# Surviving The End

**A study of encounters with post-apocalyptic evil and survival strategies in Matheson's *I am Legend*, McCarthy's *The Road,* and Kirkman's *The Walking Dead: Compendium One***

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**“Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look into an abyss, the abyss looks back into you”**

**--Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil**

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# Abstract

In this thesis the aim is to explore the dichotomy/duality of man in three post-apocalyptic texts and discuss how and why survivors react to the post-apocalyptic setting. Since a majority of post-apocalyptic fictional texts focus on the destruction of the world set to contemporary issues, this thesis will explore how the post-apocalyptic setting will force survivors into making difficult survival choices and discuss how the survivors cope with living in a devastated place. Additionally, the thesis will discuss notions of humanity, civility and evil in the selected texts and why these are important. The selected primary sources for this thesis are Richard Matheson's *I am Legend* (1954), Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) and Robert Kirkman's *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* (2009).

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# 1.0 Introduction

An apocalyptic event is when a giant-scale catastrophe occurs in the world that kills off most life, and on some occasions leveling cities and buildings turning the world into a lifeless wasteland void of most humans and animals. Post-apocalyptic fictions deal with survivors of the apocalypse, depicting how they cope with living in the new wasteland. This thesis is a study of three fictional post-apocalyptical texts. These texts are Matheson's *I am Legend* (1954), McCarthy's *The Road* (2004), and Kirkman's comic book/graphic novel *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* (2009). The earliest of these texts is set in the 1950's, and presents a protagonist determined to fix the post-apocalyptic situation. The two other texts are both from the 21st century and depict different ways of dealing with the post-apocalyptic scenario. Based on the apocalyptic event the post-apocalypse can spawn many new dangerous elements. A viral pandemic can create zombies, vampires, or other dangerous mutations. The post-nuclear war society may be threatened by toxic gases, acid rain, fallout, radiation damage and generally hazardous living conditions. The post-apocalyptic wasteland is a dangerous place to be, but do the survivors make this place better or worse?

This thesis aims to explore the dichotomy/duality of man in three post-apocalyptic texts and discuss how and why survivors react to the post-apocalyptic setting. This is of great significance to post-apocalyptic fiction as it revolves around a major theme of the genre: survival (strategies). Additionally, by visiting scenes from each text, this thesis will seek information concerning the importance of humanity and morality when discussing the notion of evil. Each scene will be compared to discover the difference in survival, groups versus sole survivor. The thesis will also sometimes use examples from other media to show similarities and further strengthen points made. Certain media, for example video games, allow the 'experiencer' to gain control of the narrative and apply their own moral code to the scenario; in a way enter the post-apocalyptic wasteland.

### *1.1 Apocalyptic Interest*

My interest in the genre started early when I first questioned the lawless nature of the fictional post-apocalyptic world. The post-apocalyptic wasteland is more or less without police and any governing body, and if they are still present they are hidden away from harm. In Kirkman's comic book/graphic novel *The Walking Dead* (2010) some survivors believe that the government will come and rescue everybody. Cillian Murphy's portrayal of protagonist 'Jim' in the motion picture "28 Days Later" (2002) by Danny Boyle says it best when prompted that there is no government: "What do you mean there's no government? There's always a government, they're in a bunker or a plane somewhere"[1].

When a nuclear bomb destroys most of the world, cities, civilizations and people, the survivors are left with the responsibility to rebuild and re-establish society. This is also a good opportunity for the lawless to take advantage of the situation. The Fallout video game-series proves that re-establishing a functioning civilization is not an easy task and plenty of smaller settlements appear to be of dystopian nature. These settlements are mostly established by power-hungry survivors who just want to be addressed as king or emperor: they have no idea how to properly run the village/settlement. These video games allow the player to step outside the borders of the traditional good-guy bad-guy norms and assume or create a role of your choosing. Dystopias are often created in the aftermath of an apocalyptic event[2].This means that society has started to develop and some kind of civilization is taking form. The dystopian state offers a more developed and less primordial world than that of the new born post-apocalyptic world; still there are signs of a past catastrophe, oppression and misery. Woodbury from *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* can possibly considered of dystopian origin.

Collectively the post-apocalyptic settings we are introduced to do not only consist of heroes keen to help rebuild society; there are also the criminals of the wasteland. These criminals have many aliases depending on the fiction (raiders, reavers, bandits, psychos etc.), and made me aware of the question of survival ethics: terms that need to be discussed in a post-apocalyptic setting. This

[1] www.imdb.com – "28 Days later" memorable quotes
[2] Turlington, S. - http://emptyearth.wordpress.com/2010/12/14/apocalypse-vs-dystopia-some-definitions/

thesis will be using the term 'bandit' for this class of survivors. Another interesting phenomenon in the post-apocalyptic setting is that it often adds a new element of threat or enemy to the remaining human population. In the event of a zombie apocalypse the new threat is the zombie, while in nuclear devastations the new threat could be mutated creatures or a toxic environment. We find this new element in all of the selected texts for this thesis: *I am legend* features vampire creatures, *The Walking Dead* zombies, and *The Road* emphasizes the very interesting human to human relationship and evil within.

### *1.2 Science Fiction and the Post-Apocalyptic Genre*

Post-apocalyptic fiction is not a separate literary genre; it is a sub-genre of science fiction. Science fiction is a genre where plausible futures of man have been discovered and made believable to the reader by the author, either by emphasizing on technical detail and scientific accuracy (hard Sci-Fi), or social sciences (soft Sci-Fi)[3]. The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'science fiction' as "imaginative fiction based on postulated scientific discoveries or spectacular environmental changes, frequently set in the future or on other planets and involving space or time travel"[4]. The genre has been very popular in literature and more recently also in other mediums such as films, comics and lately; videogames.

The genre of science fiction is often associated with the stereotypical flying spaceships, aliens, laser weaponry and distant planets. In reality, the genre deals with many 'more plausible' fictions that alter the science already known to man then presenting e.g. a serum to wake the dead, paranormal abilities, and visiting unknown lands. Early literary science fiction novels include Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or; the Modern Prometheus* (1818), and *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) by Jonathan Swift. Among the earliest of *post-apocalyptic* fiction we find Mary Shelley's *The Last Man* (1826), and Jean-Baptiste Cousin de Grainville's *Le Dernier Homme* (1805)[5].

[3] Bould, M. and Vint, S. 74-76:2011
[4] Retrieved from; http://www.oed.com – "science fiction" (11.12.12)
[5] Bould, M. and Vint, S. 30:2011

Post-apocalyptic fiction tends to have a somewhat gloomier outcome than science fiction texts. It focuses on the aftermath of the world when it has been destroyed by a major catastrophe. According to the Oxford English Dictionary website the apocalypse is: "A disaster resulting in drastic, irreversible damage to human society or the environment, especially on a global scale; a cataclysm. Also in weakened use"[6]. The OED also states that the term refers to the events described by St. John, the second coming of Christ and ultimate destruction of the world.

In general, post-apocalyptic fiction often describes an individual, group or society surviving in the ruins of the old world after a final disaster has destroyed the world. Since society has been destroyed survival is now about satisfying the primary needs (food, water, oxygen) as well as avoiding dangerous situations with hostile survivors and/or with the new threats. There are survivors living in various pockets around the fictional world/setting and the typical post-apocalyptic fiction focuses on how they are coping with the aftermath of the apocalypse.

After World War II the sub-genre gained popularity when the threat of global destruction entered the public consciousness. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had shown the devastating effect of nuclear weaponry, the Cold War made the population aware and afraid of a possible nuclear war, and the post-apocalyptic fiction written at the time reflect this type of awareness by presenting how the world possibly *could* turn out. Often post-apocalyptic writing/fiction is created with a purpose, either as a contemporary social comment or a warning against a possible future for our world. Many fictions from this era were concerned with the devastating effect of the nuclear bomb. This in turn spawned many science fiction films, most notably "Godzilla" (Honda, 1954). The aftermath of the nuclear destruction led to the fictional post-apocalyptic setting where people are fighting to survive harsh conditions to stay alive in the 'new world'. By leveling all industrial and technological constructions (water pumps, electrical plants etc.) the luxury of tap water and electricity vanishes. Thus, in order to survive, people have to leave their homes in search for food and water.

To exemplify the above, in "Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior"(Miller, 1981) the setting is a gritty and hostile post-apocalyptic world, and "Mad Max" experiences the wasteland's negative

[6] Retrieved from; http://www.oed.com – "apocalypse" (23.08.12)

aspects as he scavenges for supplies and literally fights to survive in a lawless world. In "The Book of Eli" (Albert Hughes/Allen Hughes, 2010) we follow Eli on a journey west through a devastated USA, which was destroyed by an event only called "the flash", possibly referring to nuclear bombs that scorched the sky. Dealing with the lack of water and food, bandits roaming the wasteland and the dangerous environment "The Book of Eli" shows that survival in the post-apocalyptic world is a key element to the genre. It illustrates, for instance, how precious everyday commodities, like water, have become.

Other real-life apocalyptic events have also contributed to further powering this genre and giving it such popularity we see today. An example of a pandemic event is Atwood's novel *Oryx and Crake* (2003); here a man-made virus is created to kill all humans and reset the technology of the world. Only the protagonist "Snowman" is left alive along with genetically modified hybrids. Then we have Doris Lessing's novel *Mara and Dann* (1999) which is an example of an ecological catastrophe where a new ice age has engulfed Yerrup (Europe). Mara and Dann travel the continent of Ifrik northwards away from the draught and harsh climate in an adventure to discover who they really are. In contrast, John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids* (1951) has been coined "cozy catastrophe" by Brian Aldiss in his book *Billion Year Spree: The True History of Science Fiction* (1973). This is because the remaining population is able to enjoy a comfortable existence even though society has been destroyed.

Finally, we have the technological apocalypse which is addressed in such novels as *Computer One* (Collins, 1993). This novel predicts a network of machines that label the humans as a threat. Similarly, the Terminator movie-series revolves around a future-predicted nuclear war and the rise of machines. The humans research and discover A.I (artificial intelligence, a machine/computer behaving and learning like a human) only to doom themselves. The future rebels send back a candidate to stop the invention of A.I and stop the nuclear devastation from ever happening, but this is made difficult when the machines also send someone back to stop the rebel. With "Wasteland" (Interplay Productions, 1988) video games were introduced to the post-apocalyptic genre. A rogue A.I. has caused a nuclear war between USA and the USSR, and the game follows the survivors as they attempt to survive and stop the A.I. The reason why post-apocalyptic fiction is so popular, can possible be answered by the vastness of the genre. Video

games allow people to experience and interact with the post-apocalypse, while movies display the destruction and desolation of a once bustling place/city.

### *1.3 Apocalyptic Videogames and other media*

The popularity and sophistication of videogames have grown significantly since the simplistic days of "Super Mario Bros." (Nintendo/Miyamoto, 1985) and "Pong" (Atari, 1972). The video game industry is a multi-million dollar business with a vast number of employees and consumers worldwide. In the early days of videogames, the games were usually created by a small team, and sometimes even by only one person. Today there are story developers, writers, 3D designers, sound engineers, motion-capture technology and hired professional actors, music composers, programmers, meaning hundreds of people come together to create not only a game, but an interactive experience. There are still games being produced by small teams though. These games are called *indie* games.

The video game is a fairly recent phenomenon. Like a motion picture or a novel the video game tells a story: it has a plot and narration. The special quality of this medium is that it allows the players to interact, be a part of and maybe even create the narrative based on choices of their own. Some videogames feature multiple endings to the narrative depending on the choices made by the player. To exemplify the above: the 2010-Playstation 3 game "Heavy Rain" (Quantic Dream) calls itself an interactive drama as the choices made by the experiencer/player always have an impact on the scenario.

One cannot talk about videogames and post-apocalyptic settings without mentioning the Fallout-series. The Fallout-series is one of the best known names when it comes to post-apocalyptic video games, incorporating many references to science fiction and 'pulp' entertainment of the mid 1900's and with a retro-futuristic 'feel' to it. 'Fallout' is a term that is used to explain the radioactive aftermath of a nuclear explosion. The name "Fallout" is a direct link to the aftermath of nuclear explosions when radioactive refuse falls back to earth. The name of the phenomenon derives from the fact that it "falls out" of the sky. The effect of fallout is high radiation levels

which can cause illness, death and other long term issues such as drastic mutation (e.g. to offspring). A lot of these issues are witnessed by the player in the game. These games grant the player the opportunity to create their own *avatar*/character within the game, choose qualities, and then explore the world using the avatar; almost like putting yourself into the game-world. The game grants incredible flexibility when creating a character as choices you make will affect how you "narrate" the game. To exemplify the above; if you create a character with very low intelligence, your avatar will barely be able to speak and will easily be out-smarted by other characters in the world. There will be tools, equipment and weapons that your avatar is too dumb to use. This means you have to find other ways to reach your goal.

The setting of the game is an alternate version of the world, one without the discovery of the transistor electrical component resulting in vacuum tubes used in machines again resulting in oversized, almost comical-looking contraptions (computers, nuclear powered cars, toy-like laser weapons etc.). A number of events lead up to the 'Great War', a nuclear devastation of the world resulting in the post-apocalyptic Fallout-universe, and this is where the games start. The player takes control of a vault dweller or a member of a tribe (depending on what game is played) and journeys the wasteland on a major quest for hope (a Garden Of Eden Creation Kit, a device to create and process clean water from radiated water, search for father etc. ); something that is important to the genre. Starting as either a vault dweller or a tribesman tells how technology is set back and how the world is almost reset. The game forces the player to make difficult decisions, typical to the post-apocalyptic genre, that could prove to be crucial to the narration by choosing a faction to side with or what role to play.

Later in the computer-era, online gaming became a big industry. The option for online-gaming had been a possibility for many of the later years of the 1990's, but became increasingly popular in the 21st century due to enhanced hardware, faster internet speeds and better software solutions. Now players could experience online games together across the world. This spawned a vast amount of so-called "MMO's" (Massive Multiplayer Online games) and many post-apocalyptic themed games, one of the latest being "DayZ" (Dean "Rocket" Hall, 2012). This is a highly interesting post-apocalyptic modification[7] that truly focuses on the true survival aspects of the

[7] a modification or mod. is a 'modification of the current game' based on the same engine and using the same system as the parent-game, here; ARMA: 2. You need a copy of the parent game to run the mod.

gloomy post-apocalyptic setting known from novels. When playing this particular game, one might see immediate parallels to post-apocalyptic novels such as *The Road*. These post-apocalyptic games take the dilemmas and ethical questions of the novels and turn them into survival strategies to be used by the players: forwarding their own narrative. This game presents the players with no mission or narration/plot. The object is simply to survive the post-apocalypse, much like that in *The Road*. Players have to survive the typical post-apocalyptic dangers found in such post-apocalyptic novels as McCarthy's *The Road* (2006); hunger, thirst, the cold (see Appendix 1), and the 'kill or be killed'-mentality featured in Matheson's *I am Legend* (1954). These games all present a greater threat hidden or masked by another more obvious threat: man. This is a trend that has evolved in the post-apocalyptic genre over the years. It is important to include video games because they further extend the themes portrayed in the novels, and allow "readers" to step inside the story and make decisions based on their own ethics and morale.

The post-apocalyptic fiction is a very popular genre, in movies, videogames, novels and even in music. "Godspeed You Black Emperor!" (sometimes "Godspeed You! Black Emperor") is a Canadian band that specializes in instrumental and ambient post-apocalyptic chamber rock[8], the same goes for the combined efforts of ex-Faith No More-bassist Bill Gould and Jared Blum called "The Talking Book"[9]. Though they use different medium they all share the themes of the post-apocalyptic sub-genre.

### *1.4 American Apocalyptic Culture*

There has not been an apocalyptic event on earth. All these post-apocalyptic texts are mere envisions or imaginations. They are, however, based on present day ideologies and reflecting the present in their fictional future. All the selected texts are by American authors. Richard Matheson's *I am Legend* was published in 1954 in the wake of World War 2. The world had just witnessed nuclear devastations that spawned a lot of new fiction. Fictions told of massive beings arising from the nuclear blasts and total destruction of countries; things that now became a "possibility". Another event that might have inspired a lot of fiction was The Holocaust. We can see possible inspirations in *I am Legend* from these two events (genocide of the humans by the

[8] Retrieved from; http://www.allmusic.com – "Godspeed You Black Emperor" (27.08.12)
[9] Retrieved from; http://www.allmusic.com – "The Talking Book" (27.08.12)

new vampire race) and the *fear* of the Cold War. What if a new race, born in a laboratory, was unleashed upon the population to hunt and kill us? What would happen to USA if the nation was bombed by an atomic bomb? The Cold War had this possible outcome. The 1950's American fiction had their share of heroes conquering evil and this period is perhaps best known (entertainment-wise) for a renewed interest in science fiction. It also sparked many post-apocalyptic fictions in the wake of World War 2. Robert Neville appears as an anti-hero when the sudden realization that he has been killing "ordinary humans" strikes him; could this be related to the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? When fighting monsters, one has to make sure not to become one in the process. Neville is immune to the disease, but ends up becoming a monster anyway.

Nuclear wars and total devastations are still the consensus when depicting a post-apocalyptic landscape. The 1960s through the 1980s saw the emergence of the living dead, 'zombies', on the silver screen and into pop culture. These creatures would be created by a virus/bacillus, radiation, or by interference from outer space. The zombie can be said to be a human rid of his soul, intelligence or mind. Zombies represent us —they represent humans when we are at our worst. Zombies have come to stay and remain one of the most symbolic and versatile monsters of entertainment. Whether they are present in fiction to portray a losing war against ourselves, or a mindless product of military and scientific origin, the zombie archetype is here to stay. They also represent walking death, a monster dead and reanimated with similar features of a human you might ones have known only now more decayed. The uniqueness of the human is gone and replaced by a soulless husk that only needs to feed off humans.

During the 2000s terrorism emerged as a new fear. The tragic 9/11 incident involving the World Trade Center in New York, USA struck the population with terror and fear. The USA, as a world superpower, is also a target (following the 9/11 incident) and this incident shows how quickly and suddenly things can change for the worse. Despite these acts of terrorism, McCarthy presents hope for humanity in his novel *The Road (2006).* The event of the apocalypse is never mentioned, but due to the nature of the wasteland there has been a nuclear war. *The Road* does not care about rebuilding society, concerns about the apocalyptic event or relations/connections to other survivors. Its main focus is to detail basic survival in the post-apocalyptic wasteland and what happens to the survivors when encountering a desperate scenario. It also tells of how

important family is, and raising a boy against *all* odds as a single parent, possibly sacrificing your own life for the future of humanity and hope. The era of the "golden 50s" where the hero would prevail and end evil is now replaced with an era of accepting the apocalypse and focus on surviving.

Apocalyptic fiction is popular amongst American writers. USA has seen and been a part of many wars; be that world wars or Cold Wars. The destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was decided and acted out by United States which was the first time nuclear weapons were used in war. As the deliverers of such destruction, these events may have prompted authors to write about such an outcome in United States had someone else dropped a bomb on them (Cold War). The fear and anxiety of nuclear war, now that the full effect of the devastating atomic warheads had been displayed, was in many citizens' heads. Because of all the recent events, ranging from terrorism to global warming, the people of USA has grown cautious of the apocalyptic notion. In America, where there is a strong sense of individualism and independence, the fear developed into a "survivalist response"[10]. This is where some of the people started preparing for the apocalypse by stocking up on food and ammunition, which shows acceptance of the apocalypse and preparations for survival. These are the same elements we discover in *The Road* and *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* where the main objective is to simply survive.

The apocalypse and the zombies, in many ways, represent the worst case scenario for the people of United States. The "American Dream" is a phrase used to describe the freedom, prosperity and success of venturing to, and living in, the USA. An apocalyptic event would destroy everything that the United States stands for and leave the survivors in a hopeless situation. This presents the authors with a great amount freedom and creativity to really explore the aftermaths of puncturing the "American dream". Zombies, vampires and other apocalyptic monsters are used as faceless creatures to present either an unknown threat or pose them as social critique. These are all things that present the USA as an apocalyptic-aware nation. The reason I enjoy the sub-genre is because it puts survivors in a hopeless scenario and leaves us to rediscover the setting through them, and how and why they decide to survive. As this thesis will explore, the apocalypse is a huge mental and physical burden for the survivors. When it comes to discussing

[10] Retrieved from: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-18877449
"America's fascination with the Apocalypse", BBC. (26.05.2013)

elements like evil, this thesis will use a philosophical angle along with literary depictions and dictionary entries.

There will be three texts used as primary sources for this thesis, and which will sometimes be referred to as the selected texts. Matheson's *I am Legend* (1954) tells the story of Robert Neville, alleged last man on earth and how he copes with alienation and how he struggles to survive in a world taken over by vampires. Will he fight for humanity or has a new civilization of man already been started? McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) revolves around a father and his son and how they survive the post-apocalypse. There are no vampires here, but the father and the son have to struggle with another evil. *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* (2010) is a comic book/graphical novel that tells the story of the Grimes family and several other survivors attempting to survive the aftermath of a zombie pandemic. In the post-apocalyptic world, the survivors will discover that there is another threat, other than the zombies that, needs to be paid *more* attention.

## 2.0 Post-Apocalyptic Dangers

The post-apocalyptic theme of survival focuses on the 'present' state in the world, and how the characters in the novels are coping with living in a collapsed world. According to the Bible, the apocalypse is the cleansing of earth and the "coming of God's kingdom". It's a belief shared by most of the major religions today, which all feature a sort of apocalypse or a judgment scenario where the 'good' is finally triumphing over 'evil'. The apocalypse, therefore, has since become the end-of-the-world scenario where most of the world's population is killed. As we see in fiction, the reasons for the apocalypse can be due to more secular contemporary issues like the 'Cold War' and its possible outcome-scenario. The *lucky* few that remain must survive a tormented world and suffer the consequences of the apocalypse—be it a nuclear war, epidemic or elemental disaster. It places humans in a situation they do not want to be in, such as finding themselves without basic commodities and resource, but still they cling to life by any means of survival.

The "goal" of the post-apocalyptic scenario can be said to be re-establishing civilization, and getting the world back to its pre-apocalypse state. This is the general consensus of solutions for the apocalypse—especially in the 1950s fiction. As mentioned earlier, however, this is not an easy task. There are many external and internal forces that prove a challenge.

### *2.1 The new life*

All the protagonists of these novels have memories of the way life used to be, and often reminisce back to how good life once was. Survival is one of the most urgent questions of the post-apocalyptic fiction as it is concerned with staying alive in a hostile environment and having or trying to muster hope for the future. However, when survival conflicts with ethics it becomes a problem.

In the fictional post-apocalyptic world, survival means to satisfy the primary needs and keep on living. Depending on the apocalyptic event, one or more element may be damaged: the air and water may be polluted due to nuclear fallout, and because factories and stores have most likely been destroyed or might be non-functional (e.g. loss of manpower, power failure, disease) food and drinks are hard to come by. Limited supplies force survivors to develop survival strategies. These strategies may include ways of acquiring additional supplies (e.g. hunting, growing produce, trading, stealing), and/or eliminating other survivors to secure more supplies. The phrase "survival of the fittest", coined by Herbert Spencer and more notably applied in the evolutionary ideas of *Darwinism*, where species adapt to their environment and the *strongest* continue on, can also be used in a post-apocalyptic setting. For instance does the post-apocalyptic setting allow a survivor to take the life of another human being in order to survive? Does that mean—the greatest threat towards man in a post-apocalyptic setting is actually man himself? If so, why does selfishness prevail over hospitality?

With the world destroyed, both technology and population is set back and food is generally scarce, scavenging for supplies becomes a vital action whether you are on the move, such as in *The Road*, or staying in one place, such as in Matheson's *I am Legend* (1954). Max Brooks can't stress enough the importance of being prepared and having a good supply of both medical and edible items in the event of apocalypse; "You will carry your hospital, storeroom, and armory on your back"[11]. In *The Road* we quickly learn that the father and the son are hauling a shopping cart, filled with various supplies, with them on their journey. This is also clearly displayed in the movie (Hillcoat, 2009). In *I am Legend* the protagonist survives by fortifying himself in his home. Experience has taught him that the creatures have weaknesses and by turning these into survival tactics he stays safe at night, and is thereby free to scavenge for survival-supplies and thin the vampires' numbers during the day. Scavenging is also a method employed in many post-apocalyptic movie narratives. In "28 Days Later" (Boyle, 2002), where a virus known as the "rage" has infected the masses and taken over all of England, the few that remain uninfected scavenge stores for food and bottled or canned liquids to drink. When everything has been consumed, they either have to travel or risk another store-raid to get more supplies. In "The Book of Eli" (Hughes bros., 2010) clean water and food have been rationed due to finite supplies,

[11] Brooks, M. 101:2004

thereby making it invaluable, but you can buy or trade for it in a few wasteland settlements "if you have the coin".

What these examples show is how important survival is to the genre—it is a major theme—and they raise many difficult questions. Where do you find food when the world has been devastated by a nuclear detonation or viral outbreak? What water is safe to drink, and where do you find purified or 'safe' water? When you find these valuable items; do you share them with other survivors, or do you guard them with your life? Due to the nature of the post-apocalyptic setting the possession of these valuables puts the carrier in danger. The zombies, vampires or mutated creatures that roam different post-apocalyptic settings have only one goal: to *kill* humans in order to stay alive. These creatures do not care about water, supplies or common decency. The natural thing would be for the humans to band and work together for a more hopeful future, to fight off these monsters that have laid claim to the world. Sadly, however, this is often not the case.

In many of these fictions, there is always a band of people that live outside of what is considered 'standard' norms if such even exist post-apocalypse. Generally, though, these people believe in total anarchy and do as they please to stay alive and keep surviving in the wasteland, even if that means to shed 'traditional' ethical codes and humanity. These are the criminals of the post-apocalyptic sub-genre and often feared by the (if any) civil settlements. However, we might ask the question whether criminals can even exist in a lawless world. The answer is that when dealing with a fictional post-apocalyptic setting, readers usually apply their current real-life ethics to the scenario, which are often the basis upon which many characters judge their fellow men. Characters with the future in mind tend to still use the rules from the pre-apocalypse as their goal is to re-establish or restore civilization: they seek to create a new society based on rules from the old one. However, rules that appear to not hurt anybody can be slightly bent, such as by scavenging for supplies in abandoned houses. The bandits are the ones that take it a bit further: they take advantage of the lawless situation to kill, torture, rape, and so on, without legal repercussions. In face of all this, the protagonist has to find a way to adapt to the new world, examples of which we find in *The Road* and *I am Legend*. We may also find an excellent example of constant adaptation in *The Walking Dead's* dynamic protagonist Rick Grimes. Pre-apocalypse he was a police officer, the keeper of the law and with decent moral attitudes, but

after the zombie apocalypse he struggles to keep his moral code as he feels he is changing with the world.

### *2.2 Evil and its Post-Apocalyptic Manifestation*

Evil in literature is usually portrayed as the antagonist of a gothic, horror or crime novel though the element of evil can be much more. Evil is sometimes described as a supernatural force (zombies, vampires) and always as immoral. It is also a subject in both psychology and philosophy. The gothic novel presents monstrosities that would function as the immediate/obvious evil of the text such as the Frankenstein monster, ghosts of the Otranto castle, and Mr. Hyde. By close-reading the texts that feature such monsters, such as those selected for this thesis, the reader will discover that these monsters are present to unravel another evil; the evil of man.

The protagonists in the selected texts witness some truly evil acts, and this is the evil that is provoked by the apocalypse. David Gilmore, in his book *Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts and All Manner of Imaginary Terror* (2003), discusses the different imaginary monsters in history and literature. In the final chapter of the book entitled "Our monsters, Ourselves" Gilmore presents some attributes of an evil being/monster, one of these being the act of cannibalism[12]. Gilmore establishes earlier in the book that all monsters eat humans and one of their greatest assets is a "yawning, carnivorous mouth"[13]. By giving humans the traits of monsters, the humans turn evil. Monsters are a creation of man, and at the same time, a mutation *in* man. A discussion can ensue when stating that the act of cannibalism is 'evil'. In certain tribal cultures the practice of cannibalism is considered the norm. The act of cannibalism is still regarded as unnatural in *most* parts of the world. The cannibalistic acts in the selected texts prove to be of a homicidal nature, thus referring to these acts as evil and criminal. The OED website states that the adjective evil is "the antithesis of good. *Morally depraved*, bad, wicked, vicious."[14] A philosophical school of thought (Kant) will also be applied in questions concerning moral, ethics and evil notions. These definitions of 'evil' by the OED will be used, along with

[12] Gilmore, D. 180-182:2003
[13] Ibid 176:2003
[14] Retrieved from; http://www.oed.com - "evil" (28.01.2013)

Gilmore's monster/evil traits, as guidelines when discussing evil in the selected texts, and how evil in man is triggered by the apocalypse.

Of the texts chosen there are especially two that deal with an added external danger to the post-apocalyptic wasteland in the form of 'new' monsters. These are undead vampires of *I am Legend* and the 'walkers', the zombies from *The Walking Dead*. These are monsters that have taken over the world, and are threatening the human existence. Both these monsters feed of humans and are profoundly immoral. This immorality is regarded as the monster's number one quality according to Gilmore. They are also both *undead*, a word used to define creatures that are both dead and alive (since both have died and returned, arisen or been reanimated to simulate life). This is another important factor when dealing with the *supernatural* creatures/monsters.

### *2.3 The Zombie – Walking Death*

The zombie is a fictional monster and to deal with fictional creatures, we must turn to fictional sources. There are many zombie types in fiction and the zombie type presented in *The Walking Dead* is the original urban zombie. These are the zombies typical of the George Romero movies: slow and clumsy, but very deadly in numbers. Other zombie types include the 'modern zombie', which is a fast-running, gun-toting zombie, and zombies with different, magical abilities and super-intelligence. Most zombies share one major element and that is to eat human flesh. Another important factor is that they are reanimated corpses, with the exception of the Caribbean drug-induced voodoo zombie.

The OED defines a 'zombie' as a: "soulless corpse said to been revived by witchcraft (in the West Indies and Southern states of America)"[15], while Dictionary.com defines the word zombie as: "the body of a dead person given the semblance of life, but mute and will-less, by a supernatural force, usually for some *evil* purpose"[16]. The zombie myth originates from the Caribbean. In voodoo priests would turn victims into zombie slaves by using witchcraft. However, the (fictional) viral zombies, like the ones present in *The Walking Dead*, are corpses

[15] Retrieved from : http://www.oed.com – "zombie" (28.01.2013)
[16] Retrieved from : http://www.dictionary.com – "zombie" (28.01.2013)

(or living people) infected with a virus and reanimated, and stalking the humans to satisfy their hunger[17]. These zombies are often created for war purposes and/or human experimentation by the government, generally with evil intentions. Further on in this thesis, the word 'zombie' will be used to depict the creatures from *The Walking Dead*.

Keeping in mind that these are purely fictional creatures, Max Brooks has delivered some important 'facts' in his book *The Zombie Survival Handbook* (2004) regarding the zombies based on literature and movies. There is nothing superior about the zombie attributes; they share the same strength and speed possessed by the 'host'. The only ways they are superior to humans are that they are not prone to getting fatigued or winded, they do not respond to pain, and they do not suffocate or drown. Their intelligence is gone as the brain is infected. The only need a zombie has is the need to feed. Due to this they are not very smart and lack coordination, and this is the biggest advantage the humans have over them. Since the zombies are the carriers of the disease, they also have the ability to infect others and thereby create more zombies[18].

According to the 'evil' guidelines (see section 2.2), the zombie is a monster. Additionally, Kant's philosophy on what a sentient, rational being is, does not comply with the zombie. Upon death the zombie loses its rationality and *soul* which then makes it inhuman. Even though they are victims of a plague they have become monsters and a threat to humanity in the post-apocalyptic wasteland, which is why it is accepted to kill them. However, while the zombies of *The Walking Dead* are clearly monsters, they also function like a catalyst to exhibit the worst in survivors, such as the Governor.

### *2.4 The Vampire – a Classic Monster*

The vampire is a classic literary monster that was introduced to popular literature in 1819 by John William Polidori with his short-story "The Vampyre". The OED states that the 'vampyre' is: "A preternatural being of *malignant nature* (in the original and the usual form of the belief, a

[17] Brooks, M. 14-19:2004
[18] Ibid 6-19:2004

reanimated corpse), supposed to seek nourishment, or do harm, by sucking the blood of sleeping persons; a man or woman abnormally endowed with similar habits", and the first depiction of this creature is dated to 1734 when the word 'vampire' appeared in an English collection of notes called The Harleian Miscellany[19].

The vampire folklore or myth can probably be tracked further back by exploring local texts from the origin-place of this myth. The best known depiction of the vampire or Dracula is Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* (1897). This novel has set the baseline for the vampire myth such as no reflection in mirrors, dying if exposed to sunlight, must sleep in own soil, no tolerance for garlic etc., and these are the same rules followed by the vampires in *I am Legend*.

Following the guidelines/criteria we can safely say that the vampires in *I am Legend* are monsters as they feed on humans, are immoral and reanimated dead. The notable difference between the vampires in *I am Legend* is that the "true vampires" are dead and reanimated. According to Kant's philosophy (see chapter 2.8) this makes it acceptable to kill *these* vampires. Although Neville doesn't eat any humans, he still appears as the antagonist to the infected people because he murders them. He is driven to this act by the apocalypse.

### *2.5 The Cannibal – a Monstrous Necessity?*

*The Road* does not have any immediate monster or beast that stalks the post-apocalyptic wasteland and murders the people. It depicts the desperation of man, of hunger, by portraying the act of cannibalism on more than one occasion. By Gilmore's guidelines the act of cannibalism is, however, the trait of a monster. We may argue that these culprits only did this to survive. . In that regard, however, we will have to discuss what constitutes good or bad survival methods.

What we can see so far is that the post-apocalyptic setting triggers the survival instinct in man. Based on the fictional setting, he or she will have to choose a survival strategy of good and/or

[19] Retrieved from http://www.oed.com – "vampire" (28.01.2013)

bad methods based on his or her own moral code. Good survival strategies include elements that focus on long-term survival and the start and prosperity of a new society: future through unity. Bad survival strategies include elements that focus on selfishness, the survival of one and nihilism; everything is allowed to survive. With this in mind, if you are a practitioner of 'bad' survival, which includes killing people and/or eating people, you are considered a criminal. If you murder someone to eat them, you basically take a life to prolong your own which is egotism. This kind of ethics does not concern a future based on civilized values, only selfishness.

It is important to note, though, that there *is* a difference between necro-cannibalism (eating the corpse of someone who is already dead) and homicidal-cannibalism; the latter is *always* considered a crime, whilst the first is considered unnatural and desperate; uncanny. *The Road* presents the possibility of being eaten very high. The apocalyptic event has rendered the world free of animals to hunt and crops to eat. The father and son state that they will never be so desperate as to attempt the act of cannibalism. However, we could argue that this is the survival of the fittest using the Spencer-parable. True as that may be, though, the Spencer-statement focuses on longevity and the fittest in a *longer perspective*. The slaying of your friend might give you nourishment for another week, but you must also continue living with manslaughter and cannibalism on your conscience. This also prompts a problem what to do next week, and the week after that: will you adopt the life of a cannibal? Killing another survivor to eat may prolong your life, but it destroys your humanity and thereby rendering you closer to a monster. Consequently *The Road* shows that the apocalypse can spark a metamorphosis in people making *them* the 'monsters' of this novel.

### *2.6 The bandit – the Criminals of the Post-Apocalypse*

'Bandit' is a term picked up while experiencing "DayZ". *The Zombie Survival Guide* also mentions these bandits as "modern-day barbarians":

> With the total collapse of law and order, small bands of individuals emerge to assert their authority. Looters, bandits and common thugs prey on survivors, taking what they want and indulging in whatever pleasure they can find.[…] These modern-day barbarians became such because of their disrespect of the law, their hatred of organization, their choice of destruction over creation. Their nihilistic, parasitic existence feeds off the riches of others instead of producing their own. This mentality prevents them from settling down and building a new life. [20]

It is a term that easily fits into other fictions of the post-apocalyptic genre, for instance the selected texts. The best way to explain a bandit is that he is a criminal within the post-apocalyptic setting. Since there are no rules or governing bodies in the post-apocalyptic world, he can not be defined as a criminal. In pre-apocalyptic time a bandit would be accounted for as a criminal; one that defies rules and laws. By applying present-world rules and laws to the post-apocalyptic setting, a bandit is defined by breaking these rules. The father in *The Road* sees every other survivor as a bandit, which is why he is so cautious. The Governor in *The Walking Dead* is also considered a bandit. This exemplifies how a video game term can easily be applied to novels within the genre.

The term 'bandit' is increasingly discussed especially within the "DayZ"-community. This is because players, who are all a part of the post-apocalyptic experience, have to defend their actions. "DayZ" is a plot-free video game that focuses on strictly surviving the post-apocalypse. This allows the players to do what they please, and recast themselves into roles that fit the post-apocalyptic world. It presents the player with a blank slate to form and mold how he/she pleases. The player, only represented by a screen-name, will build up reputation to be feared or loved by the community. Sometimes this means killing other players, and other times this means exaggerating ethical values for the sake of role-playing. The post-apocalyptic wasteland is void of all *written* laws and rules. It seems to make rules official, a government needs to exist. However, a set of unwritten rules has been established to define a 'bandit' or bad survival, and these are based on the rules from the old world.

The arguments in "DayZ" revolve around killing other players and stealing supplies or vehicles. Some players see stealing supplies as an ethically wrong act and then brands that player as a

[20] Brooks, M. 155-156:2004

'bandit'. Others argue that the only bandit-able offence is killing another survivor, but then again, some players justify it by saying it was a 'revenge kill' or 'bandit kill'. There are degrees of murder in our present world (manslaughter, accidental murder, crime of passion etc.), but they are all neverless crimes. Arguing that scavenging for supplies and stealing vehicles is the act of a bandit is a fallacy that many players fall into. Exploiting the finite number of supplies put in the game world or in a literary setting is not an act of bad survival, but purely surviving. The universal rule in the post-apocalyptic wasteland seems to be when a family or tenant vacates their home (either by death or travel), their remaining possessions within the house become available for all (salvaging). Just as in present life, there are degrees of crime within the post-apocalyptic setting as well, but some crimes are always considered crimes, namely murders.

In the selected texts, we see a lot of examples of the above. The father and son from *The Road* scavenge homes in search of food and when they come across an underground storage room, they take everything they can carry with them. The father still says to the boy that they are the good guys. The supplies and items left behind are free for anyone to take: the spoils of the post-apocalypse.

Rick Grimes from *The Walking Dead* supports the fact that if you kill, you are a bandit, as represented with his "you kill, you die"-speech. This may prove that the post-apocalyptic consensus considers killing to be the worst of the crimes, and bandit-branding offense. Killing someone in self-defense, however, seems to be a generally accepted survival instinct as shown in *The Road*[21].

### *2.7 Survival choices*

Every novel, movie or videogame in the post-apocalyptic genre depicts survival. The texts present how the world and its population would function if the apocalypse 'resets' the world due to human error, greed or a failing in ethics(playing 'God', technological apocalypse etc.) itself.

[21] McCarthy, C. 68, 80-81:2006

The OED states that "ethics" is the science of morals[22]: a system of moral principles or rules of conduct. The start of civilization is based on ethics and humanity, and without these two key elements a possible society could not be created. Transferring rules from the pre-apocalyptic time into the post-apocalyptic setting and basically continue surviving by the old morals and laws makes you a good guy. The notion of evil and survival strategy can be linked together. If one chooses to obey the rules and laws of the old world, one can not be defined as a "bandit". The choice of what strategy to survive by within the post-apocalyptic wasteland is based on ethics and how to behave when you can no longer be legally judged by your actions. Does, for instance, the lack of law enforcement mean that killing is now allowed? Does the disappearance of the governmental body translate to "no more laws"? Both yes and no; there are no-one to police and sentence the bandits of the post-apocalyptic wasteland. The infrastructure of the society is gone which has caused anarchy. Survivors will still contain their moral code and ethics, which will tell them that manslaughter is wrong, but this is where the bandit disagrees.

In the setting of "DayZ" every player has his own subjective opinion on how a bandit behaves. However, employing prolonged bad survival strategies eventually turns you into evil as shown by the Governor in *The Walking Dead*. Seeing the difference between right and wrong, though, is not so straightforward in the post-apocalyptic setting. Sometimes, the realization does not come until after the act has been done. For instance, the reason why Robert Neville of *I am Legend* accepts his fate without argument is because he learns that he was killing infected humans all along, an act that could be called evil by Kant's philosophy concerning moral.

When put in a scenario you've never experienced before, you improvise. Improvisation, if it works, becomes a regular habit —it is a means of survival. In *The Road* we experience how hopeless the situation is through the eyes of two survivors. The father and the son cooperate to make the best decisions which help them to survive longer and stay in touch with their humanity through old world rules. While the father sees every other survivor as a possible bandit and exhibits extreme caution, he has determined that he and his son will not become like them. Neville, though, is all alone; he has to make all the decisions on his own, which are made solely based on his future and his survival. As it turns out, *his* choices turn him into the very thing he

[22] Retrieved from http://www.oed.com – "ethics" (02.04.2013)

was trying to ward off. All this proves that the vampires, zombies, poisonous environment and the desperate need of food in post-apocalyptic settings are mere literary devices used to exhibit the true nature of man and what he/she is capable of in a desperate, fictional situation.

According to Bould and Vint, apocalyptic fiction uses the end of the world-scenario to rebuild and reorganize society[23]. Among the ashes of the old world there is a possibility of a new civilization, of something good. The beliefs that the old world laws and ethics are needed to restore civilization are the beliefs of a good guy; a good survivor. In *I am Legend* the protagonist Neville believes that he is the last man – and hope – on the planet. When he encounters the other survivor, Ruth, he starts to believe that there is yet hope for a new human civilization. In the final pages of the novel, however, Neville is captured and realizes that he is not the last defender of the human race, but actually the odd one out; the bandit. Neville is at this point driven by *hope* of a new social order and re-establishment of the human race, but when the truth is thrust upon him he accepts his fate and role as the bandit.

The question of possible futures is often discussed in the TV-series version of *The Walking Dead* (2010) as well as the comic book/graphic novel. While the protagonist Rick focuses on long-term survival, problems ensue when his wife Lori suddenly becomes pregnant. Lori argues that this is not a world to raise another child in and establishing new lives. Her argument is understandable as the world is now filled with walking dead, and to live is to survive, but Rick does not agree with her notion of 'giving up' and has hopes for a new future society. The comic book/graphic novel problematizes the idea of living in a post-apocalyptic world by questioning survival and 'why keep going'. These same notions are seen in *The Road* when the father and the mother discuss the future. Their son has just been born, and just like Lori the mother does not want to raise a child in the post-apocalyptic world. The mother is without hope and escapes from her family, leaving the father to raise the son and to get by just the two of them. The father sees it as his job to protect his son and stay alive in search of hope, while the mother has no hope and wants them all to 'take death as their lover'[24].

[23] Bould, M. and Vint, S. 29:2011
[24] McCarthy, C. 58-59:2006

### *2.8 The Evil of man*

There are various schools of thoughts about the notion of evil and how it functions in connection to man. Moral *universalism* examines what is commonly considered as evil amongst *all* humans[25] while moral *relativism* states that the consensus of good and evil is a product of local culture, prejudice and custom[26]. Nietzsche argues that there are various forms of goodness and, therefore, evil[27], while others state that good and evil are components within the human that are fed according to actions performed. The survivors in these texts are forced to make difficult moral decisions in the post-apocalypse. Is cannibalism something that could be accepted as 'ok' in the new post-apocalyptic setting? Kant's philosophy states that nothing is more important than surviving (retaining oneself), but *never* at the expense of others. However, when a human is dead, it ceases to be a rational being, thus, according to Kant's philosophy; necro-cannibalism *could* be allowed.

By Kant's philosophy, murder and rape is something that is defined as evil universally. Homicidal-cannibalism is also considered evil as Kant states that "humans are never to be used as a means to reach a goal"[28]. As stated in section 2.6 and 2.7 survivors choose different survival strategies, prompting disagreement amongst the survivors as to what is morally good or bad. The authors present the people of these texts (*The Road, I am Legend* and *The Walking Dead)* as being different; some believe that killing is accepted, while others see it as a crime. This thesis will deal with murder, rape and torture as acts of crime and being immoral (section see 2.2). The act of cannibalism (homicidal) is also considered a crime while necro-cannibalism is considered highly uncanny and desperate (see section 2.5).

[25] Rachels, J. 130:2007
[26] Ibid 28-30:2007
[27] Ibid 190:2007
[28] Ibid 138-139:2007

## 3.0 Analyzing the texts

Though all the selected texts are post-apocalyptic, they feature different kinds of apocalypse as covered in section 1.2. Firstly, Matheson's *I am Legend* (1954) depicts a world changed by a bacillus-of-war dubbed 'vampiris' by Neville, which turns everybody into vampires. The novel follows Neville's everyday narration of his survival among the vampires until he discovers the true evil. The second novel is McCarthy's *The Road* (2006), telling the post-apocalyptic narrative of a father and a son surviving and keeping the flame of a new future civilization lit. The setting is a collapsed USA, but according to McCarthy, the apocalyptic event is not important. The important point is how do you survive in the post-apocalyptic setting, and why?[29] The novel presents the most important elements of the post-apocalyptic genre: the struggle to survive and a hope for the future. This novel is selected for its important post-apocalyptic traits and the way it portrays the realistic elements of survival based on ethics, humanity and civility. In addition to these two novels, I have selected *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* (2003) by Kirkman as my last text. *The Walking Dead* is a comic book/graphic novel focusing on the group dynamics and behavior of the human survivors; how they treat each other and how they change, sometimes, in evil ways. Among the three selected texts, *The Walking Dead* features situations with groups of people and this presents an interesting addition as compared with the other novels' sole man (Robert Neville), and a pair of family members (father and son).

By comparing these three texts, the aspects of survival in different group sizes will be discussed. For instance, how different is a group from a lone survivor, and how is evil created through poor choices? This chapter will look at and discuss the dichotomy of man and discover how survivors attempt to survive in the post-apocalyptic wasteland.

[29] Adams. T. 2009

### *3.1 Richard Matheson's I am Legend*

Cold War-paranoia and nuclear anxiety became fuel for super-powered rivalry and devastated wasteland-focused fiction in the 50's. The rise of consumerism made the magazine sales, especially in the SF (science fiction) genre, rocket. Authors like John Wyndham, Robert Heinlein and Ray Bradbury began selling SF stories to said magazines[30]. Many 1950's post-apocalyptic fictions focus on fixing the post-apocalyptic landscape and re-establishing human culture such as John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids* (1951) and George R. Stewart's *Earth Abides* (1949). We will discover the same trend within *I am Legend.* However, although Neville tries to fix the situation by slaying vampires and at one point trying to make antidotes, he fails at this in the end. Matheson's *I am Legend*, published in 1954, is the oldest of the selected texts. It is regarded as being a key influence in the development of the very popular zombie apocalypse genre and being the direct influence to movies like Romero's "Night of the Living Dead" [31] (1968) and other fictions including *The Walking Dead*. While this is one of the reasons why I chose this novel for my thesis, the novel also features many of the typical post-apocalyptic traits that I will discuss. It also has Neville question his actions in the end proving the difference between good and bad survival is ethics-related.

The setting is Los Angeles in the future (1976), but with no immediate technological advances it basically mirrors the contemporary setting of the 1950s. *Alienation* is a key term in this novel as the main character, Robert Neville, is the last man in the world: he is frustrated, lonely and alienated. He seeks companionship in what he can that link to the old world, be it a dog or Ruth. With no human contact Neville loses touch with his humanity and slips into an animal-like state of survival; kill or be killed. He even finds himself tempted by the vampire harlots exposing themselves to him outside his house.

To put it briefly, the narrative of *I am Legend* follows Robert Neville, the sole survivor (or so he believes) of a human-made pandemic. A bacillus-of-war has transformed the humans into vampire-like beings that stalk Neville at night and sleep at day (true to the vampire myth). During daytime Neville is free to roam the city of Los Angeles in search of food, equipment, and

[30] Bould, M. and Vint, S. 90-91:2011
[31] Clasen, M. 315-316:2010

even research a cure for the vampirism, thinking he can solve the situation. Believing himself the only human left, Neville destroys every body he finds during daytime as he sees them all as possible threats. Another way of looking at it is that Neville stalks the vampires during daytime and the vampires stalk Neville during the night; it is a seemingly never-ending loop. However, in the end Neville discovers that he is, in a world repopulated by 'infected', actually the odd one out:

> He knew he did not belong to them; he knew that, like the vampires, he was anathema and black terror to be destroyed. (…) [I am] a new terror born in death, a new superstition entering the unassailable fortress of forever. I am legend.[32]

The narration is told from a third-person limited perspective through the focalization of Robert Neville. The creatures in the novel are presented as vampire monsters that stay true to the old vampire myth, meaning they can be defeated if special conditions are met. These are the so called 'true vampires' of the story, but at this point Neville does not know that there is a difference among the vampires. The 'true vampires' of the novel that stalk Neville outside his house want to feed on him, and this hostile act is what prompts Neville to barricade himself inside the house. The other vampire kind is the 'living vampire'. These are living people that have contracted the 'vampiris' disease, and managed to stay alive while still carrying the disease. By applying the Kant's school of thought to the issue regarding the 'living vampires' and the 'true vampires' we as readers see a distinct difference that Neville does not witness. The 'true vampires' are reanimated corpses. According to Kant this makes them lose their status of being a rational being (section 2.8) which makes them *acceptable* to kill in order to stay alive. The 'living vampires', however, are people infected and living with the disease slowly turning them into vampires (but not true vampires). Since these are infected creatures, they are victims of the plague and still rational beings. Killing *these* vampires will render Neville immoral as he uses an (infected) human to reach a means, here: survival. Neville, thinking now that he is the last man on earth, believes that every person he sees is out to kill him: "Why didn't they leave him alone? Did they think they could *all* have him? […] Why did they keep coming every night? After five months, you'd think they'd give up and try elsewhere"[33]. In a world filled with monsters, the human, being the *focalizer*, must be the good guy, and since the differences in appearance and

[32] Matheson, R. 160:1999
[33] Ibid 8:1999

behavior amongst the vampires are negligible, Neville puts all the vampires in one category: evil monsters

Neville's agency, or lack thereof, can be discussed. There are certain actions Neville does that are mere reactions to the apocalypse. Neville barricades his house because he is attacked by the vampires. He is forced to scavenge and gather supplies as a result of the apocalypse. These are things he does to stay alive. Neville travels around killing vampires during the day, which eventually prompts the infected to send Ruth on a reconnaissance mission. He also decides to try and discover a cure for the virus. This, he does to help humanity and try to fix the situation. The ironic part is that Neville's agency ends up being his demise.

The novel presents the reader with further issues concerning ethics and humanity in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. People have been transformed into vampires and Neville is forced to oppose people he used to be friends with, most notably Mr. Cortman. The dichotomy of good and bad survival is introduced when the reader learns that Neville kills not only the 'true' vampires, but also the hybrid 'infected' humans that have learned to live with the disease. He travels around hunting for dormant vampires and kills them. He argues that this is necessary for his survival; it is kill or be killed, which seems to be the issue. Even so, do ethics play a role anymore in a world without people? The narrator explains this by having Neville notice the difference between friendly, pre-apocalypse Mr. Cortman, and evil, post-apocalypse, vampire Mr. Cortman. Mr. Cortman is definitively not 'human' anymore.

At this point in the narrative, Neville is unaware of the new society emerging, and thus sees it as acceptable to kill these monsters. While he retains a hope for possibly curing the disease and rebuilding civilization, a common goal to the apocalyptic fiction of the 1950's, in the end Neville discovers that civilization has in fact already been started. As Neville witnesses the humanity within the infected he understands that *he* is the monster by realizing what he has done to them. He accepts his demise without question. Ethics and humanity, it seems, only matters when dealing with humanity/humans.

Every day is a new struggle and every morning he goes through his checklist of things that need to be done after the nightly attacks on the house. Neville does not know at this point that he is alone and he still has hopes of encountering people, particularly women, which are necessary for giving birth to children that are a symbol of hope and future. Matheson depicts Neville as an 'everyman'; a man that is tempted by the vampire harlots that parade outside his house every night to lure him out, a man who doesn't have the strongest psyche, and who is neither a master of martial arts nor has any kind of knowledge of the arts of survival. Neville is a man that most of the readers can identify with and to whom one can sympathize. This is a typical protagonist of post-apocalyptic fiction. To survive he barricades himself in his house, claiming it as humanity's last resort on earth, and spends the days gathering supplies and killing vampires. This raises the interesting question if Neville is a practitioner of bad survival. From Ruth, Neville learns that repopulation has already begun and that the infected have managed to subdue the bacillus with a pill and are slowly overcoming their disease.[34] He also learns that he has killed her husband along with many other of the 'hybrid' race when searching for and killing the vampires. Up to this point, the reader perhaps feels that Neville, being the *focalizer*, is doing a good job at staying alive and 'not-leaving-without-a-fight' as the last human sample, but here we realize that it is not quite true.

During the daytime, Neville travels around scavenging supplies, and he frequently kills the vampires while they are dormant and then burns their bodies. This, though, proves to be his downfall as Ruth tells Neville that on some occasions he has actually killed many of the hybrid humans. The difference between 'true vampires' and the new hybrid race is even noted by Neville when he is killing them:" With the sound of the mallet blow still in his ears, she had virtually dissolved before his eyes"[35]. The hybrid humans, it turns out, are not like the vampires. Like him, they have hopes for re-establishing civilization. This basically turns Neville into a bandit of the post-apocalyptic wasteland; from hero into villain.

[34] Matheson, R. 144-145:1999
[35] ibid 56:1999

However, while Neville's actions are equal to that of a bad survivor, considering that the infected have become more 'human', it is understandable why it is done. They are not considered evil/bad until the humanity factor enter the equation. The best argument is that Neville has only experienced hostility from vampires so far, and to get an advantage in the fight for survival he decides to eliminate some of his perceived enemies. Secondly, Neville knows that dormant vampires are sluggish in the mornings, and they have a special appearance unlike that of humans: "the color of fish out of water"[36]. Besides, Neville is unaware at this point that the infected humans have started to treat and live with the 'vampiris' disease. Finally, Neville believes, though he has a slight hope to the contrary, that he is the last human alive, thus making his effort the last stand of mankind to possibly rebuild society[37]. Considering the way Neville is approached each night by the vampires, it does not leave him much choice when it comes to *hospitality* and generosity: giving up would be the fall of mankind.

Continuing on the question of what Neville has done to deserve death; Matheson gives the readers the duality of man. There are two sides to Neville; one being the harsh survivalist that destroys vampires in daytime and hides in his fortress in the night, and the other being presented in flashbacks showing Neville as a hospitable and civil person towards his fellow man. Neville believes he is fighting monsters as the last human competitor, but when encountering a human he quickly recovers his ethics and former hospitable nature. Ruth restores Neville's hope of a possible future and a new civilization. As new hope dawns in his mind, his survival instinct quarrels with his old notions of ethics and humanity. Snyder's text on hospitality in *The Road*[38] can just as easily be applied to *I am Legend* since the dilemma is shared in this sub-genre; decency and humanity are two valuable post-apocalyptic fiction-traits for the good survivors. As Neville's guard is lowered, however, Ruth clubbers him senseless. In other words, in the presence of another human Neville regains his former decency which ironically leads to his capture.

The lack of critical discussion done on this novel makes my statements harder to back up. By doing a close reading of the novel, we can find elements that point towards Neville's "evil".

[36] Matheson, R. 12:1999
[37] Ibid 18:1999
[38] Snyder, P. 69:2008

Another key theme in *I am Legend* is alienation. By being the last human specimen, Neville is alienated. Typical to the 1950's post-apocalyptic novels Neville yearns for company and human contact in an attempt to recreate civilization: a situation for the protagonist to try to *fix*. The isolation and lack of human contact changes Neville. Neville adapts the instinct of an animal when preying vampires during the day, and 'rests' during the night. During the night Neville's thoughts (sexual urges, thoughts on 'giving up', and frustration) shows a man fighting, not only the physical battle, but also the mental battle of being the last man alive. His conversations with himself and with his late wife and/or grave add to the feeling of loneliness and isolation. Neville uses several weeks to get contact with a stray dog. This also stresses the desperation and loneliness that Neville is going through. This isolation changes Neville and makes him lose humanity. There is no one to "mirror" himself in until he meets Ruth and the others, e.g. he sees himself in their eyes. His encounter with Ruth shows just how depraved of humanity Neville is: his demeanor is rough and erratic, but it is still considered a positive greeting. He sees this as his chance to save the world.

With Neville being the focalizer of the narration, the readers see the situation through his "lenses". The readers witness Neville being alone, isolated and constantly attacked from all sides, and may quickly sympathize with him due to his human identity and his agency. Matheson creates great suspense that eventually leads to the twist when Neville discovers the infected people. The focalization tells the reader that Neville sees more humanity in them than in himself.

To kill monsters is accepted since they are out to kill survivors/humans: killing evil is considered a basic means of defense in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. Neville, though, discovers in the end that *he* is the biggest threat to the infected: he has been killing the good survivors. At this moment, Neville accepts his fate because he now understands that *he* is the monster. He is no better than the vampires except he is better at killing and hurting the infected population; the start of a new society for 'humans' is greater than even Neville himself. It is important to realize that Robert Neville is not evil through and through, rather his actions towards his "fellow" beings are considered evil. The agency of Neville presents him as a man who has mankind's best at heart, and its restoration is his highest priority. His evil actions, though, are triggered by the state of the post-apocalyptic setting. By close-reading the text the reader quickly discovers that Neville has faith in a human future and that he is longing for some company. Neville's encounter

with Ruth shows a man transformed by the post-apocalyptic wasteland: "He didn't realize that his voice was devoid of warmth, that it was the harsh, sterile voice of a man who had lost all touch with *humanity*"[39]. During the time Ruth spends in his house the word 'dream' is heavily emphasized. Because he has been transformed by the apocalypse, Neville has trouble dealing with her human features such as her smell[40] and her voice: "The sound of the human voice was so strange to him that it had a power over him it had never had before"[41]. As stated earlier, when fighting monsters one has to be careful not to become one in the process, and at this time in the narrative Neville is arguing who is more *human* of the two. He even contemplates killing Ruth on several occasions: "a world in which murder was easier than hope. Well, he wasn't that far gone yet, he thought. I'm a man, not a destroyer."[42] However, when he learns that the post-apocalypse setting has changed him into a destroyer, he realizes he has "gone too far". The evil that spawns from the apocalypse has manifested itself in Neville. While everyone else becomes victims of the plague, a new terror is born in death; the terror of man. The evil that Neville faces is his own:

> Abruptly that realization joined with what he saw on their faces – awe, fear, shrinking horror – and he knew that they were afraid of him. To them he was some terrible scourge they had never seen, a scourge even worse than the disease they had come to live with. […] A new terror born in death, a new superstition entering the unassailable fortress of forever. I am legend.[43]

[39] Matheson, R. 114:1999
[40] Ibid 127:1999
[41] Ibid 117:1999
[42] Ibid 129:1999
[43] Ibid 159-160:1999

### *3.2 Cormac McCarthy's The Road*

McCarthy's *The Road* (2004) depicts a father and a son who have experienced the apocalypse and now struggle to survive in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. Seven years have passed since the world was destroyed by some unexplained event (possibly a war since the environment is in a state of nuclear winter, and animals and most people are dead) and the deserted 'new world' lies in ashes. The narrative frequently uses words like 'grey', 'empty', and 'cold' to describe the surroundings. To continue to live in this world, people have started using different survival strategies and the surviving people have turned to desperate measures, such as stealing, killing and other unspeakable acts. Earlier we have seen that survivors (Neville) seek company, but here we see the father and the son are seeking *isolation*. This novel has been chosen for its gritty gloomy and 'survivalist' way of describing the post-apocalyptic struggle, and how well it presents a realistic apocalyptic wasteland. Also, this narrative is set in a war-devastated setting where the apocalypse has not, unlike the other selected texts, altered the humans into zombies or vampires. The environment seems to be hazardous (due to fallout) and possibly contributed to the illness of the father.

The narration has a third-person limited perspective. The father acts as the focalizer. The father and the son identify themselves as "good guys" and thereby distancing them from the others. The mission of the father is to protect his boy, survive and get to a warmer place. The father appears as the "brawns" as he mainly focuses on the gathering of resources and fighting/defending. The son represents "brains" as he gives important input and questions his father's decisions and sometimes steers him right. The dialogues between the father and the son are simplistic, and are at times difficult to determine which speaker they belong to. The title of the novel may represent travelling—the father and son spend most of their time on the road to a better place, both physical and metaphorical (road of life). It may also transcend this notion as the only named character in the novel, 'Ely', states that he has always travelled the road which could be understood as a path of righteousness—stay on the road, stay on the path from the past (moral) to the future (hope).

The novel has been depicted as having religious motives which is not uncommon for apocalyptic fiction as the word 'apocalypse' has Biblical roots and connections. This has been discussed in

numerous essays regarding the novel and its Biblical allusions (Susan Tyburski's essay *"The Lingering Scent of Divinity" in The Sunset Limited and The Road*[44] and John Vanderheide's essay *Sighting Leviathan: Ritualism, Daemonism and the book of Job in McCarthy's Latest Works*[45]*).* The role of the son has been suggested to transcend that of an ordinary survivor, as stated at one point stated by the man: "what if I said that he's a god?"[46]. This comment suggests that the boy represents the human hope and the fact that he 'carries the fire' further strengthens this notion. The encounter with Ely builds upon the statement that the son is humanity and hope. In a ruined world where everybody is nameless, the old man chooses the name 'Ely' for himself. 'Ely' has given up all hope and has 'always' wandered the road, but states that he never thought he would see a child again: a light in the darkness. The name chosen by the man, 'Ely', is an allusion to the Biblical story from "The Books of Samuel" where Eli's sons are cursed by God for behaving badly. Just like Eli from The Book of Samuel, 'Ely' is also almost blind. The man tells Ely that the boy 'is a god' prompting Ely to question humanity by stating: "where men can't live gods fare no better […]. So I hope that's not true what you said because to be on the road with the last god would be a terrible thing so I hope it's not true"[47]. Could this mean that in a world without a God, the boy becomes the source of humanity? In his essay on secular scripture and *The Road*, Thomas A. Schaub believes that the boy recognizes divinity in himself when the possibility of him surviving his father becomes an option, and since he carries the fire towards a new civilization. The boy matures throughout the text and when the man tells the son that: "You're not the one who has to worry about everything", the boy responds: "Yes I am […] I am the one"[48]. Schaub also states that the light follows the boy; not only is he the carrier of the fire, but he argues that the light seems to follow him around[49], something we see—"he took the cup and moved away and when he moved the light moved with him"[50]. Presumably there aren't many children left in the wasteland (according to 'Ely'). A scene in the novel depicts the protagonists watching a highly pregnant woman escorted by two men. The father and son proceed to follow her and her party to discover that the child was possibly born and eaten. This might explain why, in a grizzly manner, there is a lack of children. This leads me to believe that hope and humanity are keywords when it comes to good survival strategies, and the boy carries the fire towards the future hope.

[44] Tyburski, S. 121-129:2008
[45] Vanderheide, J. 107-121:2008
[46] McCarthy, C. 183:2006
[47] Ibid 183:2006
[48] Ibid 277:2006
[49] Schaub, T. 163:2009
[50] McCarthy, C. 296:2006

One of the key themes in the novel is that of survival. A dichotomy between good versus bad survival is presented to the reader where the humanity and ethics of the post-apocalyptic survivors are questioned. After killing and stealing, scavenging and abandoning, the son questions their motives by asking the father if they are still the good guys, whereupon the father assures him that they are. The son recognizes bad behavior from his father and this is why he questions his father's actions. Why are they the good guys when they behave just like bad guys (except for eating babies)? This is an interesting situation where the boy questions the alignment of himself and his father. In the course of the narrative the protagonists encounter very few people, and all of them are met with hostility. Understandably the father wants to protect his son, the fire-carrier, from all harm, but in doing so the father forgets his own moral code. In the process his son is confused by the survival strategies they choose. The fact that the difference between the good guys and the bad guys seems to be negligible to the son, worries the father.

The son differs from the father by always keeping his decency and may thus be seen as a sign of humanity and civility. This is discovered when the father is by the shore and the thief appears and steals their supplies. The father follows him, gun in hand, and at gunpoint becomes a bandit himself. The father is angry and tells the thief to take off all his clothes and put them in the cart. The boy does not like seeing this side of his father and does not agree with his actions. Later the man comforts his sobbing son by telling him that "I wasn't going to kill him" to which the boy responds: "but *we* did kill him"[51]. Here the dichotomy between the man and the boy is demonstrated: whereas the boy wants to help people they encounter, even if they stole from them, and be *hospitable* towards his fellow man, the father, though he has good intentions, appears as 'chaotic good' with two major missions; keeping his son, the fire carrier, alive and keep on surviving by *nearly* any means. In his article "Hospitality in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*" Snyder talks about how the hospitable and gracious spirit of the boy representing humane acts in an inhumane world, is what separates them from 'the Other'[52]. To keep one's ethics and humanity by being generous and hospitable in an environment where desperate bandits or 'road rats' see every survivor as a potential meal, is to keep faith in reborn civilization. In the above-mentioned scene, the boy and the man face a dilemma concerning how to decide the fate of the thief. Here the boy shows signs of charity and humanity pleading with his father to help the thief, the kind of civility that is needed to initiate a future civilization, a sign of hope, and a reason to

[51] McCarthy, C. 278:2006
[52] Snyder, P 69:2008

go on: he carries the fire. The fire is a metaphor for humanity and hope. Hopefully, the boy will start fires everywhere he goes. The father and son do not encounter any helpful people at all on the road when travelling together. The son is greeted with hospitality and a proposition at the end of the text; the only true example of humanity witnessed by other characters in the narrative.

Snyder discusses an important issue regarding being hospitable and generous in the post-apocalyptic world and connecting it to 'good survival': keeping values from the old world into the new world. However presenting oneself as generous and 'friendly' in a hostile world also creates several new problems to the protagonists. This is how we can relate to the 'good survival' of the boy as compared to the 'good/bad survival' of the man. Giving the impression of being hospitable can sometimes be understood as being naïve and get a survivor into dangerous situations. Pushing along a trolley filled with canned goods, blankets, shoes and water is a dangerous activity in the post-apocalyptic wasteland as you now carry everything other survivors want – on display – and they may not be as hospitable or kind as the boy. This raises another interesting thought that the man is dependent on the boy for his good ethics, hopeful future and civility, while the boy is equally dependent upon the man and his careful attitude, tough decisions and hostile nature. Would the boy survive by himself or would he be the victim of 'bandits' posing as people in dire need of aid? In the videogame format, the same problem presents itself but here the players are free to change the narration by how they act. The dilemma of being kind and hospitable versus being evil and ruthless is typical for "DayZ" where a cry for help from another player will leave you making a choice based on your ethics and humanity as opposed to your caution and trust no-one mentality. Do *you* want to survive or do you want to help others and possibly die as thanks for your aid? Do you want to be kind and friendly to prolong his/her life or do you just want his food and rifle? Here we see that the goodwill and generosity of the boy can easily be mistaken for being naïve and make him an easy target in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. It is true what Snyder says about the remaining population – they are hostile and they are dangerous, and this environment is no place for a child.

This kind of scenario is very similar to the events one encounters in the Fallout-series, but the videogame-medium allows the user much more freedom of choice to participate in the narrative. Here the players can write their own story with multiple endings and no similar play-through. You have the option to decide to help the thief by offering food or drink, or you can decide to

kill him. This provides an interesting way to narrate a story as an action always has a chain reaction causing fame and reputation, new alliances to be forged or bounties to be awarded. The player can decide to not participate in the main plot of e.g. Fallout 3 (find dad, defeat the enclave, purify water and restore hope to the wasteland) and focus on the myriads of 'micro narratives' to build relations and construct your player avatar. Compared to the novel *The Road,* the player is the one that carries the fire and only you can continue the narrative. In videogames (mostly Role-Playing Games) the narrative is player-dependent and progresses in the direction the players wish to take it. The player decides on a role, and thus the narrative takes shape based on the choices of the player. The base plot of the games stays the same, but the game changes shape based on the decisions made throughout. This gives the player the opportunity to play the game multiple times as different 'roles': play as the boy from *The Road* – generous and hospitable, or as the man from *The Road* – cautious and hostile, and thus discover the different survival strategies.

The ending of the novel presents the boy with a decision to make. He chooses hope and decides to travel with the family. The ending presents the reader with a connection between ethics and humanity to become hope and, possibly, civilization. After the man's death the boy spends his time mourning by his body until he is approached by a family that has been watching them. The boy chooses to join the family and the end of the novel might be the start of a new civilization as we see the boy being greeted with the same hospitable act he gives. This is a hopeful ending that resembles early nomadic and civil settlements; the birth of new civilization. This is one of the decisive elements when it comes to the dichotomy between good and bad survival strategies.

Overall, *The Road* does present a hopeless scenario. The element that seems to be the most pressing is that of food and drink. This is a typical problem within this genre. The need for food drives people in *The Road* to unspeakable acts, namely homicidal-cannibalism, but it is man that drives most of the killing in the novel and not lack of food. Post-apocalyptic texts are free to discover the darkness in humans and how cruel or evil man can become in a situation such as this. There is little doubt that the hunger and thirst-issue is a big one, but the human factor is even greater: it is the scenario which brings out the worst in humans.

As the father and son travel across the USA they discover very few corpses that seem to have died from starvation. The food-situation makes people do unorthodox things like resort to cannibalism. This is the desperation that is caused by the apocalypse. The father and son discover a house that has a locked cellar filled with people. One of the people has been dismembered and eaten, but kept alive. The people are hiding, but when they discover that the father and son are not the inhabitants of the house, they flock around them and ask for help. Here the father understands that this cellar is a food-storage room and these prisoners are food for the inhabitants of the house[53]. The actions of the survivors shock the father (and son) even after spending seven years in the post-apocalyptic wasteland.

There is also the motif of isolation where the father and son seek loneliness, and separate themselves from the others. As already mentioned, the apocalypse has turned the survivors into desperate man-eating bandits, and the father is often pointing out that there is a difference between them and the others: *they* are the good guys and the other survivors are bad, and thus they should stay away from them. He also does not want to increase the group by adding Ely or the boy who the son sees from time to time, the reason of which could be supply limitations, or trust issues. More people mean less food and could possibly shorten their life span. All in all, these reasons make isolation seem as the best choice.

[53] McCarthy, C. 112-117:2006

### *3.3 Kirkman, Moore, Adlard and Rathburn's The Walking Dead: Compendium One*

*The Walking Dead* is a post-apocalyptic comic book/graphic novel by writer Robert Kirkman and artists Tony Moore, Charlie Adlard and colorist/shader Cliff Rathburn. It is a monthly black-and-white comic book series that depicts the life of certain survivors of a zombie apocalypse. The comic is still being released monthly, but *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* was the edition selected for this thesis. The compendium collects issues 1 to 48 (over 8 volumes) in one massive text, though it is not the complete text. *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* comic book/graphic novel was selected due to its dealing with survival strategies in groups, questions of the moral versus immoral, and complex, dynamic characters. It has the characters asking interesting questions such as "why go on" and if things will ever go back to normal. Since the comic was created, *The Walking Dead* has been adapted to a TV-series and a videogame approved by author Kirkman.

A comic or graphical novel uses sequences of images to narrate a story and produce meaning. Western comics or graphical novels have the readers reading at a pattern from top-left to bottom-right to understand the narrative. True Asian comics, or *manga,* are read starting at the back and right to left (fully reversed from the western version). Comics or graphical novels' basic building blocks are *panels.* A panel is a single frame that usually displays single instants of actions or stills, but can be varied with some actions lasting for a fraction of a second (most common) to longer periods of time[54]. Based on the style and art-form of the creator, a single page can have a various number of panels. Panels can be in any shape, but usually appear as rectangles. The shape and border of the panel can help the artist achieve the desired effect (e.g. a heart-shaped panel), and often a change to the panels are used to portray dreams, thoughts, other abstract elements or emphasizing actions. In fast-paced action sequences the panels reflect the chaos of the moment. This is done to add a sense of urgency and on-going events to the scene. Other times it is utilized to present a setting which the other panels happen in or around. Gary Larson is known for using only a single panel for his comic "The Far Side".

[54] Saraceni, M. 7:2003

The space between the panels (if any; a stylistic choice) is called *gutter* and is a very important element. Sarcani states that there is valuable information in the gutter as it contains the information between the panels to be filled in by the reader[55]. This can be a powerful tool to utilize in comics. In Appendix 12 we can clearly see the gutter represented as medium white borders, but other times there is a picture-in-picture effect where the first or last panel serves as a backdrop for the other panels inputted into insignificant parts of the backdrop-panel.

Text in comics can be divided into character-based (speech or thought balloons: commonly associated with comics) and narration-based (*caption*). Speech balloons appear as ovals with arrows that contain direct speech from a character within the panel. Thought balloons are often depicted as cloud-like shapes. Other variations occur and often they signify how the speech is said e.g. a dotted speech balloon often means a whispering speech, while a thunder-looking balloon might mean shouting; the balloons are mostly intuitive. The caption is often positioned at the top or bottom of the panel. Usually it signifies narration, comments or important information to help the reader retain the *flow* of the comic[56].

The difference between comics and graphic novels are discussed amongst workers of the trade. Though both are, in essence, the same (pages of panels telling a narrative) a graphic novel is defined as: "a fictional story that is presented in comic-strip format and published as a book"[57]. I will use both terms when discussing *The Walking Dead: Compendium One.*

*The Walking Dead: Compendium One*-graphic novel/comic book is in black and white. The drawing style is close to photo-realistic e.g. characters look like proportional humans and not exaggerated in any way. This is done to present a realistic and "serious" environment. An important thing to note is that the comic book changes artist after the six first issues. Tony Moore draws the first chapter, then Charlie Adlard takes over and draws chapter 2-8. While Tony Moore's focus is on backdrops, details and faces, Adlard's focus is on characters and shadowing. The difference can be seen in the Appendix section. The change gives the comic a

[55] Saraceni, M. 9:2003
[56] Ibid 10:2003
[57] Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com – "Graphic novel" (19.04.2013)

more realistic style (Moore's characters are more cartoon-like). This comic book features no caption or comment, only speech balloons and sound effects.

The plot (from issue 1 to 48) revolves around Rick Grimes, his family and other survivors, and how they survive the aftermath of a zombie-virus outbreak. They do not know what has caused the apocalypse, but they learn throughout the comic that everyone is infected and is reanimated when dead, which Rick states at the end of his speech: "we are the walking dead" (volume 4, issue 24). The environment is portrayed as abandoned or overrun and encounters with survivors are rare. Typical to the 'zombie apocalypse'-genre, the army, police force and other governmental aids are unable to exterminate the zombies. This leaves the civilians to fight the undead. Rick Grimes is in a coma when the apocalypse happens and wakes up in hospital to a changed world (much like Jim in the motion picture "28 Days Later"). Rick was a police officer before the apocalypse, and quickly assumes a role as 'leader' of the group. It is assumed that, due to his police background, he has great leader abilities along with a high *moral code* and an understanding of the law.

The zombies are a big threat to the survivors, though there are other threats too that are present and more emphasized in *The Walking Dead*, such as the relationship between the characters. Kirkman has made the characters dynamic, and changes within the survivors are often commented on by the other group members. Though the zombies pose a slow, deadly threat, the real danger lies within the survivors and how they cope with their situation. In this post-apocalypse setting former everyday events turn into life-threatening chores, and the survivors in the group have to put their trust in people they do not know, as expressed by Lori when approached by Carol's marriage proposal in issue 26 (volume 6). Carol approaches Lori with a proposal to marry her and Rick. Carol bases the proposal on facts that society has broken down, and so have the old laws and rules. They, as a group, can make their own rules. Carol also states that "things are never going to go back to the way they used to be," and this view is shared by many survivors. Axel, the prisoner, states that he has lived in the prison all his life and he will probably end his life there (which he does) rather than taking his chance out in the wasteland. He feels that he is more safe inside a prison than outside in the world with the zombies and other survivors.

In *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* group dynamics and shared ethics are represented by one leader figure. These values may not be shared by all the members of the group, but the leader steps forth as the decisive factor. The rest of the group then adapt to the decisions of the leader. There are three main groups of survivors who all experience the zombies, being the most obvious threat, differently. First there is the Atlanta group which consists of Rick with family and the other random survivors of the apocalypse. This is the group that forms and evolves during the course of the comic. During the apocalypse people were told to go to big cities as the military would protect the larger cities from zombies. Most of the survivors are people that avoided big cities or some that made it out alive. Upon introduction to the Atlanta group we learn that the leader is Shane, Rick's former cop colleague and best friend. The first issue shows Shane being unable to support Rick with cover-fire during a shootout pre-apocalypse, ultimately causing Rick to get shot. Post-apocalypse, Shane and Rick have different thoughts on how to best keep the survivors safe:

W1)

Rick: Yeah… that's actually what I came here to talk to you about
Shane: Oh?
Rick: We need to move camp. It's not smart to be this close to a city full of those things. It's just too goddamn dangerous.
Shane: Are you crazy? What happens when the government starts cleaning this mess up? They'll have to start with the cities… they'll find us faster if we stay here!
Rick: When are they coming, Shane? Tomorrow? Next week? It's getting really damn cold out here and it's only going to get worse. Not to mention what happened yesterday. It's too risky to stay so close to them.
Shane: It's too risky to go somewhere else. The fires are keeping us warm. There's plenty of firewood in this area. We'll be fine here. This is the best place to be for the rescue.
Rick: What makes you so sure we're even going to be rescued? Donna almost died yesterday. What if it was one of the kids? What if it was Carl? Nobody was prepared for this, Shane. You think those girls know how to fight? If we go someplace safer maybe we won't need to be rescued so soon. I'd rather be able to get a good night's sleep every once in a while than have to sit up at night hoping the government is still intact and is going to find us.
Shane: No, dammit! We're staying right here! We're safe here! Yesterday is one of the few isolated incidents. This is the safest to be. Rick…we can protect these people. We'll be rescued here. If we go hide in the country it could take them months to find us. We've got to stay here.
Rick: Okay…if you feel that certain that it's for the best of us…fine. We'll stay. But if we're going to try and hold out here we're going to need more guns. If Donna had been carrying one yesterday she could have just turned around and shot that thing. Everyone here is going to need to carry a gun at all times.
Shane: How are we going to find enough guns for that?
Rick: I'll figure something out.[58]

[58] Kirkman, R. 2009: volume 1, issue 4 (Appendix 2-3)

Rick and Shane are both strong personalities, and they both want to keep the group safe, but in their own way. Shane wants things to stay the way they are: possibly a hint that he is not really happy with having Rick back. Rick understands that if the government has not done anything by now the possibility of a later rescue is unlikely. Regardless Rick obeys Shane's command, which proves that Rick is a 'team player' and not only understands the chain-of-command, but also quickly adapts himself to the current plan. As Rick discovers later, he too has changed, as shown by his "you kill, you die" rule amongst the group.

In post-apocalyptic environments the laws of the pre-apocalypse are often being portrayed as the correct ethical choice. It seems logical to thrust the leadership of the group on Rick, a former police deputy, to uphold order, justice and national law within the group. It is a great responsibility, no doubt, to ensure the safety of the group, keep the group sane and positive, and still uphold a democratic system to minimize the possibilities of disagreeing/revolt: Rick has to make decisions to best suit the group. From several close encounters with zombies we learn that this group has both respectful and fearful attitudes towards the zombies. The Andrea-Amy incident (volume 1 issue 5) shows the reader that they know how to deal with the zombies and they know what happens when bitten by a zombie. Another choice made by Rick that is both unethical and illegal (based on pre-apocalypse laws), is for Carl to carry a handgun. Rick knows this is against the old laws, but still issues the handgun to Carl. Carl saves Rick's life by shooting Shane: did Rick ultimately make the right decision?

The second group we encounter suffers the consequences of poor leader choices, but has managed to stay alive. This group is called the farm group as they are residing at a farm house and is led by Hershel, farmer and religious father. Hershel keeps his family safe in the farm house and has livestock and produce, but his knowledge about the zombies is limited. Rick learns that he keeps all the zombies in the barn, something that terrifies the Atlanta group. Rick sees the zombies as undead monsters while Hershel see it as sick people. In a heated discussion between Hershel and Rick regarding the zombie-barn, Hershel argues against killing the zombies because most of them are family members, and that they are heavily secured within the barn (so they cannot escape):

W2)

Hershel: Killing them?! You've just been killing them?!

Rick: We're putting them out of their misery, and keeping them from killing us! Those things aren't human. They're undead monsters. They're trying to eat us for God's sake!

Hershel: You don't know why! You don't even know what's wrong with them. Nobody does. We don't know a damn thing about what happened or what's going on.

Rick: I know those things are trying to kill us—and that the less of them there are out there the safer we'll be! And I know it's not smart to have a mess of them pinned up not thirty feet from your goddamn house! We should go in that barn right now and shoot every goddamn one of them in the head. It's not safe for them to be here! We need to kill them before they kill us!

Hershel: My son is in there God dammit![59]

Hershel is right on some points: they don't know what happened and if there is a cure. Hershel's method however conflicts with Rick's way of dealing with zombies, and he feels he has responsibility for his group: to assure them they are safe. Again, Rick shows that he is not their leader by accepting Hershel's decision: Rick could have entered the barn and killed every zombie on his own. Even so, this has become the farm group's method of handling the zombies, and though not everybody in the group agrees, they do not question the leader in his decisions. An incident later, though, makes Hershel see that these people are no longer who they used to be; they are undead monsters that do not care about familiar faces.

The third group found in *The Walking Dead* is the group in Woodbury led by the Governor. The Governor appears as the antagonist of the comic. He presents himself as a 'ringmaster' for the people of Woodbury by staging arena fights to entertain them. This seems to be his main focus in addition to stealing supplies by posing as an ally, then torturing, looting and killing the survivors. Though the Governor can be said to keep the citizens of Woodbury content, he shows no sign of mercy when dealing with visitors or outside survivors. The dystopian nature of Woodbury comes from the unethical way the community is driven. Woodbury seems to be constantly fighting with other factors/factions (settlements, survivors, army supply convoys etc.), and many of the guards and workers under the Governor do not approve of how things are done. The only way to keep the people happy, which seems to be of great importance to the Governor, is to stage arena fights where contesters fight among chained 'biters' (zombies). The Governor himself is a complex

[59] Kirkman, R. 2009: volume 2, issue 11 (Appendix 4-5)

character who surrounds himself with death. In his house he has a wall of fish tanks that contain severed zombie heads, as well as a little zombified girl chained in a closet. The girl, Penny, presumably a family member, is kept to remind him of better days. To keep her hunger in check he feeds her strangers. The wall of severed zombie heads is either kept to familiarize himself with, and normalize, the zombies, or as trophies. It is also hinted that the Governor has attempted the act of cannibalism (volume 5, issue 29). This, along with all the killings, makes him an evil character.

The above is relevant when discovering how the post-apocalyptic environment forces everybody into new scenarios. What they know is that the dead are walking, but they do not know if they can be cured. Later Rick discovers that everybody is infected with the virus. This means that everybody is a potential zombie unless dealt with before the transformation occurs. It is typical for zombie fiction that blood transfusion (through biting or clawing) will introduce the body to the virus thus rendering the victim's body infected. By experiencing the zombies differently, they develop survival strategies based on their experiences. Rick treats the zombies as evil monsters and kills them on sight, while Hershel quietly retreats to his home and sees them, as Jones states, "victims of the plague"[60].

The zombies prove little threat to the town of Woodbury since it is walled in and monitored by guards. Woodbury is well protected as regular raids and killing-missions (posing as "friendlies") have supplied them with weapons from the National Guard. The Governor uses the zombies as entertainment both in the arena and in his house ("fifty-seven channels and nothing on…"[61] volume 5, issue 29). The leader's voice is reflected again in the people as they expect to be entertained by the arena fights. Michonne, Glenn and Rick all show their disgust towards the staged fights saying it is barbaric and risky. These three groups have their own way of encountering and handling the zombies, which demonstrates the difference in morality and group dynamics in this post-apocalyptic world. How the group deals with the zombies is mostly decided by the leaders. The dystopian Woodbury is ruled by the two-faced governor where zombies are rare and used as actors in entertainment. The farm group is led by religious and oldest-of-the-group Hershel who believes that the zombies should be kept alive and cured since

[60] Jones, D. 160:2002
[61] regarding the 57 severed zombie heads, his trophy wall.

they are just people with an illness. Rick Grimes understands that the infected are no longer people, but undead monsters that are nothing like their living counterparts, thus they must be destroyed if the group is to remain safe and stay alive. As the Governor sees survivors as food for zombified Penny, Rick sees survivors as possible aids to their cause and new members of his community. Similarly, Hershel also welcomes Rick and friends to his farm. Hershel says that the Atlanta group is welcome to stay while Carl recuperates from his gunshot wound. Consequently, we may say Hershel is wise enough to trust the Atlanta group, but naïve when it comes to the zombie problem.

The leader has to make tough and maybe unpopular decisions for the group. When Rick kills Dexter he believes he is making it better for the rest of the group. This causes the group to decide that some pressure must be taken off Rick, and a new committee of leaders is selected that consists of Rick, Tyreese, Dale and Hershel. Rick realizes that as the world changes he is changing with it. Many of the characters change or experience traumatic events that make them lose hope; Tyreese has a mental breakdown when his daughter is killed in the failed suicide-pact she had with her boyfriend (volume 3, issue 14), Carol also has a mental breakdown that eventually leads to her death after her failed relationship with Tyreese (volume 7, issue 41-42), and Patricia makes some odd individual choices after her on-and-off-again boyfriend Otis dies when aiding Thomas (volume 3, issue 18). Many short-term relationships are spawned as survivors seek comfort, trust, love and affection in a ruined world.

Notions of hope for the future are also central to *The Walking Dead*. Lori's pregnancy and the birth of Judith Grimes proved that life could be created in the post-apocalyptic setting. As mentioned before children are a symbol of hope for the future, so when Judith is killed in the final assault on the prison it could possibly be a foreshadowing of a life without hope or a hopeless situation (this is where *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* ends). Carl is the 7-8-year old son of Rick Grimes who has witnessed a lot of death and become hardened to the life of the post-apocalypse. He defied death when shot by Otis, and saved Rick by killing Shane in volume 1 issue 6. Rick has told Carl on several occasions that if anything happens to Rick while he is out on an errand, Carl has to take care of the rest of the family (Judith and Lori). On the contrary to the foreshadowing Judith, Carl proves to be a hope for the future by surviving the post-apocalyptic setting and being able to make drastic decisions and lead people on some

occasions. Heavily burdened by all the events, Carl proves to be a valuable asset to the Atlanta group from start (saving Rick) to finish (killing zombies). The first encounter with human evil factor is when the Atlanta group is introduced to the Governor. This will be further discussed in the scene section (4.3).

## 4.0 Group vs. Solo effort: the difference

The optimal solution or answer to the post-apocalyptic wasteland is the re-establishment of a new, functioning civilization: making the world how it once was. All the protagonists have memories of how life used to be pre-apocalypse, and this is how they hope the future will be. Rick Grimes and a group of survivors are ready to start a new civilization. All they need is a sanctuary, a place to start their new lives free of threats from, in *Compendium One*, the Governor. The father (*The Road*), even though he is dying, decides to travel south since they probably will not survive the winter. The father's only goal is for the boy to be safe and to live; this is his only goal, but the sign of hospitality and the start of civilization that is presented in the end is a welcoming one. Neville is all alone and isolated. He decides to try and fix the problem on his own, with the dream of a new civilization in his mind. This is what he is fighting for and the reason for not giving up. He gathers books and texts to try and learn of diseases and eventually try to make an antidote for it. Civilization, it seems, has already started anew and Neville is not a part of it; he is hated and feared by it.

There are pros and cons to both solo and group scenarios. Following are scenes from the texts that mainly discover an encounter with evil produced by the apocalypse. The scenes will also talk about the difference in surviving concerned with the amounts of survivors in each group. The more people a group consists of the better the chance is to settle and restart civilization. But being in a large group also has problems. Most of the protagonists are fighting for the future to become like their memories. Here specific passages will be presented to better discover the evil of man and how it possibly supersedes the external threat.

### *4.1 "Charcoal Baby" – The Road*

The definition of 'bad survival' is to focus solely on staying alive and using any means necessary to achieve this goal for *oneself*. This might mean breaking laws from the pre-apocalypse times, but concerning this survival strategy everything becomes a possible asset. Earlier (chapter 2.8) Kant's philosophy on morals explained that everything *except* using another human to achieve something is "allowed". It can be noted to be an egotistical way of surviving, slaughtering other survivors to steal their supplies and eating them to minimize the spending of said supplies. The apocalypse can be said to force people into making bad decisions. The following scene from *The Road* depicts the father and son's encounter with bad survival strategies and evil behavior. This is their encounter with evil and the father and son both acknowledge that it is horrid behavior. The movie-version decided to drop this scene possibly due to the ugliness of it. The scene shows the desperation of mankind and what they are capable of; how far will people go to survive in the post-apocalyptic landscape? The father and son roam the destroyed wasteland towards the shore. They follow a tower of smoke in the sky towards a camp:

> They walked into the little clearing, the boy clutching his hand. They'd taken everything with them except whatever black thing was skewered over the coals. He was standing there checking the perimeter when the boy turned and buried his face against him. He looked quickly to see what had happened. What was it? he said. What is it? The boy shook his head. Oh papa, he said. He turned and looked again. What the boy had seen was a charred human infant headless and gutted and blackening on the spit. He bent and picked him up and started for the road with him, holding him close. I'm sorry, he whispered. I'm sorry.[62]

This scene proves to be an epiphany to the father as both the father and son are "hungry all the time"[63], and both are shocked by this crime against nature. This encounter further strengthens the response given to the son's question earlier; "Are we still the good guys? he said. Yes, we're still the good guys. And we always will be."[64] They would never perform such an unspeakable act no matter how hungry they are. This further strengthens the identity of the father and the son as good guys. Matthew Mullins questions what it means to be human when the ethical notion has been overrun by survival impulses[65], and if there are rules when it comes to survival? Survival impulses sometimes cloud moral and ethical judgments. This is not a decision the father and son

[62] McCarthy, C. 211-212:2006
[63] Ibid 32:2006
[64] Ibid 81:2006
[65] Mullins, M. 82:2012

would have made, for instance the father would never killed and eaten his own son. Apparently the father discovers the horrors of man during their trip and witnessing cannibalism twice on their journey, stating that these men are not the good. This presents the survivor with a choice based on ethics how best to survive. The father always knows what they will do if they are captured or if *hope* were to vanish, and he even teaches his son how he should do it if they are caught. Concerning Mullins' question the two types of survival label you a "good guy" or a "bad guy" according to *The Road.* In section 3.2 I explained how the father and son identify themselves as "good guys". Thus by separating themselves from the others, they are branding the others as "bad guys".

This scene may be said to represent the mood of the novel; gloomy, inhuman and desperate. The burned infant demonstrates desperation and the total decline of man as a *civilized* being—the egocentric notions of man that appear when survival means cooking and eating a human infant. The boy states that they would never eat a baby, and would instead take it with them and take care of it[66] distancing them from the others and showing humanity. This statement also proves that the boy has a constructive hope for the future. The burning of the infant also points towards the future-aspect, and as already most of the cities and nature are in ruins, now the future of man, here represented by a charcoaled baby, lies burned in the ashes destroyed by the desperation of the 'new world'. The father and son are appalled by the scene, and also by the statement towards the hopeless future this sight presents from the population that remains.

This scene further strengthens my argument that there are good ways of survival and bad ways of survival. Though the boy is the purest example of good survival by standing for a sense of humanity, hospitality and future prospects, the question of his survival becomes a vital one when teamed up with the more bad-aligned survivor in his father. The father is not inherently a bad survivor, but one can say he is tainted by the setting. He is also partly a good survivor, but becomes cautious and hostile due to his goal which is to protect his son. He lacks the fundamental ethics and humanity contained within the boy, represented as a fire, and can be said to have a dichotomy of good and bad in him. In capturing the thief he exacts revenge based on 'chaotic good' and 'an eye for an eye'-logics while the boy pleads with his father to help him

[66] McCarthy, C. 213:2006

instead, showing the boy's civil and humane ideas. The argument that the man becomes cautious and hostile to protect his son is a valid one. On a side note, being cautious and hostile are not the only things that describe a 'bad survivor', as stated earlier, but the struggle of the father in *The Road* is notable. The main difference between the man and the bandits proves to be their survival strategies. The father seeks shelter and isolation for him and his son while the others seek people, not for company but for food and supplies. Being a bandit or a 'bad survivor' implies having no rules at all and behaving solely based on the need to survive.

Cannibalism is a motif that is often seen in post-apocalyptic fiction. It shows how desperate the survivors are, and how hard it is to survive in the post-apocalypse without turning on each other. It is also the trait of a monster according to the criteria drawn up by Gilmore. In "The Book of Eli", Eli encounters a band of raiders on his journey. Eli is lured into the bandit trap by a female 'decoy' that manipulates him by screaming out in pain and playing his own humanity and ethics out against him. When Eli, a good survivor, attempts to approach the girl to aid her, bandits spring the ambush and attack him. After a struggle, the female decoy tells Eli that the raiders' plan was to kill him and then eat him. The good survivor Eli, like the boy from *The Road*, wants to aid his fellow man, but Eli is fooled by the bandits. This same tactic is often applied by bandits in the videogame "DayZ" where other players use the chat, arranged to talk to other players, to call for help from other players. When someone responds to the call and comes to aid the said player, there might be an ambush waiting to kill the player coming to aid him. Being a video game, death does not cause the game to end as you can start over again, but this time you might have gained new knowledge and decide to stay cautious (the man from *The Road*) and *not* help players. The father in the novel is without such a luxury, thus staying cautious all the time. Returning to the motif of cannibals; in the videogame "Fallout 3" (Bethesda Game Studios, 2008) the wanderer (the name given to the player) encounters the small city of Andale. The wanderer is greeted by joyous families that state that Andale is "the greatest town in Virginia", but the town holds a dark secret. By searching the basement of one of the houses, the wanderer will find freezers and refrigerators filled with a substance called 'strange meat' which is later revealed to be human meat. This causes the settlement to become hostile if the role of the player is a 'good survivor'. If the player has chosen the role as a 'bad survivor', and already chosen the perk[67] 'cannibal', the settlers of Andale will respond differently towards the player.

[67] A permanent advantage chosen by the player when enough experience is gained.

The act of cannibalism is a monstrous trait applied by survivors in the post-apocalyptic wasteland; when the survivors have sunk this low they have lost their humanity, especially in the case of 'killing the future' to survive a little longer. According to the scene, the cannibals do understand what they have done by fleeing from the 'spit'. Either they are returning cannibals, or they try to escape the crime they just committed. Nonetheless *homicidal cannibalism* is regarded as the traits of a monster and a crime making these survivors practitioners of bad survival; evil. The son asks his father if they are still the good guys to which the father retorts yes, they are the good guys[68], and continuing this trend, the good guys will never attempt the act of cannibalism[69]. These two events are linked together as they both deal with the protagonists encounter with evil. The cannibal-scene creates a distance between the protagonists and the others. This gap is further enhanced when the boy states that they would never attempt cannibalism and instead care for the boy. When the father tells the son that they are still the good guys, it defines the difference between the gap; the father and the son are the good guys, while the others are evil.

The reason why the father chooses to isolate themselves is to avoid these scenarios. The apocalypse has made laws and norms obsolete (to the *bad survivor*): no governmental body is around to uphold the laws so no punishment will be dealt to bandits. The newer fictions (2000-) regarding living in a post-apocalyptic world revolve around simply surviving in the world, fictions like Atwood's novel *Oryx and Crake* (2003), previously-mentioned game-mod "DayZ" (2010), and Kirkman's comic book/graphic novel *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* (2009). A minor comparison of historic genre evolution comes later in the thesis (see section 5.0). This scene presents the importance of company in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. The father and son are dependent on each other for important input and to keep ones humanity and ethics, especially in the presence of evil. This is represented by identifying the act of cannibalism as vulgar and wrong. The notion that they both agree upon this is something the readers can sympathize with, and clearly states the healthy relationship the father and the son have. A clear example will be shown in the next section and how important a secondary opinion on survival is for survivors.

This passage that I have named "charcoal baby" shows the dichotomy between good and bad survival. The post-apocalyptic setting has forced the survivors into desperate situations rendering

[68] McCarthy, C. 32:2006
[69] Ibid 213:2006

them inhumane by doing acts that are evil. This passage shows evil within humans again. Just like we will discover in *I am Legend* the humans are the ones that exhibit evil behavior based on poor ethical choices and a forgotten moral code. This is what the apocalypse does to the human survivors. The passage also shows the very element that Neville is lacking that could have saved him from becoming evil: a keeper of the fire and carrier of moral and human values.

### *4.2 "After the Night" – I am Legend*

Robert Neville is struggling to survive every day. Matheson has used inspiration from Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) to create a new breed of vampire creatures that would further inspire Stephen King, George M. Romero and *The Walking Dead*. The scene I have chosen is the very start of the novel where Neville is doing his daily routine. The scene shows the hostility of the creatures and will further explain Neville's actions toward them:

> He walked around the house in the dull gray afternoon, a cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth, trailing threadlike smoke over his shoulder. He checked each window to see if any of the boards had been loosened. After violent attacks, the planks were often split or partially pried off, and he had to replace them completely; a job he hated. Today only one plank was loose. Isn't that amazing? he thought[70].

The narrator has access to Neville's thoughts and opinions as noted in the scene above, but is not all-knowing (omniscient). Neville appears as the voice and as the focalizer and the readers experience the setting through him; through Neville the readers learn to hate the vampires and sympathize with him. An important phrase to notice about this passage is "pried off" which means that someone/something has been tearing at Neville's walls.

Neville's daily routine consists of mending and fortifying the house so that it can withstand the nightly attacks. Matheson presents the reader to a classic dichotomy of night and day where night is the curse and day is the sanctuary. Instead of travelling and escaping, Neville lays claim to the land and fortifies himself to fight off these creatures that now rule the land. The possibility that Neville could survive and create a future society does exist, and this is the reason why he keeps struggling. Later in the novel Neville discovers that he is the odd one out and that he is trespassing on the land of the new breed.

It is an interesting fact that most dystopias are set in the aftermath of an apocalyptic event. The reason for the apocalyptic cleansing is usually to rid mankind of all harmful and malevolent

[70] Matheson, R. 1:1999

technology we have created and start anew—almost like a reset-button for the world. This is true of novels such as Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* (2003) where mankind has started playing God in creating pills to prolong life and mutating animals only to be *useful* to man by grotesquely altering them. Danny Boyle's motion picture "28 Days Later" (2002),a movie inspired by *I am Legend*, depicts a similar breakout of the virus "rage" and the number of infected outnumber those uninfected. A group of survivors listen to a radio broadcast that tells them that salvation lies within a military camp outside Manchester, and the answer to the infection is there. When they reach the camp, they discover the truth and the beginning of a dystopian society. Why is it that such 'cleansing' so often results in dystopian societies?

In the chosen scene, Neville survives in a very hostile environment. He is attacked from all directions and this scene depicts that there are usually more plank-boards loosened from his house. During daytime, he has to refortify his house and collect supplies— a chore the narrator tells us that he hates. True to the genre, food and water are hard to obtain, even though Neville has his freezer filled, powered by a generator, with meat. He still has to take big risks going scavenging for food. Still I would feel more satisfied if the novel told more of these instances. This is a primary motif of the post-apocalyptic fiction genre, and that is why I chose this scene to represent the survival theme of post-apocalyptic fiction.

The vampires are out to get Neville and drink his blood, but have to go through the house to get to him. The focalization through Neville tells the readers that the vampires are evil. Neville is at this point unaware of the difference in survival strategy when it comes to the two types of vampires. He decides to survive and perhaps live long enough to witness a new hope for the human kind. Further on in the novel, Neville learns the difference between the 'living' and the 'true' vampires, but they are both gathered outside his house to taunt him. Neville does not experience any of the more civil vampires, or notice any intelligence-difference between the two vampire types, until he encounters Ruth who, although she is infected, displays some of the signs of a healthy human (outside in sunlight, healthy skin color revealed to be make-up). It is only when Neville is told the truth about the infected that he realizes what he has done: is this where his survival turns out to be bad survival?

The question concerning ethics is in the eye of the focalizer. If Ruth was the focalizer then Neville would be the ruthless killer that stalks them and kills them in their sleep. The infected are afraid of Neville. Just like Neville, the infected have to combat both the 'true' vampires and a second threat. Concerning good survival one can argue for both factions; infected and human, that they are doing what they believe to be right and what they believe to be best for the survival of their kind. Neville, who is possibly the last man alive, survives to encounter other humans and eventually restart civilization, taking back Los Angeles. He fights the hordes of vampires by stealthily taking them out by day, slowly thinning their numbers and getting an advantage in the fight. Neville spots both kinds of vampires outside his house, but the behavior of the 'living' vampire is negligible from the 'true' vampires. He states that these creatures are nowhere near civilized and that they even attack each other sometimes: "And that was all. After that they all went away weaker, he knew, than when they had come. Unless they had attacked one of their own. They did that often. There was no union among them. Their need was only their motivation."[71] The point is that both vampire types are out to kill Neville, and this is why he defends himself against them.

The narration, as mentioned earlier, is told through Neville's eyes, and this biases the reader to sympathize with Neville and his struggle. If Ruth had been the focalizer, it would have allowed the readers to sympathize with the infected, their brave battle against their disease, and share their hatred for the stalker that kills their family in their sleep. Discovering the ethical dilemma following the focalizer-notion, the difference between good and bad survival depends on future prospects, humanity and reasons for survival. To the infected, Neville represents evil and threat of Dracula, but to Neville the vampires (both 'true' and 'living') represent evil.

Neville is determined to survive because he has hopes for the future and for a new civilization: "There was, of course, the faint possibility that others like him existed somewhere, trying to go on, hoping that someday they would be among their own kind again. But how could he ever find them if they weren't within a day's drive of his house?"[72]. He believes that there is not room for both vampires and humans together, and he wants to reclaim the world starting with Los Angeles. His intentions are noble, and killing the *evil* that hinders human population is something he has

[71] Matheson, R. 11:1999
[72] Ibid 18:1999

to do to pave way for the new society. Of course the notion of evil in *I am Legend* can be discussed. Jones says in his essay: "The vampires are victims of the plague, not the embodiments of evil. The monstrosity is his"[73] stating that Neville is the evil in this context, and the vampires are unfortunate victims. "The other(s)" will always be defined as the evil by the norm, but in this post-apocalyptic world the norm is what appears to be the oddity. Though Jones' statement is a good argument against Neville, the true vampires, victims or not, have to kill in order to stay alive. This mimics Neville's survival strategy, but because of their difference in future prospects and ideology, Neville still comes out as more decent; a character who the readers can identify with. His survival is focused on a more ambitious hope; the dream of a new civilization, and he even does research to find a possible cure. These are all things he does to help civilization's rebirth, and none of these notions are egotistical. Every time Neville is approached by non-vampires that pose as friendly, he sees hope and welcomes it (the dog and Ruth), even though he has been tainted by all the time spent in isolation, and being alienated possibly draining his humanity:

> All these years, he thought, dreaming about a companion. Now I meet one and the first thing I do is distrust her, treat her crudely and impatiently. And yet there was really nothing else he could do. He had accepted too long the proposition that he was the only normal person left. It didn't matter that she looked normal.[74]

Somehow the infected manage to create a pill that eases the disease, and slowly makes the illness manageable. Their story is told through Ruth, but the reader isn't familiarized too much with the infected. They have managed to subdue some of the symptoms that come with vampiris, but still share appearance and other traits with the 'true' vampires. "It had been a clear sign. He had learned over a year before that garlic was an allergen to any system infected with the vampiris bacillus […] And the woman had reacted in the wrong way"[75] . They have to deal with both the 'true vampires' and the daylight stalker, Neville, and have already established a thriving community of infected.

[73] Jones, D. 160:2002
[74] Matheson, R. 116:1999
[75] Ibid 118:1999

Regarding Jones' statement about the victims of the plague means that Neville as well, immune or not, is a victim. In the chosen scene the vampires are the aggressive ones even though they are 'victims'. Using the Gilmore guidelines and the OED explanation of evil the vampires, although they are victims of the plague, possess both qualities: they eat human flesh/drink blood, and are morally depraved. I would like to confirm them as evil by following these guidelines and based on their preternatural abilities.

But now let us focus on Neville. To prove that Neville is a practitioner of bad survival and thus mildly evil, we have to go beyond this scene. The scene itself presents Neville as a defender of the human race, and that he doesn't interfere with the nightly events too much; this is when he regains his strength to *attack* during the day. During the day, Neville travels through the city and kills every 'vampire' he can find and burns them. Basically, the two vampire types do not *hunt* for each other. They all gather in front of his house and occasionally fight each other. This makes Neville the only enemy of the infected. Neville states that they do fight sometimes, and Ruth explains that the infected have to deal with both the vampires and Neville, but the vampires are more concerned with Neville. This is probably because he is human and vampires and zombies[76] always prefer human blood/flesh over any other. At the time of his actions (killing the infected) Neville never questions his motifs, but after he learns of the new society, he understands his *evil* ways. He is the true vampire, the true monster to the infected: stealing their lives and killing their families slowly ruining the new society. To the infected, Neville is in fact the antagonist. He is the bandit and the evil killer. Though he never attempts the act of cannibalism, he is unaware of the greater good that is spawning; a new start for the infected humans. Killing humans is still a crime, even in a post-apocalyptic setting.

This scene presents how prolonged exposure to an external evil (zombies, vampires) will eventually eat away at the survivor's humanity. In addition, isolation will force the survivor to lose his notion of ethics, humanity and civility. Isolated and alone, Neville loses his humanity and his code of conduct resulting in an internal evil being exposed. This internal evil is what prompts Neville to accept his death in the end, when he is confronted with the evil of himself. He is surviving in his fortress, being attacked from all sides and each day he has to inspect the

[76] Brooks, M. 8-9:2004

outside of his house and check for damage. This is crucial for his survival; that his fortress is in functioning order and that the *hostile* vampires can not get access to him. The father and son (*The Road)* are seeking what Neville has, isolation, while the alienated Neville seeks a companion to survive with. A companion would most likely prolong Neville's life and change his fate as it probably would present him with another goal. Now shown the importance of company, the next section will show that there are differences with groups and how they survive. This passage of *I am Legend* shows how the post-apocalypse cause Neville to lose his humanity and, in the end, being the biggest threat of the story. This novel depicts a different view on the post-apocalypse through focalization. Neville is basically the Dracula of this story. The last human in this post-apocalyptic fiction tries to shield himself from the evil outside his door, but ends up being the ultimate evil all along.

### *4.3 "Meet the Governor"—The Walking Dead: Compendium One*

Picking a scene from *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* comic book/graphic novel proves to be harder than expected as character-defining and molding events occur throughout the text. I have selected the scene that I feel best represent 'evil' in *The Walking Dead: Compendium One*. This scene is available in the appendix section. The chosen scene from this text is when readers are introduced to Woodbury where Glenn, Michonne and Rick are captured by The Governor. The Governor is a two-faced bad survivor who runs Woodbury on lies and dangerous, deadly games. After they have witnessed a helicopter crash Glenn, Michonne and Rick set out to locate it and help the survivors. Upon finding the crashed helicopter they discover that the crew has been taken by someone. They follow the tracks left by the assailants and are led to Woodbury. This is where the readers are introduced to the Governor for the first time.

W3)

Rick : Governor?

The Governor: I wear the title with a smile. It's more of a joke than anything else. But fuck it, who's out there to say otherwise? I almost went with president – but I thought I sounded too silly. Always did want to be the Governor. Saw my chance and took it. Since you're the one who's doing the talking for now – what's your story, **stranger**?

Michonne: No story. We've been travelling since the turn, saw the helicopter and was close enough to investigate – just not closer than you, right?

The Governor: Believe I was talking to the man, here, ma'am. I hope you understand.

Rick : That's our story. Shit hit the fan. We've been walking ever since. What about you? You seem to be holding this place down pretty good. What do you have here? A couple of blocks fenced off? That's nice.

The Governor: Four blocks actually. We're working on the fences for the fifth. […]

Rick : You sound lucky. Where is it you're taking us? We're walking toward the light. What is that? Baseball game?

The Governor: Well, stranger. It looks like we're not the only ones lucky around here. You showed up on the perfect night. There's a fight tonight. Curious about all the electricity? Fucking rednecks. They loved their dirt track racing so damn much they had a big ass generator installed […]

Rick : So what? You make the zombies fight each other?

The Governor: Zombies? No, a biter fight ain't no kind of entertainment. We got real live people going into the circle. Two enter – they beat the hell out of each other – put on a good show. Biters are just extra motivation.

Rick : You serious?

The Governor: I am sensing a bit of disapproval, stranger. In case you ain't noticed, the cable's out. Ain't a whole lot in the way of entertainment to be had. People get restless without entertainment.

Rick : You fence off this area – make it safe and then cart in a pile of roamers for entertainment. Not very safe, governor.

The Governor: At first, yeah – We had a few accidents. Once we started feeding them though… They got pretty docile. Not much of a threat now. Bruce, close the door, please.
Rick : Wait – You're feeding them? What the hell are you feeding them?
The Governor: Well, **stranger**. We're feeding them **strangers**.
Rick : So that's it then? You're going to feed us to your zombie pets? Is that what you did to the people in the helicopter?
The Governor: Yeah – that couple is getting chopped up right now in preparation for the reward feast that'll go down after the fight. Should be all gone by the time the sun comes up – that is unless one of our fighters gets too close to the biters and they're full after the fight. Which, sadly, does happen from time to time. They'll never admit it but that's why the people show up – that's why they love it so much.
Michonne: You sick fuck![77]

The layout is mostly uniform consisting of 4 to 9 panels per page (see Appendix 6-10). When an action is emphasized the panel is also enlarged to fit the page (one page, one panel, see Appendix 9). This is done at key moments to introduce the readers to events that force a twist or character developments like in Appendix 9: here the readers are introduced to the true nature of the Governor and how he deals with strangers depicted in one emphasized panel. Appendix 8 shows an enlarged panel taking both pages with numerous smaller panels below. Here this effect is used to present what the focalizer sees (in this case: Rick) and occurs parallel to the narration below.

This scene shows the duplicity of the Governor; friendly at first, but soon revealing his evil side. The Governor (Brian Blake) is the antagonist of this compendium. Though the Governor might be a complex character, he is evil throughout. In this scene he explains how he deals with "strangers": torturing them for information, stealing their supplies, and then "chopping" them (the helicopter crew) up as food for the zombies. By addressing Rick, Michonne and Glenn as strangers he tells them that he will kill them and/or feed them to the zombies. It almost seems that he takes better care of the zombies than he does of humans/strangers. Here we see how a settlement can be tainted by a bad leader (the Governor) and how a large set of followers are hard to please. The people demand entertainment to stay happy, and it is the Governor's task to keep food and water available for all the citizens of Woodbury.

The Governor is the leader of Woodbury and has set up a "real" rural town of 4-5 blocks with over 40 inhabitants. The town gets electricity from a big generator, and it is uncertain where the

[77] Kirkman, R. 2009: volume 5, issue 27-28 (Appendix 6-10)

town gets their food and water supply from. One assumption is that the Governor sends out raid parties to nearby towns (Fayetteville and Atlanta). This scene also tells us that chopping up strangers is something that occurs often assuming that the people of Woodbury are hostile, bad survivors, or victims of poor leadership. The Governor keeps his town medium happy with his protection and entertainment services, and he has built a new community with Woodbury: how does this make the Governor a bad survivor? The answer is how he administers his town. How the act of survival is done. The Governor admits in this scene to take advantage of survivors ("strangers") in bad situations, steal their supplies, and use them as zombie food. He keeps trophies of his human kills in his house and spends time staring at them, at his achievements. The people of Woodbury are protected by walls and by the Governor and his men. They can't leave and new additions can't enter (as 'strangers' are fed to zombies). This almost makes Woodbury feel like a prison, where the inhabitants have curfews and aren't allowed to carry weapons.

To keep the population happy/entertained the Governor has created a gladiator-like arena where scripted fights occur surrounded by zombies which the readers learn from this passage. This leads us to the assumption that the people of Woodbury are unhappy. This is further proved by the dismay of Dr. Stevens, Alice and Lilly. Continuing in vol. 5 issue 28 the Governor wants to know where Rick, Glenn and Michonne come from and where they got their gear (they are wearing prison riot gear). Based on their meeting with the Governor Rick, Glenn and Michonne understand that the Governor wants to gain this information to go and get their supplies and also kill the remaining survivors waiting at the prison. When they refuse to give him that information the Governor chops Rick's hand off, proceeds to mentally torture Glenn and rapes Michonne multiple times. This is nothing the Governor does to help his town. This is something he does because he is evil. He is the leader of a town that gets their supplies by killing and robbing survivors in need, and denies the inhabitants their freedom. In this scene he admits to breaking many of the old laws taking advantage of the post-apocalyptic situation.

This issue (volume 5, issue 28) is also the incident where the Governor admits the act of cannibalism. In his room with zombified Penny he questions how she can eat human flesh: "Even fresh, I don't see how you eat that stuff, really. I tried it – it's horrible. May taste different raw. But I'm not going to try it raw" (volume 5, issue 28). This may be a flashback to before Woodbury when maybe things were tough for the Governor (then known as Brian Blake); if it

was someone he killed and ate to stay alive. Nobody eats zombie flesh thus this taste was done on a murdered body, possibly by the Governor. This is another element that makes the Governor evil. An argument against the evil of the Governor is that even though the act of cannibalism was done only once or a couple of times, the Governor still managed to establish the town of Woodbury. This is true though it is uncertain when the Governor did this act, it still counts as inhumane. The Governor is still the character in the text that has killed most survivors, named or unnamed, and the act of cannibalism might have started his metamorphosis. When Brian Blake first encountered Woodbury, it was run by a senior member of the National Guard. Brian Blake killed this man thus completing his transformation to the Governor. Now he runs the town of Woodbury as a prison and rules as a supreme leader. When it comes to other people outside Woodbury, the Governor kills everybody and steals their supplies. The Governor captures Tyreese and Michonne as they attempt to attack Woodbury moments after the assault on the prison. They are both captured and the Governor shows up at the prison gates with Tyreese in chains. His offer is that they open the gates and surrender to Woodbury. If they refuse the Governor will kill Tyreese. The Governor proceeds to hack off Tyreese's head with Michonne's katana in a grizzly display of violence. He then returns to Woodbury and lies to the people of Woodbury:

W4)

Woodbury soldier: Well, uh… how did it go?

The Governor: How did it go? It didn't go well, that's how! It didn't fucking work! We tried to get them to open the gates — trade their man for access inside. We even threatened the man's life. These crazy –evil sons of bitches shot their own man! We had a bit of leverage and so they shot their own guy in the fucking head! They killed him so we couldn't use him against them!

Woodbury soldier: So, what do we do now?

The Governor: What do we do? We fucking kill every last one of them – that's what we do.[78]

This incident shows how the Governor lies to tilt the story in his favor. This might not be the first time the Governor has lied to the people of Woodbury. All the heads in the fish tanks may represent occasions where the Governor has lied to Woodbury as these seem to be incidents where the town has met with outsiders. The Governor according to the scene might be masking the truth from the survivors living in Woodbury. There is a possibility that they do not know

[78] Kirkman, R. 2009: volume 8, issue 46

what is really going on. The people of Woodbury may not know the truth about the helicopter crew. They too are in the fish tanks.

The Governor didn't rule Woodbury pre-apocalypse and before the apocalypse he probably didn't have the need to attempt the act of cannibalism. There is a novel linked with the Governor character called *The Walking Dead: Rise of the Governor*(2011) by Kirkman and Bonansinga that focuses on the life of Brian Blake before he became the Governor. The book tells of how the zombie apocalypse changed Brian Blake into the Governor, making him lose his humanity. Kirkman acknowledges, in an interview with the New York Times, Rick and the Governor as "two sides of the same coin" and *Rise of the Governor* tells the story of how a good man turns bad[79]. This statement tells that the zombie apocalypse has turned Brian Blake into the evil 'Governor' and made him more of a bad guy than the zombies themselves. The post-apocalypse forces Brian Blake into a metamorphosis transforming him into the character we see in *The Walking Dead: Compendium One*.

Rick has an epiphany later in the compendium where he questions his actions and how the post-apocalypse has changed him (W4). Here Rick discusses with Lori how he is tainted by the post-apocalyptic setting. Rick admits to having evil thoughts and how he feels most people of his group are expendable. The fact that Rick is questioning his own alignment and discussing it with Lori proves that Rick is aware of the situation. This is almost the same epiphany that Robert Neville has during the final pages of *I am Legend*. Rick has the luxury to share his thoughts with someone else to ease the burden, but Neville has no one to talk to; another point to how important company is. To be aware of one's evil grants the person the possibility to adjust their mindset and change it. Rick declares the Governor as evil and Rick does not want to share his ideology.

[79] Retrieved from http://www.artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com – "Rise of the Governor"

W5)

Rick: That's not even what I'm talking about. Killing Martinez—I didn't care—I don't. But it made me realize how detached I've become. I'd kill every single one of the people here if I thought it'd keep you safe. I know these people—I care for these people—but I know I am capable of making that sacrifice. I find myself ranking them sometimes—looking at them and thinking who do I like the most—who do I need the most—just in case something happened and I had to choose. I've seen so many die already—I have almost no attachment to these people at all anymore… and I could kill any one of them at any moment for the right reasons.

Does that make me evil? I mean… isn't that evil?

Lori: I—I don't know. [80]

In the post-apocalyptic setting the zombies turn out to be supporting cast as the real threat lies within the humans themselves. The zombies are the walking dead outnumbering the remaining survivor population, but the real threat is the humans. The zombies are dangerous and they are monsters; they portray every monster trait. The zombies eat human flesh and that is all they do; walk around in a virus induced trance, transformed into hideous monsters stalking humans. They don't think and they don't feel. They just eat. The difference between the zombies and the evil humans is that the humans have intellectual properties to use, and can take advantage of the situation of current chaos and flip it in their favor. The zombies are obviously evil, the humans can use cunning and manipulation, use a person's empathy and humanity against them to trick them. Concerning *I am Legend* Jones states that "the vampires are victims of the plague"[81] thus making them into a forced evil, while humans become monstrosities when faced in a desperate situation without any laws or rules to follow. This statement can also be applied to *The Walking Dead* as the plague turns survivors into a viral induced evil.

This analysis discusses how Brian Blake was turned into the Governor as a result of the apocalypse. This scene also discovers how humans in the post-apocalypse are rendered evil and present a bigger threat than the "external" evil. The apocalypse is the factor that pushes survivors of the apocalypse into evil. The Governor and Brian Blake can in many ways symbolize the dichotomy of man and the struggle between survivalist and moral behavior. The apocalypse, as noted from both Robert Neville (*I am Legend)* and the father and son (*The Road)* the apocalypse is a mental struggle as well as a physical struggle. This chapter also discovers that Rick has the

[80] Kirkman, R. 2009: volume 6, issue 36

[81] Jones, D. 160:2002

same issues, but confronts his thoughts by discussing it with Lori. Rick here explains to Lori how he has changed along with the world, become dead like the walkers, and lost humanity. Company allows Rick to talk about his feelings and lack of humanity, a choice Neville (*I am Legend*) does not have which proves to be his downfall. Neville, being alone, has no one to vent his mind to, and the ability to talk to another person is great aid for Rick in itself. Additionally, Kirkman acknowledges that Rick Grimes and Brian Blake are "two sides of the same coin"; meaning if Rick is good, the Governor is evil.

## 5.0 Comparison: Group dynamics, survival and evil

In this chapter I will compare the scenes chosen from each of the novels and contrast them and discover how evil is perceived and even spawned, and how it is affected by group dynamics. I will also discuss the differences between the earliest of the novels (*I am Legend*) and how it differs from the later texts. Has the sub-genre evolved during these 50-60 years?

These texts have similar focuses, but each text has different survival strategies and group compilations ranging from sole survivor Neville to the Atlanta group. The post-apocalyptic wasteland is a world shortly after a devastating catastrophe that has altered how people live, and in a world without rules or laws survival becomes a key element –something that is shown in *The Road*. The post-apocalyptic world places people in situations they don't want to be in which is true for these novels. McCarthy's novel highly depends on the theme of survival by, as seen in the chosen scene, creating a dangerous world where food and supplies are scarce. The scene chosen shows the desperation of people, and how they struggle to stay alive. An unknown couple decides to cook and eat a baby – this is how desperate the situation is.

For all the protagonists every day is a struggle to survive; while the father and son fight to survive hunger, thirst and the climate, Matheson presents Neville in a stationary fortress-like survival position. Rick and the Atlanta group choose to have a base-of-operation and go out on raids to gather supplies. The creatures in *I am Legend* are inactive by day and this gives Neville the opportunity to ransack and scavenge the city for supplies as well as fortify his house for the oncoming nightly attack. This is also true to *The Road* where the father and son scavenge for supplies everywhere they get to. This is an act that these three protagonists (Neville, father and son) would never do pre-apocalypse, but the present has been altered and the rules have changed. The same is true for *The walking Dead* as Glenn and Rick enter the city to find supplies and guns for the group. Does this mean there are still rules for survival? McCarthy in the chosen scene depicts a 'no holds barred'-scenario (totally unrestrained) when dealing with others than the protagonist. Matheson has the same example where Neville does have some rules that he follows as a 'builder' rather than a 'destroyer' –Neville seeks companionship and friendship instead of seeing Ruth as a resource-stealing scoundrel. *The Walking Dead* also has Rick Grimes upholding

the laws from the pre-apocalypse (more or less); this gives him moral precedence (of the group. Neville also accepts his fate when he discovers the new hybrid race, putting himself in their shoes to uncover that he is the threat to society proving that protagonists always have a *code of conduct* even in the post-apocalyptic scene. If you murder survivors in cold blood or/and take advantage of the post-apocalyptic situation, you are considered a 'bandit' which is the post-apocalyptic term for criminal thus concluding my point that protagonists, of the novels in focus, have a moral code and though survival is everything, everything is not 'permitted' to survive. According to the criteria determined earlier (guidelines) these bandits are morally depraved and thus; evil. The protagonists all have a certain evil within themselves that they must face during the apocalypse. The son has to ask his father if they are still the good guys, prompting that he is unsure and require assurance from his father. Rick talks to Lori about how the apocalypse has changed him and questions his own alignment, while Neville finally discovers that he is the evil one. By comparing the text's survival scenes we see what the survival aspect is heavily dependent on, only the context is different, and all protagonists though being is a survival state of mind, have a moral code.

### *5.1 Comparing the Atlanta group to Robert Neville*

Considering the number of survivors, the number of protagonists, we see the manner of survival changes from text to text. Robert Neville is a lone survivor. Comparing Robert Neville's options/decisions to the Atlanta group (at the time of the selected scene consists of 13 plus members) there will be big differences. Robert Neville's survival is solely based on one man's decision to stay alive. There is no democracy because there is only Neville. He has no other input thus his actions are purely based on his experiences and his thoughts on how to survive. He is a "lone wolf" though he wishes there were other survivors – in the encounter with Ruth he wishes for them to be together; Neville has hopes for the future and in his isolation and loneliness seeks company. The selected scene shows what Neville does to survive and how he keeps following the same recipe day after day. In Brooks' book *The Zombie Survival Guide* he states that it is important to stay home during the early days of the infection due to the fact that everybody will try and escape flooding the streets and roads making it impossible to escape and even damaging the situation. He also suggests doing all of the things Neville does to secure his home[82] thus at this point Neville is staying alive "by the book". During daytime Neville hunts for dormant vampires and kills them. This is a choice he has made to thin the numbers that attack him at night. He could have chosen to pack everything he owns into a car and drive off, but he chooses to stay. This is his decision and he does this because he *believes* it to be the right thing to do. The scene indicates that the vampires are attacking Neville's house during the night. This is why he is fortifying it. He gets no outside input nor has the luxury to discuss his actions with anybody else.

There are pros and cons for being alone in the post-apocalyptic setting. The pros are that Neville travels and acts alone; he is not dependent on anybody but himself; he has agency. He is not in charge of the lives of others, and every mistake he makes is his fault alone. Every item he scavenges becomes his property; he does not have to split the supplies with anybody; he is free to keep all the food and weaponry he finds. Also while he is alone, he does not have to consult the group on current living arrangements, decisions concerning the agenda of the day, or worry about casualties to his group.

[82] Brooks, M. 66-69:2004

By revisiting scene W1 we immediately discover the added tension within a group. Shane and Rick are both dominant role-takers who want to lead the Atlanta group. Shane wants the group to stay put while Rick argues that it is too dangerous to stay so close to the city centre. The group has affected Shane (romance with Lori, being appointed/assigned leader role) thus his decisions that should be for the best of the group might be clouded by personal feelings. Rick's proposition of change scares Shane and later in the issue prompts Shane to confront Rick regarding the situation:

> W6)
> Shane: I thought I could make it… I thought I could hold out… wait until they came and rescued us. They would have brought us nice beds…and hot showers and fresh clothes! They were coming, Rick. We were going to be okay!
> Rick: We still are, Shane. Everything's going to be fine!
> Shane: I can't live like this, Rick! I thought I could but I can't. I thought I could…and everything was going so good. She would have come around eventually…I know it. She would have.
> Rick: What?
> Shane: Everything was so perfect…until you came back!!
> Rick : God dammit, Shane! Stop this!!
> Shane: No, Rick…this is the only way! This is what has to happen…you weren't meant to come back…you weren't meant to live![83]

While Neville only has one person to think about, Rick has to keep the entire group happy and safe. Rick gains the trust of the group by doing odd-jobs and taking trips (for supplies) into the city. Rick does not want to strip Shane of his leader-role; he accepts Shane's decisions, but soon learns that certain members of the group question Shane's motifs (Dale, volume1, issue 3). This is an important point that tells that if the group is not happy they might rebel against the leader. This is why the Governor keeps his community happy with the arena fights.

In a group survival gets both tougher and easier; since there are more of you the group has more manpower to fend off hostile bandits, and scavenging for supplies becomes easier. A group big enough (the size of the Atlanta group) has the possibility to settle down (if they find a place safe enough) and start rebuilding. The downside is that more people mean more supplies are needed to keep everybody satisfied. The social aspect is another thing to take into consideration. A democratic system is needed to allow everybody to be heard to prevent rebellious acts. The

[83] Kirkman, R. 2010: volume 1, issue 6 (Appendix 11-12)

rebellious acts may prompt a coup of control and often (in the post-apocalyptic setting) result in deaths. Killing a close friend to assume control of a group is considered a crime and the act of someone who is mentally depraved (craving power). Rick is often in argument with both Shane and Hershel on how they lead their group, but never resorts to violence.

A lone survivor decides every action for him or herself. He/she does not have to cope with several different opinions on where to set up camp or how to deal with attackers. They are however easily outnumbered and only carry a limited number of supplies (unless he/she has a vehicle). The mental strain of being alone is also another thing the lone survivor has to cope with as exemplified by Robert Neville. The hope of the future is that he or she eventually may join another group or community. Of course as a lone survivor you are free to act as a renegade as well and only do mischievous acts. Neville is known to the vampires what Dracula is to humans, locked away in his fortified castle, and exterminating both vampires and infected during the day: the last of his kind he is legend. An important factor to remember is that Robert Neville is not *evil* by himself; it is his actions that are provoked by the post-apocalyptic setting. If Neville knew about the infected survivors at the start of the novel, he would not have murdered them the way he did. The infected treat Neville as if he is the ultimate evil, and after being captured, he is sentenced to death. Ruth tells Neville to escape prior to his capture thus showing that she doesn't believe that Neville is truly evil. The apocalypse has turned Neville from caring father to vampire hunter; it is the apocalypse that has turned Neville into Dracula. He has turned the vampires into a secondary threat and he is the primary target of the new population.

Both texts feature a virus/plague that is the main reason for the apocalypse, but the creatures are still different. The vampires however need to sleep while the sun is up. This gives Neville the opportunity to stay put; while the vampires are sleeping he can mend the house and prepare for the night. Neville is a lone survivor who decides to fortify his home and live there throughout the apocalypse: one man, one decision. After Shane is dead Rick takes control of the Atlanta group and decides to move to a secure location. At first they attempt the same kind of solution as Neville by bunkering down in a suburban residential area named Wiltshire Estates. This, it seems, is the goal of Rick and the group; to get a safe-house to stay and live until the situation returns to normal. Rick and his group are however overrun by zombies at the estates and have to flee. A large group of people means that the Atlanta group can eventually take on the prison and clear it

of zombies making it their home. Everything seems to be going fine until the Governor learns of their location and wants to take it by force for himself and his community. Apparently, the Governor feels everything should be his; if he can not have it, nobody else can.

The main difference between the number of survivors in a group has to do with survival techniques. It is easier to succumb to bad survival strategies when alone. The post-apocalyptic setting is fictional and when surviving alone without input from another survivor, one might be prone to choose bad solutions without *knowing* it. As stated earlier ethics joins the equation when individuals become a group and this is truly shown in *I am Legend*. Neville discovers his monstrosity through Ruth and the infected humans; being alone among monsters one must remember to keep one's humanity. After spending the post-apocalypse separated from humans Neville has forgotten to be human. His lack of humanity becomes even greater when confronted with the killings; the apocalypse has rendered him a destroyer. A group, however, has more people to shoulder the weight of the post-apocalypse traumas. The presence of a society is a huge mental boost for the survivors. Rick as a leader, using the laws and morals of the pre-apocalypse world, acts as an apocalypse how-to rulebook for the entire group. Ethics, hospitality and laws provided by the leader are the beginning of a new civilization. This however does not mean that the group is without trouble. The incident with Carol occurs because she is slightly alienated by Lori when suggesting the marriage. Carol is left alone when Michonne arrives at the prison and when reaching out to Lori, albeit unconventionally, she is slightly alienated, isolated and further singled out. This is enough to propel her into the arms of a zombie to seek acceptance and love; company (volume 7, issue 41). The same desperation can be seen in Neville, and one possibility is to say that they suffered the same death. When there are a series of murders in the prison Andrea escapes Thomas' assault and identifies him as the killer. Rick attacks Thomas and severely beats him up; Rick is venting his frustration from the earlier killings as Hershel took his family and came with Rick because they were told the prison would be safe. Most of the group watch this violent beat-down and have mixed emotions towards Rick's actions; Andrea feels Thomas deserves to be beaten senseless because of the crimes he has committed, while Lori thinks Thomas should be imprisoned. How can Rick please all of them at the same time? Tyreese asks Rick to establish a few rules for the new society concerning crime and punishment which prompts Rick to state this rule: "You kill? You die"(volume 3, issue 17).

Neville has managed to survive the pandemic because he was bitten by a bat when young which made him immune against the virus. Neville seeks sanctuary in his home which becomes his fortress and protection against the victims of the plague. This is a place where civilization can begin; an area to settle down. This is what Rick seeks for his group—a place to settle down and survive the post-apocalypse.

*If* Neville actually is the last man alive can be discussed, but he decides to stay within his house. When waking up in the hospital, Rick Grimes probably thinks he is the last human alive, but by exploring the wasteland discovers more survivors. Rick and the Atlanta group seek sanctuary and a place to stay safe until the situation returns to normal. Robert Neville has a sanctuary. He does not need to travel, and decides to be stationary and possibly outlive the vampires, slowly dwindling their numbers by the day. He has everything he needs within the city limits, but is he willing to sacrifice those luxuries to find other survivors? Why Neville decides to stay home instead of travelling by car to nearby cities to look for survivors, is possibly explained by his flashbacks and his need to keep memories of pre-apocalypse time near; his sanctuary filled with old memories where he escapes the present world by listening to music and drinking heavily, literally blocking out the world. He has time to arrange this during the morning/day, to fill his car with food and items of nostalgic value and drive in search of survivors. Neville contemplates the possibility of there being other survivors, but does not want to pursue them if they are further than a day's drive from his house[84] stating that moving from the house is unquestionable.

The vampires have some benefits over the zombies in that they possess a certain amount of intelligence. This means that they have enough intelligence to search for Neville and find him every day. The novel also tells that they are more energetic than zombies and can run after Neville's car without getting fatigued or tired. The drawback is that they need to flee from the sunlight when morning comes. It is the sunlight that proves to be Neville's best friend. If the vampires could keep on attacking day and night, Neville would have to flee from his house, and this may be another reason why Neville is staying; he does not have to move. The zombies, however, do not need to flee from the sunlight and can keep attacking the house until their hands are gone. They are slow, fragile, and mindless, but they are many and relentless. This is why it is

[84] Matheson, R. 1999:18

important for Rick and the group to find a safe, tough place to settle down. The prison seems to be just what they are looking for, but the Governor wants to take it from them.

It is not ideal to be alone in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. You might draw less attention to yourself and need fewer supplies to carry on, but the more you stay away from other humans you end up losing your humanity. When the loner encounters humans, he/she might attack or behave awkwardly depending on the state of his/her mind. This is something we have learned from Robert Neville. Just how important company is to humans can be discovered through *I am Legend*. The state of the mind is important, as witnessed in *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* in incidents with Carol, Rick, Hershel and Tyreese. Neville does not want to be alone, but this is his scenario. He does not attempt to flee the city to locate other survivors or to search for the beginning of a new human civilization. He decides to stay hidden in a fortress and reminisce about pre-apocalypse and surround himself with memories. The goal of Neville is to fix the situation. How do you fix an apocalypse? You start a new civilization and rebuilding the old world. To start a new civilization one needs more people and a promise of a future; children. Rick has already started a small society where children are being born, but lacks a fortress to hide inside. Even though Rick's goal is mainly to survive, the option of starting a new civilization reveals itself when presented with a flock of people and a safe-house. This is truly a step in the right direction when restarting the world, but do too many people pose as a troublesome activity when traversing the post-apocalyptic wasteland? The next section will focus on the father and the son and how they survive compared to Robert Neville.

### *5.2 Comparing Robert Neville to the Father and Son of The Road*

A notable difference between these two novels is the theme of alienation and how it is presented. *I am Legend* was published in 1954. This decade saw a significant increase in science fiction writing. A reoccurring motif in this genre was that a problem was presented and the problem was attempted solved by the protagonist (e.g. Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids* (1951), Stewart's *Earth Abides* (1949) and Miller Jr's *A Canticle for Lebowitz* (1959). Neville does not run, but decides to barricade himself in his pre-apocalypse house. This is Neville's way of clinging to the past. The problem presents itself as Neville being alone in a world overrun by vampires. He quickly decides that he is good (since he is man) and all else is evil (the other). The obvious solution to the problem is to kill (or discover an antidote) all the infected. Being the last human alive, and his actions during the day, alienates Neville from everything outside his house. It is hard to imagine being the only human left alive and just how lonely and frustrating it can be; humans are social creatures. After being alone for so long, Neville becomes desperate for contact and reaches out to (almost) anything including a stray dog. The movie version (*I am legend*, 2007) shows Neville (Will Smith) conversing with mannequins, naming them, propping them around town and, at one point, thinks "Fred" is real. The novel-Neville begins to talk to himself and at one point is scared by his own laughter and how it lacks resembles that of a beast[85]. The use of 3rd person narration in *I am Legend* further adds to the sensation of loneliness as the readers access all of Neville's thoughts. *The Road* is filled with many conversations between the father and son as a break from all the malice and desperation they have each other.

*The Road* being a novel from the 2000's changes the said theme of alienation. Where Robert Neville wants to escape his *alienation*, the father and the son seek *isolation*. Neville's logic is that everything human is good, thus the vampires are evil. The father has learned by wandering the post-apocalyptic wasteland for seven years that survivors have turned hostile and desperate. The less contact they have with other survivors the better, and if they can avoid survivors altogether, they do it. There is not much sense of unity, society or even hospitability remaining with the survivors of *The Road.* Whereas Neville's goal is to *fix* the situation, the father and the son are more concerned with just surviving the post-apocalypse. This marks the *new* motif of 2000's post-apocalyptic fiction; plain surviving in an apocalyptic setting. Examples of these are

[85] Matheson, R. 52:1999

Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* (2003), Kirkman's *The Walking Dead* (2010) and Lessing's *Mara and Dann* (1999); these texts all focus on *accepting* the apocalypse and surviving it. This proves to be a historical development within the genre.

Neville is hopeful towards the human race but sometimes contemplates his own position in this scenario. Being a sole survivor he has no outside moral input and does what he feels is his job to keep the human race surviving. Whereas there are no children present in *I am Legend* (no mention of vampire children), *The Road* features the son as a hope for the future complete with morals and ethics of the old world. The son also proves valuable at present state by questioning the father's actions, almost like a conscience-like character: this secondary input proves to be important for the father. This is something Neville never has, but wishes for badly. Group survival proves to be very important for the mental health of the protagonists as seen by comparing these novels.

In *The Road* the father and the son sees humans, driven by desperation spawned by the post-apocalypse, as the biggest threat. The novel depicts the father and son as "the good guys" according to themselves and everybody else as the other. Neville plans to cleanse the post-apocalyptic world of vampires. If Neville had a little helper, a male or female as an ally; a conscience, the helper would perhaps say: "Neville, do you notice anything different with these vampires? Do these seem more human to you? Let's investigate". *The Road* can be said to show the importance of company, or a second opinion in the post-apocalyptic setting, especially compared to *I am Legend* where Neville is battling loneliness and alienation.

All the protagonists of these two novels have encounters with evil within man. Neville's encounter is when he discovers that he is the other; he is the one that opposes the new society. This is the result of alienation and isolating; Neville is losing his humanity. The father and son's encounter with evil is briefly within themselves, but the father assures his son that they are the good guys, as opposed to Neville. The scene with the burned and partially eaten infant by the fire shows how desperate the survivors are; so desperate that they eat a newborn infant to stay alive, and this is considered as true evil by the father and son. The notion of evil is presented within Neville as a result of losing humanity trough isolation and alienation. In *The Road* evil is

presented through the desperation of man by trying to survive, and this proves to be the historical changes made in the genre.

An interesting notion is that both protagonists of these novels want what the others have; the father and the son seek isolation, while Neville seeks company. Compared to *The Road* Neville suffers the most of all the protagonists. Though the son "has no place in the post-apocalyptic wasteland", he plays a very important role for the father. They are equally dependent on each other and this is why their teamwork seems to function well in the post-apocalypse. The father dies in the end due to disease/illness, but if he was healthy the duo could have carried on further together. On his death-bed, the father tells the son that the son was always the "best guy" and to keep carrying the fire.[86] The son joins a small family that discovers him and continues his journey, which is good since he probably could not survive on his own. This prompts me to believe that *The Road* with the father and the son, they have a great scenario (the post-apocalypse considered); they lack the loneliness Neville possesses, they manage to survive without sacrificing humanity, and the father has agency to protect his son and acquire supplies for them. Neville does not get the same offer as the son (to join the infected) of *The Road* due to his evil actions towards the hybrids/infected. Civilization, it seems, has no use for an evil mass murderer. The son also has agency reviling him to be the *best guy*, being the conscience of the father, and also carrying the fire. This presents to me as a good way to traverse the post-apocalyptic wasteland.

[86] McCarthy, C. 298:2006

### *5.3 Final Notes Regarding Comparison*

All these novels present a difference in scenario for the protagonists; Robert Neville is a sole-survivor of a pandemic apocalypse. This type of apocalypse changes the people ("victims of the plague", Jones), but leaves the earth unaffected. The father and the son from *The Road* are two survivors, among many, of a possible nuclear or war-related apocalypse. Most people have been killed and the earth has been highly affected by the nuclear impact. *The Walking Dead* is another pandemic apocalypse that has altered the people post-death and made them into walking monsters. Here we follow a group of survivors and watch as they fight psychological elements as well as the zombies and the evil of humans. The notion of a realistic portrayal of the post-apocalyptic environment remains as fiction since this is never experienced. The authors can only imagine and present their vision of the aftermath of a nuclear self-destruction. This includes using a setting that is familiar to the readers, and making it new by adding monsters, zombies or other external threats. Due to the popularity of the sub-genre during the later years, images of a decaying wasteland often pops to mind when hearing the word 'post-apocalypse'.

These texts show us that the wasteland is a dangerous place. The possibility of nuclear winter is high if the apocalypse was nuclear related. The addition of external threats in the form of zombies, vampires or radiated creatures is possible if the fiction contains a pandemic apocalypse (*I am Legend* and *The Walking Dead: Compendium One)*. The lack of food and water is enough to drive men desperate and evil (*The Road).* Surviving the post-apocalyptic wasteland alone, all variations considered, is not ideal. Neville shows us how he battles with isolation and loneliness and finally sheds his humanity, rendering him closer to a monster.

The Atlanta group, featuring Rick and Lori Grimes, are lucky to have a group of people to whom they can share the burdens of a post-apocalyptic world. They also act as a very important social aspect that is needed when humans (Robert Neville seeks this) are faced with a catastrophe. The Atlanta group also has the numbers for when attempting a new civilization. A functioning civilization is the answer/solution to an apocalyptic event. However, even though the large Atlanta group has people to share the burden, unforced accidents happen when many people with different views on ethics and law are together (Tyreese, Carol, and Rick). Civilization is an

advanced state of society where a high level of science, culture and last but not least; government has been achieved[87]. In order to fully achieve a civilization, rules and governing laws need to be made. Rick has suggested one law ("You kill, you die"), but this law is not really obeyed (Rick killing Martinez, Rick killing Dexter, Maggie killing Thomas etc.)

*The Road* also has more than one protagonist travelling together. The father and son have managed to survive for seven years in the post-apocalyptic wasteland. The father has contracted an illness (possibly due to nuclear warfare e.g. radiation) and his death is foreshadowed and obvious throughout the text, eventually leaving the son alone to carry the fire. The fire is a metaphor for humanity and hope. Fire could also be said to be a symbol of technology and progress. The thought is that the boy will carry the fire and spread it around as he goes. The father and son have a symbiotic relationship as both are dependent on each other and they both help their scenario. This is true when it comes to surviving in a group; everybody is dependent on each other. The world is very dangerous and most people see survivors as a potential meal—this is what prompts the father to have a cautious, even hostile, appearance. The father protects them from physical harm, while the son protects the intellect by carrying the fire. The boy's naive nature is protected by the father, but the son would possibly not have survived on his own. Alone, the father would possibly succumbed to the same fate as Neville; alone and rid of humanity (like the others). While on the road, the two of them can survive for a long time.

[87] Retrieved from http://www.dictionary.com – "civilization" (10.05.2013)

## 6.0 Conclusion

The post-apocalyptic sub-genre has seen historical changes based on contemporary happenings (nuclear destruction, Cold War-tension, etc.). Post-apocalyptic fiction from the 1950's focused on how humanity unites to resolve the apocalypse and save earth by eliminating or curing monsters, or setting up new colonies. Today's post-apocalyptic fiction is more concerned with simply surviving, accepting the apocalypse and instead preparing. This we discovered in *The Road* and *The Walking Dead.* This change indicates the shift in moral and agency of survivors as the wasteland suddenly becomes more dangerous because survival becomes more of an individual goal rather than a mutual goal. This thesis has discovered the importance of company in a post-apocalyptic setting by comparing different scenarios in the texts and discussing the group and survival aspects. Company is important as it will give important input to surviving in the post-apocalypse: this is the first apocalypse for everybody and nobody knows how to properly act in this scenario and this is why two heads work better than one.

The thesis has also explored the duality of man and how survivors are forced to adapt to the situation. This lesson we learn from *The Road*, and that hospitality and morality is key for future hope. Carrying humanity and hope, represented as 'the fire' in *The Road*, is important. Hopefully the boy will set the world ablaze with the fire of hope: a light in the darkness. By succumbing to bad survival strategies, meaning being a bandit, humanity within will slowly be lost, eventually rendering the survivor evil. The scene from *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* explains how conduct and morality are important issues when re-establishing civilization. Additionally when exploring the scenes from each text, this thesis discovers that evil in post-apocalyptic literature is truly presented within man himself, and while adventuring in the post-apocalyptic wasteland a survivor will *always*, based on the selected texts, encounter evil in the form of human/man. *I am Legend* has Robert Neville discovering the evil within him when encountering the recuperating infected. By fighting monsters, Neville has become one (a destroyer) himself. *The Road* presents evil as man born out of desperation and starvation; every *other* is defined as evil by the father in this novel, because they do not carry the innocence and humanity of a child as *company*. Only the boy carries the fire. A defining moment is the homicidal cannibalism; infants are eaten for the survivor to live longer. *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* shows the mental struggle of the post-apocalyptic wasteland. Character drama and development/changes and how this affects

the situation are important for the comic book/graphic novel; if *The Road* presents just how desperate the post-apocalyptic situation can be when it comes to primary needs, *The Walking Dead* discovers the toll the post-apocalyptic settings has on the characters. The Governor is the main antagonist of *The Walking Dead: Compendium One* and he is the representation of evil. The post-apocalyptic wasteland is a truly dangerous place. However, the survivors tend to make the place even more dangerous. Zombies, vampires, mutations, and other secondary threats aside, this thesis has discovered, when exploring the dichotomy of man, that man is, in fact, the biggest threat in the post-apocalyptic wasteland to other survivors.

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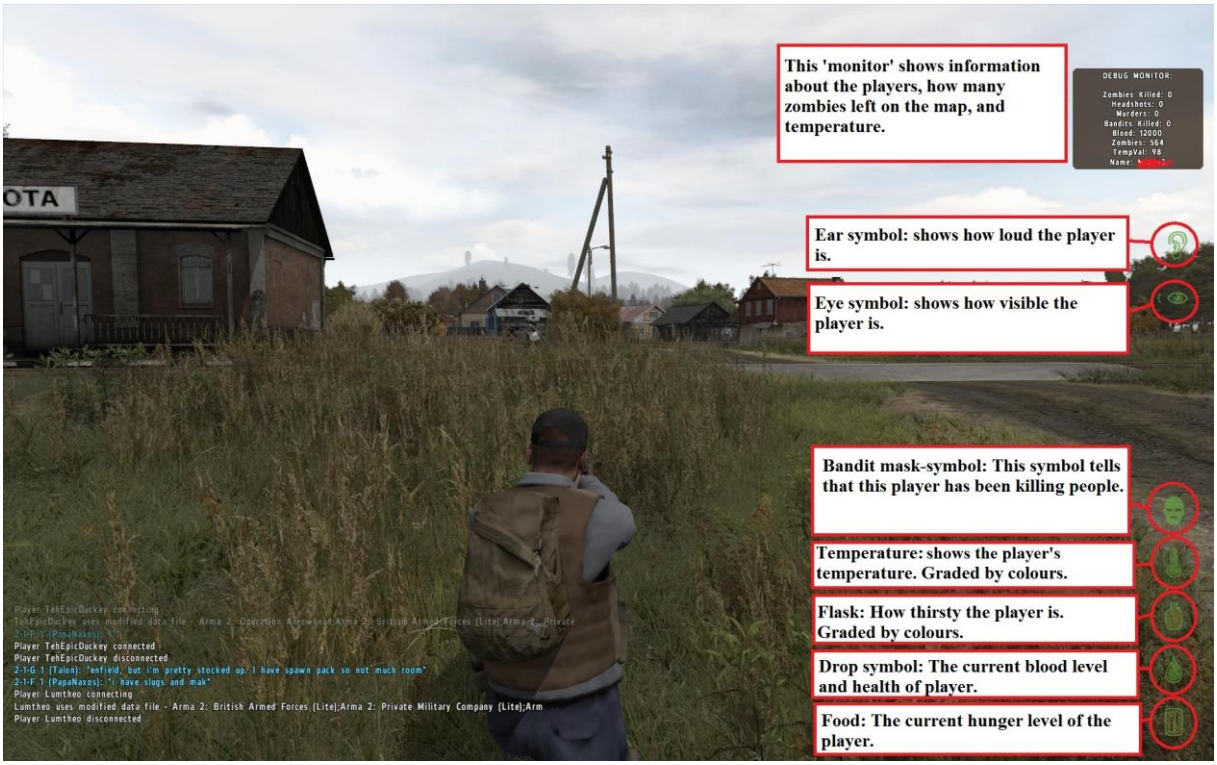
Appendix 1


This 'monitor' shows information about the players, how many zombies left on the map, and temperature.
DEBUG MONITOR:
Zombies Killed: 0
Headshots: 0
Murders: 0
Bandits Killed: 0
Blood: 12000
Zombies: 564
TempVal: 98
Name:
Ear symbol: shows how loud the player is.
Eye symbol: shows how visible the player is.
Bandit mask-symbol: This symbol tells that this player has been killing people.
Temperature: shows the player's temperature. Graded by colours.
Flask: How thirsty the player is. Graded by colours.
Drop symbol: The current blood level and health of player.
Food: The current hunger level of the player.
Player TehEpicDuckey connected
Player TehEpicDuckey disconnected
2-1-F 1 (PapaNaxos): "i have slugs and mak"
Player Lumtheo connecting
Lumtheo uses modified data file - Arma 2: British Armed Forces (Lite);Arma 2: Private Military Company (Lite);Arm
Player Lumtheo disconnected

Appendix 2

JESUS, MAN! DON'T SNEAK UP ON ME LIKE THAT!
SORRY... I WAS JUST TRYING TO GET UP HERE WITHOUT WAKING ANYONE UP.
POLICE
WELL, NEXT TIME, THROW A ROCK AT ME OR SOMETHING... YOU SCARED ME HALF TO DEATH.
ESPECIALLY AFTER WHAT HAPPENED EARLIER TODAY.
YEAH... THAT'S ACTUALLY WHAT I CAME HERE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT.
OH?
WE NEED TO MOVE CAMP. IT'S NOT SMART TO BE THIS CLOSE TO A CITY FULL OF THOSE THINGS.
IT'S JUST TOO GODDAMN DANGEROUS.
ARE YOU CRAZY?!
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE GOVERNMENT STARTS CLEANING THIS MESS UP? THEY'LL HAVE TO START WITH THE CITIES... THEY'LL FIND US FASTER IF WE STAY HERE!
WHEN ARE THEY COMING SHANE? TOMORROW? NEXT WEEK? IT'S GETTING REALLY DAMN COLD OUT HERE AND IT'S ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE.
NOT TO MENTION WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY. IT'S TOO RISKY TO STAY SO DAMN CLOSE TO THEM.

Appendix 3

IT'S TOO RISKY TO GO SOMEWHERE ELSE. THE FIRES ARE KEEPING US WARM. THERE'S PLENTY OF FIREWOOD IN THIS AREA. WE'LL BE FINE HERE.
THIS IS THE BEST PLACE TO BE FOR THE RESCUE.
POLICE
WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE WE'RE EVEN GOING TO BE RESCUED? DONNA ALMOST DIED YESTERDAY. WHAT IF IT WAS ONE OF THE KIDS? WHAT IF IT WAS CARL?
NOBODY WAS PREPARED FOR THIS, SHANE. YOU THINK THOSE GIRLS KNOW HOW TO FIGHT?
IF WE GO SOMEPLACE SAFER MAYBE WE WON'T NEED TO BE RESCUED SO SOON. I'D RATHER BE ABLE TO GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE THAN HAVE TO SIT UP AT NIGHT HOPING THE GOVERNMENT IS STILL INTACT AND IS GOING TO FIND US.
NO, DAMMIT! WE'RE STAYING RIGHT HERE! WE'RE SAFE HERE! YESTERDAY IS ONE OF VERY FEW ISOLATED INCIDENTS. THIS IS THE SAFEST PLACE TO BE.
POLICE
RICK... WE CAN PROTECT THESE PEOPLE. WE'LL BE RESCUED HERE. IF WE GO HIDE IN THE COUNTRY IT COULD TAKE THEM MONTHS TO FIND US.
WE'VE GOT TO STAY HERE.
OKAY... IF YOU FEEL THAT CERTAIN THAT IT'S THE BEST THING FOR US... FINE. WE'LL STAY. BUT IF WE'RE GOING TO TRY AND HOLD OUT HERE WE'RE GOING TO NEED MORE GUNS. IF DONNA HAD BEEN CARRYING ONE YESTERDAY SHE COULD HAVE JUST TURNED AROUND AND SHOT THAT THING.
EVERYONE HERE IS GOING TO NEED TO CARRY A GUN AT ALL TIMES.
HOW ARE WE GOING TO FIND ENOUGH GUNS FOR THAT?
I'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT.
CAN YOU KEEP IT DOWN UP THERE?!
SOME OF US ARE TRYING TO SLEEP.
POLICE

Appendix 4

KILLING THEM?! YOU'VE JUST BEEN KILLING THEM?!
WE'RE PUTTING THEM OUT OF THEIR MISERY, AND KEEPING THEM FROM KILLING US! THOSE THINGS AREN'T HUMAN. THEY'RE UNDEAD MONSTERS.
THEY'RE TRYING TO EAT US FOR GOD'S SAKE!
YOU DON'T KNOW WHY! YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEM. NOBODY DOES. WE DON'T KNOW A DAMN THING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED OR WHAT'S GOING ON.
I KNOW THOSE THINGS ARE TRYING TO KILL US--AND THAT THE LESS OF THEM THERE ARE OUT THERE THE SAFER WE'LL BE! AND I KNOW IT'S NOT SMART TO HAVE A MESS OF THEM PINNED UP NOT THIRTY FEET FROM YOUR GODDAMN HOUSE!

Appendix 5

WE SHOULD GO IN THAT BARN RIGHT NOW AND SHOOT EVERY GODDAMN ONE OF THEM IN THE HEAD. IT'S NOT SAFE FOR THEM TO BE HERE! WE NEED TO KILL THEM BEFORE THEY KILL US!
MY SON IS IN THERE, GOD DAMMIT!
YOUR SON?
SHAWN WAS BITTEN. IT WAS BEFORE WE PUT UP THE BARRIER AROUND THE HOUSE. I--I COULDN'T HELP HIM, HE DIED AFTER A COUPLE DAYS... AND TURNED INTO ONE OF THEM.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO. SO I KEPT SHAWN IN THE BARN. HE TRIED TO ATTACK US... TO--KILL US. BUT I COULDN'T KILL HIM... I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO DO THAT. WHEN WE FOUND OTHERS... WE JUST... WE KEPT THEM TOO.
HERSHEL, I-- I'M REALLY SORRY. I TRULY AM. I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH. IF I HAD LOST CARL-- I DON'T--I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD HAVE DONE.

Appendix 6

I CAN TAKE IT FROM HERE, MARTINEZ. I'D LIKE TO ESCORT OUR GUESTS MYSELF.
I NEED YOU AT THE WALL, CLEANING OFF ALL THE BITERS THEY NO DOUBT DRUG WITH THEM.
YES, SIR, GOVERNOR. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU'D BE COMING OUT TO GET THEM WHEN WE GAVE WORD OF THEIR ARRIVAL.
THEY'RE ALL YOURS.
FOLLOW ME, FOLKS. I'LL GIVE YOU THE NICKEL TOUR.
GOVERNOR?
I WEAR THE TITLE WITH A SMILE. IT'S MORE OF A JOKE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. BUT FUCK IT, WHO'S OUT THERE TO SAY OTHERWISE? I ALMOST WENT WITH PRESIDENT--BUT I THOUGHT IT SOUNDED TOO SILLY.
ALWAYS DID WANT TO BE THE GOVERNOR.
SAW MY CHANCE AND I TOOK IT.
SINCE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S DOING THE TALKING FOR NOW--WHAT'S YOUR STORY, STRANGER?

Appendix 7

NO STORY. WE'VE BEEN TRAVELING SINCE THE TURN. SAW THE HELICOPTER AND WAS CLOSE ENOUGH TO INVESTIGATE--JUST NOT CLOSER THAN YOU, RIGHT?
BELIEVE I WAS TALKING TO THE MAN, HERE, MA'AM. I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND.
THAT'S OUR STORY. SHIT HIT THE FAN. WE'VE BEEN WALKING EVER SINCE. WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU SEEM TO BE HOLDING THIS PLACE DOWN PRETTY GOOD.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE HERE? A COUPLE OF BLOCKS FENCED OFF? THAT'S NICE.
FOUR BLOCKS, ACTUALLY. WE'RE WORKING ON THE FENCES FOR THE FIFTH. WE GOT ABOUT FORTY PEOPLE HERE. SEEMED LIKE WE WERE GETTING MORE EVERY DAY AT FIRST--THEN LESS--THEN NOTHING. YOU'RE THE FIRST IN A MONTH. HARD WINTER, I GUESS.
YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY WE LOST? THE GOVERNMENT I MEAN--THE WAR AGAINST THE BITERS. WE DID LOSE, Y'KNOW.
PRESIDENT SENDS OUT THE NATIONAL GUARD TO SECURE THE CITIES, MAKE 'EM SAFE ZONES FOR ALL US NORMAL FOLK TO FLOCK TO. I'M SURE YOU REMEMBER THAT PART OF THE STORY.
MAIN PROBLEM THERE IS THE AVERAGE WEEKEND WARRIOR WAS WORRIED MORE ABOUT HIS WIFE AND KID THAN HE WAS ABOUT DRIVING HIS ASS TO ATLANTA TO FIGHT OFF CORPSES.
WHOLE GUARD STATION ABOUT A MILE AWAY--COMPLETELY ABANDONED. ALL KINDA SUPPLIES LEFT INSIDE. WE BEEN MAKING GOOD USE OF IT. NIGHT VISION GOGGLES, SNIPER RIFLES, AMMO, YOU SEEN IT IN ACTION. THIS PLACE WOULDN'T BE SHIT WITHOUT IT.
YOU SOUND LUCKY. WHERE IS IT YOU'RE TAKING US? WE'RE WALKING TOWARD THE LIGHT. WHAT IS THAT? BASEBALL GAME?
WELL, STRANGER. IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES LUCKY AROUND HERE. YOU SHOWED UP ON THE PERFECT NIGHT.
THERE'S A FIGHT TONIGHT.

Appendix 8

CURIOUS ABOUT ALL THE ELECTRICITY?
FUCKING REDNECKS. THEY LOVED THEIR DIRT TRACK RACING SO DAMN MUCH THEY HAD A BIG ASS GENERATOR INSTALLED. THAT WAY THEIR NIGHT RACES WOULDN'T BE INTERRUPTED BY A POWER FAILURE.
FIGHTS ARE MOSTLY DURING THE DAY. WE ONLY SAVE THE GENERATOR FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS.
C'MON-- I'VE GOT A PRIVATE ROOM AT THE TOP. BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE.
SO WHAT? YOU MAKE THE ZOMBIES FIGHT EACH OTHER?
I'M SENSING A BIT OF DISAPPROVAL, STRANGER. IN CASE YOU AIN'T NOTICED, THE CABLE'S OUT. AIN'T A WHOLE LOT IN THE WAY OF ENTERTAINMENT TO BE HAD.
PEOPLE GET RESTLESS WITHOUT ENTERTAINMENT.
ZOMBIES? NO, A BITER FIGHT AIN'T NO KIND OF ENTERTAINMENT. WE GOT REAL LIVE PEOPLE GOING INTO THE CIRCLE. TWO ENTER-- THEY BEAT THE HELL OUT OF EACH OTHER-- PUT ON A GOOD SHOW. BITERS ARE JUST EXTRA MOTIVATION.
PRIVATE
YOU SERIOUS?
YOU FENCE OFF THIS AREA--MAKE IT SAFE AND THEN CART IN A PILE OF ROAMERS FOR ENTERTAINMENT. NOT VERY SAFE, GOVERNOR.
AT FIRST, YEAH-- WE HAD A FEW... ACCIDENTS. ONCE WE STARTED FEEDING THEM, THOUGH-- THEY GOT PRETTY DOCILE. NOT MUCH OF A THREAT NOW.
BRUCE. CLOSE THAT DOOR, PLEASE.
WAIT-- YOU'RE FEEDING THEM? WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU FEEDING THEM?

Appendix 9

Appendix 10

SO THAT'S IT THEN? YOU'RE GOIIG TO FEED US TO YOUR PET ZOMBIES?
IS THAT WHAT YOU DID WITH THE PEOPLE IN THE HELICOPTER?
YEAH--THAT COUPLE IS GETTING CHOPPED UP RIGHT NOW IN PREPARATION FOR THE REWARD FEAST THAT'LL GO DOWN AFTER THE FIGHT.
SHOULD BE ALL GONE BY THE TIME THE SUN COMES UP--THAT IS UNLESS ONE OF OUR FIGHTERS GETS TOO CLOSE TO THE BITERS AND THEY'RE FULL AFTER THE FIGHT.
WHICH, SADLY, DOES HAPPEN FROM TIME TO TIME. THEY'LL NEVER ADMIT IT BUT THAT'S WHY THE PEOPLE SHOW UP--THAT'S WHY THEY LOVE IT SO MUCH.
YOU SICK FUCK!
KINDLY SHUT THE FUCK UP, SISTER.
IT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT WITH YOUR TWO ARMORED ESCORTS BUT I'M CERTAIN WE COULD GET A COUPLE BULLETS IN YOU WITH NO TROUBLE AT ALL.

Appendix 11

I'VE GOT NOTHING, RICK!! NO FRIENDS! NO FAMILY!! NO RESPECT!! NO FUCKING LIFE!!
THIS FUCKING WORLD! THIS FUCKING GOD-FORSAKEN WORLD OF SHIT! THERE'S NOTHING FOR ME HERE RICK!!
NOTHING!
POLICE
I THOUGHT I COULD MAKE IT... I THOUGHT I COULD HOLD OUT... WAIT UNTIL THEY CAME AND RESCUED US. THEY WOULD HAVE BROUGHT US NICE BEDS... AND HOT SHOWERS... AND FRESH CLOTHES! THEY WERE COMING RICK!
WE WERE GOING TO BE OKAY!!
WE STILL ARE, SHANE. EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE FINE!
I CAN'T LIVE LIKE THIS, RICK! I THOUGHT I COULD BUT I CAN'T!
POLICE
I THOUGHT I COULD... AND I DID. EVERYTHING WAS GOING SO GOOD. SHE WOULD HAVE COME AROUND EVENTUALLY... I KNOW IT.
SHE WOULD HAVE.
WHAT?
POLICE
EVERYTHING WAS SO PERFECT...

Appendix 12

...UNTIL YOU CAME BACK!!
GOD DAMMIT, SHANE! STOP THIS!!
NO, RICK... THIS IS THE ONLY WAY! THIS IS WHAT HAS TO HAPPEN... YOU WEREN'T MEANT TO COME BACK... YOU WEREN'T MEANT TO LIVE!
PLEASE, SHANE. DON'T DO THIS...
BLAM!
DON'T HURT MY DADDY AGAIN!