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Jonathan, Mina, and the Holiest Love

Intimations of a virtuous queerness in *Dracula* (1897)

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Abstract

The first few chapters of Bram Stoker's Gothic thriller *Dracula* (1897) conform closely to the classic Gothic narrative of imperiled heroine and menacing Gothic villain, except that the role of young, imprisoned ingénue goes to the male Jonathan Harker. The subversion of genre-based gender expectations introduced by the dissonance between the character and his role introduces a theme of transgressive gender performance and sexuality which permeates the entire novel. Drawing on gender theorist Judith Butler, this thesis argues that protagonists Jonathan and Mina Harker display a degree of gender non-conformity by contemporary standards. Gadamer's hermeneutics provide a framework for historical inquiry as *Dracula* is situated in two vital contexts, namely the socio-political context of Stoker's literary production as well as the Gothic tradition. The formulaic nature of Gothic plots provides a way to suggest the possibility of queerness without needing to name it. While the sexual transgression of the novel's vampire characters is made obvious through their vampiric anatomy and eroticized behavior, the contextual transgression of characters like Jonathan and Mina Harker relies on pattern recognition. The Harkers are presented as a viable alternative to overt vampiric transgression and conservative Victorian gender roles alike, and their queer traits are in many ways presented as virtuous.

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1 Introduction

It is a well-known paradox that while the horror genre often demonizes queerness, queer people rank among its most prolific authors. From Matthew Lewis's shapeshifting genderfluid demon in *The Monk* (1796) to Bryan Fuller's homoerotic interpretation of the man-eating Hannibal in the TV series *Hannibal* (2013), queer writers are among the primary producers of queer and queer-coded villains. Given that the horror genre has, since its inception, been given more lenience than others to explore taboo themes, there is some sense to this. Sexual deviance and gender transgression could find representation even in the repressive 19th century as long as they were confined to the dark and the wicked, ideally destroyed by the virtuous and good before the story could reach its end. Even so, an author could use the formulaic structure of Gothic horror to write characters who broke with social norms of gender and sexuality. Speculations abound about the sexuality of classic Gothic authors like Horace Walpole, Matthew Lewis, Robert Louis Stevenson and even Bram Stoker, whose best-known work *Dracula* (1897) is the focus of this thesis.

Dracula opens on a young English solicitor named Jonathan Harker travelling through Eastern Europe to Transylvania. His purpose is to complete a business transaction with a local aristocrat, Count Dracula. Once installed in the Count's decaying old castle, Jonathan slowly realizes that he has become prisoner to a creature not quite human. After a long period of captivity, Jonathan escapes, but the Count is already on his way to England. Meanwhile, schoolteacher Mina Murray—Jonathan's fiancée—is visiting her friend Lucy in Whitby when a ship crashes on the shore, its captain tied to the wheel with a crucifix clutched in his dead hands and the crew nowhere to be found. Lucy, already predisposed to illness, finds her condition deteriorating as she begins to sleepwalk nightly. When Mina leaves for Budapest after Jonathan is brought to a hospital there, gravely ill and half-mad, dr. John Seward calls his old professor Abraham Van Helsing to England for help in determining why Lucy seems to be dying from blood loss with no obvious cause. The cause that is hidden from him, but not from the reader, is that the vampire Dracula has been drinking greedily from Lucy's veins. Through him she has already become infected, and after her body fails, she rises again to become a child-eating predator. Her tragedy galvanizes the Harkers, Van Helsing and the three men who loved Lucy to hunt down and destroy the Count before his appetite can hurt more innocent women.

The story has often been read as deeply sexually conservative, and for good reason. It centers on a group of largely middle-class characters, most of them English, hunting a foreign vampire whose crimes include turning a sweet, pretty Englishwoman into an undead and hypersexual parody of herself and keeping a young man captive for suggestively homoerotic reasons. His three female companions, whose relationship to him goes unexplained, are likewise sexually aggressive and their supernatural charm can render men passively receptive to their advances. The vampires are queer-coded through their transgressive vices, and their villainy is purged through redemptive violence. In the epilogue, the existing married couple have produced a child and the unmarried young men have found wives of their own. All is well. Superficially, the ending ensures that the novel meets every criterion of how queerness may be represented in the Gothic. The sexually transgressive elements are purged, and the heroes may return to a comfortable status quo.

What complicates this reading is that in *Dracula*, queerness is not entirely confined to the villains. All the human protagonists display some level of gender non-conformity, whether by the standards of the Gothic genre or of the Victorian era in which the book was written and set. Of them all, Mina and Jonathan Harker are perhaps the most obviously transgressive. For most of his unwilling stay at Castle Dracula, Jonathan's situation and behavior calls to mind the stereotypical image of a Gothic heroine imprisoned against her will. While the exaggerated femininity he performs during captivity are toned down in later parts of the novel, he continues to be highly emotional, which goes against Victorian ideals of masculine self-control and stoicism. Meanwhile, Mina's sweet disposition and feminine virtues co-exist with a powerful intellect and great rationality, traits which were associated with Victorian masculinity. Remarkably, the novel never presents their unconventional blend of gendered traits as negative. Both characters are among the cast of heroes, and their virtues receive praise from other characters. Where the Gothic ending traditionally resolves its ambiguities through the often-violent removal of a story's complicated antagonist, the presence of the Harkers in the epilogue complicates its surface-level heteronormativity. By using Gothic genre formulas and contemporary norms Stoker keeps the Harkers' transgressions subtle, and in narratively rewarding their gender non-conformity he suggests the possibility of a virtuous queerness—a queerness which does not need to be purged from the narrative.

Any queer reading of an older text requires historical thinking, and for that reason my first chapter aims to provide the framework necessary for the interpretation posited above. In it, I first give a brief account of the historical context which birthed *Dracula*, focusing on the latter half of the 19th century. While Bram Stoker was born and raised in Ireland, he spent most of his adult life living and working in England. *Dracula* is primarily set in England, and all but two of its protagonists are implicitly English. For these reasons, the historical context provided is primarily English. After providing a broader historical overview, I narrow my focus to Stoker's life and the specific context of *Dracula*'s production, including a brief account of Oscar Wilde's trials. Afterwards, I give a brief account of historical censorship of creative works with queer or otherwise taboo themes, delving into some of the ways various writers and creatives have worked around such limitations.

Having provided the necessary background, I move on to giving an account of my primary theoretical framework. First there is Hans-Georg Gadamer, whose hermeneutical approach to reading as given in *Truth and Method* (1975) has greatly influenced my own interpretive process. Gadamer recommends a holistic approach to understanding a historical text, but he cautions the reader to foreground their own historical context and the prejudices that go with it. The second important theorist I introduce is Judith Butler and especially their seminal book *Gender Trouble* (1990), which combines feminist theory with psychoanalysis to call into question the nature of gender. Their account of how disruptive actions from within a system of oppression can be more effective than attacks from without is particularly relevant to my claims, as is their analysis of drag and abjection. Afterwards, I provide a brief account of the Gothic as a literary tradition and clarify some key terms before moving on to an explanation of the secondary criticism I have used to deepen my understanding of *Dracula* as a text.

My first text-focused chapter concentrates on Jonathan Harker and utilizes primarily close reading and comparative analysis to explore his gender non-conformity. I first set out to analyze him as a Gothic heroine, only to find that the Gothic heroine is a more contentious and complicated term than I had initially assumed. Narrowing my scope to those heroines commonly associated with the female-led Gothic tales written in the style of Ann Radcliffe has been helpful, but as I explain in 2.3.1, not entirely unproblematic. However, Ann Radcliffe's best-known Gothic novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1796) provides a baseline point of comparison for an archetypal heroine and the form of her captivity. I analyze

Jonathan's captivity as a feminizing plot beat and delve into the possible sexual threat posed to him by the Count and the female vampires who reside in the castle. As Jonathan's role becomes more complicated and *Dracula* ceases to closely follow the plot structure of 18th century heroine-led Gothic, I shift towards an analysis of what the Victorian era would have considered to be Jonathan's hysterical tendencies and consider how he might still be subtly feminized by some of the traits Stoker chooses to emphasize in him.

The second text-focused chapter performs a shorter analysis of Mina's gender non-conforming traits as well as considering how the Harkers as a couple relate to one another in gendered ways. In analyzing Mina, I consider Victorian gender norms and how the narrative treats her as a woman with some contextually masculine traits. I argue that her masculine traits are treated positively and that the narrative rewards her for using them. In so doing I make use of Richard Marsh's *The Beetle* (1897), which features two female characters coded as masculine in two different ways, to illustrate my point. *The Beetle* has the advantage of being extremely contemporary to *Dracula* as well as sharing key plot similarities. Its popularity upon publication suggests that it reflects contemporary norms well. Moving on to the Harkers, I use close reading to demonstrate a persistent pattern of relational gender transgression between them. Rather than conforming to a heteropatriarchal lover-beloved dynamic, Stoker shows them taking care of one another as needed, both characters at times depending on the other. Here I deepen my analysis of how the characters are presented as morally good and heroic, concluding that their gender non-conformity codes them not only as queer but as virtuously queer. Their queerness is not only incidental and acceptable, but in itself virtuous.

2 Theory and background

2.1 Historical background

In volume one of his *The History of Sexuality* (1976), Michel Foucault traces the phenomena of sexual repression in Europe back to the early eighteenth century. He connects repression to the emergence of the term "population" as "an economical and political problem" which made it necessary to analyze "the birthrate, the age of marriage, the legitimate and illegitimate births, the precocity and frequency of sexual relations, the ways of making them fertile or sterile, the effects of unmarried life…"; in short, sex and reproduction (Foucault 25-26). Towards and throughout the nineteenth century, sexuality "was carefully confined; it moved into the home", and from there it was delegated to the "single locus of sexuality… at the heart of every household (…): the parents' bedroom" (Foucault 3). Sex became prisoner to the monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Sexuality became more regimented and was ushered into the private sphere, not to be talked about or acknowledged in polite society.

By the *fin de siècle*, sexuality had been brought back into the public eye through legislation and scandal. The spread of sexually transmitted diseases, notably syphilis, caused panic. The Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864, 1866 and 1896 were passed in response, though they were protested by women, who were disproportionately targeted by these acts (Ramday 29). That women were subjected to in-depth and humiliating medical examinations and disproportionately quarantined if infected by syphilis was particularly unjust, because—unlike boys and young men—girls and young women were generally not taught about sexually transmitted diseases (Ramday 39, Showalter 196). Many female writers like Sarah Grand therefore made the case for women's sexual education, and many works today categorized as New Woman writing contend with sexually transmitted diseases within the context of marriage (Ramday 26, 32). However, the danger of syphilis was also leveraged by socially conservative voices to further their own agendas. Social purity campaigners linked syphilis with male homosexuality and prostitution, and in France the "image of the victimized wife and infected child" was used by medical professionals to reinforce monogamy, normative morality, and traditional views of "male and female sexuality" (Showalter 195). The discourse around sexually transmittable infections is one of many ways in which discourse around sexuality and gender more broadly came into the Victorian public

consciousness, and it served as a precursor to increasingly heated debates as England approached the end of the nineteenth century.

In the 1880s, a series of sexual scandals were made topics of public concern—and many of these scandals involved transactional sexual exchange between men and/or boys, resulting in a dramatic increase in public awareness of male homosexuality (Showalter 3). The moral outrage regarding men who fell in love with or had sex with other men arguably culminated in the sensational trials of Oscar Wilde, who was found guilty of "gross indecency" in 1895 (Craft 115). Wilde's trial, defense and subsequent imprisonment was a turning point in public English discourse on sexuality and masculinity. In one sense, nineteenth century England had hitherto been more forgiving of "deviant" sexuality, that which was "against nature", because "the codes relating to sexual offenses diminished considerably in the nineteenth century"—but the law had only ceded in favor of medicine, which pathologized deviance into something a person was rather than something they did (Foucault 38-41). However, the 1886 Labouchère Amendment to the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 made "all homosexual acts, private or public, illegal" (Showalter 14). Without the Labouchère Amendment, Wilde could not have been convicted. The case was extremely publicized, and many newspaper editorials at the time portrayed Wilde as "the modern monster… perverting cultural or religious ideals… [whose] sin is infectious" (Schaffer 407). The male homosexual, and Wilde in particular, was construed as unnatural, filthy, and contagious.

The trials emphasized the youth of the men whose intimate company Wilde paid for. In his closing speech, Solicitor-General Lockwood refers to the young working-class men Wilde preferred as "illiterate boys"—a misleading statement, since several of them had worked as clerks—and as "youths", but never as men (Linder, "Closing Speech for the Prosecution by Solicitor-General Frank Lockwood"). What is implicitly suggested by the terminology employed is that Wilde's sexual relations are predatory, possibly even pedophilic. On a personal level, I find I cannot disagree. The clerk Edward Shelley would have been 17 or 18 when Wilde met him (Linder, "Testimony of Edward Shelley"), and Wilde had younger lovers than him. But Florence Balcombe married Bram Stoker at the age of 19 in 1878 (Belford 87), and Wilde had been courting her since 1875 (Schaffer 391), a circumstance which occasioned no scandal whatsoever. Clearly the issue for his contemporaries was not that Wilde liked his men very young, but rather that he liked his very young lovers to be men.

Moreover, the trial stressed the deviance of what had taken place. One Charles Parker reported that Alfred Taylor, a frequent intermediary who had introduced several young men to Wilde, had undergone a "marriage of sorts" to a young man named Mason. When asked if Taylor had said who "acted as a woman", Parker reports not only that one of them (it is unclear whether he means Taylor or Mason) had worn a wedding dress, but subsequently also that Wilde had asked Parker to pretend to be a woman when they had intercourse. "Wilde insisted on this filthy make-believe being kept up" (Linder, "Testimony of Charles Parker"). Though no other witness alleges anything similar, the accusation Parker makes here is particularly relevant because it brings the looming horror of gender transgression to the forefront of the conversation. Homosexuality is itself a threat to Victorian constructions of gender and sexuality—what Judith Butler terms institutional heterosexuality (*GT* 32), or the heterosexual matrix (*GT* 6)—but that Parker admits to crossdressing and pretending to be a woman during intercourse further destabilizes normative gender roles. That the examiner pursues the question of who played the female part before any suggestion had been made of cross-gender play speaks to an anxiety common to *fin de siècle* England. That anxiety is the fear that men were becoming unmanly, an anxiety closely linked to the fear that women were becoming too manly.

Beginning with an 1861 census of the population, a noticeable surplus of unmarried women began to inspire fears that some women may never marry or have children (Showalter 19, 3). Developments in the field of international trade had destabilized class relations as successful enterprising merchants brought a very different, industry-focused view of masculinity into the upper classes, and many of them wanted to provide their daughters with an education as well (Ramday 28). Additionally, many of the upheavals and scandals discussed—such as the debate around syphilis—had led to women questioning more broadly what their lives ought to be. One such woman, Sarah Grand, had vocally opposed the Contagious Diseases Acts in the 1860s in spite of her young age, and she would go on to become a prominent activist for women's rights as well as a writer. In 1894, she coined a term which even today remains central in discussions around Victorian gender debate: the 'New Woman' (Belford 236). The New Woman was associated with educated, working middle-class women, but she also represented the belief that a sexually independent woman was "not only permissible but healthy" (M. Ellis 195). Many New Woman writers openly questioned the institution of marriage and women's reliance on it (Showalter 38), arguing that it must at least be reformed

(Winstead 320). Between women's rights activism, the socio-cultural phenomenon of the New Woman, and class-based challenges to socially sanctioned forms of masculinity, the roles of men and women seemed uncertain, and rising awareness of male homosexuality only added to mainstream anxieties around the seeming dissolution of gender.

The 19th century was a time of rapid industrialization, which led through urbanization to social change. The possibility of employment was presented to middle-class women, as was a degree of education. At the same time, fears about the state of the Empire led to anxieties regarding men's social role. New Woman activists agitated for women's liberation, while homosexuality became increasingly visible; as such, both the New Woman and the homosexual aesthete were caricatured as monstrous figures who went against nature and would corrupt society if left unchecked. These discourses, of course, can be traced in literature. Showalter makes a convincing argument for the homosexual subtext of secrecy and double lives in R. L. Stevenson's urban Gothic novella *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) in chapter six of *Sexual Anarchy*, whereas many New Woman novels and even Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* (1860) explicitly dealt with female disenfranchisement. Naturally there were also novels that took a more reactionary view, such as Richard Marsh's *The Beetle* (1897), wherein the New Woman figure Marjorie Lindon is endangered, brutalized, humiliated and silenced because of her refusal to listen to a man.

2.1.1 Biography

When Bram Stoker began working on *Dracula* in 1890, per his earliest notes (*Bram Stoker's Notes for Dracula – A Facsimile Edition* 12, henceforth *Notes*), the 'Woman Question' loomed large over English public discourse—and a few years into his work, so did Wilde. Talia Schaffer's work indicates that Stoker began writing in earnest in 1895, a mere month after Wilde's conviction (381). Stoker's own notes, as subsequently compiled by Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller, neither support nor contradict her, as Stoker continued to research vampire folklore and work on the novel's outline until at least April 1896 (*Notes* 275). Luckhurst also claims that the majority of *Dracula* was composed during Wilde's incarceration (xii), and unlike Schaffer's claim, his was made after Stoker's notes had been compiled and annotated. As such, I find him credible. What is true in any case is that much of his writing was done in the aftermath of the Wilde trials, which were scandalous and highly

public affairs. But while the trials were likely difficult to avoid for anyone, Stoker was more personally connected to them than most.

While it is difficult to say with any degree of certainty that Stoker and Wilde were friends, they were certainly familiar with one another. While he lived in Dublin, Stoker cultivated a friendship with Wilde's parents (Belford 59). Florence Balcombe, the young woman Wilde courted in 1878, would eventually come to marry Stoker (Schaffer 391). When Stoker began working for the Lyceum Theatre and hosting club dinners there, Wilde was a frequent guest both at shows and at the dinners (Belford 127). He certainly interacted with the Stokers as a couple. Wilde sent Florence Stoker a copy of one of his children's books, the attached note ending as such: "With kind regards to Bram" (Belford 201). Today that line would hardly give anyone pause, but by the standards of the time the fact that Wilde refers to "Bram" rather than "Mr. Stoker" or "your husband" implies a degree of intimacy between the two men. In his closing speech, Wilde's prosecutor Lockwood said the following of Wilde's relationship to Alfred Taylor: "What are the indications of an intimate friendship? They call each other by their Christian names" (Linder, "Closing Speech for the Prosecution by Solicitor-General Frank Lockwood"). Wilde's usage of "Bram" may well have been a token of long acquaintanceship rather than close friendship, or Wilde may have thought them to be closer than they were. It could be an intentional impertinence. In any case it is a casual form of address, suggesting Wilde felt comfortable enough not to treat Stoker with polite deference. Given that Wilde continued to be invited to the Lyceum Theatre, of which Stoker was the manager, it seems reasonable to assume that his informal tone did not cause much offense. Whether or not they would have considered one another as friends, they certainly spent a great deal of time in the same social circles and had many mutual friends.

In 1895, Oscar Wilde was tried and convicted of 'gross indecency' and sent to Reading Gaol to perform two years of "hard labor" (Showalter 14). After months of escalating harassment, Wilde had pressed libel charges against the Marquess of Queensberry for calling him a sodomite. The easiest way to have the case dismissed would be to prove Queensberry's charges true, and as part of the defense's strategy they turned to scrutinizing the contents of Wilde's published works. During Wilde's cross-examination at the first of the three trials, Edward Carson—the defense attorney—read excerpts of his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* then questioned him both on the propriety of its content and on whether it had been

drawn from his own life (Linder, "Cross Examination"). Wilde's conviction was a public spectacle. It was covered in newspapers like the Westminster Gazette, which "hailed Wilde's conviction as a justification of censorship" (Showalter 171). In the eyes of the public Wilde's "grotesquely distorted public persona" came to represent the sin of homosexuality (Schaffer 388) and a sign of the same "immorality" that had felled Ancient Greece and Rome (Showalter 3). It would have been impossible for Stoker not to be aware of the conviction and the shape of the public discourse surrounding Wilde.

Stoker was one of the only people in their social circle who never spoke publicly about the trials. Both Ellen Terry and Henry Irving, the leading actors at the Lyceum, expressed their sympathy and support for Wilde (Schaffer 395). The author Hall Caine, to whom *Dracula* is dedicated under the nickname Hommy-Beg, was openly horrified by the accusations levied against Wilde (Belford 244). Considering the general outspokenness of the people around Stoker, his silence becomes conspicuous. Not only can no opinion on the case be traced in letters, notes, or even anecdotes told by colleagues, friends or family, there is no record of him talking about Wilde at all after the trial. Even in his *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* (1906), there is no mention of Wilde's name anywhere. At one point he draws up a list of "a thousand notable guests or so" (Belford 236), though he admits it is "partial—incomplete; by comparison meagre; representative rather than comprehensive" (*Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* 315, henceforth Reminiscences). Even there, Wilde's name is mentioned nowhere (*Reminiscences* 315-326).

The total omission of Wilde—a playwright, a regular guest at the Lyceum and a great admirer of Henry Irving—from *Personal Reminiscences*, a lengthy two-volume biography about Irving which dealt extensively with the Lyceum, indicates that Stoker did wish not to be associated with Wilde after the trial. Yet if those were Stoker's feelings, it seems strange that he did not publicly distance himself from his fellow author. Their acquaintanceship was known. Gossip columns had reported on their shaking hands in the Lyceum (Belford 127) before. By all accounts, Hall Caine continued to associate with Irving and Terry after expressing his horror at Wilde's crimes despite their differing opinions, so it is doubtful that Stoker would have been ostracized by his colleagues for expressing his thoughts. Silence does not, however, indicate indifference. *Not* voicing any sort of opinion on a criminal case that shook London—one which was covered in most newspapers, one involving someone in his

social circle, one which his friends and co-workers felt strongly about, one involving someone with whom his wife had once been romantically involved—must have taken effort. It seems unlikely that he would have bothered to maintain that silence for the rest of his life if he had no strong feelings on the subject.

Speculating on his state of mind during those months would be a futile endeavor. Stoker kept no diary, and he rarely expressed his feelings openly to anyone; Schaffer makes a convincing argument that he regarded reticence as a duty (388). Regarding his employment under Irving, Stoker himself wrote: "Looking back I cannot honestly find any moment in my life when I failed him, or when I put myself forward in any way when the most scrupulous good taste could have enjoined or even suggested a larger measure of reticence" (*Reminiscences* 34). The latter clause supports Schaffer's argument. Stoker chooses to highlight specifically his capacity for reticence as a quality which made him a suitable helpmeet for Irving. It is therefore not surprising that no record of his private feelings survives, if ever there was one. It is impossible to say exactly what Stoker felt when he learned of the charges laid against Wilde or the punishment he suffered for them. The only indication of his feelings lies in his very refusal to discuss them, and the only inference that can reasonably be made is that whatever he felt, he felt strongly.

Having established that Stoker was a very private person of whose inner life we know very little, it is worth briefly dwelling on the possibility that Stoker may have been attracted to men. While there is no evidence to suggest he had any lovers other than his wife, male or female, he was an avid admirer of American poet Walt Whitman—whose 'Calamus' poems were among only a few contemporary texts tacitly endorsing homosexual relationships (Craft 112). As a student, he was "inexorably drawn into a group of Whitman supporters led by Edward Dowden, his English professor" (Belford 40). Another noted admirer of Whitman, incidentally, was Wilde (Belford 166). At 31, Stoker married Florence Balcombe (Belford 87). The pair only had one child (Belford 121), suggesting either a remarkable degree of caution or a relatively inactive sex life. As many scholars have pointed out, Stoker's life was instead "dominated by intense friendships with men" (Luckhurst xi), perhaps especially Henry Irving. To modern eyes this is decidedly suggestive. Still, it is important to remember that *fin-de-siècle* England placed great value on homosocial relationships. Showalter comments that the phenomenon of men's clubs for all social classes "existed on the fragile

borderline that separated male bonding from homosexuality… manly misogyny from disgusting homoeroticism" (Showalter 13). Stoker's intense friendships with and admiration of men, even when they threatened to eclipse heterosexual romance, are not in themselves evidence of anything other than Victorian manhood.

Of all the men Stoker admired, Walt Whitman stands out for the intensity of feeling he inspired. As a young man, Stoker wrote Whitman a rather remarkable letter—remarkable both in its earnestness and for being one of very few documents which give any insight into his inner life. In it, he tells Walt that "a man of less than half your own age, reared a conservative in a conservative country, and who has always heard your name cried down… felt his heart leap towards you across the Atlantic…" (Traubel par. 9). It is interesting that Stoker chooses to highlight and subtly detach himself from his conservative upbringing, saying he was "reared a conservative" rather than calling himself a conservative man. However, the most striking part of the letter comes towards the very end. First Stoker writes, "How sweet a thing it is for a strong healthy man with a woman's eyes and a child's wishes to feel that he can speak to a man who can be if he wishes father, and brother and wife to his soul" (par. 9). Notably, Stoker chooses to endow both himself and Whitman with male and female traits. His closing line is ambiguous: "I don't think you will laugh, Walt Whitman, nor despise me, but at all events I thank you for all the love and sympathy you have given me in common with my kind" (par. 9). It is contextually unclear what Stoker means by "my kind".

While he writes in this letter that he has been more open with Whitman than anyone else (par. 9), he waited four years to send the letter enclosed with a shorter note. In the shorter letter, he introduces his old writing, and adds his hope that "we may sometime meet and I shall be able perhaps to say what I cannot write" (par. 7). Stoker met Whitman at least twice, but Whitman made no record of either meeting and Stoker's own records (written for publication) are characteristically reticent. Whatever it was he felt he could only tell Whitman in person remains unknown. On their own, each of the quotes I have highlighted could be entirely innocuous. Viewed holistically, however, they do seem to imply that Stoker has recognized some part of himself in Whitman's poetry that goes against his conservative upbringing and which he feels is too secret to even write. But while my own experience of being 24 and closeted makes a queer reading natural for me, his use of "my kind" might refer to his Irish identity, a political stance, or something else entirely.

In later years Stoker would become more conservative and even write articles in favor of censorship (Luckhurst xii), some of which are implicitly anti-homosexual (Schaffer 389). A public stance taken against homosexuality is hardly evidence of heterosexuality, however. Ernst Röhm was a prominent member of the German Nazi Party and a homosexual man who was outed by "the liberal press" (Stewart 96). In 2007, Republican Senator Larry Craig, who had voted against marriage equality, was outed by men he had solicited for sex (Popkey). And as recently as 2020, Hungarian politician Jozsef Szajer, who had drafted a ban on same-sex marriage, was caught at an all-male orgy in Brussels, Belgium during a police raid related to Covid-19 restrictions (Ring). Many queer people throughout history, and even today, have outwardly condemned their own communities and identities, sometimes as a survival strategy. That being said, queer people are in the minority as far as vocal homophobes go. In Stoker's case, his sudden turn to conservatism proves nothing either way.

It would be inappropriate to definitively say that Bram Stoker would have lived as a queer man in a more accepting society, but it may be equally inappropriate to definitively rule it out. Stoker was by his own admission "naturally secretive to the world" (Traubel par. 9). There is no conclusive evidence to be found for his being attracted to men, but there is no evidence to disprove it either. The best option may be to become comfortable with the uncertainty. The first decade or so of critical scholarship around *Dracula* failed to consider the possibility of homoeroticism in the novel altogether. Some scholars in the 90s and 2000s, on the other hand, went so far as to ascribe specific thoughts and feelings to a long-dead, notoriously private man based primarily on the fiction he wrote, "leaving behind innuendo and misinformation about the life of this most elusive of authors" (Belford x). The persistent erasure of queer identities throughout history makes it tempting to label ambiguous figures like Stoker, but consciously held uncertainty avoids the outside imposition of labels while still allowing for a multitude of possibilities.

Much of Stoker's life remains a mystery to historians. He was a notoriously private man, and only a handful of his letters reveal anything about his inner workings. He married a much younger woman at the age of 31, one who had at one point been romantically involved with Oscar Wilde, but his extensive biography of Henry Irving suggests that his homosocial fixations ran deeper than his romantic attachment to his wife. While he would pen articles arguing for censorship later in life, the letters he wrote to Walt Whitman in his mid-to-late 20s

subtly juxtapose Stoker with his conservative country and upbringing. It is difficult to say anything about Stoker's inner life with any degree of certainty. The one definite statement with which I unequivocally agree is one made by Belford in the introduction to her biography of Stoker. She describes him as intelligent and insightful, then points out that "his position at the Lyceum Theatre placed him at the social nexus of Victorian society. He was many things, but naïve was not one of them…" (xiii). Stoker was no recluse. He had situated himself at a place where high and low society met, employed himself at an institution that went from being somewhat stigmatized to somewhat respected during his own lifetime. He likely saw and heard much. It should not be assumed that he had no opinion or knowledge of social and political matters just because he did not speak on them.

2.1.2 Censorship, queerness and taboo

Many Gothic texts include an overtly conservative ending, but there are many reasons why an author in any given historical moment might explore subversive themes only to add an ending that appears to condemn those same themes. A writer who explores controversial themes is sometimes assumed to condone them, which can have severe social consequences. Depending on the reading public's appetite for the grotesque it may not even be profitable, since a book may sell better if readers are not embarrassed to recommend it to friends, family and acquaintances. In some extreme cases, an author may risk being prosecuted on grounds of obscenity. Even if there are no legal repercussions, there are many cases throughout history where authors have been defamed for the context of their books. Writing about that which is taboo or controversial can, as such, be risky. If an author still wants to write about topics that are deemed subversive or to include controversial themes, a common workaround to avoid backlash or even censorship is to either confine what could be contentious to subtext or to textually condemn it.

While the Hays Code came about long after the publication of *Dracula,* an examination of how films with queer themes were made under it illustrates some of the ways in which creatives can work around limitations and how those limitations ultimately shape their work. The Production Code, commonly referred to as the Hays Code, was instituted in 1934. Its purpose was to ensure that films made in Hollywood conformed to a strict standard of morality, which meant limitations on sex in general, but especially homosexuality, called "sex perversion" in the document (Noriega 22). Yet filmmakers still made movies that dealt with

homosexuality. One heavily censored 1954 film had its name was changed from *Olivia* to The *Pit of Loneliness* as a deliberate allusion to Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1928); the title change signaled to viewers the same-sex romance that the plot could not represent (Noriega 26). Lesbianism could be implied, but not stated outright. When the Production Code was updated in 1961 to permit some limited representation of "homosexuality and other sexual aberrations" on screen, the main mode of representation became the villain (Noriega 30). Filmmakers who wanted to represent queer themes under the Hays Code either relied on subtext, relegated queerness to a film's villains, or included a tragic ending that could be read as narratively punishing the queer characters.

The workarounds mentioned above have historically been used to safeguard books against censorship or obscenity charges as well. Some can be traced back to a specific legal precedent set in 1728 during the prosecution of one Edmund Curll. Curll's pornographic texts were seen as dangerous because they might corrupt the morals of English readers (Gladfelder 134)—a common line of reasoning for censors. Ironically, the precedent set by the case may have led to fewer prosecutions on the grounds of obscenity in the following decades. "[T]he judgment… contained its own escape clause," because it established that authors "could write freely about the wickedest acts" as long as the text morally condemned them (Gladfelder 135). After the Curll case, novelists could represent taboo sexuality or extreme violence so long as the narrative condemned it as wicked. Naturally, such a loophole was enthusiastically exploited by novelists who only feared legal consequences. One example is John Cleland's pornographic *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748), wherein the narrator Fanny Hill uses "moralizing asides" to condemn crimes and sexual acts which she "lubriciously presents" to the reader in great detail (Gladfelder 137). While a loophole was created, however, a precedent was also set for the prosecution of authors who failed to take advantage of it.

Perhaps this, along with the rising number of women who read novels, was why late 18th and early 19th century novelists were so eager to present their works as being morally instructive. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, for instance, the education and advice given to Emily St. Aubert for her betterment is also dispensed to the reader through the book's narration (M. Ellis 52)—and in many of Austen's works, the heroine must improve herself to attain a happy ending. Novelists often positioned their works as having "monitory, corrective, socially regulative aims" (Gladfelder 135). The case of Edmund Curll created a legal loophole when it came to

depicting erotic, violent, or otherwise taboo material. It seems likely that such a precedent could be connected, as in the case of the Hays Code, with the increased visibility of queer-coded and otherwise non-conforming villains in 18th and 19th century Gothic literature. Authors were legally disincentivized from writing sexually explicit or taboo material without including narrative moral condemnation, although legal consequences were not all they risked in approaching unspeakable topics.

When Matthew Lewis acknowledged his authorship of *The Monk*, a move made as part of an attempt to defend its controversial contents, a "scandal… erupted about the public morality of Lewis's novel" and to a lesser extent the Gothic genre (M. Ellis 108-109). While *The Monk* contains scenes which remain shocking today, what led to its round condemnation was that it was published as a novel, a genre popular with young women (M. Ellis 115). Its taboo scenes and themes were depicted without any pretense of moral instruction. Indeed, by initially presenting its villain-protagonist as a paragon of virtue who is then easily tempted to sin, the text arguably calls into question the strength and value of some those virtues. The outrage Lewis provoked was to some extent because of the content of his book, to a larger extent because of the content combined with the form, but it was also in large part because he failed to perform the expected self-censorship of condemnation. The scandal threatened to destroy Lewis's political career, as commentators raised the question of whether the author of such a text was fit to be a legislator (M. Ellis 110). Ultimately Lewis's career was not destroyed, and his reputation was not permanently ruined. Nevertheless, the backlash he faced illustrates the social risks associated with publishing material that could be deemed obscene.

2.2 Theory

2.2.1 Hermeneutics and Gadamer

The experiences Stoker had must be understood as influences on his choice of subject matter, his methods of representation, and so on. The political discourses of an author's historical moment are apt to find some expression in their work, however unconsciously. Neither author nor reader can divorce themselves from their cultural context. Both will bring their own prejudices, or fore-conceptions, to the text. These are shaped by cultural and historical context as well as personal experiences. Being aware of what we as readers bring to a text is particularly important when reading a text in a foreign language, from a foreign culture, or from a different time. "Gothic" originally denoted an ethnic group in the Middle Ages, and

when Ann Radcliffe uses it to describe architecture she means that it dates from a specific time period. Today, the general populace uses it to describe a genre of music and a blend of visual signifiers, whereas in this thesis it denotes a literary genre and tradition. In order to understand *Dracula*, it is therefore important to both understand its context and to acknowledge my bias as a queer 21st century reader.

My approach is a hermeneutical one, and I am specifically making use of Gadamer's hermeneutics. In *Truth and Method* (1975), Gadamer delves into historical, theological and philological hermeneutics before proposing a new approach to the field. While his concern is primarily with historical hermeneutics, he repeatedly returns to literary criticism as a point of comparison and departure, and his methods have been used in literary scholarship before. He posits, correctly, that writer and reader alike are both conditioned by their own present time, and he instructs the reader to be conscious of their own prejudices if they want to engage with the text on its own terms. The reader "projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text" because "he is reading the text with particular expectations", and as he[1] achieves a more holistic understanding of the text his own preconceptions are under constant revision (Gadamer 279). To Gadamer, all acts of interpretation begin with "foreconceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones" when the reader is confronted by the unfamiliar, especially with unfamiliar uses of language (280). A reader can no more detach themselves from the present than the writer could; the important thing is that they remain open to "a fluid multiplicity of possibilities" of meaning, as in conversation with another human being (Gadamer 281).

The example of a conversation is one to which Gadamer continually returns throughout the book, and it provides a clue as to how he views historical understanding. He argues that when we interpret a text, we should not be trying to insert ourselves into the writer's mind; rather, we should be trying to understand how what the writer is saying "could be right", which is to say that we should "try to transpose ourselves into the perspective within which he has formed his views" (Gadamer 303). The effort of understanding a text therefore does require

[1] Gadamer uses the generic "he", and for ease of convergence I will do the same in quoting or paraphrasing him. Otherwise I prefer the singular they.

some knowledge of the context within which the writer was situated. But more important to Gadamer is the reader's openness to being proven wrong and to changing their mind when confronted with the unfamiliar. Bringing our own preconceptions to a text is inevitable, and we cannot know in advance "the productive prejudices that enable understanding from the prejudices that hinder it" (Gadamer 306). That process of separation must be undergone as we read. "Real historical thinking must take account of its own historicity" (Gadamer 310). In order to understand a historical text a reader must first understand that they are situated in a historical context of their own.

This does not mean that the reader must disregard their own self entirely. In understanding their relationship to a text as dialogic, in expecting "an answer" and perceiving themselves as a questioner, the reader views themselves as "part of the tradition" that has produced the text. The reader considers themselves as being "addressed by" the text, and becomes capable of responding to it (Gadamer 385). They must understand the tension that exists between themselves and the text, becoming aware of their own otherness and foregrounding "the horizon of the past" in their effort to understand what the text is asking of them (Gadamer 315-17, 382). That mediation is what allows a reader to understand the truth of a text, although what is understood to be a text's truth will inevitably change with time. Interpretation is a timeless task, and a text will always be understood differently in different contexts.

Gadamer's hermeneutical theory is a natural choice for my thesis because of my emphasis on historical and literary context. Hermeneutics instructs the reader to understand the text on a holistic level, "the schema of whole and part" (Gadamer 202), meaning that the part must be understood in the context of the whole and vice versa. My approach is a hermeneutical one, and I am specifically making use of Gadamer's hermeneutics. In *Truth and Method* (1975), Gadamer delves into historical, theological and philological hermeneutics before proposing a new approach to the field. While he is primarily concerned with historical hermeneutics, he repeatedly returns to literary criticism as a point of comparison and departure, and his methods have been used in literary scholarship before. He posits, correctly, that writer and reader alike are both conditioned by their own present time, and he instructs the reader to be conscious of their own prejudices if they want to engage with the text on its own terms. The reader "projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in

the text" because "he is reading the text with particular expectations", and as he[2] achieves a more holistic understanding of the text his own preconceptions are under constant revision (Gadamer 279). To Gadamer, all acts of interpretation begin with "foreconceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones" when the reader is confronted by the unfamiliar, especially with unfamiliar uses of language (280). A reader can no more detach themselves from the present than the writer could; the important thing is that they remain open to "a fluid multiplicity of possibilities" of meaning, as in conversation with another human being (Gadamer 281).

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Gadamer's hermeneutical theory is a natural choice for my thesis because of my emphasis on historical and literary context. Hermeneutics instructs the reader to understand the text on a holistic level. The part must be understood in the context of the whole, and the whole must be understood in the context of the part. As such hermeneutics works very well alongside close reading, which is a technique I employ throughout this thesis. It is also helpful in understanding a text as part of a literary genre or movement. There are parts of Dracula which resonate strangely with 18th century Gothic, whereas other parts are better understood as part of the 19th century urban Gothic genre; an understanding of those two genres can therefore instruct the reader on how to read these seemingly disparate sections. Likewise, knowledge of Victorian gender roles and relationship norms elucidates how Stoker does and does not reproduce them.

The most important way in which Gadamer's hermeneutics has improved my reading is in its insistence on re-evaluating the text as one's understanding improves. My interpretation of *Dracula* is built on an understanding of the novel as a product of its time, but my interpretation is inevitably also a product of all the criticism that has come before it and of my own historical horizon. Thus, as Gadamer calls on readers to do, I have had to confront my own prejudices in reading and consciously set aside those which were not helpful to my understanding. Having first learned about how hysteria was associated with femininity and then about the stereotypical characteristics of male and female hysteria, for instance, recontextualizes many of the emotional outbursts of the male protagonists. Their breakdowns are not only fits of hysterics, they are fits of female hysterics (Băniceru 34). That these fits are not generally condemned by the narrative for it undermines the most conservative readings of the book. Recognizing these nuances allows for a more nuanced reading.

As for my historical sources, a variety of articles all pointed towards Elaine Showalter's seminal book *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (1991), which has

proven a critical source for much of my understanding of Victorian anxieties surrounding gender and sexuality. Her book gives a thorough overview of the varying types of gender transgression that the Victorian mainstream observed, condemned, and feared, and it takes note of how these anxieties were represented through fiction. She considers the threat of the single woman, the political woman, the male homosexual, and she takes stock of the various ways in which they were represented in newspapers, public discourse and in literature. Another useful work is Barbara Belford's *Bram Stoker and the Man Who Was Dracula* (1996), which gives as thorough an account as anyone might hope for of Bram Stoker's life from childhood to his death. Though Belford does engage in some speculation where evidence is scarce, her research is thorough and useful. Finally, there is Talia Schaffer's "'A Wilde Desire Took Me': The Homoerotic History of Dracula" (1994), which is possibly the most comprehensive article on Stoker's relationship to Wilde and Stoker's own possible homosexuality to date. While some of her claims have been cast into doubt by subsequent investigations into Stoker's notes, Schaffer's effort to collect and review historical documents is impressive. Both Schaffer and Belford make some use of Stoker's *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* (1906), as it is the closest Stoker gets to doing any sort of biographical writing. To some small extent, I do the same.

2.2.2 Queerness, gender and Butler

The other theorist I make primary use of is Judith Butler. I mainly base my analysis on their 1990 book *Gender Trouble*, though I also make use of *Bodies That Matter* (1993). In comparing Jonathan Harker to the archetypal Gothic heroine, I found Butler's theory of gender as performance to be illuminating. Butler's theory of gender performativity views gender not as a natural extension of human biology, but rather as a culture-wide self-perpetuating phenomenon of mimesis. The process of "becoming" a gender is, to Butler, a "laborious process of becoming *naturalized*" (*GT* 95). Societal taboos produce hegemonic reproductive heterosexuality, which requires a stable and oppressive gender binary as its foundation (*GT* 87). As such, children are raised to view their own bodies and the bodies of others in accordance with this script: "the repressive law… acts not merely as a negative or exclusionary code, but as a sanction, and… as a law of discourse, distinguishing the speakable from the unspeakable (…), the legitimate from the illegitimate" (*GT* 89). Butler calls into question the very idea of an inherent internal gender identity, instead arguing that gender identity is produced from the outside through a series of "acts, gestures, enactments" that are

repeatedly and consistently performed (*GT* 185). Through sustained repetition, these performances "create the illusion of an interior and organizing gender core" which has in fact been transposed onto the mind (*GT* 186), just as they create the contours of a societally validated sexed body.

While Butler's dismissal of the notion of a gender identity is deeply interesting, what is even more pertinent for my thesis is their discussion of the ways in which the oppressive system of gender and compulsory heterosexuality may be destabilized from within. Unlike French philosopher Monique Wittig, Butler argues that lesbianism is not uniquely suited to combat institutional heteropatriarchy. They believe that homosexual couples may inadvertently reproduce the power dynamics of the heterosexual matrix, and that "structures of psychic homosexuality" may exist "within heterosexual relations" (*GT* 165). They also point out that other displays of power inform sexuality beyond sexual orientation (*GT* 165), which is of course correct. Racialization may complicate the seemingly straightforward power dynamic between a heterosexual couple, as may a variety of other intersecting identities.

Additionally, Butler points to the possible destabilizing effect on the heterosexual matrix of seemingly incongruous gender performances. As an artform, drag seemingly takes its effect from the incongruity between the performer's anatomical sex and their gendered performance. Butler asserts that there is in fact a third element at play: the performer's identity. As such, the performance exposes "a dissonance not only between sex and performance, but sex and gender, and gender and performance" (*GT* 187). A drag performance is a staged production of gender that calls attention to its own artificial nature, which may in turn expose the broader artifice of gender or gender roles. "In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself—as well as its contingency" (*GT* 187). To Butler, the "gender parody" inherent to drag is not a parody of a Platonic ideal of original and originary gender, but rather a parody of "the very notion of an original" (*GT* 188). Though the "gender meanings" found in these performances are necessarily "part of hegemonic, misogynist culture", their recontextualization through parody denaturalizes them to the audience, thus calling into question their validity (*GT* 188).

The possible destabilizing function of drag, or in this instance of gender performance so incongruous that it becomes drag-like in its effect, is important to my reading of Jonathan

Harker's imprisonment in Castle Dracula. His captivity is obviously similar to the captivity experienced by various imperiled heroines in the Gothic tradition, where the "nexus between captivity and gender is especially pertinent" (Smith 125). Many scholars have made the point that Jonathan is disproportionately feminized in the novel (Boone 82, Craft 109, Demetrakopoulos 106). Some go so far as to point out that he is feminized by association with the Gothic heroine (Kuzmanovic 415, Botting 183). Yet few have noted the possible effect on the reader of having the novel open with the point of view of a man whose narrative, even from the first page onwards (Luckhurst xx), is a traditionally female one. As I hope to demonstrate, reading Jonathan Harker's captivity narrative as a deliberately incongruous gender performance calls into question some of the assumptions a reader might otherwise make about how the rest of the novel represents gender.

Another relevant point of terminology which tangentially relates to Butler is the term *queerness*. It has traditionally been used to refer to same-sex or same-gender attraction, but which has become broader in recent years. Transgender people often consider themselves queer even if their sexual orientation is strictly heterosexual, and the term has also come to encompass asexuality as well as aromanticism. Some intersex people consider themselves to be queer, others do not. To quote Noreen Giffney, while queer can be shorthand for the "lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community", it is "more often embraced to point to fluidity in identity, recognising identity as a historically-contingent and socially-constructed fiction… It signifies the messiness of identity" (2). *Dracula* was written in the 1890s, where the term "inversion" was more commonly used than "homosexuality." Bisexuality and transgender identities were not well-known. In the context of this thesis, the term queerness primarily relates to transgression: sometimes sexual transgression, but almost always gender transgression. The two are closely linked in Victorian culture. A man who desires a woman, but who desires to be passive while she is active, would not be considered queer by most today—but in Victorian England, both would be seen as transgressing against order, against God's will, and against their own natures.

2.3 The Gothic

While much of my focus so far has been on the historical context of the *fin de siècle* in England, *Dracula* is also a product of a specific literary tradition, namely the Gothic. The Gothic is a genre of literature dating back to the 18th century, and to simplify it greatly, it is a subgenre of horror. More than many literary traditions, it aims to evoke "the passions of fear and terror" (M. Ellis 22). While Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is generally considered to be the earliest Gothic work, the tradition that is most relevant for my thesis would not emerge until a few decades later with Ann Radcliffe's works. The tradition I speak of is what has often been referred to as the female Gothic, a term which I will explore more in-depth shortly. The important thing to note for now is that the term is gendered, and that it refers to a genre within the Gothic which features heroines—usually young, beautiful and virtuous—as its leading characters. Other recurring motifs are male villains, who are powerful, mysterious and sinister, often having or aspiring to aristocratic titles (Botting 183), and Gothic locations, often the ruins of an opulent setting. Prime examples of the latter include the gloomy old castle, or the oppressive abbey (M. Ellis 83). These stories often center secrets that must be unearthed, and which often reveal the family as a suspect institution (Briggs 127). The setting is usually either historically or spatially removed from the writer's own time and place, and in fact the heroine must often do a great deal of travelling over the course of the story.

The characterization above is superficial; the Gothic is more complex than it is often given credit for. In his article "Coming Out of the Castle: Gothic, Sexuality, and the Limits of Language" (2000), Allen W. Grove makes the claim that while "Gothic novels are often predictable and formulaic", they "nevertheless reveal an obsession with veiling, cloaking and unknowability" (429). Grove's contention is that while the Gothic novel usually features recognizable plot beats which tread the way toward a predictable, heterosexual marriage, authors within the tradition—often women or "putatively gay men such as Horace Walpole, William Beckford, Matthew Lewis and Francis Lathorn" (430)—have often made use of Gothic conventions to subtly put forward progressive ideas. Female Gothic authors like Radcliffe and Kelly, for instance, "use the Gothic conventions of superstition and passion-run-amok" to suggest that "successful marriages… are more dependent on reason than passion" (Grove 436).

Gothic villains often engage in sexually transgressive behavior. The vampire Carmilla of Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872) drinks the blood of beautiful young women while professing her love for them. Matthew Lewis' villainous protagonists "obsessively dwell on illicit passion" (Miles 52). *The Monk*'s demon Rosario/Matilda moves between male and female identities and is one of many shapeshifting villains whose body is itself transgressive. The wedding of hero and heroine at the end of a Gothic novel attempts to reinscribe heteropatriarchal norms, constituting a "foreclosure of ambiguity" which requires the "monsters and madwomen… [to] be punished and ostracized" (K. Ellis 258). The normative is created "through the force of exclusion and abjection" (*Bodies That Matter* xiii, henceforth *BTM*), but creating a constitutive inside necessitates the simultaneous creation of the constitutive outside as well as a border region where the almost-human and the almost-abject meet. Gothic novels, by rendering deviants abject and expelling them from the realm of virtue and morality, nevertheless create a space of possibilities for deviation and disruption.

A more direct example of using "formulaic repetitions" to suggest the unspeakable is how Gothic novels treat sexual violence. When a genre has established that a woman alone with a man is in danger of sexual assault, "a writer can invoke the threat of rape without ever naming or describing the act. The trained reader comes to expect sexual transgression and violation whether they actually happen or not" (Grove 483). A reader familiar with the Gothic will learn to recognize Gothic formulas. As such, a writer familiar with the Gothic can write about sensitive or contentious topics without having to name them. To Grove, the most relevant examples are politically charged or taboo topics like homosexuality, women's liberation, and sexual violence. Broadly speaking, I agree that Gothic formulaic repetitions, which might also be termed Gothic *coding*, are particularly useful for discussing politically sensitive matters without leaving a writer open to being challenged. This concept ties back to Butler's idea of disruptive gender performances.

2.3.1 Male and female Gothic

The eighteenth-century Gothic romance is broadly acknowledged as having two major subgenres. These distinct modes of Gothic are often exemplified, and may be said to have started, with the novels of Matthew Lewis and Ann Radcliffe. According to Robert Miles, "'Female Gothic' and 'male Gothic' have emerged as convenient tags for identifying the differing schools of Radcliffe and Lewis" (43). The "male" Gothic, typified by writers like

Horace Walpole, Matthew Lewis and Lord Byron, tended towards more overt depictions of sex and violence. These stories often featured explicitly supernatural creatures and events, and it is from this form of writing that the idea of the Gothic or Byronic hero took shape. The "female" Gothic, a tradition associated with Ann Radcliffe, Charlotte Smith and the Brontë sisters, among others, tended to avoid explicit sex and violence. Radcliffe avoided supernatural phenomena, to the point where an oft-critiqued feature of her novels is the section wherein all the supernatural occurrences are revealed to have been perfectly natural. These novels were usually, in Kate Ferguson Ellis' words, "heroine-centered" (258).

It is true that most Gothic romances written by female authors focused more on women's position in society, and likewise that violent, sexual and supernatural excess was usually the domain of male authors. This is not a rule without exceptions, however. Charlotte Dacre's 1806 novel *Zofloya, or the Moor* has a young, beautiful woman as its protagonist, but its plot—a protagonist lusting after someone she cannot have, having her weakness exploited by the devil in disguise, resorting to violence to get her way, and finally being dragged to hell—has far more in common with Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* (1796) than anything written by Radcliffe. Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), on the other hand, features a young governess who begins to believe her workplace might be haunted as its heroine and is far more reminiscent of the so-called female Gothic. Works like these disprove the idea that all male authors or all female authors of Gothic are drawn to the same elements. Another definition put forward by Ellen Moers claims that the "female Gothic" encompasses all Gothic works authored by women (90). But by that definition, the broad statements of other scholars on the themes and tropes found within these two subgenres become erroneous. Hoeveler sees the female Gothic as embodying of a type of feminism which centers a self-satisfied victim complex on the part of women (31). That cannot easily be applied to a work like *Zofloya* or *Wuthering Heights*, where the heroine's views and behavior are challenged and punished within the narrative, or even *Jane Eyre*, where the heroine gradually finds the agency to remove herself from oppressive situations.

Settling the question of what "the female Gothic" is and whether there is a meaningful distinction between it and "the male Gothic" falls outside the scope of this thesis. In order to avoid making reductive claims about all Gothic texts written by women between the publication of Clara Reeves' *The Old English Baron* (1778) and the present day, I have

chosen to narrow my focus down to the novels and heroines of Ann Radcliffe and the authors taking inspiration from her. In so doing, I can make use of the adjective Radcliffean where using terms like "the female Gothic" would be reductive. This is a cue taken from Fred Botting, whose article comparing *Dracula* to Radcliffe's works makes use of the term "Radcliffean Gothic" (184). In this thesis, I will be extending that form and applying it to the archetypal heroine as well. By doing that, I can use the term "Radcliffean heroine" to enable a more specific and nuanced discussion where the term "Gothic heroine" might be reductive or confusing.

The term "Gothic heroine" is often used to describe a heroine who behaves in a particular way, but there are many heroines within the Gothic. The term has been reductive almost for as long as the Gothic genre has existed, but in later years it has become particularly egregious. Modern authors are still writing Gothic stories, many of which feature heroines who have very little in common with Walpole's Isabella or Radcliffe's Ellena. Austen uses the term "heroine" in *Northanger Abbey* to discuss tropes that are often associated with "the Gothic heroine" (3-6), but of course there are many kinds of heroine both within the Gothic and within literature more broadly. The archetype she appears to be invoking has a great deal in common with Radcliffe's heroines, though simplified for comedy's sake. As such, where it might otherwise be useful to invoke an archetypal Gothic heroine, I instead invoke the Radcliffean heroine. Making a distinction between the Radcliffean heroine and the Gothic heroine more broadly avoids generalizing and enables better in-depth analyses of both.

I acknowledge that Radcliffe's heroines are not all identical, and that even the terminology proposed above will be reductive in certain instances. The archetype that Austen refers to simply as "the heroine" and which is sometimes called "the Gothic heroine" does not perfectly describe even Emily St. Aubert, who is likely the originator of many of the stereotypes associated with the stock character. Her heroines "are themselves literary creators" (Norton 85), and while Emily may seem passive to modern readers, she is surprisingly strong-willed. Her agency is limited, but she does not conceal her displeasure and often voices it even to powerful men like Montoni or Count Morano. A stock character will always be described in simplified ways, however, and many commonly cited examples of stock characters contain more depth than is commonly ascribed to them. It should also be noted that in discussing Radcliffean heroines, I do not limit the character archetype to

Radcliffe's heroines. She was an influential writer, and many authors found inspiration in her work—or, in some instances, found imitating her work to be a profitable venture (Norton 89). Her heroines laid the foundations for a particular literary archetype which perhaps has more in common with the heroines of her imitators, but which nevertheless began with her. The term "Radcliffean heroine" refers to that archetype.

Other scholars may use different terminologies. Where I cite scholars who make use of the female/male Gothic distinction, this may be assumed to refer to the styles exemplified by Radcliffe and Lewis. Where a scholar is instead making a broad reference to all Gothic works authored by either women or men, I will explicitly make note of that. The privileging of the former over the latter is a pragmatic decision rather than a value judgment. Of the works I have read which make use of the distinction, most seem to favor using them to as a shorthand for two sets of genre conventions. Using those as the assumed default therefore reduces the amount of requisite footnotes.

2.4 *Dracula* scholarship

Dracula is a novel that has received a great deal of critical attention, especially since the 1970s. Given the body of scholarly criticism that surrounds it, I have chosen to narrow my focus to the schools that are most closely related to the inquiry of my own thesis, namely feminist and queer readings. Important to mention here are Stephanie Demetrakopoulos and Christopher Craft, whose works proved foundational within those two schools of *Dracula* scholarship. Demetrakopoulos was, moreover, one of the first scholars to attempt any serious inquiry into *Dracula*, and her readings of Lucy and Mina as well as the theme of repressed sexuality throughout the novel (as seen in her 1977 paper "Feminism, Sex Role Exchanges, and Other Subliminal Fantasies in *Dracula*") laid the groundwork for future feminist readings. Christopher Craft's phenomenal "Kiss Me With Those Red Lips: Gender and Inversion in *Dracula*" is one of the most well-known scholarly articles on *Dracula*, and to my knowledge was the first article to read into the queer subtext of the novel. His interpretation of the vampire's mouth as sexually ambiguous has been especially important to my understanding of the novel. Of the other *Dracula* scholars cited in this thesis, most, if not all, reference either Demetrakopoulos, Craft, or an article written in direct response to one of them.

Although I make use of too many articles to name them all, some stand out either in terms of how frequently they are cited or the extent to which they shaped my thoughts on the novel. Notable here is Dejan Kuzmanovic, whose article "Vampiric Seduction and Vicissitudes of Masculine Identity in Bram Stoker's Dracula" (2009) explores many of the same themes of masculine identity that caught my own attention. He argues that Jonathan Harker's feminization is an important step in his coming-of-age as an exemplary Englishman, pointing to his marriage and rapid promotion as evidence, and his argument is convincing. My thesis ultimately reaches a very different conclusion, but Kuzmanovic's article has been instrumental in leading me there precisely because of how thorough Kuzmanovic's research is and how skillfully he argues his position. Another important article to mention is Fred Botting's "*Dracula*, Romance and Radcliffean Gothic" (1994), which is one of the only sources I could find that performs any extended comparative analysis of *Dracula* vis à vis Radcliffe's works. Notably, as mentioned above, I found his use of the term "Radcliffean Gothic" to be so helpful that I extended it to more productively discuss the Radcliffean heroine as well.

2.5 Chapter conclusion

No author can write outside their historical context, just as no reader can approach a text without bringing their own prejudices to it. Bram Stoker's writing, intentionally or not, reflects the anxieties of *fin de siècle* England regarding gender and sexuality. His female vampires behave in eroticized ways that go against Victorian restrictions on female sexuality, and Dracula's predatory behavior is a danger to young men as well as women. His work is a product of a literary and cultural history, both of which have influenced its creation and aid in understanding it.

Familiarity with the archetypes and tropes Stoker borrows from the Radcliffean Gothic brings *Dracula*'s queer subtext into the light. He places a male character in the role of a heroine, an inherently disruptive act which also infuses the villain/heroine dynamic with homoerotic energy. Such a move constitutes a Butlerian act of dissonant gender performance, but on the level of writing. Metatextual knowledge of how Gothic archetypes and tropes were used to represent the unrepresentable adds further dimension to the reading. Gothic writers frequently inserted queer subtext and themes into the text, but they were most often confined to the villain, who would inevitably be destroyed. In *Dracula*, while the Gothic villain dies, the

queer-coded male heroine survives into the epilogue. When Stoker's use of Gothic tropes produces a constitutive inside that bounds the human (*BTM* xvii), he admits queerness into it.

The cultural history surrounding *Dracula* encompasses broad sociopolitical movements of the latter half of the 19th century, but also the small social circle of the Lyceum Theatre in London in the 1890s. It delves into the ways women's rights activists were ridiculed and the ways the law and public discourse were weaponized against men who had sex with men. By understanding the political discourses contemporary to *Dracula*'s creation, the reader can see traces of a progressive stance which may be hidden from a reader who does not recognize their own historical position as a prejudiced one. Stoker imbues his female protagonist with traits that would have been understood by contemporary readers as masculine, but unlike other contemporary texts, he neither demonizes nor ridicules them. Instead, the narrative suggests that her androgyny is virtuous and, if society will let her express it, beneficial.

Like Stoker brought present day anxieties into *Dracula*, every generation will understand a given text in its own way, because the text is part of an ever-changing tradition through which an age "seeks to understand itself" (Gadamer 307). Critics bring their own history and its prejudices to a work of art or literature. Demetrakopoulos found no trace of homoeroticism in *Dracula*, but today scholarly consensus indicates that there are queer themes in the text. Gadamer writes about the "curious impotence of our judgment where temporal distance has not given us sure criteria" (308). Demetrakopoulos's reading, far from impotent, was foundational and remains useful even today, but as one of the first scholars to criticize it she simply did not have access to many other perspectives. Gadamer refers to our situational context as our horizon, the complete image of what we can see. It is not "a rigid boundary," but rather moves with the subject (Gadamer 247). Implicit here is that while new knowledge and points of view come into view, others fade out of sight. No horizon can make everything visible. Rather than mourn that, we must try to make use of what is available to us.

3 Jonathan Harker, Gothic heroine

It is curious that while Jonathan Harker's narration both opens and closes the novel, his role in the novel is often greatly changed in adaptation. The 1931 film version starring Bela Lugosi gives Jonathan's captivity narrative to Renfield, thus reducing Jonathan's own role to merely that of husband and hunter. The two most recent film adaptations, both released in 2023, *Renfield* and *The Last Voyage of the Demeter*, drop him altogether. The 2020 BBC mini-series by Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat depicts Jonathan's captivity, but has him killed in Budapest before he can marry Mina. The 2013 television adaptation created by Cole Haddon and Daniel Knauf as well as Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1990) both had Jonathan represent the sexual repression and patriarchal oppression of the Victorian age, with the sexually liberated and liberating Dracula instead serving as Mina's love interest. Evidently, many creators find Jonathan's story either unappealing or difficult to adapt. Where he is included, Jonathan is either Mina's husband or Dracula's victim—but rarely both. The sole exception that comes to mind is Werner Herzog's *Nosferatu* (1922), released a full century ago. The consistency with which Jonathan's storyline is omitted, altered, or partly surrendered to Renfield or Dracula—each respectively more unambiguously emasculated or masculine—hints at a perceived incongruity between his initial captivity and his subsequent status as a desirable romantic hero. It suggests that there is something about Jonathan's stint as Dracula's prisoner that continues to make readers uncomfortable.

It may be that the sort of captivity narrative experienced by Jonathan Harker is more frequently associated with female characters. Jonathan Harker, to paraphrase one of Botting's comments on *Dracula*, is a strange hero. A male character written by a man, he draws on genre conventions associated since the 18th century with female protagonists from novels written by women for women[3]. He begins his story with the sort of travel narrative long associated with Ann Radcliffe's heroines (Luckhurst xx), complete with lavish scenery descriptions and vague pre-sentiments of dreadful things to come. Soon enough, he is imprisoned in a vast, ruined castle by an older male aristocrat and subjected to terrors he

[3] "*Dracula* is a strange romance. By a man, about men and for men, it draws on a form of writing associated, since the eighteenth century, with femininity" (Botting 181).

struggles to rationalize. Once free, he succumbs to a euphemistic "brain fever" and remains in a hospital in Budapest until his betrothed comes to bring him home. They wed, and shortly afterwards he inherits wealth and an estate from a father figure. In summary, his story from the first page and up until his wedding neatly follows the "formulaic repetitions" (Allen W. Grove's phrase) of the narrative laid out by *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, its protagonist Emily St. Aubert, and the many writers who found inspiration in Radcliffe's works. The narrative, however, does not end there. Soon enough, Jonathan learns what the reader already knows: Dracula is still alive, and he has moved on to terrorize another young, vulnerable victim. For the rest of the story, Jonathan cannot in any way be said to fit the standard narrative or characterization of the Radcliffean Gothic heroine.

My goal for this chapter is to examine the degree to which Jonathan Harker conforms to the archetypal Radcliffean heroine during his imprisonment at Castle Dracula and the degree to which he more broadly conforms to Victorian gender norms throughout the novel. I argue that his characterization during the first section of the novel would, to the experienced Gothic reader, constitute a disruptive gender performance. A reader who is familiar with Gothic genre tropes would recognize that Jonathan is performing a role that is incongruent with his assumed anatomy and expressed gender identity. Essentially, it is an act of Gothic queer-coding. A receptive audience could read homoerotic tension and a tacit undermining of gender roles into the plotline, whereas readers unfamiliar with the genre could easily ignore or overlook any queer subtext. Importantly, however, this act of (paradoxically) overt genre-based coding sets the audience up to expect further subversion. Through characterizing Jonathan Harker as a Radcliffean heroine, Stoker uses familiar archetypes to undermine existing gender structures and enables more subtle disruption of heteropatriarchy later on in the book.

3.1 The Gothic heroine as archetype

Before delving into any analysis of Jonathan Harker's complicated role, it will be necessary to quickly establish what characterizes the Radcliffean heroine and what shape her narrative arc generally takes. Jane Austen may have best summarized her in describing what Catherine Morland, protagonist of *Northanger Abbey*, is not: Catherine is not an orphan, not a beauty, not an admirer of nature's beauties, not uncommonly gifted as a child, not an able musician, not an artist, but instead fond of athletic games and mischief (3-6). Given that Catherine is not

what anyone would expect a heroine to be, the typical or expected heroine[4] must be Catherine's opposite. The Radcliffean heroine often has a frail constitution, but she is usually well-educated. She intensely admires "the sublime and the picturesque" (Miles 46), and her sense for poetry is such that she often composes or declares it on the spot. To Miles, this aligns her not with the "romantic, in the sense of being fatally overcome by her love interest… [She], rather, is Romantic with a capital 'R'" (46). According to Diane Long Hoeveler, she has a sensitive nature and strong emotions, but strives to "[educate] her senses so that her intellect is in control, rather than secondary to the buffeting of the sensual or emotional" (34). In many ways, she represents an ideal, perhaps with the intended function of serving as a role model for the presumed young female reader. Her love interest, too, tends to be young, virtuous and handsome—though he is rarely flawless. By the ending or epilogue, they typically settle into a blissful, heteronormative unit, what Grove terms the "conventional, predictable marital ending" (443, 445).

These traits are perfectly exemplified in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*'s Emily St. Aubert, which is possibly Radcliffe's best-known work. Emily is uncommonly beautiful and charming, to the point where most of the single male characters are explicitly attracted to her. She plays the lute and sings beautifully, she reads, writes and recites poetry, she dresses simply and elegantly in contrast to the gaudier fashions donned by the less heroic female characters, and she faints no less than eleven times over the course of the novel. She is portrayed as being kind and gentle, even to those who are socially beneath her. Her status as an iconic Gothic heroine is helped by the enduring popularity of *Mysteries of Udolpho*. The aforementioned *Northanger Abbey* does parody the Gothic more broadly, but Radcliffe and *Udolpho* are referenced more frequently within it than any other Gothic author or text. Radcliffe was "accorded a prominent position in the lists of the great novelists" up until "about 1860" (Norton 253). She was an exceptionally well-known author in her time.

Even by the late 19th century, where 18th century Gothic had largely gone out of fashion, *Udolpho* was still referenced in passing in other literary works in ways that assumed at least a passing familiarity with the premise of the text. Charles Robert Maturin loved Radcliffe's

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[4] Austen only alludes to this character archetype as a/the "heroine", but she makes repeated references to Ann Radcliffe's novels throughout *Northanger Abbey*.

romances and made reference to them both in some of his plays and in the preface to his best-known work, *Melmoth the Wanderer* (Norton 253-4), a novel which in turn "fascinated" Bram Stoker (Belford 132). The castle of Udolpho "has become metonymic for the terrors of confinement we associate with the [Gothic] genre" (K. Ellis 260), and Emily with its prisoner. The first section of *Dracula*, with Jonathan's journey to Transylvania and his period of incarceration in Castle Dracula, has a lot in common with *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in terms of plot elements and overall narrative structure. As that part of the novel is the primary focus of this chapter, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* will therefore be useful as an example of an iconic and influential work of 18th century heroine-led Gothic literature. Likewise, because of her iconic status and to avoid sweeping generalizations, Emily St. Aubert will be my primary point of comparison for Jonathan Harker.

Like other heroines before her, the orphaned Emily finds herself confined within a crumbling old castle where she faces a great many terrors. The villainous Montoni, who becomes her *de facto* guardian upon marrying her aunt, imprisons her for reasons unknown to her. The terror she experiences at not knowing what is to become of her or her aunt bleeds into superstition as she hears ghost stories about the castle. Montoni, who has designs on her inheritance and who will gladly expose her to the advances of his men if that will give him the leverage he needs to extract her signature on the right forms, is the real threat. A secondary threat is Count Morano, who was promised her hand in marriage when the family lived in Venice for a time. Now that Montoni has rescinded that offer, Morano schemes to save Emily from Udolpho—by force, if necessary. With the help of the servants Ludovico and Annette, Emily is able to escape the castle, though not before the death of her unfortunate aunt. By the end of the novel, she is happily reunited with her long-beloved Valancourt. They marry, and she inherits her childhood home. As explained above, the plot progression of her narrative is considered standard for a heroine-led Gothic, and in many ways Emily would come to represent the most stereotypical Gothic heroine.

In superficial terms, there are quite a few differences between a heroine like Emily and Jonathan Harker. Even setting aside the obvious discrepancies of sex and gender he is never described as an exceptional beauty, and while he certainly appreciates the beauty of nature, he does so only in the form of personal writing. However, I would argue that the most important defining feature of the Radcliffean heroine—and the Gothic heroine more broadly—is neither

her beauty nor her artistic gifts, but rather that she is imperiled and imprisoned. Julie Smith calls this "Gothic literature's reliance upon the heroine's confinement" and argues that its roots lie in the genre's preoccupation with the patriarchal oppression of women (126). In Kate Ferguson Ellis's article re-evaluating the classic Gothic heroine and her feminist significance, she concludes that the heroine's task "is to escape from the castle that has become her prison, to preside over its demystification… and to claim the fortune and lineage that the villain has sought to make his own" (263). To Grove, her defining feature is that she "continually finds herself unprotected in a world of snares and pitfalls", and that her survival depends on her "learn[ing] to recognize or contend with evil" (436). While Austen's parodic work does an excellent job of delineating the stereotypes associated with the Gothic heroine as a figure, scholarly consensus instead points to her perilous circumstances as her defining trait.

Readings of Jonathan Harker as more akin to a Gothic or Radcliffean heroine than a traditional male hero have emerged only in recent years. As recently as 1972, Stephanie Demetrakopoulos, in the midst of analyzing latent expressions of deviant sexuality in *Dracula*, dismissed the idea of a queer reading out of hand. She argued that while one could find imagery that evoked incest, adultery, rape, and group sex in addition to "symbolic fantasies" of sadism and masochism, the exception was homosexuality, which "obviously did not interest Stoker" (105, 108). Christopher Craft's seminal 1984 article "Kiss Me With Those Red Lips: Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*" provided the first queer reading of the book, arguing that "the novel's opening anxiety, its first articulation of the vampiric threat, derives from Dracula's hovering interest in Jonathan Harker" (109-110). Bearing in mind the power the Count wields over his prisoner, the similarities between his role and the archetypal Radcliffean heroine come more clearly into view. Radcliffe's Emily and Walpole's Isabella are isolated from their loved ones, imprisoned in gloomy old castles, and they must both evade the aggressive sexual advances of older aristocratic men.

In *Dracula*, however, the imprisoned ingénue is a young man. I am hardly the first to make the observation that he "suffers the isolation, helplessness and physical and sexual threats conventionally reserved for the Gothic heroine, abandoned to the vicious caprices of the villain" (Botting 183). His captivity in Castle Dracula resembles that of a Radcliffean heroine, as does its effect on his mind. He sees and hears strange things and begins to wonder if he is going insane or if the castle truly is home to something dark and unnatural. That, too, is

typical of the Radcliffean heroine, who must strive to maintain her composure faced with seemingly unexplainable occurrences. Both the form and effect of his captivity make an analysis of his character as a male Radcliffean heroine appropriate. Furthermore, it seems as though Stoker is intentionally inserting parallels between Jonathan and female heroines, though they are not all Gothic. Together, all these elements serve to emphasize Jonathan's unusual position as a male character, perhaps indicating from the beginning that *Dracula* is not as conservative with regards to gender roles as it might appear at first glance.

One of the many perilous circumstances which Jonathan Harker shares with many heroines is his dangerous journey to Transylvania, the travel narrative being a common motif in Gothic novels more broadly and Radcliffe's Gothic specifically. Though her captivity remains the best-known part of the plot, Emily St. Aubert of Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*—a novel that will serve as a point of comparison throughout the chapter—spends a great deal of time traveling, whether willingly or not (K. Ellis 260). According to Julia Stanski a travel narrative served to highlight the dangers a female traveler might encounter (1), but it also lent itself well to lavish descriptions of scenery and allowed the heroine to interact with sublime nature. To Emily, traveling is a source of terror and delight alike. Even during her first journey, undertaken for pleasure, her mental well-being is burdened with "concerns over her father's health, bandits, getting lost, and finding a place to stay for the night…" (2). The latter two journeys affect her even more. Upon learning that she is to travel to Montoni's castle, Udolpho, she is filled with "fear and dread" (Stanski 2). During the final extended journey, the anxiety that her traveling party will be caught by Montoni or his men mingles with the dread of what will happen to them if they cannot procure money and the real danger of their seafaring vessel being caught in a storm (Radcliffe 451-453, 485). She is cheered and comforted by "beautiful and sublime scenery" and the "emotional and spiritual uplift that it evokes" in her (Stanski 3), however, which helps her endure the fear.

Jonathan Harker likewise begins his tale by travelling through Romania and Hungary on his way to Castle Dracula, and the connection between his journal entries and the narration of Radcliffe's novels has not gone unnoticed by critics. Roger Luckhurst comments that the form and content of Jonathan's travel journal "into a menacing un-English world… [echo] the heroines from Ann Radcliffe's Gothic novels" (Luckhurst xx). While Jonathan cheerfully writes about food, local history and superstition, his journey is soon marred by strange

experiences. He has “all sorts of queer dreams” (Stoker 10) and the locals begin to express their fear for him (12). He tries to downplay his own fears as feelings of unease, but they clearly affect him more than he lets on, because by his second journal entry he already seems to fear for his future: “If this book should ever reach Mina before I do, let it bring my goodbye” (Stoker 13). The closer he gets to his destination, soon to be his prison, the more intense his experiences become. On the drive to the castle, he sees mysterious blue flames and comes into genuine peril when wolves begin to circle the carriage. Even after a disguised Dracula drives away the beasts, Jonathan continues to experience a “dreadful fear” so strong he is “afraid to speak or move” (Stoker 20), a phrasing notably like many of Emily’s fearful paroxysms. For both characters, travelling is a source of literal danger and emotional distress.

Both characters, however, are also sensitive to the beauty of nature and find great comfort in it. After hearing the locals whispering about superstition and realizing they are casting protective charms on him, Jonathan soon loses “sight and recollection of ghostly fears in the beauty of the scenes” that he sees as they drive (Stoker 14). He describes the pastoral scenes of “forests and woods” and “farmhouses”, masses of fruit blossoms (Stoker 14), but soon also “the lofty steeps of the Carpathians themselves”, towering over them with “an endless perspective of jagged rock and pointed crags, till these were themselves lost in the distance, where the snowy peaks rose grandly” and “mighty rifts… through which… [he] saw now and again the white gleam of falling water” (Stoker 15). This is not unlike Emily’s joy at seeing “pine forests of the mountains upon the vast plains, that, enriched with woods, towns, blushing vines, and plantations of almonds, palms and olives” (Radcliffe 28), nor later the “tremendous walls of the rocks… and the fresh water of a spring, that… thence precipitated itself from rock to rock, till its dashing murmurs were lost in the abyss, though its white foam was long seen amid the darkness of the pines below” (Radcliffe 29). Emily and Jonathan, in short, are both highly sensitive to the beauty of nature. The sights they behold, whether lovely, sublime or terrifying, exert a strong influence on their emotional and mental states.

The cheer imparted on them by the sights of pastoral or natural beauty is matched only by the fear that grips them when their dark, desolate destinations come into view. To Emily, Udolpho is “a gloomy and sublime object” which, along with the darkness of the woods she must travel through, awakens “terrific images in her mind” (Radcliffe 227). Udolpho, though its “mouldering walls of dark grey stone” and “extensive ramparts” are initially lit up by the

setting sun, to her is “invested with the solemn duskiness of evening” and seems to “frown defiance on all, who dared invade its solitary reign” (226-7). Castle Dracula, likewise, is a “vast ruined castle, from whose tall black windows came no ray of light, and whose broken battlements showed a jagged line against the moonlit sky” (Stoker 20). As Emily’s mind is flooded with terrific images, so too does Jonathan feel “doubts and fears crowding upon” him (21). Udolpho and Castle Dracula are Gothic locations, and both will reveal themselves in Gothic fashion to be “architecturally-complex maze[s]” (Smith 125) that are difficult to navigate. They engender feelings of isolation, endangerment and insignificance in their captives, rather than claustrophobia. By first using the format of a travel narrative and subsequently showing Jonathan’s growing fear as he approaches Castle Dracula, Stoker plays with familiar Gothic elements to set up the terror Jonathan will experience during his captivity and his subversion of normative gender roles.

3.2 Entrapment

Whether literal or metaphorical, the theme of captivity is one of the more consistent themes in what has been termed the female Gothic. Smith claims that the genre’s frequent explorations of imprisonment and female victimization help explore the “the binary opposition of immobility and mobility”, since Gothic stories frequently explore how patriarchal constructions of femininity constrain women (Smith 126). Literal captivity threatens heroines like Emily St. Aubert or Emmeline in Charlotte Smith’s *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788), but even in less straightforward cases, such as *Jane Eyre* (1847) or *Wuthering Heights* (1847) women are metaphorically trapped by the expectations placed upon them as women. Once Catherine Earnshaw becomes Catherine Linton, she must live with her husband, not her beloved childhood home, and she cannot ramble on the moors as she did before. Her mobility is limited by the expectations placed on her as an adult woman and a wife, as is her agency. Likewise, in addition to being physically confined in the Red Room by Mrs. Reed as a child, Jane Eyre’s agency and mobility are consistently limited by her gender and class. Her metaphorical entrapment is grotesquely mirrored by Bertha Rochester, née Mason, who has been kept imprisoned by her own husband for years.

If we read *Dracula* as a novel in the Gothic tradition established by authors like Ann Radcliffe, then Jonathan’s imprisonment, both in mirroring well-known heroine-centered Gothic narratives and by rendering him passive and dependent on another, places him in a

traditionally female role. Like many Gothic heroines, he experiences a loss of agency and mobility. Kuzmanovic points out that his despairing "The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!" (Stoker 32) might easily have been uttered by "Clarissa, Pamela, or Emily in the depths of Udolpho" (415). Jonathan has his mobility limited in some striking ways. As a guest, he feels he may not wander freely, saying "I did not like to go about the castle until I had asked the Count's permission" (Stoker 25). He asks if he may enter the library freely, to which Dracula gives him some very specific rules: "You may go anywhere you wish in the castle, except where the doors are locked, where of course you will not wish to go…"[5] (Stoker 26). This seems permissive, but Dracula neglects to mention that most of the doors will be locked. Jonathan may examine "[one] or two small rooms near the hell", but these are empty "except old furniture" (Stoker 40), and the massive front door remains locked whenever he tries it.

Within Gothic narratives, spatial limitation often puts the heroine at risk of victimization at the hands of the male villain, who "enjoys spatial autonomy" (Smith 126). For Montoni, this is the freedom to travel or even to wander the castle without fearing uncomfortable or potentially dangerous encounters with men, dangers about which Emily is constantly worried. Count Dracula takes spatial autonomy to extreme ends: he can turn into a bat and fly, his mist form could allow him to move past locked and bolted doors, and he can climb the walls of the castle to traverse it through the windows. Jonathan cannot leave the castle. The front door is always locked when he tries it. When he attempts to explore the castle, he quickly learns how trapped he is: "…I explored further; doors, doors, doors everywhere, and all locked and bolted! In no place save from the windows in the castle walls is there an available exit" (Stoker 32). Jonathan becomes aware that he is a prisoner early on, and he experiences a great deal of distress as a result. Imprisonment on its own is not an inherently feminine plot element; in Radcliffe's *The Italian* (1797), the heroic lead Vivaldi is imprisoned and tortured by the Inquisition. Jonathan's imprisonment, however, is not marked by physical harm. While Count Dracula does lunge at him once with violent intent, Jonathan's crucifix repels him; his hand touches only "the string of beads" (Stoker 31). Instead, like most Radcliffean heroines,

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[5] The instruction given to Jonathan here is, incidentally, very similar to the ones given to the young heroines of classic fairy tales like *Beauty and the Beast* or *Bluebeard*.

Jonathan experiences isolation, emotional distress, and the hovering, unnamable threat of sexual violence.

3.3 The threat of sexual violence

Sexual violence and taboo are common threads in Gothic literature, whether subtly or overtly, and have been since its inception. Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, often regarded as the first work of Gothic fiction, sees its villainous protagonist Manfred attempting to force the much younger Isabella to marry him. The threat of forced marriage is of course, as Markman Ellis rightly points out, implicitly also the threat of sexual violence (37). Emily St. Aubert, too, is pressured to marry a man she does not love, but she faces the more tangible threat of Montoni's men, who leer at her and occasionally stalk her throughout the castle. What she fears from them is never named, but most readers will likely infer that she is afraid they will rape her. Whereas authors like Matthew Lewis could engage directly with themes of sexual violence, Radcliffe instead employs what Grove calls formulaic repetitions (438), or what could be termed coding. When an experienced reader of Gothic literature notices the set-up to violence or sexual violence, the threat registers without the need for payoff—nor even the need to be named. A woman only needs to be in an isolated location with a man whose intentions are unclear and without an ally to protect her for the threat of sexual violence to register with the reader.

For almost all his stay at Castle Dracula, Jonathan Harker is alone with the Count. As a male character, the situation does not register immediately as threatening like it would for an Emily, Ellena or Isabella. However, Jonathan's situation is not unlike that of a woman. His position as a very recently graduated solicitor who has been sent to the Count by his employer is uncertain. Kuzmanovic notes that Hawkins' letter implicitly undermines Jonathan's manhood not only by stressing his subservience beyond what is necessary for a solicitor, but also "by implicating his manhood in a homosocial exchange between Hawkins and Dracula" (415). In fact, Jonathan's position is not entirely unlike Emily's in Venice either, where she is used to strengthen the familial and financial connection between Count Morano and Montoni. Within the Gothic genre, the woman's "status as a chattel lightly given in marriage, as an heiress to be possessed, sexually or legally, along with her property, or as a potential victim of male violence" (Hughes 11) is an oft-explored theme. In *Dracula* the young professional is at

least symbolically at risk of many of the same things as a woman who finds herself alone with a man.

Moreover, Stoker writes a series of odd exchanges between them which serve to underline and render suspect what Craft terms the Count's "hovering interest in Jonathan Harker" (109-110). Jonathan's journal makes note of several occasions wherein the Count subtly, but insistently, pushes for a heightened physical intimacy between them. The first three times the Count touches Jonathan, it is as a matter of courtesy which would be expected of whichever role he was assuming at the time. Disguised as the driver, he helps Jonathan onto and later down from the coach, twice catching his arm "in a grip of steel" (Stoker 17). When he introduces himself as Count Dracula, they shake hands, impressing Jonathan with the coldness of his hand as well as his strength (Stoker 22). The fourth time stands out as profoundly strange. Jonathan, smoking after dinner and so implicitly seated, describes the Count leaning over him. As his hands touch Jonathan—the narration omits the location—Jonathan shudders and feels overcome by nausea (Stoker 24). Dracula notices Jonathan's reaction and draws back "with a grim sort of smile" that shows his "protuberant teeth" before retaking his own seat (Stoker 24). What Dracula intended to accomplish by this gesture is left unclear, as most of his intentions are.

Oddly enough, Jonathan provides no additional commentary on the Count's peculiar gesture. No context is given that could explain why the Count is leaning over him, and he neglects to record his emotional response to the situation beyond his physical nausea. Jonathan's journal is generally very precise in recording anything that strikes his interest, especially anything that might relate to Dracula or help explain his nature, so this omission is strange. Another few omissions shortly arise, all following the pattern established in this scene. The next day, Dracula leads him to his supper by taking his arm (Stoker 29). By itself, the gesture is hardly inappropriate—Seward performs the same gesture when Arthur Holmwood struggles to walk on his own after Lucy's death (Stoker 147). However, it is odd in this instance because Dracula and Jonathan are not close friends. They are solicitor and client. And unlike Arthur, Jonathan is not in extreme emotional distress. There is no need for him to be supported or physically guided by the Count.

The gesture is later repeated by Jonathan in an even more telling scenario. Jonathan takes Mina's arm when they walk together in Piccadilly, and Mina recalls that he used to do this before she went to school, but now she feels it "very improper". Even in his weakened condition, she only allows the gesture because they are married and will not be seen by anyone they know (Stoker 155). Her narration implies not only the intimacy of the gesture, but also that Jonathan should be aware of its impropriety when the Count does it to him. If he has generally ceased to take her arm after she learned it was improper, one may infer that they had a conversation about it. Yet Jonathan neglects to comment whenever the Count touches him in ways that would be considered innocent between two close friends, but which are decidedly inappropriate between solicitor and client.

Jonathan's selective silences are reminiscent of the Radcliffean heroine's unwillingness to name her fear of sexual violence directly, in that both serve to obscure the unspeakable. For an author like Radcliffe, naming the fear of rape would be scandalous. Matthew Lewis named them, and more: in his works, "the paranoid fears of a Radcliffe heroine are made the real exploits of diabolical protagonists" (M. Ellis 84). In truth, the contents of *The Monk* were not altogether dissimilar from other "under-the-counter publication[s] for gentlemen's interest only" (M. Ellis 115), but that it was published as a Gothic work earned it at least an assumed female readership (M. Ellis 94). That brought backlash. The form brought it to the attention of young women, and because young women might read, it the novel was deemed obscene. He faced public backlash (M. Ellis 114). Ann Radcliffe, whose books were wildly popular with young women, would have had to be very careful in what she addressed. Her novels could speak to fears of sexual violence, incest, patriarchal oppression, the sins of the father and more, but only obliquely. Thus she employed coding.

By placing Jonathan in a situation generally reserved for an imperiled heroine, Stoker appears to be doing the same. A situation is set up wherein the threat of sexual violence is encoded without needing to be named. Jonathan is young, vulnerable, and comparatively naïve, and an older man of higher social status takes him as his prisoner. They are alone in a remote location. A reader familiar with Gothic tropes will see that Jonathan's situation is like that of a Radcliffean heroine and may infer from there that Dracula, or someone else in the castle, may be a sexual threat to the young solicitor. Jonathan himself does not voice this fear, but he is clearly uneasy from the beginning. He does not comment on the Count touching him during

his first night, but his feelings are made clear from the nausea he experiences at the contact, but later that night he writes in his journal "I doubt; I fear; I think strange things which I dare not confess to my own soul. God keep me, if only for the sake of those dear to me!" (Stoker 24). At this point he has no reason to suspect that Dracula is himself a supernatural being, yet he is clearly terrified of something which he cannot bring himself to name. In Gothic language, his terror can easily be interpreted as the fear of sexual violence, a fear made yet more unspeakable because he is a man.

Whatever unspeakable thing he is afraid of, his being afraid will be proven a sensible response in a subsequent scene which is well known and has seen much scholarly discussion. Jonathan, having slept "only a few hours" (Stoker 30), begins his morning by shaving. The Count walks in on him and, because he does not cast a reflection in the shaving mirror, startles Jonathan when he places a hand on his shoulder. In starting, Jonathan cuts himself. When the Count sees the blood, he becomes frenzied. His eyes blaze "with a sort of demoniac fury" and he attempts to seize Jonathan's throat, but Jonathan's crucifix stops him, and the scene ends with Dracula disposing of Jonathan's shaving mirror before leaving (31). The incident is never given any more context in the novel. What stands out on a close reading is that Dracula does not knock or in any way announce himself before entering. On the contrary, he enters so quietly that Jonathan does not notice him at all until Dracula touches his shoulder. The greeting is overly familiar, but otherwise innocuous. What is more suspect is how the scene begins, an opening quickly overshadowed by the spectacle of violence: Jonathan is shaving as part of his morning ritual, having just woken up from what he describes as a short sleep. Dracula is intruding unbidden on him in his bedroom, "the most intimate domestic space" (Băniceru 44) and the most vulnerable, and—between Jonathan's uncommonly short night and Dracula's silent, unannounced entry—there is no reason to assume he intended to find Jonathan awake.

The state of sleeping is associated with vulnerability in Radcliffean Gothic. In *The Italian*, Ellena is vulnerable to attempted murder when she falls asleep under the dubious protection of the villainous Schedoni. Here, "the unspeakable crime at the heart of Ellena's terror is not just murder. Instead, generic associations allow Radcliffe to use the palatable discourse of murder to present Schedoni as a rapist" (Grove 439). In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily is likewise subjected to an attempted kidnapping by Count Morano, who is erotically fixated on

her, while asleep in her bedroom in Udolpho (Radcliffe 265). Later, falling asleep in the wrong place will leave Jonathan vulnerable to a much more explicit near-rape scene. For now, the fact that Dracula may have attempted to enter Jonathan's bedroom with an expectation of finding him asleep is merely suggestive.

Keeping in mind how Jonathan avoids dwelling on his feelings and the conspicuous lack of comment on strange and uncomfortable interactions, let us consider some of the other ways in which Dracula violates Jonathan's boundaries. For instance, when Dracula asks Jonathan to write Mr. Hawkins, he lays "a heavy hand" on Jonathan's shoulder (Stoker 37). The gesture is subtle, but the adjective "heavy" suggests Dracula may be seizing the opportunity to subtly remind Jonathan of his unnatural strength, as he did by giving a painfully strong handshake when they first met (Stoker 22). Another instance is less obvious: after Jonathan writes in secret to Mina and Mr. Hawkins, Dracula acquires the letters. When he comes to confront Jonathan about them, he sits down beside him (Stoker 46). The only other time their seating positions have been specifically indicated is on the first night, where they were seated on either side of the fireplace, implicitly some distance away from each other (Stoker 24). Like many of the previous instances of touch or proximity between Dracula and Jonathan, the seating decision is innocuous on its own. It is only worth bringing up because, when compared to the scene of the first evening, it suggests an escalation has taken place where this rather unprofessional seating arrangement is so expected as to merit no remark whatsoever.

Chapter IV opens on what is perhaps the most profound violation of professional and personal boundaries yet. Having been menaced by the three vampire women and fainted, Jonathan wakes up in his own bed, uncertain whether what he experienced was a dream. Later events suggest it was not. He notes that his clothes have been "folded and laid by in a manner which was not [his] habit" and that while he winds his watch before bed, it is now unwound. He concludes that if he had not dreamt, "the Count must have… carried me here and undressed me" (Stoker 44). The connotations here are undeniably suggestive, especially considering that it is immediately preceded by the scene wherein Dracula repels the three female vampires by explicitly laying claim to him: "How dare you touch him, any of you? How dare you cast eyes on him when I had forbidden it? Back, I tell you all! This man belongs to me!" (Stoker 43). When the woman mocks him, accusing him of never having loved, Jonathan writes that the Count turns, "after looking at my face attentively", and declares "in a soft whisper" that yes,

he too can love (43). He gives the women a child to feed on, and they leave. Dracula stays. Jonathan, who most scholars agree is by this point in a state of (even unwilling) arousal, "puts in use a self-defensive and self-denying mechanism worthy of Clarissa and faints" (Kuzmanovic 417). When he next wakes up, it is in his own bed, where he himself points out that he has likely been carried to his bed and undressed by his captor.

Dracula merely carrying Jonathan to bed or to the couch on the library would be far less disturbing. Instead, a young man is put into a trance-like state, undergoes a symbolically near-rape experience at the hands of three women, is rescued, loses consciousness, and wakes up not knowing what has happened between fainting and waking. As Miriam Rheingold Fuller observes, disheveled hair and soiled or lost clothes are often used by authors like Jane Austen "to signal women's loss of virginity", especially following a violent encounter (91). Later, an attack by Dracula will leave Mina wearing a bloodied nightdress, which many scholars agree symbolizes sexual assault and defloration[6]. When Lucy is first bitten by Dracula, Mina's narration focuses a great deal on the fact she has sleepwalked in her nightdress and without her shoes (Stoker 87-89). Stoker, then, is clearly conscious of the symbolic value of clothing and uses various states of undress to signal vulnerability and victimhood. Viewed in connection to other instances of dishevelment in the novel, Jonathan's being undressed here identifies him with the female characters. Like them he is forced to be vulnerable, which contextually becomes part of a genre-based gender performance. Where many of the other instances of inappropriate physical contact or proximity are merely odd, Jonathan waking up and realizing he has been stripped in his sleep is at once a Gothic heroine's paranoid fears realized and a greater violation than most Radcliffean heroines will ever experience.

There is a structurally similar scene in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* wherein Emily is woken in the dead of night by the soft sounds of someone entering her chamber and approaching her bed. She soon recognizes the figure to be Count Morano, an unwanted suitor who has pursued her since they met in Venice. She tries to flee, but he stops her (Radcliffe 261). Morano reveals that he means to make her his "in spite of Montoni" and to take her away to Venice (262). As much as Emily wants to escape Udolpho, her fear of Morano is greater than her fear

[6] See for instance Baciu (84), Kuzmanovic (421), or Schaffer (413).

of her uncle, so she determines to remain under Montoni's "protection" (263). When Morano realizes she will not be moved by his pleas, he decides to abduct her (265). His ploy is interrupted by Montoni, clearly furious, entering the room: "Was it for this, Count Morano… that I received you under my roof…? Was it, that you might repay me for my hospitality with the treachery of a fiend, and rob me of my niece?" (266). The two fight, and Montoni wins. Count Morano is reluctantly permitted to stay at Udolpho for a few hours until a nearby cottage can be provided for him to stay in during the worst of his recovery (268). It is worth noting that the reason for Count Morano's stooping to abduction is that Montoni had initially promised Emily's hand to him in marriage, then changed his mind when he learned that Morano was not as wealthy as he had assumed (272-73).

Jonathan and Emily are both attacked at night, surprised when they were sleeping and, consequently, at their most vulnerable. While the purposes of the vampire women and Count Morano are very different, they all present a sexual threat to the protagonist. Both Jonathan and Emily are initially shown to be powerless to resist the attack, though in Jonathan's case this would appear to be first because of the entranced state they induce in him and second because vampires possess superhuman strength, whereas in Emily's case she is simply a woman physically overpowered by a man. In any case, the attack by the minor villain (or villains) is interrupted by the true Gothic villain of the story, who physically defends the helpless heroine. After that point, the scenes become less similar. When Montoni verbally lashes out at Count Morano, he does so "in a cool, sarcastic tone of voice" (Radcliffe 266), whereas Jonathan's impression of Dracula paints him as less disinterested: "But the Count! Never did I imagine such wrath and fury, even to the demons of the pit. His eyes were positively blazing… as if the flames of hell-fire blazed behind them" (Stoker 43). Montoni is not shown to be emotionally invested in Emily, whereas Dracula's rage suggests a personal interest in Jonathan.

It is interesting that Jonathan's response to the vampire women is more the stereotypical Radcliffean heroine than the response of the actual Radcliffean heroine Emily to her would-be abducter. While she is unable to physically fight him, and while she does accept the inevitability of capture, she at least voices her dissent and her disdain. Faced with the three ladies, on the other hand, Jonathan goes into a swoon. They cause an unease in him, "some longing at the same time some deadly fear… a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss me

with those red lips" (Stoker 42). He lies still, gazing out at them behind his lashes, as the fair woman approaches. Even when her lips and teeth are at his throat, "just touching and pausing there", all he does is close his eyes "in a languorous ecstacy" and wait "with beating heart" (Stoker 43). As many scholars have pointed out, Jonathan here adopts the "pose of a swooning maiden" (Demetrakopoulos 106). Both in his bodily position, laid supine on the couch, and his passivity, Jonathan takes on a very submissive role. It is almost cliché to point out that what he waits for, with such mingled pleasure, is penetration—penetration of the "supersensitive skin" of his throat. His behavior here is, per Christopher McGunnigle, that of a "female stereotype" (175)—so archetypal that it surpasses and perhaps calls into question the legitimacy of the original archetype. He is rendered powerless, pliant, and aroused in spite of himself.

The scene is the height of Jonathan's incongruous gender performance, but it also clearly demonstrates why his performance may go unnoticed by many readers. What makes Jonathan obviously feminine as he lies on the couch and awaits the vampire's kiss is his passivity. Radcliffean heroines are generally fairly passive. Emily St. Aubert is taken from place to place without much say, compelled to act by others, and rarely exhibits any true agency beyond expressing her opinion. At the beginning of *Dracula*, Jonathan behaves similarly. He goes to Transylvania because Mr. Hawkins tells him to, accepts the peasants' gifts even when they make him uncomfortable, and follows Dracula's rules. Indeed, he delays in exploring the castle because he does not yet know if that is against the rules. His captivity, an inherently feminizing condition as it "renders the body dependent, passive and distressed—traits stereotypically assigned to women" (Smith 129), is imposed upon him. Through Gothic coding it lays the groundwork for reading him as a feminine archetype, but incarceration cannot on its own be said to constitute a Butlerian gender performance. What makes Jonathan read as a heroine rather than an incarcerated hero is his reactive passivity. According to Butler, "acts, gestures and desire… produce the effect of an internal core… *on the surface* of the body" (*GT* 185). Faced with the threat of the vampire women, Jonathan performs the role of the distressed heroine on all these points.

For most of his captivity, Jonathan's submission is more extreme than Emily's, perhaps because his situation is even more vulnerable than hers. It may seem counter-intuitive to say that Jonathan is more vulnerable when the recently orphaned Emily is effectively Montoni's

ward in addition to being his prisoner, and on top of that anatomically and legally a woman. Yet a close reading of the two novels demonstrates that being a woman lends her certain protections which are unavailable to a man in Jonathan's position. When she is threatened with being alone with the Count, she, as a woman, can name the "impropriety" of this to others and beg to be spared (Radcliffe 197). She asks Montoni not to leave her with Morano, and while he protests and says he will not indulge her caprices, he finally does join the party so the two will not be alone (Radcliffe 197, 198). Jonathan, on the other hand, is a man and a professional who must perform to his client. His livelihood is at stake, and in turn, so is his prospect of marriage. Jonathan's responsibilities put him in a position where he is as dependent on his captor's goodwill as Emily. Additionally, his isolation is more extreme than hers. She has the company of her servant Annette, and later the aid of Annette's beloved Ludovico. Jonathan has only the Count, his creatures, and his employees, none of whom provide any comfort or aid.

Grove argues that within the Gothic, near-rape or rape scenes occur according to formulaic patterns, primarily while the heroine is alone and isolated in a castle or abbey. "These… repetitions across the genre create associations and expectations for the Gothic reader so that once the convention is established, a writer can invoke the threat of rape without ever naming or describing the act" (Grove 438). Everything about Jonathan's situation would normally lead a reader to expect him to suffer an actual or attempted rape at the hands of the Count, except that he is a man. He is alone, isolated, unprotected, and shut up in a Gothic location, with exactly the sort of man an experienced reader would expect to be a Gothic villain. The Count repeatedly touches him, sometimes in ways which are inappropriate or which go unexplained. The scene where Jonathan wakes up in bed having been carried there by the Count is eerily reminiscent of the aftermath of a date rape sequence. Considering scenes like this alongside Jonathan's admitted tendency to leave some of his thoughts and feelings out, the parallels to the sexual victimization faced by many Gothic heroines become almost blatantly obvious. A reader familiar with Gothic genre conventions would come to expect such a scene, and thus be able to read into the subtext, whereas a court of law might not be able to find anything injurious.

The threat Dracula might pose to Jonathan is never named, not even through the metaphor of vampirism. Even in his own diary, Jonathan is hesitant to conclude that the Count might have

designs on him. He is remarkably quick to conclude that the three women mean to suck his blood (Stoker 44), and yet he apparently remains oblivious "to the fact that Dracula as well might wish to suck his blood—or do whatever else the women were about to do" (Kuzmanovic 417). Even when he feels certain that Dracula is not human, he never openly wonders whether Dracula, too, might see him as a meal. This seeming obliviousness has long extended to critics as well: Craft concludes that "Dracula's desire to fuse with a male" is "[always] postponed and never directly enacted", instead finding fulfillment through heterosexual proxies (Craft 110). As Paul James Emmett puts it, "In over a century of Dracula studies… no one has disagreed" (Emmett 118) with the notion that Jonathan is never actually bitten by Dracula. Broadly speaking, scholars agree that Dracula preys exclusively on women, with the exception being the sailors of the Demeter.

Yet a close reading of the text makes it more probable than not that Dracula does feed on Jonathan. On his last night in the castle, Jonathan hears the Count talking to the three vampire women outside his bedroom door, telling them "Back, back, to your own place! (…) Tomorrow night… is yours!" (Stoker 52). This is the British version of the novel. In the American version, he first tells the women that "To-night is mine", "stating baldly that Dracula plans to feed on Jonathan" (Auerbach and Skal, Stoker 52n2). After Jonathan wakes, he determines yet again to go to Dracula's crypt, this time with the goal of acquiring the key to the front door. There he finds Dracula, now younger, with "gouts of fresh blood" on his lips, and he thinks to himself that Dracula seems "simply gorged with blood" (Stoker 53). Clearly Dracula has fed, but Kuzmanovic rightly points out that no mention has been made of Dracula leaving the castle to hunt—an event Jonathan pays rigorous attention to elsewhere—and that there is no evidence of any human in the castle except Jonathan (418). Before he is found in his crypt, the last known location of Dracula is right outside Jonathan's door (Emmett 118). Emmett confidently concludes: "No matter what critics have not said, Dracula has vamped Jonathan Harker" (119). If Jonathan wonders or suspects anything of the sort, he does not include it in his narrative.

Jonathan's silence and ambiguity when it comes to acknowledging that Dracula might be a direct threat to him is fascinating, because it could reasonably be caused by any number of coping mechanisms or emotional responses. Although Dracula continually touches Jonthan in ways which are overtly strange (Stoker 24) or which Stoker later establishes Jonathan would

have known was inappropriate (Stoker 29, 155), Jonathan never voices any discomfort. His reticence even in his own diary is especially odd because when he does comment on touching Dracula, he finds the contact disgusting. When Dracula leans over to touch him on the first night and much later when he later leans over Dracula to search his sleeping body for the key, he is clearly uncomfortable. Both times he "shudders", and in the latter scene he writes that "every sense… revolted at the contact" (Stoker 24, 53). If his revulsion is as powerful as his language indicates here, his lack of reaction or comment when Dracula takes his arm or puts a hand on his shoulder is strange. His emotional response to touching or being touched by Dracula are either extremely inconsistent or he is omitting information as he writes. The latter indicates that whatever he is experiencing is unutterable even in the privacy of his own diary. A quote discussed earlier seems to support this idea: in his own diary, he writes "I doubt; I fear; I think strange things which I dare not confess to my own soul" (Stoker 24). The sentence simultaneously reveals and obscures his doubts, fears, and strange thoughts. Their presence is confirmed, and though they go unnamed, the fact that he cannot confess them even to his own soul implies their guilty or shameful nature.

Many scholars read Jonathan's passivity as covertly implying that he desires Dracula. Emmett interprets both Jonathan's going to sleep after he has heard Dracula outside his bedroom and fainting after Dracula chases the women away as intentionally "leaving himself vulnerable" for the Count, citing Jonathan's leaving the crucifix by his bed before wandering the castle as evidence (Emmett 118-19). Kuzmanovic develops this interpretation by arguing that both the swoon and Jonathan's obliviousness that Dracula might pose the same threat to him as the women are self-denying techniques which serve to obscure his own "preference" for being bitten by Dracula (417). Reading Jonathan's actions through a Freudian lens, this interpretation makes sense; for most of modern history and literary history, homosexuality was taboo to the point where scholars and novelists alike refused to even name it (Grove 437). To many, it continues to be the love that dare not speak its name. I would posit another possible reading: Jonathan's nameless fear might not stem from his own unspeakable desire for Dracula, but instead from the unspeakable thought that Dracula may desire him.

To many Gothic heroines, a man's love or lust is at best an ambivalent blessing and at worst a threat. A man's obsessive pursuit threatens her autonomy and safety. Escaping the Marquis de Montalt's pursuit is one of Adeline's primary motivations in Radcliffe's *The Romance of the*

Forest (1791). When Jane Eyre decides to leave Mr. Rochester following the revelation that he is already married, his attempt to make her stay comes in the form of brutish intimidation: "Jane! will you hear reason?... because, if you won't, I'll try violence" (Brontë 338). Even Valancourt's love for Emily is at times frightening and overwhelming to her, as when he insists that if she loves him, she must agree to elope with him (Radcliffe 158-59). Morano's obsession with her terrifies her. Jonathan, likewise, is frightened by the Count. While Dracula's feelings are never fully explored, his possessiveness coupled with his softly whispered declaration that *he too can love* certainly resembles the way Radcliffean antagonists often covet the heroine.

Faced with imprisonment and the threat of violence, Jonathan must assume a submissive social role in deference to an older man who has socially sanctioned power over him, who appears to desire him, and whose intentions are unknown to him. His ordeal places him into a traditionally feminine social role. His feminization becomes most obvious in the scene wherein the three unnamed vampire women very nearly drink his blood. Jonathan's keen, but anxious submission to their advances, whether supernaturally induced or not, has him enjoying "a 'feminine' passivity and await[ing] a delicious penetration from a woman whose demonism is figured as the power to penetrate" (Craft 108). The reversal of the conventionally accepted sexual norms (at the time) of the man acting upon a passive woman carries interesting gender-based implications both for the vampire women and for Jonathan. His entrapment and lack of agency during his stay at Castle Dracula feminize him, but so do his subsequent illness and dependence on Mina during his recovery. Even the form of his narration marks him as androgynous at times. Although his most explicit feminization occurs during his captivity, his feminine qualities are not limited to either his stay or its aftermath.

3.4 Identification

While Jonathan's circumstances evoke the perils of a Radcliffean heroine, Stoker actively reinforces the connection by identifying Jonathan with literary heroines, Gothic and otherwise. Sometimes these connections are drawn by the narrative itself, but Jonathan himself repeatedly articulates "his situation as analogous to that of an imprisoned and endangered heroine" (Kuzmanovic 415). These articulations could be read as performative speech acts, "discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names" (*BTM* xxi). Jonathan's situation produces an identification with heroines, so he performs survival

strategies that are associated with heroines, and his actions in turn reinforce his identification with them. His articulations become part of a sustained performance.

The most obvious example might be where Jonathan writes that "this diary seems horrible like the beginning of the 'Arabian Nights', for everything has to break off at cock-crow" (Stoker 35). *Arabian Nights*, more commonly known as *One Thousand and One Nights*, centers on the newly wedded Scheherazade as she entertains her royal husband with stories to keep him from executing her like his other brides. Jonathan's sentence construction here does not necessarily imply that he is identifying with Scheherazade, and it follows a scene wherein Dracula has been telling Jonathan stories (albeit of the old "warlike days") rather than the other way around. However, the full context of the conversation is telling. Jonathan has realized that he is a prisoner and that his "only plan" must be to keep silent about what he knows and learn all he can about the Count by making conversation on topics that the Count finds interesting (Stoker 32). Like Scheherazade, he is in danger of being killed if he fails to entertain his captor, and so he is using conversation to prolong his life.

In terms of performativity, the comparison to Scheherazade serves three functions. Firstly, as discussed, Jonathan's articulation of his situation as akin to that of a heroine may constitute a performative speech act. Secondly, it shows the reader that Jonathan thinks of his *situation* as being like that of a literary heroine. He sees the similarities between his situation and the story of a heroine who must keep her powerful husband distracted with her words from dusk till dawn so he will not kill her. And rightfully so; their situations are similar. Finally, it draws a comparison between his *behavior* and hers. By drawing a comparison between Jonathan and Scheherazade, Stoker highlights that Jonathan is drawing on traditionally feminine survival strategies: pacifying a potentially dangerous man through relational and conversational intercourse. In other words, Jonathan is performing the role of a captive literary heroine in a very Butlerian way. The performance is sustained through nightly repetition: a month and a half later, on June 24th, Jonathan writes that "the Count left me early", giving him a chance to explore (Stoker 47). If such an occasion is worth noting, we may infer that the Count usually stays with Jonathan until it is late. Most nights, then, Jonathan spends inhabiting a role which he himself has identified as that of a female literary heroine.

While his connection with Scheherazade is explicit and self-identified, it is preceded by a literary reference to an explicitly Gothic work. Dracula, disguised as his own driver, arrives at the Borgo Pass to take Jonathan to his castle. As the villagers recognize the Count, one of the peasants whispers a line which Jonathan identifies as being from Gottfried August Bürger's 1774 ballad *Lenore*: "Denn die Todten reiten schnell", for which the text provides the translation "for the dead travel fast" (Stoker 17). In the ballad, the young Lenore awaits her fiancé's return from the war. In the middle of the night, a man who looks like her fiancé knocks on the door and asks her to come with him. On a black steed they ride, fast and wild, through a mysterious and frightening landscape. They arrive at a cemetery at sunrise, where the rider leads her to a tomb. He reveals himself to be Death in disguise. He has taken her to her fiancé's tomb, which is also to be Lenore's grave, and she dies. That Stoker specifically chooses to reference *Lenore* here must be intentional, because the next sequence is remarkably reminiscent of Lenore's ride. Jonathan rides in a carriage pulled by black horses through a frightening landscape with a driver who is not what he claims to be. His destination, Castle Dracula, was supposed to be his tomb, though it is left unclear whether Dracula meant for him to die there or to let the vampire women turn him.

Referencing *Lenore* here serves to foreshadow that the driver is untrustworthy and that Jonathan might be travelling to his death, but it also draws attention the similarities between his predicament and Lenore's. To anyone familiar with the ballad, the reference will be rather obvious as soon as the horses begin to move. Jonathan's role in this part of the narrative is, blatantly, the maiden deceived by Death in disguise. The juxtaposition here, as with Scheherazade, draws attention to Jonathan's anatomically incongruous performance of a literary heroine. Arguably this instance serves a different secondary function, in that it invokes intertextuality. Excepting *Hamlet*, *Lenore* is the only work of fiction in *Dracula* to be referenced by its title—and *Hamlet* is only referenced by name because it shares a name with its protagonist. In invoking a poem whose plot clearly maps onto what happens in the novel, Stoker signals his familiarity with the work to readers who know it. The clear similarities between Lenore's ride and Jonathan's drive prove that Stoker's allusion to *Lenore* is no accident. Given that *Lenore* is a Gothic ballad, Stoker's more than passing reference to it suggests an awareness of Gothic literature. If so, the allusion might serve as a subtle nod to readers familiar with Gothic archetypes and plots. At any rate, it indicates that Stoker is aware he is drawing on female characters and archetypes to characterize Jonathan.

The most blatant instance of Jonathan being identified with women, though, occurs when he finds a closed, but importantly not locked, door at the top of a staircase. To enter, he must force it open "with many efforts" (Stoker 40). This, of course, is a traditionally masculine feat of athleticism and initiative, and it is quite courageous as well, given that he is skirting dangerously close to breaking one of Dracula's rules. Behind the door is a wing of the castle he describes as having "more air of comfort" than any other he had seen. In the British version, he says only that it must have been "occupied in bygone days" (Stoker 40). The American version contains a small addition: Jonathan explicitly says the wing must have been "occupied *by the ladies* in bygone days" (Project Gutenberg edition of *Dracula*, italics mine). Perhaps this is another example of Stoker censoring his novel for a British audience who was increasingly hostile to any indication of homosexuality or gender transgression, and who might therefore not look kindly on male vampires feeding on men or on human men finding comfort in women's spaces.

After he schools his nerves against the "dread loneliness" in the place, Jonathan finds "a soft quietude" coming over him. As he sits at a little oak table, he imagines that "in old times possibly some fair lady sat to pen, with much thought and many blushes, her ill-spelt love-letter" at the very same place where he is now writing in his diary (Stoker 40). Jonathan's rest here provides the most overt example of his identification with women, and it is more than usually connected to embodiment. This juxtaposition between the two figures, Jonathan and the imagined lady, "both writing about their feelings and awaiting their destiny, is immediately reinforced by Harker's move from the lady's seat into her bed…"[7] (Kuzmanovic 416). He determines "to sleep here, where of old ladies had sat and sung and lived sweet lives" while mourning their men, away at war (Stoker 41). What he describes is a very idealized image of women, but it is one which seems to give Jonathan comfort. After his attack by the vampire women, he ceases to overtly identify with women. But in this moment, the idea of sleeping in the ladies' chamber makes Jonathan feel safe.

[7] Actually a couch, but the fact that he chooses to sleep here does still speak to an identification, a sense of belonging, or perhaps a feeling of community with women, if not all of the above.

Textually speaking, the double image of the lady and Jonathan writing about their feelings in the same place creates an almost tangible link between them. Because the woman is imaginary, Jonathan is really creating a pretext for another incongruous gender performance. He navigates the room in the same way he imagines the "fair lady" navigating it, sits and writes where he imagines her sitting and writing, then sleeps in the same room as she would have slept. Bluntly put, he creates a model of womanhood in his mind and proceeds to act like her. Between his behavior here and his extreme submission when, a short while later, the vampire women threaten to consume him, Jonathan creates a "dissonant and denaturalized performance that reveals the performative status of the natural itself" (*GT* 200). While he has been identified with the Radcliffean heroine since the beginning of the novel, the parallels are at first primarily those of circumstance. While there is certainly something performative in the choice to couple certain plot elements with a male protagonist, that performance is entirely metatextual: it relies on a familiarity with common narrative structures and formulas. These two scenes, closely connected, are overt, in-text examples of Jonathan assuming a gendered role at odds with his presumed anatomical sex.

There is one last identification and parallel that is worth briefly dwelling upon, namely the narrative parallels between Jonathan and Lucy Westenra. Their basic storylines are remarkably similar: they are engaged, they are victimized, they fall severely ill, and they wind up bedridden in the care of foreign doctors. Of all the primary narrators in the novel, their narratives notably have little overlap, and their own narration never overlaps at all. While Lucy is alive, Jonathan's voice is only heard through Mina's diary entries, as his own diary is literally sealed away. The primary difference between them is simply that Lucy dies—quite possibly because Mina, who has been protecting her, travels to Budapest to reunite with Jonathan.

Their encounters with Dracula leave both characters physically weak, ill, and terrified, and both write their goodbyes to their respectively affianced Mina and Arthur as well as their prayers. Both are victimized by Dracula, and both meet him by chance. Jonathan was only sent to Transylvania because Mr. Hawkins suffered more than usual from gout. As for Lucy, she was put in his path through a series of coincidences: she happened to be staying in Whitby at the time, she happened to inherit her father's sleepwalking condition, and the spot she walked to in her sleep just happened to be where Dracula went after the *Demeter* crashed into

Whitby harbor. They are both associated with sweetness and gentleness (Stoker 95), and the word "supersensitive" is only ever used for the two of them—though for Jonathan it is only applied to his throat, whereas Mina uses it to describe Lucy's nature (Stoker 86). While under Dracula's power, they suffer from bad dreams, and they are both described as becoming pale and thin. After Lucy briefly recovers, she writes to Mina that "This strong air would soon restore Jonathan; it has quite restored me" (Stoker 101). Notably, Lucy herself here draws a connection between them through their illness and prospect of recovery. Their symptoms are quite similar.

While they are being actively preyed on by Dracula, both find comfort in gifts whose meaning they do not understand, namely the old woman's crucifix and Van Helsing's garlic flowers (Stoker 16, 120-22). These gifts provide a tangible protection against the vampires but fail because of human error. Jonathan is put into the path of the female vampires after hanging his crucifix by his bed, and Lucy is attacked by Dracula because her mother removes the garlic flowers. Later, Lucy places the flowers on her mother's dead body, thus leaving herself vulnerable to another attack. Incidentally, Mrs. Westenra's death is sudden and brought on by shock, though her heart condition had been known to the reader almost since she was first introduced. Similarly, Jonathan's father figure Mr. Hawkins dies "very suddenly" (Stoker 143), though his gout is a pre-existing condition and the reason he could not travel to Transylvania himself. While Stoker makes use of doubling throughout the book, it is interesting that Jonathan specifically has so much in common with Lucy, the most overtly girlish character in the novel. Textually, it is particularly curious that the same traditionally feminine adjectives—sweet, gentle—are applied to both. Language, as I will discuss at greater length in the second chapter, is one of the primary ways in which Stoker subtly subverts gender norms.

Lucy is, in many ways, the most obvious representation of a typical Radcliffean heroine to be found in the novel. Unlike Jonathan, she physically resembles the archetype: Mina immediately describes her as "looking sweeter and lovelier than ever" when they meet (Stoker 63), and her appearance is generally more commented upon than any other character, save perhaps for Dracula. Her beauty combines with her sweet, gentle personality to make her extremely attractive to the men around her. Like Emily St. Aubert, whose "beauty, modesty, sweetness and simplicity" are juxtaposed with the "ostentatious extravagance" of her aunt's

habitual dress (Radcliffe 183), Lucy has no interest in fashion and proclaims dress "a bore" (Stoker 57). While her house is no Udolpho, her illness nevertheless confines her to it. And, of course, Dracula preys on her too. That she makes a connection between her illness and Jonathan's, both caused by the Count, reinforces Jonathan's general connection to the Gothic heroine. It has a secondary function as well: the indirect comparison she makes between herself, a very feminine Victorian woman, and Jonathan serves to highlight that his connection to Victorian masculinity is at this point rather tenuous.

3.5 Victorian manliness and female hysteria

It has been noted by several scholars, including Luckhurst and Straight, that all the men in Dracula—except Quincey Morris—suffer "moments of collapse that are explicitly termed 'hysterical,' a term commonly associated with the weakness of women. They swoon away at moments of crisis, or are susceptible to trance" (Luckhurst xx). Both Luckhurst and Straight agree, however, that "Jonathan is perhaps the most fragile of all" (Straight 389). He proves susceptible to the trance-like state induced by the female vampires, but after his escape, he suffers from what Sister Agatha terms a "violent brain fever" (Stoker 95). This "brain fever" causes amnesia, weakness, and apparently has induced Jonathan to "raving" about his experiences. Both the euphemistic brain fever and the behavior he continues to exhibit throughout the novel are highly reminiscent of what Stoker's contemporaries would term *hysteria*, a condition with decidedly feminine connotations.

Hysteria is an almost inherently feminized and feminizing condition. It is "a tendency whose very semantics come from the Greek *hystera*, meaning the womb, implying femininity" (McGunnigle 173), However, where a character like Dr. John Seward suffers from the persistent, singular symptom of "chronic melancholia" (Straight 389), associated with "male" hysterics during the 19th century (Băniceru 34), and is mostly functional, Jonathan's hysteria takes on a very different character. First, his breakdown is so severe that he must be hospitalized. While in the hospital, he "rave[s] of dreadful things" (Stoker 99). His "dreadful shock" was severe enough that he had rushed into a train station "shouting for a ticket for home", but apparently unable to give details: the station-master had to guess "that he was English" (Stoker 95). Once the violence of his condition gives way to slow healing, he becomes unsure of himself. Like the Radcliffean heroine finally beginning to believe the castle may be haunted, he questions his sanity: "I do not know if it was all real or the

dreaming of a madman" (99). Even after he proclaims himself "cured", he is by far the most emotionally volatile member of the vampire hunters.

Where Seward's melancholia would be termed male hysteria Jonathan has more in common with "female hysterics," who were "more capricious, volatile" and reported "a multitude of symptoms" (Băniceru 34). When Mina suggests that Dracula should not be struck down in hatred, Jonathan leaps to his feet, "almost tearing his hand from hers" before expressing that if he "could send his soul for ever and ever to burning hell", he would do it (Stoker 269). Mere lines later, he has "flung himself on his knees beside her" and, "hid[ing] his face in the folds of her dress", is openly weeping (269). It would be convenient, but untrue, to say that in Radcliffean romance extreme emotions were the exclusive domain of heroines; in actuality, heroines like Ellena or Emily must often tell their heroes to "moderate these transports" (Radcliffe 159). During the Romantic era in which Radcliffe wrote, "men of feeling" (and women of intellect) were "fashionable" (Hoeveler 41). By the time of *fin de siècle* England, however, Jonathan's emotional instability and his apparent inability or unwillingness to control his feelings would be considered unmanly, even effeminate.

During his stay at the hospital, Jonathan's feminine gender performance is exacerbated by his lack of mobility, agency, and by his apparent bout of female hysteria. "He has had some terrible shock," Mina writes (Stoker 99), and in truth the mental toll Jonathan has suffered during his captivity seems to affect him as much as any physiological condition. His illness has left him physically weaker: he "slips into a feminine position, as his enforced passivity intimates the patriarchal stereotype of the physically helpless female" (Smith 134). Mina's first impression when she sees him again, as recorded in her letter to Lucy, is that "[all] the resolution has gone out of his dear eyes" and "that quiet dignity… in his face has vanished" (Stoker 99). To get here, he has exerted his cunning, courage and performed great feats of athleticism, but the performance of extreme masculinity has ironically left him a physically frail hysteric who lacks the confidence to assert or even believe in the reality of his experiences. Taking into account 19th century gender roles, Jonathan is at his most feminine here.

Jonathan's clear symptoms of trauma are another feminizing agent which disrupt any attempted performance of manhood, leading to a failure of the sustained repetition necessary

to produce a naturalized gender (*GT* 190). When he sees the Count again in London, the shock weakens him. He pales, stares, and seems to forget to whom he is speaking. When Mina asks about the man he is looking at, he tells her it is "the man himself" without giving any explanation before almost collapsing (Stoker 155). After they find a seat, Mina describes him staring blankly at nothing until he falls asleep on her shoulder (Stoker 155-6). In discussing Richard Marsh's *The Beetle* (1897), a novel I will discuss in greater detail at a later point, Natasha Rebery describes the character Paul Lessingham as "los[ing] his celebrated cool and becom[ing] unmanned" when he is "confronted with name or image of the Beetle" (Rebery 6). Her use of the term "unmanned" is deliberate. She connects the scene to one of the most consistent characteristics of ideal Victorian masculinity, namely self-control (Rebery 5). When he sees Dracula again, Jonathan loses that self-control, and with it his physical strength. By contemporary Victorian standards, he is doubly unmanned.

The "shock" he has experienced also recalls the language used in the Radcliffean romance. Emily St. Aubert frequently experiences "sudden shock[s]" (144) like this one, many of which leave her pale, feeble, insensible, or all of the above. One of these instances has some similarities to the scene where Jonathan sees Count Dracula in London:

> "'Well, then,' said Emily, with assumed composure, 'it is—Count Morano, I suppose.'
> 'Holy Virgin!' cried Annette, 'are you ill, ma'amselle? You are going to faint! Let me get some water.'
> Emily sunk into a chair; 'Stay, Annette,' said she, feebly, 'do not leave me—I shall soon be better… The Count, you say—he is come then?'" (Radcliffe 246)

When Emily believes her aggressor to be nearby, her body fails her and she must sit down. She relies on Annette to bring her water and care for her, much like Jonathan relies on Mina to find him a seat. In the corresponding scene from *Dracula*, Mina does not understand why Jonathan goes pale, loses all strength and would have "sunk" if not for her supporting arm, but she nonetheless pulls him away and takes him to a park where he can sit for a while and recover (Stoker 155-156). He falls asleep on her, and when he wakes, he appears to have forgotten what happened. Emily's many swoons, too, render her entirely insensible to everything happening around her. Many of Radcliffe's heroes are highly emotional creatures, and in her works "Gothic villains… cause male hysteria" (Botting 183), but none of her heroes display Jonathan's level of physical and mental fragility.

Jonathan is an example of a hysterical male lead in a Gothic novel, but that is not in itself unusual. Stoker was in no way the first to write a hysteric male Gothic lead. Băniceru traces a pattern within Gothic literature by men of male protagonists suffering not only from hysteria, but from female hysteria. Authors like Edgar Allan Poe, Guy de Maupassant and E. T. A. Hoffmann all wrote male leads who experienced sudden changes of mood, who behaved and expressed their emotions capriciously. The forms of their works reflected their erratic emotional states: their first person narrators adopted a "hysterical voice", characterized by being fragmented, incoherent, ambiguous, evasive, unmanly and elusive, which was generally attributed to female characters (Băniceru 34). Of all the first person narrators, only Jonathan, not Mina or Lucy, can be said to make use of the hysterical voice. His journal contains significant gaps, for one: between his resolution to cautiously learn more about Dracula and the next entry, where he first sees the Count climbing the exterior of the castle, seven days pass without any comment (Stoker 35). On the 31st of May, he finds his travel papers have been stolen; he does not write again until 17th of June (Stoker 46). These breaks in the narrative are never acknowledged, and no note is ever made of how this time was spent. Where he does write, as previously exemplified in the section on the threat of sexual violence, information and details are sometimes omitted without explanation. His fractured, evasive narrative which makes use of feminine-coded language and identifications can thus be considered a hysterical narrative and, consequently, as another level of gender performance.

Between the specifics of the trauma he experiences, his emotional response to it, and the form of his narrative, Jonathan clearly embodies a female archetype for a time. While his own agency in the Gothic situation he finds himself in is limited, Butler argues that most gender performances are not actually voluntary; gender does not originate in some psychological core (*GT* 186), but rather in the "repressive [symbolic] law" which has as its goal to produce normative heterosexuality (*GT* 89). Gender expression is not produced by gender identity. In this case, Jonathan's performance as the Radcliffean heroine is produced by his Radcliffean situation. The argument could be made, then, that his behavior is meant to be read as anomalous. Even if that were the case, Stoker's decision to write a male character situated in an archetypally female predicament, without a trace of comedy or satire, constitutes a sort of performance on its own. However, there are many other indications throughout the text that Jonathan's femininity predates his captivity in Castle Dracula, and by Victorian standards he does not entirely outgrow it even by the end of the text.

If Jonathan Harker is to be read as a male literary archetype, the strongest argument would be to say that while he does display feminine traits and behaviors in captivity, he must—and does—shed them by the end of the novel. Dejan Kuzmanovic performs the most thorough analysis of Jonathan Harker's gender expression I have found, and that is precisely his argument. He argues that the novel's anxieties and repressed desires around gender and sexuality "interact with Harker's gender and professional anxieties in order to stage a contained and temporary identity crisis, which finally results in a restructuring of his ego" (Kuzmanovic 412). He views Jonathan's narrative as a variation on the Victorian masculine coming-of-age narrative, and he supports his claim competently and rigorously.

In Laura Apol's analysis of late 19th century children's serial stories, which heavily featured coming-of-age narratives, she finds that their male protagonists "attain success and become independent and autonomous young men through personal hard work, resourcefulness, and diligence" (Apol 67). These, along with wits, courage and initiative, let them overcome the obstacles in their path and symbolically "break from… the Mother", being socialized "*out of* relationships and *into* independence" (Apol 66). By this metric, Jonathan's actions at the end of chapter four certainly indicate a growth into manhood. He determines to escape by scaling the castle wall, determining to find the "quickest and nearest train" (Stoker 55). By the standards of the time, this would be a masculine act: he takes the initiative, accepts the danger, and physically exerts himself in order to escape. This is compounded by his assertion that if he should fail, "…the precipice is steep and high. At its foot a man may sleep—as a man" (Stoker 55). The actions taken here unambiguously and intentionally serve to reconstitute his manhood and may be read as the necessary exertions of a boy or young man to achieve independence and maturity.

Looking at Apol's definitions of the late 19th century literary coming-of-age, boys are not meant only to "break" with the Mother or other parental figures but are typically socialized "*out of* relationships" entirely in favor of independence (66). Botting points out that the only biological parents to whom the reader is introduced are Lucy's mother and Arthur's father, who both die (187). Considering there are no other mentions of his family, we may assume Jonathan is finally orphaned when Mr. Hawkins, his "second father" (Stoker 49), dies. But while he superficially fulfills the requirements of Victorian manhood in acquiring a wife, a house and a respectable profession, life after his escape is decidedly not marked by

independence. As Kuzmanovic acknowledges, he must still recover from his sickness in order to become a functional man in Victorian society. Even after he and Mina return to England, he continues to suffer from night terrors (141) and Mina mourns that "the very essence of [his character's] strength is gone" (143). Bearing this in mind, it may be appropriate to reconsider whether Jonathan's character growth can so easily be categorized as a male coming-of-age story.

Reading a coming-of-age motif into a 19th century novel requires a gendered perspective, because the genre originates in children's stories that have usually served the didactic function of modelling appropriate behavior for their young audience. They "attempt to explain, justify, and even impose on their audience what could be considered 'correct' patterns of behavior and belief" (Apol 62). At the time, these narratives were often "highly stereotyped" along gender lines (Apol 61), and even in more recent literature they remain somewhat dichotomous. Male coming-of-age narratives have typically portrayed a "rite of passage" and an "ascension… to some sort of social power", whereas traditional female coming-of-age narratives tend more towards "a lesson in restraint, punishment, and repression" (Halberstam 6). Jonathan does ascend to social power, taking on the role of partner in his law firm and attaining a wife. His actual ordeal, however, serves the latter role far better. Held captive, he must socially submit to Count Dracula in order to survive. Failure to do so is punished, alternately by the Count and by the narrative itself.

Then there is the matter of sexual violence. Jonathan is implicitly in danger of sexual violence throughout his stay (and arguably subjected to it before the end). As far as coming-of-age narratives go, sexual violence is only traditionally a feature in ones aimed at girls and young women. Some male coming-of-age stories, such as Michiel Heyns' *The Children's Day* (2002) or Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* (2003), do feature themes of sexual violence and abuse, but for the most part these are recent works. Female coming-of-age stories, on the other hand, have according to Kelly Oliver been "full of dangers" like assault and rape since the time of "traditional myths and fairytales" (20), though as in the Gothic those threats are rarely named as such. Instead, the threat of rape is usually identified as the threat of forced marriage or the advances of an unwanted suitor. It may seem like a minor point, but if Jonathan's arc is to be read as a 19th century coming-of-age narrative, gendered plot conventions must be accounted for. Likewise, if Jonathan's arc is to be read as a gendered

coming-of-age narrative, plot conventions associated with specifically 19th century coming-of-age literature ought to be taken into consideration. “All correct interpretation must be on guard against arbitrary fancies and the limitations imposed by imperceptible habits of thought” (Gadamer 279). The literary-historical context should not be disregarded as genre norms are subject to change, and the norms associated with 20th or 21st century coming-of-age stories should not be retrofitted onto a 19th century novel.

Kuzmanovic points to the Harkers’ marriage as one of the signs that Jonathan is beginning to take his place as a man, but his claim becomes far more dubious given its full context. Jonathan’s father figure, Mr. Hawkins, is the one who suggests they “may as well marry” in Transylvania—but the suggestion is made to Mina (Stoker 94). Jonathan is treated less like a groom ascending to social power (Halberstam 6) and more like a bride being passed from the care of a father to the care of a spouse. Mina’s initiative in rescuing him and pushing for the marriage read as masculine, and Jonathan’s passive acceptance reads as an extension of his submission when faced with the vampire women—which is to say, as a continuation of the femininity he performed there. There is also the fact that specifically in female coming-of-age narratives, marriage is almost unilaterally presented as the final step of a female socialization (Apol 67). 19th century coming-of-age narratives prioritized a liberation from childish dependence. Masculinity “could be as dependent on marriage as femininity was”, but marriage was not a universal prerequisite for manhood the way it was for womanhood (Demirhan 150). Between the relative importance of the marriage ending in male versus female coming-of-age narratives and the part Jonathan plays in his own marriage, reading his marriage as part of a becoming-a-man narrative may be a stretch.

In the context of Victorian coming-of-age narratives, Jonathan’s story cannot easily be read as either typically male or typically female. There can be no doubt that Jonathan goes through an “ordeal”, but the ordeal is coded as feminine. To survive he adopts the strategy of placating and entertaining his captor, which is relational and somewhat passive and thus contextually reads as feminine. To escape he must perform typically masculine feats of athleticism and courage, which were both considered masculine in the 19th century as well. He is rewarded with marriage and a new home, which is typical of the female coming-of-age story, but also with a business, which is decidedly not. The most significant element in favor of the becoming-a-man narrative is undoubtedly the proclamation he makes before his escape—“At

[the precipice's] foot a man may sleep—as a man" (Stoker 55)—but the narrative does not end there, nor does it end with the marriage scene in which he is again feminized. He lands one of the killing blows on Dracula and in symbolic terms having a son is an affirmation of manhood, as it ensures that his lineage will continue under his name, but those circumstances cannot on their own be said to constitute his becoming a man. If a coming-of-age motif is present, then its presentation alternates between feminine and masculine, at times neither, at times both.

Kuzmanovic argues that Dracula's attack on Mina finally incentivizes Jonathan to pursue the destruction of the vampire, who has forced Jonathan's identity to its gender-based crisis (418). In order for him to properly become a man, Mina must become "a lady in peril" for Jonathan to protect and avenge (Kuzmanovic 421). His reading here implies that Mina is feminized by the attack, and that observation is correct. After she is forced to drink Dracula's blood Mina suffers her only major bout of hysteria, and Jonathan does step into a masculine role in turn. Seward describes his face contorting in rage even as he tenderly strokes Mina's hair, momentarily wielding great self-control while embodying both sides of the traditional masculine protector (Stoker 249). Mina even implores him to be "brave and strong" for her (Stoker 250). Dracula's attack causes Mina to be more emotional, by Victorian standards a feminine state of being, and Jonathan's response is markedly masculine.

Yet in the following chapters, Mina does not continue to be feminized, nor does Jonathan's performance of masculinity prove to be sustained in the way that is necessary for a truly normative performance (*GT* 190). Up until the attack, Mina had been excluded from the group's hunt for Dracula and even their discussions of it so as to shelter her, a typical exertion of masculine Victorian protectionism. Afterwards, the group decide to include her again: "Mina should be in full confidence… nothing of any sort—no matter how painful—should be kept from her" (Stoker 253). Jonathan, meanwhile, becomes very emotional, a state associated with Victorian femininity. His anger has him shouting in most conversations with the group, and failing to kill the Count in Carfax Abbey leaves him in a "sublime misery" that had "no place for words" (Stoker 268). Here it is important to, per Gadamer, "transpose ourselves into the perspective" of the author (Gadamer 303). Today anger and rage are perhaps the most acceptable emotions for a man to openly display, but by Victorian era standards emotional excess was inherently feminine. A manly response to his situation would have been

"[d]isinterested and controlled compassion" (Demirhan 96). The volatility of Jonathan's mood here speaks to a lack of self-control, which—as discussed—was one of the core tenets of Victorian masculinity.

On the other hand, Mina is obviously shaken and upset, but she consistently makes a great effort not to be overwhelmed by her feelings (Stoker 269). Eric Kwan-Wai Yu rightly observes that her greatest feats of intellect—whose link to the masculine I will explore in the next chapter—are performed after she is attacked by Dracula. Only then does "her 'masculine' logical thinking [begin] to surpass… Van Helsing" (Yu 157). The scene of the attack positions Mina as very feminine and Jonathan as very masculine, but to them, that dynamic seems no more permanent than its opposite from the hospital in Budapest. Mina's intellect, rationality and self-control continue to be prominent, as do Jonathan's powerful emotions.

Given that volatility of feeling was associated with female hysteria, let us return briefly to Băniceru and her interpretations of the male Gothic hysteric. She claims that "hysterical narrative[s] within the Gothic genre" allowed writers to "create male characters that subvert the conventions of [contemporary] normative masculinity" (30), and I would argue Jonathan Harker follows that pattern. In the novels she analyzes, the hysteric heroes are ambiguous figures. Many of them are criminals, some violent. What makes Jonathan Harker remarkable within the Gothic tradition of hysterical men is that Stoker clearly *does* intend for him to be sympathetic. While he is the most feminized of the men, Seward and Van Helsing nevertheless stress his courage and fortitude after reading his story. The Gothic usually "expresses the anxiety of the mainstream majority that it will be invaded and replaced by 'the other'" (Băniceru 29-30), and *Dracula* is certainly no exception to this rule, but Jonathan's 'otherness' is treated with compassion. Jonathan continues to be a highly emotional character, but he is nevertheless healthy, functional, and a valued member of their group.

More remarkable still is how Jonathan's hysteria progresses throughout the novel and what is shown to improve it. He regains his health overnight as soon as the root cause is addressed, as Van Helsing expresses disbelief at not seeing any signs of sickness in him. Jonathan explains: "I was in doubt, and then everything took a hue of unreality, and I did not know what to trust, even the evidence of my own senses… I mistrusted myself. Doctor, you don't know what it is

to doubt everything, even yourself…" (Stoker 168). Mina reads his diary, doubts it, and sends it to Van Helsing. Van Helsing reads it and confidently affirms Jonathan's narrative: "Strange and terrible as it is, it is *true*! I will pledge my life on it" (Stoker 167). Stoker here makes the radical suggestion that the female hysteric may have a perfectly good reason to be mentally unsound, and that her story ought to be believed. But though he has recovered from his shock, Jonathan has not been cured of being an emotional man: he finds Van Helsing to be "so earnest and so kind that it made me quite choky" (Stoker 169). In other words, he is touched to the point of tears. He affirms himself as being "a new man", but he has not become a model of stoic Victorian masculinity and he never will.

3.6 Chapter conclusion

Through formulaic plot elements like the travel narrative, entrapment, the threat of sexual violence and loss of sanity, Stoker sets a reader familiar with Gothic conventions up to interpret Jonathan Harker as an imperiled Radcliffean heroine. While experiencing these tribulations, Jonathan increasingly identifies with imagined women, primarily literary heroines. His language and style of narration mimic the panicked narration of Radcliffe's heroines, or what Băniceru terms the hysterical voice, which has been used in Gothic literature to signal a male protagonist's distance from normative masculinity. Jonathan's survival strategies are relational and focused on placating his captor, akin to those of literary heroines like Scheherazade. All told, these elements constitute a dissonant gender performance that destabilizes gendered narrative conventions by calling attention to them. Stoker also alludes directly to Bürger's *Lenore*, a Gothic ballad, in a situation where Jonathan's situation is analogous to the titular maiden. Taking all these elements into consideration, Jonathan Harker can clearly be read as an articulation of the Gothic heroine. His characterization uses Gothic coding to subvert gender norms by representing a female archetype through a male character. Through his early use of Gothic coding, Stoker sets the experienced reader up to expect further subversion in the rest of the novel.

In addition to his use of Gothic coding, Stoker employs contemporary gender norms in establishing Jonathan—and to a lesser extent, the other male protagonists—as less than perfectly masculine. While Jonathan steps into a more masculine role when required, his emotional outbursts continue to resemble what was termed female hysteria by Stoker's contemporaries even after he proclaims himself cured of his brain fever. Though his anger

and drive for vengeance read as masculine by modern standards, one of the most important tenets of Victorian manliness was self-control, often to the point of stoicism. In continuing to write Jonathan as overtly emotional, Stoker casts doubt on the interpretation that his feminine posturing in Castle Dracula result solely from the feminizing circumstances imposed on him. When the story moves from a typically 18th century Radcliffean Gothic into an urban 19th century urban Gothic, Jonathan Harker's femininity shifts from Radcliffean heroine to hysterical Gothic hero.

Unlike most hysterical Gothic heroes, however, Jonathan's femininity is decoupled from villainy. While his rage is prominent and the other characters censure his vengeful outbursts (Stoker 265, 269), his allegiance is always to Mina and the Crew of Light. Within that group, moreover, he is respected and well-liked. Seward calls him "uncommonly clever" (Stoker 199), and the epilogue confirms that the crew continue to spend time together as friends (Stoker 326). The group are shown taking care of him, as when Arthur Holmwood lets him sleep in on their journey to slay Dracula (Stoker 310). Finally, as part of the Crew of Light Jonathan utilizes the relational skills that let him survive Castle Dracula to gather information about Dracula's movements and resting places (Stoker 229), demonstrating that his feminine-coded traits have a place among them. While Jonathan lives up neither to Radcliffean Gothic masculinity nor Victorian ideal masculinity, the Crew of Light accept him. By consistently presenting Jonathan as sympathetic, well-intended and eventually heroic, the narrative encourages the reader to accept him as his friends do.

4 The Harkers

One of the most common criticisms levied against Gothic novels is that, while their plots may have subversive themes, their endings excise them and reinstate the status quo. The conventional romance inevitably leads to a heterosexual marriage at or towards the end which reinscribes dominant heteropatriarchal norms. The villain, usually an overtly disruptive element, is eradicated and all is well. Many scholars interpret Dracula along these lines, specifically with regards to sexual and gender norms. While Jonathan Harker has performed an unconventionally feminine role and some parts of his journal imply queer themes, his subsequent marriage to Mina is seen as effacing that part of his story. By killing Dracula and achieving all the markers of modern manhood—marriage, son, and a business—he sheds any lingering femininity and definitively inscribes himself as a normative man (Kuzmanovic 422). A complementary reading of Mina Harker, née Murray, might argue that she has for a time she is a complex female character who performs intellectual work and is praised for her masculine traits, but the epilogue reduces her to a non-speaking role as a mother and the emotional heart of the crew. According to Karen A. Winstead, she is "stripped of her agency, demoted from a teammate to a mascot" (328). Both characters have displayed contextually queer traits, in that they are gender transgressive, but marriage and parenthood has turned them into the picture of heteropatriarchal domestic idyll. The epilogue serves the same function as the Gothic marriage plot: it forecloses any remaining ambiguities about gender and sexuality.

A close reading suggests that Stoker uses the Harkers and their epilogue rather differently. The Harkers are, both in terms of Gothic genre norms and contemporary Victorian gender norms, rather androgynous individuals. Left to their own devices, the way they relate to one another disregards relational gender norms in favor of a needs-based reciprocity and fluidity. Their love story in many ways reads as a subtler continuation of the themes of gender and sexuality raised from the start by Jonathan's dissonant performance of the Radcliffean heroine. In establishing the Harkers as both individually and relationally gender non-conforming, Stoker undermines the Gothic marriage plot's ability to remove sexual otherness. That both characters and their marriage is nevertheless presented as positive takes the argument one step further, suggesting that some forms of queerness may be permissible in society, helpful, admirable, or even virtuous.

In this chapter, my aim is to analyze Mina and her husband through the lens of Victorian gender roles. Whereas Jonathan's status as a feminine or feminized man is by now scholarly consensus, claiming that Mina can be considered a positive representation of a masculine woman or that the Harkers' marriage is egalitarian is more contentious. First, I address the argument that the epilogue reinstates normative heteropatriarchy by having the Harkers be happily married with a child. Providing a very brief overview of the history of literary censorship and how authors work with the limitations they are given, I argue that an ending or epilogue should not be considered the truest reflection of a text's political or moral leaning. Even if that were the case, as I will argue later, *Dracula*'s epilogue may not be as conservative as it seems. I analyze Mina Harker's character through the lens of Victorian gender roles, arguing that she possesses both traditionally feminine and masculine traits.

To illustrate that she is nevertheless presented as an admirable character, I draw on two contemporary texts that also prominently feature women with masculine traits, namely Arthur Machen's novella *The Great God Pan* (1890) and Marsh's bestselling novel *The Beetle*. Both texts feature female villains who are monstrously masculine and who possess shapeshifting abilities, echoing Victorian anxieties about women being masculinized. *The Beetle* is especially relevant in that it features both a monstrously masculine female villain and a New Woman protagonist whose narrative treatment, in contrast to Mina, strips her of her agency. Marjorie Lindon's epilogue sees her silenced, traumatized, and fully feminized, textually punished for desiring agency and failing to heed the male protagonists. A short exploration of how Marsh treats his female characters creates a useful literary-historical backdrop to Stoker's treatment of Mina, who, by contrast, has her masculine traits exalted in the narrative. I conclude my analysis of Mina by calling attention to some instances of her masculinity being textually connected to the divine, arguing that Stoker turns her gender transgression (queerness) into a sacred virtue.

Moving on to the Harkers' relationship, my primary argument is that their marriage is presented as healthy and loving despite their non-normative, relatively egalitarian, and occasionally genderfluid relationship dynamic. First, I dismiss the notion that they might be unreliable narrators, then I move on to address contemporary criticisms of their relationship as patriarchal. While Mina's brief exclusion from the Crew of Light is deeply sexist, the text does not imply it was Jonathan's idea, nor does it suggest his complicity here is in line with

his character otherwise. Contrasting Mina's attack with a similar moment in *The Beetle*, I argue that Stoker's narrative punishes the men for their condescending protectionism, whereas Marsh punishes Marjorie for not submitting to similar attitudes. I argue that the novel on the whole demonstrates the Harkers having a fluid relationship dynamic, with Mina often taking on a more active, protecting role compared to Jonathan; by Victorian standards, she assumes a masculine role. Though they are a man and a woman, their performance of heterosexuality reads as dissonant, given sufficient scrutiny. Their love, however, reads as genuine, strong, and at times passionate, suggesting that a symbolically queer union might be as productive and loving as a conventional one. If such a relationship constitutes the heterosexual status quo in the formulaic Gothic marriage ending, then the normative values usually ascribed to it are undermined from within.

4.1 The Gothic ending

Readings of *Dracula* often emphasize that Dracula brings ambiguity. He feminizes Jonathan Harker, transforms the sweet Lucy Westenra into an eroticized undead predator, and invades the Harkers' marriage bed. His attack on Mina integrates her more fully into the homosocial Crew of Light, enabling her to fully utilize her intellect and power of deduction to great effect. As such, Dracula's violent destruction leads to the reassertion of "unambiguous identities", letting the characters again become "simply husbands or wives or civilized men and women without the confusion that signifies uncleanness" (McWhir 35). In this reading, Stoker challenges heteropatriarchal norms only to reinscribe them at the end. Transgression, uncleanness, is purged. The epilogue serves the same purpose as the traditional Gothic marriage plot. With Dracula's corrupting influence gone, Mina will presumably be content to become the 'Angel in the House'.

The reading of the Gothic marriage plot as inherently ideologically conservative makes some key assumptions, however, and one of those assumptions merit some deconstruction both in general and as it relates to *Dracula* specifically. Several scholars have questioned whether a narrative's ending should necessarily be privileged over the rest of the work. Grove argues that "The critical practice of privileging [the] ending… often effaces the middle of a work… [T]he privileging of the heteronormative 'end' erases other constructions of sexuality presented elsewhere in the novel" (Grove 444). Boone likewise notes that it is "a critical commonplace that gothic texts conclude with a vision of order", a conservative ideal, but adds

that “it is crucial to consider what challenges to that order they offer on the way to such conclusions” (Boone 86). Both scholars make the point that an author’s choice to include transgressive elements and themes should not be rendered insignificant by the inclusion of a normative ending.

The question of censorship, which must include the possibility of self-censorship, is necessarily relevant in discussing a work written during a time when the author could risk severe social, legal, or public repercussions for publishing a work deemed immoral, obscene, or politically controversial. *Dracula* was in large part written at the heels of a trial where a book’s content had been used as evidence of its author’s corrupt moral character. Although its tender beginnings can be traced all the way back to his first notes from 1890 (*Notes* 12), he was still working out plot details as late as the spring of 1896 (113). Minute differences between the American version published in 1899 and the British version, which is the most printed version today, suggest he may have either removed a few lines[8] from his original version or added some to the American edition. The first could be seen as an incidence of Jonathan identifying with women, whereas the other strongly implies that Dracula means to feed on Jonathan. They are minute differences, but they do indicate that Stoker was more comfortable with the thought of an American readership noticing queer subtext in that section of the novel. Consequently, we cannot dismiss the possibility that Stoker may have opted to censor his work to avoid controversy in the wake of a nationwide scandal, though it is impossible to guess at how much. At a time of great backlash to the growing awareness of male homosexuality as well as to the progressive women’s movement, erring on the side of caution would be natural.

4.2 Mina Murray Harker and Victorian masculinity

On the 20th of August 1897, Arthur Conan Doyle penned a letter to Bram Stoker wherein he praised his friend’s recently published novel Dracula, singling out the “old professor” and “the two girls” as being “most excellent” characters (Doyle). In the more than century that has passed since then critical and reader evaluation has shifted, but the fascination with Mina as a

[8] Auerbach and Skal comment on one on page 52 of the Norton Critical Edition of *Dracula*, and I count at least one more—see section 3.4. A closer side-by-side investigation of the texts might yet reveal more.

character has not subsided. That fascination stems in large part from her being a somewhat unconventional heroine for the time period. While she was certainly not the first admirable female character in literature, Mina stands out for her intelligence and her comparative independence. Unlike even the impressive Marian Halcombe from Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* (1859), Mina does not need to be protected by the men around her. In fact, attempts by the men around her to protect her invariably endanger her more (Straight 389, Ramday 53, Luckhurst xxii), and her work proves crucial to their victory (Winstead 323, Yu 156). Despite her disidentification with the New Woman (Stoker 86-87) and the common reading of the novel as "regulat[ing] monstrous female sexuality and desire" (Straight 382), most scholarly readings of Mina consider her a proto-feminist character and an example of the New Woman.

The caveat generally presented is that she is an acceptable "New Woman" only because her abilities are used to serve men, and that the epilogue sees her safely returned to her heteropatriarchal marriage and deposited into motherhood and the domestic sphere. To Demetrakopoulos, she is "most feminine when aping masculine pseudo-rationality" but "typically Victorian in her sexual repression" (104), a "good woman" when contrasted with Lucy precisely because Mina is "decarnalized and non-sexual" (109). Belford interprets her as "the ideal motherly woman" (237). Other scholars recognize her textual androgyny but read her narrative as one of "a dangerous hybrid" androgyne "who must be domesticated" (Showalter 181). She may be a New Woman, but she is acceptable because rather than being "independent of the male and emancipated", she "can assist the men for the fulfillment of the greater good" (Baciu 78). In other words, her masculine traits are read as textually defanged by her feminine role as helper and assistant. Through this lens, her becoming a mother echoes the traditional Gothic formula of having the narrative "end within the familiar, comfortable realm of marriage, home, hearth and family" (Grove 443).

Such a reading depends on *Dracula*'s ending being straightforwardly conservative, but that assumption merits closer analysis. Some scholars have argued otherwise. Straight considers the novel a tacit endorsement of women's writing, which was a contentious issue in England at the *fin de siècle*. The integrity of female journalists, for whom Mina expresses a small degree of admiration in her letter to Lucy (Stoker 56), was openly questioned by conservative social forces. That Mina is presented as a thoroughly reliable narrator subtly pushes back

against the notion that women should not be trusted to write. Rather than seeing the ending as a "taming" of her, Straight reads Mina as "a female character capable of being a wife and mother, as well as an independent professional and valued writer" (392). In her reading, Mina's motherhood does not necessarily replace her intellectual capabilities or diminish her strength. The presence of Quincey Jr. could even be read as tacit pushback against the idea that a woman's fertility is contingent on her being shielded against all distress (Eltis, qtd. in Winstead 328). If Mina has a son and is a good mother, clearly Van Helsing was wrong in assuming she was too fragile to be part of the hunt.

As for her marriage, there are plenty of indications that Mina's relationship with Jonathan is more egalitarian than it might appear at first glance. While Jonathan does regress into a typical Victorian protectionist attitude at one point the novel is careful to suggest that it is out of character for him, and he has an obvious change of heart afterwards. Before and after this lapse, they are frequently presented as peers, working together both to learn and practice shorthand (Stoker 55) and to assemble the text of *Dracula* (Stoker 202, 205). Mina "anticipates becoming not an 'Angel in the House' but something more like a business partner" (Winstead 319), and Jonathan seems open to that idea. Finally, while Mina's "sweetness and loving care" are emphasized in the epilogue, so too is the fact that she is "brave and gallant" (Stoker 327). These last two adjectives ring notably masculine, both by the standards of the Victorian era and of Gothic literature. In fact, the final two descriptions of Quincey Morris—the most unambiguously masculine character among the main cast—uses the exact same adjectives: he is described as "a gallant gentleman" and "our brave friend" (Stoker 326-7). That his description occurs almost side by side with Mina's and that they use the same adjectives draw attention to Mina's masculine, heroic qualities as well as her feminine, nurturing ones. Mina's indirect comparison to Quincey undermines the epilogue's superficial image of normative Victorian domesticity and instead exposes some cracks in the veneer of gender normativity.

The last paragraph of the epilogue, rather than foreclosing any ambiguities, instead draws attention to them—and particularly to the ambiguities of gender and gender roles within the novel. Butler might call the classic Gothic ending a variant on the "construction of the human" which creates, through difference, "the more and the less 'human,' the inhuman, the humanly unthinkable" (*BTM* xvii). Even in its more conservative forms, the process creates

the "constitutive outside", a space where the "excluded sites come to… haunt [the] boundaries" of human and inhuman (*BTM* xvii). Between her attack by Dracula and his death, Mina herself haunts that boundary. In *Dracula*, the veil separating the monstrous and the human is diaphanous at best. A vampire may pass as human for a time, and a human may become a vampire. In Mina's case, Dracula further blurs the boundaries between human and monster as well as male and female by creating a psychic link between them. For a time, hypnosis can transpose her psyche to his body, and the novel tacitly implies the reverse is true as well.

When approaching the Borgo Pass, Mina becomes "all on fire with zeal" and "some new guiding power" is evidently hers, because she points out the correct way to the castle. Van Helsing questions how she knows the way, and she gives an odd reply: "Of course I know it… Have not my Jonathan travel and wrote of his travel?" (Stoker 314). On a rational level, her response is unsatisfying. Firstly, Jonathan does not give an accurate description of the way from the Borgo Pass to Castle Dracula. His journey to the castle is undertaken with Dracula as his coachman, and Jonathan notes that they are "going over and over the same ground again" (Stoker 18). The journey is undertaken in the dark, using a misleading route, and Jonathan is in a state of terror and wonder for most of it. When they do reach the castle, he notes that he "must have been asleep" since he did not "[notice] the approach to such a remarkable place" (Stoker 20). When he is later prompted by Dracula, he admits that he would not know where to find the spots where he had seen the mysterious blue flame, which apparently confirms that he is not certain of the route they took (Stoker 27). The path Mina suggests is accurate, but she could not have found it in Jonathan's journal, which makes her reply strange.

Furthermore, the way Mina's speech is presented here is linguistically ambiguous. As a highly proficient native English speaker and a former teacher, she is unlikely to make such a grammatical mistake in speaking. On its own the grammatical error would likely only point to Van Helsing, the foreigner, being an unfaithful scribe. But apart from this scene, none of his transcriptions of Mina's speech (few as they are) feature grammatical mistakes. It is strange that her declaration here should be the exception. The sentence, beyond being grammatically incorrect, is oddly formal and stilted, whereas Mina's speech tends to be somewhat more relaxed. Between that, the unnatural knowledge of the path and the established influence

Dracula has over Mina, the person making casual reference to "my Jonathan" could be the Count speaking through Mina's lips. Through that lens, the stilted formality makes more sense. Dracula speaks English as a second language, though according to Jonathan he does so with remarkable proficiency (Stoker 26), and his dialogue features more elaborately constructed sentences. Where the phrase noticeably differs from Mina's dialogue elsewhere, it resembles the Count's manner of speaking. If so, the abject, transgressive Gothic villain Dracula and the virtuous hero Mina are quite literally embodied in the same flesh. It would be difficult to imagine, per Butler's quote above, a more extreme haunting of boundaries.

The Count is, as befits a Gothic villain, summarily executed before the end of the novel. Mina, who has dwelled in a man's body and whose body has been possessed by a male vampire's consciousness, survives the Gothic narrative and gets a happy ending which acknowledges her masculine virtues. The narrative does not punish her masculinity or independence through death or madness, and the usage of traditionally masculine adjectives to describe her suggests that she has not been feminized either. Stoker performs the expected motion of killing the Gothic villain, but Dracula's death does not simultaneously kill Mina's masculinity, just as it does not destroy Jonathan's femininity. The ending cannot reconstitute Mina as ideally feminine according to the symbolic (*BTM* 69), because a reconstitution would require her to have been ideally feminine at some point before meeting Dracula. Stoker's epilogue, rather than turn Mina into a purely feminine woman, posits that Mina's masculine qualities can exist alongside her feminine ones without being vampiric.

The epilogue's emphasis on Mina's masculine and feminine qualities alike recalls Van Helsing's earlier proclamation that Mina has a "man's brain—a brain that a man should have were he much gifted—and woman's heart" (Stoker 207). The remainder of the novel proves his assessment to be accurate. Whereas all the men, save "the enigmatic Quincey Morris" (Winstead 326), suffer some sort of hysterical breakdown, Mina remains mostly clear-headed and several scenes show her calming the men down. Straight argues "Mina's mental fortitude makes her the most resolute and distinguished member of the group. Mina is the one that remains emotionally grounded" (389). As discussed in chapter 2, hysteria was considered primarily a female malady, and, moreover, the men's hysteria is coded as the feminine subtype of hysteria (Băniceru 34). The fact that Mina is generally the calmest and most

rational member thus codes her not only as intellectually masculine, but also as emotionally and, perhaps most importantly, usefully masculine.

On an authorial level, her masculine traits draw attention to the comparative emotional femininity of her male companions. Her calm allows the men to be emotional, in fact, as seen in the scenes where she comforts Arthur, John and Quincey as well as the many scenes where she supports Jonathan. Her relative masculinity allows their feminine vulnerability to come forth. If female masculinity were always a horrific phantasm in Dracula, then these scenes ought to be framed negatively in some way. In a very real way, she threatens the men's masculinity by enabling a temporary "descent into feminine castration and abjection" (*BTM* 66). That, of course, is the "threat" which Butler argues compels "the assumption of masculine… attributes in the first place" (*BTM* 66). Yet instead, the men reward her with gratitude and admiration (Stoker 204). Where the female vampires of the novel undergo a "monstrous ascent into phallicism" (*BTM* 66) and become hypersexual monsters that must be destroyed, Mina's androgynous traits instead valorize her. Within the story her intelligence and rationality are an unambiguous boon to the hunters and to the hunt, as are her compassion and kindness. Her dispositional androgyny is an inherent part of what makes her so very admirable to the other characters in the novel.

4.2.1 Other literary "masculine women"

The way Stoker represents Mina's comparative androgyny as a strength and a virtue is especially striking considering how contentious gender issues had become by the late 1890s. As discussed in my first chapter, the late Victorian era was a time of great anxiety surrounding gender roles, and particularly the roles of women. Social changes resulting from industrialization and empire-building—more international trade, the rise of the middle class, the entry of women into the work force, the rising number of female writers, the New Woman movement, and the popularization of female education—combined to make gender roles seem precarious. As more women entered the workforce or received an education, they began to "question the ability of men to determine society's rules or to demand that women be the guards of sexual morals for society as a whole" (Ramday 29). These activists were seen as trespassing not only against their social role, but also against their womanhood. Women who protested their place in society were caricatured as "gender abominations" who had shed their natural womanhood, even by other women; Ramday cites one Mrs Eliza Linton as calling

New Woman activists "men-women" (27). In turn, anxieties arose around the masculinization of women, the feminization of men, and the disintegration of gender roles, if not of gender entirely.

Such anxieties around gender can be easily traced in contemporary literature. New Woman writers were tackling gender questions head-on, but much Gothic literature written around the same time clearly deals with the themes of gender and sexuality—though usually not in a way that was sympathetic to those who would transgress the traditional bounds of gender and sexual roles. Arthur Machen's novella *The Great God Pan* centers on a female villain, Helen Vaughan, who is revealed to be the daughter of titular deity. Vaughan is suggested to be promiscuous, and possibly to have led a female friend of hers to some sort of traumatic sexual encounter with either herself or something else. The encounter is not depicted, but the fact that the girl, Rachel, is found "half undressed" and "evidently in distress" combined with the "paroxysm of horror" experienced by a man who hears the story in its entirety indicates that what happens to her is sexually violent (Machen 14). Some years later a string of suicides among London men all connect back to Vaughan under a new pseudonym (Machen 39-40). Having pieced this together, the protagonists determine to confront Vaughan, giving her the choice to hang herself or have everything revealed. She chooses death, and in death her inhuman nature is revealed.

What follows is the most viscerally gruesome part of the novella:

> "The skin, and the flesh, and the muscles, and the bones, and the firm structure of the human body that I had thought to be unchangeable, and permanent as adamant, began to melt and dissolve… I saw the form waver from sex to sex, dividing itself from itself… Then I saw the body descend to the beasts whence it ascended… I watched, and at last I saw nothing but a substance as jelly" (Machen 54-55)

The horror of Vaughan's disintegration is strong enough that Machen chooses to revisit it on the final page of the novella, having explained Vaughan's supernatural origin. Again he describes the "hideous form upon the bed, changing and melting… from woman to man, from man to beast, and from beast to worse than beast" (59). Vaughan's metamorphosis upon death clearly echoes Victorian anxieties around the concept of degeneration: evolution in reverse. But before she turns into beast and "worse than beast", Vaughan's body first becomes a site of horror when it "wavers" between sexes and becomes male. Even before then, Vaughan

inspires dread through her improper sexual conduct, including a suggested sexual assault on a female friend. Vaughan is, socially as well as physically, a "man-woman" and a gender abomination, and her later descent into a bestial form and "worse" seems to suggest that destabilizing gender will lead to degeneration.

A similar motif can be found in Marsh's *The Beetle*, which was published the same year as *Dracula* and outsold it at the time, though it fell into obscurity in the first half of the 20th century (Vuohelainen 94). The titular Beetle, like Helen Vaughan, is a monstrous, shapeshifting villain. Initially it is introduced as a literal beetle, but it soon it transforms into a hideously ugly human presumed to be a man because "it was impossible such a creature could be feminine" (Marsh 11). The first narrator, Holt, observes it changing shape twice. The second time around the Beetle has become younger and its features have become slightly less grotesque. But "the most astounding novelty" is that it looks more feminine; Holt wonders if she might be "some ghoulish example of her sex, who had so yielded to her depraved instincts as to have become nothing but a ghastly reminiscence of womanhood" (Marsh 19). Her womanhood is later confirmed. None of the narrators acknowledge her as a woman. She is "the creature", and when they do not speak of her as an "it" they default to masculine pronouns: "What become of the creature… who he was—if it was a 'he,' which is extremely doubtful… are puzzles" (Marsh 231). Like Helen Vaughan the Beetle is rendered monstrously masculine by her sexual aggression, but the Beetle's gender transgressions and her ugliness calls her womanhood into question on even a textual level.

Part of what makes the Beetle so monstrous and horrible is her ability to cross seemingly immutable boundaries: "human and animal, animal and insect, male and female… heterosexual and homosexual" (Byron 140). Her shapeshifting enables her to do the impossible, namely enact transgressive homosexuality upon unwilling men. In this respect she has a great deal in common with Stoker's female vampires, both being "phallicized" by supernatural means (*BTM* 66) and rendered abject as a result. When she takes on the guise of the old man, she compels Holt to undress and then molests him: "Fingers… were thrust into my mouth, they touched my staring eyes… and—horror of horrors!—the blubber lips were pressed to mine—the soul of something evil entered into me in the guise of a kiss" (Marsh 15). While in her man's guise, she also betrays her lust for and hatred of Paul Lessingham with a "savage, frantic longing" (Marsh 21). Sexual aggression was thought to be the domain

of men, whereas women were supposed to be passively receptive (Craft 108). Both her physical appearance and her overt sexuality mark her as masculine, which makes her monstrous.

Later, the Beetle kidnaps Marjorie Lindon, the secret fiancée of protagonist Paul Lessingham and Marsh's own literary New Woman. After the narrative has revealed that the Beetle is a woman, the reader learns that she has stripped Marjorie naked, dressed her in men's clothing, and subjected her to some unspecified form of torment which apparently has her wailing, shrieking and screeching (Marsh 221). It takes her three years "under supervision as a lunatic" to recover (Byron 140) from whatever was done to her. Yet in the epilogue, the horror the narrative chooses to dwell on is that she was "paraded through London in the tattered masculine habiliments of a vagabond" (Marsh 231). The Beetle is monstrous in her transgressive and aggressively sexuality, and she is doubly monstrous in her shapeshifting body. Arguably, though, the most frightening aspect of her monstrosity is that she forces another woman—an Englishwoman of good breeding, no less—to transgress societal gender norms by crossdressing. Her gender transgression is posited as contagious.

4.2.2 Mina's manly virtues

With these contemporary depictions of gender abominations and monstrous men-women in mind, the nuanced way Stoker presents female masculinity becomes readily apparent. His female vampires are monstrous, aggressive and sexually threatening. Even their physical bodies are masculinized through the vampiric mouth which "combines male penetration and female reception", i.e. heterosexual female reception of bodily fluids (McGunnigle 174). Like Helen Vaughan and the Beetle, they are presented as monstrous, and their transgressive relationship to gender and sexuality is decidedly part of the reason why they must be destroyed. A key difference between the texts, however, is that the female vampires are not the only mode of female masculinity or androgyny represented in the text. The text presents female androgyny through the obviously transgressive and sexually aggressive vampire women, but also through the covertly subversive Mina Murray Harker, whose masculinity is far from monstrous. Instead, her masculine traits are openly admired by other characters and prove vital to the group's pursuit and eventual destruction of the Count.

Rather than demonizing her, the narrative explicitly connects Mina's masculinity to the divine and the holy. After praising her intelligence, her "man's brain", Van Helsing goes on to say that "God fashioned her for a purpose, believe me, when He made that so good combination" (Stoker 207). Mina's masculine traits, the novel seems to suggest, are not only admirable: they are of God, which in the logic of the narrative means they are inherently and necessarily a force for good. Van Helsing, as Winstead points out, is "repeatedly proven wrong" whenever he determines that Mina is too fragile in her femininity to join the hunt for Dracula (323). But when it comes her godliness, the narrative seems to suggest that he is correct. Mina's thoroughness in recording information, her ability to see the larger picture, and her deductive reasoning all enable the destruction of Count Dracula. In addition to garlic and wooden stakes, Stoker's vampires are specifically shown to be repelled by communion wafers and the crucifix—both holy symbols. The crucifix stops Dracula's attack on Jonathan, and communion wafers laid on the ground or wedged into doorways or windows create a barrier through which the vampire may not pass. If there is a connection between holy symbols physically stopping vampires and Mina being Dracula's bane (even specifically because she tracks and intercepts his movements), it may well be unintentional. Still, in stark contrast to the monstrous, heathenistic masculinity of Helen Vaughan or The Beetle the narrative repeatedly implies that Mina's "masculine" intelligence and rationality are divine gifts, sacred in their own right.

My argument is not so much that Mina is masculine as that she is androgynous. Some of her positive traits, like rationality, intelligence, attention to detail and comparative stoicism, would be considered masculine by the standards of fin-de-siècle England. Others, like her kindness, empathy and gentleness, would be considered feminine. That she possesses both is highlighted by the narrative, and it is presented as a desirable trait. By desirable, I mean that it makes her remarkable and beloved among her platonic friends—although Jonathan does respond to her most impressive intellectual work by taking her into his arms and kissing her (Stoker 306), suggesting that he finds her intelligence desirable in the more conventional sense. But her masculine traits are presented as desirable on a narrative level also in that her considerable talent for deduction and her hard work greatly benefit herself. When she uses her intelligence to bring about Dracula's destruction, she saves not only London, but also her own immortal soul: the mark on her forehead is removed, suggesting that the vampiric "uncleanness" has passed from her. The stereotypically masculine traits of intelligence,

rationality and initiative, then, are what save her. Mina is the only female character afflicted by vampirism who survives the novel, and implicitly it is her androgynous disposition which enables her to do so.

4.3 The Harkers and the "holiest love"

The relationship between Jonathan and Mina Harker has often been dismissed as a vehicle for the Gothic marriage ending. Mina is contrasted with Lucy as a "good woman" whose purity and industriousness save her from vampirism (Chez 83), and their son represents the future of England (Kuzmanovic 420). Jonathan, though initially weak, grows into the masculine role of a hunter (McWhir 35), becoming capable of protecting English women from foreign threats. He earns his happy ending by becoming a brave man, just as Mina earns hers by being a good woman. A closer examination of the roles they take relative to one another suggests that their relationship is more complicated than this. While there are certainly moments where Jonathan steps into the role of a masculine protector, particularly towards the end of the novel, Mina is similarly concerned for his safety and well-being. At times, she is the protector and he the protected. The roles they occupy at any given moment seem based on need rather than gender. Some of this has already come up in my thesis, in that I have devoted quite a few pages to analyzing Jonathan's gender non-conforming behavior. In this section, I will instead focus on the Harkers as a couple. The goal of this is to demonstrate that their relationship effectively queers the hero/heroine marriage plot, both through their individual gender non-conformity, how they easily vacillate between roles in their relationship, and in how their relationship can be read as metaphorically queer.

It is important to acknowledge that the book, in-universe, is the Harkers' work, but while this means that an argument could technically be made for the Harkers being unreliable narrators, the book does not invite such a reading. Mina compiles the text from several sources, typewrites them, and compiles them. Jonathan's epilogue, and his name, ends the book. On one hand, this means the reader is presented with an inherently biased work. Their perspective shapes the information the readers is given, and they might well have reasons to present themselves in a positive light. The Harkers both—and Mina especially—plausibly demonstrate a degree of narrative integrity, at least as far as honesty is concerned. From her very first appearance, Mina demonstrates an interest in being able to recreate the truth precisely: "I shall try to… [interview people and] remember conversations. I am told that,

with a little practice, one can remember all that goes on or that one hears said during a day" (Stoker 56). Her "attention to writing down details exactly as they happen and recording accounts and conversations precisely as they were relayed shows her attention to discovering the truth" (Straight 386), and this effort is what renders Dracula destructible. Mina's records are repeatedly shown to be reliable and accurate in-universe, so the reader is given little reason to doubt her integrity.

While Jonathan seems to leave out details when he narrates his interactions with Dracula, he refuses to omit his attraction to the vampire women: "It is not good to write this down, lest some day it should meet Mina's eyes and cause her pain; but it is the truth" (Stoker 42). Judging by this, Jonathan seems unlikely to be performing any censorship made to make himself look better. Some of his other descriptions of his behavior in the castle—"I behaved much as a rat does in a trap" (Stoker 32)—would not fit in with a self-aggrandizing narrative. Furthermore, in the epilogue Jonathan acknowledges the inherent inauthenticity of the book as a reproduced object: "…in all the mass of material of which the record is composed, there is hardly one authentic document; nothing but a mass of type-writing, except the later notebooks… and Van Helsing's memorandums" (Stoker 326). This acknowledgment and Jonathan's open questioning of his sanity paradoxically only make him seem more reliable. If he was using his narration to paint a flattering picture of himself and his marriage, he would presumably not want to draw attention to the unreliability or inauthenticity of the text, nor would Mina include his observation in the final product. As readers, we have little reason to doubt their recounting of events.

Setting aside any argument that the Harkers are intentionally unreliable narrators, tackling the claim that they represent an ideal marriage seems like a natural next step. That claim, however, is somewhat contentious. Many adaptations have portrayed Jonathan as a symbol of patriarchal oppression who stifles Mina's freedom. There is a grain of truth in this. After Mina has typewritten all the records up to the present day, the men decide that she must be excluded from the rest of the investigation. Jonathan takes part in making this decision, and he expresses relief after she agrees. As Straight says, Mina is excluded and essentially reduced to a "womanly" secretarial role where she has no stake in the documents she produces, and the men's concerns "stem directly from Victorian notions of women's weaker nerve force" (389). The decision to exclude Mina is inarguably sexist, and even within the

narrative it is punished when Mina, vulnerable and alone, is fed on and attacked by Dracula. But that decision did not originate with Jonathan. The suggestion came from Van Helsing. Jonathan and the rest of the men merely "follow his lead, despite their better judgment—particularly Jonathan Harker", who "iterates and reiterates his relief that Mina is being left out of the proceedings—as if trying to convince himself" (Winstead 327). As Winstead goes on to note, he "falls back into his old habit of consulting her" remarkably quickly after she is attacked (327). The next time Van Helsing decides Mina "must be kept out of the loop", not only does he not try to enlist Jonathan (Winstead 327)—he repeatedly encourages Seward not to share his opinions with Jonathan either (Stoker 282, 292). Implicit in his decision is an understanding that Jonathan cannot be persuaded to keep secrets from Mina against her will anymore.

Moreover, unlike Van Helsing it is never suggested that Jonathan thinks Mina's nerves are too weak for this work. He only says that he felt "dread" at her being "in this fearful business" and that her work, the record-keeping, "is done… due to her energy and brains and foresight" (Stoker 218). What is suggested here is simply that he fears for her safety; his actions are still sexist and ultimately harmful, but his motivations are arguably benevolent. Even this benign sexism, however, seems out of character for him. After the group's first exploration of Carfax Abbey, Jonathan returns to find Mina asleep and writes: "It is too great a strain for a woman to bear. I did not think so at first, but I know better now" (Stoker 223). Plainly, then, Jonathan did not initially believe that Mina should be kept out of any fearful business on the basis of being female. He assented to Van Helsing's suggestion and grew to agree with his rationale, but it was not his idea nor was the ideology behind it one with which he agreed. McWhir points to the separation between Jonathan and Mina as one of Van Helsing's failures, as he endorses it (36); Winstead argues that Van Helsing "recalibrates their marriage" because of his own misogynistic beliefs (320). The text does not actually suggest that Van Helsing has made any particular effort to sway Jonathan to his beliefs. It does, however, provide ample evidence that Jonathan would not have reached the decision on his own.

After Mina is attacked, Jonathan thoroughly sheds his paternalistic desire to exclude her. When she herself suggests that she cannot be trusted with information, he only reluctantly agrees, writing that he feels "a door had been shut" between them (Stoker 283). The unambiguously negative image suggests that he has come to see withholding information

from her as a barrier to emotional intimacy. Those feelings seem a truer reflection of his values, as he has expressed them before: "Wilhelmina… you know, dear, my ideas of the trust between husband and wife: there should be no secret, no concealment" (Stoker 99). Jonathan agrees to exclude Mina from the hunt based on harmful sexist stereotypes, but he regrets it and never does it again. Stoker seems to go out of his way to show the reader that while this lapse in judgment is regrettable, it is not reflective of Jonathan's character and it in fact goes against the values he otherwise holds. As such, I would argue that the decision to exclude Mina cannot really be said to reflect any paternalistic power imbalance within their relationship. Note that my argument is not that such a power imbalance does not exist, but rather that Jonathan's poor decision-making specifically does not characterize their relationship. Mina and Jonathan cannot be truly equal within their marriage, because the outside circumstances of their marriage—as a couple living in Victorian England—make true equality impossible. The best they can do is to work within the confines of their marriage to value and respect one another.

Another interesting point about Mina's exclusion from the hunt is that the text seems not to endorse it, which becomes more apparent when compared to an inverse version of the same plot point in *The Beetle*. Having heard the story of Robert Holt, a destitute clerk who has been hypnotized by the Beetle into doing her bidding, Marjorie determines to investigate the facts of the matter. Sydney Atherton, her spurned would-be fiancé, attempts to dissuade her with a variety of arguments. She does not listen. Realizing she will not relent, Sydney permits her to join with a warning: "Your blood be on your own head!" (Marsh 144). His pronouncement turns out to be prophetic. Her insistence on joining the investigation, "her 'emancipated' refusal of Atherton's protective desire to restrict her to a feminine role" by insisting she remain at home, which ultimately leads to her fateful second encounter with the Beetle (Margree 72). As a consequence, she is abducted and tortured by the Beetle, which effectively removes her from the narrative except as motivation to the men. This is an obvious way to punish a character who, as both Margree, Rebery and Vuohelainen have pointed out, is clearly meant to represent a 'New Woman' figure. Her desire for autonomy and equality lead directly to her punitive masculinization (Margree 72, Rebery 9), unspecified but suggestively sexual torment at the hands of the Beetle, and subsequent breakdown into hysteria, which all work to domesticate her.

Atherton's failed attempt to exclude Marjorie from the investigation and the consequences of her insistence on joining together form a stark contrast to Mina's actual exclusion and the consequences thereof. Marjorie's self-determined inclusion directly leads to her being attacked and victimized by the Gothic villain, whereas Mina's attack is a result of her involuntary exclusion. Narratively speaking, it is Marjorie's self-determination and denial of paternalistic protection that endanger her, and so her sufferings can be read as punishment for her desire for emancipation. Atherton worries that she may not be able to keep her "presence of mind" faced with what is inside the building they are investigating (Marsh 147). He is proven right: after her rescue, Marjorie spends three years as "a lunatic" in an asylum (Marsh 231). In Mina's case, the opposite is true. When she is attacked, it is a direct consequence of being shut in and kept in the dark. The narrative is using her as a proxy to punish the men for their mistake, which was to exclude her. Mina's most notable moments of hysteria follow her attack, but so do many moments of exceptional insight and cleverness.

If Marjorie's abduction removes her from the narrative, Mina's attack has the opposite effect: she is, if anything, more prominent and active than before. Her desire to be part of the investigation is validated, and she goes on to prove her value as a fellow hunter. Her exclusion from the Crew of Light indirectly leads to her being accepted as part of an otherwise homosocial group. Her admission into such a homosocial space furthers her narrative masculinization. In 3.2, I discussed entrapment as a feminizing condition common to the Radcliffean heroine. By the same token, the opposite is true: the Gothic villain usually enjoys a great degree of spatial autonomy (Smith 126). At first, Van Helsing seeks to restrict Mina's participation in the hunt, and he succeeds. After the attack he tries to prevent her—and Jonathan—from traveling with the group to Transylvania, but he fails. At her own insistence, she travels with them (Stoker 284). This time, she resists his patriarchal protectionism and demands her right to spatial autonomy.

Her determination to safeguard her spatial autonomy is mirrored by Jonathan's insistence that she be armed, an understated decision only briefly mentioned by Mina towards the end of Chapter XXVI: "We have all got arms, even for me a large bore-revolver; Jonathan would not be happy unless I was armed like the rest" (Stoker 308-09). Though the debate on whether or not to arm Mina does not play out on the page, we can infer from the single sentence above that it happened at Jonathan's suggestion—or possibly at his insistence. The specific wording

she uses when she says he "would not be happy" unless she was armed indicates that he felt strongly about the matter, which in turn suggests circumstances that would let him make the warmth of his feelings known. For most of the novel, Jonathan's temper has been shown when he feels the others are making incautious, thoughtless or cowardly decisions, especially as they pertain to Mina or Dracula. He is especially enraged when Van Helsing says he intends to bring Mina to Transylvania: "Here Jonathan interrupted him hotly:-- 'Do you mean to say… that you would bring Mina (…) right into the jaws of his death-trap? Not for the world! Not for Heaven or Hell!" (Stoker 307). If any of the others had objected to Mina carrying a weapon, it seems likely that Jonathan would have protested, which might be the reason for Mina's choice of words when describing it.

The most important information given by Mina here, though, is simply that Jonathan wanted her to be armed. Rather than relying on the men to protect her, he wanted able to protect herself if needed. For modern readers, that desire is perfectly natural and understandable, but it is a striking contrast to the condescending and ultimately harmful protectionism she suffered under earlier in the book. Van Helsing has repeatedly insisted that she must be protected from danger and shielded from anything that might upset her emotions too deeply, for no reason other than that she is a woman (Stoker 207, 295). Jonathan, on the other hand, responds to her choosing to put herself in danger by ensuring that she has the means to defend herself at least against the wolves. Admittedly the choice to arm Mina is a minor detail, but Stoker chose to put it there and he chose to let it be at Jonathan's insistence. His concern for her safety appears not to be ideologically motivated at this point in the novel, but neither does it come across as patronizing.

His feelings in wanting to arm Mina are also poignant in that they mirror his own feelings while held captive in Castle Dracula. His foremost wish is that she not travel to Transylvania, just as he, in the beginning of the novel, primarily wished that he himself "were safe out of it, or… had never come" (Stoker 30). When it becomes evident that he cannot leave, he instead wishes he had "a gun or some lethal weapon" (Stoker 51). When he realizes that Mina cannot stay, he pre-emptively grants the wish that was never granted to him. Simple though the gesture may be, it speaks to an understanding of her as a fellow human being with desires not unlike his own. Finally, it is worth noting that he seems more than comfortable with her wielding a deadly—and undeniably somewhat phallic—weapon. Whereas the phallicized

women of *The Great God Pan* and *The Beetle*, and the vampire women elsewhere in the novel, inspire fear, Jonathan is entirely comfortable with Mina armed. Arming her does not wound his ego as a masculine protector. Instead, it ameliorates his concern for her as her husband. All told, his pragmatic insistence on her carrying a revolver indicates a healthy disregard for traditional gender roles which contradicts a reading of their relationship at the end of the novel as being heteropatriarchal.

4.3.1 New Women and marriage

Throughout the nineteenth century, there was a "tendency to categorize women in relation to marriageability" (Halberstam 51), and it was assumed that motherhood was a woman's "raison d'être" (Ramday 29). At the time of Stoker's writing, marriage was being debated in the public sphere. Female writers denounced "the sexual double standard and the many barriers that impeded women seeking education and employment, impelling them to contract marriages they would never have contemplated otherwise" (Winstead 315). Old forms of marriage were criticized as detrimental not only to women's autonomy, but by extension to the state of marriage itself as creating unhappy homes. The New Woman movement challenged existing forms of marriage, advocating for a marriage based on mutual affection, trust, and friendship: "Friendship is a recurring theme in New Woman discussions of marriage" (Winstead 320). The concept of friendship suggests an equality which was not necessarily a given in most 19th century marriages. Whereas a man who married a woman had the legal right to treat her more or less as he liked, a friendship between peers is dependent on mutual feelings of affection and a degree of respect.

All evidence points to the Harkers viewing each other as friends, in accordance with New Woman ideals of marriage. McWhir speculates that Jonathan's notes on train times reflect his "concern with punctuality" and that this might be why Mina "is so good at reciting railway timetables" (McWhir 31). The text does seem to corroborate this, although she does express that while she began doing this to help him, she "found it so useful" that she "always" studies the timetables now (Stoker 54), seemingly for her own sake as much as his. However, Jonathan also seems to keep her and her interests in mind when he is alone: "I shall enter here some of my notes", he says of his visit to the British Museum, "as they may refresh my memory when I talk over my travels with Mina" (Stoker 10). His journal becomes noticeably more detailed after he remarks on their purpose as a conversational aid. Similarly, he writes a

memorandum to himself—"I must ask the Count about these superstitions" (Stoker 14)—even though he does not seem to take any particular interest in the supernatural beyond what is necessary to understand his own experiences. Mina, on the other hand, immediately takes note of local legends: sightings of a "white lady", a type of ghost, in Whitby Abbey (Stoker 63) and the sound of bells from the bottom of the sea signaling lost ships, which she immediately asks Mr. Swales about, only to be disappointed when she discovers that he is "a very sceptical person" (64). Jonathan could be collecting local superstitions specifically to share them with his fiancée when he gets back because she takes an interest in myths, legends and ghost stories. If so, that demonstrates some attention to her likes and dislikes and a willingness to accommodate them, which points to a friendly relationship.

Mina's first letter to Lucy rather charmingly reveals that she and Jonathan sometimes write letters to one another in shorthand (Stoker 55). Shorthand is useful to both of them in the type of work they want to do, but that they write, essentially, coded letters to one another seems a playful application of a professional skill and could perhaps be read as a shared hobby. There is an interesting tendency between the two of them to share in their labor. While many scholars refer to the text of Dracula as Mina's work, the novel makes it quite clear that the two are working together. Mina tells Seward that "Jonathan and I have been working day and night…" (Stoker 197), and when Jonathan arrives they quickly get to work again "knitting together in chronological order every scrap of evidence they have" (199). The text is in fact a joint effort, although Mina is the one to begin it and she continues to type even when Jonathan is out pursuing other leads. The division of labor between them points to a degree of marital equality.

Several scenes indicate that they confide in one another. After Van Helsing's letter they sit up late talking about all that has happened (Stoker 168), and later scenes demonstrate that Jonathan prefers to be able to consult with Mina before making serious decisions (282). In addition to apparently having some interests in common, the Harkers divide work between them and often work together, and they seem to be in one another's confidence. Finally, there is evidently a great deal of affection between them. They each speak well of the other, and in their separate narratives they frequently think of one another. Jonathan thinks of her when he eats good food, when he learns interesting historical facts, and when he hears about local superstition. Whenever he fears for his life, he thinks of her and wishes her goodbye, as Lucy

later does with Arthur. On her side, she thinks about him often; first with hope for their future together, then with increasing worry as he fails to return. When he does turn up, she travels alone to Budapest to bring him back.

The mutual affection binding Jonathan and Mina together is quickly made apparent to the reader. Jonathan's journal entries frequently mention Mina and vice versa. They clearly trust one another. When Sister Agatha reassures her that Jonathan has not mentioned any other woman Mina is happy, but not remotely surprised (Stoker 99). She chooses to marry him despite his illness, which for a woman without any fortune of her own is significant, and she is by all accounts overjoyed to have him as her husband: "I do hope you will be always as happy as I am now", she writes to Lucy (Stoker 101). He, meanwhile, takes Mina's hand and calls it "the dearest thing in the world" which he would "go through all the past again to win" (Stoker 100). The pledge is sweet to Mina, but to the reader, who knows all Jonathan has gone through, it truly demonstrates the depth of his affection for her. Even in her article comparing the husband-wife relationships to the master-pet relationships in the novel, Chez admits that "…the text is clearly invested in telling a reciprocal love story…" (83). Winstead straightforwardly considers the Harkers a "fruitful" union, based on "respect and friendship", that might make the world more pleasant—precisely the sort of marriage for which the "New Women and their allies" advocated (Winstead 332). There are plenty of signs to indicate that Stoker intended for them represent an ideal married couple—not the ideal, necessarily, but at least one of many possible iterations thereof.

4.3.2 Gender-fluid relations

It is hardly groundbreaking to point out that the Harkers represent an ideal Victorian married couple, but it is important nevertheless, because the Harkers also represent an odd marriage in that they do not conform to Victorian gender norms relationally. I have discussed how both characters are gender non-conforming on their own, but those traits stand out all the more when they are brought together. When Jonathan becomes sick in Budapest, Mina travels across Europe on her own to bring him back. Whereas Jonathan's journal briefly mimicked the form and content of a Radcliffean heroine's travel narrative, her narrative never does. As far as narrative decisions go, it is appropriate that her narrative does not take on such a format here, because if anything she is playing the Radcliffean hero to his heroine. As discussed in

3.5, he is, if anything, the party being given away to a spouse by a father. Hawkins suggests to Mina, not to Jonathan, that they may as well marry in Budapest.

Mina becomes Jonathan's spouse, but also his caretaker. Her nurturing him reads as feminine to a modern audience, but illness was itself associated with femininity in the 19th century and in 19th century literature. In Wilkie Collins's *A Woman In White* (1860), protagonist Walter Hartright says of an invalid man that he had "a frail… look – something singularly and unpleasantly delicate in its association with a man", but which would be "natural and appropriate if it had been transferred to the personal appearance of a woman" (Collins 39). Illness was associated with physical and mental frailty, traditionally the domains of women. While "affect and sympathy" were also considered feminine (Demirhan 84), the role of protector was associated with manliness. When Mina types out Jonathan's journal to be "ready for other eyes if required", one of her motives is that she might be able to shield Jonathan from emotional upset: "…then, perhaps… I can speak for him and never let him be troubled or worried with it at all" (Stoker 161). The language she uses here is the language of Victorian paternal protectionism. Her protective instinct and the feminizing effects of Jonathan's illness code her as the masculine party to his convalescent feminine weakness.

In 3.4, I discussed Stoker's allusion to Bürger's Gothic ballad *Lenore*, which I argued creates a direct association between Jonathan and the heroine through plot similarities. Another interesting point which is better worth raising here is Lenore's fiancé. Though William A. Taylor's translation and most subsequent English translations have Lenore wondering if her William is "faithless" or dead (Rossetti p. 2, line 2), they are in fact anglicizing his name. At the time, anglicizing names was not uncommon: Rossetti prefaces his translation by giving his reasons for not translating Lenore's name into "Leonora" or "Leonor" (p. 1). The original German ballad has Lenore pining for her *Wilhelm* (Krueck 6). Previously, I claimed that Stoker's use of the ballad reads as intentional because its plot essentially foreshadows Jonathan's frightening drive to the castle and the true identity of the driver. The quote found in *Dracula*—"Denn die Todten reiten schnell"—is provided in German[9] (Stoker 17),

[9] Stoker does misquote *Lenore* slightly—the refrain only reads "Die Todten reiten schnell", and to my knowledge no variation adds "Denn". However, he also misquotes a line from *Hamlet* (Stoker 41), which he knew very well thanks to Irving, so I would not dismiss his familiarity with *Lenore* on that account.

suggesting familiarity with the material. Stoker keeps Lenore's name in its original German form, like Rossetti and unlike William A. Taylor, making it plausible that Stoker named Jonathan's fiancée *Wilhelmina* (Stoker 99) with the ballad's Wilhelm in mind.

Such a move would foreshadow Mina's slow turning into a vampire in the second half of the novel as well as her curious psychic connection to Dracula. The Wilhelm of the ballad functions as his own double in that the false Wilhelm initially appears to be the real Wilhelm, and his glamour only fades as the real Wilhelm comes into view. Dracula clearly plays the role of Wilhelm the impostor, but Mina's full name links her to Wilhelm as well, thus creating a connection between them. More importantly, the allusion through naming positions Mina as the masculine half of the relationship. Re-gendering the lovers from the Gothic ballad draws attention to the artifice of traditional gender roles and suggests that gender could be more mutable. If a man can convincingly play the imperiled heroine and a woman can portray the heroine's faraway lover, as they do, then gender is not the stable construct the Victorians imagined.

Mina's eagerness to marry Jonathan hints at an active role in their dynamic, the traditionally masculine role of the lover in a lover/beloved dynamic. When they are married in Budapest, Mina writes to Lucy about her joy, revealing that she asked for the ceremony herself and expressing profound excitement about being married: "…oh, Lucy, it was the first time he took his wife's hand", she says, along with "…oh, Lucy, it is the first time I have written the words 'my husband'…" (Stoker 100). In that sentence alone, she refers to Jonathan as "my husband" three times. When she asserts that this is the first time she has written those words she, unusually, makes a mistake. On the 19th of August, in her excitement to know that Jonathan is alive and to have been essentially given permission by Mr. Hawkins to marry him, she refers to her then-betrothed as "Jonathan, my husband" (Stoker 94). They were not married then, nor had she broached the possibility of marrying in Budapest with Jonathan. Her love takes on a possessive undertone as she repeatedly refers to him as "my husband" or, later, "my Jonathan" (Stoker 323).

Jonathan's narration rarely does the same to her, but it is nonetheless evident that he adores Mina to the point of blasphemy. When Van Helsing first expresses his admiration of Mina to Jonathan, he notes that "I would listen to him go on praising Mina for a day, so I simply

nodded and stood silent" (Stoker 168). To him, she is "all perfection" (270), and nothing could induce him to be afraid of her nor permit them to be separated—not even the judgment of God. Jonathan valuing his relationship with Mina over his religious beliefs becomes a recurring motif in the latter part of the novel. When she is attacked and expresses the belief that she has become "unclean" and "must touch him or kiss him no more", since she is "now his worst enemy… whom he may have most cause to fear", he responds by holding her tighter and declaring her words "nonsense" (Stoker 248-49). While he has been personally victimized by Dracula, it is the Count's attack on his wife that makes him vengeful. When Mina's telegram reveals that the Count is heading towards Carfax Abbey, Jonathan breaks the nervous silence by thanking God that "we shall soon meet", and when Van Helsing urges moderation, Jonathan bites back by saying he would sell his soul to "wipe out this brute from the face of creation" (Stoker 265). When Dracula appears, Jonathan physically attacks him and tries to climb out a window to pursue him when he flees (Stoker 267), which aptly demonstrates his desire for violent retribution if not his skill in pursuing it.

The only power capable of reliably soothing his anger is his wife's desire for mercy. When she pleads for his pity, he readily gives it, flinging himself "on his knees beside her" and embracing her (Stoker 269). Later, he owns that he loves her "a thousand times more for her sweet pity of last night" (Stoker 270). Still, it is implied that her persuasion fails when she asks the group, and Jonathan in particular, to destroy her if she ever truly becomes a vampire. At her request Jonathan reads her the burial service, but unlike all the other men, he never verbally assents to killing her. Given that he has earlier determined that if she becomes a vampire "she shall not go into that unknown and terrible land alone" (Stoker 259), his silence is significant. It implies that he still holds the belief that a life with her, even as a vampire, even under Dracula's power—a power which he has more reason than most to fear—is still preferable to one without her.

The section wherein Jonathan determines to become a vampire with Mina if need be is striking from a religious perspective. He theorizes that the conviction he feels and the feelings underlying them must be the reason vampires have been able to multiply, calling them the "recruiting sergeant for their ghastly ranks" (Stoker 260). While crucifixes and communion wafers repel vampires, they must rest in sacred earth. The feelings that would drive Jonathan to damn himself, his feelings for Mina, he refers to as "the holiest love" (Stoker 259-260). In

a novel steeped in religious themes, that juxtaposition weighs heavily. Particularly interesting is the paradox inherent in calling the love that would, per the novel, sever his attachment to the Christian God the holiest love. Jonathan here suggests that the holiest love is not the love of God, but rather a human love strong enough that the lover would willingly become unholy, if that is what love requires of him. If God rejects Mina, Jonathan will reject God, and that is sacred to him. While the parallel may be unintentional, Jonathan's feelings resonate with queer experiences of romantic love.

The Harkers, separately and as a couple, model a non-conformity which stands in contrast to the non-conformity displayed by the vampire characters in the novel. Where the female vampires are aggressive and violent, Mina's masculine traits greatly benefit herself and the other characters. The vampires' desire for the Harkers is sinister, but their desire for one another is presented as beautiful and touching. As a couple, they each protect and care for the other as needed. When Jonathan is sick, Mina cares for him; when Mina is attacked, Jonathan cares for her. The reciprocity of their marriage aligns with New Woman views of what marriage should be, but moreover it demonstrates that they care more about each other's well-being than societal norms. It would be easy to say that they have an almost gender-fluid relationship, where each party vacillates between masculine and feminine according to their own and their partner's needs at any given moment, but it may be more accurate to say that they inhabit different roles within their marriage according to their needs regardless of societal gender expectations. The Harkers seem to simply disregard gender within the confines of their romantic relationship, at least to the extent that any married couple at the heart of the British Empire in the late 19th century possibly could disregard gender.

4.4 Chapter conclusion

Stoker draws explicit connections between Mina's masculinity, Jonathan's love for her, and the divine. Throughout the novel, she consistently performs gender in ways that undermine a purely feminine identification. Her intelligence, which is narratively described as and by Victorian standards assumed to be a masculine trait, enables the group to hunt down and thus defeat Count Dracula. Her industry is the primary driving factor behind the creation of the text *Dracula*, and at every turn the narrative supports her desire for agency. Her ability to rationally sit down and think rather than despair marks her as extraordinary. In many ways, Mina could be considered Dracula's true nemesis: he attempts to destroy or appropriate

"bod[ies] of knowledge" (Straight 391), but she repeatedly foils his attempts. When he tries to destroy their documents, he is foiled by her having written the narrative in triplicate. While their original documents are lost, their story is safe because of her foresight and caution. When he later attempts to use Mina herself to spy on the group, she turns his own powers back on him, "ironically… [turning him into] a document that Mina and Van Helsing decipher" (Straight 391). He destroys knowledge; she creates, compiles, collates, and copies it for distribution.

Beyond her intelligence, the text also repeatedly refers to her as being "brave". In the penultimate sentence of the narrative her bravery and gallantry are once again brought up, a choice made yet more striking because of how closely it mirrors the descriptions given of Quincey Morris immediately beforehand (Stoker 327, 326). Of course, the text also highlights her traditionally feminine "sweetness and loving care" (Stoker 327), but she is not reduced to them. In fact, the narrative seems to suggest that reducing her to these qualities is an immature reading. Van Helsing says that her infant son Quincey Jr. already knows her maternal qualities, but that someday, he will know "what a brave and gallant his mother is" (Stoker 327). While Mina is sweet and loving, understanding her only through her traditionally feminine qualities would be to childishly overlook a large part of what makes her admirable. Her masculine qualities, her bravery and gallantry and presumably also her intelligence, are important to understanding her as a whole character. Van Helsing comments that Quincey Jr. will also "later" understand how beloved she was and how much was dared "for her sake" (Stoker 327). His final addition here is notable in that it completes a set of traits which he appears to link together. Mina is sweet and loving (by Victorian standards feminine), she is brave and gallant (by Victorian standards masculine), and she is deeply loved. Contextually, then, the reader is led to understand that the combination of traits that she embodies are valued and appreciated by those around her.

In addition to being admirable, there is a direct link made between Mina's transgressively masculine traits and the divine which points to a broader theme of approved transgression in *Dracula*. Van Helsing believes her "man's brain" to be something the "Good God fashioned… for a purpose" (Stoker 207), and like the other holy implements wielded by the heroes, Mina's intelligence proves to be a powerful weapon against Dracula and the evil he represents. Jonathan's love for Mina is similarly described in ways that echo religious

language. He falls to his knees before her when her pity touches him, kneeling as one would in front of an altar. The link made here between their love and religion is further amplified when the others leave the room, "leaving the two loving hearts alone with their God" (Stoker 269). When Jonathan decides that he would follow her into vampirism, a state which according to Seward leaves even Mina "with all her goodness and purity and faith… outcast from God" (Stoker 268), he is explicitly choosing Mina over God. That he chooses to call this affection "the holiest love" (Stoker 260) draws attention to the depth of his feelings for her, but it also functions to bring the religious paradox of the vampires' "hideous bodies" only being able to "rest in sacred earth" (Stoker 259-260) into his discussion of love. What Jonathan is suggesting is that the love that exists between humans can be more sacred than the love God has for humanity and vice versa, and furthermore he is saying that his love for Mina falls into that category. Just as the masculine traits that many Victorians considered unnatural in women are Godly in Mina, a love that would leave them both outcast from God is paradoxically proven holy.

The experience Jonathan alludes to here, that of having to choose between being with the person he loves and being in God's grace, is highly resonant with the lived experience of many queer people throughout history. In many communities, it resonates still. In discussing possible disruptions of the symbolic law, Butler argues that agency may be found in "the possibilities opened up in and by that constrained appropriation of the regulatory law" (*BTM* xxi). The Harkers aptly demonstrate how that can be. Jonathan and Mina's relationship is a queering of heterosexual marriage insofar as they perform outside their prescribed sex roles, prioritizing one another's actual needs over social norms and expectations. They counter and subvert the relationship dynamics usually associated with marriage at the time. He relies on her, she protects him, and when necessary, they swap roles. Neither of their genders would be considered successful iterations under the symbolic law of the heterosexual matrix, but by the end of the novel, nobody seems to mind.

What makes their relationship extraordinary is that it is depicted as good. On a narrative level, Jonathan's marrying Mina occurs around the same time that he is promoted. Kuzmanovic notes this, going so far as to argue that the marriage is "more… a condition of rapid professional success than a fulfilled sexual union" (420). While he is right to spot this correlation, I interpret the outcome differently. In understanding *Dracula* through the lens of

the heroine-led Radcliffean Gothic, Jonathan can be read as an iteration of the heroine. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and most other heroine-led Gothic romances, the heroine's reward for surviving her trials are a good marriage, inherited wealth, and in time a family—"for an orphan, significant gains" (Botting 193). Upon escaping the castle, Jonathan is in quick order awarded two of these, with only the establishment of a traditional family with children being delayed until the end. As such, his marriage to Mina is narratively equated with the reward traditionally conferred on the virtuous heroine at the end of a typical heroine-led Gothic novel.

Notably, all these rewards are conferred equally upon Mina and Jonathan alike. When Mr. Hawkins decides to leave them all his wealth, he makes a telling speech: "My dears… may every blessing attend you both. I know you both from children… Now I want you to make your home here with me… in my will I have left you everything" (Stoker 140). His language, especially his repetition of you both, takes care to emphasize that his fatherly affection is not restricted to Jonathan. As such, although legally Jonathan would own all the financial assets shared between them, it is evident that he is not intended to be the sole recipient of Mr. Hawkins's inheritance. Stoker makes use of Gothic language and coding throughout the novel. With that in mind, it makes sense to read the ending as an endorsement of Jonathan, Mina, and the way they conduct their marriage.

While they have decidedly transgressed gender norms, both individually and as a couple, there can be no doubt that they are narratively represented as good, virtuous people who deserve the admiration readily bestowed upon them by their friends. That they are both happy in the novel's epilogue speaks to individual virtue. That they are specifically happily married strongly indicates that their relationship is meant to be read in a positive light. Though there are many representations of gender and sexual transgression in the novel that are monstrous, the transgressions represented by the Harkers are instead tacitly endorsed by the narrative. The feminized, emotional man and the woman with the man's brain come together to form a marriage wherein they largely disregard gender roles, and the narrative unambiguously presents that union as good.

5 Conclusion

My thesis began as an examination of Jonathan Harker as rearticulating the archetypal Gothic heroine and has evolved into an examination of the Harkers as representing a virtuous queerness. In my first chapter, I explored how Jonathan's travel narrative, his captivity, the threats facing him and the language with which he expresses his fear all echo the terrorized Radcliffean heroine. Using Emily St. Aubert from Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* as my primary point of comparison, I analyzed Jonathan's captivity as analogous to hers. Both are made to travel to a distant country at someone else's command, and their destinations are desolate castles where they face terrors that seem supernatural. Their captors, Dracula and Montoni, are the Gothic villains of the story, both older men with sinister motives who do not take well to being disobeyed. While there, Emily and Jonathan experience what are clearly coded as near-rape scenes; Emily when Count Morano tries to abduct her from her bedroom, Jonathan when the three vampire women find him sleeping and try to drink his blood. Both are rescued by their respective villain, enraged that his authority has been thus undermined. While their plots diverge greatly after their escape, both marry the person they had been engaged to prior to their torments, inherit property, and start families of their own.

I chose to compare Jonathan specifically to Emily St. Aubert because she is one of the better-known Radcliffean heroines, and because her captivity in Udolpho is considered one of the most archetypal examples of Gothic entrapment. Finding that her story for a time remarkably resembles Jonathan's, I concluded that he can indeed be read as a Radcliffean heroine while he is Dracula's prisoner. His circumstances are inherently feminizing, per Smith's work on masculine spatial embodiment (129), but as Kuzmanovic points out Jonathan also articulates his situation "as analogous to that of an imprisoned and endangered heroine" and compromises his masculinity further through his own actions (415). Stoker further cements the link between Jonathan and the imperiled heroine through literary allusions to figures like Scheherazade and Burger's Lenore, both made at a time when their situation is obviously analogous to Jonathan's.

All in all, Stoker seems to be deliberately imbuing Jonathan's narrative with Gothic formulaic repetitions that characterize him as feminine. Allen W. Grove has commented on similar uses of Gothic coding before, which has been used to discuss both sexual violence and queerness

without having to name the potentially controversial topic to which the author alludes. In *Dracula*, Gothic coding allows Stoker to imply a great degree of gender transgression in one of his protagonists without having to name it. By having his first narrator be a male Gothic heroine, which I argue constitutes a Butlerian dissonant performance (*GT* 187), Stoker opens the possibility of future gender transgression. As the story progresses Jonathan's 18th century heroine mannerisms fall to the wayside, but the context of *fin de siècle* London still highlights the contextual femininity of his sensitive nature. His and Mina's narration imply that he has been somewhat gender non-conforming since before he met Dracula, making it plausible that his femininity does not die when his knife strikes true.

Having established the Gothic coding at play in Jonathan's characterization, my second chapter focuses on Mina as a character and the Harkers as a couple. While many readings emphasize the stabilizing influence of the family-centered epilogue and Mina's return to the domestic sphere, I have argued that Mina's role is more complicated. While her feminine virtues are greatly admired in the novel, masculine virtues such as intellect and rationality are also ascribed to her. Other late Victorian Gothic works like Marsh's *The Beetle* express great anxiety around female masculinity and goes to great lengths to punish women who aspire to or embody masculinity, but *Dracula* rather exalts Mina's masculine traits. On several occasions, Stoker uses language that suggests her masculine intellect is holy, that it is a gift from God. Her intelligence and rationality are narratively presented as instrumental in the Crew of Light's pursuit of the Count, an obvious case of good versus evil, which connects nicely with the idea that they are holy.

Finally, I argue that Jonathan and Mina's relationship, while heterosexual, cannot be said to represent conservative heteronormativity. While there is a section of the novel where Mina is excluded from the hunt because the group assume her womanhood makes her too frail to participate, they are narratively framed as being in the wrong and punished for it. Jonathan agrees to the scheme, but Stoker clearly establishes that it is out of character for him. In many ways, their marriage subverts heteronormative gender roles. Mina travels to Budapest to bring her betrothed home and receives permission from his father figure to marry him while he is there, which figures her as the romantic hero to his heroine. For a time she is the stronger part in the marriage, completely subverting heteronormative gender roles, and instances like Jonathan taking her arm provide clues that their unusual dynamic by far precedes Jonathan's

illness. Though she takes on a weaker role when attacked by Dracula, their dynamic is not permanently switched to a heteronormative one. She continues to be the more rational and intellectual half of the marriage, which he greatly admires her for. Of the two she is also more prone to using possessive language, again inverting traditional heteronormative relationship dynamics.

Towards the very end of the novel, Mina's relative masculinity continues to be subtly supported in the narrative. During the last battle with Dracula, she is equipped with a firearm at Jonathan's insistence. I find this to be a significant detail, because the act of arming Mina subtly acknowledges that the men may not be able to protect her. Implicitly, Jonathan has learned from past mistakes not to depend on patriarchal Victorian protectionism, and he would rather empower Mina to protect herself if necessary. Many point to the epilogue as a typical Gothic ending wherein, with the disruptive influence of the monsters gone, domestic heteropatriarchy is restored. While many Gothic novels do indeed follow such a formula, a few factors complicate the foreclosure of ambiguities in *Dracula*. The vampires do represent the most overt form of gender transgression, with their mouths being anatomically ambiguous organs, but they are not the only disruptive influences. Mina and Jonathan both display gender non-conforming traits and habits, and they are very much alive. The epilogue very nearly ends on a description of Mina as being both sweet and gentle—traits associated primarily with Lucy, secondarily with Jonathan—as well as brave and gallant, traits associated primarily with the unambiguously manly Quincey Morris. By highlighting Mina's eclectic collection of gendered virtues, the novel indicates the continued presence of gender transgression in the text. Gender non-conformity could be said to have undergone a domestication, but it certainly has not been excised.

By attempting to read *Dracula* in a holistic manner while taking into account the context of Victorian era Britain, Gothic tradition stemming back to the 18th century and Stoker's own life, disparate elements come together to suggest Stoker encoded a virtuous form of queerness into the text. Immediately establishing Jonathan Harker as a covert male iteration of a female stock character leads an attentive, experienced reader to look for other traces of gender non-conformity in the text, where it will be found. Other moments of male characters experiencing stereotypically female hysteria become apparent through this lens. Mina's masculine traits and her occasionally assumed masculine role in dealing with Jonathan stand out, as do

Jonathan's other feminine traits post-escape. While much queer analysis has focused on the role of the vampires, the suggestively queer traits of the heroes have only recently begun to emerge in scholarly criticism. The hysteric breakdowns on the male characters are often mentioned, and Jonathan's similarity to Gothic literary heroines has seen some limited analysis. I have attempted to explore that topic in more depth and to connect it with what I see as *Dracula*'s truly extraordinary feat: finding a way for some of the Gothic's nigh-inherent queerness to survive into the epilogue.

If the traditional Gothic ending relies on the expulsion of otherness, Stoker's use of Gothic coding presents an alternative. Jonathan and Mina's marriage seems conventional, in that it is Victorian English, middle-class, white, and strictly speaking heterosexual. Contextually, however, the way they relate to one another in combination with their individual gender non-conformity still reads as queer. Butler might term it a heterosexual relation built on "structures of psychic homosexuality" (*GT* 165). They argue that if subversion of the "Law", e.g. the heterosexual matrix, is possible, "it will be a subversion from within the terms of the law, through the possibilities that emerge when the law turns against itself and spawns unexpected permutations of itself" (*GT* 127). By positioning them at the heart of Victorian middle-class society, Stoker suggests that the otherness could be in our midst. Jonathan and Mina present versions of gender non-conformity which can be wielded against evil, and that association leads naturally to interpreting their gender non-conformity as good, virtuous, or holy. Implicitly, their role in the narrative suggests that virtuous queerness exists; that queerness is not inherently unclean, evil, or corrupting.

As most theses do, mine has its limitations. One of them comes down to theory. I was unable to get my hands on Eve Sedgwick's *Between Men* (1985) in time to do it justice, but a deeper analysis of the relationship between Jonathan and Dracula could have made good use of her theory of homosocial relationships in the 19th century. Such a study could likely also make better use than I have of Stoker's own propensity towards intense homosocial relationships with older men. I had to prioritize differently. Likewise, while I have alluded to the failed masculinity of the other men in the Crew of Light in my thesis, I unfortunately had to deprioritize analyzing their characters. Quincey Morris could have made a particularly interesting object of study as the most idealized form of Western masculinity in the story, in

spite of—or perhaps because of—the almost complete absence of his own voice in the text. The *Westminster Gazette* gets to speak for itself more than Quincey.

Upon a close reading, several instances seemed to suggest the presence a taboo desire in *Dracula* which has barely seen analysis at all, namely the unspoken desire of men *to be desired*. Demetrakopoulos touches on this when she interprets "the exchange of conventional sex roles" in the novel as "suggest[ing] the weariness that Victorians felt towards pure, passive, decarnalized females versus bestial, aggressive males" (Demetrakopoulos 106), but I suspect there is more to be unearthed here. Jonathan Harker is intensely desired by the vampires, but that very desire marks them as monstrous. Through demonizing all the erotic interactions between Englishmen and vampires, the fantasy of being desired is simultaneously invoked and disavowed. Yet there are strands of that desire tenuously visible in Mina's love for Jonathan. Curiously, while they are present from her first written entry they noticeably intensify towards the end of the novel. Her increased possessiveness of her husband seems correlated with her slow corruption into becoming a vampire. The politics of desiring men, and of men wanting to be desired, in 19th century Gothic could make for an interesting future study, though it unfortunately fell outside the scope of this thesis.

Bram Stoker is long dead, and even when he was alive, he would have been unlikely to offer clarifying statements on the true meaning of his texts. As scholars, we are forced to look elsewhere if we want to understand *Dracula*. To me, the answer came in the form of Gadamer, who says that "every interpretation must begin somewhere and seeks to supersede the one-sidedness which that inevitably produces" (487). His hermeneutics are an exercise in improving and in continually forgiving one's former self, who was naturally mistaken about many things. He argues that to understand a text we must let ourselves be addressed by it, entering into a dialogue with it and assuming it has something to tell us. It requires the reader to assume that the text has a meaning, that it is the answer to a question they do not yet understand. "We must attempt to reconstruct the question to which the traditionary text is the answer" (Gadamer 382). That is what I have attempted to do. To me, the question posed by *Dracula*, hidden behind coding and expectations and plausible deniability, is whether a woman like Mina or a man like Jonathan may be permitted to live after all.

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