, but in “strange symbols” he calls it “an outrage upon friendship and hospitality” (Stoker 185). In this way, the novel shows that writing is a positive action that puts control in the hands of the writer. This power-play angers Dracula and he punishes Jonathan for it by taking away “every scrap of paper” (186) from him. If Dracula did not recognize the power in writing, he would not have done this. Even though there is not a single person who would disobey Dracula and send Jonathan’s coded message, Dracula still takes Jonathan’s paper away from him, therefore taking away some of his control and his ability to stay sane.

Writing also works against Dracula in that it makes the individual struggle against him more real; writing creates a more permanent record than memory of Jonathan’s individual experience, bringing it out of his mind and making it possible for him to connect his experience with others’ experience. When Jonathan worries about his sanity, he writes down what he has felt and witnessed as if to prove to himself that he is not mad; writing is his way of fighting the self doubt that plagues him. His diary makes his memories into a physical thing, therefore making them more real. Writing also allows Jonathan to regain some detachment from his situation. It is easier for him to analyze what is happening to him if he writes it down. From an early point in the novel, Jonathan uses writing in his journal to deconstruct the mysteries of Dracula’s castle and Dracula himself. This gives Jonathan some distance from his memories so he can use his experiences to understand the vampires. As Dracula has isolated him, he cannot be sure that his experience with the supernatural is not a hallucination. He is not capable of establishing boundaries between what is real and what is produced by his mind. The only
way for Jonathan to truly be sure that he is not going insane is for someone else to have a similar supernatural experience. Dracula seems to use the disbelief that vampires are real against Jonathan and the other humans; as long as he is not recognized as a real being, he is not a threat and he remains in control. When Jonathan writes down what he is witnessing in the castle, he creates the opportunity to reveal that vampires are real and that they are a threat and through this revelation Jonathan attempts to gain control.

Jonathan feels control further slip out of his grasp with the doubt that what happened in the castle was real; this is a blurring the “real” and the “supernatural” as Jonathan sees these two things as opposed. His confusion and doubt manifests both mentally and physically. More than one character describes Jonathon’s mental state as unstable and similar to madness. When Jonathan makes it out of Dracula’s castle, he does seem to briefly lose control of his mind. The nurse taking care of him describes his affliction as “a violent brain fever” (Stoker 233) and Jonathan’s definition of brain fever is “to be mad” (237). He pulls himself together enough to occupy his normal life, but he is consumed by doubt; this doubt seems to cause a physical and mental weakening in Jonathan. Mina describes him as “thin and pale and weak looking” and “a wreck of himself” (237). Mina reads Jonathon’s journal and wonders “whether it be true or only imagination” and she thinks that it is possible that “his brain fever” or madness is what caused him to write about monsters (297). When the people in Jonathon’s life doubt his sanity, he doubts his own sanity. When Jonathan does see Dracula in London, he cries out “if only I knew!” and, after going to sleep, forgets that he saw the monster (292-93); he cannot deal with the ambiguity surrounding Dracula’s existence, so he ignores it. His doubt about the reality of what happened in Dracula’s castle causes him to fear that he
did go mad, that he is not in control of his mind. He describes a loss of “trust” in his “senses” (305), as if “the doubt as to the reality of the whole thing” (305) had made him paranoid. The doubt made him feel “impotent, and in the dark, and distrustful” (305). Essentially, doubt in his sanity caused Jonathan to feel without strength or power to do anything effective. When he cries out “If only I knew!” he seems to want to know without a doubt if Dracula is real or not; it is the doubt itself that is driving him insane. Jonathan cannot establish a boundary between himself as a human and the vampires as monsters if he is not sure that they are real.

When Jonathan is reassured by an authority figure, Van Helsing, that he “may sleep without doubt” because, as “strange and terrible as it is,” everything he wrote in his journal is true, Jonathan’s physical and mental power is restored (Stoker 304). Van Helsing does not just say that he believes Jonathan, he says that what Jonathon has written is true, that Jonathan’s experiences were real. Jonathan feels that the letter containing Van Helsing’s corroboration of his experiences has “made a new man” of him and has “cured” him (305), as if doubt was a physical illness that was plaguing him and Van Helsing is the doctor that gave him the remedy for it. Neither Jonathon nor Mina doubt Van Helsing; the doctor’s word is treated as fact. If Mina or Jonathon were to doubt the doctor’s word, Jonathon would not be able to transform into the strong and certain character he needs to become to defeat Dracula. He needs certainty to establish himself as Dracula’s opposite and enemy. Later, when they are actively working against Dracula’s destruction, Mina feels that Jonathan “was never so resolute, never so strong, never so full of volcanic energy, as at present” (338). Where Jonathan was weak and lethargic before, now that he knows that he is sane, he has gained powerful mental and
physical strength; he feels so much stronger after Van Helsing relieves his doubt that he is “not afraid, even of the Count” (305). It seems as though he was never as afraid of the Count as he was of the possibility of his own madness; after this possibility is eliminated, his weakness is also gone. Van Helsing, as the figure with the most knowledge about vampires and authority, acts in a way as a representation of society; if Van Helsing supports Jonathan’s story that is enough proof for Jonathan that he is not in fact insane. Even though Van Helsing is just one man, his word is never questioned and Jonathan’s doubt seems completely relieved. Jonathan is not capable of a self-affirmation of sanity; he needs an authority figure to tell him that he is sane. As the doubt of others coincided with Jonathon’s self doubt, the affirmation of authority is self-affirming. Jonathan has not been permanently altered by his encounters with vampires. By this I mean, he is still a left brain dominant character and therefore the opposite of the right brain dominant vampire.

While Jonathon is set up from the beginning of the novel as a moral and logical character, Lucy Westenra is set up as a lustful and superficial character; even as a human, Lucy is more emotional and sexually aggressive, more right brained, than the Harkers. In Lucy Westenra’s first appearance in the novel, she is differentiated from Jonathan and Mina Harker; where Mina is devoted solely to Jonathan and works hard as an “assistant schoolmistress” (Stoker 194), Lucy is “a horrid flirt” (198) and therefore morally ambiguous. Mina writes to Lucy of her impending marriage to Jonathan and of how she is “practicing shorthand very assiduously,” making her a female version of Jonathan (194). Lucy writes of getting “three [marriage] proposals in one day!” (196) and that she feels “a sort of exultation” (198) at getting multiple proposals. Lucy asks Mina,
“why can’t they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble?” even though she realizes that “this is heresy, and I must not say it” (199). Mina writes that she and Jonathan “will start in life in a very simple way” and seems to imply that Lucy has chosen the richest of her three suitors and will have a very comfortable life after marriage (210). Like Jonathan, Mina’s moral goodness has been connected to writing through her use of shorthand; she decides to “keep a diary in the same way” (195) as Jonathan. Mina and Jonathan come off as logical and hard working people. “[Mina’s] favourite word is 'duty' and she evidently has little time for romantic dreaming, only for work, concern and responsibility” (McWhir 31). Lucy is marked as a sexually vivacious character and through this is morally ambiguous; she mainly writes about her suitors and not about working. A sexual loss of control seems to be latent in Lucy and she does not show the same control that Jonathan and Mina show; she straddles the boundary between controlled and uncontrolled.

The characters who are attacked and fed on by Dracula, Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker, become fractured into their human good selves and their vampire evil selves; the human and the monstrous parts of them are separated. Despite this separation, they are still ambiguous characters and this ambiguity must be rectified for the novel to reach a conclusion. These two female characters are vulnerable because they are ignorant of what is happening to them. This ignorance is a form of isolation because they are excluded from the group knowledge. While Mina is aware of Dracula’s existence, both Mina and Lucy are unaware of what is causing their mental and physical distress. Mina is only consciously aware of what Dracula is doing to her when the whole group is aware of it. There seem to be only two options for these characters, with Lucy and Mina each
representing one of the two options. Lucy is a flirtatious character and because of this defining characteristic, must die, transform into a vampire, and be destroyed. Mina is a nurturing character and must be decontaminated and go on to become a mother. Through these endings, all ambiguity is removed. The infected character must inhabit the role of the human or the monster, not both, for the boundary between the two to stabilize. The characters in the novel mimic the actual Victorians who were trying “to maintain (the illusion of) an autonomous and discrete self-identity” (Hurley 4). This novel shows just how afraid the Victorians were of the unreal or imaginary, the uncontrolled, and the ambiguous; Stoker turns these fears into a monster in order to unequivocally destroy that monster. Throughout the novel, control and detachment are turned into moral qualities exhibited by the human characters, especially Jonathan and Mina Harker, and a hedonistic over-consumption and lack of control become immoral qualities through the vampires.

Lucy, unlike Jonathan, has very little control over her life and therefore has no tools with which to fight Dracula. She is completely open to Dracula’s influence because of her lack of control. She does not seem to be capable of talking about what is happening to her or saving herself from it because she does not know what is happening. After her first few encounters with Dracula, she only remembers “something long and dark with red eyes…and something very sweet and very bitter all around me at once” (Stoker 232). Lucy cannot communicate to others about her relationship with Dracula because she does not know what is happening to her; Mina has to tell the story, even though she does not know what is really going on. Only the reader knows that Dracula is sucking Lucy’s blood and that he gains control over her when she sleeps. Mina tries to keep Lucy safe
inside the house, but Lucy sleepwalks out into the night. When Lucy cannot make her way outside, Dracula must come to her window in the form of a bat to take her blood. She has been robbed of the choice to go outside or not and she has been robbed of the ability to talk about what has happened to her. Dracula’s influence takes away what little control Lucy had over her body and mind.

Lucy seems to know that something is wrong, but she cannot name it and therefore she cannot do anything about it; she is stuck in a space where what is real and what is unreal cannot be established. When she parts from Mina to go back to the city, Dracula is able to find her again. She feels something “dark and horrid” and she is “full of vague fear,” but as long as Lucy cannot name what is happening to her, she is helpless against it (Stoker 241). Lucy states that she is having bad dreams at night and that she wishes she could remember them (241); she seems to know that she is missing important information that could be helpful for her. Knowledge is the most important weapon against Dracula and Lucy is without any provable knowledge. If she did know what was happening to her, she could at least try to fight it. All she can do while in this state of half-knowledge is try to stay awake. Lucy’s resistance to Dracula is utterly passive and her survival depends on the men in her life, especially Van Helsing, who suspects what is really going on. Lucy never becomes an active player in the game against Dracula. As a human, she never reaches the point where she can name her attacker. The human characters can only actively attack Dracula when they are certain of his existence; Lucy is only vaguely aware of Dracula and this causes her passive response to his attacks. The ambiguity of Dracula’s existence is something that protects him and makes Lucy vulnerable in multiple ways. Dracula is free to feed on Lucy and Lucy’s doctor, Dr.
Seward, believes that Lucy’s physical weakening must come from “something mental” (243). Dr. Seward describes her symptoms, including “dreams that frighten her, but regarding which she can remember nothing” (243) and feels that a logical explanation is that Lucy is going insane. This makes Lucy’s weakening into something that she has done to herself instead of something that has been done to her. Like Jonathon, Lucy’s weakness coincides with another character, Dr. Seward, expressing doubt in her sanity. Lucy is never given the affirmation of her fears that Jonathon is given. Van Helsing does not reveal the existence of vampires until after Lucy is dead as she must be used to prove that vampires exist and spark the unification of the men who love her in their quest to destroy Dracula; this makes Lucy into a passive and isolated character as she has very little control over her own life.

Lucy as a vampire is even more mentally and sexually out of control than she was as a human. Once again, a vampire is defined as out of control. She is still in the gray area between good and evil, even as a vampire, and must be killed to neutralize this ambiguity. She retains some of her humanity, which destabilizes the barrier between human and monster. Van Helsing states that since Lucy “was in a trance, sleep-walking” when she was bitten by Dracula, “in a trance she is Undead, too” (Stoker 316). Even as a vampire, Lucy’s actions are attributed to Dracula’s control over her and are not her own; this means that Lucy is still in quite an ambiguous situation. There is still a part of Lucy, her soul, trapped in her Undead body that is visible when she sleeps; she is described by Dr. Seward as “more radiantly beautiful than ever” when she sleeps in her coffin (Stoker 315) as this is the time when the beauty of her soul comes to the surface. When Dr. Seward sees Lucy’s vampire self for the first time he describes the change in Lucy as
“sweetness…turned to adamantine, heartless cruelty, and…purity to voluptuous wantonness” (Stoker 324). Dr. Seward uses the word “voluptuous” repeatedly to describe Lucy’s vampire self and this harkens back to the female vampires in Dracula’s castle. Once again, the female vampire can be seen as similar to a prostitute; the doctor describes Lucy’s eyes as “unclean and full of hell-fire, instead of the pure, gentle orbs we knew” (Stoker 324). She uses her “diabolically sweet” (Stoker 324) voice to tempt her husband into embracing her and allowing her to bite him and taint him; Van Helsing stops her with a crucifix. The order of religion is a major weapon against the hedonistic and sinful vampire.

Once the men have seen Lucy for themselves, they are convinced in the existence of vampires and know that they must “purify” Lucy by killing her and freeing her immortal soul (Stoker 328). This allows the moral man to control the out-of-control and immoral vampire version of Lucy and re-establish the boundary between man and monster by destroying the transgressive vampire. The certainty in the existence of vampires makes the human characters into active participants in the destruction of vampires, beginning with the staking of Lucy’s vampire self. This is the only non-ambiguous end for Lucy’s character and the only way for control to truly be restored, and therefore the only viable end; this end for Lucy’s character also serves to bring the male characters together. In this moment, the human men bond over their common love for the human version of Lucy while destroying the vampire version of Lucy. They unite in their humanity, stabilizing the boundary between human and monster.

Once unified, the men are much stronger because their knowledge base is larger and more complete; they take all of the knowledge they have gained individually,
combine it, and add to it, making Dracula more real and pinning down his weaknesses. Anne McWhir notes the importance of knowledge as a weapon when she says that “the infection that Dracula's invasion brings to England can be withstood best by those who come closest to understanding its source” (33). Once Dr. Seward, Arthur Holmwood, and Quincey Morris have “learned to believe” (Stoker 329) through their experiences with Lucy’s vampire self, they meet up with Jonathan and Mina Harker and begin “knitting together in chronological order every scrap of evidence they have” (Stoker 335) because they “must have all the knowledge” (Stoker 333) about Dracula in order to beat him. Dr. Seward stresses that there must be “no secrets,” only “absolute trust” and that they will be “stronger than if some of us were in the dark” (Stoker 333). They focus on “dates” and putting everything “into chronological order” (Stoker 334) until they feel that they are all “informed as to the facts” (Stoker 344). Only after the group has formed Dracula’s narrative since he came into their lives can they “arrange [their] plan of battle with this terrible and mysterious enemy” (Stoker 344). It is at this point that Jonathan Harker is described as “strong” and “resolute” (338, 345). They do not seem to spend much time worrying about Count Dracula’s great physical strength and mystical abilities. The power of the group is based in their certainty in Dracula’s existence and monstrosity and their certainty in their humanity. Some of Dracula’s mystery is removed through this cataloguing of superstitions and the monster is removed from the ambiguous realm of dreams and placed in a more scientific setting. This group intelligence makes Dracula more real, he is no longer treated as a figment of imagination and childish fear, but as a dangerous enemy. As long as the human characters remain within the group intelligence,
where everything is treated with more certainty than ambiguity, they are in much less danger.

Both Lucy and Mina are in danger, in the ambiguous space, when they are isolated from the group intelligence and, through that, cut off from knowledge of the enemy. As Dracula’s castle physically isolates Jonathan Harker in the beginning of the novel, Lucy and Mina are isolated through the decision of the male authority to leave them out of the group consciousness of the situation. Van Helsing does not tell Lucy or her mother of his growing certainty that a vampire is attacking her in her sleep; because he does not tell them, they do not know what the garlic he surrounds her with is for and Lucy’s mother removes it from her room and leaves her vulnerable to Dracula (Stoker 260-61). Lucy enters the grey area between life and death, between human and monster, when Dracula begins to feed on her and influence her. This ambiguous situation seems to have two possible outcomes for women: full transformation into a vampire, followed by the true death or full restoration back to human and motherhood, which is a form of ‘true life’ in that the woman brings a life into the world. As Lucy’s character is driven by lust from the first pages of the novel, she is doomed to fall into the first category. Her transformation into a vampire also serves as the way for Van Helsing to introduce the concept of vampires to the men who loved her without the fear that they will doubt him or think that he has gone mad. This seems to be the reason that Van Helsing did not tell anyone before Lucy’s transformation; he thought, and possibly feared, that they would not believe him. As a vampire, Lucy serves as irrefutable proof of the existence of vampires and the men bond over their shared knowledge and experiences.
When Mina is isolated from the group consciousness, she experiences the same vulnerability that Lucy went through, even though she is a more logical and moral character. Like the other human characters, “Mina is most vulnerable to pollution when she is most conscientiously kept apart from it. Knowledge of evil seems to bring with it a strength that mere innocence cannot possess” (McWhir 36). Isolation from knowledge makes even the most moral characters vulnerable. Jonathan states that the work against Dracula “is to be a sealed book” to Mina (Stoker 358) and this separates her from the group physically, as when they break into one of Dracula’s lairs, and mentally, in that they cannot talk to Mina about their fight against Dracula. Mina exhibits the same warning signs as Lucy did, as “she looked heavy and sleepy and pale, and far from well” (Stoker 365), but no one seems to notice this on its own. Mina, like Lucy, cannot remember what Dracula does to her in her sleep; all she can recall is a “vague terror” (Stoker 385). As Mina cannot name the monster that is attacking her, she cannot do anything about it. Mina believes, or convinces herself, that she is having nightmares that she cannot remember; even for Mina, the attacks are not real until there is proof that they are happening. Unlike Lucy’s situation, Mina does not have to die and transform into a vampire in order to prove that Dracula has bitten her. The group discovers that Dracula is attacking Mina through Renfield, the mental patient in the Count’s thrall, and only after the whole group sees with their own eyes that Dracula and Mina have exchanged blood can Mina write more specifically about the attacks. At this point, Dracula has established a connection with Mina that can only be severed with his destruction; this connection moves Mina into the same grey area between human and monster that Lucy occupied.
Again, once the boundary between human and monster deteriorates, communication with that character is closely monitored and certain information is kept from that character. The men talk to each other around Mina, forming a circle of communication that surrounds her, but throughout the last section of the novel they do not talk directly to her as frequently. Van Helsing monitors her health, even checking the length and sharpness of her teeth, but does not tell her what he is doing (Stoker 391). Mina provides information about Dracula’s whereabouts through hypnotism, but does not remember what she sensed or said when she comes out of the trance (Stoker 406-07). The group shares some information with her, but they seem to keep from her anything that might upset her or that they do not want Dracula to know. The human men create a new barrier around the monster/human hybrid character, separating themselves from that character.

The novel’s conclusion does not leave room for any uncertainty: most of the characters end up either dead or married. The barrier between human and monster is re-established. The main characters are successful in their destruction of Count Dracula and as he is dying, Mina sees “a look of peace” (Stoker 459) on his face before he crumbles into dust. Like Lucy and the other female vampires, Dracula secretly wants his soul to be free; as the vampires seem to represent sexual deviants with ties to mental illness and immaturity, it is implied that the people who fall outside of proper society wish for redemption and to rejoin that society. Quincey Morris seems happy to die for the cause they have dedicated themselves to and looks on Mina’s “stainless” (Stoker 459) forehead with reverence before he dies. In the final confrontation with Dracula, as throughout the novel, the characters do not seem to fear death. They fear that Dracula will win and Mina
will be doomed to become a vampire, but their wishes are for the survival of other people and not for themselves. There is no doubt that Mina is no longer tainted because the stain has left her face and she passes through the circle embedded with the holy wafer with no trouble. “By the end of the novel, all reproducing bodies are siphoned into one as Mina gives birth for them all” (May 20); she has a son, a symbol of life and strength, and his “bundle of names links all our little band of men together” (Stoker 460). Arthur, also known as Lord Godalming in the later half of the novel, and Dr. Seward “are both happily married” (Stoker 460). Although “there is hardly one authentic document” (Stoker 460) left in the record of events, the record itself remains intact, giving evidence of the “living truths” (Stoker 460) of the group’s shared battle with evil. In the end, the status quo is restored and, while it seems important for the group to remember what happened, it seems equally important that they move on. Their societal duty is to get married and have families, which is what they go on to do after they kill Count Dracula.

*Dracula* explores many different fears. It explores fears of doubt and ambiguity in identity, the fear of negative influence, the fear of losing control, and the “dread that the assumptions of stability on which society was based were illusory” (May 22). The human characters fight to re-establish that illusion of stability. Count Dracula’s existence as a supernatural being shakes the main characters’ self-confidence and makes them doubt their own sanity. This self-doubt seems to frighten the characters more than Dracula himself. Once they are sure he does exist, they regain their self-confidence and destroy him. This gothic novel allows characters to attack ambiguity and win against it, killing the source of ambiguity, Count Dracula; in this way, a positive, unambiguous, and unrealistic conclusion is reached. Kelly Hurley points out that “the very popularity of the
[gothic] genre speaks for its efficacy in interpreting and refiguring unmanageable realities for its audience” (5); Dracula is a definitive example of this phenomenon. The enemy is clearly identifiable, unlike reality, and the taint left on other characters evaporates with the destruction of the enemy. McWhir notes that “the pollution or dangerous power that disappears at the end of Dracula means that the characters can return to a world of clear categories and unconfounded moral and social distinctions” (32). Dracula, more than Dorian Gray or Jekyll and Hyde, is an “incitement to social conformity” (Holden 470). In Stoker’s novel, the evil can be destroyed, leaving the humans to go on with their lives as if nothing out of the ordinary has happened. Boundaries can be re-established and the illusion of control and stability can be maintained.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: A MOVEMENT

TOWARDS UNITY

The lasting popularity of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and *Dracula* points to their continuing resonance in our culture. We are still working through the desire to make the uncontrolled into something we can control. Jekyll-Hyde sought control by attempting to split into a good and a bad self and in this way control his uncontrollable desires through the capture and release of his bad self. Dorian Gray tried to control his life by turning his search for pleasure into a philosophy and turning his life into art separate from morality. The human vampire hunters control the vampires and the urges they represent by killing them. All of these texts explore the desire for control through boundaries separating human from monster.

The television show *Dexter* and the movie *Teeth* are modern depictions of the same wish to control the uncontrollable. These depictions follow characters who, while feeling the desire to distance themselves from their monstrous aspects, find a way to embrace their darker nature. Both main characters, Dexter and Dawn, live double lives. They are aware that if their secrets are revealed, their lives will be at risk. This is similar to the monsters previously discussed. Where these modern human/monster hybrids differ is they become better at controlling their monstrosity and the story rewards them for their increased skill by allowing them to keep living. While Dexter and Dawn struggle with
accepting their darker natures, they do not end up distancing themselves from it. These modern characters successfully live with the good and the bad parts of themselves.

The character Dexter is a serial killer, but he kills people on his own terms and he successfully controls his darker nature. His father was a policeman and gave Dexter a code that he follows when he stalks and kills people. The first and most important rule of this code is to only kill people guilty of terrible crimes. This makes Dexter an ambiguous character in that he is a murderer, but he is also a kind of vigilante because he kills people who “deserve to die.” This ambiguity is important because it shows how good and evil coexist in Dexter in a way that they were not allowed to coexist in the late-Victorian Gothic. In Dexter’s “noble” decision to only kill terrible people, he is different from the monstrous characters discussed in the three previous chapters. Dexter is able to twist his monstrosity, the desire to kill, into something that is both more positive and into something that he can control. In Dexter’s recognition that his dark urges are a part of his identity, he finds a way to live with them.

In the movie *Teeth*, the main character, Dawn, also finds a way to live with the dark part of herself. She begins the movie filling the role of the passionately Christian teenager and, in pledging complete abstinence, she represses her sexual urges. Over the course of the movie, Dawn discovers that her vagina is equipped with a set of teeth, described in terms of the myth of the “vagina dentate,” which is depicted as monstrous and slightly supernatural. Dawn neither loses control of herself nor completely represses her abnormal physical monstrosity. The movie ends with her in a position of power. She learns to control her vagina dentate and uses it to castrate the men who rape her. The final shot of the film is Dawn smiling into the camera while trapped in a car with a man.
obviously intent on raping her. Dawn is physically monstrous, but as she embraces her monstrosity it becomes a source of power for her. Like Dexter, Dawn is a mix of good and evil and it is hard to differentiate where one ends and the other begins. What is clear is that for her to control her monstrosity, she must confront it and accept it as a part of who she is. The vagina dentate becomes almost a positive thing and at the end of the film, Dawn has abandoned repression and is at her most powerful point in her character arc.

While the monsters of the late-Victorian Gothic must die, these modern monstrous characters are allowed to live. There is an escapism and tolerance in these modern stories that was absent from the novels previously discussed. While these characters are allowed to get away with the crimes they commit, I do not see these works of entertainment as condoning murder or sexual mutilation. *Dexter* and *Teeth* show a recognition that the monster is a part of man, that good and evil are not separate. This is a step forward from the suicide and murder of these characters. In watching these characters find a way to live with their monstrous qualities, the audience can relate to them and possibly start to let go of their repression of the shameful parts of themselves.
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