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# TECHNOLOGIES OF MONSTROSITY: BRAM STOKER'S *DRACULA*

## I. Once Bitten Twice Shy

BY WAY OF AN INTRODUCTION TO BRAM STOKER'S *DRACULA*, I WANT TO TELL MY OWN STORY about being consumed and drained by the vampire. Reading *Dracula* for the first time years ago, I thought I noticed something about vampirism that had been strangely overlooked by critics and readers. Dracula, I thought, with his peculiar physique, his parasitical desires, his aversion to the cross and to all the trappings of Christianity, his blood-sucking attacks, and his avaricious relation to money, resembled stereotypical anti-Semitic nineteenth-century representations of the Jew. Subsequent readings of the novel with attention to the connections in the narrative between blood and gold, race and sex, sexuality and ethnicity, confirmed my sense that the anti-Semite's Jew and Stoker's vampire bore more than a family resemblance. The connection I had made began to haunt me; I uncovered biographical material and discovered that Stoker was good friends with, and inspired by, Richard Burton, the author of a tract reviving the blood libel against Jews in Damascus. I read essays by Stoker in which he railed against degenerate writers for not being good Christians. My conclusions seemed sound, the vampire and the Jew were related, and monstrosity in the Gothic novel had much to do with the discourse of modern anti-Semitism.<sup>1</sup>

Toward the end of my preliminary research, I came across a fantastic contemporary news piece which reported that General Mills Cereal Company was being sued by the anti-defamation league because Count Chocula, the children's cereal character, was depicted on one of their cereal boxes wearing a Star of David ("General Mills").<sup>2</sup> While I felt that this incident vindicated my comparison of Jew and vampire, doubts began to creep in about stabilizing this relationship. By the time my doubts had been fully expressed and confirmed by other readers, I discovered that, rather than revealing a hidden agenda in Stoker's novel, I had unwittingly essentialized Jewishness. By equating Jew and vampire in a linear way, I had simply stabilized the relationship between the two as a mirroring, but I had left many questions unanswered,

indeed unasked, about the production of monstrosity, whether it be monstrous race, monstrous class, or monstrous sex.

## II. Technologies of Monstrosity

Attempts to consume Dracula and vampirism within one interpretive model inevitably produce vampirism. They reproduce, in other words, the very model they claim to have discovered. So, an analysis of the vampire as perverse sexuality runs the risk of merely stabilizing the identity of perversity, its relation to a particular set of traits. The comparison between Jew and vampire still seems interesting and important to me but for different reasons. I am still fascinated by the occlusion of race or ethnicity in critical interpretations of the novel but I am not simply attempting now to bring those hidden facets to light. Instead I want to ask how the Gothic novel and Gothic monsters in particular produce monstrosity as never unitary, but always as an aggregate of race, class, and gender. I also want to suggest that the nineteenth-century discourse of anti-Semitism and the myth of the vampire share a kind of Gothic economy in their ability to condense many monstrous traits into one body. In the context of this novel, Dracula is otherness itself, a distilled version of all others produced by and within fictional texts, sexual science, and psychopathology. He is monster and man, feminine and powerful, parasitical and wealthy; he is repulsive and fascinating, he exerts the consummate gaze but is scrutinized in all things, he lives forever but can be killed. Dracula is indeed not simply a monster, but a technology of monstrosity.

Technologies of monstrosity are always also technologies of sex. I want to plug monstrosity and gothicization into Foucault's "great surface network" of sexuality "in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledges, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power" (*History* 105–06). Although Foucault does not talk about the novel as one of these "major strategies of knowledge and power," the Gothic novel in my discussion will represent a privileged field in the network of sexuality. The novel, indeed, is the discursive arena in which identity is constructed as sexual identity; the novel transforms metaphors of otherness into technologies of sex, into machinic texts, in other words, that produce perverse identities (see Armstrong).

Foucault identifies the figures of "the hysterical woman, the masturbating child, the Malthusian couple and the perverse adult" (105) as inventions of sex's technology. The vampire Dracula represents all of these figures, economically condensing their sexual threat into one noticeably feminized, wildly fertile, and seductively perverse body. He is the deviant or the criminal,

the other against whom the normal and the lawful, the marriageable and the heterosexual can be known and quantified. Dracula creeps “facedown” along the wall of the very “fortress of identity”; he is the boundary, he is the one who crosses, and the one who knows the other side.

But the otherness that Dracula embodies is not timeless or universal, not the opposite of some commonly understood meaning of “the human”; the others Dracula has absorbed and who live on in him take on the historically specific contours of race, class, gender, and sexuality. They are the other side of a national identity that in the 1890s coincided with a hegemonic ideal of bourgeois Victorian womanhood. Mina and Lucy, the dark and the fair heroines of Stoker's novel make Englishness a function of quiet femininity and maternal domesticity. Dracula, accordingly, threatens the stability and the naturalness of this equation between middle-class womanhood and national pride by seducing both women with his particularly foreign sexuality.<sup>3</sup>

To claim that Dracula's sexuality is foreign, however, is already to obscure the specific construction of a native sexuality. Lucy, as many critics have noted, is violently punished for her desire for three men, and all three eventually participate in a ritual staking of her vampiric body. Mina represents a maternal sexuality as she nurtures and caters to the brave Englishmen who are fighting for her honor and body. The foreign sexuality that confronts these women is defined in opposition to “normal” sexual functions; this forces the reader to annex “natural” and native sexuality. It is part of the power of *Dracula* that Stoker merges pathological sexuality with foreign aspect and, as we shall see with reference to the insane Renfield, psychopathology. The vampire Dracula, in other words, is a composite of otherness that manifests itself as the horror essential to dark, foreign, and perverse bodies.

*Dracula* the text, like Dracula the monster, is multi-valenced and generates a myriad of interpretive narratives: narratives which attempt to classify the threat of the vampire as sexual or psychological, as class-bound or gendered. The technology of the vampire's monstrosity, indeed, is intimately connected to the mode of the novel's production. As Jennifer Wicke has argued, *Dracula* is a veritable writing machine constructed out of diaries, letters, newspaper clippings, and medical case notes: “*Dracula*, draped in all its feudalism and medieval gore, is textually completely au courant. Nineteenth-century diaristic and epistolary effusion is invaded by cutting-edge technology . . .” (470). The process of compilation is similarly complex: Mina Harker, as secretary, makes a narrative of the various documents by chronologically ordering them and, where necessary, transcribing notes from a primitive dictaphone. There is a marked sexual energy to the reading and writing of all the contributions to the narrative. Reading, for instance, unites the men and Mina in a safe and mutual bond of disclosure and confidence. After Mina listens to Dr. Seward's phonograph recording of his account of Lucy's

death, she assures him: "I have copied out the words on my typewriter, and none other need now hear your heart beat as I did" (235). Seward, in his turn, reads Harker's diary and remarks, "after reading his account . . . I was prepared to meet a good specimen of manhood" (237). Later, Seward passes by the Harkers' bedroom and on hearing "the click of the typewriter" he concluded, "they were hard at it" (237). Writing and reading, on some level, appear to provide a safe textual alternative to the sexuality of the vampire. But at the same time they produce the vampire as the "truth" of textual labor; he is a threat which must be diffused by discourse.

The novel presents a body of work to which, it is important to note, only certain characters contribute. The narrative episodes are recorded, transcribed, addended, edited and compiled by four characters—Jonathan Harker, Dr. Seward, Mina Harker, and Lucy Westenra. The control of the narrative by these characters suggests that the textual body, for Stoker, like the bodies of the women of England, must be protected from any corrupting or foreign influence. Van Helsing, Lord Godalming, Quincey Morris, Renfield, and Dracula have only recorded voices in the narrative; at no time do we read their accounts of events. Three of these men are foreigners—Van Helsing is Dutch, Quincey Morris is American, and Dracula is East European. Lord Godalming, we assume, has English blood but as an aristocrat he is of a different class than the novel's narrators. Renfield, of course, has been classified as insane and his subjective existence is always re-presented by Dr. Seward.

The activities of reading and writing, then, are crucial in this novel to the establishment of a kind of middle-class British hegemony and they are annexed to the production of sexual subjectivities. Rather than being seen as essential to only certain kinds of bodies, sexuality is revealed as the completely controlled, mass-production of a group of professionals—doctors, psychiatrists, lawyers. Writing, or at least who writes, must be controlled since it represents the deployment of knowledge and power; similarly, reading must be authorized and censored. When Mina falls under the vampire's influence and he begins to read her mind, she is barred from reading the English group's plans. Similarly, the English men eliminate Dracula's contaminated opinions from the narrative; he has no voice but is read and written by all the other characters in the novel.

By examining Stoker's novel as a machine-text, then, a text that generates particular subjectivities, we can atomize the totality of the vampire's monstrosity, examine the exact nature of his parasitism, and make an assault upon the naturalness of the sexuality of his enemies. By reading *Dracula* as a technology of monstrosity, I am claiming a kind of productivity for the text, a productivity which leads to several avenues of interpretation. But this does not mean that monstrosity in this novel is constantly in motion. Every now and then it settles into a distinct form, a proper shape, and in those moments

Dracula's features are eminently readable and suggestive. Dracula is likened to "mist," to a "red cloud," to a ghost or a shadow until he is invited into the home, at which point he becomes solid and fleshly. As flesh and blood, the vampire embodies a particular ethnicity and a peculiar sexuality.

### III. Gothic Anti-Semitism, 1: Degeneracy

Gothic anti-Semitism makes the Jew a monster with bad blood and it defines monstrosity as a mixture of bad blood, unstable gender identity, sexual and economic parasitism, and degeneracy. In this section I want to flesh out my premise that the vampire as represented by Bram Stoker bears some relation to the anti-Semite's Jew. If this is so, it tells us nothing about Jews but everything about anti-Semitic discourse which seems able to transform all threat into the threat embodied by the Jew. The monster Jew produced by nineteenth-century anti-Semitism represents fears about race, class, gender, sexuality, and empire: this figure is gothicized or transformed into an all-purpose monster.

By making a connection between Stoker's Gothic fiction and late-nineteenth-century anti-Semitism, I am not claiming a deliberate and unitary relation between fictional monster and real Jew; rather I am attempting to make an argument about the process of othering. Othering in Gothic fiction scavenges from many discursive fields and makes monsters out of bits and pieces of science and literature: Gothic monsters are over-determined, and open therefore to numerous interpretations, precisely because they transform the fragments of otherness into one body. That body is not female, not Jewish, not homosexual, but it bears the marks of the constructions of femininity, race, and sexuality.<sup>4</sup>

Dracula, then, resembles the Jew of anti-Semitic discourse in several ways: appearance, his relation to money and gold, his parasitism, his degeneracy, his impermanency or lack of allegiance to a fatherland, and his femininity. Dracula's physiognomy is a particularly clear cipher for the specificity of his ethnic monstrosity. When Jonathan Harker meets the Count at Castle Dracula in Transylvania, he describes Dracula in terms of a "very marked physiognomy": he notes an aquiline nose with "peculiarly arched nostrils," massive eyebrows and "bushy hair," a cruel mouth and "peculiarly sharp white teeth," pale ears which were "extremely pointed at the top," and a general aspect of "extraordinary pallor" (18). This description of Dracula, however, changes at various points in the novel. When he is spotted in London by Jonathan and Mina, Dracula is "a tall thin man with a beaky nose and black moustache and pointed beard" (180); similarly, the zookeeper whose wolf disappears after a visit by Dracula to the zoological gardens, describes the

Count as “a tall thin chap with a ‘ook nose and a pointed beard” (145). Most descriptions include Dracula’s hard cold look and his red eyes.

Visually, the connection between Dracula and other fictional Jews is quite strong. For example, George Du Maurier’s Svengali, the Jewish hypnotist, is depicted as “a stick, haunting, long, lean, uncanny, black spider-cat” with brown teeth and matted hair and, of course, incredibly piercing eyes (108). Fagin, the notorious villain of Charles Dickens’s *Oliver Twist*, also has matted hair and a “villainous-looking and repulsive face” (105). While Dracula’s hand has “hairs in the center of the palm” and long, pointed nails, Fagin’s hand is “a withered old claw.” Eduard Drumont, a French National Socialist who, during the 1880s, called for the expulsion of the Jews from France in his newspaper *Libre Parole*, noted the identifying characteristics of the Jew as “the hooked nose, shifty eyes, protruding ears, elongated body, flat feet and moist hands” (qtd. in Mosse 156).

Faces and bodies mark the Other as evil so that he could be recognized and ostracized. Furthermore, the face in the nineteenth century which supposedly expressed Jewishness—“hooked nose, shifty eyes,” etc.—was also seen to express criminality and degeneration within the pseudo-sciences of physiognomy and phrenology. “Nineteenth century science,” writes Sander Gilman, “tried to explain the special quality of the Jew, as perceived by the dominant European society, in terms of a medicalization of the Jew” (“Sexology” 87). Degeneration and Jewishness, one could therefore conclude (or indeed ratify scientifically), were not far apart. Stoker draws upon the relation between degeneration and physiognomy as theorized by Cesare Lombroso and Max Nordau for his portrayal of Dracula.

During the final pursuit of the vampire, Van Helsing, Seward, and Mina carry on a discussion of criminal types. Van Helsing defines Dracula as a criminal with “a child-brain . . . predestinate to crime” (361). As Van Helsing struggles to articulate his ideas in his broken English, he turns to Mina for help. Mina translates for him succinctly and she even adds sources for the theory Van Helsing has advanced: “the Count is a criminal and of criminal type. Nordau and Lombroso would so classify him, and qua criminal he is of imperfectly formed mind” (361). Since Mina the provincial school teacher mentions Lombroso and Nordau, we may conclude that their ideas of criminality and degeneracy were familiar to an educated readership and not merely a small medical community. As Mina points out, Lombroso would attribute Dracula’s criminal disposition to “an imperfectly formed mind,” or, in other words, to what Van Helsing calls a “child-brain.” Lombroso noted similarities between the physiognomies of “criminals, savages and apes” and concluded that degenerates were a biological throwback to primitive man (xv).

As it developed in the nineteenth century, criminal anthropology focussed quite obviously upon the visual aspects of pathology. Scientists would

catalogue and demonstrate propensities for degenerative behavior by reading bodies and faces. These practices confirm that racial stereotyping depends upon the visual. And racial degeneracy, with its close ties to a social Darwinist conception of human development, also connects with sexual degeneracy. In describing the medicalization of sex, Foucault describes a progressive logic by which “perversion-hereditary-degenerescence” (*History* 118) became the basis of nineteenth-century scientific claims about the danger of undisciplined sexuality. Sexual perversions, within this chain, arise out of inherited physical weaknesses and lead, potentially, to the decline of future generations. Furthermore, Foucault claims, theorizing degenerescence or degeneration as the result of hereditary perversion takes the “coherent form of a state-directed racism” (119).

Elsewhere, Foucault argues that modern anti-Semitism developed, “in socialist milieus, out of the theory of degeneracy” (224). During an interview with Alain Grosrichard, Guy Le Gaufey, and Jacques-Alain Miller, the subject of vampires arises out of a discussion of the nobility and what Foucault calls “the myth of blood” (222). In relating blood as symbolic object to the development of racial doctrines of degeneracy and heredity, Foucault suggests that the scientific ideology of race was developed by the Left rather than by the Right. Lombroso, he points out, “was a man of the Left.” Le Gaufey asks:

LE GAUFEY: Couldn't one see a confirmation of what you are saying in the nineteenth century vogue for vampire novels, in which the aristocracy is always presented as the beast to be destroyed? The vampire is always the aristocrat and the savior a bourgeois . . .  
FOUCAULT: In the eighteenth century, rumors were already circulating that debauched aristocrats abducted little children to slaughter them and regenerate themselves by bathing in their blood. The rumours even led to riots. (223)

When Le Gaufey again emphasizes that this theme develops as a bourgeois myth of that class's overthrow of the aristocracy, Foucault responds, “Modern antisemitism began in that form” (223).

I have described this discussion at length to show how one might begin to theorize the shift within the Gothic novel from the threat of the aristocrat to the threat of the degenerate foreigner, from the threat of money to the threat of blood. The bad blood of family, in other words, is replaced by the bad blood of race, and the scientific theory of degeneracy produces and explains this transition. While neither Le Gaufey nor Foucault determines the role played by the Gothic novel in producing these new categories of identity, I have been arguing that Gothic fiction creates the narrative structure for all kinds of gothicizations across disciplinary and ideological boundaries. “Gothic” describes a discursive strategy which produces monsters as a kind of temporary but influential response to social, political, and sexual problems. And yet, Gothic, as I have noted, always goes both ways. So, even as Gothic style creates the monster, it calls attention to the plasticity or



constructed nature of its creation and thus calls into question all scientific and rational attempts to classify and quantify agents of disorder. Such agents, Gothic literature makes clear, are invented, not discovered, by science.

### III. Gothic Anti-Semitism, 2: Jewish Bodies/Jewish Neuroses

I am calling modern anti-Semitism “Gothic” because in its various forms—medical, political, psychological—it too unites and therefore reproduces the threat of capital and revolution, criminality and impotence, sexual power and gender ambiguity, money and mind, within an identifiable form, the body of the Jew. In *The Jew's Body*, Gilman demonstrates how nineteenth-century anti-Semitism replaced religious anti-Judaism with this pseudoscientific construction of an essentially criminalized and pathologized Jewish body:

The very analysis of the nature of the Jewish body, in the broader culture or within the culture of medicine, has always been linked to establishing the difference (and dangerousness) of the Jew. This scientific vision of parallel and unequal “races” is part of the polygenetic argument about the definition of “race” within the scientific culture of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century it is more strongly linked to the idea that some “races” are inherently weaker, “degenerate,” more at risk for diseases than others. (39)

In *Dracula*, vampires are precisely a race and a family that weakens the stock of Englishness by passing on degeneracy and the disease of blood lust. Dracula as a monster/master parasite feeds upon English wealth and health. He sucks blood and drains resources; he always eats out. Jonathan Harker describes the horror of finding the vampire sated in his coffin after a good night's feed:

the cheeks were fuller, and the white skin seemed ruby-red underneath; the mouth was redder than ever, for on the lips were gouts of fresh blood, which trickled from the corners of the mouth and ran over the chin and neck. Even the deep, burning eyes seemed set amongst the swollen flesh, for the lids and pouches underneath were bloated. It seemed as if the whole awful creature were simply gorged with blood. He lay like a filthy leech, exhausted with his repletion. (54)

The health of the vampire, his full cheeks and glowing skin, of course, comes at the expense of the women and children he has vamped. Harker is disgusted not simply by the spectacle of the vampire but also by the thought that when the Count arrives in England he will want to “sate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless” (54). At this juncture, Harker picks up a shovel and attempts to beat the vampire-monster into pulp. The fear of a mob of parasites feeding upon the social body drives Harker to violence because the parasite represents the idle and dependent other, an organism that lives to feed and feeds to live.<sup>5</sup>

Dracula is surrounded by the smell or odor of awful decay as though, as Harker puts it, "corruption had become itself corrupt" (265). When Harker and his band of friends break into Carfax, Dracula's London home, they are all nauseated by a smell "composed of all the ills of mortality and with the pungent, acrid smell of blood" (265). Similarly, a worker who delivered Dracula's coffins to Carfax tells Seward, "That 'ere 'ouse guvnor is the rummiest I ever was in. Blyme! . . . the place was that neglected that yer might 'ave smelled ole Jerusalem in it" (240). The worker is quite specific: to him the smell is a Jewish smell. Like the diseases attributed to the Jews as a race, bodily odors, people assumed, clung to them and marked them out as different and indeed repugnant objects of pollution.<sup>6</sup>

Parasitism was linked specifically to Jewishness in the 1890s via a number of discourses. In business practices in London's East End, Jews were vilified as "middlemen" who lived off the physical labor of English working-class bodies. In a *Spectator* essay entitled "The Dread of the Jew" we find contemporary references to Jews as "a parasitical race with no ideals beyond the precious metals" (see also Jones). Jews were also linked to the spread of syphilis, to the pseudoscientific discourse of degeneration, and to an inherent criminality that could be verified by phrenological experiments. The Jewish body, in other words, was constructed as parasite, as the difference within, as unhealthy dependence, as a corruption of spirit that reveals itself upon the flesh. Obviously, the horror generated by the repugnant, disease-riddled body of the vampire bears great resemblance to the anti-Semite's "Jewish body" described by Gilman as a construction of the nineteenth-century culture of medicine. But the Jewish body does not only bear the burden of a scientific discussion of "race." In its incarnations as vampire and madman, the Jew also produces race as a psychological category. Race, in other words, may manifest itself as an inherent tendency toward neurosis, hysteria, or other so-called psychological disturbances. While this may seem completely in keeping with the larger motives of nineteenth-century race ideology—the division of humanity into distinct groups—in fact the psychologization of race has particularly insidious effects. It obscures the political agenda of racism by masquerading as objective description and by essentializing Jewishness with relation to particular kinds of bodies, behaviors, and sexualities.

Dracula's blood bond with the insane Renfield provides a particularly powerful link between his character, the racial and psychological stereotypes of Jews, and Gothic anti-Semitism. Seward's interactions with the insane Renfield fulfill a strange function in the novel; while, one assumes, Renfield should further demarcate the distance between normal and pathological, in fact, Seward constantly compares himself to his patient. "Am I to take it," ponders Seward, "that I have anything in common with him, so that we are, as it were, to stand together?" (114). Renfield's frequent violent outbursts and

his habit of eating insects convinces Seward, temporarily at least, that Renfield's insanity resembles rationality only by chance. Renfield's obsessive behavior involves trapping flies to feed to spiders and spiders to feed to birds which he then consumes. "I shall have to invent a new classification for him," Seward decides, "and call him a zoophagous (life-eating) maniac; what he desires is to absorb as many lives as he can, and he has laid himself out to achieve it in a cumulative way" (75). "Zoophagous," of course is a term that may just as easily be applied to Dracula, and so the diagnosis made by Seward on Renfield connects the pathology of one to the other.

Gilman shows how nineteenth-century sexologists marked the Jews as particularly prone to insanity. Arguing that the race was inherently degenerate and that degeneration was perpetuated by inbreeding, Krafft-Ebing and Theodore Kirchhof, among others, suggested that, in Gilman's words, "Jews go crazy because they act like Jews" ("Mad Man" 590). We may apply this dictum to *Dracula* with interesting results: 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. In Stoker's novel, vampirism and its psychotic form of zoophagy both make a pathology out of the threats posed to rationality by excessive consumption and its relation to particular social and sexual habits. The asylum and Carfax, therefore, the homes of madman and vampire, sit in the heart of London as disciplinary icons, reminders to the reader of the consequences of over-consumption.

In several of his famous Tuesday lessons at Salpatriere, Dr. Jean-Martin Charcot remarked upon the hereditary disposition of the Jews to certain nervous diseases like hysteria. "Jewish families," he remarked during a study of facial paralysis, "furnish us with the finest subjects for the study of hereditary nervous disease" (qtd. in Goldstein 536). In an article on psychiatric anti-Semitism in France at the turn of the century, Jan Goldstein has analysed interpretations of the Jews within the human sciences to show how supposedly disinterested and objective studies fed upon and into anti-Semitism. Charcot's pronouncements on the Jews and hereditary nervous disease, for example, were often used by anti-Semites to prove the degeneracy of that race. Similarly, Charcot's work on "ambulatory automatism" was used by his student Henry Meige to connect the Jews, via the myth of the Wandering Jew, with a particular form of epilepsy which induced prolonged somnambulism in the subject.

The restless wanderings of the Jews, [Meige] seemed to say, had not been caused supernaturally, as punishment for their role as Christ-killers, but rather naturally, by their strong propensity to nervous illness. The Jews were not so much an impious people as a constitutionally defective one. (Goldstein 543)

The pathology of the Jews, according to anti-Semitism, involved an absence of allegiance to a Fatherland, a propensity for economic opportunism, and therefore a lack of social morality and, in general, a kind of morbid narcissism or selfishness.

Dracula's need to "consume as many lives as he can," his feminized because non-phallic sexuality, and his ambulism that causes him to wander far from home in search of new blood marks him with all the signs of a Jewish neurosis. As the prototype of the wanderer, the "stranger in a strange land," Dracula also exhibits the way that homelessness or rootlessness was seen to undermine the nation. The threat posed by the wanderer, furthermore, is clearly identified by Stoker within the novel as a sexual threat. The *nosferatu* is not simply a standard reincarnation of Gothic's Wandering Jew, but rather an undead body, a body that will not rest until it has feasted upon the vital fluids of women and children, drained them of health, seduced them, and transformed them into a growing legion of perverts and parasites.

In "The Uncanny," Freud writes about the roots of the uncanny in the lack of place (148). He goes on to reveal the mother's genitalia as a primal uncanny place, a place of lack, a site that generates fear and familiarity. Being buried alive, Freud suggests, appears in fiction as "the most uncanny thing of all" but this fear simply transforms a more pleasurable and familiar fantasy, that of "intra-uterine existence" (151). The uncanny aspect of the vampire, however, is not reducible to an oedipal scene because "home" in the 1890s was precisely an issue resonating with cultural and political implications. Coming or going home, finding a home, was not simply a compulsive return to the womb; it involved nationalist, imperialist, and colonialist enterprises. "Homelessness" in relation to the Jews became an issue with particular resonance in England in the 1890s when approximately 10,000 Eastern European Jews fled the Tsar's violence and arrived in England (see Holmes). Dracula, of course, has no home and wants no home; he carries his coffins (his only permanent resting place) with him and nests briefly but fruitfully in populated areas. Home, with its connotations of marriage, monogamy, and community, is precisely what Dracula is in exile from, and precisely what would and does kill him in the end.

His enemies seek to entrap and confine him, to keep him in one place separate from the native population. Mina Harker, the epitome in the novel of all that is good in woman, tells Seward that they must "rid the earth of this terrible monster" (235) and Van Helsing pronounces Dracula "abhorred by all, a blot in the face of God's sunshine; an arrow in the side of Him who died for man" (251). Dracula like the Jew and the Jew like the vampire is not only parasitical upon the community's health and wealth, he is sick, nervous, a representation of the way that an unbalanced mind was supposed to produce behavior at cross-purposes with nation, home, and healthful reproduction.

The relation between Renfield and the vampire suggests that vampirism is itself a psychological disorder, an addictive activity which in Renfield's case can be corrected in the asylum but in Dracula's case requires permanent exile, or the permanent confinement of the grave. The equation of vampirism with insanity implies an essential connection between progressive degeneracy, hereditary perversion, and a Gothic science fiction of race.

#### IV. Gothic Sexuality: The Vampire Sex

Dracula's racial markings are difficult to distinguish from his sexual markings. Critics have either excluded race from their discussion of his vampire sexuality or have discussed it merely as a function of his strange sexuality.<sup>7</sup> One critic, Sue Ellen Case, has attempted to locate the vampire within the tangle of race and sexuality. She is interested in the vampire in the nineteenth century as a lesbian vampire and as a markedly queer and outlawed body. She also connects the blood lust of the vampire to the history of anti-Semitism and she opposes both lesbian and Jew within the vampiric form to a reproductive or maternal sexuality. Case describes the vampire as "the double 'she' in combination with the queer fanged creature. . . . The vampire is the queer in its lesbian mode" (9).

Of course, vampiric sexuality as it appears in *Dracula* has also been described as homoerotic (Craft) and as heterosexual exogamy (see Stevenson). So which is it? It is all of these and more: the vampire is not lesbian, homosexual, or heterosexual; the vampire represents the productions of sexuality itself. The vampire, after all, creates more vampires by engaging in a sexual relation with his victims, and he reproduces vampires who share his specific sexual predilections. So the point really is not to figure out which so-called perverse sexuality Dracula embodies; rather we should identify the mechanism by which the consuming monster who reproduces his own image comes to represent the construction of sexuality itself.

Vampire sexuality blends power and femininity within the same body and then marks that body as distinctly alien. Dracula is a perverse and multiple figure because he transforms pure and virginal women into seductresses, produces sexuality through their willing bodies. The transformations of Lucy and Mina stress an urgent sexual appetite; the three women who ambush Harker in Castle Dracula display similar voracity. Both Lucy and Dracula's women feed upon children: as nosferatu, buried and yet undead, Lucy walks the heath as the "Bloofer Lady" who lures children to her and then sucks their blood. This act represents the exact reversal of a mother's nurturance. Crouching outside her tomb, Harker and his friends watch horrified as Lucy arrives fresh from the hunt. "With a careless motion," notes Seward, "she flung to the ground, callous as a devil, the child that up to now

she had clutched strenuously to her breast, growling over it as a dog growls over a bone" (223). Lucy is now no longer recognizable as the virginal English woman who had been engaged to marry Lord Godalming and the group takes a certain sexual delight in staking her body, decapitating her, and stuffing her mouth with garlic.

When Mina Harker falls under Dracula's spell, he inverts her maternal impulse. The woman who, by day, nurtures all the men around her, by night drinks blood from the bosom of the King Vampire himself: "Her white nightdress was smeared with blood and a thin stream trickled down the man's bare breast which was shown by his torn-open dress" (298). Apart from the obvious reversal of Mina's maternal role, this powerful image feminizes Dracula in relation to his sexuality. It is eminently notable, then, that male but not female vampires reproduce; Lucy and the three female vampires in Transylvania feed from children but do not create vampire children. Dracula alone reproduces his form.

Dracula, of course, also produces male sexuality in this novel as a composite of virility, good blood, and the desire to reproduce one's own kind. Male sexuality in this respect is a vampiric sexuality (and here I diverge from Case's claim for vampirism as lesbianism). As critics have noted, the birth of an heir at the novel's conclusion, a baby boy named after all the men who fought for his mother's virtue, signifies a culmination of the transfusion scene when all the men give blood to Lucy's depleted body. Dracula has drunk from Lucy and Mina has drunk from Dracula, so paternity by implication is shared and multiple. Little Quincey's many fathers are the happy alternative to the threat of many mothers, all the Bloofer Ladies who might descend upon children at night and suck from them instead of suckling them. Men, not women, reproduce within this system; the female body is rendered non-productive by its sexuality and the vampire body is distinguished from the English male bodies by its femininity.

Blood circulates throughout vampiric sexuality as a substitute or metaphor for other bodily fluids (milk, semen); the leap between bad blood and perverse sexuality, as Case points out, is not hard to make. Dracula's sexuality makes sexuality itself a construction within a signifying chain of class, race, and gender. Gothic sexuality, furthermore, manifests itself as a kind of technology, a productive force which transforms the blood of the native into the lust of the other—as an economy which unites the threat of the foreign and perverse within a single monstrous body.

## V. Gothic Economies

A Gothic economy may be described as a thrifty metaphoricity, one which, rather than simply scapegoating, constructs a monster out of the traits

which ideologies of race, class, gender, sexuality, and capital want to disavow. A Gothic economy also complies with what we might call the logic of capitalism, a logic which rationalizes even the most supernatural of images into material images of capitalism itself. To take a remarkable image from *Dracula* as an example, readers may recall the scene in Transylvania at Castle Dracula when Jonathan Harker, searching for a way out, stumbles upon a pile of gold:

The only thing I found was a great heap of gold in one corner—gold of all kinds, Roman, and British, and Austrian, and Hungarian, and Greek and Turkish money, covered with a film of dust, as though it had lain long in the ground. None of it that I noticed was less than three hundred years old. There were also chains and ornaments, some jewelled, but all of them old and stained. (49)

This image of dusty and unused gold, coins from many nations and old unworn jewels, immediately connects Dracula to the old money of a corrupt class, to a kind of piracy of nations and to the worst excesses of the aristocracy. Dracula lets his plundered wealth rot, he does not circulate his capital, he takes but never spends. Of course, this is exactly the method of his vampirism: Dracula drains but it is the band of English men and Van Helsing who must restore. I call this an instance of a Gothic economy because the pile of gold both makes Dracula monstrous in his relation to money and produces an image of monstrous anti-capitalism, one distinctly associated with vampirism. Money, the novel suggests, should be used and circulated; vampirism somehow interferes with the natural ebb and flow of currency, just as it literally intervenes in the ebbing and flowing of blood.

Marx himself emphasized the Gothic nature of capitalism, its investment in Gothic economies of signification, by deploying the metaphor of the vampire to characterize the capitalist: “British industry . . . vampire-like, could but live by sucking blood, and children’s blood too” (*First International* 79). The modern world for Marx is peopled with the undead; it is, indeed, a Gothic world haunted by specters and ruled by the mystical nature of capital:

Capital posits the permanence of value (to a certain degree) by incarnating itself in fleeting commodities and taking on their form, but at the same time changing them just as constantly. . . . But capital obtains this ability only by constantly sucking in living labour as its soul, vampire-like. (*Grundrisse* 646)

While it is fascinating to note the coincidence here between Marx’s description of capital and the power of the vampire, it is not enough to say that Marx uses Gothic metaphors. Marx, in fact, is describing an economic system, capitalism, which is positively Gothic in its ability to transform matter into commodity, commodity into value, and value into capitalism. And, Gothic capitalism, like the vampire, functions through many different, even contradictory, technologies. Indeed, as Terry Lovell points out in *Consuming Fiction*, capitalism demands contradiction and it predicates a radically split self-con-

tradictory subject. The capitalist subject is both “a unified subject who inhabits a sober, predictable world and has a stable self-identity,” and a self “open to infatuation with the wares of the capitalist market place” (15–16). The nineteenth-century novel, Lovell claims, “is deeply implicated in this fracture within capitalism’s imaginary selves” (16). Obviously, the “imaginary selves” of the vampire and his victims exemplify fractured and contradictory subjectivities: both vampire and victim are figured repeatedly in desiring relations to both production (as writers and breeders) and consumption (as readers and as prey).

Vampirism, Franco Moretti claims, is “an excellent example of the identity of fear and desire” (100). He too points to the radical ambivalence embodied within the Gothic novel and to the economy of metaphoricity within Gothic monstrosity. For Moretti, Frankenstein’s monster and Dracula are “totalizing” monsters who embody the worker and capital respectively. Dracula is gold brought to life and animated within monopoly capitalism. He is, as we have discussed, dead labor as described by Marx. While Moretti finds Dracula’s metaphoric force to be inextricably bound to capital, he acknowledges that desire unravels and then confuses the neat analogy. The vampire represents money, old and new, but he also releases a sexual response that threatens bourgeois culture from below.

Like Frankenstein’s monster, Dracula’s designs upon civilization are read by his enemies as the desire to father a new race. Harker fears that Dracula will “create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless” (54). More than simply an economic threat, then, Dracula’s attack seems to come from all sides, from above and below; he is money, he is vermin, he is the triumph of capital, and the threat of revolution. Harker and his cronies create in Dracula an image of aristocratic tyranny, of corrupt power and privilege, and of foreign threat in order to characterize their own cause as just, patriotic, and even revolutionary.

In one interaction between Harker’s band of men and the vampire, the Gothic economy that Dracula embodies is forcefully literalized. Having broken into Dracula’s house, the men are surprised by Dracula’s return. In the interaction that follows, the vampire is turned into the criminal or interloper in his own home. Harker slashes at him with a knife: “A second less and the blade had shorn through his heart. As it was, the point just cut the cloth of his coat, making a wide gap whence a bundle of bank-notes and a stream of gold fell out” (323–24). Dracula is driven back by Harker who holds up a crucifix and then forced out of the window, but not before “he swept under Harker’s arm” in order to grasp “a handful of the money from the floor.” Dracula now makes his escape: “Amid the crash and glitter of the falling glass, he tumbled into the flagged area below. Through the sound of the shivering glass I could hear the ‘ting’ of the gold, as some of the sovereigns fell on the flagging” (324).



This incident is overdetermined to say the least. The creature who lives on a diet of blood, bleeds gold when wounded; at a time of critical danger, the vampire grovels upon the floor for money, and then his departure is tracked by the “ting” of the coins that he drops during his flight. Obviously, the metaphoric import of this incident is to make literal the connection between blood and money, and to identify Harker’s band with a different and more mediated relation to gold. Harker and his cronies *use* money and they use it to protect their women and their country: Dracula hoards gold and he uses it only to attack and seduce.

But there is still more at stake in this scene. A Gothic economy, I suggested, may be identified by the thriftiness of metaphor and so the image of the vampire bleeding gold connects not only to Dracula’s abuses of capital, his avarice with money, and his excessive sexuality, but it also identifies Dracula within the racial chain of signification that links vampirism to anti-Semitic representations of Jewishness. The scene vividly resonates with Shylock’s famous speech in *The Merchant of Venice*:

I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases . . . if you prick us do we not bleed? if you tickle us do we not laugh? if you poison us do we not die? and if you wrong us shall we not revenge? (3.1.55–63).

Bram Stoker was stage manager for the 250 performances of *The Merchant of Venice* in which Henry Irving, his employer, played Shylock and so it is not so strange to find echoes of Shakespeare’s quintessential outsider in Stoker’s Dracula. But Stoker epitomizes the differences between Dracula and his persecutors in the very terms that Shylock claims as common ground. Dracula’s eyes and hands, his sense and passions are patently alien; he does not eat the same food, he is not hurt by the same weapons or infected by the same diseases, and when he is wounded, “pricked,” he does not bleed, he sheds gold. In the character of Dracula, Stoker has inverted the Jew’s defense into a damning testimony of otherness.<sup>8</sup>

The traditional portrayal of the Jew as usurer or banker, as a parasite who uses money to make money, suggests the economic base of anti-Semitism, and the relation between the anti-Semite’s monster Jew and Dracula. I have shown that within a certain politics of monstrosity the Jew and the vampire are both degenerate, that they both represent parasitical sexuality and economy, that they both unite blood and gold in what is feared to be a conspiracy against nationhood.

We might interpret Moretti’s claim that the vampire is “a totalizing monster” in light of the Gothic economy which allows Dracula to literalize an anti-capitalist, an exemplary consumer and the anti-Semite’s Jew. With regard to the latter category, Dracula is foreignness itself. Like the Jew, his

function within a Gothic economy is to be all difference to all people, his horror cannot and must not be pinned down exactly.

Marx's equation of vampire and capital and Moretti's analysis of *Dracula* and gold must be questioned in terms of the metaphoricity of the monster. As Moretti rightly points out, in the literature of terror "the metaphor is no longer a metaphor: it is a character as real as the others" (106). The Gothic, indeed, charts the transformation of metaphor into body, of fear into form, of narrative into currency. *Dracula* is (rather than represents) gold, his body bleeds gold, it stinks of corruption, and it circulates within many discourses as a currency of monstrosity. The vampire's sexuality and his power, his erotic and economic attraction are Gothic in their ability to transform multiple modes of signification into one image, one body, one monster, a totality of horror.

## VI. Biting Back

The technology of *Dracula* gothicizes certain bodies by making monstrosity an essential component of a race, a class, a gender, or some hybrid of all of these. I have tried to show that gothicization, while it emerges in its most multiple and overt form in the Gothic novel, is a generic feature of many nineteenth-century human sciences and ideologies. Gothic economies produce monstrous capitalist practice, Gothic anti-Semitism fixes all difference in the body of the Jew, and Gothic fiction produces monstrosity as a technology of sexuality, identity, and narrative. But, I have also tried to make the case for the productivity of Gothic fiction. Rather than simply demonizing and making monstrous a unitary other, Gothic is constantly in motion. The appeal of the Gothic text then partly lies in its uncanny power to reveal the mechanisms of monster production. The monster, in its otherworldly form, its supernatural shape, wears the traces of its own construction. Like the bolt through the neck of Frankenstein's monster in the modern horror film, the technology of monstrosity is written upon the body. And the artificiality of the monster denaturalizes in turn the humanness of his enemies.<sup>9</sup>

*Dracula* in particular concerns itself with modes of production and consumption, with the proximity of the normal and the pathological, the native and the foreign. Even though by the end of the novel the vampire is finally staked, the monster is driven out of England and laid to rest, even though monogamous heterosexuality appears to triumph in the birth of Quincey Harker, the boy is as much the son of *Dracula* as he is of the "little band of men" (400) after whom he is named. Blood has been mixed after all; and, like the "mass of material" which tells the story of the vampire but contains "hardly one authentic document," Quincey is hardly the authentic

reproduction of his parents. Monster, in fact, merges with man by the novel's end, and the boy reincarnates the dead American, Quincey Morris, and the dead vampire, Dracula, as if to ensure that, from now on, Englishness, rather than a purity of heritage and lineage, or a symbol for national power, will become nothing more than a lost moment in Gothic history.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup>In her generally sympathetic biography of Burton, Fawn Brodie notes that Burton backed up his accusations against the Jewish population of Damascus with no historical evidence whatsoever, and he simply "listed a score or so of such murders attributed to Jews from 1010 to 1840" (266)! Burton was unable to find a publisher for his book because the subject matter was considered too inflammatory and libellous. When the book did finally appear (posthumously) in 1898, thanks to the efforts of Burton's biographer and friend W. H. Wilkins, an appendix entitled "Human Sacrifice amongst the Sephardim or Eastern Jews" had been edited out. Wilkins, in addition to editing Burton's work, was very involved in the debate about Jewish immigration to England in the 1890s. See Wilkins, "Immigration of Destitute Foreigners," "Immigration Troubles," "Italian," *Alien*. See also Stoker, "Censorship," for the claim that degenerate writers have "in their selfish greed tried to deprave where others had striven to elevate. In the language of the pulpit, they have 'crucified Christ afresh'" (485).

<sup>2</sup>The caption notes that the offensive picture of Dracula on the cereal box came from Bela Lugosi's 1931 portrayal of him in *The House of Dracula*. General Mills responded to the protest by saying that "it had no intention of being antisemitic and would redesign the covers immediately."

<sup>3</sup>In an excellent essay on the way in which "foreignness merges with monstrosity" in *Dracula*, John Stevenson claims that the threat of the vampire is the threat of exogamy, a threat of interracial competition.

<sup>4</sup>In "The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," Homi Bhabha describes the way that colonial discourse creates stereotypes as fetishes. This equation between stereotype and fetish allows Bhabha to discuss colonialism as a discipline, as, in other words, a "non-repressive form of knowledge" which can sustain opposing views and contradictions. I find Bhabha's formulation to be very helpful in thinking through the productive nature of othering and the way othering always also constructs selves.

<sup>5</sup>In an anti-Semitic tract called *England Under the Jews*, Joseph Banister, a journalist, voiced some of the most paranoid fears directed against an immigrant Jewish population, a population steadily growing in the 1880s and 1890s due to an exodus from East Europe. Banister feared that the Jews would spread "blood and skin diseases" among the general population and he likened them to "rodents, reptiles and insects." Banister, whose book went through several editions, made pointed reference to Jews as parasites calling them "Yiddish bloodsuckers" (qtd. in Holmes 39–42).

<sup>6</sup>On blood accusation and its long history, see Albert S. Lindemann.

<sup>7</sup>On vampire sexuality see Senf, but also Demetrakopoulos, Phyllis Roth; and Wasserman.

<sup>8</sup>The "pound of flesh" scene in *The Merchant of Venice* also connects suggestively with Stoker's *Dracula*. Shylock, after all, is denied his pound of flesh by Portia's stipulation that "in the cutting

it, if thou dost shed/ One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods/ Are (by the laws of Venice) confiscate/ Unto the state of Venice" (4.1.305–08).

<sup>9</sup>In the recent film by Francis Ford Coppola, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, it must be observed that this Dracula was precisely not Stoker's, not the nineteenth-century vampire, because Coppola turned this equation of humanness and monstrosity around. While I am claiming that Dracula's monstrosity challenges the naturalness of the "human," Coppola tried to illustrate how Dracula's "humanity" (his ability to love and to grieve) always outweighs his monstrous propensities.

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