

gaze back at you. You long to smash something, rape someone. You are not you. You are a monster.

Beset by this nightmarish vision, Robert Louis Stevenson screamed in his sleep in the early hours of an autumn morning in 1885. Immediately after his wife awoke him, he set to work on what he called a “fine bogey tale”—*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*—in which he said, “Man is not truly one, but truly two.” The book was an overnight success, and no wonder. The story captivated the imagination of Victorians, who were fascinated with the dichotomy between repressive propriety—represented by the mild-mannered scientist Dr. Jekyll—and uncontrollable passion, embodied in the murderous Mr. Hyde. Dr. Jekyll thought he understood how to control himself. But when Mr. Hyde took over, look out.

The story was frightening and imaginative, but it wasn’t new. Long before Sophocles’s *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, the war between interior good and evil had been the stuff of myth, religion, and literature. In Freudian terms, each of us houses a dark self, an id, a brute that can unpredictably wrest control away from the superego. Thus a pleasant, friendly neighbor, seized by road rage, crashes his car into a semi. A teenager grabs a gun and shoots his friends. A priest rapes a boy. All these otherwise good people assume that they understand themselves. But in the heat of passion, suddenly, with the flip of some interior switch, everything changes.

Our experiment at Berkeley revealed not just the old story that we are all like Jekyll and Hyde, but also something new—that every one of us, regardless of how “good” we are, underpredicts the effect of passion on our behavior. In every case, the participants in our experiment got it wrong. Even the most brilliant and rational person, in the heat of passion,