Blood, Enjoyment and Belonging in Selected Vampire Fiction

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Abstract

This thesis argues that blood is the central object of the vampire genre. Since the entry of the word ‘vampire’ into English in the early eighteenth century, human understanding of blood changed drastically. Yet the vampire’s blood-drinking remained its definitive characteristic. Moreover, in vampire stories the human characters also draw blood, wielding knives, guns, needles and more, in efforts to establish or defend the type of community in which they wish to live.

The modern vampire is born, in part, out of the confrontation of the Enlightenment with blood itself. Due to blood’s centrality to western premodernity, its complex symbolism, along with its status as a real substance that is indispensable to human life, blood was uniquely placed to both mark and carry surplus meaning as western culture faced rapid upheavals with the onset of modernity. The vampire genre became a forum for probing and interpreting unresolved questions of belonging and exploitation that emerged. To serve this function the genre used blood as the definitive object of vampiric enjoyment.

Combining Lacanian psychoanalytic understandings with medical history and the close reading of a range of vampire texts, this thesis traces how premodern beliefs about blood as individual and collective essence never fully disappeared, even in the face of scientific and medical discoveries that disproved them. In the late nineteenth century, older ideas about blood as heredity morphed into eugenicist beliefs that blood was the agent of racial degeneration. Several vampire texts incorporate elements of eugenics discourse. In the twentieth century, when eugenics was disavowed, blood nevertheless remained a symbol for race and essence. As Jim Crow segregation ended in America, postmodern vampires who relate to their blood-drinking with reluctance appeared. The ironic distance between postmodern vampires and their earlier counterparts meant that the genre provided a means for exploring the afterlife of eugenics, given the vampire’s history as a racialised monster.

Case studies of three novels – Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897), Richard Matheson’s *I Am Legend* (1954) and *Fledgling* (2005) by Octavia Butler – are centralised in this discussion. A conclusion examines the first season of the television series *True Blood* (HBO, 2008).

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Introduction

Why has the vampire appealed to writers and their readers over such a long period, from the eighteenth century to the present? Almost no other monsters of the Victorian era went on to become so canonical to popular culture as did Count Dracula. While the way in which the vampire is imagined has morphed with changing times, the vampire's blood-drinking has remained a definitive part of vampire mythology. And yet it is not only vampires' fangs that draw human blood in vampire stories. In the three novels I take as case studies for this project because of the ways they crystallise the symbolic work blood does in their locations and eras – Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* (1954) and *Fledgling* (2005) by Octavia Butler – humans wielding shattered glass, knives, bullets and needles draw blood too.[1] In these three novels, as in vampire texts more generally, humans draw blood from themselves and from other humans in efforts to establish or defend the type of community in which they want to live. Vampire texts turn out to be concerned with human blood in more varied and significant ways than one might have expected of a genre that typically lays no claim to literary or philosophical sophistication.

My hypothesis is that the opportunity for modern audiences to engage in a fantasy about human blood has drawn them back to enjoy recycled and reinvented vampire stories over successive generations. As they do so readers navigate, if not always consciously, the conditions underlying social arrangements already in place in western modernity as well as speculatively exploring the import of social arrangements that are yet to come. I use the term 'fantasy' in this project in the Lacanian sense to refer to an imagined construct necessary to the management of human desire as well as to our understanding of the human drive to revisit or repeat unresolved events and experiences.

The three novels whose study forms the core of this project are concerned with the relation of blood to belonging, with the drive to repeat an enjoyable but potentially lethal encounter, and with the relation of authority to community cohesion. In all three texts, when the vampire represents a threat to the community's blood, the vampire's appearance tests the leadership of the community that is being threatened along with the community's structures of authority. In *Dracula* that community is late nineteenth-century England. In *I Am Legend*,

[1] Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, ed. Roger Luckhurst (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Richard Matheson, *I Am Legend* (London: Gollancz, 2006); Octavia E. Butler, *Fledgling* (Boston; New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2005).

the mid-twentieth-century United States is the threatened community. In *Fledgling*, earlier forms of the genre are reversed, and the vampire protagonist is threatened by other vampires in a speculatively imagined twenty-first-century American West Coast. While the case studies made of these novels are central to what follows, three accompanying chapters provide further socio-historical context for these discussions and treat not only novels but also poems, short stories, films and televisual texts. A conclusion considers the first season of *True Blood* (HBO, 2008), an adaptation of a 2001 novel, *Dead Until Dark* by Charlaine Harris, in relation to the preceding discussion.

While I do not claim that the three novels that form the basis of this project are the only ones that might demonstrate under-explored aspects of the relation of fantasies about blood to belonging, *Dracula*, *I Am Legend* and *Fledgling* highlight contradictions underlying the symbolic work blood does in western modernity with particular clarity with regard to the historical contexts of their production. Additionally, blood seems always to have had a symbolic or representative function for humanity that relates to surplus meaning. Blood has tended to stand for social continuity but also for social change in ways that are not always easy to understand. I have centralised three novels—that is, longer narratives—in part because novels, as fiction, are also a kind of surplus, and have heralded and accompanied social change while being serially continuous in form.[2] Novels can ask questions other kinds of narratives cannot, and novels about blood, vampires and human communities might yield important insights about the interrelation of the above concerns.

If a focus on blood has remained fundamental to the vampire genre, however, the ways that people understand and use blood changed immensely during the period between *Dracula*'s publication and *Fledgling*'s. The discovery of blood types, the development of blood transfusion and blood banking technologies, the replacement of blood with DNA as the perceived agent of heredity, the emergence of a global blood products industry, and the advent of HIV – a new, blood-borne disease – all occur between 1897 and 2005. Given such upheaval in understanding, it is apposite to ask what relation the vampire, with its blood-drinking, might have not only to the import of these specific changes but to their range and magnitude. Why has the vampire remained a viable mass entertainment? To what exactly does the longevity of the vampire genre, as a venue for engaging blood-focused fantasies in a quasi-disguised manner, attest? Is there some deep 'sameness' that remains essential to

[2] Victoria Nelson, *Gothicka: Vampire Heroes, Human Gods, and the New Supernatural* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Press, 2012), ix-x, 4.

people's engagement with blood from one generation to the next, from one culture to another? Or is blood an index of modern change itself? Within modernity blood is always on shaky epistemological ground as wave after wave of scientific understanding rewrites the theory of blood over a palimpsestic ground of pre-existing meanings with deep historical roots, originating in bodies of folk knowledge and religious tradition that 'belong' to premodernity. As a substance with this uncanny historicity, and a liquid object that is uniquely both alienable from, and essential to, our living bodies, it appears to be a cross-cultural universal that blood occupies a symbolically overdetermined position in each and every worldview, as anthropologist Melissa Meyer has argued.[3]

From a historical perspective, the link between blood and essence is remarkably strong and longstanding in western cultures. In the Galenic understanding, which preceded modern biomedicine, blood was the 'juice of life,'[4] as I discuss in further detail in Chapter One. Blood influenced mood and demeanour, sickness and well-being**,** and constituted the matter of a newly formed infant in the womb. Blood was conceived as 'lifeblood,' as a foundational and defining resource on both individual and communal levels. For centuries, Christians thought of themselves as vessels of Christ's blood, forming a '*corpus mysticum*,' a term that 'came to designate the visible body of the Church.'[5] The anti-Semitic Blood Libel, from the thirteenth century on, held that Jews stole Christian blood for use in secret rituals.[6] The term 'bloodsucker' predates 'vampire' in English. It was used to mean a 'person who preys upon another's money, possessions, or other resources.'[7]

This background made it possible by the late nineteenth century for the vampire, an arch blood-stealer, to take on the function of a serious political metaphor, describing

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[3] Melissa Meyer, *Thicker Than Water: The Origins of Blood as Symbol and Ritual* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

[4] Piero Camporesi, *The Juice of Life: The Symbolic and Magic Significance of Blood*, trans. Robert R. Barr (New York: Continuum, 1995).

[5] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*, trans. Gemma Simmonds, Richard Price, and Christopher Stephens (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 250. Cited in Gil Anidjar, *Blood: A Critique of Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 90.

[6] E. M. Rose, *The Murder of William of Norwich: The Origins of the Blood Libel in Medieval Europe.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

[7] 'bloodsucker, n.' *OED* Online. *OED* Third Edition, March 2012. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/20437.

exploitation in various forms.[8] Capitalists were compared to vampires for driving traditional craftspeople and traders out of business. Anarchists and socialists were similarly labelled for using violence to fight capitalism. They were often portrayed by their critics as not genuinely having the common workers' interests at heart. Unconventional women were portrayed as vampires too for shirking their duty to 'give back' to society by fulfilling their expected role, especially by reproducing humans. On the whole, Sarah Libby Robinson explains, 'vampires embodied most anxieties attendant on modernity, as [*fin de siècle*] contemporaries understood it.'[9] Anti-Semitism was a recurring feature of the vampire metaphor wherever it appeared. High-level financiers were viewed as 'parasites living off […] other's work without making equal contributions in return,'[10] with Jewish financiers 'scrutinized especially closely.'[11] Immigrants were figured as vampires, draining finite resources from the nation and introducing a foreign element into the national culture. In America, recently freed slaves were caricatured similarly, as an inclusion in the national body politic that threatened to undo civilisation, dragging the national culture 'backward' in terms of techno-scientific progress and biological evolution.

A key to answering the questions posed by this thesis about the function of blood's symbolic overdetermination in a given society lies in this trivalent matrix of the vampire figure, its blood-drinking, and the idea of exploitation. Although the notion of the vampire as exploitative became 'submerged' or obfuscated as a conscious expectation among the genre's audiences over time, it has never been far from the surface. In a sense, exploitation emerges as one of the names for the problem of western modernity itself: modern western societies have never developed a means for articulating and consciously interrogating the meaning of exploitation, for ascertaining or resolving its place within society. Earlier western societies did not have this problem, because, although they may have relied on forms of what we would certainly call exploitation today, such as slavery, there is a uniquely modern sense in which exploitation becomes problematic. In English 'exploitation' speaks of making 'full and good use' of something, such as harvesting trees from a forest with which to build.[12] But by

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[8] Sara Libby Robinson, *Blood Will Tell: Vampires as Political Metaphors before World War I* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2011), xvii.
[9] Robinson, xv.
[10] Ibid., 93.
[11] Ibid., 97.
[12] 'exploit, v.' *OED* Online. *OED* Third Edition, June 2016. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.auckland. ac.nz/view/Entry/66647.

the nineteenth century, when industrialisation and capitalism radically changed Anglophone societies, the word took on the connotation of *excessive* use: making full use of something *and then some*, often implying an 'unfair or unethical action' taken to make 'illicit or excessive profit from a person or thing.' [13]

As industrialisation, coupled with capitalism, changed the field of what making 'full and good use' of a resource might mean, traditional rights to profiting from resources were thrown into question. The monarch and the aristocracy no longer had the divine right to 'exploit' the land and the people. With the abolition of slavery in the British Empire and America during the nineteenth century people could no longer legally exploit the labour power of other humans without paying them. Superficially, at least, this represented a symbolic limit on the exploitation of the human individual. Also during the nineteenth century, European nationalism retroactively posited a link between 'blood and soil.' A nation, a people, a *Volk* were imagined as having an organic belonging to the land upon which their communal identity was said to have arisen, a belonging that came hand in hand with rights, and even an obligation, to exploit that land's natural resources. At the same time as this imaginary link gained currency, however, it was always conceptualised as being already under threat from the alienating forces of modernisation, often projected onto a supposedly vampiric racial minority.[14] Beyond Europe, versions of pro-white teleological conceptions of historical progress, such as America's 'Manifest Destiny,' helped colonial-settler societies justify to themselves their exploitation of indigenous peoples and their territories.[15]

In the foregoing we have seen that blood and vampires have represented things western modernity finds both essential and vexing: inheritance and continuity but also energy (that is, lifeblood), exploitation, and instability. Vampires can represent the exploited (women, racial minorities, immigrants) as well as the anxiety attending the increasing pace of change with industrialisation. Relatedly, each of this thesis's three central novels ends in a

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[13] Ibid.

[14] For example, Adolf Hitler called the German people '*einen völkischen Organismus*' in *Mein Kampf*, ed. John Chamberlain et. al. (Boston: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941), 362. See also Adalbert Stifter, *Indian Summer* [*Der Nachsommer* (1857)] (New York: P. Lang, 1985), 45, where the narrator discusses how raising grain gives rise to civilisation, evoking a sense of organic teleology imparted to the narrator's present.

[15] Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981). See also Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

way that is not as clearly optimistic as we might have expected, because in each story, civilisation only survives by accepting a fresh dose, a new level, of vampirisation. The above contradictions are merely displaced. In *Dracula*, the fraternity of vampire hunters led by Van Helsing accept the 'unclean' Mina Harker into their group in order to vanquish the Count at the end of the story. In *I Am Legend*, vampires become the 'new people of earth' and the novel's primary vampire hunter, Robert Neville, turns out to be a 'vampire' for these new people. In *Fledgling*, vampire society tentatively accepts a racially different, genetically modified vampire named Shori as one of their own, thereby letting go of one version of their historical identity and embracing newness even though the decision is loaded with uncertainty. At the end of the first season of *True Blood*, the topic of my conclusion, a human 'monster,' a serial killer on an anti-vampire campaign has been vanquished, seemingly clearing the way for vampires to integrate into the small town of Bon Temps in which the drama is set.

All three novels are concerned with how a 'civilised' society can make the most of modernity's power to open more and new avenues to enjoyment, without enjoying in such a way that it causes society, or humanity's, demise. How, when collectively and individually humans seem so prone to self-sabotage? Yet each novel concludes that there is no meaningful choice other than to move into the future trying to take the vampire into account. In each of these three novels, there is no choice but to adopt a new dynamic within the body politic in order to survive the crisis represented by the vampire's appearance. Because the vampire represents a crisis in each of the novels, each text is concerned with the future and so with leadership. A concern with leadership is a concern with the future, with the direction society is taking. Blood, in the form of royal blood, is an old symbol for leadership in western culture, but since blood is also a symbol of life and survival, blood also stands for all that is at stake in the choices of leadership a modern society makes.

In order to make sense of the contradictory impulses and tendencies outlined above, I draw on several key concepts from Lacanian psychoanalysis. In particular, I look to psychoanalysis for its explanations of why human beings repeat certain actions and beliefs even when they do not consciously wish to do so. One of the forms of repetition I examine here is the repetition of the vampire story itself as a blood-focused fantasy across a range of contexts and periods within western modernity. Furthermore, the vampire story is usually a story about a piece of history uncannily residing anachronistically in the present day, an unresolved piece of history that 'repeats' or persists into the present in an unwanted or enigmatic way. The vampire figure itself typically embodies this kind of 'piece' of western

modernity's history. Psychoanalysis similarly examines why and how pieces of an individual's, and a culture's, past might refuse to be forgotten or return unexpectedly or anachronistically.

Psychoanalysis gains many of its key ideas from the observation that human infants are dependent on other creatures, usually their own parents or other human caregivers, for their survival during at least the first eighteen months of life. No other animal is born with such utter dependence on care that comes from others for such a long period of time, coupled with a relatively high level of intelligence with which to interpret that care. During early-infancy, the newborn – who does not yet have 'subjectivity' per se – does not perceive any boundary between itself and the wider world.[16] At first, the satisfaction provided by milk, to take one example of satisfaction,[17] comes as part of a pre-subjective oneness (that is, a pre-subjective lack of boundary between self and other, between self and outside world). The repetition of satisfaction that comes and goes for reasons beyond the infant's control eventually installs the infant's subjectivity, the infant's sense of self as distinct from the object that provides satisfaction, for example a nursing breast that provides satisfying milk.[18]

For Lacan, the fact that forms of satisfaction are repeated for reasons beyond the infant's control and comprehension establishes a 'drive' in the human being to try to repeat forms of satisfaction in myriad ways throughout the individual's lifetime.[19] Humans seek patterns in the repeated returns and departures of satisfaction in order to try to anticipate how to recapture satisfaction when it becomes absent. We make rudimentary stories and imagine scenarios to tell ourselves what is happening. This narrativising of essentially enigmatic repetitions serves to assuage the anxiety of not being in control of when satisfaction provided by an outside source will return. We try to figure out what that outside source wants of us and how we can get it to come back.[20]

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[16] Sigmund Freud, 'An Outline of Psycho-Analysis,' in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud Volume XXIII (1937-1939): Moses and Monotheism, An Outline of Psychoanalysis and Other Works*, ed. James Strachey et al. (London: Vintage Books, 2001), 188.

[17] Ibid., 154.

[18] Ibid., 188.

[19] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book XI: The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* trans. Alan Sheridan, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (New York; London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1981), 167-68.

[20] Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. and ed. James Strachey (New York; London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1961), 13-17.

The enjoyment that attaches to these primal experiences of satisfaction during infancy is termed '*jouissance*' by Lacan. *Jouissance* can be loosely translated as 'enjoyment,' however, the term does not denote enjoyment in the everyday sense, hence it is usually left untranslated by Lacanians writing in English. Instead, *jouissance* names the special 'enjoyment' that exists beyond pleasure, an excitation 'capable of covering the whole spectrum of pain and pleasure.'[21] Psychoanalysis observes two key points about how humans relate to *jouissance*. First, other people's *jouissance* is always felt to have come at the cost of one's own. By definition there is never 'enough' *jouissance* to go around for everyone, it is always won at some(one's) expense. Second, even though our thirst for *jouissance* is unquenchable, images of full *jouissance* are horrifying. The vampire has often been one such image, as he or she breaks the modern taboo on blood-drinking for his or her grotesque satisfaction.

The 'death drive,' first described overtly by Freud (as '*Todestrieb*') in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* [*Jenseits des Lustprinzips*] (1920), names the way in which people cling to symptoms, stories and fantasies that they unconsciously believe will bring them *jouissance*, even, sometimes, at the price of causing their own self-destruction. The drive to recover lost *jouissance* explains why individuals and groups tend to repeat certain actions and beliefs even when they know it is against their self-interests or even despite not consciously wishing to do so. People tend to cling to the modes of *jouissance* to which they are accustomed, rather than seeking new forms of enjoyment at the risk of undermining their already constituted familiar settings, and the *jouissance* they believe their current conditions will continue to provide. Ellie Ragland defines the drive as 'the inertia of *jouissance* which makes a person's love of his or her' familiar context 'greater than any desire to change' it.[22] In many vampire stories, the vampire represents the threat of a radical change to the status quo of the society it enters, thus forcing the other characters in the story to confront the 'drive' of their society to maintain its familiarity.

The pre-subjective oneness described above can also be thought of as 'complete,' or 'total,' *jouissance*. When the outside source of repeated satisfaction becomes recognised as 'outside' and separate from the infant, subjectivity and selfhood are established. However,

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[21] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XX: On Feminine Sexuality, The Limits of Love and Knowledge, Encore 1972-1973*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W.W. Norton and Co, 1998), 3-4, 114.

[22] Ellie Ragland, *Essays on the Pleasures of Death: From Freud to Lacan* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 85.

because the emergence of subjectivity can only happen by recognising that the *jouissance* attached to primal satisfactions is separate from the self – coming from outside not within, from an other, not the self – the cost of subjectivity is a loss of *jouissance*, that is, a retrospective recognition of prior *jouissance* as already lost. Thus, an individual gains subjectivity and social identity by having a piece of pre-subjective 'total' *jouissance* cut off – or, 'castrated,' in psychoanalytic parlance.[23] This concept of 'castration of *jouissance*' is important for reasons to which I return shortly.

The Lacanian term 'Other' – or 'big Other' ('*grand Autre*') – refers, in the first instance, to the Other person who is the outside source providing the infant with intermittent satisfaction. The Other posits a degree of foreignness in the subject from its earliest moments, as the infant must take into account the 'Otherness' of its caregiver/s in order to try to communicate what it wants. For example, the infant is 'virtually obliged' to learn its caregivers' language.[24] The individual's earliest self-conceptions ultimately come from other people from the big Other.

This Lacanian Other is akin to the Freudian concept of the superego. In addition to the first adults encountered in life, the Other or superego can also stand for one's community, one's society, or one's race. This Other, of whom the individual is both a servant and a representative, is any community in whose cause one believes one would be justified in fighting a 'good fight,'[25] becoming a martyr to a certain fantasy of communal future life. Meanwhile, while the superego is popularly understood as a censoring agent,[26] checking the subject's illicit lusts as 'the law insofar as the subject has internalized it,'[27] the superego is more fully understood as a pure command or injunction without content. As such, the

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[23] Except, technically, in cases of psychosis, which is understood as a lack of this 'castration.'
[24] Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), 5.
[25] As in the words of Saint Paul, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith' (2 Timothy 4:7).
[26] For example, demonstrating the popular understanding (rather than the technical or specialised definition) of the term, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'superego' as: 'In Freudian theory: that part of a person's mind that acts as a self-critical conscience or censor, reflecting standards and behaviour learned from parents and society; the agent of self-criticism or self-observation that acts as a check on the id and the ego.' 'superego, n.' *OED* Online. *OED* Third Edition, June 2012. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/194265.
[27] Todd McGowan, *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 28.

superego is obscene and cruel. It is a relentless '*You must*'[28] probing all corners and levels of the psyche, not only its socially acceptable content. On one hand the superego says '*You must*' obey the rules and laws of the land, the family, social etiquette and one's culture's definitions of morality. On the other hand, the superego equally says, '*You must*' obey your wishes: enjoy all you can. As a contradictory command to obey both 'innermost' personal desires and 'outer' duties to a given public or group, Lacan says, '[t]he super-ego is at one and the same time the law and its destruction.'[29]

These concepts of *jouissance*, superego and castration can be used to interpret and understand not only individuals, but societies. Akin to the individual's castration as a condition of gaining subjectivity, individuals have their *jouissance* castrated as a condition of entering society. This means that, in the words of anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, '*a person can not do just what he pleases*'[30] and remain a member of society. Social etiquette, formalised written laws, and other cultural rules all dictate what an individual may do. While, in practice, many rules can be bent, in a given society there will be certain crimes that are virtually never accepted from any individual. Breaking a society's fundamental taboos will result in the removal of the offender from that society by execution, exile, or imprisonment. In *Totem and Taboo* [*Totem und Tabu*] (1913), Freud discusses at length the idea that a societal prohibition – or a 'taboo' in 'primitive' cultures – is fundamental to societal cohesion.[31] For Freud, the incest taboo is the prime example of such a prohibition. Blood-drinking becomes thoroughly taboo more recently in our history, and the vampire, as a blood-drinker, becomes an icon of illicit or forbidden *jouissance* for modernity. The vampire thus represents someone whose belonging in society is fundamentally in question. But as an enjoyer of that which is forbidden and taboo, the vampire's *jouissance* also represents that which was castrated from the modern subject as the price of the subject's belonging in society.

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[28] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book I: Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953–1954*, trans. John Forrester (New York: Norton, 1988), 102. Cited in McGowan, 30.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, trans. James Harle Bell, John Richard von Sturmer, and Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 43, original emphasis. Cited in McGowan, 12.
[31] Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics* trans. James Strachey (New York; London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1950).

The superego, or big Other, with its contradictory commands, works on both sides of society's prohibitions. The superego is what tells us to obey the law, to sacrifice ourselves and our *jouissance* for the good of the wider community. The superego also tells us to break the rules and pursue fuller *jouissance* than we currently have. In the coming chapters I follow Todd McGowan's understanding of western modernity as a gradual shift away from a 'society of prohibition' – the traditional society where most people follow duty in the traditional sense of self-sacrifice and obedience to explicit laws most of the time – to a 'society of commanded enjoyment': a society in which the superego's other command, the command to enjoy at any cost, begins to drown out its prohibitory counterpart.[32] In the society of commanded enjoyment, instead of feeling guilty that she or he has enjoyed her- or himself too much, the subject feels guilty that she or he is not enjoying enough. As western modernity becomes a 'society of commanded enjoyment' traditional taboos and prohibitions hold less authority, as society in general seeks to unlock the *jouissance* that, it is implied, lies behind every barrier of forbiddance. Ironically, however, it is impossible to enjoy on command, to simply 'enjoy enjoyment,' so without the barrier of a prohibition, *jouissance* becomes only more elusive.[33] This is why contemporary western society, which appears to be more permissive than ever, has not produced correspondingly high levels of happiness and satisfaction in its subjects.

Along with the waning of the authority of prohibitions in the society of commanded enjoyment, the authority traditionally held by leaders has weakened too. McGowan associates traditional authority with the Lacanian concept of the 'Master Signifier.' This is one signifier in the 'chain of signifiers' that does not refer to anything else but itself, having a totally stable meaning. In contrast, a regular signifier relies on its reference to other signifiers to gain its meaning, for example, 'we can identify a table because it isn't a chair, which isn't a couch, and so on.'[34] As the Master Signifier 'refers only to itself'[35] it anchors meaning and authority. For example, the Master Signifier makes a leader's command have an agreed upon meaning instead of being endlessly interpretable and thus the command's obedience being endlessly deferrable. When meaning is unmoored, authority is undermined from the start. The vampire's appearance in western culture as an object of fascination and conjecture in the

[32] Todd McGowan, *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).
[33] Ibid., 37-39.
[34] Ibid., 41.
[35] Ibid.

early eighteenth century itself represents a weakening, or at least a shift, in historical authority. The 'vampire executions' documented in the Hapsburg military reports, the discussion of which inaugurates the entry of the word 'vampire' into the English language, were illegal. As Erik Butler observes, the 'destruction of the vampire' in these reports 'was also a blow aimed at Austrian authority figures.'[36] I return to this topic in the following chapter.

Despite the vampire's importance as a western cultural icon for almost three centuries now, it was not until the late 1960s that vampire literature began to be considered worthy of serious academic study. This shift in academic attitudes itself reflects a cultural transformation in the operation of a form of authority, as a number of English literary scholars redefined the parameters of the authority of their academic discipline. Just as vampire fictions burgeoned from the late 1960s on, as I discuss in Chapter Five, non-fiction studies of vampires also proliferated at this time. Additionally, many works of popular non-fiction, rather than academic studies, appeared. Throughout the following decades a steady stream of popular non-fiction books about vampires were produced to meet the demands of a growing Gothic fandom. As is explored in Chapter Five, this eruption of vampire texts, both fictional and non-fictional, coincides with the rise of the 'society of commanded enjoyment' described by Todd McGowan. With enjoyment's shift in status (from prohibited to commanded), vampires now perform a new kind of function: something one can want to be. The vampire narrative becomes something that can assist with the kinds of questions of identity and belonging that postmodernity poses to the individual citizen-consumer incessantly. Victoria Nelson describes a 'tidal wave of pseudoscholarly compendia, encyclopedias, and annotated editions of all things vampire'[37] in the postmodern era. In Nelson's view (discussed further below) such 'pseudoscholarly' vampire studies' 'lack of factual accuracy' 'is irrelevant in the long run, as they stoke the flames of legend creation by further blurring the boundary between fiction and reality.'[38] One of the hallmarks of the Gothic is its tendency to play with the boundaries between fact and fiction, between verifiable truths and unverifiable beliefs. In turn, in the postmodern era this blurring of fact and fiction, already present in the Gothic, becomes more generalised in contemporary culture. From around the early 2000s, the study of Gothic fandom and 'Goth' subcultures, including a

[36] Erik Butler, *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film: Cultural Transformations in Europe, 1732-1933* (New York: Camden House, 2010), 41.
[37] Nelson, 131.
[38] Ibid.

subculture of people who identity as 'real' vampires, has been a growing subfield of Gothic studies.[39]

Much of the focus of vampire studies in the late 1960s and the 1970s was on Stoker's *Dracula* and on Stoker's biography.[40] Since this time, new trends in vampire scholarship have often been tied to, or influenced by, important new interpretations of *Dracula*. This, however, held slightly less true in the opening decades of the twenty-first century, perhaps signalling a broadening of vampire studies. Another common focus of early vampire studies was the folkloric origins of vampire literature.[41] Combining these two strands of vampire scholarship – Stoker studies and folklore studies – perhaps the most famous vampire study of the 1970s was Raymond T. McNally and Radu Florescu's *In Search of Dracula: A True History of Dracula and Vampire Legends* (1972).[42] McNally and Florescu originated the popular myth that Stoker based Count Dracula on the historical Vlad Tepes, a fifteenth-century ruler of Wallachia (a region of modern Romania). This theory was initially accepted

[39] For example, Phil Hodkinson, *Goth: Identity, Style and Subculture* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002); Melissa A. Click et al., ed., *Bitten by Twilight: Youth Culture, Media and the Vampire Franchise* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010); Gareth Schott and Kristine Moffat, ed., *Fanpires: Audience Consumption of the Modern Vampire* (Washington, D.C.: New Academia Pub., 2011); Maria Mellins, *Vampire Culture* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013); Isabella van Elferen and Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, *Goth Music: From Sound to Subculture* (New York: Routledge, 2016). A much earlier study, Norine Dresser's *American Vampires: Fans, Victims, Practitioners* (New York: Norton, 1989) anticipated the later academic interest in vampire fandom and associated practices. On real vampires see Joseph Laycock, 'Real Vampires as an Identity Group: Analyzing Causes and Effects of an Introspective Survey by the Vampire Community,' *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 14.1 (2010): 4-23.

[40] For example, Joseph S. Bierman's 'Dracula: Prolonged Childhood Illness and the Oral Triad,' *American Imago* 29 (1972), takes a psycho-biographical approach to Stoker's novel and surmises that *Dracula* is an expression of Stoker's repressed hostility towards his brothers and his employer, Henry Irving, for reasons stemming from being bedridden in his childhood before the age of seven.

[41] For example the edited collection by Jan L. Perkowski, *Vampires of the Slavs* (1976); Bacil F. Kirtley, '*Dracula*, The Monastic Chronicles and Slavic Folklore,' *Midwest Folklore* 6 (1956): 133-139; Grigore Nandris, 'The Historical Dracula: The Theme of His Legend in the Western and in the Eastern Literatures of Europe,' *Comparative Literature Studies* 3 (1966): 367-396.

[42] Raymond T. McNally and Radu Florescu, *In Search of Dracula: A True History of Dracula and Vampire Legends* (New York: Graphic Society, 1972).

by several scholars, including Daniel Farson,[43] Christopher Frayling,[44] Franco Moretti[45] and Paul Barber.[46] It has since been discredited, most clearly by Elizabeth Miller.[47] While Stoker certainly found the name 'Dracula' in Wallachian history,[48] there is no evidence that he had any further knowledge of Vlad Tepes's biography.

Gender and sexuality were also important themes of early vampire study and have remained so throughout the following decades, although questions of race and national belonging are more to the foreground in this thesis, due to the nature of the texts my study centralises. The earliest scholars to pay attention to sexuality in Gothic literature were those influenced by psychoanalysis. Ernest Jones argued in 'On the Nightmare' (1933) that vampirism represents repressed or unacknowledged sexual impulses, with the 'vital fluid' of blood symbolising semen.[49] Several scholars followed this line of interpretation into the 1970s several scholars followed this line of interpretation. C. F. Bentley, for example, argued in 1972 that the 'obsessional[ly] detail[ed]' descriptions of vampirism throughout *Dracula* provided symbolically sexual images that were desirable yet 'rejected or repressed on a conscious level.' [50] By the late 1970s, scholars influenced by second-wave feminism began to

[43] Elizabeth Miller, 'Back to the Basics: Re-examining Stoker's Sources for *Dracula*' *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 10.2 [38] (1999): 191.
[44] Ibid., 192.
[45] Franco Moretti, 'Dialectic of Fear' [translated by Susan Fischer], in *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms*, trans. Susan Fischer, David Forgacs and David Miller (London; New York: Verso, 1983), 82-108, 91.
[46] Paul Barber, *Vampires, Burial and Death: Folklore and Reality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 2.
[47] Miller (1999). See also: Elizabeth Miller, *Dracula: Sense and Nonsense* (Westcliff-on-Sea: Desert Island Books, 2000) and Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 133.
[48] According to Miller, Stoker's notes show that he found the name in William Wilkinson's *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* (1820). Miller (1999), 190.
[49] Ernest Jones, *On the Nightmare* (New York: Liveright, 1951 [London: Hogarth Press and Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1933]), 119. As is detailed in Chapter One, within premodern Western medical thinking, semen was viewed as a form of processed blood. On the equation of blood with sperm in Victorian culture as it is reflected in Stoker's *Dracula* see: William Hughes, 'Delusions of Pallor: Sanguine Depletion, Eroticism and the Economics of Blood in *Dracula*' in *Dracula: Myth et metamorphoses*, ed. Claude Fierobe (Villeneuve D'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2005), 123-38.
[50] C. F. Bentley, 'The Monster in the Bedroom,' *Literature and Psychology* 22 (1972): 28. See also Maurice Richardson, 'The Psychoanalysis of Ghost Stories,' *The Twentieth Century*

examine the depictions of women and gender roles in *Dracula*. Stephanie Demetrakopoulos noted that gender roles are often exchanged or reversed in Stoker's novel. The seemingly 'feminist' praise of Mina Harker in *Dracula* in fact celebrates her ability to emulate the characteristics expected of a man, thus nullifying the novel's feminism in Demetrakopoulos's view.[51] Some later notable studies that focussed on sexuality in *Dracula* include Christopher Craft's '"Kiss Me with Those Red Lips": Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*' (1984), John Allen Stevenson's 'A Vampire in the Mirror: The Sexuality of *Dracula*' (1988), and Talia Schaffer's '"A Wilde Desire Took Me": The Homoerotic History of *Dracula*' (1994).[52] The implications of some of these are considered in Chapter Two. In the early 1980s, studies such as David Punter's *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day* (1980), and James B. Twitchell's *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (1981) further bolstered the academic credibility of the Gothic and vampire literary studies.

Karl Marx writes in *Capital* (1867) that, '[c]apital is dead labour, which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks.'[53] It was not until the appearance of Franco Moretti's essay 'Dialectic of Fear' (1983) that the implications of Marx's quote began to be seriously explored within Gothic studies. Moretti reads Stoker's *Dracula* in relation to the capitalism of the novel's era. Arguing that monopoly was one of the greatest unconscious fears of a bourgeois readership at the end of the nineteenth century, Moretti reads Count Dracula as a representation of monopoly. For Moretti, Count Dracula 'is a true monopolist: solitary and despotic, he will not brook competition. Like monopoly capital, his ambition is to subjugate the last vestiges of the

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166 (1959); and Leonard Wolf, *A Dream of Dracula: In Search of the Living Dead* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), 303.

[51] Stephanie Demetrakopoulos, 'Feminism, Sex Role Exchanges, and Other Subliminal Fantasies in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 3 (1977). See also: Phyllis Roth, 'Suddenly Sexual Women in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' *Literature and Psychology* 27 (1977); Judith Wasserman, 'Women and Vampires: *Dracula* as a Victorian Novel,' *Midwest Quarterly* 18 (1977); Carol A. Senf, '*Dracula*: Stoker's Response to the New Woman,' *Victorian Studies* 26 (1982).

[52] Christopher Craft, "Kiss Me with Those Red Lips": Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' *Representations* 8 (1984); John Allen Stevenson, 'A Vampire in the Mirror: The Sexuality of *Dracula*,' *PMLA* 103 (1988); Talia Schaffer, '"A Wilde Desire Took Me": The Homoerotic History of *Dracula*,' *English Literary History* 61.2 (1994).

[53] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. 1 (1867), trans. Ben Fowkes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), 342.

liberal era and destroy all forms of economic independence.'[54] This fear of monopoly was a fear of the undermining of ideals of individual freedom and competition within the economy. Robert A. Smart's 1994 essay, 'Blood and Money in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*: The Struggle against Monopoly' builds on Moretti's work to specifically examine the connections between money and blood in Stoker's novel.[55] The interpretation of vampires and other monsters in relation to economics and capitalism has remained an important strand of Gothic studies since the publication of Moretti's essay. Three notable examples are: Rob Latham's *Consuming Youth: Vampires, Cyborgs and the Culture of Consumption* (2002) (discussed further below), Annalee Newitz's *Pretend We're Dead: Capitalist Monsters in American Pop Culture* (2006) and David McNally's *Monsters of the Market: Zombies, Vampires and Global Capitalism* (2011).[56]

Paul Barber's *Vampires, Burial and Death: Folklore and Reality* (1988) claimed to offer the first scientific explanation for the folkloric vampire. Taking an anthropological approach to the vampire, Barber hypothesises that the origin of the vampire myth lies in certain medical phenomena that can cause corpses to exhibit vampiric symptoms, such as a bloodied mouth, a reddened face, groaning when staked, and bloating. Barber suggests, '[m]ost folklore is not presented to us as a simple account of experience but is put through a series of cognitive filters, so that a narrated event, however "real," may end up in later retellings with little or no resemblance to what we think of as reality.'[57] While Barber's book is considered a landmark in vampire studies, and – like McNally and Florescu's *In Search of Dracula* – has reached a wide non-academic audience, *Vampires, Burial and Death* has often been criticised by Gothic literary scholars for its rather ahistorical conception of the vampire, and the dubious premise that a folkloric or shared communal belief requires such a direct,

[54] Moretti, 92.
[55] Robert A. Smart, 'Blood and Money in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*: The Struggle against Monopoly,' in *Money: Lure, Lore, and Literature*, ed. John Louis DiGaetani (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1994).
[56] Rob Latham, *Consuming Youth: Vampires, Cyborgs and the Culture of Consumption* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Annalee Newitz, *Pretend We're Dead: Capitalist Monsters in American Pop Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); David McNally, *Monsters of the Market: Zombies, Vampires and Global Capitalism* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011).
[57] Barber, 195.

'real' origin.[58] Barber brings together a wealth of information about the anthropology of death rites and corpse disposal from premodern and non-western societies, with an emphasis on cross-cultural comparison. This is of limited relevance to my thesis, with its focus on the literary vampire of Anglophone modernity. I discuss the folkloric vampire in relation to the origins of the literary vampire in Chapter One, drawing primarily on the work of Erik Butler and Nick Groom[59] (discussed further below).

A trio of essays published in the early 1990s focussed on issues of race and colonialism in Stoker's *Dracula,* issues with which this thesis is more directly concerned: Stephen D. Arata's 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization' (1990), Jules Zanger's 'A Sympathetic Vibration: *Dracula* and the Jews' (1991) and J. Halberstam's 'Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*' (1993).[60] Many studies focussing on race, ethnicity, and colonialism in *Dracula,* and in Gothic literature more generally, have followed in the coming years and decades. My own thesis contributes to this subfield. Arata highlights how Count Dracula's infiltration of the heart of the British Empire, and his predation on Lucy Westenra as a symbol of England, articulates an anxiety about 'reverse' colonisation, of foreign, non-English people holding power over the English. In a 'terrifying reversal,' 'the colonizer finds himself in the position of the colonized, the exploiter becomes exploited, the victimizer victimized.'[61] Arata suggests that reverse colonisation narratives abound in late Victorian popular fiction, but that Stoker's *Dracula* is the prime example of the phenomenon. Arata sees these reverse colonisation

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[58] For example, in 'Monster Culture (Seven Theses),' Jeffrey Jerome Cohen claims that Joan Copjec's 'Vampires, Breast-Feeding, and Anxiety' [*October* 58 (1991)] has a 'superiority' to Paul Barber's *Vampires, Burial, and Death* due to Barber's efforts to 'extrac[t] a transcultural, trans-temporal phenomenon labeled "the vampire,"' whilst 'even if vampiric figures are found almost worldwide, from ancient Egypt to modern Hollywood, each reappearance and its analysis is still bound in a double act of construction and reconstitution.' Jeffery Jerome Cohen, 'Monster Culture (Seven Theses),' in *The Monster Theory Reader,* ed. Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 39, 52n3.
[59] Erik Butler, *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film: Cultural Transformations in Europe, 1732-1933* (New York: Camden House, 2010); Nick Groom, *The Vampire: A New History* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2018).
[60] Stephen D. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization,' *Victorian Studies* 33.4 (1990); Jules Zanger, 'A Sympathetic Vibration: *Dracula* and the Jews,' *English Literature in Transition (1880-1920)* 34.1 (1991); Judith Halberstam, 'Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*,' *Victorian Studies* 36.3 (1993).
[61] Arata, 623.

narratives as expressions of the fear many late Victorians felt regarding what was widely perceived as the physical and moral decline of the British.[62] Arata also believes that the late-Victorian reverse colonisation narrative is an expression of cultural guilt, arguing that '[i]n the marauding, invasive Other, British culture sees its own imperial practices mirrored back in monstrous forms.'[63]

Like Arata, Zanger elucidates a racial subtext in Stoker's novel, expounding the resonances between Count Dracula and the 'archetypal Jew'[64] of English culture. Zanger reads *Dracula* as a response to the influx of Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, observing that '[b]etween 1881 and 1900, the number of foreign Jews in England increased by 600 per cent.'[65] *Dracula*'s ability to express its era's anti-Semitism in a socially acceptable form is, Zanger surmises, what lent the novel 'a significant portion of its power.'[66] Although Count Dracula is not explicitly identified as Jewish in Stoker's novel, in Zanger's view the Count nonetheless 'vibrated sympathetically to generalized unease' regarding Jews in Britain. Zanger notes that late Victorian anti-Semitism went '[b]eyond a miscellaneous xenophobia,'[67] due to centuries of literary and folk tradition'[68] that cast Jews as bloodthirsty, money-hungry enemies of Christianity. Halberstam likewise links Count Dracula with the late nineteenth-century anti-Semitic stereotype of the Jew. Halberstam, however, insists that vampirism and Gothic monstrosity cannot be interpreted in terms of a single form of 'otherness' but embody a combination of multiple forms of otherness along the lines of 'race, class, and gender.' [69] I shall return to Halberstam shortly.

Ken Gelder's *Reading the Vampire* (1994) surveys the vampire genre up to the early 1990s. Gelder theorises that the vampire figure's cultural longevity stems from its ability to combine elements that are seemingly 'beyond' culture with those that are within it. For example, vampires have been represented as ethnically and racially 'foreign' or 'unassimilated'[70] yet the representation itself was historically an act of self-definition for

[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Zanger, 36.
[65] Ibid., 34.
[66] Ibid., 36.
[67] Ibid., 43.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Halberstam (1993), 334.
[70] Ken Gelder, *Reading the Vampire* (London; New York: Routledge, 1994), 141.

western culture. Analogously, the vampire as a 'queer' figure would appear to occupy the position of an outcast, yet 'culture found itself drawn towards' the vampire as queer, both as a symbol of erotic freedom and as an object of sexological fascination.[71] Gelder observes that in the late twentieth century vampire texts often represented 'youth subcultures,' which are marginal to mainstream society (or 'culture,' in Gelder's words), in conflict with the nuclear family, usually considered central to – or 'inside' – American society.[72] Gelder suggests that boundary-breaking is a function of the vampire figure, but, more interestingly, he emphasises that vampires show that boundaries are not where, or what, they seem to be. Gelder points out that vampire stories often play on the vampire's status as a cultural outsider to probe or subvert society's 'conventional view' of itself, the stories eventually arriving at 'a recognition that the vampire is not only central to culture but may even be (re)constructing it in its own image – or vice versa.'[73]

Nina Auerbach's *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (1995) became one of the most often cited studies of vampire literature. Auerbach famously states that 'every age embraces the vampire it needs'[74] as a way of considering how the vampire figure has undergone multiple reinventions during its history. Auerbach's study, like Gelder's, traces the changes in the vampire genre from its beginnings up to the early 1990s, covering a range of texts. My methodological choice to make this thesis a long-scale survey of the vampire genre follows in the footsteps of Gelder's and Auerbach's studies. Auerbach traces the changes in the vampire genre in relation to shifting forms of power. For Auerbach, the literary vampire before *Dracula* is a figure of homosocial friendship and intimacy, threatening or subverting patriarchal power. This tradition is abandoned by Stoker's novel, which reinvents the genre, in Auerbach's view. Observing that 'vampires go where power is,'[75] Auerbach describes how the vampire travels to America in the twentieth century. She surmises that vampires now embodied the monarchs that Americans were 'forbidden' to desire by democracy.[76] By the 1970s, when official authority seemed to be in crisis, especially after the Watergate scandal, vampire stories imagined strong vampire leaders ruling over new kinds of societies that

[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid., 142.
[74] Auerbach, 145.
[75] Ibid., 6.
[76] Ibid., 101.

Auerbach characterises as 'feminist oligarchies and kingly democracies.'[77] Auerbach then sees the vampires of the 1980s losing much of their power, becoming more vulnerable, mirroring the human bodily vulnerabilities at the forefront of people's minds in an era shocked by the advent of the AIDS epidemic. The new societal beginnings imagined in the vampire narratives of the 1970s seemed to be abandoned, with the genre becoming more pessimistic. Auerbach's book ends by questioning where the genre will go next, noting that 'vampirism is wearing down and vampires need a long restorative sleep.'[78] Ironically, vampires were about to become even more popular than ever before.

In *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (1995) J. Halberstam views the body itself as the paramount battleground upon which ideals of national identity were expressed and contested in Britain and America in the nineteenth century, the impact of which carries forward into the Gothic in the twentieth century. The Victorian monster's body, as a reflection of stereotypes of socially stigmatised identities, helped construct ideals of normalcy and 'purity' (both racial and moral) in contradistinction to the monster's abnormal body. At least in the Victorian era, Gothic texts seemingly suggest that a bodily or superficial abnormality signals a 'deeper' or inner monstrosity. Thus, the Gothic becomes a forum where the relation of the body's appearance to the individual's 'inner' psychology or morality, and his or her potentially hidden truths of identity, are explored, subverted or constructed. The monster's body can be read in multiple ways, signifying excessively, and thus – as mentioned earlier – it is Halberstam's position that a unitary mode of interpretation is inappropriate for analysis of the Gothic. Halberstam's readings do, however, tend to focus on sexuality in relation to monstrosity, and he states that sexuality is the 'dominant mark of otherness'[79] in Gothic literature.

Sexuality plays an important role in the vampire texts treated throughout this thesis. In However, in both Matheson's *I Am Legend* and Butler's *Fledgling,* along with *True Blood,* I find that the sexual enjoyment is just one form of *jouissance* circulating through the story, along with blood-drinking and consumerism. In *Consuming Youth: Vampires, Cyborgs, and the Culture of Consumption* (2002) Rob Latham explores connections between consumerism,

[77] Ibid., 147.
[78] Ibid., 192.
[79] J. Halberstam, '"Parasites and Perverts: An Introduction to Gothic Monstrosity," from *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters*' in *Classic Readings on Monster Theory: Demonstrare Volume One,* ed. Asa Simon Mittman and Marcus Hensel (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2018), 79.

enjoyment and vampirism. Latham argues that the vampire is fused in a dialectical relationship with the cyborg, the two being key metaphors of consumerism in post-Fordist American popular culture. Latham locates the genesis of the vampire/cyborg dialectic in Marx, who portrays capitalism as a vampiric force, but also describes the 'factory system'[80] turning workers into 'undead extensions'[81] of capitalism's machinery – that is, 'essentially' cyborgs.[82] In turn, Latham connects vampirism as a metaphor for consumerism with the image and ideal of youth in late twentieth-century American culture. Youth becomes an important element of capitalism in the late twentieth century, where an association with youth and rejuvenation becomes a selling point for products, whilst youth-driven trends spur on new waves of consumption. Latham interprets the vampire as being 'literally an insatiable consumer driven by a hunger for perpetual youth,'[83] but he also notes how, in the late twentieth century, vampires increasingly take the form of undead youths. In *Fledgling* this generic convention is taken to the extreme, as the protagonist is a child with amnesia, in a state of naivety and innocence while Shori also represents, among other things, the postmodern consumer.

Stacey Abbott's *Celluloid Vampires: Life after Death in the Modern World* (2007) is a landmark study of vampire films, which is particularly insightful regarding the postmodern vampire. Abbott observes that the typical setting of the vampire film gradually migrates from New York City to Los Angeles, providing a setting associated with *jouissance*, as the city blends with locations such as the beach and the amusement park.[84] I discuss *The Lost Boys* (dir. Joel Schumacher, 1987), one of Abbot's examples of the 'Los Angeles vampire film,'[85] at length in Chapter Five. In the 2000s, advanced technology becomes a more prominent part of vampire films. Technologically enhanced vampires appear in films such as those of the *Blade* series (1998-2004) and *Underworld* (dir. Len Wiseman, 2003). Characterised as 'vampire cyborgs' by Abbott, they constitute a merging of the two poles of the dialectic identified by Latham. Computer programs, genetic engineering, and high-tech weaponry all become more common features of the post-9/11 vampire film. Not only do the films'

[80] Latham, 3.
[81] Ibid., 3.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 1.
[84] Abbott, 179.
[85] Ibid., 177. While set in the fictional Californian town of Santa Carla, Abbott argues that the setting of *The Lost Boys* is symbolically Los Angeles. Abbott, 179.

narratives revolve around technology, but the vampires themselves are technologically produced, relying on advanced make-up and special effects to become visually realised on screen. The centrality of genetic engineering in *Fledgling*, as well as the depiction of terroristic violence, connects Butler's novel with the wider shifts in the vampire genre observed by Abbott.

Of relevance to the thesis's fifth and sixth chapters, Victoria Nelson's *Gothicka: Vampire Heroes, Human Gods and the New Supernatural* (2012) examines the transformation of the Gothic in the postmodern era. Especially after the turn of the millennium, the Gothic becomes 'brighter,' incorporating elements of romance and fairy tale to an extent that was almost unimaginable before the late 1960s. Nelson argues that one of the key functions of the Gothic since its inception has been to provide western culture with a way of 'imagining and encountering the sacred, albeit in unconscious ways.'[86] Nelson also argues that the Gothic has come to serve as 'a vehicle for developing the frameworks of new religious movements.'[87] During the twentieth century Gothic fandom began to blend with new religions such as Wicca while Gothic texts also began reflecting western culture's growing acceptance of informal, 'personal gnosis'[88] associated with New Age spirituality. The postmodern vampire becomes, Nelson argues, a fantasy of human deification: 'the notion of humans as gods.' [89] This is a theological analog for the transformation of the western cultural superego noted by Todd McGowan, as authority moves from traditionally appointed leaders to the individual. Whereas earlier vampires represented a violation of the boundaries of human identity in the direction of demonology or degeneration, postmodern vampires offer an image of enhanced humanity. In Chapter Six, I show how the protagonist, Shori, a human-vampire hybrid, functions as an allegory for the future human, embodying many of Nelson's observations about the millennial Gothic.

The only study of vampires to date in which blood is the primary focus, as it is of my project, is Aspasia Stephanou's *Reading Vampire Gothic through Blood* (2014).[90] However,

[86] Nelson, xi.
[87] Ibid., xii.
[88] Ibid., 132.
[89] Ibid., 40. The North American history of 'deification or theosis' is connected with Freemasonry and Mormonism. Nelson traces the ideas back to Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) and Jakob Boehme (1575-1624).
[90] Aspasia Stephanou, *Reading Vampire Gothic through Blood: Bloodlines* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

my study is significantly different from Stephanou's in its methodology and its conclusions. In the chapters that follow, I outline a chronological history of blood, where shifts in human beliefs about, and understandings of, blood are examined in relation to shifts in the vampire genre and vice versa. Stephanou's book features chapters discussing vampire texts and blood thematically, rather than chronologically. Stephanou thus highlights thematic commonalities between disparate texts across time but is less able to situate them in their historical contexts. Stephanou explores a range of meanings and symbolic functions that blood can encompass and perform, emphasising the apparent fluidity of blood symbolism. By drawing on Lacanian understandings, I elucidate historical continuities that Stephanou misses. Stephanou argues that '[b]lood's messy, diverse, historically occulted circulations and eruptions through time unsettle continuity of being and break teleological movement, revealing that neither man nor his body is stable.'[91] By contrast, I see important continuities in the history of blood and its use as a metaphor by the vampire genre. I agree that blood may 'break teleological movement' but for me this is due to its function as a metonym for *jouissance*, the drive to recapture lost *jouissance* being a cause of unconscious repetitions in human lives. In this thesis I show that blood is a symbolic device that also 'carries' forward unanswered questions and keeps being re-mystified in different historical contexts. There is thus an important continuity that is not lost or replaced over time. While Stephanou sees blood as a 'liquid' symbol that can 'evolv[e]' and 'transfor[m]' perhaps endlessly,[92] I see blood performing a specific function as a cultural enigma. For me this continuous function encompasses the plethora of meanings discussed by Stephanou.

Nick Groom's *The Vampire: A New History* (2018), finally, gives an account of the vampire from its folkloric origins up to Stoker's *Dracula*, with a conclusion briefly considering later texts. In a study with considerable relevance to my project's early chapters, Groom shows how the vampire is distinct from a folkloric entity, arguing against the notion that vampires are a transhistorical, universal fear. The vampire *qua* vampire becomes so when the folkloric entity is encountered by Enlightenment thought. Groom characterises the vampire as 'a powerful tool for making sense of the human predicament.'[93] Confronted with reports of the vampire's existence from eastern Europe, questions were generated in the fields of medicine, science, law and theology relating to their various definitions of human being;

[91] Stephanou, 4.
[92] Ibid., 1.
[93] Groom, xiv.

for example, regarding the medical definition of death, or regarding the legality of exhuming corpses suspected of vampirism. Groom shows how the questions raised by the Enlightenment encounter with vampirism remain the chief concerns of the vampire genre in later centuries.

In the next chapter I consider the origins of the literary vampire in this encounter between Enlightenment thought and eastern European folklore, paying specific attention to the role of blood in the transformation of the vampire from a piece of local folklore to an important monster of western literature and popular culture. The modern vampire is born not only out of the confrontation of the Enlightenment with the folkloric vampire alone, but also with blood itself. Due to blood's centrality to premodern western cultures, its complex history as a symbol, along with its status as a real substance that is indispensable to human life, blood was uniquely placed to both mark and carry surplus meaning as western culture faced rapid upheavals with the onset of modernity. As I show in the chapters that follow, the vampire genre became a forum for considering, probing and interpreting unresolved questions of belonging and exploitation that emerged within western modernity. To serve this function the genre recruited blood, already one of western culture's most overdetermined symbols, to a new career, as the definitive object of vampiric enjoyment.

Chapter One: Blood and Vampires before Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897)

From the vampire's first appearance in the English language in 1732, blood-drinking is its defining feature. Blood-drinking made the vampire not simply a ghost or revenant but confirmed that the vampire had a real corporeality and posed a material threat to the community on which it preyed. In the eighteenth century that community was usually the vampire's own family and their village. The vampire's haemophagy also meant that vampirism was not a miracle, like Biblical resurrections, since resurrected people in the Bible [1] did not suck blood.[2] In order to examine the question of why blood-drinking was integral to the vampire from its first appearance in western culture, this chapter surveys the understandings of blood that existed in western cultures before the appearance of vampirism as an object of fascination in the early eighteenth century – from Greek antiquity through the Middle Ages and into the early modern period. The chapter then surveys a selection of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century vampire texts, leading up to the appearance of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in 1897.

By the end of this chapter we shall see that by the late nineteenth century, the image of contemporary human being was no longer that of a creature fallen from its ideal or Adamic state but the opposite: a creature who had evolved 'up,' out of nature, and was now in peril of falling back into it. By the time Stoker writes *Dracula* blood-drinking had become an icon of uncivilised savagery – but this also made it an image of 'full,' 'uncastrated' *jouissance*: definitionally what being a modern white man was not supposed to be. While western theories of heredity became more deterministic by the late nineteenth century than they had been in earlier centuries, in the face of this determinism race became – almost paradoxically – understood as something fragile and highly malleable via corruption and degeneration. In turn, blood's meaning changed, since blood was the material link between contemporary individuals and their ancestors, the vehicle of heredity and the agent of potential degeneration.

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[1] Lazarus (John 11:1–44), the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11–17), Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:21–43, Matthew 9:18–26, Luke 8:40–56), and Jesus Christ (Mark 16, Matthew 28, Luke 24, Acts 1, and John 20).

[2] Nick Groom, *The Vampire: A New History* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2018), 57-58.

Anglophone culture by the *fin de siècle* had come to think about the sacrifice of enjoyment in specific and historically unique ways, in large part because the ancient past was radically reconceived during the nineteenth century along with the story of humankind's origins. As I showed in the introduction, human sociability, civility, and communal belonging are made possible when individual group members share in a sacrifice of *jouissance* (enjoyment beyond pleasure), termed a 'castration' in psychoanalytic parlance. In the Lacanian view, this is a structural feature of human communities that applies across time and place.

By the late nineteenth century, animals, white people's supposedly less civilised forebears (including superstitious, often Catholic, peasantry in many Gothic tales), along with non-white people (white people's even more distant forebears, in evolutionary terms, some believed), and, often, women and children, were imagined as enjoying more directly, more spontaneously than contemporary white men, part and parcel with their perceived irrationality and 'primal savagery.' At this time the vampire's enjoyment of blood becomes an emblem of this 'primal savagery,' which is associated with humankind's evolutionary past. Thus, in the cultural context of the *fin de siècle* the equation of civilised culture, humanness (as opposed to the bestial savagery of the prehistoric 'missing link') and racial whiteness, worked in concert to place a moral duty on the individual to refrain from *jouissance*. As we shall see, the vampire comes to represent the failure or violation of this responsibility.

There was a contradiction, however, in this ideology of civilisation.[3] To be modern, or 'civilised,' meant resisting irrational superstitions and folk cultural practices, instead embracing science and technological progress. In other words, being civilised meant breaking rules that had held authority in the past but no longer did, due to their being founded on superstition or folk belief rather than modern scientific reason. Insofar as breaking rules connotes enjoyment, being modern was thus just as much about enjoying as it was about 'civilised' self-denial. As I show later, the vampire genre explored this contradiction by the later nineteenth century, for reasons that are elaborated over the course of the chapter. These historical factors paved the way for Stoker's *Dracula* to take the form it did, as examined in Chapter Two.

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[3] For a detailed discussion of this understanding of modernity in relation to racial ideology see Juliet Flower MacCannell, *The Future Hysteric's Guide to the Future Female Subject* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 97-109.

From Greek antiquity through the Middle Ages and into the seventeenth century the fact of blood's circulation through the vascular system was unknown to western culture. Instead, people thought that blood surged and flowed from one part of the body to another, due to a variety of environmental and dietary factors. Blood's invisible actions within the body were supposed to resemble the actions of bodies of water observable in nature. Blood could boil or cool, become thick and stagnant, dried up and depleted or run abundantly. Blood moved in concert with other observable natural rhythms, like the tides of the sea: the repetition of day followed by night, the repetition of seasons year by year, the repeated appearance and disappearance of stars. When William Harvey published *De motu corbis*[4] in 1628 he introduced into western culture the concept of blood's circulation through the veins and arteries, pumped by the heart.[5] Barely more than a century later – a brief interval, in long-scale historical terms – the vampire enters Anglophone culture.

Many medieval and early modern ideas about blood dated back to Greek antiquity. Empedocles of Acragas (490-430 BCE) had described a 'haemocentric' conception of the human being.[6] He theorised that everything in the *kosmos*, including humankind, is composed of four basic elements: air, water, earth and fire. As Valentina Conticelli describes, Empedocles further supposed that 'since man was part of the universe, his body (the microcosm) must function like the universe (the macrocosm).'[7] The principle of analogy, and the idea of 'sympathetic rapport' between elements in the microcosm (the individual human body) and the macrocosm (the world, the cosmos), would remain key in how western culture thought about blood and the human body well into the eighteenth century. For Empedocles, blood combined all four elements, and it is in the blood that elements within the body could meet with like elements in the outside world, via the pores. Here blood was not only the 'vital principle' but 'the principle of thought' itself and the agent of sensory perceptions and intelligence.[8] '[W]ith earth do we see earth, with water water, with air bright air, with fire

[4] The full title is: *Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus* [*An Anatomical Exercise on the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Living Beings*].
[5] Ibn al-Nafis (1213-1288) gives the first recorded description of pulmonary circulation in his *Sharh Tashrih al-Qanun li Ibn Sina* [*Commentary on Anatomy in Avicenna's Canon*] published c.1242.
[6] Valentina Conticelli, '*Sanguis Suavis*: Blood between Microcosm and Macrocosm,' in *Blood: Art, Power, Politics and Pathology*, ed. James M. Bradburne (Munich, London, New York: Prestel, 2001), 55.
[7] Conticelli, 56.
[8] Conticelli, 57.

consuming fire'[9] states Empedocles; and, elsewhere: '[the heart] dwell[s] in [a] sea of blood which surges back and forth, where especially is what is called thought by men; for the blood around men's hearts is their thought.'[10] According to this model, it is because one's blood can combine all four elements that one is able to perceive 'the whole of nature.' If any element is internally missing from inside one's body it would be impossible to perceive that element in the world.[11] Thus, antique thinking saw blood not just as a matter of physiology but also as a matter of what we call psychology and neurology today. Concurrently, other Greek philosophers saw blood as the seat of the soul, in part because steam was observed rising off freshly spilt blood.[12] Death was synonymous with blood's complete cooling and/or drying up. The equation of blood with life, or life force itself, by the ancient Greeks constitutes the root of the way in which the modern vampire texts discussed in this thesis are able to use blood as a metonym for *jouissance*. In ways that are outlined later in this chapter and the chapters that follow, what Lacan calls *jouissance* is the animating driver of human 'life.' In his *Seminar VII*, Lacan claimed that life itself is an apparatus of *jouissance*, and that *jouissance* is an excess of life or a 'superabundant vitality.'[13] *Jouissance* is a link between the body and the world whence it comes.

After Empedocles, Hippocrates of Kos (c.460-c.370 BCE) and his students fused Empedoclean ideas with the humoural pathology suggested by Alcmaeon of Croton (fifth century BCE), who had identified certain properties – such as cold, dryness, and humidity – with states of illness or health. The humours were phlegm, yellow bile and black bile, all of which represented an imbalance of elements within the body. Blood was added to this schema bringing the number of humours to four, an ideal number in Greek antiquity, thus 'completing' the schema and making it analogous to the Empedoclean four elements. In contrast with the other humours, blood was healthy and represented a harmonious balance of elements within the body. Blood was associated with humidity, warmth, infancy, and

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[9] DK 31 B 109 in H. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. W Kranz (Berlin, 1951-52) [DK followed by the number of the fragment is the standard abbreviation]; quoted in Conticelli, 56. N.B. Conticelli is using English translations from G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge, 1962).

[10] DK 31 B 105 cited in Conticelli, n. 12, 247.

[11] Conticelli, 57.

[12] Ibid., 57-58.

[13] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis 1959-1960*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Dennis Porter (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), 237.

spring,[14] all of which were associated with vitality as opposed to (cold, dry) death. Meanwhile Aristotle (384-322 BCE) argued that humans had 'purer and more abundant' blood than animals, and that it is this that makes us superior to the other animals.[15] For Aristotle, man 'is the biped most in accordance to nature.'[16]

Within this understanding, bloodletting aimed at eliminating the harmful excesses of the other three humours that had mingled with blood in the body. The aim was not to lose 'pure' blood itself, nor did Hippocratic physicians believe that a person could have too much blood,[17] an idea that appears inconsistently in later centuries. Greek antiquity had inherited bloodletting from prehistoric times. In Greek mythology bloodletting was said to have been discovered by Podalirius,[18] a son of Aesculapius, the god of medicine whose father is Apollo. The fact that bloodletting has been recorded or observed in traditional cultures throughout history and around the world also suggests that it was present in prehistoric cultures.[19] For the ancient Greeks, as Conticelli notes, '[t]he practice of bloodletting was also strongly linked to the relationship between microcosm and macrocosm.'[20] In a context where 'the entire human constitution depend[ed] on the celestial spheres, through a relationship of necessity or one of sympathy' where 'the zodiacal belt govern[ed] man's external anatomy, whilst the planets rule[d] the gut and internal organs,'[21] physicians had to take into account not only the body of the patient in front of them, but also the position of the stars, the planets and the moon, the season of the year, and the time of the day or night. These macrocosmic conditions dictated which veins would be suitable for phlebotomy at a given moment.[22]

The theory of the temperaments that developed by the second century CE was an elaboration of the Hippocratic synthesis of Empedocleanism with Alcmeonism. The temperaments were sanguine (when blood predominates within the body), phlegmatic (when

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[14] Conticelli, 60.
[15] Aristotle, *De partibus animalium* [*On the Parts of Animals*], 477 a 21-23, cited in Conticelli, 60.
[16] *De part. an.*, 706 b 10 (English translation quoted from *On the Progression of Animals*, trans. E. S. Forster [London, 1968], 497), cited in Conticelli, 60.
[17] Conticelli, 60.
[18] Conticelli, 62.
[19] See Melissa Meyer, *Thicker than Water: The Origins of Blood as Symbol and Ritual* (New York: Routledge, 2005).
[20] Conticelli, 62.
[21] Giuseppe Bezza, *Arcana Mundi: Antologia del pensiero atrologico antico* (Milan, 1995), vol. II, 678, quoted in Conticelli, 62.
[22] Conticelli, 62-63.

phlegm does), choleric (yellow bile predominating), and melancholic (black bile predominating). Conticelli observes that, '[a]s a doctrine' the theory of the temperaments 'was simply an extension of the system of four-way correspondences between the microcosm and the macrocosm, affirming further relationships between the properties, elements, and possible characteristics of human beings.'[23] Galen of Pergamon (129-c.210 CE) added a more physiognomic dimension to the theory, suggesting that different temperaments shaped the body, meaning that certain physical types could be correlated with different behaviours and the prevalence of certain humours. Galenic medicine predominated in western and Islamic cultures until its gradual replacement by modern biomedicine by around the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, the historical context that produced *Dracula* (1897).

In the twelfth century, William of Conches (c.1090-c.1154) suggested that the natural temperament of Adam and the original temperament of humankind itself was sanguine. It was the corruption of Man's original Edenic state that gave rise to the other humours. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) shared similar ideas, noting that, 'if man had remained in paradise, he would not have had the *flegmata* within his body, from which many evils proceed, but his flesh would have been whole and without dark humor.'[24] According to William of Conches, no animal can be sanguine, this is achievable only by the human being in a state of internal equilibrium.[25] The Middle Ages multiplied the system of correspondences of the four-part humoural system: the four winds, the cardinal points, the planets and the signs of zodiac were now included. Blood, dubbed 'the King of the humours,' was analogously linked with other things that came first, or were ideal or uppermost, in other hierarchies. For example blood was associated with Jupiter (analogous to the kingly status of its namesake), the south (associated with warmth), the signs of Aries, Taurus and Gemini (spring signs).[26] By now, blood was 'an ensouled life-stuff, present everywhere in the body that was [...] the sole carrier of the spirits as well as of the innate heat,' that is, the antique medical concept of *émphyton thermén*, later *calor innatus*.[27] In this period it appears that the words 'tempers,'

[23] Conticelli, 61.
[24] Hildegard of Bingen, *Causae et Curae* [*Causes and Cures*] c. 42, quoted in Florence Eliza Glaze, 'Medical Writer: "Behold the Human Creature,"' in Barbara Newman, ed., *Voice of the Living Light: Hildegard of Bingen and Her World* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1998).
[25] Conticelli, 62.
[26] Conticelli, 62.
[27] Thomas Fuchs, *The Mechanization of the Heart: Harvey and Descartes*, trans. Marjorie Grene (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2001), 23.

'spirits,' 'passions,' and 'humours' (and sometimes *pneuma*, that is, 'breath') are used interchangeably on a general level, although individual writers may have used them with more specificity.

Piero Camporesi writes that, '[i]n parallel fashion with human blood, but with unlimited miraculous content, the divine blood [of Christ] loomed over human beings' salvation and welfare' during the late Middle Ages.[28] Caroline Walker Bynum portrays a late medieval European culture enthralled with Christ's blood on every level: from popular practice, to politics, to scholarly theological debates about the nature of Christ's dual being as both God and man, especially during the 'long fifteenth century.'[29] This is not a fascination with blood universal to all premodern cultures (although, so far as we know, virtually every culture has ascribed symbolic importance to blood).[30] Thus the culture that came directly before the one in which the vampire first appears is a culture with a specific and unique obsession with blood. In 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council elevated transubstantiation, the claim that the Eucharist literally took the form of Christ's blood, to the status of an official doctrine. The Christian celebration and adoration of blood consequently had a 'dark side' in the suspicion and vilification of Jews during the Middle Ages.[31] This was expressed in the 'Blood Libel,' the accusation against Jews of murdering Christians, especially children, in order to steal their blood for occult ritual purposes. The first such accusation came after the murder of William of Norwich in the mid-twelfth century.[32]

In 1656 Christopher Wren (1630-1723) experimented with hypodermic injections on dogs, leading to the technological possibility of transfusing blood from one body to another. The idea of putting blood from one body into another was self-evidently desirable from the perspective of the premodern conception of blood. But up until the late seventeenth century, there had been no technical means available for transfusing 'living' blood. Instead people ingested blood and blood products which they saw as curative and sometimes magical (and

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[28] Piero Camporesi, *The Juice of Life: The Symbolic and Magic Significance of Blood*, trans. Robert R. Barr (New York: Continuum, 1995), 14.
[29] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Later Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).
[30] Anthropologist Melissa Meyer makes this argument in her book *Thicker than Water: The Origins of Blood as Symbol and Ritual* (New York: Routledge, 2005).
[31] David Biale, *Blood and Belief: The Circulation of a Symbol between Jews and Christians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 5.
[32] E. M. Rose, *The Murder of William of Norwich: The Origins of the Blood Libel in Medieval Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

therefore distinct from the abhorrent cannibalism they believed might be practised by savage races).[33] The first blood transfusions were of animal blood into humans, in an attempt to transfer the animal's qualities to the human patient.[34] In 1667, Jean-Baptiste Denys transfused calf's blood into a 'madman' who ran through the streets naked, setting houses on fire.[35] The calf's blood, the doctor surmised, 'by its mildness and freshness might possibly allay the heat and ebullition of [the patient's] blood.'[36] The Royal Society soon transfused lamb's blood into Arthur Coga, 'a very freakish and extravagant man,'[37] to see if this would make him more mild.[38] Similar experiments followed in Britain and Europe,[39] but when, within a decade or so, the high rate of fatalities caused by transfusion became apparent, the practice was abandoned and in some places banned.[40] Blood transfusion would not be attempted again until the early-nineteenth-century experiments of James Blundell, described later in this chapter.

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The word 'vampire' entered the English language in 1732 via translations and summaries of reports by Hapsburg military officers about the local Serbian *hajduks* (peasant-soldiers) under their supervision taking action against 'vampires.' The *hajduks*' vampire was a peasant who refused to die, returning from the grave to attack his community. A medical officer named Frombold observed the *hajduks* exhume a corpse, stake it and burn it. The dead man, Peter Plogojowitz, they alleged, came to his vicitms in the night and, by 'throttl[ing]' them, gave

[33] Camporesi, 17-26. See also Louise Noble, *Medicinal Cannibalism in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) and Richard Sugg, *Mummies, Cannibals and Vampires: The History of Corpse Medicine from the Renaissance to the Victorians* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011).
[34] Douglas Starr, *Blood: An Epic History of Medicine and Commerce* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 24.
[35] Starr, 3.
[36] J. Denis. 'An extract of a letter…,' *Philosophical Transactions* 2 (Nov. 10, 1667), 617-24; quoted in Starr, 3.
[37] Letter from Henry Oldenburg to Robert Boyle, 25 November 1667, in *The Works of the Honourable Robert Boyle*, new edn, 6 vols (London, 1772), vi. 250. Cited in Groom, 19.
[38] Groom, 19.
[39] Starr, 12.
[40] Groom, 20. Starr, 15-16.

them an 'illness' that killed them within twenty-four hours.[41] Flückinger, another medical officer, also observed the 'execution' of a corpse. Arnont Paule was accused of sucking the blood of people and turning them into vampires, as well as sucking the blood of cattle.[42]

These reports were circulated in German-language journals, with French and English translations following. The key point of fascination about these reports for the educated readers who consumed them was that the skeptical and credible physicians, expecting to find no evidence of the peasants' claims, did indeed witness signs of vampirism, including blood on the corpses' mouths. Frombold reports, '[n]ot without astonishment, I saw some fresh blood in [the so-called vampire's] mouth, which, according to common observation, he had sucked from the people killed by him.'[43] Flückinger confirmed that sixteen autopsies in the village of alleged vampire Arnont Paule had confirmed the existence of ten bodies in a condition of vampirism ['im Vampyrestande'].[44] During the rest of the eighteenth century the vampire enters Anglophone culture mostly through non-fiction texts such as theological tracts, proto-ethnographic travel writings and legal documents. Many of these texts were written in response, or in relation, to the initial military medical reports, primarily the Flückinger report of 1732 and the Frombold report of 1725 (which gained attention retrospectively, after the Flückinger report). As Nick Groom notes, 'the word *vampire* [...] was adopted in the 1730s to describe a contemporary wonder.'[45] The vampire as a vampire, distinct from a ghost, revenant, witch or werewolf, then, emerges with the Enlightenment as a spectacle of 'unenlightened' beliefs held by superstitious peasants or, mysteriously and inexplicably, by more credible westerners. The authors of these early vampire non-fictions almost never believe vampirism could be real. Instead, they write from the perspective of feeling curious as to what is really behind the belief, with explanations such as mass hysteria, obscure illness, and accidental mass narcosis forwarded.[46] The vampire then becomes a metaphor, a symbol used to talk about the uncanny experiences that escape the explanations

[41] Frombold report, English translation in Paul Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 5-7. Cited in Erik Butler, *Metamorphoses of the Vampire in Literature and Film: Cultural Transformations in Europe, 1732-1933* (New York: Camden House, 2010), 32.
[42] Flückinger report, English translation in Barber, 16. Cited in Butler, 34.
[43] Frombold, English translation cited in Butler, 32.
[44] Butler, 34.
[45] Groom, xix.
[46] Groom, 46-52.

of modern science, or to talk about misguided belief and naive credulity, or to talk about bloodsucking as exploitation.

No sooner did news of the vampire phenomenon reach Britain from the Continent than it was interpreted as a political metaphor. A London journal, *The Craftsman*, published a satirical dialogue on vampires, staging a debate between a doctor who 'ridicul[es]' the reports based on Flückinger as 'romantick Stories' and a 'young *Lady*' who believes them. Both appeal to a third figure, a Mr. D'Anvers, who is presented as being the author of the text. Taking neither side, D'Anvers offers a third position, stating:

> I must agree with the learned Doctor, that an inanimate Corpse cannot perform any vital Functions; yet, agree with the Lady that there are Vampyres. This Account [of vampirism], you'll observe, comes from the Eastern Part of the World, always remarkable for the *Allegorical Style*. The States of *Hungary* are in *Subjection* to the *Turks* and *Germans*, and govern'd by a pretty hard Hand; which obliges them to couch all their Complaints under *Figures*.[47]

In multiple ways, as we shall see in this chapter and those that follow, vampire texts are used as allegories and satirical or political metaphors, both consciously and unconsciously by different authors. D'Anvers is correct in observing that a 'complaint' of sorts is rendered by the peasants' actions as represented in the widely published medical officers' reports. For example, in the Frombold report:

> the subjects [i.e. peasants] resolved unanimously to open the grave of Peter Plogojowitz [the suspected vampire] and to see if [...] signs [of vampirism] were really to be found on him [...] I could do what I wanted, but if I did not accord them the viewing and the legal recognition to deal with the body according to their custom, they would have to leave house and home, [and] the

[47] '1.5 Anon., "Political Vampyres" (1732)' [Source: *The Craftsman*, no. 307 (20 May 1732). Quoted from *Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1732, pp. 750-2], in *Gothic Documents: A Sourcebook, 1700-1820*, ed. E. J. Clery and Robert Miles (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2000), 24-26. Cited in Butler, 53. Groom identifies the author as Nicholas Amhurst, see Groom, 37-38.

> entire village [...] I could not hold such people from the resolution they had made, either with good words or with threats.[48]

The peasants refuse to follow orders and insist on practising their culture, following their own beliefs.[49] In the 'Satirical Dialogue,' D'Anvers continues:

> These Vampyres are said to torment and kill the Living by sucking out all their Blood; and *ravenous Minister*, in this part of the World, is compared to a *Leech* or a *Blood-sucker*, and carries his Oppressions beyond the Grave, by anticipating the *publick Revenues*, and entailing a perpetuity of *Taxes*, which must gradually drain the Body Politick of its Blood and Spirits.[50]

The vampire, then, was immediately recognised as a bloodsucker or a leech, symbols that were already current in Anglophone culture, and applied to thinking about the public or body politic in physiological terms. 'Since ancient times,' writes Groom, 'the nation and its institutions had been described in terms of human anatomy,' while Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) had 'influentially revived the image in 1651, by famously depicting constitutional power as the *Leviathan*, a gigantic human figure. This figure of the political colossus continued well into the eighteenth century.'[51] As we shall see, this tradition of symbolising a nation's people as a single human body that is subject to physiological vulnerabilities in some ways foreshadows the nineteenth century literalisation of blood as symbol, whereby the blood of the individual is thought to have a material impact on the survival of the nation. In 1733, the Dutch East India Company were already lampooned as 'Vampires of the Publick, and Riflers of the Kingdom' for 'sending [money] out again to foreign Countries without any Returns for it, which defeats the Industry of the [English] Merchant.'[52] Around the late

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[48] Translation in Paul Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 5-7. Cited in Butler, 32. The report in the original German is in Klaus Hamberger, *Mortuus non mordet: Kommentierte Dokumentation zum Vampirismus 1689-1791* (Vienna: Turia & Kant, 1992), 43-45.
[49] Butler, 41.
[50] Clery and Miller, 25. Cited in Butler, 53.
[51] Groom, 43.
[52] Charles Forman, *Some Queries and Observations upon the Revolution in 1688, and its Consequences: Also a Short View of the Rise and Progress of the Dutch East India Company;*

sixteenth and early seventeenth century, 'bloodsucker' was used to figuratively denote 'userers,' 'tax collectors' and cannibals believed to be found in the New World.[53] The vampire reported on the eastern borders of Europe, then, was immediately taken up as a device for talking about resources, especially money, being drained from the body politic. While the metonymy between blood, 'lifeblood' (that is, what we might call 'life force,' a term that does not appear until the nineteenth century[54]) and money had deep historical roots, it was also in this period that blood was being converted into money in a historically new way, in the form of the blood and the life of the slaves consumed by the Atlantic slave trade. In turn, the production of new products and new commercial exchange networks that the exploitation of the slaves made possible was changing western culture, with sugar, coffee, chocolate and tobacco literally entering western consumers' bloodstreams and stimulating new forms of *jouissance*, or attachment to these products. These new stimulants, proving difficult to fit into traditional Galenic schemata, played a role in the decline of humoural theory.[55]

The first English-language vampire story to be published was John Polidori's *The Vampyre: A Tale,* which appeared in April 1819. Upon its initial publication, *The Vampyre*

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with Critical Remarks (London: Oliver Payne, 1741), cited in Groom, 39, who explains: 'written [in 1733] but not published until 1741.'

[53] 'bloodsucker, n.'. *OED* Online. *OED* Third Edition, March 2012. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/20437. 'sanguisuge, n.'. *OED* Online. *OED* Second Edition, 1989. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/170680. In earlier centuries 'leech' had more positive connotations, in fact being a synonym for 'healing' and a word referring to 'a physician.' Through popular etymology an Old English word *lǽce* meaning 'a physician, one who practices the healing art' was, it appears, conflated the homonymous word for *Hirudo medicinalis* and other medicinally used species: '*lyce*.' Gradually the connotations of leeching became predominantly negative. See: 'leech, n.1'. *OED* Online. *OED* Second Edition, 1989. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/106916. 'leech, n.2'. *OED Online*. *OED* Second Edition, 1989. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/106917. See also, Robert G. W. Kirk and Neil Pemberton, *Leech* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 9.

[54] 'life, n.'. *OED* Online. *OED* Third Edition, September 2009. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/108093.

[55] Mary Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press 1999), Ken Albala, *Food in Early Modern Europe* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2003).

was attributed to Lord Byron.[56] Polidori had been Byron's personal physician and was present at Villa Diodati, Lake Geneva, in July 1816, along with Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (later Shelley) and her stepsister Claire Clairmont when it was famously decided that each person present would write a 'ghost story.' Polidori's story is, he claimed, a completion of the story Byron started writing that night.[57] *The Vampyre* tells the story of Aubrey, a young man from English high society ('the *ton*'[69]), who befriends a mysterious older man, Lord Ruthven. The pair travel to Rome, then Greece. Slowly Aubrey realises that Lord Ruthven is a vampire, a realisation hindered by the fact that when the rural Greek beliefs in vampirism are first presented to Aubrey he writes them off as mere superstition. Aubrey's realisation also comes too late, as it arrives after he has sworn an oath to Lord Ruthven that he will not reveal anything he knows about the mysterious aristocrat 'for a year and a day' (79). Believing he witnessed Ruthven's death in Greece, Aubrey is shocked when, upon his return to London, he finds the vampire mixing in society and engaged to marry his sister, Aubrey's only remaining relative.

Due to his oath, Aubrey cannot warn Miss Aubrey about her fiancé's secret identity. For Nina Auerbach, the oath is central to the theme of friendship in the story, friendship being the defining theme of the vampire genre before *Dracula* in Auerbach's view, as I described in the Introduction.[58] Auerbach argues, the 'oath is frightening because it involves not raw power, but honor and reciprocity.'[59] The stress of keeping his oath drives Aubrey mad. His 'rage not finding vent, [breaks] a blood-vessel,' producing an 'effusion of blood' that kills him (85). Lord Ruthven marries Miss Aubrey and immediately disappears. In the text's final line, Miss Aubrey's vampirisation is revealed metonymically: she is found to have 'glutted the thirst of a VAMPYRE!' (85). By and large, blood in *The Vampyre* operates according to humoural theory: Aubrey's blood 'run[s] cold' (74) when the Greek woman, Ianthe, informs him of local vampire beliefs. When Aubrey mentions vampires to Ianthe's family it 'ma[kes] their blood freeze' out of fear (75). The conclusion, with Aubrey's 'rage' at Lord Ruthven resulting in a lethal 'effusion of blood,' also belongs more to the Galenic

[56] John Polidori, *The Vampyre: A Tale* in Anne Williams, ed., *Three Vampire Tales: Complete Texts with Introduction, Historical Context, Critical Essays* [New Riverside Edition] (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 68-85.
[57] Byron published his vampire 'fragment of a novel' as an appendix to *Mazeppa* (1819).
[58] Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 14.
[59] Ibid.

worldview than to the modern. Importantly, it is not Ruthven who kills Aubrey in any direct sense; it is actually Aubrey's own blood, under the pressure of the 'rage' Ruthven inspires. In contrast with *Dracula*, and other stories closer in time to the *fin de siècle*, Lord Ruthven walks free at the end of *The Vampyre*, and, Aubrey, along with his family, is destroyed.

Polidori's *Vampyre* was immediately taken up by western popular culture, including in Europe, with numerous ('innumerable,' writes Brian Frost) translations, adaptations and appropriations being made. These versions often changed plot details but continued to engage the core idea of an aristocratic vampire and his allure, if not irresistibility, to women.[60] Many of these adaptations were theatrical stage productions including plays and low-brow melodramas.[61] The most remarkable version of Polidori's story also happens to be the first American vampire story. *The Black Vampyre: A Legend of St. Domingo,*[62] was published in New York by its author, under the pseudonym 'Uriah D'Arcy,' by June 1819, with a second edition following in August.[63]

The Black Vampyre is a satire of Polidori's story and presents a very different narrative from the earlier text. Quoting Byron's 'The Giaour' as its epigraph (149-150), *The Black Vampyre* references the Polidori story and Byron's narrative poem equally, incorporating plot details from both texts and playing on the readers' knowledge of the controversy surrounding the authorship of the Polidori original, the 'white' *Vampyre*. In 'The Giaour' the Christian hero, a 'giaour' or infidel in the eyes of the Ottoman narrator, is cursed with vampirism after killing Hassan to avenge the death of Hassan's slave, Leila, with whom the hero had an affair, the punishment for which was her death. In broader terms, *The Black Vampyre* satirises capitalism, highlighting the connection between plagiarism and slavery as, this text suggests, two ways of misappropriating labour. D'Arcy's story also satirises western

[60] Brian J. Frost, *The Monster with a Thousand Faces: Guises of the Vampire in Myth and Legend* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Press, 1989), 38-39.
[61] Frost, 38. See also Roxana Stuart, *Stage Blood: Vampires of the 19th Century Stage* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Press, 1994).
[62] Robert C. Sands, 'The Black Vampyre: A Legend of Saint Domingo,' in Andrew Barger, ed., *The Best Vampire Stories 1800-1849: A Classic Vampire Anthology* (Place of publication not identified: Bottletree Classics, 2012), 149-170.
[63] 'Uriah D'Arcy' is a pseudonym for either Robert Charles Sands (1799-1832) or Richard Varick Dey. For publication dates see Katie Bray, '"A Climate … More Prolific … in Sorcery": *The Black Vampyre* and the Hemispheric Gothic,' *American Literature* 87.1 (2015), 3. Andrew Barger argues convincingly that the author is Sands in his introduction to the story. See Barger, editorial comment, 145-148.

society's self-image as 'civilised' through its excessively formal language, abundant and bathetic use of high literary and classical references, and depiction of the white slave-owning characters as ironically more monstrous than the text's vampire.

The Black Vampyre is set in Saint-Domingue, the French colony on the island of Hispaniola that became Haiti on January 1 1804, following the success of a revolution and slave rebellion that had begun in 1791. The opening paragraph states that the 'ancestors' of Mr Anthony Gibbons, 'a gentleman of African extraction,'[64] 'were sold in St. Domingo remarkably cheap, as they were reduced to mere skeletons by [...] the passage; and all died shortly after their arrival, except one' (150). This one survivor is the eponymous 'black vampyre.' The sole surviving slave is 'of a very slender constitution, and fit for no work whatever. The gentleman who purchased *him,* charitably knocked out his brains; and the body was thrown into the ocean' (150). The 'gentleman,' a planter named Mr. Personne, is surprised when the 'little corpse' comes back that night. He kicks the 'small negro' back into the water but the undead boy swims back to shore, 'crawling, crab-fashion, to the feet of Mr. Personne.' Whatever violence Personne enacts against the boy backfires and turns against him in a comedic 'instant karma.' When Personne knocks the boy over, he immediately 'recover[s] his altitude' (151). When Personne has the boy thrown into a fire, the boy becomes rubber-like and 'pop[s]' Personne 'head-foremost into the fire (152). The throwing of the slave into the ocean is a reference to Byron's 'The Giaour,' in which Leila is sewn into a sack and thrown into the ocean as punishment for her affair with the Giaour. It also recalls the *Zong* incident of 1781, when 132 slaves were thrown overboard into the Caribbean Sea as the ship was running out of drinking water.[65] According to Henri Christophe's personal secretary[66] slaves in Saint-Domingue were 'drowned in sacks'[67] by French planters, one among several other acts of inhumane cruelty.

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[64] The slave-vampire's story ensues, and it is not until the story's final paragraph that Anthony Gibbons is mentioned again. Gibbons is 'a lineal descendant from' (169) the 'black vampyre,' now living in New Jersey, implying that the story has a material connection with contemporary readers in the United States.

[65] Bray, 20n7.

[66] Henri Christophe (1767-1820) was one of the leaders of the Haitian revolution.

[67] Cited in Robert Debs Heinl; Nancy Gordon Heinl; Michael Heinl, *Written in Blood: The Story of the Haitian People, 1492-1995* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2005).

The Black Vampyre's 'animated burlesque,'[68] as one 1819 reviewer described the story, of the slave owner's violence against a slave who cannot die performs a fantasy implicit in the institution of slavery itself. An undying slave who can withstand an infinite amount of violence is an ideal slave in at least two ways. First, if the slave can withstand any violence, this lessens the culpability of the slave-owner for behaving inhumanely to another human being, and, by extension, devaluing human life (his own life, his own humanity) in purchasing another life. This 'logic' was at work in the racialisation of pain sensitivity in this era. For example, in 1811 a 'professional planter' wrote that 'slaves possessed "less exquisite" bodies and minds [than their white masters]. Because of their dulled sensitivities, slaves were better "able to endure, with few expressions of pain, the accidents of nature."'[69] Secondly, a body that can withstand anything can work indefinitely – making it an infinitely exploitable body.

The Black Vampyre, however, by imagining this fantasy, also shows that the ideal, un-kill-able slave would also be un-enslavable, because without the threats of death and violence, there is no way to stop the slave escaping. The paradox is highlighted, though, by the fact that the undying slave also has no particular reason to run away either. These features point toward a conceptual paradox within the institution of slavery. Although Personne has legal ownership of the slave's body, and can therefore inflict fatal violence on that body, and in that sense he 'owns' the slave's life, there is something here that exceeds ownership. Personne cannot own the slave's 'extra life' that is his undeadness, his 'superabundant vitality' or *jouissance* produced by the fact that he is enslaved, but not mastered. Slavery itself has a part in producing the slave's resistance. Additionally, this undead slave is ideal in that he does not run away. Comically, and horribly, the text gives Mr Personne an inverted runaway slave: a slave who refuses to leave him. That slaves really did run away from their masters points to the fact that when property law is applied to human beings it does not work. Indeed, if we attempt to imagine a human who is owned not only bodily but 'body and soul,' we can only conceive of this as a Gothic nightmare (for example, Renfield's subjection to the Count in Stoker's *Dracula*).

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[68] Dennis [pseud.] review of *The Black Vampyre: A Legend of Saint Domingo by Uriah D'Arcy*, *New York Evening Post*, July 10 1819, quoted in Bray, 12.

[69] 'A Professional Planter,' *Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves, in the Sugar Colonies* (London: J. Barfield, 1811), 201, quoted in Joanna Bourke, 'Pain Sensitivity: An Unnatural History from 1800 to 1965,' *The Journal of Medical Humanities* 35, no. 3 (2014): 302.

Shortly after burning in the fire Personne dies and is 'buried amid the lamentations and tears of all the funeral' (153). Personne is:

> much regretted by all who had the honor of his acquaintance, particularly by his negroes; who could not soon forget him; as he had left too many sincere marks of his regard upon their backs, to be ever obliterated from their recollections. (153)

The sentence puns on the word 'regret' as the slaves regret Personne's cruelty rather than his death. The satirical reference to scars Personne leaves on his slaves' bodies echoes D'Anvers' characterisation of taxes being the undead legacy of political 'vampyres.' Personne is monstrous, recasting the meaning of the lines from 'The Giaour': 'Go – and with Gouls and Afrits rave;/ Till these in horror shrink away/ From [a] specter more accursed than they!' (150). The implication is that Personne is already 'accursed' from his slave owning, not for supernatural reasons. In the Byron poem, the Giaour is cursed with vampirism as punishment for the murder he commits in revenge for Leila's death: '[b]ut first,' 'ghastly haunt thy native place/ And suck the blood of all thy race.' The term 'race' is given new meaning in the American recontextualisation. 'Race' becomes black or white 'race,' not race in the sense of family ('There from thy daughter, sister, wife/ At midnight drain the stream of life'), as in the original, a move that also highlights the fact that these connotations were inherent in the original text. The epigraph continues:

> *Yet loathe the banquet* [i.e. the blood] *which perforce*
> Must feed thy livid living corse:
>
> Thy victims, ere they yet expire,
> Shall know the demon for their sire;
> As cursing thee, thou cursing them,
> Thy flowers are withered on the stem.

The familial 'victims' gaining a demonic 'sire,' the cursed man's progeny becoming 'withered' flowers foreshadows the way in which vampirism is often linked with degeneration later in the nineteenth century. The 'flowers withered on the stem' evoke the 'dried up,' bloodless children of the Giaour. In the context of *The Black Vampyre* the poem

evokes the notion of a curse passed on from generation to generation. A 'mulatto' with vampiric tendencies is born by the 'black vampyre' and Personne's widow. It is this mulatto offspring who is the direct ancestor of Anthony Gibbons, said to be currently living in New Jersey at the end of the story.

The name 'Personne' is a pun in that the poem leads us to question what kind of *person* owns slaves, and how slave-owning, with its attendant cruelties, fits into the bounds of human behaviour (at what point, at what extreme, does cruelty violate the boundaries of what it means, morally or philosophically, to not be a monster?) Depending on the context, *personne* in French can mean 'nobody,' alluding to Mr. Personne's lack of empathy for his fellow human being. '*Personne*' can also mean 'anybody,' and suggests he can be read as an 'everyman' or representative figure for the newly emerging white bourgeoisie, enriched by the unacknowledged blood of slaves.[70] As a 'nobody' or an 'anybody,' the name Personne also points to the superficiality of the planter's social status, which is culturally specific but (the text mockingly shows) does not make him a better person than the slave boy, who is much smarter and has higher morals than Personne. *Personne* as 'any body' is also 'just another body,' another human being like his slaves. As the text states, 'if we gaze on the rows of skulls which festoon and garnish Surgeon's Hall, we can apply no standard to determine their relative beauty. They are all equally ugly; and the block of Helen might be mistaken for that of Medusa' (5). These are references to the gap between the symbolic and the real, which is discussed in relation to *Dracula* in the following chapter.

'Many years' later, Personne's widow, Euphemia, is visited by a stranger, 'a colored gentleman,' and his page, 'a pale European boy, in an Asiatic dress' (153-154). The prince, who turns out to be the undead slave returned, and Euphemia agree to elope the same night, despite 'remonstrances' from 'the family chaplain' 'as to the impropriety of marrying a negro' (156). By midnight Euphemia and the prince are married. The same night the prince takes Euphemia to a graveyard, unearths a corpse, rips its heart out and presses the blood into a chalice, mixing the blood with 'dark particles' of soil (158). Then, in a mockery of Aubrey's oath to Lord Ruthven in Polidori's text, the prince urges Euphemia:

> Swear, or if that is against your principles, affirm, by this dirty blood, –and bloody dirt; –by this watery blood, –and bloody water; –by this watery dirt,

[70] My understanding of the French definition of 'personne' comes from Bray, 11.

> and dirty water; –that you will never disclose in any manner, aught of what you have seen and shall see this night. (158)

The mingling of blood, dirt and water in this oath (which Euphemia declines to take), and in the text more generally, mimics the action of the economy, moving people away from their ancestral homes, their 'native ground' and the place where the labour, or blood, they put into the ground had a meaning established by tradition. While slaves were being forcibly removed from their homelands, bloodying the water of the Atlantic Ocean both literally and, this text suggests, symbolically, at the same time peasants in Britain and other sites of industrialisation were moving to cities and finding their labour redefined. At the time Byron wrote 'The Giaour' this was occurring in England. The 'soil' of a rural place of belonging, a 'native place,' was one of the by-products of industry.

At the end of the story the Personne family are reunited in revivified, undead form – all turned into vampires by the prince. They are led to a secret cave 'known only to the Professors of the OBEAH art' (163). The text continues to link vampires with 'Negro' culture, conflated with 'Oriental' culture, with hiddenness (a form of darkness analogous to the dark skin of the 'negro') and resistance to the slave trade and the political status quo. This feature of the text seems to 'perform' Eluned Summers-Bremner's observation that, '[i]t was in this period that darkness was associated with the forces of political revolution as ordinary people awoke to the realities of systemic exploitation.'[71] In the cave are 'several blackamoors in sumptuous Moorish apparel' who are vampires, or 'vampyre monarchs' (164), along with 'slaves, rudely attired, and imperfectly armed with clubs and missiles' (164). As Katie Bray observes, this scene 'recalls the Bois-Caïman incident,' a secret Voodoo ritual carried out by slaves, 'that many identify as the start of the Haitian Revolution.'[72] After a long speech in which he traces the vampires' lineage back to Prometheus and other figures from Greek mythology, as well as to African tribes, the prince, addressing the crowd of slaves, says:

> 'But to come to the object of our present meeting. Sublime and soul-elevating theme! – The emancipation of the Negroes! –No matter whether the bills of sale was scrawled in French or in English; [...] we shall stand liberated […]

[71] Eluned Summers-Bremner, *Insomnia: A Cultural History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 83.
[72] Bray, 10.

and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of Universal Emancipation!!!'
(*Unparalleled bursts of unprecedented applause!!!*) (166-167)

The response of his audience is such that 'the mass of their thick blood leaped up with the quickening pulse of anticipated freedom; they danced and sung, with violent gesticulations' (167). Here *jouissance* and blood are media of political revolution. French soldiers break in on the scene, however, and the vampires are staked. The meeting depicted in the story is quelled but the reader in 1819 also knows that Saint-Domingue really was lost by the French to a revolution. The text thereby expresses antislavery sentiment while also being able to claim that it is not serious about that content (because it is clearly a satire) and that, in the end, it does not depict the 'Universal Emancipation' that the 'Black Vampyre' advocated.

While *The Black Vampyre* cautioned against disregarding the humanity of any person, another vampire story of the early nineteenth century cautioned against disregarding the taboo boundary between life and death: 'Wake Not the Dead,' an English translation of a German story by Ernst Raupach (1784-1852) published in 1823.[73] The protagonist, Walter, asks a sorcerer to revive his dead wife Brunhilda. The sorcerer warns him, '[w]ake not the dead' (76). But Walter does not heed the warning. The revivified Brunhilda turns out to be a vampire. She gradually destroys Walter's household, kills his children by drinking their blood, and, at the end of the story, kills Walter. As his castle burns to the ground, in the final moments of his life, Walter hears a voice 'exclaim,' '[w]ake not the dead!' (100).

The injunction made by the title 'Wake Not the Dead' echoes the reservations many physicians had about blood transfusion at this time, when recent 'discoveries of resuscitation and galvanism […] suggested that the natural order might be revealed, dismantled, and reassembled.'[74] In many physicians' minds, transfusion had already proved dangerous, hence

[73] The story has usually been attributed to Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853). For a detailed account of how this happened and the case that the story is by Raupach see: Heide Crawford, 'Ernst Benjamin Salomo Raupach's Vampire Story "Wake Not the Dead!"' *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 45.6 (2012), 1189-1205. 'Wake Not the Dead' [aka 'The Bride of the Grave'] was first published in *Popular Tales and Romances of the Northern Nations in Three Volumes* (London: Printed for W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, Stationer's Hall Court, Ludgate Street; and J.H. Bohte, York Street, Covent Garden, 1823) with no author or translator named. The German original, 'Laßt die Toten ruhen,' was first published as 'Ein Marchen von D. Ernst Raupach' ['A Fairy-Tale by Dr. Ernst Raupach'] in *Minerva. Taschenbuch für das Jahr 1823* ed. Wilhelm Blumenhagen, Vol. 15 (Leipzig: Fleischer, 1823), 35-88.
[74] Pelis, 176.

it was banned. In 1818 James Blundell (1790-1878), an eminent accoucher ('man-midwife' or 'obstetrician') of the era had 'suggested that persons dying of hemorrhage might be saved by the timely transfusion of blood from a willing human donor.'[75] Blundell specifically thought of transfusion as a therapy for 'women on the verge of death from uterine hemorrhage.'[76] As Douglas Starr writes, '[s]uccessful case histories often told of how such women were veritably reanimated by transfused blood,' and these 'led to a revival of interest in transfusion, in which doctors throughout Europe felt free to experiment' with transfusion techniques and technologies for the first time since the late seventeenth century.[77] Kim Pelis argues that the culture of Romanticism, by idealising, or 'romanticising,' the idea of the 'lone creative genius,' aided in providing a context in which Blundell was motivated to go against medical convention to pursue 'truth[,] penetrate uncharted territories and "unveil" nature.'[78]

Science, in the form of medical knowledge, is also central to *Carmilla*[79] by Sheridan Le Fanu (1814-1873), which first appeared in his 1872 collection of supernatural tales, *In a Glass Darkly*. As Anne Williams notes, *Carmilla* is one of 'the most significant of the Victorian vampire tales because it links Romantic vampires and their late-Victorian "grandchild," *Dracula*.'[80] *Carmilla* is about a mysterious girl, Carmilla Karnstein, coming to stay with a widower and his daughter, Laura. The two girls share a strange, immediate bond – a 'love' (for example, 102, 104-05, 112) – that scares Laura, though not enough to make her end the friendship. Like *The Vampyre*, the theme of friendship is central to *Carmilla*.[81] Meanwhile, local girls and young women die one by one from a mysterious 'plague' (106), which the reader increasingly suspects is caused by the vampire Carmilla**.**

[75] Kim Pelis, 'Transfusion, with Teeth,' in *Blood: Art, Power, Politics and Pathology*, ed. James M. Bradburne (Munich, London, New York: Prestel, 2001), 175.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Starr, 37.
[78] Pelis, 176.
[79] Sheridan Le Fanu, *Carmilla* [1872] in Anne Williams, ed., *Three Vampire Tales: Complete Texts with Introduction, Historical Context, Critical Essays* [New Riverside Edition] (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 86-148.
[80] Anne Williams, 'Introduction' in Anne Williams, ed., *Three Vampire Tales: Complete Texts with Introduction, Historical Context, Critical Essays* [New Riverside Edition] (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 1-12, 8.
[81] Auerbach, 41.

Laura's 'love' for Carmilla is characterised by experiences of *jouissance* in response to Carmilla's presence. Rather than straightforward pleasure, Carmilla gives Laura a 'paradox[ical]' excitement that she struggles to explain. Laura relates:

> I experienced a strange tumultuous excitement that was pleasurable, ever and anon, mingled with a vague sense of fear and disgust. […] I was conscious of a love growing into adoration and also of abhorrence. This I know is paradox, but I can make no other attempt to explain the feeling. (104)

Carmilla stages a literal meeting between Laura and her ancestor, who returns in the form of a vampire. Confused by her bond with Carmilla, Laura asks, '[a]re we related[?]' (105). In fact, Laura is 'descended from the Karnsteins' through her mother. This is revealed when it is noticed that Carmilla is identical with the girl in a portrait dated '1698' of one of Laura's ancestors named Mircalla (111). Carmilla claims to be related to the Karnsteins too, as an explanation for the resemblance, but the reader suspects, and the story ultimately reveals, that Carmilla and Mircalla are one and the same person. Laura and her father eventually discover that Carmilla has lived for generations going by different aliases – Carmilla, Millarca, Mircalla – that are always anagrammatic re-orderings of the same set of letters: c, a, r, m, i, and l. Given the text's thematic concerns with descent and ancestry, the apparent inability of Carmilla to give herself a name beyond those spelt by an original set of letters seems to symbolise the inability of later generations to fully break from their heredity. While the letters can be rearranged to produce a new form, the original remains within the newly generated name. People at this time were beginning to believe than before that, similarly, a family's ancestors remain within its new generations.

The family name that Laura and Carmilla share, 'Karnstein,' evokes the Latin '*carn*-' meaning 'flesh' or 'meat,' as in 'carnage,' 'carnal' or 'carnivorous' – hinting at Carmilla's vampirism. 'Stein' evokes the word 'stain,' as in 'bloodstain.' Carmilla is 'stained' by her vampirism: 'bathed, from her chin to her feet, in one great stain of blood' (119) in one of Laura's dream-visions. 'Stein' also means 'stone' in German. 'Karn' is a homonym for 'cairn,' the prehistoric stone mounds and monuments that drew fascination during the nineteenth century when people stopped believing the folkloric explanations for the origins of the monuments, such as stories that the cairns were erected by fairies or giants. This is another example of origins taking on new meaning that emerge with modernity: in earlier centuries people were able to accept a supernatural explanation for the stones' origins, but the

efficacy of such legends eroded in modern times and so the stones' origins become unexplained and mysterious. The evocation of this kind of mystery in turn symbolises the kind of mystery that attaches to human origins at this period. In 1859 Charles Darwin had published *On the Origin of Species*, putting forward a theory of evolution. Even earlier, the idea of a 'missing link,' a prehistoric forebear of humanity connected with the other animals, had circulated. For example, Robert Chamber's *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (1844) 'introduced the concept of missing links in the context of evolution and the fossil record to a wider reading public in Britain,'[82] as Peter C. Kjærgaard reminds us.

Racial identity is a submerged theme of the story, as indicated by the fact that Carmilla's family and a number of her entourage (whose identities are never fully explained) are associated with darkness and blackness. When Carmilla first arrives, one of Laura's governesses sees 'a hideous black woman, with a sort of coloured turban on her head.' The 'black woman' 'gaze[s] […] from the carriage window, nodding and grinning derisively [...], with gleaming eyes and large white eye-balls and her teeth set as if in fury' (98-99). Auerbach notes that this 'hideous black woman' may represent 'a voodoo priestess,' and may, in fact, may be Carmilla's maker or mistress, though this is not stated in the text.[83] 'Are we related?' is the question western modernity was asking about its ancestors at this time in the new ideas of species evolution.

Nascent ideas about racial degeneration suggested that one's ancestors could 'return' from within oneself, or one's peers, via the family or racial blood people carried. For example, in 1866 John Langdon Down (1828-1896) published his paper 'Observations on an Ethnic Classification of Idiots,' in which he reported that 'feebleminded' people born to white parents had the physiognomy of non-white people. Down observed Malay, Ethiopian, and Aztec 'types' but claimed the most common classification, around ten percent, were Mongol.[84] Down writes:

> Here […] we have examples of retrogression […]. If [the] great racial divisions are fixed and definite, how comes it that disease is able to break down the barrier, and to simulate so closely the features of the members of

[82] Peter C. Kjærgaard, '"Hurrah for the Missing Link!": A History of Apes, Ancestors and a Crucial Piece of Evidence,' *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* 65.1 (2011),83-98. 86.
[83] Auerbach, 40.
[84] K. Codell Carter, *The Decline of Therapeutic Bloodletting and the Collapse of Traditional Medicine* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2012), 118-119.

> another division. I cannot but think that the observations which I have recorded, are indications that the differences in the races are not specific but variable.
>
> These examples of the result of degeneracy among mankind, appear to me to furnish some arguments in favour of the unity of the human species.

In *Carmilla*, enigmatic human origins, on the levels of family and of race, undiagnosed illness, and unexplained supernatural states are intertwined and, to an extent, conflated. In *Carmilla* vampirism is articulated in terms of a more modern conception of illness than in earlier texts. Part of how this is achieved is the way in which the characters assume that the mysterious deaths of young women are being caused by an unidentified plague or epidemic and try to find the cause of the death by using medical knowledge (an ironic effort that the reader knows is misguided, having guessed the vampiric cause of the deaths before the characters). Another example is the way in which the narrator, Laura, believes she is sick for most of the story, not realising she is being vampirised. The whole story is framed by official-sounding commentary telling the reader that the narrative belongs to a found document, much the same strategy used by Stoker in *Dracula*.

The story 'Olalla' (1885) by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) weaves illness, racial degeneration and vampirism together even more tightly than *Carmilla* did.[85] The Scottish narrator, a soldier recovering from wounds in Spain, is instructed by his physician to go and stay with a rural family. The physician tells the narrator, '[t]he air of [the] mountains will renew your blood' (101). In contrast with the narrator's renewing blood, however, his host family are degenerating: '[t]he family blood had been impoverished, perhaps by long inbreeding' (113). The narrator observes that the mother and son of the family are mentally impaired. The daughter, Olalla, however, is intelligent and studious and he falls in love with her. At the story's climax, the narrator cuts his hand on a window and appeals to Olalla's mother for help – with 'blood' 'oozing and dripping' (128) from his hands. Olalla's mother goes into a frenzy and bites him.

'Olalla' does not contain supernatural vampirism, but the mother's bite is constructed as a kind of vampirism, primarily by means of references to blood: the narrator describes the 'sudden spurting of blood' as he is bitten, and his strength 'rapidly ebbing with the loss of

[85] Robert Louis Stevenson, 'Ollala,' in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Other Tales*, ed. Roger Luckhurst (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 101-138.

blood' (128). 'Olalla' engages the vampire story to depict a 'natural' version of vampirism that is perhaps all the more horrifying for depicting a 'degenerate' living human. Edwin M. Eigner observes, 'Stevenson [and Stoker, only three years older than Stevenson] belonged to the first generation of Victorians brought up on [*On the*] *Origin of Species*.'[86] Stevenson was fascinated by the idea that 'the aboriginal man,' 'the cave-dweller, still lusty as when he fought tooth and nail for roots and berries,' continues to reside in modern white people.[87] In his 1887 essay 'The Manse,' Stevenson refers to his grandfather as 'a homunculus or part-man,' who 'no doubt, even as I write the phrase […] moves in my blood, and whispers words to me.'[88]

When the narrator of 'Olalla' is sent to stay with the degenerate family he is given an enigmatic command. The physician informs him, '[y]ou are to remain, they say, a stranger; they will give you attendance, but they refuse from the first the idea of the smallest intimacy' (102). From the beginning of the story, then, the narrator faces a prohibition and he remarks on his desire to break the rule: 'I was piqued, and perhaps the feeling strengthened my desire to [stay with the family], for I was confident that I could break down that barrier if I desired' (102). While Olalla's mother breaks the cultural taboo on consuming blood, the narrator is all too happy to break the family's prohibition on even 'the smallest intimacy.' The story hinges on the 'moral dilemma' the narrator faces: should he pursue his love for Olalla, breaking the rules in pursuit of his *jouissance*? Or, should he do the supposedly responsible thing (sacrifice his *jouissance*) and not reproduce with Olalla, thereby avoiding the furtherance of a degenerated race? 'Olalla' is thus about the tension created by the contradiction intrinsic to the late-nineteenth-century ideology of civilisation, mentioned at the start of this chapter. If white man, supposedly the apex of human evolution, was on one hand, by definition, he who resists 'primal savagery' (that is, uncastrated, full *jouissance*), he was also, on the other, one who enjoyed that which was forbidden by traditional prohibitions and taboos.

No such dilemma bothers Olalla's mother. She is a creature of full *jouissance* and this is what horrifies the narrator (and the implied reader). She is described as 'liv[ing] in her body,' 'savouring and lingering on the bodily pleasures of [her] movement[s]' (123) with 'invincible content[ment],' with 'satisfaction [...] written on her face eternally' (112). The mother's bite signals that she has degenerated to animal status. In *Dracula*, Stoker uses the

[86] Edwin M. Eigner, *Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966), 199.
[87] Stevenson cited in Eigner, 200.
[88] Ibid.

same image of 'full *jouissance*' horribly revealing itself when the Count lunges at Jonathan Harker after he cuts himself shaving. In the next chapter I turn to *Dracula* and show that Stoker's novel uses blood to explore this tension in the ideology of civilisation as, on one hand a duty to sacrifice enjoyment, while, on the other, a duty to enjoy.

Chapter Two: 'What Does That Blood Mean?': Blood in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897)

In the final decade of the nineteenth century, when Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) was written and published, the notion of 'civilisation' had become crucial to the identity and anxieties of the 'world-dominating'[1] 'white men's countries.'[2] As I showed in the previous chapter, 'civilisation,' closely tied with definitions of human being, became a concept expressing the superego's contradictory dual commands, outlined in the Introduction: to enjoy, and to resist enjoying. In the previous chapter I described how vampire texts such as Robert Louis Stevenson's 'Olalla' (1885) expressed and explored the late nineteenth-century ideology of civilisation's precept that to be civilised – or modern – meant enjoying, in the sense of partaking in that which had been forbidden by unreasoned traditions and superstitions of the past. Yet, in contradiction, being modern, or civilised, also meant forgoing enjoyment. A new prohibition emerged: to be modern – advanced both culturally and biologically – also meant forgoing the enjoyment of anything identified with the uncivilised nature attributed to non-white people (who were thought to embody the ancestors of the civilised, white races) along with non-human animals and anyone deemed mentally or physically defective.

In arguing that Stoker's *Dracula* employs blood as a metonym for *jouissance*, this chapter explores the superegoic contradiction and traces the emerging prevalence of commanded enjoyment over enjoyment's prohibition. As Todd McGowan describes, this superegoic shift is commensurate with the shift to a modern, permissive society, where

[1] Sigmund Freud, 'Thoughts for the Times on War and Death' trans. James Strachey in *Civilization, Society and Religion: Group Psychology, Civilization and Its Discontents and Other Works*, ed. Albert Dickson (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985), 61.
[2] Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 6.

'subjects exist side by side in their isolated enclaves of enjoyment,' away from a traditional, prohibitive society where subjects are 'tied together through a shared sacrifice' of *jouissance*.[3] While the societal shift that McGowan describes does not fully take place until the later twentieth century, he argues that 'the emergence of consumer culture within monopoly capitalism,'[4] at '[a]round 1900,'[5] 'marks the beginning to the command to enjoy,'[6] because monopoly capitalism saw 'a vast increase in consumption.'[7] Now, for the first time, 'advertisements abandoned all propositional claims and replaced them with images with which consumers could identify.'[8] As McGowan explains, images are directly enjoyed in a way that words are not, [9] so at this time enjoyment starts to become more powerful than reason as a force for selling products and driving consumption.

It is, perhaps, because Stoker's novel speaks so well to the problem that this shift in the western cultural superego poses for the modern subject that *Dracula* held more meaning for later generations than Stoker's own. *Dracula* was moderately successful upon its initial publication, but nobody in 1897 could have guessed that Stoker's novel would prove to be an influential text for more than a century to come. It was not until the shift from prohibition to compulsory enjoyment intensified during the twentieth century that Stoker's novel became an icon of popular culture. Nonetheless, the roots of this shift are in place earlier, as premodern beliefs and traditions broke down in the wake of industrialisation and the rise of capitalism. *Dracula* registers the beginnings of this shift.

The first four chapters of *Dracula* – Jonathan Harker's Transylvanian journal – establish the novel's thematic and conceptual concern with *jouissance*, and blood as the primary device for expressing and exploring this concern. *Dracula* includes multiple case studies of vampirism, weaving them together into one narrative. The first case, Jonathan Harker's, as a first person description of being held prisoner and threatened by Count Dracula,[10] has the effect of establishing vampirism as something the reader imagines as a

[3] Todd McGowan, *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 2.
[4] Ibid., 33.
[5] Ibid., 31.
[6] Ibid., 33.
[7] Ibid., 31.
[8] Ibid., 64.
[9] Ibid., 59.
[10] The matter of whether Dracula drinks Jonathan's blood while he is imprisoned at the castle is open to interpretation. The text does not explicitly say that this happens. It is most strongly

direct, personal, subjective threat, even as the novel later moves on to more removed, third-person descriptions of vampiric predation.

The opening of Jonathan's journal signals that *Dracula* is a story about *jouissance*. Jonathan's movement from western modernity into an Orientalised, traditional space, figuratively belonging to the past, is a movement from one regime – one order or arrangement – of *jouissance* into another. Jonathan writes, 'the further east you go the more unpunctual are the trains. What ought they to be in China?' (6).[11] He also notes that there are 'no maps of [Transylvania] as yet to compare with [Britain's] own Ordnance survey maps' (5), and that Castle Dracula is absent from any map, in a district that is 'one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe' (5). These details show that the people of Dracula's homeland are not subject to modern schedules and spatial orderliness, they retain a *jouissance* that the modern subject has given up. Yet, at the same time, the local Transylvanian peasants submit to other limits on their *jouissance*. Jonathan writes, 'I read that every superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool' (6). Superstition – traditional taboo – is a form of 'castration,' as I described in the Introduction. The peasants are free from the castrations of modern civilisation but they submit to others, like superstition. Conversely, Jonathan is free from the limits enforced by superstition, but submits to modern castrations such as running to schedules determined by standardised time and meeting the standards of professional

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implied when Dracula tells the three vampire women, the 'weird sisters' (48) (who are often called the 'brides of Dracula' in popular culture although they are not described as such in the novel), that they are forbidden from 'touch[ing]' Jonathan, saying, 'This man belongs to me!' (39). This episode, including the phrase 'belong to me,' was integral to Stoker's initial concept of the story, see Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 71. Later, Dracula tells the women vampires: 'To-morrow night, to-morrow night is yours!' (50). In the 1899 American edition this line is more suggestive, reading: 'To-night is mine. To-morrow night is yours!' See Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, ed. Roger Luckhurst (Oxford University Press, 2011), 371n50. The fact that Jonathan does not transform into a vampire as Lucy does, and as Mina begins to, might suggest that he was not bitten by the Count. However, Jonathan's lack of transformation also follows an inner logic of the novel observed by Auerbach, which insists that no other male vampires can exist besides the Count. See Auerbach, 81. Overall, *Dracula* does not posit a coherent vampirology. For details of the novel's inconsistency regarding how victims become vampires, see Elizabeth Miller, *A Dracula Handbook* (Bloomington, Indiana: Xlibris, 2005), 172-73.

[11] Page numbers given in the text refer to: Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, ed. Roger Luckhurst (Oxford University Press, 2011).

conduct. In fact, it is Jonathan's middle-class job that places him in the position of being available for the Count to take prisoner. Jonathan's refusal to abandon his professional duty in the face of early hints of danger[12] ultimately allows the Count to execute his plan to leave Transylvania and migrate to England. As Nina Auerbach observes, 'Jonathan is never his own man even before he becomes the vampire's prisoner.'[13] Jonathan is a 'coerced and reluctant tourist'[14] who only enters the story out of professional duty (an act of disobeying the command to enjoy – a subtle but fundamental way in which the novel frowns upon castration and endorses enjoyment).

Before meeting the Count, Jonathan begins to lose his 'modernity,' accepting a peasant woman's gift of a crucifix even though, 'as an English Churchman,' he had 'been taught to regard such things as in some measure idolatrous' (8). This erosion of his modern – non-'idolatrous,' non-superstitious – standards foreshadows the loss of Jonathan's confidence in his own sanity that comes once he is imprisoned by Dracula. It is as though Jonathan is being drawn into the 'imaginative whirlpool' he described earlier. The way in which Jonathan experiences individual, subjective symptoms as he moves closer to Castle Dracula signals that he is moving not simply into an area with a different culture from his own, but into a space where *jouissance* is ordered differently. Jonathan finds he does 'not sleep well' (6). '[T]hough my bed was comfortable enough, […] I had all sorts of queer dreams' (6), he writes, foreshadowing the sleepwalking, strange dreams, insomnia and over-sleeping experienced by the other vampire hunters later in the novel. The way in which Jonathan wonders if eating paprika, a spice unfamiliar to him, has caused his 'queer dreams' shows that his symptom is a quasi-physical disturbance of the kind that the term *jouissance* articulates. That Jonathan's modernity and selfhood begin eroding in advance of his meeting Count Dracula, merely through proximity to the vampire, demonstrates Gail B. Griffin's observation that the Count becomes 'a pervasive presence, a force rather than a "character."'[15]

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[12] The innkeeper's wife tries to dissuade Jonathan from leaving for Castle Dracula but he refuses, stating: 'there was business to be done, and I could allow nothing to interfere with it' (8).

[13] Auerbach, 69.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Gail B. Griffin, '"Your Girls That You All Love Are Mine": Dracula and the Victorian Male Sexual Imagination' in Margaret L. Carter, ed., *Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1988), 137.

By the end of Jonathan's journal, his creeping sense of dislocation, his sense of compromised agency and loss of trust in the reliability of familiar measures and authorities, grows to overwhelm him. Jonathan now believes that 'the old centuries had, and have, powers of their own that mere "modernity" cannot kill' (37). Closely tied to this realisation about western modernity's limits, or fallibility, is the undermining of Jonathan's confidence in his own sanity, which he describes as the 'one thing' left for him 'to hope for,' adding, 'if, indeed, I be not mad already' (37). Losing trust in his own sanity shows that Jonathan has been drawn almost completely into the whirlpool of 'submission' to the castrating Count Dracula. While the Count's blood-drinking is a kind of 'literal' castration of his victims, it is only the most obvious example of the castrating force Dracula exerts on the characters in the novel. A less obvious, less 'literal,' example is the way in which the vampire hunters all, at times, question their own sanity and each other's. Questioning one's own sanity evinces a disintegration from the symbolic order that tells one who one is and represents an unfamiliar reconfiguration of one's *jouissance*. For example, when he is confronted with the information that Lucy has become a vampire Arthur asks, '[a]re you mad that speak such things, or am I mad to listen to them?' (192). Seward asks if Van Helsing's 'mind can have become in any way unhinged' (190), while Mina initially experiences a 'fever of doubt' (173) regarding Jonathan's sanity after reading his Transylvanian journal. Significantly, Dr Seward, the holder of symbolic authority over sanity as the administrator of an insane asylum, is the character in the novel who questions his own sanity the most. 'I am beginning to wonder,' writes Seward, 'if my long habit of life amongst the insane is beginning to tell upon my own brain' (127). 'May not I […] be of an exceptional brain, congenitally?' (69), Seward asks himself, later admitting, 'I sometimes think we must be all mad and that we shall wake to sanity in strait-waistcoats' (255).

While vampirism – especially the unexplained blood loss it causes – makes characters question their own sanity on an individual level, it also leads them to question the reliability of modern science. When Lucy begins losing blood mysteriously, as she is secretly vampirised by the Count, Seward's inability to explain the cause leads him to request Van Helsing's help, bringing the Dutchman into the story. One of Van Helsing's first comments in the novel, after examining Lucy, is, 'I have made careful examination, but there is no functional cause. With you I agree that there has been much blood lost; it has been, but is not' (108). Hence blood is especially implicated in the 'blank' 'from premise to conclusion' (178) that Van Helsing suggests is supposed to be filled through rational explanation within the modern, scientific worldview. Later, after transfusing his blood into Lucy, Seward describes

‘wondering over and over again how Lucy […] could have been drained of so much blood with no sign anywhere to show for it’ (121). The question mesmerises Seward in a manner not unlike Dracula’s mesmerising of Lucy, or Van Helsing’s mesmerising of Mina elsewhere in the novel. Seward writes, ‘I think I must have continued my wonder in my dreams, for sleeping and waking, my thoughts always came back to the little punctures in [Lucy’s] throat’ (121). When Harker sleeps through Dracula’s attack on Mina, waking to find his wife dripping in blood, he cries, ‘What does that blood mean!’ (263). Harker’s exclamation echoes the question of blood’s meaning being posed to characters, and the reader, throughout the novel, ‘over and over again,’ in Seward’s words.

Just as blood exerts a mysteriously excessive level of fascination for Seward, suggesting it almost has an agency of its own in the world of the novel, blood also makes unacknowledged actions that are not necessarily noticed by the characters, but are there to be seen by the reader in the collection of diary entries, messages, and recordings that make up *Dracula*. Instances of accidental bleeding are akin to the other accidents and unconscious acts – such as sleepwalking and so forth that I mentioned earlier – that strangely move the plot forward at times. When Lucy cuts her hand as she is opening a window that breaks ‘by chance’ it provides Seward with the opportunity to ‘test the quality of her blood’ (105). ‘The qualitative analysis gives a quite normal condition,’ Seward writes, ‘and shows, I should infer, in itself a vigorous state of health’ (105). Seward’s inability to find anything out from analysing Lucy’s blood is itself a sign of vampiric predation for the reader. This scene echoes the one in which the reader first learns (or suspects) that the Count is a vampire, when Jonathan cuts himself shaving (27), leading Dracula to ‘make a grab at [his] throat’ (28). The reader recognises ahead of Jonathan that the Count’s ‘demoniac fury’ at the sight of blood is a sign of vampirism. The mirroring of these two scenes of accidental bleeding draws one of many parallels between vampirism and science that are found in *Dracula* but it also bolsters the sense of blood having an agency of its own, as if blood itself has an ‘eagerness’ to appear – or that the characters unconsciously want their own blood to be spilled – in this story, underscoring that blood is this text’s primary object of fascination.

Another ‘case study’ of vampirism offered by *Dracula*, which demonstrates the Count’s sanity-eroding force, is that of Mr R. M. Renfield, a patient at Dr Seward’s asylum and a telepathically-influenced minion of the Count. Renfield is introduced to the reader as ‘a zoophagous (life-eating) maniac’ (68-69) who ‘desires […] to absorb as many lives as he can, and […] has laid himself out to achieve it in a cumulative way’ (69). As the novel progresses, the vampire hunters, along with readers, realise that Renfield is a gentleman, who even

knows Arthur's father[16] personally from the Windham Club (227), an exclusive 'Society of Gentlemen' (386n227). Renfield is highly educated. At times he discusses philosophy and current affairs, and he quotes Shakespeare. Yet Renfield shows that 'primal savagery' can lie hidden behind a civilised persona. He eats flies, spiders and even sparrows raw. Earlier, Renfield is observed trapping flies and feeding them to spiders, in turn feeding the spiders to birds, and he expresses plans to feed the birds to a kitten, posing the question as to his purpose in doing this. In one of his lucid moments, he cogently explains his own mental condition:

> I [am] a man who had a strange belief. […] I used to fancy that life was a positive and perpetual entity, and that by consuming a multitude of live things, no matter how low in the scale of creation, one might indefinitely prolong life. At times I held this belief so strongly that I actually tried to take human life. (218)

On one hand, Renfield dramatically performs the now-outdated medieval valourisation, which I described in Chapter One, of blood as the 'juice of life.' On the other hand, Renfield's pseudo-scientific, pseudo-mathematical 'method' (67)[17] is a grotesque mimicry of modern scientific methodology. The way in which Renfield tallies up lives as though the different species' blood held quantifiable amounts of lifeforce is methodical. Renfield acts as though he believes he can accrue other creatures' enjoyment, as though the enjoyment of eating were 'a perpetual entity' still residing in the bodies of the other 'life eaters' he consumes. Renfield's words reveal that he thoroughly subscribes to the notion of a 'scale of creation,' with humanity at the top of that hierarchy. His words, 'I actually tried to take human life,' suggest he sees humanity as the apical life form, as well as this being the commonly held assumption of Stoker's era. Renfield's 'zoophagy' is an extreme assertion of the belief in human superiority, with his consumption of 'lower' forms demonstrating humankind's superiority over the other animals.

Renfield's belief in humankind's superiority, taken to an extreme, apparently posits for him that human blood is worth drinking. Renfield's attempt to consume human life is depicted when he bursts into Seward's study with 'a dinner-knife' in hand, cutting Seward's

[16] Lord Godalming before Arthur inherits the title.
[17] 'There is a method in [Renfield's] madness' (67), Seward writes.

wrist 'rather severely' (132). 'My wrist bled freely, and quite a little pool trickled on to the carpet' (132) writes Seward. He then notices Renfield: 'his employment positively sickened me. He was lying on his belly on the floor licking up, like a dog, the blood which had fallen from my wounded wrist' (132). Renfield's posture, 'licking up' the blood 'like a dog' is an image of 'full' *jouissance* or 'savage delight' (197).[18] Renfield forgoes the etiquette which registers his human – that is, civilised – identity for himself and others in the symbolic order and goes straight for the enjoyment his 'strange belief' suggests: the blood on the carpet. Seward's response of feeling 'sickened' shows that Renfield is breaking a cultural taboo, echoing the feeling of 'revolt' Jonathan feels when he touches the comatose Count, bloated with blood, laying 'like a filthy leech, exhausted with his repletion' (51). *Dracula* exposes the superegoic contradiction as it is found within the ideology of civilisation, because when Renfield takes human superiority literally, a notion that implies that humans should not have to follow rules based on tradition rather than reason, by drinking blood he in fact loses his status as 'civilised man' and is rendered animal-like. Renfield effectively shuns the symbolic and pursues the real *jouissance* that eating 'life' gives him, obeying the command to enjoy perhaps more completely than any other character in the novel. In this way Renfield embodies the nascent consumerism of *Dracula*'s era, which drove on the shift towards a society of commanded enjoyment in its nascent form at this time.

While blood itself was not (literally) commodified in the nineteenth century to the extent that it would be in later centuries[19] (as is discussed in the following chapter and Chapter Five), as the famous Karl Marx quote cited in the Introduction[20] suggests, there is a sense in which blood (as life) is labour, and capitalism converts labour into capital, which may in turn be converted into commodities. *Dracula* performs metonymic slippage between blood and money multiple times. When Jonathan cuts the Count with a knife, Dracula seems to bleed money: 'a bundle of bank-notes and a stream of gold f[a]ll out' (284). When workers on Doolittle Wharf are bribed to offer information that will help identify the ship on which

[18] I borrow this phrase from Seward's statement that when he sees Lucy in her vampiric state he 'could have' 'killed' her 'with savage delight' (197).

[19] As outlined in the previous chapter, blood products were sold as forms of what is now called 'medicinal cannibalism' during the nineteenth century, as well as bloodletting and leeching being commercialised in this era.

[20] 'Capital is dead labour, which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks.' Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. 1 (1867), trans. Ben Fowkes (Harmondswroth: Penguin, 1976), 342.

the Count has escaped England, the act of bribery is described metonymically. Van Helsing relates that the workers 'be better fellows' – that is, are more forthcoming – 'when they have been no more thirsty' (294). The workers' lack of being paid for their information is articulated as 'thirst,' which in the context of a vampire novel draws a connection between money and blood. Robert A. Smart argues that *Dracula* is in fact a 'morality tale about money.'[21] In Smart's view, which builds on the work of Franco Moretti described in the Introduction,[22] *Dracula* posits that '[a] free flow of money is vital to an evolved capitalist economy, while the concentration of money and capital in the hands of a few monopolists staunches both free capital flow and movement up or down the socioeconomic ladder.'[23] In this interpretation, the defeat of the Count is the defeat of monopoly itself. Early in the novel the Count is associated with hoarding money. Within Castle Dracula, Jonathan discovers a heap of 'gold of all kinds, Roman, and British, and Austrian, and Hungarian, and Greek and Turkish money, covered with a film of dust, as though it had lain long in the ground' (47), showing that the Count holds onto money for long periods of time rather than 'spend[ing] it […] freely' (330) as the vampire hunters do.

Smart points out that while the men pool their blood in their attempt to save Lucy, their more successful efforts to save Mina involve them pooling their money.[24] It is the vampire hunters' wealth that allows them to pursue the Count, eventually destroying him. They hire private transport ('a lovely steam launch,' 'half a dozen beautiful horses, well appointed' [331]),[25] bribe sailors and Transylvanian officials (310),[26] and buy 'all the maps and appliances of various kinds that can be had' (331) in order to chase the vampire. 'Thank God! [that] we are well supplied with money' (310) Jonathan reflects. Mina expresses feeling 'thankful that Lord Godalming is rich, and […] Mr Morris […] has plenty of money, [and both] are willing to spend it so freely' (330). It is one of *Dracula*'s many contradictions that the financial means by which the Count is defeated are essentially the same as those that

[21] Robert A. Smart, 'Blood and Money in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*: The Struggle against Monopoly,' in *Money: Lure, Lore, and Literature*, ed. John Louis DiGaetani (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1994), 253.
[22] Franco Moretti, 'Dialectic of Fear' [translated by Susan Fischer], in *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms*, trans. Susan Fischer, David Forgacs and David Miller (London; New York: Verso, 1983),
[23] Smart, 254.
[24] Ibid., 259.
[25] Arthur is also willing to hire a 'special,' a private train, but none is available (314).
[26] Jonathan writes, 'Judge Moneybag will settle this case, I think! (310).

allowed him to come to England in the first place, as Smart observes.[27] This contradiction is implicitly acknowledged by Mina's declaration, 'think of the wonderful power of money! What can it not do when it is properly applied; and what might it do when basely used!' (330).

Mina's awareness of the power of money being able to be used for good or evil, of its not having these qualities intrinsically, also applies to science for the characters in the novel. That a modern worldview and modern methods might potentially collapse foundational boundaries – the boundary between 'good' and 'evil,' or the one between human and animal – is highlighted when Seward expresses curiosity about Renfield's 'experiment' (69), writing:

> What would have been [Renfield's] later steps [if he had been given the kitten which would have been fed with his birds]? It would almost be worthwhile to complete the experiment. It might be done if there were only a sufficient cause. Men sneered at vivisection and yet look at its results to-day! Why not advance science[?] […] I must not think too much of this, or I may be tempted; a good cause might turn the scale with me. (69)

If advancing science means breaking old taboos, as with the example of vivisection, it points to the difficulty of discerning where taboo-breaking is positive or progressive (needed in order to 'advance science') or where taboo-breaking is dangerous or regressive (taking human life, or going to Castle Dracula when local superstition warned against it). Later, Van Helsing reveals that Dracula is 'experimenting and doing it well' (280), showing that science, like money, can be 'basely used.' Van Helsing explains that the reason the Count is so dangerous, and why he must be destroyed – not only driven back to Transylvania – is because, unlike lesser vampires, Dracula is able to 'progress' and grow his brain by learning through experimentation. '[T]his monster has been creeping into knowledge experimentally' (281) Van Helsing asserts.

Renfield explains that he believed he could 'strengthen' his 'vital powers by the assimilation with [his] own body of […] life through the medium of his blood – relying […] upon the Scriptural phrase, "For the blood is the life"' (218). Yet in its Biblical context, the phrase is part of a prohibition on eating blood given by God to Moses.[28] So Renfield, in

[27] Smart, 259.
[28] Leviticus 17: 10-14.

misconstruing, or recontextualising, the Biblical phrase not only breaks the social taboo on eating raw animals, he also breaks the Biblical prohibition he quotes. As David Hume Flood points out, 'the Biblical reference ironically highlights the unholiness of Dracula's (as well as Renfield's) activities.'[29] '[A]t the same time that the allusion shockingly points to Dracula's sacrilegious inversion of the religious norm,' Flood continues, it 'also hints at an underlying dark reality in which the world of Dracula is inextricably linked with the world of traditionally "sanctified" values.'[30] As Flood argues, '[t]he point of these allusions is not just that the sacred has been profaned but that the profane has also been linked to the sacred.'[31] This connection between the sacred and the profane through shared blood symbolism is an example of what Victoria Nelson, whose work I discussed in the Introduction, has described regarding the Gothic 'carr[ying]' western culture's 'unconscious religiosity.'[32] Gothic literature becomes the place where western culture expressed forms of the supernatural that were no longer acceptable in other areas after, either within Protestantism or within a secularised worldview.[33]

In 'hierarchicising' blood according to the 'scale of creation' (218), Renfield mirrors Van Helsing, who selects the donors for Lucy's blood transfusions according to a pseudo-scientific hierarchy (detailed shortly). In one of *Dracula*'s many subversions of the boundary between the vampire and the vampire-hunters, the Count likewise fosters a hierarchical conception of blood. As Auerbach notes, '*Dracula* is in love […] with hierarchies.'[34] The Count regales Jonathan with commentary on the Dracula ancestral blood, '[w]e […] have a right to be proud, for in our veins flows the blood of many brave races who fought as the lion fights, for lordship' (30). The Count also describes how people 'of the Dracula blood' are the local Szekely people's leaders. This leadership is legitimised by the 'Dracula blood' whose

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[29] David Hume Flood, 'Blood Transfusion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula.*' *University of Mississippi Studies in English* 7 (1989), 187.
[30] Ibid., 187.
[31] Ibid., 188.
[32] Nelson, xi.
[33] Nelson, xi, 10-12. Nelson's sources for this argument include: Victor Sage, *Horror Fiction in the Protestant Tradition* (London: Macmillan, 1988); Robert F. Geary, *The Supernatural in Gothick Fiction: Horror, Belief, and Literary Change* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992); Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004) and Maurice Lévy, 'FAQ: What Is Gothic?' *Anglophonia* 15 (2004), 23-37.
[34] Auerbach, 66.

'spirit could not brook that [the Dracula family] were not free' (31). The Count continues, 'the Szekelys – and the Dracula as their heart's blood, their brains, and their swords – can boast a record that mushroom growths like the Hapsburgs and Romanoffs can never reach' (31). Here the Count compares his own ancestral blood with two of the most powerful dynasties in European history, and, while judging his own blood vastly superior to theirs, demonstrates that he subscribes to the underlying assumption that blood underpins political power. The Count's rhetoric ascribes to blood the power to confer on its holders a natural aptitude for leadership, leadership being conflated with the right to subordinate others. This is precisely the ideology performed by the western, 'world-dominating'[35] 'white men's countries'[36] in Stoker's era. Yet, within those countries, the middle class was embracing democratic and meritocratic principles, whilst aristocratic power was increasingly seen as outdated. J. Halberstam argues that, 'with the rise of bourgeois culture,' race was increasingly central to 'the construction of national unity' whilst 'aristocratic heritage became less and less an index of essential national identity.'[37] 'Therefore, the blood of nobility now became the blood of the native and both, Halberstam observes, 'were identified in contradistinction to so-called "impure" races such as Jews and Gypsies.'[38] One hierarchical conception of blood (race) was embraced while an older one (aristocracy) was losing its standing, yet blood remained central to each.

In contrast with the Count's view of himself as 'high' born, the vampire hunters in *Dracula* explicitly understand Dracula in terms of atavism. Van Helsing describes Dracula as a 'criminal […] predestinate to crime,' stating that 'he be not of man-stature as to brain. He be of child-brain in much' (317). Mina observes, '[t]he Count is a criminal and of criminal type. Nordau and Lombroso would so classify him, and *qua* criminal he is of imperfectly formed mind' (317). Max Nordau's treatise *Degeneration* was an 1895 best-seller that 'used the biological language of evolutionary decline or regression to denounce' modern, 'decadent' art and culture (390n317). Cesare Lombroso theorised the existence of 'criminal

[35] Freud, 61.
[36] Lake and Reynolds, 6.
[37] Halberstam, 84.
[38] Halberstam, 84. Halberstam draws on Hannah Arendt, who argues that 'if race doctrines finally served more sinister and immediately political purposes, it is still true that much of their plausibility and persuasiveness lay in the fact that they helped anybody feel himself an aristocrat who had been selected by birth on the strength of "racial" qualification.' Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), 8. Cited in Halberstam, 84.

man' [*l'uomo delinquente*] as almost a subspecies of the human, with deformed brains and tell-tale 'stigmata,' as Lombroso called them: physical characteristics that signaled congenital criminality. Lombroso wrote that criminals had an 'irresistible craving for evil for its own sake, the desire not only to extinguish life in the victim but to [...] drink its blood.'[39] Some of the features that Lombroso believed marked 'criminal man' are found in the novel's description of Count Dracula: his high, aquiline nose, 'like the nose of a bird of prey,' bushy eyebrows that 'tend to meet over the nose,' and a 'protuberance' on the upper ear, 'a relic of the pointed ear.'[40] The Count's blood-drinking is the novel's chief example of atavism. Like Carmilla Karnstein in Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872), discussed in the previous chapter, the Count represents the return of the middle-class, late Victorian vampire hunters' ancestor, which they must repress in order to maintain their status as 'civilised' beings. As Auerbach puts it, the Count is 'not simply evil; he is an eruption from an evil antiquity that refuses to rest in its grave.'[41]

As mentioned earlier, the choice of donors for each of Lucy's blood transfusions is made according to Van Helsing's hierarchical conception of blood. Arthur is deemed the most appropriate donor because he is Lucy's 'lover, her *fiancé*' (121), but also because he is perceived as being manlier than the more educated men available. When Arthur arrives unexpectedly at the first transfusion scene, Van Helsing explains:

> [Seward] was to give his blood, as he is more young and strong than me […] but, now you are here, you are more good than us, old or young, who toil much in the world of thought. Our nerves are not so calm and our blood not so bright than yours! (115)

As the first transfusion takes place Van Helsing is delighted to find that Arthur 'is so young and strong and of blood so pure that' he 'need not defibrinate it' (115). Fibrin is the protein that causes blood to clot. Blood clotting outside the vein before it could be transfused into the patient was a problem in early transfusions. This problem was solved in the mid-1910s by the practice of adding 0.2% sodium citrate to collected blood. Van Helsing uses the up-to-date

[39] Cesare Lombroso, 'Introduction,' in Gina Lombroso-Ferrero, *Criminal Man: According to the Classification of Cesare Lombroso* (New York; London: G. P. Putnam, 1911), xv.
[40] Leonard Wolf, *The Annotated Dracula* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1975), 300, citing Lombroso.
[41] Auerbach, 63.

term ‘fibrin,’ but his apprehension of non-coagulating blood as a sign of health belongs firmly to the Galenic and ancient understanding of blood (described in the previous chapter) that held that blood became less fluid with age. From a modern medical perspective, blood that does not clot outside the vein is the sign of disease or a bleeding disorder, such as haemophilia.

Because blood transfusion happened to become commonplace during the twentieth century, readers today often do not realise that a patient in Lucy’s situation in the 1890s was highly unlikely to survive. Because the existence of blood types was unknown in the nineteenth century, a patient receiving four transfusions from as many random donors would likely be transfused with incompatible blood. Stoker likely intended the blood transfusions in *Dracula* to be taken as the most amazing and dramatic piece of technology featured in the novel. Van Helsing’s transfusions represent the apex of modern mechanical or technological capability in a novel where the characters revel in other examples of advanced technology: the train, steamboat, phonograph, kodak camera, Winchester rifle, typewriter, electric lamp. Lucy’s body thus becomes a kind of ‘battleground’ upon which Dracula’s vampirism is fought directly by modern medical technique. As Flood observes, ‘Dracula himself is but an organic apparatus for direct transfusion, so that transfusion, for all its embodiment of the highest principles of scientific progress and altruism, is inevitably drawn into […] associations with the vampire.’[42] A battle between medieval ‘organic’ supernatural techniques and modern medical ones is staged. The Count’s predation on Lucy illustrates his ‘doubling’ of the hunters in that his desire for her reflects their own. Arthur, Seward, and Quincey each propose marriage to Lucy. Lucy represents an ideal of English femininity. Her name, meaning ‘Light of the West,’ implies this ideal. Stephen D. Arata argues that Count Dracula’s bite deracinates Lucy, so that ‘the only way to counter this process is to “re-racinate” her by reinfusing her with the “proper” blood.’[43] Of course, this ‘re-racination’ is ineffective, and even the collective blood of modern, western masculinity – Seward’s English, Morris’s American, and Van Helsing’s Teutonic blood – does not win Lucy, metaphorically England, back alive for the men.

Although the vampire hunters are shown to ironically hold much more in common with the Count than they would like to admit, *Dracula* clearly does not draw a full

[42] Flood, 189.
[43] Stephen D. Arata, ‘The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonisation,’ *Victorian Studies* 33, no. 4 (1990): 632.

equivalence between the hunters and the Count. The novel still ends with the vanquishing of Count Dracula.[44] The direct, 'full' *jouissance* represented by blood-drinking is not tolerated or condoned by the characters or rewarded by the plot. How, then, does *Dracula* reflect the emerging prevalence of the command to enjoy over the traditional prohibition on enjoyment? In part, it does this precisely through the ironic similarity outlined above, between the Count and the novel's heroes, because this breaks the traditionally unquestioned status of symbolic authority (authority conferred by the symbolic order). When authority itself, not just a specific holder of that authority, is questioned it is no longer 'authority' in the traditional sense. The proliferation of doubt about modernity's mastery over the world that is found throughout *Dracula* signals the cultural shift away from a traditional society to a modern one. 'Modernity' in *Dracula* cannot offer a 'Master Signifier,' the theoretical lone signifier that holds meaning by referring only to itself, remaining exempt from the 'chain of signifiers' as described in the Introduction.

'Modernity,' or some analogous term, does not function as a Master Signifier in *Dracula*, as we might have expected given the Count's status as an emblem of premodernity. Yet neither does any contrasting term, such as 'premodernity' or 'tradition,' or 'Dracula,' win out over 'modernity' in the end either. While *Dracula* plays with stark contrasts and dichotomies, it repeatedly declines to convincingly endorse one side over the other, insisting repeatedly on contradiction. The version of 'modernity' that wins against Dracula, an emblem of premodernity, incorporates a piece of the premodern into itself. For example, in contrast with the 'othering' of superstition in Jonathan's journal at the start of the novel, near the end of the story Van Helsing says, 'to superstition must we trust at the first; it was man's faith in the early [*sic*], and it have its root in faith still' (304). Just as Jonathan is saved from the Count by accepting the somewhat 'idolatrous' crucifix at the start of the novel, the characters are able to save themselves from Dracula in the larger narrative only by accepting a measure

[44] The ending is ambiguous because the Count 'crumble[s] into dust and pass[es] from […] sight' (350), which does not necessarily evidence that he has met 'real' death given that he and the women vampires seemingly materialised out of dust on other occasions during the story. Earlier, Van Helsing stated that Dracula can 'come on moonlight rays as elemental dust' and 'become so small' that he can 'slip through a hair-breadth space' (223). The fact that Dracula is destroyed by knife attack also renders the ending ambiguous since the reader has been led to believe through the latter half of the novel that in order to meet 'real' death he would need to be staked in the same way Lucy was (Miller, 173-74). However, as Miller observes, 'the fact that the scar disappears from Mina's forehead, indicates strongly that it was Stoker's intention to be definite: Dracula is gone' (Miller, 49).

of superstition back into their worldview. In the end it is not one side or the other of any given duality that the novel advocates. Rather, *Dracula* advocates embracing the lack itself of any one term being chosen over another. This advocacy of embracing the lack of a Master Signifier is voiced by Van Helsing when he encourages having an 'open mind' on multiple occasions.[45] 'I have learned,' Van Helsing says, 'not to think little of any one's belief, no matter how strange it be. I have tried to keep an open mind' (173). Later, Van Helsing says:

> There are such beings as vampires; some of us have evidence that they exist. […] I admit that at the first I was sceptic. Were it not that through long years I have trained myself to keep an open mind, I could not have believe[d]. (220)

Here Van Helsing claims that the 'open mind' is what allows him to recognise the existence of vampires and so fight the Count.

In contrast with Van Helsing as the advocate of an 'open mind,' Count Dracula, a 'force' emanating castration, seeking total oppression, insists on only one authority: his own. The Count tells the men: 'you and others shall yet be mine – my creatures, to do my bidding' (285), and he telepathically impinges upon Mina's agency after she drinks his blood. The periodic weakening of Dracula's power over Mina at sunset and sunrise is referred to as giving Mina's 'freedom' back to her (305-06, 309, 318). Renfield, when under the Count's telephathic influence, says 'I am not my own master' (229). The destruction of the Count at the end of the novel represents a destruction of the Master Signifier. It is the traditional authority, or Master Signifier, that is the piece of the premodern past that the modern vampire hunters eliminate. Otherwise there is no specific part of the past they wish to eliminate, due to their 'open mind[s].' The multiplicity of the group of hunters, having no single leader who holds authority over the others, embodies the lack of a new authority in the traditional sense. Forms of symbolic authority do not hold within the group. Lord Godalming defers to the others, although he has the traditional authority granted by aristocratic blood. Even the traditional patriarchal authority of men over women does not hold, as the men are forced to

[45] Van Helsing advises Seward to read Jonathan and Mina's diaries, 'with the open mind' (204). Van Helsing says to Seward, 'we shall have an open mind, and not let a little bit of truth check the rush of a big truth, like a small rock does a railway truck' (180). Van Helsing describes himself to Renfield as being 'without prejudice, and with the habit of keeping an open mind' (229). Seward introduces Van Helsing to Arthur, via a letter, as having 'an absolutely open mind' (106).

include Mina in their plans despite their normative (for 1897) impulse to preclude her. As Elizabeth Miller observes, *Dracula* has a 'collective hero,' not one hero. '[O]nly [by] working in collaboration' can the hunters 'hope to defeat' Count Dracula.[46]

Another way in which *Dracula* ruminates on the undermining of symbolic authority that goes hand in hand with the lack of a Master Signifier is through its depictions of the Lacanian 'real' exceeding the grasp of the symbolic order. Undeadness is itself a quintessential image of the gap between the symbolic and the real: a gap we habitually overlook, the gap in symbolic authority. Symbolic death is death registered within society's symbolic order; for example, one's name appearing on a gravestone or a death certificate. Real death happens independently of society's symbolic procedures. The gap between real death and its symbolic registration posits a dimension of undeadness within human life, since this gap means that becoming subject to society, and its symbolic laws, entails a degree of alienation from one's own life and death.[47]

It is not only vampirism that references this gap between the symbolic and the real in *Dracula*. For example, when the extraordinarily long-lived Mr Swales speaks about the graves at Whitby, he says that the gravestones are 'tumblin' down with the weight o' the lies wrote on them' (63). The writing engraved onto the headstones makes false claims about the virtues of the deceased persons they commemorate, as well as lying about the way in which the living remember – or, in fact, forget – the dead. '[T]he memories of them bean't cared a pinch of snuff about, much less sacred' (63), Swales observes. Moreover, Swales claims that many of the graves do not even hold bodies as they claim: 'in nigh half of them there bean't no bodies at all' (63), 'there be scores of these lay-beds [graves] that be toom [empty] as old Dun's bacca-box on Friday night' (64). The image of the empty grave hints at the uncanny phenomenon of vampirism, but also connects vampiric undeadness with the inability of the symbolic to fully articulate the real.

Another reference to the gap between the symbolic and the real is found when Van Helsing describes his marriage: 'me, with my poor wife dead to me, but alive by Church's law, though no wits, all gone […] I […] am [a] faithful husband to this now-no-wife, am bigamist' (164). As Roger Luckhurst explains, '[t]his obscure sentence seems to suggest that

[46] Miller, 40.

[47] Furthermore, as McGowan explains: 'The symbol[ic] brings death and alienation into the world because it brings absence – or, more properly, presence in absence. Because the symbol allows us to experience the presence of absence, it allows us also to become conscious of death without actually dying (26).

Van Helsing is still married in the church's eyes, but that his wife is mad or somehow insensate and "dead to me"' (381n164). The real always exceeds the grasp of the symbolic. Authority, or identity, conferred by the symbolic order is founded in sign systems such as language, for example by conferring titles on individuals that are traditionally commensurate with certain types of authority: 'king,' 'judge,' 'doctor,' 'father,' or, in the example above, 'husband.' But because the real cannot be fully articulated by language, symbolic authority is never total, complete oppression, in that symbolic authority cannot reach the real. To highlight the real can be politically subversive, insofar as political power of any kind is predicated on the functioning of the symbolic order. The symbolic order might need no undermining, as undermining may be performed by the real already. For example, a king, no matter how powerful, can still bleed like anybody else.

A further reference to the gap in symbolic authority is Van Helsing's evocation of 'King Laugh.' After Lucy's death, Van Helsing 'laugh[s] and crie[s] together, just as a woman does' (163), in 'a regular fit of hysterics' (162). When Seward asks Van Helsing why he laughed, Van Helsing explains:

> [Laughter] is a king, and he come when and how he like. He ask no person; he choose no time of suitability. He say: 'I am here.' […] King Laugh he come to me and shout and bellow in my ear: 'Here I am! Here I am!' till the blood come dance back […] it is a […] world full of miseries […] and yet when King Laugh come he make them all dance to the tune he play. (163)

Laughter is often a sign of enjoyment. The 'fit of hysterics' described is a form of laughter that accompanies *jouissance*, enjoyment beyond pleasure that might also encompass pain. *Jouissance* is real, exceeding the symbolic, and both laughter and blood have a real dimension while also being ascribed symbolic meaning by humans. Van Helsing's phrase, 'King Laugh,' underlines the point that laughter (the real) holds an authority all its own, in that it evades all symbolic authority. Laughter cannot be strictly controlled by societal rules (the symbolic) such as being always limited to socially designated moments of 'suitability.' Irruptions of the real such as hysterical laughter 'level' human hierarchies as 'all dance' to the 'tune' of the real at certain times, regardless of any symbolically appointed identity or role. Similarly, a person can potentially bleed at any time.

Insofar as *jouissance* is structurally on the 'wrong side of the law,' the superego's command to enjoy is a kind of duty to break the law, and this is precisely what the vampire

hunters do. Their entry into Lucy's tomb, in order to save her soul with 'real' death, is illegal. Seward writes that he 'realized distinctly the perils of the law which [they] were incurring in [their] unhallowed work' (186). The men also break the law when they enter the Count's residences searching for his boxes of Transylvanian earth. 'We broke house at Carfax' admits Quincey Morris (248), worrying that '[t]his burglary business is getting serious' (249). Later, Jonathan urges the men to 'break in' to the Count's Piccadilly house 'if need be' (272). Van Helsing then describes at length how they should 'break in' '*en règle*' (273), 'by the rules,' simply by acting as though they are legitimately entitled to have a locksmith pick the lock for them. This is another example of the gap between the symbolic and the real, or the limit of symbolic authority. As long as the hunters offer the appearance of working 'by the rules' they can in fact break the law. In his draft notes for *Dracula*, Stoker referred to the hunters as a 'Vigilante Committee.'[48] This term came from America and such 'committees' were usually found in 'boom towns' or new settlements on the West Coast, the periphery of 'civilisation,' not the centre, where *Dracula* takes place. The *OED* defines a 'Vigilance Committee'[49] as a 'self-appointed committee for the maintenance of justice and order in an imperfectly organized community.'[50] In showing the need for a Vigilante Committee operating out of the heart of the British Empire in order to protect western civilisation, not only physically or biologically but also spiritually, *Dracula* implies an 'imperfection' at the heart of modernity. This, however, is the novel's way of insisting on the lack of a Master Signifier that would complete or 'perfect' symbolic authority.

As we shall see, vigilantism becomes a central motif of the vampire genre although it has not been widely recognised as such. In the twentieth century the vampire genre migrated from England to the United States. Increasingly, most vampire texts were authored by Americans, and vampire stories were primarily set in America. In immigrating to America, the vampire genre moved to the place where the modern concept of vigilantism originated. In Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* (1954) the protagonist, Robert Neville acts as the self-

[48] Bram Stoker, *Bram Stoker's Notes for Dracula: A Facsimile Edition* annotated and transcribed by Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller (Jefferson, North Carolina; London: McFarland and Company, 2008), 35.

[49] The *OED* has 'committee of vigilance' or 'vigilance committee' as the correct terms, rather than 'Vigilante Committee' as Stoker puts it. The *OED* defines a 'vigilante' as a 'member of a vigilance committee.' 'vigilante, n.' *OED* Online. *OED* Second Edition, 1989. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/223335.

[50] 'vigilance, n.' *OED Online*. *OED* Second Edition, 1989. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/223332.

appointed defender of 'civilisation' and humankind, feeling justified in his violence against those he perceives as 'vampires.' At the end of *I Am Legend* Neville faces justice executed by the 'vampires.' In Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (2005) the protagonist, Shori Mathews, is the victim of vigilante vampires who seek to exterminate her. *Fledgling* ends with the vigilantes facing trial in a legitimate vampire court. Both later novels reverse the plot of *Dracula* by staging trials at the end instead of endorsing vigilante 'justice.' The first season of the television series *True Blood* (HBO, 2008) similarly endorses official justice over vigilantism. The villain of *True Blood*'s first season is a human serial killer who kills humans whom he believes are in aiding the integration of vampires into human society.

Vigilantism is symptomatic of the shift from a society of prohibition to one of permission. When subjects feel dutybound to become self-appointed law enforcers this shows that traditional authority has lost its efficacy. The 'self' becoming the reference point for legitimising law enforcement, in place of a traditional authority figure (such as an officer of the law endorsed by the symbolic order), shows that enjoyment has taken precedence over prohibition. Vampiric blood-drinking demonstrates the modern sensibility, where one person's enjoyment is another person's castration. In traditional societies, prohibition guards against this situation, because everyone shares in a castration enforced from 'above' by the Master Signifier. When the Master Signifier is removed, however, individuals become competitors for the *jouissance* that appears to be freely available except for the claims laid upon it by one's neighbours. *Dracula*, then, poses the question, is there a third way forward – between the absence and the presence of the Master Signifier? I do not think Stoker's novel answers this question. But, as I show in the chapters that follow, the vampire genre after *Dracula* became a vehicle for revisiting this question as modernity progressed. Over a century later, the question remains open today, and so the vampire genre persists.

Chapter Three: Blood and Vampires, 1897-1954

This chapter looks at the intertwined histories of blood and of the vampire genre in the years between the publication of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in 1897 and the publication of Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* in 1954. In this chapter I show how the vampire genre carried the equation of blood with *jouissance* it inherited from the nineteenth century forward into the twentieth century. Once again, the genre's linking of blood with *jouissance* proved adaptable into new kinds of vampire story, written under new historical conditions. Along with the persistence of the genre's core identity as a literature of *jouissance*, one general change is evident in the vampire texts of this period: the vampire was becoming more detached from Christian cosmology. This shift in the genre is indicative of the waning of Christianity's power in western society compared with earlier centuries. It is symptomatic of the cultural shift I described in the previous chapter, the shift towards a society of commanded enjoyment, where traditional authority loses its grip. In the wake of this softening of the theological or demonological conception of vampirism, vampires became 'biological.' Less often spiritually alien, vampires were increasingly imagined as an alien species or as the victims of an inherited curse. In turn, the vampire story often interrogated the rhetoric of the eugenicist beliefs that flourished in America before falling out of favour during World War II. The shift from supernatural explanations of vampirism to scientific ones in the vampire genre also reflected the rise of science's importance for western culture. This 'de-demonising' or 'biologising' of the vampire paved the way so that, already, by the 1940s the 'traditional' vampire narrative – the vampire story in the 'tradition' of Stoker's *Dracula*[1]– was being played with and ironised. The appearance of ironic and comedic vampire texts in the 1940s[2] foreshadowed the more obvious revolution in the genre that occurred during the late 1960s and 1970s, which is detailed in Chapter Five.

This period between Stoker's *Dracula* and Matheson's *I Am Legend* also saw a revolution in humankind's ability to manipulate our blood. By the 1920s, blood transfusion was relatively cheap and easy, and could be performed by a nurse rather than a specialist surgeon. By the end of the 1930s blood could be stored, transported and 'banked.' Blood was

[1] In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, *Dracula* is taken to be the 'traditional' vampire story, even though it was tradition-breaking in its initial 1890s context.
[2] For example, *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. Dir. Charles Barton. 1948.

now a medical therapeutic agent with a historically unprecedented independence from the human body. Blood was now a 'disembodied'[3] or detachable human tissue. This freeing of blood from the body materialised or literalised the old metonymy of blood for money. Blood could now circulate like money, which was itself already a form of 'disembodied' labour or life, or *jouissance*. The financial metaphors of blood 'banking' and 'donation' established during the 1930s would prove enduring and shape the future rhetoric of blood management in ways I discuss in Chapter Five. By the outbreak of World War II blood was considered a 'crucial war matériel' used to heal wounded soldiers.[4] In response to the war, the first large-scale campaigns for voluntary blood donations from the public were launched. In turn, blood giving came to be seen as a patriotic act, and as an affirmation of societal belonging, in a way that stuck – albeit inconsistently – into the twenty-first century.

On one hand, twentieth century medical understandings of blood flew in the face of old beliefs about racial difference residing literally in the blood. The ABO blood types, discovered by Karl Landsteiner between 1900 and 1903, cut across racial boundaries. Even members of the same immediate family often do not share a blood type. In 1919 serologists Ludwik and Hanna Hirszfield verified that blood types do not correlate with race.[5] As we shall see, the ability of one person's blood to benefit another's body across class, race, religion, gender and national boundaries could be seen to demonstrate a shared or universal humanity. On the other hand, such universalist or anti-racist interpretations of blood tended to be in the minority, articulating a protest against different forms of racism that were more prevalent. In the opening decades of the twentieth century eugenics flourished in America. After 1907 states began sterilising people deemed 'unfit' in efforts to eradicate their perceived defects from future generations of American society.[6] Meanwhile, Jim Crow laws enforced racial segregation in the United States, based on the so-called 'one drop rule' with its rhetorical figuring of blood as race. The 'one drop rule' was the conceptual rule, sometimes codified as law, by which, as Langston Hughes put it, 'in the United States, the

[3] Kara W. Swanson, *Banking on the Body: The Market in Blood, Milk and Sperm in Modern America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014), 7, 11.
[4] Swanson, 53.
[5] Douglas Starr, *Blood: An Epic History of Medicine and Commerce* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998) 75.
[6] Elof Axel Carlson, 'The Hoosier Connection: Compulsory Sterilization as Moral Hygiene' in Paul A. Lombardo, *A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 11.

word "Negro" is used to mean anyone who has any Negro blood at all in his veins.'[7] Where possible, new medical understandings of blood were often employed to support racist rhetoric. For example, sickle cell anaemia, a hereditary blood disorder that occurs predominantly in people whose ancestors lived in sub-Saharan Africa, was taken as a proof of black Americans' inferior blood. Haemophilia provided a colourful example of 'bad' heredity for eugenicists during the 1920s and 1930s.[8]

Almost all the important developments in blood medicine were made in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. As America began to emerge as a global superpower after the Spanish-American war of 1898, cutting-edge medical research moved to the United States from Europe, and so did the vampire genre. American authors wrote the bulk of vampire stories during this period. Consequently, vampire stories were more often set in the United States – or in metaphorically 'American' settings – than they had been during the nineteenth century. Two stories set in New England are discussed in this chapter: 'Luella Miller' (1902) by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman[9] and 'Bewitched' (1925) by Edith Wharton.[10] America's film industry gave the twentieth century its most enduring and iconic vampire: Bela Lugosi's rendition of Count Dracula in Universal Pictures' *Dracula* (1931) directed by Tod Browning. The appearance of pulp magazines, from the founding of *Weird Tales* magazine in 1923 through the rest of the period covered by this chapter, created a forum where scores of vampire stories circulated. The most famous of these, 'Shambleau' (1933) by C. L. Moore,[11] is discussed later in this chapter, as is a lesser-known example, 'Over the

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[7] Langston Hughes, *Autobiography: The Big Sea*, ed. Joseph McLaren (Columbia; London: University of Missouri Press, 2002 [1940]), 36.

[8] Stephen Pemberton, *The Bleeding Disease: Hemophilia and the Unintended Consequences of Medical Progress* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 1, 18.

[9] Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, 'Luella Miller,' in *Dracula's Guest: A Connoisseur's Collection of Victorian Vampire Stories* ed. Michael Sims (London: Bloomsbury: 2010), 391-405. First published in *Everybody's Magazine*, December 1902; reprinted in Wilkins Freeman's collection *The Wind in the Rose-Bush, and Other Stories of the Supernatural* (1903). Also anthologised in: Alan Ryan, ed., *The Penguin Book of Vampire Stories* (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 175-187. Leonard Wolf, ed., *Blood Thirst: 100 Years of Vampire Fiction* (USA: Oxford University Press, 1997), 69-80.

[10] Edith Wharton, 'Bewitched' in *Ghost Stories of Edith Wharton*, ed. David Stuart Davies (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 2009), 141-159. First published in *Pictorial Review* 26 (March 1925). Reprinted in her collection, *Here and Beyond* (1926).

[11] C. L. Moore, 'Shambleau,' in *The Penguin Book of Vampire Stories*, ed. Alan Ryan (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 254-281. First published in *Weird Tales* magazine,

River' (1941) by P. Schuyler Miller.[12] The oeuvres of both Richard Matheson and Octavia Butler, whose vampire novels are the foci of Chapter Four and Chapter Six, respectively, are the cultural descendants of this early to mid-twentieth-century American pulp literature.

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'Luella Miller' (1902) by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman is in many ways exemplary of the changes in the vampire genre that were to occur over the next half-century or so. The vampire in this story, Luella Miller, is American. Luella moves from a neighbouring town to the New England village in which the story is set. Although Luella's vampirism is supernatural, she is neither demonic nor foreign in the manner of Stoker's Count. As Nina Auerbach puts it, 'Luella is the exemplar of her class and time, the epitome of her age, not an outcast in it.'[13] Luella does not literally feed on blood. Instead, she feeds on energy, on life blood, in an unexplained, supernatural manner that perhaps even she herself does not understand. People are mysteriously drawn to perform different kinds of labour for Luella. These helpers grow weak and usually die if they continue helping her. When Luella's husband, Erastus Miller, 'go[es] into consumption of the blood the year after' their marriage, even though 'consumption wa'n't in his family' (394), it underlines the idea that Luella is a vampire, and that she consumes her victims' blood even without biting them.

In its departure from the 'traditional' depiction of a vampire drinking literal blood, 'Luella Miller' points to the vampirised blood in the wider vampire genre as already being a symbol for labour and energy, for life force or *jouissance*. Luella's victims enjoy their victimisation, that is, their vampirisation. One victim, Luella's sister-in-law Lily Miller, claims that Luella is not 'strong enough to do anythin[g]' for herself (395). Another helper, Maria Brown, 'act[s] real mad when folks sa[y] anything' against Luella. Maria claims that 'Luella [i]s a poor, abused woman, too delicate to help herself,' and 'if [Maria] die[s] helpin' them that couldn't help themselves she would' (400-01).

November 1933. Also anthologised in: Leonard Wolf, ed., *Blood Thirst: 100 Years of Vampire Fiction* (USA: Oxford University Press, 1997), 137-160.

[12] P. Schuyler Miller, 'Over the River,' in *The Penguin Book of Vampire Stories*, ed. Alan Ryan (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 321- 333. First published in *Unknown* [aka *Unknown Worlds*] magazine, April 1941.

[13] Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 108.

'Luella Miller' reads as a cautionary tale against altruism. Luella's helpers are portrayed as fools who are blinded to Luella's manipulations by their own respective self-conceptions as altruistic nurturers, in the case of the women, or as chivalrous saviours, in the case of the men. Here the story registers the shifting status of charity under the influence of eugenicist ideas at the time. Helping the poor and the mentally or physically 'unfit' found less justification as a deterministic view of heredity gained currency.[14] Aiding the survival of dysgenic sectors of the population to survive, and thus breed, met with disapproval. Contemporary with 'Luella Miller,' David Starr Jordan's *The Blood of the Nation: A Study of the Decay of Races* (1902) argued that:

> [A] race of men or a herd of cattle are governed by the same laws of selection. Those who survive inherit the traits of their own actual ancestry. In the herd of cattle, to destroy the strongest […] fairest [and] most promising calves, is to allow those not strong nor fair nor promising to become the parents of the coming herd. […] Such a process is called race-degeneration.[15]

The rise of eugenics in America led to the world's first compulsory sterilisation law to be passed in Indiana in 1907. Other states followed.[16] Into the 1920s, eugenicists continued to warn, 'the golden rule […] will wreck the race that tries it.'[17] Educator Letta S. Hollingworth lamented the 'wave of uninformed humanitarianism, which rose in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and extended through the nineteenth.' [18] Under the influence of this 'humanitarianism,' Hollingworth argued, the meaning of 'philanthropy' had 'degenerated to mean love of stupid and vicious man.'[19] In eugenicist rhetoric, eugenic practices were modern, scientifically informed practices, unbound from the 'traditional,' 'emotionally

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[14] Carlson, 12.
[15] David Starr Jordan, *The Blood of the Nation: A Study of the Decay of Races* (Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1906 [1902]), 12.
[16] See Kuhl, 17.
[17] R. W. Edmonds [or Edmunds, Selden gives two spellings], 'Intellectual Adventuring,' *The Forum* 72.6 (December 1924), 861. Cited in Steven Selden, 'Transforming Better Babies into Fitter Families: Archival Resources and the History of the American Eugenics Movement, 1908-1930, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 149, no. 2 (June 2005): 205.
[18] Leta S. Hollingworth, *Gifted Children: Their Nature and Nurture* (Oxford: Macmillan, 1926), vii, partially cited in Selden, 205.
[19] Hollingworth, vii.

satisfying doctrine'[20] of philanthropy that was perceived to have prevailed in the nineteenth century and earlier. In other words, eugenics urged a form of societal forgoing of traditional castration (altruistically giving up one's wealth for the good of one's neighbour, in the name of charity) in order to access the perceived promise of greater *jouissance* for each individual in a biologically superior society.

Philanthropy and humanitarianism posed a threat not only when extended to 'unfit' 'Anglo-Americans,' but also when 'traditional,' moral, altruism allowed dysgenic Europeans (from the south and east of the continent), Jews and non-whites to enter the United States via immigration. Madison Grant concluded his eugenicist tract *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916) by warning specifically against 'altruistic ideals' and 'maudlin sentimentalism' 'sweeping the nation toward a racial abyss' by creating a racially diverse, 'Melting Pot' society.[21] Angela Smith explains, '[e]ugenic lore held that, in the colonial period, the predominantly western European origins of immigrants to the United States formed the basis for a specifically American nationality, grounded in homogeneity of racial origin and cultural beliefs.'[22] Madison Grant believed that 'a population homogenous in race, religion, traditions and aspirations [had existed] down to 1840' but that America had 'inserted into the body politic […] an immense mass of foreigners.'[23] Jordan, quoted earlier, had claimed that colonial American blood was, in fact, royal blood:

> Almost every Anglo-American has […] noble and royal blood in his veins. The Massachusetts farmer […] has as much [royal] blood […] as flows in any royal veins in Europe. […] When we consider […] 'what constitutes the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon,' we shall find his descent from the old nobility […] not the least of its factors.[24]

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race: Or, The Racial Basis of European History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), 228. Cited in Nancy Ordover, *American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy, and the Science of Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 52.

[22] Angela M. Smith, *Hideous Progeny: Disability, Eugenics, and Classic Horror Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 49.

[23] Madison Grant, 'Closing the Floodgates,' in *The Alien in Our Midst*, ed. Madison Grant (New York: Galton, 1930), 16. Cited in Smith, 54.

[24] Ibid., 28-29.

Jordan and other eugenicists understood that the term 'blood' as 'an expression formed to cover the qualities of heredity' was 'figurative only.'[25] However, blood remained the language used to describe heredity. Jordan writes:

> [T]he old word ['blood'] well serves our purposes. The blood which is 'thicker than water' is the symbol of race unity. In this sense the blood of the people concerned is at once the cause and the result of the deeds recorded in their history. For example, wherever an Englishman goes, he carries with him the elements of English history. […] Thus, too, a Jew is a Jew in all ages and climes […] In like fashion the race traits color all history made by […] negroes.[26]

While 'Luella Miller' is a fascinating literary example of a vampire story from the start of the twentieth century, the most popular vampire text in America during the first decade of the twentieth century was 'The Vampire,'[27] a poem by Rudyard Kipling. [28] Kipling's poem describes a 'fool' being beguiled by a 'woman who [does] not care' for him. The 'fool' 'call[s]' the vampire 'his lady fair' but in reality she is a ghastly 'rag and a bone and a hank of hair.' Rather than losing his literal blood, the 'fool' loses his material wealth and his social standing. He wastes 'the work of [his] head and hand' along with his 'honor and good intent' for the vampire woman. The vampirism depicted in the poem is not overtly supernatural. The reason or explanation for the vampire-woman's behaviour and her power is not given. She is not shown to meet with any punishment for her actions.[29] Instead, like 'Luella Miller,' 'The Vampire' is more concerned with warning against 'foolishly' falling prey to a vampire.

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[25] Ibid., 9. For Jordan, the actual agent of heredity was the 'germ plasm.'
[26] Ibid., 9-10.
[27] Rudyard Kipling, 'The Vampire' in *Selected Poetry*, ed. Craig Raine (London: Penguin, 1992), 95-96.
[28] For details about the poem's publication in America see: J. Lawrence Mitchell, "Rudyard Kipling, *the Vampire*, and the Actress," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 55.3 (2012): 303.
[29] Janet Staiger, *Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 147.

During the 1910s, the Kiplingian vampire woman became the 'vamp' stock figure for the new medium of film.[30] '[U]nique to silent films,' the 'vamp' is 'neither heroine nor villainess,'[31] unlike the 'fallen woman' of films in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1915, the film *A Fool There Was* (dir. Frank Powell), starring Theda Bara, popularised the slang term 'vamp' to denote this figure and became its iconic iteration.[32] *A Fool There Was* 'portrays a money-hungry woman whose lust for the finer things in life causes the death of her hopelessly obsessed suitor.'[33] A pseudonym, 'Theda Bara' is an anagram for 'Arab death.' Bara's name and her biography were fabricated to make her popular image an embodiment of the 'vamp' as a knotting together of danger and desirability at the intersection of feminine sexuality and ethnic exoticism. The 'vamp' figure embodies the dysgenic woman forbidden by eugenics.

Throughout the 1910s 'blood' remained a key word in eugenic rhetoric. For example, a 1910 article in *Pearson's Magazine* figured venereal disease as a 'loathsome vampire,' responsible for impending white racial 'suicide':

> Stalking […] hand in hand with the negro and the mulatto, is the 'Great Black Plague.' [Syphilis] is to-day seriously imperilling the very existence of the Anglo-Saxon blood. The social body is being defiled, sapped and weakened, and a proud race is all too close to the verge of committing involuntary suicide.[34]

A 1913 letter by Theodore Roosevelt surmised that, '[s]ome day we will realize that the prime duty[,] the inescapable duty of the good citizen of the right type[,] is to leave his or her blood behind in the world[.]' [35] Here 'blood becomes a figure for the reproductive act,' as Smith observes. '[T]o "leave one's blood behind" is to reproduce it in the form of children and thus perpetuate the nation's "best blood" while delimiting the "bad."'[36]

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[30] Anthony Slide, *Silent Players: A Biographical and Autobiographical Study of 100 Silent Film Actors and Actresses* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 390.
[31] Ibid.
[32] For other actresses who played the 'vamp' figure see ibid., 390-392.
[33] Erik Butler, *The Rise of the Vampire* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 48.
[34] Robert Wickliffe Woolley, 'The South's Fight for Race Purity,' *Pearson's Magazine* [undated, ca. 1910], 206-07. Cited in Smith, 55.
[35] Theodore Roosevelt, Letter to C. Davenport, January 3 1913. Cited in Smith, 47.
[36] Smith, 47.

Meanwhile, blood transfusion was revolutionised during the 1910s. A series of technological innovations 'eliminated the need to cut open the patient's arm' to enact the operation.[37] By 1915 the method for using sodium citrate to keep blood from coagulating outside the vein was discovered.[38] These developments meant that 'the technique of blood transfusion which had been so very complicated up to then, was suddenly made as simple as an ordinary saline infusion.'[39] Early haematologist Bertram M. Bernheim described the shock of the discovery as being 'almost as if the sun had been made to stand still.'[40] The radical newness of the procedure seems not to have registered in popular culture directly, at least, not consciously. However, though the public may not have realised it at the time, this advance opened the door to blood becoming a commonplace medical therapeutic agent. Blood was becoming truly disembodied for the first time. The greater ease with which transfusions could be done meant that doctors were willing to experiment with it as a treatment for a wider variety of ailments from typhoid to leukaemia, to goitre, to carbon monoxide poisoning and cancer.[41] Previously, due to the difficulty, expense and risk involved, transfusions were usually used only in emergency cases of severe haemorrhage. In turn, the increase in the number of transfusions and the number of transfusion's uses, meant that the demand for blood increased too. The fears of blood-mixing voiced by eugenicists were being realised medically.

A grim satire of an American community's horror at dysgenic blood-mixing is found in Edith Wharton's 'Bewitched' (1925). In 'Bewitched,' Mrs Prudence Rutledge alleges that her husband, Saul, is being vampirised by Ora Brand, a local young woman who died a year prior to the events of the story. By the end of 'Bewitched,' however, the reader suspects that nothing supernatural has occurred. Instead, it is implied that Mrs Rutledge's allegation of vampirism is merely a cover for an extramarital affair between Saul and Ora's living sister, Vanessa. The reader suspects that Mrs Rutledge has convinced the men in the story to stake the vampiric Ora as a way of getting them to mistakenly kill the living Vanessa. The Brand sisters are said to be 'the handsomest girls anywhere around' (152). However, later we read

[37] Starr, 43, 48.
[38] Ibid., 48.
[39] Richard Lewisohn, 'The Development of the Technique of Blood Transfusion Since 1907,' *Journal of the Mount Sinai Hospital* 10 (1944): 605-22, 612. Cited in Starr, 49.
[40] Bertram M. Bernheim, *Adventure in Blood Transfusion* (New York: Smith & Durrell, 1942), 139-40. Cited in Starr, 50.
[41] Swanson, 30.

that only 'some people thought [Vennessa] handsome, [because] she was so swarthy' (158). Vanessa, called 'Venny' for short (alluding to 'venereal disease'[42]), is apparently mentally unfit; she is 'ignorant' and runs 'wild on the slopes of Lonetop' (153).

Echoing the eugenicist discourse of the story's era, community gossip in 'Bewitched' holds that Venny's death at the end of the story, which is claimed to be due to pneumonia, was inevitable due to her heredity (although the reader suspects the real cause of death is that she was shot by men who mistake her for her sister). Locals say: '[t]hey don't ever make old bones on the mother's side of [Venny's] family' (158), and 'I always said both them [Brand] girls was frail… Look at Ora, how she took and wasted away! […] Their mother, too, *she* pined away just the same' (158). In particular, the Brand sisters' early deaths appear, in the view of the community, to be the inevitable result of the Brand 'blood' being inbred. We read that the sisters' father 'hadn't ever oughter marry his own cousin, because of the blood' (152).

Despite the spectre of inbreeding and incest, along with other disturbing details of the local community's history mentioned in 'Bewitched' (for example, madness, witchcraft, and massacre), as Aspasia Stephanou observes, the 'real vampire' of the story is Mrs Rutledge.[43] It is the story's characterisation of Mrs Rutledge as a monster who nonetheless belongs seamlessly in her community that makes 'Bewitched' a satire. The primary symbol of Mrs Rutledge in the text is the colour white. At Venny's funeral, Mrs Rutledge appears 'whiter than ever' (158) and her hands 'bloodless' (159). In contrast, Venny's grave is described as a 'fresh black stain in the graveyard snow' (159). Wharton takes the whiteness valourised by eugenics and highlights the sinister or negative connotations it can bear: cold, frigidity, death. Mrs Rutledge is figured as a white marble statue, which suggests a form of undeadness since a statue of a person is an unliving facsimile of a living being. Mrs Rutledge's eyes look 'like the sightless orbs of a marble statue' (144). Her skin is 'uniform white' (144). Her features are 'so fixed' it is 'doubtful […] if anything unwonted could be made to show in [her] face' (142).

Mrs Rutledge seems not to be upset by Venny's death, one of the key clues that she in fact manipulated the men to make the death happen. The story ends with Mrs Rutledge casually mentioning that she will 'just call round and get a box of soap' (159) at a local store.

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[42] For a detailed discussion of the references to syphilis in the story see Gerard M. Sweeney, 'Wharton's Bewitched,' *The Explicator* 56.4 (1998): 198-201.

[43] Stephanou, Aspasia. *Reading Vampire Gothic through Blood: Bloodlines* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 85.

The box of soap symbolises Mrs Rutledge's over-commitment to cleansing and purifying. Akin to Wharton's treatment of whiteness in the text, where cleanliness is usually seen as something positive and valued, in this story cleaning takes on a sinister meaning. Mrs Rutledge 'cleans' her reputation by using the story of vampirism to cover her husband's natural (rather than supernatural) infidelity. A 'text over the [Rutledges'] mantlepiece' reads: '*The Soul That Sinneth It Shall Die*' (144).[44] Later, Mrs Rutledge picks up 'the family Bible' and points out the verse in Exodus, "*Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live*"[45] (151). The eagerness for punishment expressed in these quotations presages Mrs Rutledge's conviction that '[a] stake through the breast' is' the only way' to deal with a case of vampirism. This punitive attitude to vampirism is itself the mask for a cruel disregard for human life. The exceedingly 'white' Mrs Rutledge can manipulate her culture's conceptions of eugenics, and 'swarth[iness]' as a stigma of dysgenic blood, to effectively commit murder by proxy. Like *The Black Vampyre*, discussed in Chapter One, the supposed vampire is not the true monster in 'Bewitched.' Instead the story satirically reveals how a community harbours a 'vampire' who can treat other people with cruelty while remaining within the social conventions of her particular culture.

The 1920s saw the height of eugenics in mainstream acceptance in America culture. Stefan Kuhl writes:

> In the 1920s, mainline eugenicists held prestigious positions as professors in universities and as members of leading research institutes, where they received support from major foundations. Their influence extended into the highest political levels of the state and federal governments. The important role they played in shaping immigration policy, health administration, and sterilization laws indicates the extent of their influence.[46]

[44] Ezekiel 18:20.
[45] Exodus 28:18.
[46] Stefan Kuhl, *Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 79.

At the 1920 Kansas State Fair, 'human subjects were for the first time judged alongside the "Pet Stock" and "Milch Goat" categories.'[47] This inaugurated the 'Fitter Families for Future Firesides' competitions of the 1920s, which were a transformed version of 'Better Babies' competitions that had been conducted since the start of the century. The transformation in the competitions indicates the greater purchase hereditary determinism had as an explanation for human being by the 1920s. Steven Selden details, 'the earlier competitions were concerned' with individual babies meeting 'physical and mental standards,' while 'the later contests collected data on a broad range of presumed hereditary' characteristics in a family's history, to predict propensity to more complex and abstract traits such as generosity, jealousy and cruelty.[48] Legislation was passed to limit immigration of perceived dysgenic 'aliens' such as the 1921 'Emergency Quota Act' and the 1924' Immigration Act.' Quotas were determined based on the 'national origins' of the United States population recorded in historical censuses, first from 1910, then 1890. The aim of these policies was thus to keep the racial makeup – the 'blood' – of America similar to what it had been historically.

Meanwhile, as transfusion became a more common practice, the concept of the 'professional donor' arose. The professional donor was imagined as a physically and morally ideal, American man. Although doctors knew that women were just as appropriate sources of blood as men, the 'professional donor' was strongly gendered male. The idealised portrayal of 'professional donors' implicitly stuck to eugenicist versions of the ideal blood source. The male professional donor was a kind of reflection, or inversion, of the female 'vampire.' Newspaper articles spoke of men 'earning a living by letting blood.'[49] 'These "professionals" were not "down-and-outers" or "rovers"' who were often recruited for the earliest transfusions, 'but strong, healthy working-class men or college boys who sold their blood to supplement their income or to earn tuition in order to advance themselves.'[50] In the press there was a fascination with the physicality of the feat of repeatedly giving blood. [51] The professional donor did not 'lead a life of ease and luxury.'[52] 'He must go through life with a

[47] Wendy Kline, 'Eugenics in the United States,' *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, ed. Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 514-515.
[48] Selden, 199.
[49] Swanson, 42.
[50] Ibid., 43.
[51] Ibid., 43.
[52] Cited in Swanson, 43.

sore arm and must submit to considerable discomfort.'[53] He must also eat a 'scientific diet of blood-producing foods,' heavy on eggs and fresh milk.[54] Such professional donors could give blood as often as forty times a year. By comparison, readers were told, an amateur should only give three or four times a year.[55] In reality, people broke the regulatory rules and physicians sometimes had to use less than ideal 'donors' because those were the people available. This kind of 'professional donor' would prove unique to the twenties, as things changed when the Great Depression set in and individuals and institutions could no longer afford to pay as much or as often for blood. World War II then created such demand for blood later that an ideal of voluntary blood 'donation' was promoted to the public. When paid 'donations' returned in the postwar years they were viewed quite differently, as shown in Chapter Five.

In the early years of the Great Depression the twentieth century's archetypal vampire was born in the version of Count Dracula portrayed by Bela Lugosi in the Universal Studios film *Dracula* (1931) directed by Tod Browning. The Browning film sexualises Count Dracula in a way that is absent from Stoker's novel. The Count of Stoker's novel is repellent. Part of what makes the original Count of the novel terrifying is his ability to mesmerise victims into unwitting, unwilling intimacy with him. The Bela Lugosi rendition of Dracula is alluring. This shift in the figure of Dracula is a key moment in the shift that would take place over the twentieth century away from the nineteenth century vampire towards a more 'human' vampire. Making Count Dracula desirable is also instrumental in making Browning's film one about eugenics. As Smith argues, the film 'adapt[s] the vampire narrative in romantic terms' in order to produce a '*reproductive* drama' that addresses the film's 'eugenic [historical] context.'[56]

The film's concern with romance and reproduction is revealed in the scene where Lucy (Frances Dade) and Mina (Helen Chandler) compare each other's 'taste' in men. Shortly after meeting the Count at the theatre, Lucy and Mina discuss the 'fascinating' foreigner. Mina says 'I suppose [Count Dracula's] alright. But give me someone a little more normal […] like John.' (In the film 'Jonathan Harker' becomes 'John Harker.' He and Mina are engaged in the film. The couple's marriage is implied at the end of the film, unlike the novel where these characters are married in the middle of the story.) Mina's comment affirms

[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Smith, 56.

John's function as 'normal' in contrast with the Count, a rhetorical move that becomes important when Mina falls under the Count's influence later in the film, threatening to undo the eugenic union between Mina and John and replace it with a dysgenic one between Mina and the Count.

As in the Stoker novel, the first blood spilled in the film (and almost the only blood shown on screen) is self-inflicted by a human character, not caused by a vampire. Renfield (Dwight Frye), who travels to Transylvania instead of Jonathan in this version, spills his own blood in Dracula's presence. Instead of the shaving scene from the novel, in the film Renfield cuts himself on a paper clip holding the contract for the lease of Carfax Abbey. In this way the film foreshadows the fact that the lease of Carfax, and the immigration it represents, will lead to bloodshed. The film cuts between a close-up of Renfield's bleeding finger and a medium shot of the Count bearing an intensely focussed facial expression as he moves forward toward the camera. The Count's advance is broken by the crucifix Renfield wears. Ironically mistaking the Count's horror at the crucifix for an aversion to blood, Renfield explains, 'Oh it's nothing serious, just a small cut.' A medium shot then shows Renfield sucking his own blood from his cut finger. The Count then pours Renfield some 'very old' wine, saying 'I hope you will like it,' and explains that he 'never drink[s] … wine.'[57] The movement of the scene from Renfield sucking his own blood to the Count pouring wine draws a comparison between blood and wine as two liquids that might be enjoyed. These fluids are already linked via Christianity. Dracula does not drink wine but the viewers know blood is Dracula's wine. The film shows vampiric blood-drinking as 'another' form of enjoyment.

Women's taste in men, and men's taste in beverages, are later mirrored on a national level, as the film comes to be about America's 'taste' in the immigrants it wants to welcome.

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[57] This line is in fact derived from the anonymous story 'The Mysterious Stranger,' published anonymously as an English translation from the original German, which appeared in *Chamber's Repository of Instructive and Amusing Tracts* in 1854. The translator and the original author were not given by *Chamber's Repository*, and their identities remain unknown today. See: Anonymous, 'The Mysterious Stranger' in Michael Sims, ed. *Dracula's Guest: A Connoisseur's Collection of Victorian Vampire Stories* (London: Bloomsbury: 2010), 196-239. Facsimile available at: https://archive.org/stream/chamberssreposit00cham#page/n11/mode/2up (Accessed 23 July 2019). The 1854 date of publication, not printed in the publication, is given in John Edgar Browning, 'The Mysterious Stranger' in *Encyclopedia of the Vampire: The Living Dead in Myth, Legend, and Popular Culture*, ed. S. T. Joshi (Greenwood, 2010), 215.

In a scene where Van Helsing confronts Dracula, the Count says: 'Van Helsing, […] it would be well for you to return to your own country.' Van Helsing counters, defiantly: 'I prefer to remain and protect those whom you would destroy.' The scene pits two immigrants against each other: the eugenic north-western European versus the dysgenic south-eastern European. Van Helsing, on the side of protection, embodies the '*Homo Europaeus*,'[58] while the swarthy Dracula is on the side of destruction. Dracula replies to Van Helsing: 'You are too late. My blood now flows through her veins.' The threat of blood flowing in veins is a departure from the traditional vampiric threat of blood-stealing. Instead the dysgenic threat of unwanted blood-giving is made. 'You are too late' as a reply to eugenic rhetoric reveals eugenics' reliance on a logical fallacy. For the concept of racial purity to emerge, someone must first be deemed racially impure. Racial purity is something that must be lost already in order to emerge as an object that people would want to defend or 're-'capture. Additionally, as the American Society of Human Geneticists argues, 'the concept of "racial purity" is scientifically meaningless,'[59] it is always 'too late' for eugenics due to prehistoric human migrations and 'mixing of different populations throughout human history' having already occurred.

Like Browning's *Dracula*, 'Shambleau' (1933) by C. L. Moore casts the vampire as a dangerous immigrant. In this way she echoes Count Dracula of Stoker's novel, making the story akin to the 'reverse colonisation narrative' described by Stephen D. Arata, discussed in the Introduction.[60] In 'Shambleau,' however, the vampire comes from another planet rather than from another country. Like 'Luella Miller,' 'Shambleau' is a cautionary tale against

[58] Cited in Kuhl, 17. '[T]he German and Nordic' type, served as the model or racial superiority' for Géza von Hoffman, author of *Racial Hygiene in the United States of North America* (1913). 'Hoffman quoted American eugenicist Charles Woodruff as stating, "It is clear that the types of human beings from northwest Europe are our best citizens and have, therefore, to be conserved.' Charles Woodruff, 'Climate and Eugenics,' *American Breeders Association, Proceedings of Annual Meetings* 6 (1910): 122, quoted in Hoffmann, *Rassenhygiene in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika* (Munich: Lehmann, 1913), 114.
[59] American Society of Human Genetics Executive Committee, 'ASHG Denounces Attempts to Link Genetics and Racial Supremacy,' *The American Journal of Human Genetics* 103 (November 1, 2018): 636.
[60] Stephen D. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonisation,' *Victorian Studies* 33.4 (1990): 623.

altruism. The protagonist of 'Shambleau,' Northwest Smith, is an 'intergalactic gunslinger'[61] travelling through a 'raw camptown' (261) named 'Lakkdarol' that is 'Earth's latest colony on Mars' (256). The nominally Martian setting is characterised by tropes of the American 'Wild West,' making the setting of the story symbolically American. In 'Shambleau,' Northwest comes across a mob chasing down an alien 'brown girl' (259), seemingly intent on killing her. Northwest intervenes and rescues the girl from the mob. However, the sexually alluring alien – who, when asked her name replies she is 'Shambleau' – ultimately turns out to be a vampire who feeds on energy while addicting her prey to an intense pleasure they receive from feeding her. At the end of the story, by luck, Northwest's sidekick, Yarrol, rescues him from the vampire Shambleau. Thus, 'Shambleau' is about the danger of altruistically rescuing an alien from mob violence.

'Shambleau' is fundamentally about misrecognising taboo when confronted with it. It turns out that Northwest has broken a taboo by rescuing Shambleau. Like the protagonists of earlier vampire stories, Northwest breaks local taboos, ignoring the mob's warnings to shun Shambleau, and in doing so Northwest unwittingly makes himself prey for a vampire. For Northwest, 'Shambleau' is simply the woman's individual name, and later the name of her species. But as the story progresses the reader can see that 'Shambleau' is another word for 'taboo.' 'She's Shambleau! Shambleau, you fool!' (257) the mob leader tells Northwest. 'She's Shambleau, I tell you!' (258). In these sentences the term 'Shambleau' can be swapped for the word 'taboo' and keep the same meaning. The mob's reaction to Northwest saving the woman also demonstrates that a taboo has been broken: 'contempt spread[s] from face to face' (258) through the mob when Northwest 'claims' the alien. 'Instinctive, instant disgust [was] in the faces [of the mob] – they would have looked less so if he admitted cannibalism' (259). After an epigraph, the story proper begins with the sentence, 'Shambleau! Ha… Shambleau!' being shouted by a 'mob' in a state of 'wild hysteria' (255). The reader wonders what the word 'Shambleau' means, placing him or her in a position of sympathy with Northwest who also does not understand its meaning. The text, by swapping the word 'taboo' for 'Shambleau,' highlights its thematic concern with the idea of failing to recognise taboo, since the reader is forced into at least initially not recognising the term 'Shambleau' as meaning 'taboo.'

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[61] Editorial note, in *Weird Vampire Tales: Thirty Blood-Chilling Stories from the Weird Fiction Pulps* ed. Robert Weinberg, Stefan R. Dziemianowicz and Martin H. Greenberg (New York; Avenel, New Jersey: Gramercy Books, 1992), 147.

In numerous ways 'Shambleau' codes Northwest Smith as white American and Shambleau as a racially non-white woman in the tradition of other dysgenic women vampire figures. Shambleau wears a turban, a signifier of ethnic exoticism. She is described as, for example, a 'brown, sweet body' (259) or 'that sweet brown body' (263), in terms of 'sweet, yielding brownness' (263) and as a 'brown girl-creature' (269). Northwest's surname, 'Smith,' suggests his descent from English stock, the kind approved by eugenicists. Meanwhile, the first name 'Northwest' evokes the region of Europe from which colonial Americans' supposedly eugenic ancestors came. The taboo-breaking depicted in the story thus becomes a symbol for interracial unions and the implied resulting miscegenation: a social taboo that was illegal in many states in the 1930s.

'Shambleau' is not simply a story condemning disregard for breaking the rules or the taboo on miscegenation. This story is about the anxiety of not knowing where the taboo is. One cannot respect a taboo that one cannot recognise as such. If Stoker's *Dracula* was about, among other things, the vanquishing of a 'Master Signifier' (see the previous chapter), that is, the erasure of an authority whose power reliably holds, 'Shambleau' – like many vampire stories in this period – is about the anxiety that ensues in the absence of such an authority. Eugenics itself can be seen as an attempt to compensate for the erosion of old beliefs, as heredity was now a matter of human responsibility rather than something to be left up to God or fate.

1933, the year in which 'Shambleau' was published would prove to be a landmark in the history of American eugenics. For the rise of Nazism in Germany, leading to the advent of World War II, would lead to eugenics becoming seen as something belonging to the Nazis. This, in turn, would lead to America disavowing eugenics.[62] Stefan Kuhl writes:

> [t]hrough their comprehensive and uncritical support of Nazi race policies, mainline eugenicists had made their own standing in the United States partly dependent on the reputation of Nazi Germany. As Nazism grew more unpopular with the American public, mainline eugenicists were no longer able to distance themselves from Nazi race policies.[63]

[62] See Kuhl's chapter, 'The Influence of Nazi Race Policies on the Transformation of Eugenics in the United States,' 77-84.
[63] Kuhl, 82.

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In the 1940s vampire stories began to become ironic. One example, 'Over the River' (1941) by P. Schuyler Miller, tells the story of a dead man waking up as a vampire. The man wakes with almost no memory of his life, nor does he realise he is dead. He wakes to 'a strange world. What the other world had been like, before, he d[oes] not remember, but this [i]s different' (323). He intuits that there are 'things he had forgotten, in another world' (323), alluding to his life-before-death. While the story is written in the third-person, the narrative is focalised through the perspective of the protagonist. The man's amnesia puts the reader in the position of trying to figure out who and what he is, because his perspective cannot tell us this directly. By the end of the story the reader knows that the man is a vampire and that his name is (or was, in life) Joe Labatie, although Joe does not register these pieces of information himself. The phrase 'over the river' refers to the river Joe crosses in order to satisfy his craving to attack a woman whom the reader is able to figure out is his widow. But 'over the river' is also a conventional metaphor for the afterlife.[64] The title, 'Over the River,' thus underlines the way in which the story is an account of an afterlife experience. Insofar as the story is a puzzle for the reader to figure out, the title provides a key to the answer. The story ends abruptly with Joe being staked. By focussing the reader on the vampire's perspective and asking the question, 'What would it feel like to be a vampire?' Miller's story represents a significant departure from most earlier vampire stories which did not centralise this question, if it was posed at all.

A key signal of Joe's vampirism is his thirst for blood. As he wanders the forest, Joe attacks animals that cross his path and drinks their blood. Animal blood 'help[s] him go on' (330) and makes him feel 'really alive!' (328). Before long, however, Joe senses that he requires something more than the bare nutriment of non-human blood:

> A new feeling was growing in him. It was strange. It was not thirst – not hunger. It submerged them in its all-powerful compulsion. It gripped his muscles and took them out of his control, forcing him [forward] step by step […] There was something he must do. Something – [.] (328)

[64] This is a particularly American metaphor, coming from 'negro spirituals' which figured 'crossing' into the afterlife as crossing a river. At least, this is the 'face value' meaning of this river metaphor. For a detailed account of the multiple meanings of the 'river' in these songs, see Charsee Charlotte Lawrence-McIntyre, 'The Double Meanings of the Spirituals,' *Journal of Black Studies* 17.4 (1987).

The language here emulates the superego as a command without content. The superegoic command to enjoy is the command that 'there is something [you] must do' to enjoy more, to enjoy fully. The command to enjoy can motivate the drive, as an 'all-powerful compulsion' that is 'not thirst – not hunger.' The thing it turns out Joe must do is attack his widow, referred to as 'the girl,' reflecting Joe's non-recognition of her as his wife. The story uses the old vampire lore that the vampire preys on its immediate family to have Joe feel driven to attack his still-living wife. 'The new hunger, the yearning that drew him to the girl […] was stronger than [thirst and hunger]. It was all that mattered now' (330). After Joe attacks his wife he feels satisfied, 'the hunger was gone, and the thirst. […] The yearning was gone' (331). Vampiric blood drinking is *jouissance* in this story but the text demonstrates that the blood-drinking is done 'innocently,' in a merely driven way, not out of malice or hatred on Joe's part.

After Joe attacks 'the girl,' his brother-in-law Louis arrives at the house with two friends. The text states, '[t]hey knew the curse that was on the unshriven of Joe Labatie's blood' (332). Louis 'would not see the Labatie curse fall on his sister or her children after her' (332). Vampirism is a hereditary curse in this story. The way in which Louis defends his sister, albeit, too late, from Joe because of the 'cursed' Labatie blood he threatens to bring into their family makes Louis a eugenicist figure. When Joe is finally staked, the narrative describes how '[Joe] saw Louis take [the stake] and raise it in both hands above his head. He saw Louis' teeth shine white in a savage grin. He saw the stake sweep down –' (332-33). Louis's 'savage' grin inspires the reader's sympathy for Joe. In a coded way, the story's provocation, 'imagine waking up as a vampire,' is 'imagine waking up on the wrong side of eugenics' (which, as I show in the following chapter, is something *I Am Legend* does as well).

The irony in this story shows the distance travelled in representation of the vampire from the turn of the century to the 1940s, the years between *Dracula* and *I Am Legend*. In this period, as we have seen, the vampire was very often a woman, she or he became a biological entity rather than a demonological one, and the vampirism became explained as an inherited condition much more often than before. Repeatedly, vampire stories incorporated elements of the eugenicist rhetoric that permeated American culture into the 1930s. After World War II, and the disowning of eugenics, vampire stories became ironic 'take offs' of their generic primogenitors. In the following chapter I turn to Matheson's *I Am Legend*. As we shall see, *I Am Legend* both expresses and furthers the ironic turn the vampire genre began to take over

the first half of the twentieth century. Like Stoker's *Dracula*, Matheson's *I Am Legend* draws together the extant strands of the vampire genre to create a text with an uncanny cultural impact far beyond anything that could be expected at the time of the novel's initial publication. One example that shows *I Am Legend*'s impact is the fact that it was awarded 'Vampire Novel of the Century' by the Horror Writers Association in 2012.[65] *I Am Legend* explains vampirism as a contagious disease and engages the trope of the racialised, female vampire as a sexually alluring danger. Its protagonist, Robert Neville, unwittingly turns into a vampire, symbolically but also, in a sense, literally. Neville symbolically becomes a vampire as the text highlights his many vampiric qualities, including taking blood by force from other individuals. Yet the text insists that being a vampire or not is a matter of perceptions or culturally constructed 'legends' more than anything else, so one can say that Neville literally does become a 'vampire,' because that is what he becomes in the eyes of the new society that rises at the end of the novel. The phrase 'I am legend' comes to mean 'I am a vampire,' in the context of Matheson's novel. Where Stoker's novel blurs the boundary between vampire and hunter, Matheson's novel erases it.

[65] The award marked the centenary of Bram Stoker's death in 1912.

Chapter Four: 'Is the Vampire So Bad? All He Does Is Drink Blood': Blood in Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* (1954)

Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* (1954) is primarily the story of the protagonist, Robert Neville's fight for survival. Readers are introduced to Neville living in a post-apocalyptic Los Angeles in the late-1970s: an imagined, relatively near future for *I Am Legend*'s initial readers in 1954. In the wake of presumably nuclear 'bombings' (41), civilisation has been decimated by the spread of a mysterious 'disease' (for example: 54, 72, 132) whose victims become 'vampires.' Those infected become comatose by day, averse to garlic and religious paraphernalia, with, Neville believes, an insatiable appetite for blood. Neville decides to search for a cure for the vampire disease. Late in the novel we learn that Neville is in fact immune to the illness. We also learn that there are two types of vampire: 'dead' corpses animated by the disease, and 'still living' (135) vampires: people who are alive but infected with it. In his efforts to research the vampire disease, Neville steals the blood of infected people (in the form of blood samples for research purposes) while they are asleep (comatose by day), making Neville into a vampire from the perspective of the living infected. Neville's motivation for trying to find a cure for the disease is to make the 'still living' vampires fit back into his definition of normality, changing their blood back to match his (unchanged blood) again. The infected, 'still living' vampires eventually form a cohesive society, becoming 'the new people of earth' (159). Neville is, however, blind to this fact, because his convictions about himself and his blood prevent him from recognising the truth. After encountering a spy from this group, a woman named Ruth, who tries to warn him against continuing his anti-vampire campaign, Neville is eventually arrested by the 'new people' who make a public spectacle of killing him in retribution for the lives he took.

In 1954, America was enjoying economic prosperity and newfound power after emerging victorious from World War II. America's view of itself was that a new society was being formed. America now had 'the highest standard of living ever known by any people in any country at any time,' one Advertising Council campaign declared.[1] Leaders emphasised

[1] 'The Miracle of America,' Records of the American Heritage Foundation (National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, Maryland), Box 210, 'Economic Campaign – A.H.F.' folder. Cited in Wendy Wall, *Inventing the 'American Way': The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 195.

the 'American Way,' a set of shared values, centred on individuality and 'freedom of choice' both with regard to which products to buy and which leaders to elect. The rhetoric of the American Way promised to incorporate the large numbers of refugees and displaced persons who had immigrated to America after World War II, along with other American immigrants and immigrants' descendants, whose ancestors did not necessarily share a religion, ethnicity or nationality. There was also a need to bolster social cohesion as the make-up of many communities had changed – or new communities been created – during the war, as millions of Americans were uprooted due to military service or in pursuit of jobs created by wartime.[2] In 1950s America the American Way was also associated with the ideal of normalcy and a certain kind of lifestyle: the middle-class couple, married with children, who bought a new house in the suburbs, a new car and new household appliances.[3] Consumerism and consumption were the ways this new ideal of postwar American belonging was expressed.

While the eugenics of the earlier twentieth century was now out of favour, the same kinds of people who were favoured by American eugenics – namely, white Anglo-Saxon Protestants – served as the model for postwar America's idealised norm.[4] To some extent, idealisation of normalcy within the American Way served a similar function as eugenics had earlier, as a way of defining who was wanted and who was unwanted within the nation. The American Way, however, in stark contrast with eugenics, was something many people could literally buy into. Buying the right products and performing the right – that is, normal – kind of lifestyle could grant people belonging in 1950s America. During this period, Jews along with southern and eastern European ethnic groups were 'homogenized into white Americans.'[5] To a significant extent, John A. Powell observes, being white now 'meant living in the suburbs.'[6] There was a significant exception to this, however, as black Americans were often prevented from buying property in white neighbourhoods through redlining ('refusing housing loans to neighborhoods containing black residents'[7]) along with

[2] Wall, 168.
[3] Anna G. Creadick, *Perfectly Average: The Pursuit of Normality in Postwar America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), 120. See also W. Scott Poole, *Vampira: Dark Goddess of Horror* (New York: Soft Skull Press, 2014), 1-25.
[4] Creadick, 34-36.
[5] Creadick, 122.
[6] Legal scholar John A. Powell in *Race: The Power of an Illusion* (three-part documentary television series), episode 3, 'The House We Live In' (dir. Llewellyn M. Smith, California Newsreel, 2003). Cited in Creadick, 122.
[7] Creadick, 121.

other legal and administrative practices, such as the use of 'deed covenants' stipulating that a property could not be sold to a black buyer.[8] Anna G. Creadick notes that 'less than 2 percent' of the '$120 billion' that 'the federal government underwrote in new housing' '[b]etween 1934 and 1962' 'went to non-whites.'[9]

In fact, while the postwar United States was optimistically 'sell[ing] Americ[a] to Americans,'[10] this era was rife with anxieties. The effort to define the common ground of the American Way was itself motivated by an underlying anxiety shared by many Americans that, as Wendy Wall observes, 'the greatest danger to [America] lay within [the nation itself] – in the centrifugal forces that, if exacerbated or left untamed, might tear a democracy apart.'[11] Many Americans believed that 'internal strife' in Germany had caused the rise of Nazism in the 1930s. [12] Now, it was feared, civic disunity and intolerance might allow Communism to take hold in America. The means by which America gained its victory in World War II, the atomic bomb, created anxieties about a possible nuclear war or an accidental nuclear disaster. In 1953, after the United States and Russia each tested thermonuclear weapons (second generation, hydrogen nuclear bombs), the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' Doomsday Clock was set at 'two minutes to midnight.' A metaphor for the perceived likelihood of a human-made global catastrophe happening, two minutes to midnight was the clock's most pessimistic, fearful, setting since its inception in 1947.

In this uneasy climate, in May 1954, the United States Supreme Court decided *Brown v. Board of Education*, a landmark case signalling the beginning of the final days of Jim Crow segregation, which had been put in place through the preceding decades since *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896. *Brown v. Board of Education* caused an uproar. Many white politicians, especially from the South, vowed to fight desegregation. A strategy known as 'Massive Resistance' was led by Virginia senator, Harry F. Byrd Sr. Desegregation was another kind of catastrophe, from some Americans' perspective, and another way in which America seemed to be facing an end of what it had been that was fused with the new beginnings the nation faced.

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[8] Ibid., 121-122.
[9] Ibid., 122.
[10] 'A Program to Re-Sell Americanism to Americans,' proposal by Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, 15 November, 1946, Thomas D'Arcy Brophy papers, Box 35, Folder 8, Wisconsin State Historical Society, Archives, Madison, Wisconsin. Cited in Wall, 171.
[11] Wall, 166.
[12] Ibid., 167.

Why was desegregation resisted in the United States in an era when all were said to belong? While black men served alongside white men in America's armed forces in World War II, the blood of black and white donors was segregated, as the last chapter showed. Additionally, the blood of black Americans had in the past not only been shed for America on the battlefield but also converted into economic power through slavery. Although many decades separate the practice of slavery from the end of World War II, it is perhaps not surprising that postwar America would not want to consider this essential contributor to its later rise to economic dominance, fearing the drastic return to beginnings that atomic power might cause via the destruction of modern civilisation and aiming to bring Americans together by idealising consumerism. The practice of redlining and the opposition to desegregation showed that black Americans were not to become ideal consumers. A likely reason for this is the lack of address to the historical absence of any legitimate basis for black labour exploited through human enslavement. This meant black skin connoted a source continually available for exploitation in the postwar period, at the same time that consumerism itself became the norm. Black Americans' desire for equitable access to education, housing, employment, and suffrage was feared.

Although it is not immediately obvious, *I Am Legend* examines these dynamics through the lens of fantasy. The vampires' illicit desire to consume blood is part of the novel's satire of early postwar racism. One early scene is key in setting this up. While drunk (ironically, a state induced by chemically altering his blood), Neville makes a speech to an imagined audience. He says:

> Friends, I come before you to discuss the vampire; a minority element. […] Society hates him without ration.
>
> But are his needs any more shocking than the needs of other animals and men? […] is the vampire so bad?
>
> All he does is drink blood.
>
> Why, then, this unkind prejudice, this thoughtless bias? Why cannot the vampire live where he chooses? […] He has no means of support, no measures for proper education, he has not the voting franchise. No wonder he is compelled to seek out predatory nocturnal existence.
>
> Robert Neville grunted a surly grunt. Sure, sure, he thought, but would you let your sister marry one? (20-21)

Neville's reference to vampires 'not [having] the voting franchise' clearly positions *I Am Legend*'s vampires as a symbol of black Americans in the 1954 American context of the novel.[13] The bottom line in Neville's argument, the question 'would you let your sister marry one?' ventriloquises mid-twentieth-century white American arguments against miscegenation, evoking a white man speaking about not letting his sister marry a black man. In Jim Crow America, interracial sexual relations were taboo, and marriages across the 'color line' were illegal in the Southern states and some others, although it was an open secret that extensive miscegenation had already occurred.[14] It was not until 1967, with the *Loving v. Virginia* case, that the Supreme Court ruled to overturn all state-level laws prohibiting interracial marriage. The way in which Neville replies to his own argument about the vampire being a misunderstood, 'prejudiced against' minority, with '[s]ure, sure […] but would you let your sister marry one?,' a reply devoid of a counter-argumentative point, shows that Neville – symbolically, white America – has an aversion to miscegenation that runs deeper and stronger than something that can be reasoned away.

Neville's view of the vampires depends on the assumption that his own blood is uncontaminated. It emerges, however, that the only support for this belief is Neville's coding as a fantasy of the average, 1950s suburban, white American everyman to the point of parody. A 'plant' worker (39, 42, 53) who lost his wife and their daughter to the plague, Neville is described as 'thirty-six, born of English-German stock, his features undistinguished apart from […] the bright blue of his eyes' (2) with '[j]ust an ordinary face' (131). Even after

[13] In theory, black Americans were granted suffrage under the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1870. In practice, however, rules and regulations – such as literacy tests and poll taxes – at state and local government levels were used to prevent black people from voting. This continued, in many areas, into the 1960s.

[14] In fact, the non-self-evident nature of racial difference due to miscegenation was partly why Jim Crow laws were introduced in the first place. The *Plessy v. Ferguson* case, the legal foundation of Jim Crow segregation, was a 'test case' orchestrated by the New Orleans *Comité des Citoyens* ('Committee of Citizens'), a racially mixed group who hoped to prove that Louisiana segregation laws violated the Fourteenth Amendment. Homer Plessy was chosen to break the state law in an act of civil disobedience in part because, as the court puts it, his 'one-eighth African blood' was 'not discernible in him' (*Plessy v. Ferguson* 163 U.S. 537, 538 cited in Golub, 564). If Plessy 'had not declared that he was a colored man when asked by the conductor, he almost certainly would not have been arrested' (564). Mark Golub, '*Plessy* as "Passing": Judicial Responses to Ambiguously Raced Bodies in *Plessy v. Ferguson*,' *Law and Society Review* 39.3 (2005). See also Keith Weldon Medley, *We as Freemen: Plessy v. Ferguson* (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing, 2003), 142.

society's collapse Neville carries on living in his suburban family home and driving the same model of station wagon that he had owned when his family was alive. Despite having no scientific talent or training, Neville uses his own, supposedly normal, blood as the measure against which to judge the supposed abnormality of the vampires' blood. In the novel's final line, he thinks to himself, 'I am legend' (160). When Neville realises that he has become a vampire in the eyes of those whom he earlier perceived as vampires the reader learns, along with Neville, that it was Neville's blood that was abnormal all along. It is Neville's fears about others' blood that have led him to cause most of the bloodshed in the story.

It is Neville's under-considered blood that is the basis of his identification of the living infected as vampires. For a vampire is what Neville ultimately becomes, while his insistence that the infected should be kept separate from himself echoes the desire of many Americans to enforce racial segregation. In the apocalyptically imagined America of *I Am Legend*, all blood is potentially the same. Racially different blood becomes equally infected in the *I Am Legend* post-apocalypse. An indicator of the kind of society 1950s America was becoming at this time, meanwhile, is the reference to society hating the vampire 'without ration.' For what *I Am Legend* reveals is the historical conditions for what Todd McGowan identifies as the 1950s shift from a society of prohibition to one of commanded enjoyment (or *jouissance*),[15] the reduction of everyone to the same kind of consumer.

For McGowan, America's transformation from a 'society of prohibition' to a 'society of enjoyment' is completed after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, when 'the last major barrier to the [global] flow of capital' was removed.[16] But the conditions that directly enabled the transformation began in the postwar period, when television brought consumer advertising into American homes. This is when, arguably for the first time, identification with images of consumption became the means by which belonging was to be ensured rather than through identification with or obedience to more distant authorities.[17] *I Am Legend* imagines a version of what the coming society of commanded enjoyment might look like. The lack of a 'vertically' imposed authority, an authoritative prohibition (such as was embodied by the Count in Stoker's *Dracula*, as I argued in Chapter Two) opens Neville's world to a 'horizontal' competition for *jouissance* expressed as idealised consumerism within the 1950s

[15] Todd McGowan, *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 2.
[16] Ibid., 34.
[17] Ibid., 64, referencing Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (New York: Penguin, 1985), 74, 92-93.

world from which *I Am Legend* comes. When there is no limit imposed from 'above,' no prohibition as a visible sacrifice of *jouissance* that neighbours share between them, the individual's neighbours appear to 'castrate' or impinge on the individual's would-be full *jouissance*, threatening her or his sense of what she or he has. Hence the need, in the American 1950s, to 'keep up' with the visible consumption of one's suburban neighbours, or want what they have.

It is also the case that while consumer desire seems to take citizens forward, the drive takes them back, unconsciously, to earlier conditions. In *I Am Legend* these earlier conditions concern the labours and desires of black Americans. What at first appears to be a 'man versus monster' horror story slowly morphs, as the novel progresses, into a horror story about humanity's inner monstrosity. This 'inner monstrosity' is none other than the ability to become blinded by the drive, by the unconscious pursuit of *jouissance* at the expense of recognising the real effects of that pursuit. Through the lens of fantasy, *I Am Legend* examines humanity's potential for inhumanity, or, the monstrosity of Cold War, Jim Crow American culture. It is Neville who preys on 'still living' vampires as they sleep in pursuit of moving 'forward' towards the goal of normalcy as he conceives it. Neville's *jouissance* and his duty become fused, one and the same. Neville is able to carry out genocide while pursuing what he perceives as a duty to sustain normality. In turn, sustaining normality is equated with defending his *jouissance*. In the end Neville finds that he is 'the abnormal one now,' as '[n]ormalcy [is] a majority concept, the standard of many and not the standard of just one man' (159). In this way, *I Am Legend* satirises the desire to be normal, and shows Neville to be regressing to the status of a black man, who historically enables the white consumerist norm but is not expected to participate in it.

While Neville 'regresses' to become like a black man who is lynched, *I Am Legend* is carefully structured to make readers expect the opposite: the story of a white man's survival. Regression is at first disguised as transformation: as 'forward' evolution or adaptation. In Part 1, January 1976, soon after the collapse of society, Neville is a lonely, miserable alcoholic, only just getting by in his new situation. His compulsive drinking of alcohol mimics the compulsive blood-drinking associated with vampirism, ironically foreshadowing the novel's ultimate revelation that Neville has become the vampire. In Part 2, March 1976, Neville has begun to develop a routine, adjusting to his circumstances. At the end of Part 2 he finds a dog still alive in the daylight, a hint to the reader that life may not have been decimated as completely as Neville assumes. At the opening of Part 3, June 1978, the action moves forward by more than two years. Neville now appears to be fully adapted to his new

environment, no longer troubled by the things he found problematic in Parts 1 and 2. In contrast with the fearful, preyed-upon Neville of Part 1, at the beginning of Part 3 Neville is out 'hunting for Cortman,' his neighbour who is now a vampire. Neville enjoys the hunt like 'a relaxing holiday' (108). In Part 3 Neville meets Ruth and obsesses over the question of whether or not she is infected. At the end of Part 3 Neville takes a blood test that proves Ruth is infected. Ruth escapes him and in Part 4, January 1979, 'dark men' (150, 152, 153) from her group capture Neville and attempt to execute him. Neville takes pills given to him by Ruth in order, it is implied, to commit suicide so that his death 'd[oes] not have to be butchery before [the crowd's] eyes' (159). This, however, happens in front of the 'street filled with people' (159), so Neville's death is still a public spectacle. Although Neville is not executed per se, technically his death is a suicide, because of its public and spectacular nature, I read this scene as a symbolic lynching, as I discuss later in this chapter.

The division of the novel into these four parts set between January 1976 and January 1979, each of which works like a 'snapshot' of Neville at a different stage of his transformation as he adapts to his post-apocalyptic conditions, ultimately shows the transformation to have been a regression. The novel, as a sequence of narrative snapshots from a process of metamorphosis, is reminiscent of the famous science illustration 'March of Progress' from *Early Man* (1965),[18] which depicts fifteen of humankind's evolutionary forebears positioned in a linear sequence to demonstrate an 'evolution' from monkey-like creature (*Pliopithecus*) to modern *Homo sapiens*.[19] Neville's adaptation to his world, imagined by him as progress, but ending with his being ejected from it, shows Neville instead to have been one of that world's conditions for being: the man whose desires are feared most, the man who does not belong.

Neville's 'adaptation' to post-apocalyptic conditions, which is actually a regression in ways that he does not recognise, shows that regression is not always visible in the ways one might expect. In Neville's case, a fetishised normality that is motivated by fear seems to drive his un-self-recognised regression while, for many early 1950s white Americans, regressions

[18] Rudoph F. Zallinger [illustrator], 'The Road to Homo Sapiens' [illustration, also known as 'The March of Progress'] in Francis Clark Howell, *Early Man* (New York: Time Inc., 1965).
[19] Although Zallinger's illustration post-dates *I Am Legend*, it had predecessors. For example, an illustration by an unknown illustrator, labelled 'Evolution' in Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (New York: Charles L. Webster & Company, 1889), title page. Another example is the frontispiece to Thomas Henry Huxley's, *Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature* (1863).

might be being driven by fetishised normality too. Another kind of transformation, 'mutation,' 'an abrupt change in the heritable traits of an organism,'[20] is treated by Neville as a kind of 'bad' evolution. In Neville's rhetoric, evolution is 'good,' or safe and predictable, while mutation is 'bad,' or dangerous and unpredictable, and Neville assumes that humans – or, at least, white American men, like himself – can easily distinguish each mode of transformation from the other.

The human being is at the heart of Neville's conception of two opposed types of transformation: evolution is assumed to proceed with a vested interest in the good or safety of humanity, when left to run its course without being perverted by human interference. Mutation, on the other hand, is the kind of transformation that happens when evolution is denatured by humans. Mutation may harm the advance of human civilisation, and thus represents regression. In this understanding, the human is paradoxically over-valued and feared simultaneously: humans are 'special' enough so that our place in nature does not harm us, yet the power that stems from human specialness, that allows our species to drastically interfere with nature, could potentially harm humans and nature, as with the atom bomb. This contradiction about human exceptionalism reflects America's contradictory relation to its new global power and the linked economic prosperity which promised new kinds of enjoyment to citizens. For this enjoyment was promised to those who bought in to the prescribed consumerism, the forward drive of which to more power and better technology seemed to be indistinguishable from a drive toward greater potential for self-destruction, and relied on under-acknowledged violence toward, and exploitation of, black Americans both historically and currently.

A key early scene that shows transformation's unpredictability is a flashback to the early days of the plague. Neville remembers a conversation he had with his wife, Virginia, when schools and workplaces were still operating, when he surmised, '[m]aybe the insects are […] [m]utating' (43). In this scene, Neville believes that mutant insects may be the underlying cause of the vampire plague, changing human blood and being. Neville adds that the word 'mutation' 'means they're… changing. Suddenly. Jumping over dozens of small evolutionary steps, maybe developing along lines they might not have followed at all if it weren't for… (44). Neville does not complete the sentence, but Virginia offers, 'the

[20] 'mutation theory, n.' *OED Online*. *OED* Second Edition, 1989. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/253922.
'mutation, n.' *OED Online*. *OED* Third Edition, June 2003. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/124296.

bombings?' and Neville replies, '[m]aybe' (44). In the same conversation, Neville says, 'I hope to hell we aren't breeding a race of super-bugs' (43). In this context the term 'breeding' implies accident or lack of control, a process in excess of intentional reproduction, which is also a definition of the unleashing of the drive that goes hand in hand with the 'mutation' of capitalism linked with the new postwar American culture. As I discuss in Chapter Six, with regard to Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (2005), in historical terms the black American population can also be said to have been inadvertently 'bred' by the now-defunct institution of slavery. At this time, America wanted to embrace certain kinds of societal transformation while eschewing others, and it wanted to be able to predict the outcomes of its transformations. On one hand, America's embrace of consumerism and idealised normalcy was a transformation from what it had been. But for all its emphasis on 'normalcy,' the postwar American Way could not be claimed to be 'normal' in a historical sense. It was a new kind of lifestyle for a transforming society. On the other hand, America did not want to change so much that it would give black Americans equal rights and own up to the blood debt that white America had incurred to black America through slavery.

When Neville says that the insects could be 'developing along lines they might not have followed at all if it weren't for…' the ellipses in place of the completion of his statement invite the reader to consider what is not being said. Virginia's suggestion, 'the bombings,' might be rephrased: 'America's power' or 'America's progress.' The fears caused by America's atomic power paradoxically led to its citizens consuming more products and becoming more like each other because to consume American products was to identify with the opposition to Communism. Yet to consume was also to behave, unconsciously, as an obedient mass as did citizens under Communism, so Cold War fears were not easily abated. At this time, transformation was in fact a resistance to change as much as a new development. And by not allowing black Americans to make the same transformation encouraged of their white compatriots, the claim that blacks were abnormal could be bolstered.

America's treatment of its black population was an obvious contradiction of many of its postwar ideals. Now involved in the Cold War, America needed to present itself globally as a leader on the world stage – a leader that other nations, including nations with predominantly non-white populations, could trust and follow. American mistreatment of, and violence against, non-whites came under increased scrutiny as the United States emerged from World War II as the would-be leader of a global coalition against Communism. America needed such a coalition to be multi-racial and inclusive of newly, or soon to be, independent ex-colonies. Americans faced the vexed proposition that white-governed

America needed to be seen by other nations as the appropriate leader of a democratic 'free world' populated by a mostly non-white global humanity, despite its contemporary and historical racism.[21]

The lack of address to the contribution of slavery to America's mid-twentieth-century power is carefully suggested in *I Am Legend* by repetitions of the words 'black' and 'white' in places where they at first seem to have no import. These mimic the 'hidden persuasion' subliminal advertising techniques that were being trialled at the time but were unknown to the public until 1957. The words 'black' and 'white' carrying 'extra' meaning that 'hides in plain sight' within the narrative is also reminiscent of the 'picture within a picture'[22] technique that psychologist Fredric Wertham claimed allowed 'subliminal sexual imagery'[23] to circulate in comic books. Wertham's *Seduction of the Innocent*, a 'minor best-seller'[24] published in April 1954, claimed that 'if children knew where to look' – viewing specific sections of an image from a certain angle – 'they could find pornography in comic books'[25] because sexual images were included as 'picture[s] within [the] picture[s].' In *I Am Legend* 'black' appears twenty-four times while 'white' appears forty-seven. '[B]lack rocks' are depicted in Neville's mural (5), 'black grooves' on his records (21), 'white blossoms' are on Virginia's grave (29), 'white curtains' hang in Ben Cortman's window (60). Ruth wears a 'dirty white dress' (110). These repetitions are also examples of what Susan Gillman calls 'formal expressions of polarity'[26] within the text, a hallmark of what she terms 'American racial melodrama.' Gillman's 'racial melodrama' names an American literary tradition that depicts '[t]he ostentatious invisibility of racial forces barely hidden beneath the [American] social surface'[27] through narratives concerned with racial passing, communication with ancestors via time travel and other occult means, and hidden racial alliances formed through secret societies. Gillman argues that 'race melodramas work by exposing the excess of American race relations.'[28] While Gillman's

[21] Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Press, 2001), 45-48.
[22] Matthew W. Dunne, *A Cold War State of Mind: Brainwashing and Postwar American Society* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 158.
[23] Ibid., 159
[24] Ibid., 160.
[25] Ibid., 159.
[26] Susan Gillman. *Blood Talk: American Race Melodrama and the Culture of the Occult* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 17.
[27] Ibid., 18-19.
[28] Ibid., 18.

study focuses on texts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *I Am Legend* is a cultural descendant of such texts and contains many of the same themes and motifs. The vampires in *I Am Legend* are described as both black and white, but consistently as one or the other. Becoming a vampire in *I Am Legend* means embodying literally the Jim Crow fantasy that humans can fit within a black/white polarity. On the other hand, vampires' shared consumption of blood overrides or surmounts their now outdated racial identities, in a sense realising the possibilities of American Way consumerism if opened to all races, but the result is nightmarish from Neville's perspective. Vampires are described as '[s]omething black in the night' (17), 'black bastards' (24) and 'black unholy animal[s]' (103). They are also described as 'white faced' and having 'cold white hands' (32). The repeated references to 'black' and 'white' also echo the Jim Crow signage of the novel's era and are thus about America's under-acknowledged Southern history. This signage, with commands such as 'Whites Only' and 'Blacks Only,' signalled the possibility of race-mixing while forbidding it, the same possibility that Neville fights against symbolically, in the form of fighting the mixing of infected vampire blood with what he believes to be his own uninfected white masculinity.

The word 'two' repeats in a similarly excessive manner through *I Am Legend*, implying that, like the words 'black' and 'white,' the word also carries extra meaning for the novel. This extra meaning could be that Cold War America's division of itself into 'black' and 'white' cannot be explicitly acknowledged in the nation's fantasies about itself. Analogous to the reduction of ethnic diversity into two 'races' by Jim Crow, other forms of complexity were reduced into stark binaries at this time in American history: normal or abnormal, patriot or enemy. The Cold War meant that 'one either swore allegiance to American institutions and authorities or was seen as aiding and abetting the enemy.'[29] As well as referring to the two sides of the colour line and Cold War polarisations, *I Am Legend*'s repetition of 'two' could represent the two sides of the novel's story, the story as experienced from Neville's perspective and the other, second version, the story of Ruth's people setting up a new society. Neville is the last of his kind while Ruth and her people see themselves as the first of a new breed of citizens. The repetition of 'two' is especially visible in a passage where Neville reflects on killing a couple of sleeping vampires:

[29] Mark Jancovich, *Rational Fears: American Horror in the 1950s* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1996), 15.

> Two days since he'd buried [his wife, Virginia].
>
> Two eyes looking at the clock, two ears picking up [its sound], two lips pressed together, two hands lying on the bed.
>
> He tried to rid himself of the concept, but everything in the world seemed suddenly to have dropped into a pit of duality, victim to a system of twos. Two people dead, two beds in the room, two windows, two bureaus, two rugs, two hearts that…
>
> […] Two days, two hands, two eyes, two legs, two feet[.] (65)

The set of ellipses that stand for the omitted completion of the John Keats quotation, 'two hearts that beat as one,' ironically shows that Neville unconsciously recognises that the two vampires' hearts no longer beat because he staked them. But they also show that he unconsciously avoids facing his responsibility for those heartbeats ceasing by leaving the train of thought unfinished. This is the same kind of contradictory thinking that allowed black and white soldiers to fight together while their blood continued to be segregated. As it turns out the murders of sleeping vampires represent Neville's unwitting regression into the place of a black man and the real vampire in the eyes of the new society.

The naming of Neville's wife Virginia is a reference to a part of the American past that cannot be easily buried. In contrast with the illicit vampire women which I will discuss shortly, and the ambiguous Ruth, Neville's dead wife and daughter, Virginia and Kathy, embody an idealised 'pure' femininity, as both of their names imply. Kathy means 'pure'[30] while Virginia is associated with 'virginal' purity.[31] Virginia is also the United States' founding colony. Virginia Neville in *I Am Legend* seems to represent an idealised embodiment of America itself, performing a similar function as Lucy Westenra does in

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[30] 'From an early date, [the name 'Katherine'] was associated with the Greek adjective *katharos* "pure."' Patrick Hanks, Kate Hardcastle and Flavia Hodges, 'Katherine,' in *A Dictionary of First Names* (Oxford University Press, 2006). https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/10.1093/acref/9780198610601.001.0001/acref-9780198610601-e-1811. (accessed 28 July 2019).

[31] The state of Virginia was 'named in honour of Elizabeth I, the "Virgin Queen."' Patrick Hanks, Kate Hardcastle, and Flavia Hodges, 'Virginia,' in *A Dictionary of First Names* (Oxford University Press, 2006). https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/10.1093/acref/9780198610601.001.0001/acref-9780198610601-e-3198. (accessed 28 July 2019).

Dracula as an embodiment of England.[32] The purity associated with Virginia could be seen as white racial purity.

This is also the significance of the fact that Neville, standing in his imagination for uncontaminated blood, and in the text for white America, refuses to let go of his wife Virginia, even after her death, even at the cost of letting her become a vampire, which contradicts virtually all of his consciously stated aims (demonstrating the drive to hold onto familiarity I described in the Introduction). Neville's irrational relation to Virginia suggests a reference to the unburiable fact of black enslavement. The state of Virginia was one of the earliest slave-trading centres in America, and the place where the American version of slavery as an institution was developed and legally established. In the popular song, 'Carry Me Back to Old Virginny' (1878) by James A. Bland, which became Virginia's state song in 1940,[33] the narrative voice is that of an emancipated slave struggling to find work in the new, post-slavery era, for whom 'Old Virgin[ia]' is synonymous with old slavery. This example demonstrates how the state of Virginia was an Ur-site for American slavery, remembered nostalgically in the popular imagination of the Jim Crow era.

If Virginia and Kathy represent the ideal of Southern womanhood, a fantasy slavery helped support, the vampire women – women infected with the vampire plague – are figured as being intrinsically horrific. Yet Neville feels sexual desire for them, an indication of his own ultimate commonality with them. They are human women, albeit infected ones, and he is a human man, just as men and women divided by racial segregation were still all ultimately human and able to sexually enjoy each other and, potentially, produce children. For decades, anti-miscegenation rhetoric had unintentionally acknowledged – and sometimes, perhaps, in paranoid manner over-estimated – the ultimate indifference of human sexual desire toward the human-made 'color line.' The vampires who harass Neville and crowd outside his house each night are 'almost always women' (12). They 'strik[e] vile postures in order to entice him out' (6). 'It [i]s the women who ma[k]e it so difficult' (7), Neville thinks to himself. '[T]he women pos[e] like lewd puppets in the night on the possibility that he'd see them and decide to come out' (7), their likeness to puppets revealing the constructedness of the fantasy of their difference from Neville.

[32] Stephen D. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization,' *Victorian Studies* 33.4 (1990), 632.
[33] The song was retired in 1997.

I Am Legend details Neville's inner conflict between a sexual desire for the women and his desire to resist this urge, seemingly in order to remain uninfected. In terms of the novel's racial commentary, Neville's uninfected status stands for the retention of the racial purity of his bloodline. Both are achieved by abstinence from sex, that is, deriving *jouissance* from non-white women:

> Deep in his body, the knotting heat began again […] He knew the feeling well and it enraged him that he couldn't combat it. […]
>
> He looked at the bookcase across from him. All the knowledge in those books couldn't put out the fires in him; all the words of centuries couldn't end the wordless, mindless craving of his flesh. The realization made him sick. It was an insult to a man. All right, it was a natural drive, but there was no outlet for it any more. […] You have a mind don't you? he asked himself. Well *use* it! (7)

Neville thinks in terms of an opposition between two sets of associations: on one side, masculinity ('it was an insult to a man'), rationality, and science ('knowledge,' 'books'), and, on the other side, femininity, sexual enjoyment, and the 'wordless, mindless' 'natural drive' of the 'flesh.' Neville is in fact a parody of a man who embraces the 'masculine' side of this opposition and eschews the 'feminine.' Neville's perception that there is a 'natural drive' for which there is no longer an outlet, a reference to the post-apocalyptic landscape, is also a reference to the forms of inhumanity Cold War America might be seen to entail.

According to the intertextual codes of 1950s horror fiction outlined by Mark Jancovich, Neville is not simply embracing science in his masculinised search for a cure for vampirism, he is turning away from humanity. 1950s horror texts often express the fear of depersonalisation by associating femininity with humanity while associating science with a loss of humanity. In the early-1950s there was a widespread anxiety that techno-scientific organisation, and the culture of Fordism along with mass media, were causing people to lose their human ability to co-operate, interact and engage their feelings and intuitions. Just as Americans feared Communism as a system that 'den[ied] personal feeling and characteristics, and [forced people] to become mere functionaries of the social whole,' many also feared that 'the effects of scientific-technical rationality upon their own society was producing the same

features within America itself.'[34] Neville is not simply misogynistic so much as misogyny is a symptom of his becoming 'depersonalized.'

I Am Legend's images of 'depersonalized' vampirism could also be considered early examples of the 'vampire/cyborg dialectic' articulated by Rob Latham,[35] which I discussed in the Introduction. Along with Neville undergoing a process of 'depersonalization' I have outlined above, the vampires who harass Neville are described as 'puppets' (7) and 'dull, robot-like creatures' (109). The text's combination of vampirism with a mechanical or robotic form of undeadness – synthesising the two sides of the 'vampire/cyborg' dialectic – could be seen as reflecting the 'depersonalizing' force of 1950s consumerism, which drove uniform purchases which required men like Neville (middle class, white, 'normal' men with families) to become good workers, efficiently fitting into a larger capitalist machinery.

Related to these American fears, the completion of Neville's transformation from sexual man to apparently asexual monster is outlined in a passage in Part 3, when he observes how strange it is that after meeting Ruth 'he fe[els] no physical desire' for her: 'If [Ruth] had come two years before, maybe even later, he might have violated her' (125). By this point, Neville has displaced sex, smoking and drinking alcohol – three forms of *jouissance* – with the equally compelling task of scientific investigation. When the 'experiments had begun,' '[s]moking had tapered off' and 'drinking lost its compulsive nature' (125). '[W]ith surprising success, he had submerged himself in investigation' (125). Neville's 'sex drive […] virtually disappear[s]' (125). An earlier scene, from Part 2, demonstrates the affinity Neville's 'scientific' experimentation has for him with the drive to sexual enjoyment he struggles to deny. Because Neville is less fully transformed in Part 2 than he will be later, the holes in his logic are more apparent to him than they are in Part 3. Neville takes a 'woman from her bed, pretending not to notice the question posed in his mind: Why do you always experiment on women?' (49). Although a man is also available for experimentation, Neville chooses the woman, telling himself, 'For God's sake! […] I'm not going to rape the woman!' (49). Then we read: 'He ignored that […] Morality, after all, had fallen with society. He was his own ethic' (50). The scene demonstrates Neville's 'dehumanising' or 'depersonalising' regression in progress, where the 'human' ethical or moral qualms are present, but they are also ignored and actively negated. Neville's phrase, 'I'm not going to rape the woman!' is a tacit admission

[34] Jancovich, 26-28.
[35] Rob Latham, *Consuming Youth: Vampires, Cyborgs and the Culture of Consumption* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

that his experiments are a form of 'rape' and that he does indeed want to 'rape the woman.' For Neville does not say, 'I do not want to,' only, 'I'm not going to.'

The fact that Neville has replaced a desire for sex, historically associated with black men in America, with a desire for knowledge indicates that his absence of knowledge is directly related to black enjoyment, proscribed in the era. The only person with scientific training in the entire novel is also the only person explicitly described as being a 'negro': a former co-worker of Neville's who 'had studied mortuary science' (56). *I Am Legend* subverts Neville's assumption that he is capable of finding a cure for vampirism first by demonstrating that he has no scientific training or talent. Neville has 'no anatomical knowledge' (15). In the novel's first lines Neville's lack of analytical thinking, scientific talent that might compensate for a lack of formal training, is revealed. He cannot 'calculate' the time of the vampires' arrival on cloudy days, since he relies on 'the lifetime habit of judging nightfall by the sky' (1). Neville's formation of judgements based on 'lifetime habit' rather than a reasoned, scientific methodology, would be more readily associated with a black man than a white man during the 1950s, as would an assumption of lack of scientific talent, a relative lack of access to scientific training being a given, the result of years of under-investment in equal opportunities.

The fact that the only scientist in *I Am Legend* is a black man, representing a reversal of 1954 mainstream assumptions and providing a direct association between black personhood and Neville's obsession with investigating blood, also indicates why the reason for blood being the basis of a study is never given within the novel. When Neville goes to a library to try to research the cause of the vampire plague, we read, '[t]entatively, for want of better knowledge, he set up a possible basis, and that was blood' (67). The phrase 'for want of better knowledge' demonstrates not only that Neville is not conducting a properly scientific study. For Neville, blood stands in the gap that his 'want,' his lack, of 'better knowledge' leaves open. The reader might well ask, if the vampires drink blood, why does that mean that the disease is carried in their blood? If their bite is infectious, would the pathogen not be in their saliva?[36] Vampiric blood, here, represents the fact that Neville's enjoyment is inseparable from that of black people, just as blood is a substance that human beings share. That blood is the 'basis' of the vampires' disease is an assumption borrowed from the real-world historical context that the novel is satirising. Jim Crow segregation, its

[36] It is not until later in the novel that Neville uses a microscope to observe bacteria present in infected blood.

critics argued, was founded on an erroneous, unscientific assumption that blood is the basis of race. For critics of segregation, Jim Crow was a system implemented 'for want of better knowledge.' For example, a decade earlier, the segregation of the American armed forces' blood supply had been characterised as 'accept[ing] the racial mythology of the enemy,' accepting, as Dwight MacDonald put it, a belief that should exist 'only in the imagination of a Hitler.'[37] Similarly, in 1942 the *New York Times* had criticised the Red Cross's segregation of blood donations as 'keeping alive […] superstitions and mysticism.' 'We wonder,' wrote the *Times*, 'whether this is really an age of science.'[38]

Neville's interactions with animal life further demonstrate the wishful nature of his 'knowledge.' Toward the end of Part 2 Neville encounters a seemingly uninfected dog (83). The issues Neville faces regarding the dog are a rehearsal for what will happen when he meets Ruth in Part 3. The dog's survival, like Ruth's, suggests that Neville may be overestimating the fatality of the vampire disease. The dog and Ruth thus test Neville's ability to modify his beliefs based on the evidence in front of him. Neville thinks that the dog is probably 'one of those freak accidents that followed no percentage law,' and had somehow 'evolved a system' (87) to live among the vampires. Ironically, what Neville sees in the dog reflects his own status: Neville is a 'freak accident,' the lone person with immunity and thus the odd one out from earth's new society of infected but still living people. Neville believes that being bitten by a bat – earlier in life, while 'stationed in Panama during the war' (132) – caused his immunity to the vampire disease. As Ruth points out, if the bat had attacked more humans after biting Neville, then more people would have gained the same immunity to the plague that now only he possesses (133). So, by killing the bat in an act of casual violence, Neville has, without realising it, destroyed the vaccine for vampirism for which he spends most of the novel searching. Neville's inadvertent, unknowing destruction of the very object for which he spends most of his time searching is caused directly by his over-confidence in his ability to recognise which actions will take him forward toward his goal and which will cause regression. It also demonstrates the unconscious drive to retain a familiar context, as Neville retains his lack of the very object he ostensibly pursues.

Neville never does figure out how the dog survived, but its survival indicates that the vampire disease is not as powerful as Neville assumes. The dog's survival indicates a 'want'

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[37] Dwight MacDonald, *The War's Greatest Scandal! The Story of Jim Crow in Uniform* (New York: March on Washington Movement, 1943), 12. Cited in Sarah E. Chinn, *Technology and the Logic of American Racism* (London; New York: Continuum, 2000), 128.
[38] 'Blood and Prejudice,' *New York Times*, June 14, 1942. Cited in Chinn, 119.

in Neville's knowledge. Neville wants 'very much to fix it and get the dog's affection. Shades of Androcles,' he thinks to himself (89). In a condensed way *I Am Legend*'s reference to Androcles evokes the so-called 'Negro Problem' – also called the 'Negro Question' – of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: the question for white America of how to 'befriend' the now-emancipated black population, and how to limit their aspirations and expectations in the face of new opportunities arising with modernisation.[39] Although the terms 'Negro Problem' and 'Negro Question' had largely lost currency by the 1950s, the problem or question that these expressions articulate remained unresolved, and took on new meaning in the context of America's postwar prosperity and newfound global power.[40]

In the Aesop fable, Androcles is a runaway slave from a Roman consul posted in Africa.[41] Androcles removes a thorn from a lion's paw, healing the lion. Later, Androcles is captured and condemned to be thrown to a lion. By chance, Androcles is thrown to the same lion he previously healed. The lion 'recognize[s] his friend, […] fawn[s] upon him, and lick[s] [Androcles'] hands like a friendly dog.'[42] Seeing this, the emperor frees both the lion and the slave. The lion shows gratitude to the slave, Androcles, who helped him – but white America could not be said to have shown gratitude for the black lives that were consumed by slavery. Neville thinks he deserves the dog's 'affection' and gratitude for feeding and 'fixing' him, but as this involves identifying himself with a runaway slave, the question of black entitlement is raised. An association between Androcles and African Americans existed in the popular imagination due to the history of how the George Bernard Shaw play 'Androcles and the Lion' (1912) was produced in the United States. Because Aesop's Androcles was said to be African, the Androcles of Shaw's play was seen as an appropriate role for black actors,

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[39] Gillman, 1-3, 11, 13.

[40] As new generations of black Americans were born after slavery, being '[u]nconditioned to positions of inferiority,' a mainstream of white Americans feared they 'could take advantage of the new urban modes of social and physical mobility that brought them into contact with whites on terms of potential equality at a range of social sites: hotels, restaurants, parks, theaters, hospitals, and – most frequently and therefore most problematically – the rapidly expanding network of public streetcars, railroads, and buses that carried increasing numbers of people within and between cities (and were consequently the first facilities to be segregated.)' Elizabeth Abel, *Signs of the Times: The Visual Politics of Jim Crow* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 4-5.

[41] Aesop, 'Androcles,' in *The Fables of Æsop*, ed. Joseph Jacobs (London: Macmillan and Company, 1922), No. 23, 60-61.

[42] Ibid.

who were prevented or discouraged from playing most serious theatre roles.[43] Matheson's reference to this tale, as well as the fact that 'shades' can refer to blackness, reminds the reader of the ongoing impact of the events of slavery and the unacknowledged fact that Africa has contributed to American identity.

The fact that Neville thinks that the dog is probably 'one of those freak accidents that followed no percentage law' reminds the reader of the model of numerical normalcy William Whyte described in *The Organization Man* (1956), two years after *I Am Legend*'s publication. Whyte researched and, in an appendix, satirised the kind of personality tests companies had begun using to select prospective employees, which rendered an individual's score 'in terms of a percentile rating – that is, how [one] answer[s] questions in relation to how other people have answered them.'[44] Success in such personality tests lay 'in getting a score somewhere between the 40th and the 60th percentiles' so that a test respondent 'should try to answer as if' he or she 'were like everybody else is supposed to be.'[45] Despite the fact that, by definition, not everyone can be normal (if everyone is 'normal' the category loses its meaning) – and nobody can be 'perfectly average'[46] – Americans sought to be seen as such for the comparative freedoms that 'passing as normal' promised. It is as though in 1950s America the logic of 'passing' – that is, 'passing for white,' hiding one's 'negro' ancestry – was extended beyond race to include everyone, since everyone might conceivably have something 'abnormal' to hide. Fear of blackness thus connoted fear of other kinds of difference. Precisely because there was a hyperawareness that abnormalities were being hidden,[47] there could be no way for anyone to rise completely above the suspicion of practising some kind of 'passing' as normal.

The question of passing is also subtly invoked when Neville meets Ruth, one of the 'new people of the earth,' a fact he does not yet recognise. Ruth first appears to Neville as a

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[43] The Shaw play had been produced by the Federal Theatre Project's Negro Theatre Unit, directed by Orson Wells, starring Arthur 'Dooley' Wilson (who played 'Sam' in Wells' *Casablanca* [1943]) as Androcles. In 1952 a Hollywood adaptation of the Shaw play, with a white cast, had come out, which made the story more well-known in 1954 than it is today.
[44] William Whyte, *The Organization Man* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2002 [New York: Simon & Schuster, 1956]), 405.
[45] Whyte, 405.
[46] Creadick.
[47] For example: illicit sexual desires, illicit political affiliations or beliefs, marital and familial strife behind closed doors, veterans' publicly unacknowledged trauma from World War II, bodily 'deformities' and undisclosed illnesses.

'white spot' moving 'out in [a] field' (110). Once Neville gets closer he sees that she is wearing a 'dirty white dress' (110). Ruth's first appearance as 'white' but, on closer inspection, turning out to be wearing something 'dirty white' foreshadows what happens symbolically as Ruth at first appears to Neville to be uninfected but later turns out to be infected. The 'dirty white' of the dress evokes the idea of tainted racial whiteness: the white-looking slave descendants who were black under the law but who sometimes passed as white for the benefits that they hoped this might offer themselves and their families.[48]

Underlining Ruth's symbolic racial ambiguity, her physical description fits that of someone who might have 'negro' ancestry: she is 'very tan' (110), she has 'bronze legs' (111), 'dark eyes' (113), and a 'tanned shoulder' (113). Whereas, historically, 'tan' skin might betray the ancestry of someone with 'black blood' who is trying to pass as 'white,' in this scenario Ruth's 'tan' is possible proof that she is uninfected, since, as far as Neville knows, nobody infected can walk in sunlight. Skin colour in both *I Am Legend*'s fictional setting and Matheson's America is seen as revealing the status of one's blood. Later, Ruth reveals her 'tan was only make-up' (144), a narrative detail that echoes the extensive use of cosmetics to darken or lighten entertainers' skin on American screens and stages throughout the Jim Crow era, sometimes in ways that were obviously farcical but also in subtle ways that were not supposed to be known or noticed by the audience.[49]

Symbolic ambiguities also lie behind the key shock that is integral to *I Am Legend*'s premise, part of what initially 'hooks' the reader into the suspense that keeps her or him reading. This is the fact that the vampire legend turns out to have a scientific explanation: vampires are real, not merely legend. Science is here shown to be fallible, having failed to recognise the reality of vampirism. Neville's father, associated with science, 'had died

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[48] It is believed that thousands of people 'passed' out of slavery, though passing's hidden nature makes even an approximate number difficult to determine. Elaine K. Ginsberg, 'Introduction: The Politics of Passing,' in *Passing and the Fictions of Identity* ed. Elaine K. Ginsberg (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 1996), 1.

[49] For example, blackface minstrelsy by white performers was not supposed to actually disguise the performers' race. On the other hand, for example, the singer Billie Holiday – who had light skin and might be called 'mixed race' today – was sometimes forced to wear dark makeup so that audiences would not get the impression that a white woman was sharing the stage with a band of black musicians. Holiday's autobiography recounts: '[Theatre managers] told [Count] Basie I was too yellow to sing with all the black men in his band. Somebody might think I was white if the light didn't hit me just right. So they got special dark grease paint and told me to put it on.' Eleanora Fagan [also known as Billie Holiday] and William F. Dufty, *Lady Sings the Blues* (London: Sphere Books, 1973 [1956]), 60.

denying the vampire' (15). Science's fallibility is highlighted in a scene where Neville reads Stoker's *Dracula* to pass the time and reflects on the line from Dr Van Helsing: 'The strength of the vampire is that no one will believe in him.'[50] Neville thinks about how this line is 'true':

> True, [Neville] thought, but no one ever got the chance to know it. Oh, they knew it was something, but it couldn't be that – not *that*. *That* was imagination, *that* was superstition, there was no such thing as *that*.
>
> And, before science had caught up with the legend, the legend had swallowed science and everything. (17)

Here, the repeated '*that*' which stands for the phrase 'vampires are real,' mimics a vampire-denier's refusal to admit that vampires exist. The vampire-denier's refusal to explicitly state his or her belief in the non-existence of vampires, saying '*That* is superstition' instead of saying '*The idea that vampires are real* is superstition,' suggests that the 'superstition' still holds power.

This denial suggests that there is danger in admitting the truth of things that have historically been deemed untrue, again illustrating the action of the Lacanian death drive as a repetition that can defy rationality. Science is expected to take care of the problem of superstition. But science has failed to recognise the truth of the vampire legend, and when the plague begins, science fails to stop its spread. The bacilli that Neville believes causes vampirism is described as having 'hid behind obscuring veils of legend and superstition' (78). Both science and legend are forms of belief, and here, scientific event and folk belief are joined. As cultural enigmas, legends may develop in order to offset fears about species regression, just as science promises to ensure progression but that very progression threatens to morph into regression if humans cannot manage the beliefs that shape science's uses or the outcomes of experiments. The primary example of the intertwining of science and legend in the novel's era, and in the text itself (if 'the bombings' really are what caused the vampire disease[51]) is that advanced science created nuclear bombs which, if international relations were not managed correctly, could be used to cause a regression in the form of modern American civilisation's collapse.

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[50] In fact, this quotation comes from the Tod Browning film adaptation, not the Stoker novel.
[51] The real origin of the disease is never revealed by the novel.

Regression, however, is exactly what is fantasised by *I Am Legend*, as Neville, a white everyman, is publicly 'executed' in front of a symbolically black audience. The scene is clearly presented as a lynching. That the attack holds racial significance is suggested by Ruth calling Neville 'the last of the old race' (157). By implication Ruth's people, the 'new race,' stand in for the coming, desegregated, new America. Ruth tells Neville that the crowd he can see gathering outside the building he is held in, 'mean to execute' him. 'They have to […] they hate you' (158). The final passage of the novel reads:

> Abruptly [the] realization joined with what [Neville] saw on [the crowd's] faces – awe, fear, shrinking horror – and he knew that they *were* afraid of him. To them he was some terrible scourge[,] […] an invisible spectre who had left for evidence of his existence the bloodless bodies of their loved ones. […]
>
> Robert Neville looked out over the new people of earth. He knew he did not belong to them; he knew that, like the vampires, he was anathema and black terror to be destroyed. […]
>
> […] Full circle, he thought […] Full circle. A new terror born in death, a new superstition entering the unassailable fortress of forever. (159-60)

Neville realises that he has become 'anathema and black terror to be destroyed' for the 'new people of earth.' The reference to Neville leaving 'bloodless bodies of [the new people's] loved ones' as evidence of his existence underscores his status as a vampire. The phrase also works allegorically as a statement about white America having created 'bloodless bodies' of black people, 'loved ones' of the black community, through its history of lynching – and thus acting monstrously. 'New people' is a phrase that historically referred to mixed-race people. In *Charles W. Chesnutt's The House behind the Cedars (1900), mulattoes are called 'new people' because they do not belong (legitimately) to the 'old famil[ies]' of the South.*[52] Neville has come to perform a social function for the 'new people' that 'vampires' – allegorical black people – had performed for him and his society: symbolically, mid-twentieth-century white America. Neville is the monster the new society can define itself by violently excluding. By becoming not just any arbitrary story but a society-defining legend, who is bluntly defined as evil and 'anathema,' Neville emerges as a symbol on whose

[52] Charles W. Chesnutt, *The House behind the Cedars* [1900] in *Stories, Novels, and Essays* (New York: Library of America, 2002).

meaning society can rely. The ending of the novel is thus not simply about Neville seeing that he is 'the vampires' vampire,'[53] but, in the context of mid-century America, about recognising that his white American culture 'hasn't the power,' or the universality, or the neutrality, or the supremacy, that the 'legend' of Cold War American belonging 'says it has.' This discovery mirrors how Neville discovers that 'the cross hasn't the power legend says it has' (129) in deterring vampires.

Before this point, the fact that Neville has become the vampire of the novel – that is, the vampire for 'the new people of earth' – is signalled when the 'dark men' (150, 152, 153) from Ruth's people come to arrest him and he is 'shocked' (148) when they kill the vampires outside his house. Neville realises 'he [feels] more deeply toward the vampires than he d[oes] toward their executioners' (148). Neville's identification with the vampires rather than with the 'new people' hints at *I Am Legend*'s final revelation that Neville has become the vampire himself: a legend for Ruth's people.

Neville's public 'execution' references the concern with lynching in the United States at mid-century. While the number of lynchings had decreased significantly since the early 1930s, the meaning of lynchings had become more urgently scrutinised than ever before. At the same time, it was observed that terroristic acts such as the bombing of private homes appeared to be replacing the 'traditional' form of lynching by hanging or shooting,[54] raising the question of whether lynching was truly dying out or merely transforming. In 1951 W.E.B. Du Bois and other black leaders submitted a petition to the United Nations entitled *We Charge Genocide*, which argued that American treatment of blacks since emancipation, including the federal government's failure to stop lynchings, fit the definition of 'genocide' found in the 'United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide' which America had signed in 1948.[55] Many Americans saw lynching as a national embarrassment that threatened to delegitimise the United States' claims to leadership as a new global superpower. Lynchings troubled Americans because there was no clear way to stop them, and as vigilante violence their meaning and purpose lacked an official definition. Lynchings in fact highlighted divisions within white America regarding the so-called 'Negro

[53] Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 138.
[54] Alistair Cooke, 'Year of No Lynchings: Hopes in U.S. – and Fears,' *The Manchester Guardian*, Thursday 1 January 1953, 1.
[55] William L. Patterson, ed., *We Charge Genocide: The Crime of Government Against the Negro People*, 4th edition (New York: Civil Rights Congress, 1952 [1951]).

Problem' mentioned earlier: the 'problem' of how to treat the black population, the freed slaves and their descendants, and of how to fit them – or not – into wider American society. Lynching, a practice operating beyond the law, could be seen as a testament to the 'Negro Problem' remaining unsolved by official means.

In the 1950s context, as *I Am Legend* shows via fantasy-cum-allegory, a transformed version of the 'Negro Problem' remained. Initially, it had been the 'question' or 'problem' of what should be done regarding the population of ex-slaves immediately following emancipation. Who was to provide jobs for this 'new' population and how were these people to live? The 'answer' or 'solution' of establishing Jim Crow segregation, a symbolic castration of black *jouissance* and black freedom, now proved to have been a deferral of the question rather than a genuine answer. By not integrating the ex-slaves more thoroughly into America straight away, reserving some parts of society for 'whites only,' new generations of descendants of the slaves – the black Americans of 1954 – were now gaining more grievances against America, on top of the initial one incurred by the atrocity of treating their grandparents as property. This is evinced, for example, by the fact that in 1954 when the Nation of Islam, whose leadership included Malcolm X, was teaching that 'the white man is the devil and […] America is hell,'[56] the teaching resonated in the black community beyond those who believed it literally or theologically (making Malcolm X an inspiration to the 'black power' movement that would arise in the late-1960s).

Black blood carried the debt of slavery forward – refusing to let it die out or become forgotten – and thus became a symbol of what white Americans stood to lose if black Americans were granted full civil rights, which was the most obvious answer to the 'Negro Question' yet one that, collectively, by 1954 white Americans had refused to entertain. The spread of violence from one people to another, from the 'old race' that Neville represents to the 'new people of earth,' illustrates an idea that concerned many critics of America's treatment of its black population. Namely, that allowing anti-black violence to go unchecked paved the way for other forms of violence to spread that might ultimately harm white Americans and the nation's overall power. In *We Charge Genocide*, America's violence against black Americans was presented as a threat to world peace. The petitioners 'solemnly warn that a nation which practices genocide against its own nationals may not be long

[56] 'Malcolm X FBI File, Summary Report, Detroit Office, March 16, 1954 (Excerpt)' in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader* ed. Manning Marable and Garrett Felber (New York: Penguin Books, 2013), 69.

deterred, if it has the power, from genocide elsewhere.'[57] The concern that violence could spread and 'double back' on white Americans was also a recurring theme of arguments against lynching throughout the decades since emancipation.[58] The way in which *I Am Legend* expresses the notion of America's racist violence 'doubling back' on itself in monstrous form echoes Stephen D. Arata's concept of 'reverse colonization' (discussed in the Introduction and Chapter Two) being expressed by late Victorian popular fiction, especially Stoker's *Dracula*. *I Am Legend*, however, uses the motif in a more self-conscious, satirical and allegorical way, whilst the 'reverse colonization' described by Arata was an unconscious expression of 'cultural guilt.'[59]

I Am Legend anticipates the idea encapsulated by the title of the 1959 documentary television series, 'The Hate that Hate Produced,' profiling the Nation of Islam as an organisation of 'black supremacists.'[60] In its context, the title of the series suggests that whites' 'hatred' of their black compatriots was directly 'produc[ing]' a hatred in black Americans of white Americans. In a 'morality play' staged within a Nation of Islam meeting, depicted in an early scene of the first episode, 'the white man [is] put on trial for his sins against the black man. He [is] found guilty. The sentence is death.'[61] *I Am Legend*'s final scene is reminiscent of the Nation of Islam's 'trial' pageant, albeit in a manner where the critique of America is far less easily recognisable as such. In *I Am Legend*'s final scene the lynching as public spectacle that was inflicted on thousands of black men historically[62] is now inflicted on Robert Neville, who embodied postwar ideals of normalcy even after American society's destruction. In the story's final moments Neville realises that he was able to transform into a monster – or regress to the status of a black man – precisely through his defence of the American Way and, due to his faith in the American Way as a source of

[57] Patterson, 7.
[58] Jacqueline Goldsby, *A Spectacular Secret: Lynching in American Life and Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 21-22.
[59] Arata, 623.
[60] 'Malcolm X FBI File, Memo, New York Office, July 16, 1959,' in Marable and Felber, 149.
[61] Ibid, 150.
[62] The Equal Justice Initiative has documented nearly 6,500 cases of lynching between 1865 and 1950. See: Equal Justice Initiative, 'Reconstruction in America: Racial Violence after the Civil War, 1865-1876' (Montgomery, Alabama: 2020) and Equal Justice Initiative, "Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror," third edition (Montgomery, Alabama: 2017).

personal *jouissance*, his obedience to the superegoic command to enjoy. Through its implicit critique of America, *I Am Legend* highlights the failure of the nation's efforts to answer the historical 'Negro Question.' Black blood was not going away. This was ironic, because the defence of white blood's racial purity was so stringent it objectified black blood, maintaining the integrity of people who might inherit the debt of slavery.

The fact that Neville becomes, symbolically, a 'black man' and the new society of 'dark men' act toward Neville as white Americans act towards black Americans, suggests that no progress is made, no newness is found. Although the infected people who re-establish society are called the 'new people of earth,' in a significant sense *I Am Legend* does not imagine a genuinely new society. The 'new people' are different from the 'old race' because they are infected, symbolically mixed-race or non-white or black, yet they are all infected and thus represent a new form of homogeneity, a new 'norm.' *I Am Legend* imagines a replacement of one homogeneity by another, which would seem to offer no progress towards finding a solution for integrating forms of difference into a social whole without masking or undoing the difference itself.

This is *I Am Legend*'s ultimate illustration of the action of the drive. Even out of a complete revolution a situation emerges that is essentially the same as that which it replaced in a crucial way. The 'new people of earth' have recreated the old society's use of blood as the object that defines their collective identity. The role of blood as a symbolically loaded substance that is pivotal in the management of *jouissance* has been reinstalled, repeated as if it were an irresistible action. In the conclusion of this thesis I describe how blood occupies the place vacated by traditional authority in season one of the television series *True Blood* (HBO, 2008). Something similar is at work in *I Am Legend*, where the authority of blood in defining identity re-emerges after the downfall of Robert Neville's civilisation and the erosion of all its foundational 'legends.'

That what appears to be a new society is crucially identical with the old society evinces Auerbach's argument that 'the demarcation between [the] vampires and [Neville]' is 'ruthlessly' 'blurred' by *I Am Legend*.[63] Stephanou echoes Auerbach when she argues that *I Am Legend* 'unsettles and undermines […] dichotomies.'[64] It is more accurate, however, to say that *I Am Legend* satirises the belief, or faith, in dichotomies. In other words, the novel satirises belief in the Master Signifier (the authority of received legend, whether that be

[63] Auerbach, 138.
[64] Stephanou, 57.

religious or scientific doctrine), or submission to the authority that would state where definitional boundaries lie. In this sense Matheson's novel actively participates in the societal shift described by Todd McGowan, from prohibition to commanded enjoyment, by suggesting that traditional prohibition is a kind of 'legend.' In Chapter Two I argued that Stoker's *Dracula* celebrates the downfall of the Master Signifier in the form of the Count's defeat. In contrast, the Master Signifier in *I Am Legend* is treated as not being there in actuality in the first place, and thus as not needing to be undermined per se. Where *Dracula* is fearful of the Count's tyrannical authority, *I Am Legend* suggests that such authority is an illusion that exists only insofar as people obey it, just as a legend's power does not depend on its actual veracity but on people's belief in it.

In later texts, including *Fledgling* (see Chapter Six), and the television series *True Blood* (see the conclusion), vampire societies are split, lacking cohesion and consensus in a way that mirrors postmodern culture's lack of these things due to the predominance of a command to enjoy over the command to observe prohibitions. *I Am Legend* is different from later vampire texts in that the vampire society depicted, 'the new society' (158), does not appear to be divided but instead mirrors the self-certainty that Neville's culture had imparted to him. *I Am Legend* satirically questions whether a society really can go without a Master Signifier or 'legend,' even if legends are functions of belief rather than objective truth. An enigmatic material-symbol such as blood, to which legends can be attached, may be required for societal cohesion as such, *I Am Legend* concludes.

Chapter Five: Blood and Vampires, 1954-2005

The 1950s ideal of American consensus, ultimately, did not hold.[1] As Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin observe, '[i]n the course of the 1960s, many Americans came to regard groups of fellow countrymen as enemies with whom they were engaged in a struggle for the nation's very soul.'[2] Consensus or not, America continued to be a global superpower during the period covered by this chapter: the years after the publication of Robert Neville's *I Am Legend* (1954) and leading up to the publication of Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (2005). American popular culture continued to hold a global appeal, and so vampires remained, for the most part, American. America's global power was also reflected in the shape of the world's blood products industry. By the 1970s 'almost anyone in the Western world or Japan who received plasma-based medication made intimate contact with American donors,' most of whom had been paid for their 'donations.'[3]

With the collapse of the ideal of consensus, around a decade after *I Am Legend*'s publication, American society underwent a dramatic transformation. The society of commanded enjoyment described by Todd McGowan began to emerge in earnest.[4] Vampires, outsider figures with alien *jouissance* as enjoyers of blood, made the perfect symbols for the postmodern subject of commanded enjoyment. On one hand, enjoyment of blood, as something that had become a cultural taboo in the modern era, could symbolise the heights of self-realisation in an increasingly narcissistic society. On the other hand, blood-drinking as a shameful, illicit, or problematic secret, could become a symbol of alienation from other factions of society, and represent ethnic or subcultural identity. In an era where enjoyment becomes commanded, the central problem for the subject is what to do with desires he or she did not choose. Realising one's wants might be one thing, but what if one does not want to want what one desires? The vampires who come after *I Am Legend* begin to typically relate with ambivalence to the fact that they did not choose their bloodthirst. The vampire's choices,

[1] Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[2] Ibid., 4.
[3] Douglas Starr, *Blood: An Epic History of Medicine and Commerce* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 265.
[4] Todd McGowan, *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).

like the postmodern subject's, are choices about what to do with regard to what one wants. There is a new homogeneity in this era that came to celebrate many forms of diversity and permission, but it is a homogeneity of difference or 'infection' with desires one did not consciously choose for oneself.

*

The primary blood administration issue debated in the United States in the 1950s was the question of whether a medical patient receiving blood should be made to pay for the blood he or she used, either financially or in kind (with a reciprocal blood 'donation'). Alternatively, might blood be received as a gift, given by altruistic donors in an affirmation of civic bonds, as in Britain, France, and most other western nations? Two rival organisations vied for control of America's blood supply, each advocating a different side of the debate. The American National Red Cross (ARC) promoted the idea of blood as a gift that should be available to all. The ARC's rival, the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB), on the other hand, fought the idea, invoking the metaphor of the blood 'bank' to liken 'free' blood to 'free' money. In the Cold War context of the 1950s, these competing paradigms for blood administration were easily framed in terms of wider debates about capitalism versus communism. This is reflected in Dr Lester Unger's argument that:

> Under a plan by which everyone irrespective of his financial status, gets so-called 'free blood' this therapeutic agent is singled out as the only medical gratuity given to self-supporting individuals. If that philosophy is correct, then 'free obstetrics,' 'free surgery,' 'free medicine,' for that matter, 'free everything' should be available to all regardless of financial ability.[5]

'Free' blood was seen in ideological, and even moralistic, terms, as an agent of contamination that might allow 'communist' tendencies towards idleness, helplessness and irresponsibility to creep in and corrupt the American Way.

The federal government declined to regulate blood administration, resulting in a blood supply with no single authority controlling or monitoring it. Instead, inefficiency and

[5] Lester J. Unger, 'The Blood Bank Service of the New York Post-Graduate Medical School and Hospital,' *Proceedings of Blood Bank Institute*, Dallas, TX, Nov. 17-19, 1948, 104, cited in Kara W. Swanson, *Banking on the Body: The Market in Blood, Milk and Sperm in Modern America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014), 98.

confusion reigned, as surplus blood at one location could not easily be shared with another location that needed it. Because of the banking metaphor and its figuring of blood as money, in an act of faith, Americans tried to let 'free market' principles see that blood was directed to the right places at the right times. In 1950 the so-called 'Boston Agreement' outlined how hospitals and other agencies might exchange blood between themselves. For years to come, however, it proved impossible to implement. Since there were no national standards set for the various clinical processes blood went through on its way from 'donor' to recipient, blood from one institution was not easily accepted as being 'equal' to, or fungible with, blood from another agency. Meanwhile, while such debates waged, time and again throughout the period covered by this chapter, medical professionals used blood from risky or compromised sources when the supply from their preferred sources ran out.

Within this context and a decade after *I Am Legend*'s publication, two monster families with vampire mothers appeared in the competing television sitcoms *The Addams Family* (ABC, 1964-1966) and *The Munsters* (CBS, 1964-1966), both of which were among the top twenty-five most viewed television programs in America during their initial runs.[6] In a humorously non-threatening manner, the Munsters and the Addams performed the same scenario Robert Neville had fought against in *I Am Legend*: the invasion of American suburbia by vampires. *The Munsters* and *The Addams Family* were both designed around the central joke of unexpectedly placing Gothic characters into the sitcom format, which for the preceding decade had almost exclusively depicted exceedingly wholesome, idealised white American middle-class families, epitomised by the Cleavers of *Leave It to Beaver* (CBS/ABC, 1957-1963). Much of the *The Munsters*' and *The Addams Family*'s humour is generated by the monsters' nonchalant subscription to now outdated, 1950s 'normal' ideals despite their monstrosity. For example, when Eddie Munster tells his mother, Lily, 'Boy, mom, you sure have a lot of recipes here. Caesar salad, beef Stroganoff, Napoleon brandy, bloody Mary,' Lily replies, 'Yes Eddie, and at one time or another, they were all friends of the family.'[7] Here the characters think they are emulating the Cleavers, with Lily embodying the ideal of the domestic housewife who is a keen collector of recipes to cook for her family. But the audience laughs because in doing so she fails dramatically, innocently evoking

[6] As measured by the Neilsen ratings of audience size, October 1964 - April 1965, cited in Ellie Taylor, *Prime-Time Families: Television Culture in Post-War America* (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 30.

[7] 'Herman's Lawsuit.' *The Munsters*, Season 2, Episode 31. Originally aired April 21 1966.

cannibalism, an action that would almost always be considered incongruous with domestic normalcy.

As families with relatable aspirations (to 1950s-style normality and participation in the American Way) but idiosyncratic eccentricities, the Munsters and the Addams show that by the 1960s vampirism was becoming a metaphor for ethnic difference within American culture. Arguably, the development of American audiences' ability to laugh at, and with, monsters in a new way during the 1960s, paved the way for the sympathetic, and eventually heroic vampires that were soon to proliferate.

The Munsters and *The Addams Family* came about as the result of 'competition between the networks to fill the prime-time schedules with new comic gimmicks escalat[ing] to fever pitch.'[8] Television producers' desire to gain the highest ratings possible also caused the advent of the most significant vampire of the 1960s: Barnabas Collins (Jonathan Frid) in the soap opera, *Dark Shadows* (ABC, 1966-1971).[9] As William Patrick Day explains, 'Barnabas was originally intended to be a traditional evil vampire who would be staked after a few months' but the 'overwhelmingly positive viewer reaction to Barnabas led to a gradual change in focus as [the producers] realized that the vampire was becoming their central character.'[10] Analogous to market forces providing the nation's blood supply, American consumers demanded the new types of vampires that emerged during the 1960s. When another character, Dr Julia Hoffman (Grayson Hall), began falling in love with Barnabas, it 'got even more positive audience reaction.'[11] As Barnabas struggled against the 'curse' of his vampirism, figured as a disease in this text, and pursued various love affairs over hundreds of episodes, *Dark Shadows* focused on his vulnerability and suffering. Barnabas is usually seen as the first example of the 'sympathetic vampire,' which would soon proliferate.

Another sympathetic vampire followed with the 1972 film *Blacula* (dir. William Crain) giving American popular culture its seminal black vampire: the eponymous 'Blacula,' also called 'Mamuwalde.' By the early 1970s, *The Black Vampyre* (1819), discussed in Chapter One, was all but forgotten. Imagining a vampire as explicitly 'black' was unheard of

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[8] Taylor, 29.

[9] Barnabas Collins first appears in episode 211, originally aired April 17 1967. Barnabas's hand, played not by Jonathan Frid but by Timothy Gordan, appears in the preceding episode, 210.

[10] William Patrick Day, *Vampire Legends in Contemporary American Culture* (University of Kentucky Press, 2002), 38.

[11] Day, 38.

by a mainstream 1972 audience. *Blacula* merged horror with the emerging 'blaxploitation' film genre that was primarily aimed at, and created by, black Americans in contrast with the white-centrism of Hollywood at that time and earlier. Like the blaxploitation genre itself, appropriating and repurposing the medium of film for a black audience, *Blacula* claims the vampire story and turns it into a story about black characters and contemporary issues pertinent to black Americans.

At the end of the story, Mamuwalde willingly destroys himself by walking into sunlight at the end of the film: a virtually unimaginable version of the vampire in earlier decades. *Blacula* subverted extant stereotypes of black Americans, namely the 'Uncle Tom' figure epitomised in roles that popularised Sydney Poitier with white audiences and the 'superspade' or 'buck,' epitomised by the character John Shaft (Richard Roundtree) in the film *Shaft* (1971, dir. Gordon Parks).[12] *Blacula*'s eponymous vampire, mostly called by his African name, Mamuwalde, is played by Shakespearean actor William Marshall, and given formal speech and manners that cue associations with the Uncle Tom figure. The stereotype of Uncle Tom, a name derived from the character in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852),[13] was associated with a subservient version of racial integration, and based on older stereotypes of the 'faithful slave.'[14] Mamuwalde, however, as an authentic, embodied link to black Americans' pre-slavery African roots, comes to represent a version of black separatism totally at odds with the Uncle Tom stereotype. Meanwhile, *Blacula*'s chief vampire hunter, L.A.P.D. pathologist Dr Gordon Thomas (Thalmus Rasulala), resembles the 'superspade' in his machismo and overt sexuality, yet he is shown to be an Uncle Tom in his assimilationist attitude exemplified by his collaboration with the otherwise monoracially white police force. Neither side wins in *Blacula*, which ultimately refuses to idealise any particular dogma that will guide black Americans into the future.

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[12] See Brooks E. Hefner, "Rethinking *Blacula*: Ideological Critique at the Intersection of Genres," *Journal of Popular Film and Television* (2012), 64-65. Stereotypes discussed by Hefner are those defined by Donald Bogle in his *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films*, Third Edition (New York: Continuum, 1998).

[13] While the name 'Uncle Tom' originates from Stowe's novel, the characteristics of the stereotype are based on the Uncle Tom figure as he appeared in later adaptations of the original text.

[14] See Micki McElya, *Clinging to Mammy: The Faithful Slave in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007).

Blacula begins with an account of how Prince Mamuwalde becomes a vampire. He and his wife, Luva (Vonetta McGee), are guests of Count Dracula (Charles Macaulay) at his castle in Transylvania in 1780. The three speak as diplomats, with Mamuwalde telling Dracula that his 'people are eager to bring [their] ancient culture into the community of nations' but that the white nations, whom implicitly Dracula represents, must first 'totally cease the slave trade.' Ironically, while Count Dracula embodies a racialised foreignness from Englishness and racial whiteness within Stoker's novel, in *Blacula* the Count has become a representative embodiment of racial whiteness. Dracula replies that 'ceas[ing] the slave trade' is 'unrealistic' and the following exchange ensues:

Dracula:	Slavery has merit, I believe.
Mamuwalde:	Merit? You find merit in barbarity?
D:	Barbarous from the standpoint of the slave, perhaps. Intriguing and delightful from mine. I would willingly pay for so beautiful an addition to my household as your delicious wife.
M:	Sir, are you ill?
D:	Oh, I mean no insult, prince. It is a compliment for a man of my station to look with desire on one of your colour.
M:	Sir, I suddenly find your cognac as distasteful as your manner. You're behaving like some animal.
D:	Really?
M:	Really.
D:	Let us not forget, sir, it is you who comes from the jungle.

Mamuwalde and Luva now attempt to leave but Dracula has his henchmen attack the African prince, while a group of vampire women swoop in and surround Luva, implicitly making her one of Dracula's harem. The Count's earlier description of Luva as 'delicious' equates enslavement, vampirism and rape with consumption and blood-drinking. Once Mamuwalde is restrained, the Count curses him with vampirism, saying:

> You shall pay, black prince. I shall place a curse of suffering on you that will doom you to a living hell. A hunger, a wild, gnawing, animal hunger will grow in you, a hunger for human blood. Here you will starve for an eternity, torn by an unquenchable lust. I curse you with my name. You shall be 'Blacula'! A

> vampire like myself, a living fiend. You will be doomed never to know that sweet blood which will become your only desire.

This is the only time Mamuwalde is referred to as 'Blacula.' Strangely, the Count announces cursing the prince with his name, but calls him 'Blacula' instead of 'Dracula.' The camp excess of the name 'Blacula' having a lack of narrative justification is a source of enjoyment for the audience, attesting to the film being aimed at a black audience rather than a white one.

The implication is that Dracula intended to keep Mamuwalde locked in a coffin forever, thereby making him 'doomed never to know that sweet blood which [would have] become [his] only desire.' Once reawakened, Mamuwalde's primary concern is winning the affections of Tina (also played by Vonetta McGee), the sister of Dr Gordan's girlfriend, Michelle (Denise Nicholas). Mamuwalde considers Tina to be a reincarnation of Luva, as the two characters are physically identical (both being played by the same actress). Tina eventually accepts the notion that she is indeed Luva. The would-be union of Tina/Luva and Mamuwalde promises to rekindle the prince's dignified, African authenticity in the post-slavery and post-Jim Crow contemporary black American community. However, Dr Gordon in his over-defensiveness of the black community – allegorically, a protection against separatism as symbolised by Mamuwalde – shoots at the prince and misses, hitting and killing Tina. Unwilling to exist without Tina/Luva, implicitly because the political project of reestablishing authentic African culture in contemporary America is now thwarted, Mamuwalde kills himself by walking into the sun.

Like the black American audience presumed to be *Blacula*'s primary audience, Mamuwalde ends up in America as the supplement to a commoditised exchange. He likens his imprisonment in the coffin to 'slavery.' A couple of American antique dealers are responsible for unleashing Mamuwalde from his coffin in contemporary Los Angeles. Near the start of the film they are shown buying the contents of Castle Dracula, planning to 'make a fortune' selling it back in the United States. They almost leave Mamuwalde's coffin behind. Only after signing papers with the estate agent do the couple discover the room containing Mamuwalde's coffin, among other items of furniture. One of the dealers asks the agent, 'this is included in the deal, right?' Mamuwalde, like the contemporary black American viewers of *Blacula*, is that which is 'more than was bargained for,' that is recognised as being 'included in the deal' retrospective of the transaction taking place. The antique dealers hyperbolically call their deal 'the coup d'etat of the century,' unconsciously attesting to Mamuwalde's presence upsetting the political status quo of the 1970s society he is about to enter.

As Mamuwalde was infiltrating the vampire film, black blood was entering the national blood supply. Racial segregation of blood was almost entirely ended by the close of the 1960s, in step with other forms of official desegregation that had occurred with Lyndon B. Johnson signing the Civil Rights Act in 1964, ending the Jim Crow era.[15] As Kara W. Swanson observes, '[i]t was just as formal racial segregation of blood was ending that the professional [that is, paid] donor was coming under increasing scrutiny in medicine and among the lay public.' This fear was largely racialised, the assumption being that much 'paid' blood was made up of 'black' blood.[16] In general, the blood collected by 'for profit' collectors – that is, blood collectors who paid donors for their blood – was viewed with suspicion, seen as somewhat sordid. The donors these businesses attracted were 'an underclass, desperate and down on their luck. Made sickly by their living conditions and tempted to lie by the promise of cash [and] represent[ing] high risks for hepatitis and malaria.'[17] 'For profit' collectors were sometimes said to be dealing in 'ooze for booze.'[18] Doctors warned against 'exploiting for its proteins a population which is least able to donate them.'[19] 'Can it be considered proper to bleed and exploit skid row inhabitants whose nutrition is so poor [?],' Dr Tibor J. Greenwalt asked, continuing, 'are we to rely upon the undernourished to supply the blood needs of the Nation?'[20] Insofar as this situation was the predictable outcome of a blood supply controlled not by a single authority but 'the hand of the market,' the issue was seen to write large the unwholesome nature of American capitalism in general.

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[15] In 1950 the American Red Cross had stopped keeping record of blood donors by race. Arkansas mandated blood segregation until 1969, Louisiana until 1972. Some cases of blood segregation at individual institutions still occurred into the late-1970s but these were now very rare.

[16] Swanson, 142-43.

[17] Starr, 189.

[18] Ibid., 196.

[19] Tibor J. Greenwalt, 'Plasmapheresis as a Source of Human Protein,' in *Conference on* Plasmapheresis, 'XXth Scientific Meeting of Protein Foundation, Inc.' (Boston, April 7 1966), 2. Cited in Starr, 208.

[20] T. Greenwalt, 'Letter to Hon. Edward V. Long,' July 24 1964, cited in 'Threat to Community Blood Bank Posed by FTC Ruling Is Termed "Monstrous,"' *Newport News Press*, June 14 1964, cited in United States Congress, *Bill to Amend* (1964), 208-09. Cited in Starr, 196.

In 1970 social researcher Richard M. Titmuss found that Britain had a safer, more reliable, blood supply than the United States.[21] Titmuss argued that this was because Britain eschewed 'paid donations' like those allowed in America, relying entirely on 'voluntary,' unpaid donations. Perhaps more importantly, after World War II Britain had established a nationalised health system, which managed the national blood supply as part of its work. The United States, on the other hand had opted to let the 'invisible hand' of market supply and demand take care of the blood supply. Titmuss's book, *The Gift Relationship: From Human Blood to Social Policy* 'crystallized existing American concerns' about whether blood should be gifted or sold.[22] Swanson observes:

> The gift/commodity dichotomy [established by Titmuss] challenged the basic rationale of the [blood] bank, manifested in its ledgers recording deposits and withdrawals, that a body product from a stranger would have equivalent therapeutic value to the receiving body, regardless of its source. Aided by the medical profession, by Titmuss's critique, and the resurfacing of racial fears, Americans began to divide [blood] into two unequal categories, equating purchased [blood] with contamination and disease, and gifted body products with purity.[23]

In 1972 the *National Observer* published a story entitled 'Blood that Kills,' describing how 'patients in American hospitals were unaware that they received "cheap, possibly contaminated blood"' from addicts and homeless paid donors, which, 'along with the blood of prisoners and blood from "impoverished, medically backward Haiti" carried the threat of serum hepatitis.'[24]

The vampire's metamorphosis from object (of horror) to subject is expressed in Anne Rice's novel, *Interview with the Vampire* (1976).[25] The transformation is signaled by the title:

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[21] Richard M. Titmuss, *The Gift Relationship: From Human Blood to Social Policy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1970). First American edition by Pantheon Books, New York, 1971.
[22] Swanson, 122.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Susan E. Lederer, *Flesh and Blood: Organ Transplantation and Blood Transfusion in Twentieth-Century America* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 97, citing August Gribben, 'Blood That Kills,' *The National Observer*, January 29 1972, and ARC Record Group 200, Group 5, 020.101 folder Blood Program Hepatitis Material.
[25] Anne Rice, *Interview with the Vampire* (London: Sphere, 2008 [1976]).

the vampire now has something to say, and an audience who wants to hear it. He is now the subject of an interview. No longer an abject monster, Rice's vampires are 'gorgeous fiends.'[26] As in *Blacula*, the slave trade is also the material condition for the vampires' existence in Rice's novel. Within the first few pages, Louis de Pointe du Lac, the eponymous vampire who is being interviewed, mentions that the plantations he owned, worked by slaves, 'had a great deal to do with [his] becoming a vampire' (9). This is because the vampire Lestat de Lioncourt turns Louis into a vampire so that he can take advantage of Louis's money and money management skills, as well as taking possession of Louis's plantation. Louis and Claudia, the two characters that Rice's novel depicts turning from human to vampire, take slaves as their first victims. Slaves offer a source of human blood upon which the vampires can feed with impunity. Later in the novel, Claudia and Louis come to see themselves as Lestat's slaves (112). Slavery offers them the paradigm for understanding their situation. Lestat remarks, 'if you find one or more [vampires] together it will be for safety only, and one will be the slave of the other, the way you are of me' (78). Louis protests 'I'm not your slave,' but relates, 'even as [Lestat] spoke I realized I'd been his slave all along' (78). 'That's how vampires increase … through slavery,' declares Lestat (78). Louis eventually refrains from drinking human blood. Instead, he moralistically embraces a diet of rat blood.[27] During the 1970s, increasing numbers of vampires relate to their blood-drinking with ambivalence. 'I'd like to be normal. I just have a sickness. The only way I can survive is by drinking blood,' confesses the protagonist of *Martin* (dir. George A. Romero, 1978).

Early warnings, such as Titmuss's, that the blood services complex risked spreading disease through the global blood supply, were retrospectively vindicated when the AIDS epidemic exploded in the early 1980s. At first the disease was noticed through an increase in rare, 'opportunistic' infections, including rare forms of cancer and pneumonia, that were symptomatic of the infected body's impaired immune system.[28] By mid-1982 AIDS was recognised, its cause still unknown. High-risk groups were identified as gay men, Haitians,[29]

[26] In a later novel in the series, *Queen of the Damned* (New York: Ballentine Books, 1988), Lestat declares: 'I can't help being a gorgeous fiend. It's just the card I drew' (8).
[27] Sorcha Ní Fhlainn, *Postmodern Vampires: Film, Fiction, and Popular Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 34.
[28] Starr, 267.
[29] Paul Farmer, *AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

haemophiliacs and intravenous drug users.[30] AIDS made visible the interconnectedness of individuals' blood, revealing the extent to which blood had become a common resource.

Yet more than ever, in the 1980s vampires were represented as a minority identity residing within the larger society of natural, mortal humanity. In George R. R. Martin's *Fevre Dream* (1982), vampires are a different 'race' with their own social hierarchy. The continuation of Anne Rice's 'Vampire Chronicles,' *The Vampire Lestat* (1985) and *The Queen of the Damned* (1988), explained the origins of her vampires and the inner workings of their parallel, or hidden, society. In *The Lost Boys* (1987, dir. Joel Schumacher), vampires are a gang of 'cool' punks. In *Near Dark* (1987, dir. Kathryn Bigelow) vampires are punk-like nomads. As Sorcha Ní Fhlainn observes, '[v]ampire cliques rose sharply in the 1980s, as many vampires actively sought out new social groups and alternative families.'[31] This imagining of vampirism as a secret 'race' or hidden, parallel society, goes hand in hand with what Victoria Nelson describes as 'the upgrading of vampires from "undead" to "immortals."'[32] 'In this new representation,' observes Nelson, 'the process of becoming a vampire is one of expansion of consciousness,'[33] and the vampire starts to become a figure representing a version of enhanced, rather than degraded or degenerated, humanity.

The Lost Boys, the highest grossing vampire movie of the 1980s, is sometimes seen to affirm traditional patriarchal authority.[34] But the traditional nuclear family is, in fact, absent from this story. At the end of the movie it is not the traditional nuclear family that is embraced, but, instead, a non-traditional family unit that includes a single mother and a grandparent raising children. In *The Lost Boys*, two brothers, Michael (Jason Patric) and Sam (Corey Haim), move to the fictional beach town of Santa Carla (shot in Santa Cruz), California with their mother, Lucy (Dianne Wiest), after she divorces their father, to live with Lucy's father (Barnard Hughes). An eccentric 'hippie,' who grows marijuana and refuses to own a television, the boys' grandfather is far from a patriarch who would enforce submission to traditional rules. A straitlaced business owner, Max (Ed Herrmann), begins courting Lucy, promising to become a replacement father figure for the boys. It turns out, however, that Max is the Santa Carla's head vampire, and he must ultimately be destroyed to secure the film's happy ending. Similarly, in the earlier film, *Fright Night* (1985, dir. Tom Holland), a teenage

[30] Starr, 267.
[31] Ní Fhlainn, 98.
[32] Nelson, 125.
[33] Ibid.
[34] For example, see Auerbach, 168.

boy protagonist, Charley Brewster (William Ragsdale) fights a vampire, Jerry Dandridge (Chris Sarandon), who threatens to seduce his mother and become his stepfather in the absence of his biological father. In *The Lost Boys* and *Fright Night*, vampiric threat is one and the same with the re-establishment of patriarchy.

The Lost Boys' opening scene showing the vampires at a boardwalk carnival attests to the centrality of enjoyment to the film. This is underscored by the tag line, 'It's fun to be a vampire,' that was used in advertising the film.[35] The way the vampires walk around on a moving carousel, menacing the seated, paying customers enjoying the ride in the prescribed manner, announces the film's imagining of vampirism as the pursuit of 'alternative' modes of *jouissance*. After Michael drinks the blood of the vampire David (Kiefer Sutherland), David's gang make Michael join them in hanging by their hands from a rail bridge while a train drives over it. The boys hold on until, one by one, they lose grip and drop into the mist below. The shuddering movement of their bodies, caused by the train, is reminiscent of sex, as well as being a kind of inversion of the clichéd film symbol for sex: a train driving through a tunnel. The situation thus reads like a kind of group sex act, evoking the sexual rituals used to initiate group belonging that are popularly believed to occur in groups such as gangs, American college fraternities, and the military.

The film's barely sensical narrative progression takes place against a backdrop of Native American culture as an absent presence. Shots of a carved wooden American 'Indian Chief' appear between scenes, as though the sculpture is watching the story happen. The 'Indian' carving serves no purpose in terms of narrative progression, its purpose being seemingly only decorative. Similarly, Sam's dog is named Nanook, a feature of the text that does not serve narrative progression but invokes Native American culture. For the Inuit, Nanook (Nanuk) is an 'almost human' bear deity, who dictated bear hunters' success or failure. The name Nanook was popularised, however, as the name of the man who was the subject of the first 'full-length' documentary, *Nanook of the North* (1922, dir. Robert J. Flaherty). Nanook the dog aids the boys in their fight against David in the film's final scene. Mirroring Nanook's action, the grandfather ultimately saves the day by driving his car through the living room wall at precisely the right moment to destroy Max, the head vampire. *The Lost Boys* thus relies on a version of nature to insist on a 'natural order of things' that will disallow Michael from becoming a vampire, even while everything the other characters do to try to save him from vampirism is completely ineffectual. The watching but unseeing

[35] Cited in Ní Fhlainn, 81.

wooden eyes of the Indian Chief, the dog Nanook, and the eccentric grandfather (a crypto-native or quasi-native figure) all support the film's natural order. Native American life was devastated by diseases introduced by Europeans, in a part-intentional, part-accidental genocide that killed eighty to ninety percent of the population.[36] This was an even more dramatic example of a historical epidemic than the bubonic plague, to which AIDS was sometimes compared – and one that was fundamental to modern American history yet less consciously or publicly talked about. The Native American epidemic illnesses appeared to confirm the American doctrine of Manifest Destiny – not at the time they occurred, but in retrospect, when this idea developed in the nineteenth century. *The Lost Boys*' narrative follows a similar logic to that of Manifest Destiny, with the Native American's absent presence, now in service of the natural order, seeming to step in to protect the boys from vampirisation. What this equates to, however, is protection from being forced to submit to traditional patriarchal authority as embodied by Max. Thus the film endorses the command to enjoy, by constructing castration (patriarchal authority) as such an abhorrent fate that the natural order of the universe will actively prevent it from happening.

While AIDS does not appear overtly in *The Lost Boys*, the means by which Michael contracts vampirism from David resonates with the contemporary idea that AIDS was passed on by virtually any contact with blood. David has Michael drink his blood from a bottle, rather than the traditional act of vampiric biting. This method of creating new vampires resonates with the 1980s idea that AIDS circulated through the pursuit of illegal and illicit forms of *jouissance* – gay sex, intravenous drug use – or the seemingly different *jouissance* attached to the 'different' embodiment of haemophiliacs or Haitians. David tells Michael he has to drink from the bottle without knowing what its contents are. Only later does Michael find out that what he was asked to drink was David's blood and that it will turn him into a vampire. This mirrors the way in which people in the mid-1980s were finding out that they might already have contracted AIDS without knowing it during the period when the disease had been unknown, since the retrovirus can be carried for several years before symptoms develop. Becoming a vampire in *The Lost Boys* happens gradually rather than instantaneously, as was common in earlier texts, making vampirism seem more like an illness whose effects work on the victim over time than a supernatural metamorphosis. Nina Auerbach claims that *The Lost Boys* 'introduces' 'the half-vampire' to the genre, which she

[36] Sheldon Watts, *Epidemics and History: Disease, Power, and Imperialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 84.

sees as 'the most important paradigm-shift of the 1980s.'[37] Now vampirism can act like an illness, sometimes being reversed if treated correctly. Michael and his girlfriend, Star (Jami Gertz), ultimately recover from the vampirism with which they were infected. Similarly, in *Near Dark*, transfusions of healthy blood reverse vampiric infection and save the protagonists, Caleb Colton (Adrian Pasdar) and Mae (Jenny Wright).

In the 1990s marginalised identity groups began protesting their exclusion from blood donation. In April 1990 an FDA ban on accepting Haitian blood was protested by 'tens of thousands' who 'swarmed across the Brooklyn Bridge into lower Manhattan.'[38] They were protesting a 'policy on blood donations they said unfairly stigmatized Haitians and Africans.'[39] The ban on gay men's blood was protested since its implementation in the 1980s, but overt forms of activism and protest grew from the 1990s onwards. As Jeffrey Bennet describes, many people feel that blood donation is a 'ritual' affirming 'civic identity'[40] and societal belonging, thus they feel that being banned from donating blood because of their identity is a form of persecution.

By the 1990s, blood was also the easiest source through which to harvest DNA. This was the period in which, as Donna Haraway puts it, 'blood [was] recast in the coin of genes and information.'[41] At this time popular culture seemed to celebrate multiculturalism but in a manner that was fused with a fascination with genetics and technology. In 1991 pop singer Michael Jackson's music video for 'Black or White' featured a sequence of human faces from different 'races' morphing into each other.[42] The imagery of racial morphing coupled with the words of the song, repeating 'it don't matter if you're black or white,'[43] seem to announce an era in which race has become obsolete. In 1993 *Time* magazine featured a computer-generated image of a woman's face composed by combining the faces of people of

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[37] Auerbach, 168.
[38] Donatella Lorch, 'F.D.A. Policy to Limit Blood Is Protested: Marchers Say AIDS Ban Is a Stigma,' *New York Times*, April 21 1990, 25.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Jeffrey Bennet *Banning Queer Blood: Rhetorics of Citizenship, Contagion, and Resistance* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2009), 8, 116.
[41] Donna J. Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan©_Meets_OncoMouse TM: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York; London: Routledge, 1997), 265.
[42] John Landis (dir.), 'Black or White' [music video], premiered November 14 1991.
[43] Michael Jackson and Bill Bottrell, 'Black Or White' [song] from the Michael Jackson album *Dangerous* (1991).

different ethnicities.[44] Accompanying text on the magazine cover reads: '[t]ake a good look at this woman. She was created by a computer from a mix of several races. What you see is a remarkable preview of THE NEW FACE OF AMERICA.'[45] Haraway points out that 'liberal multiculturalism,' while appearing to dispel the overt racism of the earlier twentieth century, often reasserted concepts of racial essence in the process of doing so. For example, Haraway points out that the *Time* cover depicting the 'new face of America' was described in the accompanying editorial as being '15% Anglo-Saxon, 17.5% Middle Eastern, 17.5% African, 7.5% Asian, 35% European and 7.5% Hispanic.'[46] Haraway observes that '[e]arly-[twentieth] century racialized ethnic categories reappear [here] as entries in an electronic database for […] statistical […] analysis.'[47] Slavoj Žižek calls the belief in the possibility of quantifying identity in this way 'radical self-objectivization': 'the situation in which, in the guise of the genetic formula, I will be able to confront what I "objectively am."' [48] Jonathan Marks points out another problem with this kind of self-objectivisation when applied to conceiving of 'genetic similarity' even between different species, let alone different 'races,' since 'the very structure of DNA compels it to be no more than 75% different, no matter how diverse the species being compared are.'[49] Marks observes, 'the universe of genetic similarities is quite different from our preconceptions of what similarities mean.'[50] 'Yet the fact that our DNA is more than 25% similar to a dandelion's does not imply that we are over one-quarter dandelion – even if the latter were a sensible statement.[51]

In 1990 fashion brand United Colors of Benetton used the so-called 'Blanket photo' in its advertising, featuring a white woman, a black woman, and an east Asian infant posed wrapped together in a blanket in a manner suggesting they are a family unit.[52] It is as if the photograph takes the words of the Michael Jackson song literally, 'if you're thinkin' of being

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[44] Ted Thai [photographer], cover image for *Time*, November 18 1993, Vol. 142 No. 21. The headline reads: 'The New Face of America: How Immigrants Are Shaping the World's First Multicultural Society.'

[45] *Time*, November 18 1993, Vol. 142 No. 21, cover.

[46] Ibid., cited in Haraway, 264.

[47] Haraway, 265.

[48] Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London; New York: Verso, 2008 [1999]), 405-06.

[49] Jonathan Marks, *What it Means to be 98% Chimpanzee: Apes, People, and their Genes* (Berkeley: University of California Press; 2002), 5.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Oliviero Toscani [photographer], 'Blanket' [photograph], 1990.

my baby, it don't matter if you're black or white. If you're thinkin' of being my brother, it don't matter if you're black or white.' While this multiracial, queer family is not technologically produced in the manner of the computer generated faces of the *Time* cover or the music video just discussed, its historic newness (the image of nuclear families had been predominantly monoracial and heteronormative, historically) sits in a context where the newness to western culture of celebrating multiculturalism is symbolically tied to the newness of advanced technology and, in this case, the newness of fashion trends. These different forms of celebrated newness seem to herald new forms of *jouissance* for contemporary consumers, but they also announce the further downfall of historic familiarities and can thus be experienced as threatening people's familiar routes to *jouissance*, hence why they shocked audiences and caused controversy when initially published. As the vampire became increasingly imagined as a new kind of human, rather than the undead corpse of earlier times, this mix of ideas about DNA, race, technology, multiculturalism, altered humanity and forms of newness became incorporated into vampire texts.

Meanwhile, also in the 1990s, the Human Genome Diversity Project collected blood samples from indigenous populations, but was criticised as a 'vampire project'[53] by some, raising new questions in bioethics around the concept of 'informed consent.'[54] Court cases and law suits revealed the extent to which corporate greed and professional negligence within the blood products industry had allowed the AIDS epidemic to take place. For example, Susie Quintana, who contracted HIV from a blood transfusion, sued United Blood Services and was awarded $8.1 million in damages by a jury in 1992.[55] Aspasia Stephanou observes that, in parallel with increased awareness of the finitude of our usual energy sources, 'in vampire texts [at this time] blood's availability becomes limited, ushering the whole of society into a crisis, sharpening appetites and facilitating the privatisation of human blood.'[56] This shift in the genre might also be a response to the awareness that 'clean' blood was a finite resource, with the potential danger of infected blood having impacted western culture.

The 1990s is when the genre known as 'paranormal romance' first appeared in its now recognised form, as well as being the period in which 'Young Adult' novels first became a

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[53] Michael Dodson and Robert Williamson, 'Indigenous Peoples and the Morality of the Human Genome Diversity Project,' *Journal of Medical Ethics* 25, no. 2 (1999): 205.
[54] Haraway, 249-53.
[55] Starr, 322-24, 335-37.
[56] Stephanou, 121.

defined genre and market in the eyes of publishers.[57] A version of paranormal romance was also depicted in the television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (The WB/UPN, 1997-2003). From Tanya Huff's 'Blood' series of novels (1991-), to Laurell K. Hamilton's 'Anita Blake' series (1993-), novels about vampires more often than not began to feature a tough, even warrior-like heroine in a reversal of the preyed-upon 'damsel in distress' in the tradition of Stoker's Lucy Westenra.[58]

Jewelle Gomez took the reversal further in *The Gilda Stories* (1991), [59] consciously taking Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's 'Saint Germain' novel series (1978-) as inspiration, which features one of the first vampires to feed on human lovers without killing them, and without immediately transforming them into vampires. Gomez invents a lesbian black American vampire whose bite is healing and enjoyable.[60] In *The Gilda Stories* vampires refer to taking a 'share of the blood' (24, 33). Instead of drinking 'blood,' with no article, the word 'the' is placed in front of the word 'blood.' This phrasing suggests a limit on the resource, instead of blood coming from an endless supply. Vampiric feeding in *The Gilda Stories* is also referred to as 'the exchange' (58) and 'trad[ing] for life's blood' (57). Gilda is not just 'sympathetic' but benevolent. She and her kind can impart positive thoughts and aspirations into the minds of those whose blood they consume. It is remarked that 'there is a joy to the exchange [vampires] make' (45). An ethical vampirism is explicitly laid out within Gilda's vampire 'family.' Their 'first lesson' is that '[*y*]*ou must never take your share of the blood without leaving something of use behind*' (192, original emphasis). One of Gilda's vampire mentors, a native American woman named Bird informs her:

> Some [vampires] are said to live through the energy of fear. That is their sustenance more than the sharing. The truth is we hunger for connection to life, but it needn't be through horror or destruction. Those are just the easiest

[57] This point is discussed at length in Joseph Crawford, *The Twilight of the Gothic? Vampire Fiction and the Rise of Paranormal Romance, 1991-2012* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014).
[58] Nelson, 129.
[59] Jewelle Gomez, *The Gilda Stories* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2016 [Firebrand Books, 1991]).
[60] In a public lecture at the San Francisco Public Library Gomez described how *The Gilda Stories* was influenced by Yarbo. See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSj50Y9rVHY (accessed November 30, 2018).

> links to evoke. Once learned, this lesson mustn't be forgotten. To ignore it, to wallow in death as the white man has done, can only bring bitterness. (110)

Their heightened consciousness of finitude regarding an essential resource means the vampires in *The Gilda Stories* resemble the postmodern consumer. The virtue of altruism – implicitly a strategy for remedying the ill effects of 'unethical' consumerism – is associated with the characters' non-white and female identities. In the following chapter, I show how *Fledgling* places another non-white female vampire protagonist in a position that makes her an allegory for the postmodern consumer. Where Gomez places her protagonist in a relationship of 'exchange,' however, Butler places her protagonist into a 'symbiosis,' producing a closer allegory for the complexities of postmodern consumerism than Gomez does.

Continuing *The Gilda Stories*' reversals of cultural preconceptions, bloodshed initially signifies freedom in the novel. The protagonist, who at this point in the story has not yet received the name 'Gilda,' kills a bounty hunter who tries to rape and capture her as she flees the plantation where she has been enslaved. She stabs and kills him in self-defense. The blood spilled in this scene is described as a 'cleansing' 'bath' 'washing' over her (12). In a later scene, another vampire named Bird 'slice[s] beneath [her] right breast' and bleeds directly onto 'Gilda's dark skin.' Gilda 'hungrily dr[a]ws the life [that is, the blood] through her parted lips into her body' (139). Blood-drinking is an eroticised and romanticised act in this scene, in stark contrast with the disgust evoked by blood-drinking in most earlier texts. Throughout *The Gilda Stories* the association of blood with illness and contagion that was prevalent at the time of the novel's initial publication, due to the AIDS crisis, is reversed.

Increasingly during the 1990s vampire society becomes riven,[61] split between good and evil vampires as a corollary with the rise of 'good' vampires who take human lovers (predominantly, a human teenage girl or a young woman couples with a male vampire who outwardly appears to be her age). Generally, good is equated with respect for human life, while evil is equated with disregard if not hostility toward humankind. In *The Gilda Stories,* Gilda and Bird exterminate a vampire named Fox who callously kills and exploits women. In the first 'Young Adult' paranormal romance, *The Silver Kiss* (1990) by Annette Curtis

[61] Ní Fhlainn, 118-21, 159. See also Mark Edmundson, *Nightmare on Main Street: Angels, Sadomasochism and the Culture of the Gothic* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 56-58, 63.

Klause, the protagonist Zoë (whose name means 'life') and her vampire boyfriend, Simon, must destroy Simon's brother, Christopher, to stop Christopher from killing people. By the late 1990s, and especially after the September 11 attacks on the United States in 2001, the theme of a physical and ideological war between factions of a split vampire society becomes a common feature of myriad vampire stories.[62] In Charlaine Harris's *The Southern Vampire Mysteries* novel series (2001-2013),[63] vampire society is split between those ready to embrace synthetic blood (marketed with the ironic product name 'TrueBlood') and those who wish to retain their familiar *jouissance* by feeding on human prey. In the conclusion of this thesis I examine the first season of the television adaptation of Harris's series, *True Blood* (HBO, 2008). In *Underworld* (2003), a vampire warrior-woman, Selene (Kate Beckinsale), fights werewolves (called 'Lycans' in the film) that she believes killed her family.

In *Blade* (dir. Stephen Norrington, 1998) a half-vampire, half-human 'daywalker' fights a vampire named Frost who wants to start a 'vampire apocalypse,' turning everyone into vampires, but needs Blade's blood to complete the ritual to make it happen. 'Born' vampires look down on 'turned' vampires, mirroring a racial hierarchy.[64] Blade uses 'serum,' a synthetic replacement for human blood, to quell his inborn thirst. Gilda and Blade are opposites in many ways. Gilda is loving, nurturing, philosophically ethical (reading Lao-Tsu's *Tao Te Ching* regularly) and creative (having careers as a singer, a member of an off-Broadway black theatre company and a bestselling novelist at different points in history). Blade is 'badass,' macho, destructive, technologised or cyborg-like.[65] Yet both Gilda and Blade are deeply ethical in their respective ways, searching to do what is right in the absence of an explicit authority to give them guidelines. Much of Gilda's story dwells on her feelings of uncertainty as she tries to choose the right actions. By the turn of the millennium, most vampires were still white, but black vampires embodied the range of the vampire figure: the most nurturing, loving and contemplative of vampires on one hand, the most violent and macho of vampire-superheroes on the other. In the following chapter I turn to Octavia Butler's *Fledgling*. The protagonist, Shori, is a kind of synthesis of Gilda and Blade. Like Blade, Shori is a daywalker, of mixed human and vampire origins. Like Gilda, Shori ruminates on the ethics of her actions. Like Blade, Shori defends herself by fighting other

[62] Ní Fhlainn, 170-72.
[63] The first five of the thirteen novels were published before *Fledgling*.
[64] Stacey Abbott, *Celluloid Vampires: Life after Death in the Modern World* (Austin: University of Texas, 2007), 193.
[65] Abbott, 197-203.

vampires. Like Gilda, Shori helps the humans whose blood she drinks. Unlike Blade, Shori ultimately appeals to vampire society to use their internal legal system to protect herself and her ‘family’ of human blood-sources.

Chapter Six: 'I Don't Want to Need It': Blood in Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (2005)

Fledgling (2005) by Octavia Butler is the first-person narration by the protagonist, Shori, of events following an attack on her community of which she is the sole survivor. At fifty-three years old, Shori is a child in Ina terms and has the appearance of a 'ten or eleven' (8) year-old human girl. The novel begins with Shori waking in a cave with no memory of who she is, or of her prior life. *Fledgling* follows Shori's journey as she discovers details of the attack that caused her amnesia. She must first identify her attackers, a vampire family named the Silks, defend herself from more of their attacks, and eventually bring them to justice. While completing this quest, Shori must discover what kind of person, and what kind of being, she has been in the past, and make decisions about who she wants to be and how she wants to act in the present. These decisions will shape the future of herself and of others. 'I have to know who I am,' Shori declares, 'and what I am' (57). At the end of the novel Shori concludes: '[my family] were all gone. The person I had been was gone. I couldn't bring anyone back, not even myself. I could only learn what I could […] about my families. I would restore what could be restored' (310). The novel concludes with Shori affirming that she will accept, and live with, the lack of memory and of family that she cannot restore.

In *Fledgling*, as in Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* (1954) which I discussed in Chapter Four, vampires are not supernatural beings. They are, in Butler's words, 'biological vampires'[1]: a 'genetically similar' 'cousin species' of humanity 'like the chimpanzee' (67) who call themselves 'Ina.' The Ina are physically powerful humanoids with a centuries-long natural lifespan. Against their superhumanity, the Ina possess two key weaknesses that are 'biological' versions of older vampirology: involuntary daytime hibernation and hypersensitivity to sunlight. In this way *Fledgling* fits Stacey Abbott's observation that early twenty-first-century vampire texts reconceived 'generic conventions and iconography [to] undermin[e] the laws of religion and folklore in favour of laws of science and technology.'[2] The efforts of some Ina to overcome their biological weaknesses is the direct cause of Shori's existence. In *Fledgling* the Ina have been an entirely white-skinned species up until the births

[1] John C. Snider, 'Interview: Octavia E. Butler [2004],' in *Conversations with Octavia Butler*, ed. Consuela Francis (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), 218.
[2] Stacey Abbott, *Celluloid Vampires: Life after Death in the Modern World* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), 197.

of Shori and her siblings,[3] who are products of genetic engineering. Shori's mothers (plural, the Ina reproductive system uses multiple parents rather than the couple of the human system) mixed their own DNA with the genes of a 'black human' (76) woman named Jessica Margaret Grant (132). The purpose of Shori's geneticist mothers' work was to produce Ina who can withstand exposure to sunlight and stay awake during the day. As Abbott has shown, in the early twenty-first century, 'blood signifies the potential of modern genetics and the mysteries of DNA,' as 'both the science and the ethics of genetics and DNA' became a 'cultural preoccupation' during the 1990s and 2000s. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Shori is like the character Eric Brooks, also known as Blade, from the *Blade* movies and Marvel comics, who is also a black American human-vampire genetic hybrid.[4]

Shori is a new kind of Ina. Her newness is highlighted when people 'greet' her by 'touching' her in disbelief. 'It was as though they had to touch me to believe I could be Ina and yet be awake [during the day],' she says (160). As an 'experiment' (31, 66, 76) nobody knows how strong Shori will become once she reaches adulthood. However, it appears that Shori's venom is super-strong, promising to make her the strongest Ina, and thus the strongest life form, on earth once she reaches adulthood. As an Ina-human hybrid, Shori is also a new kind of human. At the start of the novel the question is open, for the reader as well as for Shori, along with Wright (the first human Shori meets, with whom she immediately begins a symbiosis), as to whether she might, in fact, be human. 'If you're right about [remembering hunting a deer without weapons and eating it raw after waking in the cave], you're not human' (20), Wright remarks. Shori's non-humanity is a matter of 'if' ('*if* you're right about what you remember'), not an immediate certainty in Wright's mind. He does not immediately consider that Shori might belong to a non-human species, instead surmising that a psychological cause might explain her behaviour. 'If a psychiatrist found out what you eat and drink, he might think you're insane' (31), Wright muses. Shori thus evinces the 'humanization' of vampires in the postmodern Gothic described by Victoria Nelson.[5]

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[3] All of Shori's sisters are dead before the novel's events, killed in the attack that cost Shori her memory, while Shori's brothers are all killed by the Silks about a third of the way into the novel.

[4] For a comparison of Blade and Shori, see Aspasia Stephanou, *Reading Vampire Gothic through Blood: Bloodlines* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 114-17.

[5] Nelson, 126.

In the final moments of the novel, Shori tries coffee as a dare and discovers she can 'tolerate' it. '[Coffee] was less appealing than plain water, but not disgusting. I wondered what other human food or drink I could tolerate. When I had more time, I might find out' (305), we read. Here the novel suggests that Shori has more human-ness than has been discovered over the course of the story, which might be explored in sequels to *Fledgling*. Butler's journal entries and archived papers reveal that she intended to write a series of books about Shori.[6] Butler typically wrote her novels in series. Of Butler's twelve published novels, besides *Fledgling*, only one other, *Kindred* (1979), is a standalone novel. At the time of her death in 2006, Butler had begun work on a sequel to *Fledgling*.[7] How Shori's genetic hybridity might express itself once she reaches adulthood, is unknown not only to herself but all the characters in *Fledgling*, especially since all of the scientists involved in creating her are now dead.

Fledgling's vampires, the Ina, derive sustenance almost entirely from the blood of several human donors whom they refer to as their 'symbionts' and keep together in a kind of 'family' (72, 129, 159, 270) that is also described ambivalently as a 'harem' (83-84), a 'group marriage' (127), 'a commune that had somehow survived from the 1960s' (151), as a form of prostitution (192) and as something that 'sound[s] more like slavery than symbiosis' (204). The symbionts become long-lived but remain mortal humans. They become addicted to the individual venom of their particular Ina master or mistress, also giving up their self-mastery to that Ina by falling under a chemical hypnosis caused by the Ina mistress or master's venom.[8] Venom is an agent that chemically alters the bloodstream it enters, echoing the changed blood that – as I show in what follows – Shori instantiates for all the other characters in the novel.

As the story unfolds it becomes clear that Shori's greatest task is to settle on blood's meaning. There is the blood Shori relies on for sustenance, tying human lives to her own survival, and human individuals to each other through their shared addiction to her venom.

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[6] OEB 3279, Octavia E. Butler Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Cited in Gerry Canavan, *Octavia E. Butler* (Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 167, 171.

[7] Canavan describes draft fragments of several differing versions of this sequel that exist, found in OEB 75, OEB 77, OEB 78, OEB 83, OEB 601, and OEB 3155 at the Huntington Library. See Canavan,167-170.

[8] Iosif, Shori's father, explains to her: '[Human] bodies detect individual differences in [Ina] venom […] [The symbionts are] addicted to their particular Ina and no other' (74).

Then there is the blood Shori will drink from an Ina male to bind him to her as a mate, making him infertile with other Ina. Finally, there is the intergenerational, or 'racial' blood through which Shori might hand her genetic uniqueness on to a future generation, inaugurating a new hybrid species that is not so much a combination of human and Ina as an altogether new category of being that represents both the future of humanity and of the Ina. It is the Silks' actions in response to what they perceive as the intergenerational ramifications of Shori's blood being handed on to her would-be progeny that threatens Shori's survival.

An Ina 'Council of Judgement,' a trial scene, concludes *Fledgling* and this is where everything Shori has learned about herself since waking up in the cave is tested, as are the beliefs and motives of the Silks. Here, Shori is invited to 'tell [her] story' (235) to a panel of Ina elders. Each of these elders is 'related in one way or another to the Silks and to Shori' (193). This makes explicit the familial blood link between Shori and the Silks that the Silks wish to deny. Shori's extended familial connections with Ina society are highlighted when Vladimir Leontyev, 'one of the fathers of Shori['s] mothers' who sits on the Council, says: '[f]amily is what matters here. You [Shori] are of great importance to me because you are one of my descendants' (236). These conditions of the Council show that even though the Silks were successful in murdering Shori's close relatives, her parents and siblings, they have still failed to eradicate Shori's blood links to Ina society. They show that such an eradication would be an impossible project, as blood relation within a species (allegorically, or symbolically, the human species) is a matter not of total absence nor total presence, but of degree.

Forms of eugenics are built into the framework of the novel's imaginary scenario on multiple levels. If the Silks are found guilty of the murders of Shori's family the Council can disband the Silk family by executing the adults and having the children adopted into other families. Managing Ina 'blood,' the blood of the species' intergenerational future, is the function of the Council. In the end, a majority of the Council vote to 'st[an]d with Shori [against] the Silk family' (299). The vote is not unanimous, however. The verdict is phrased:

> For the wrongs the Silk family has done […] the penalty, by written law, is the dissolution of the Silk family. The five unmated Silk sons must be adopted by five families in five countries other than the United States of America. […] They will be Silk no longer. (299)

The Council of Judgement's legal power to make the Silk children 'Silk no longer' mirrors the Silks' aim to terminate, by vigilante means, Shori's genetic legacy by destroying her before she can reproduce. Prior to the Council it is explained to Shori that if the Silks are found guilty they will 'lose their children' because they would 'not be seen as fit to raise them' (225). The term 'fit' was central in eugenics rhetoric of the early twentieth century (as I discussed in Chapter Three), but here the term is applied to a form of cultural unfitness, handing on the wrong beliefs or values to the next generation, rather than biological unfitness as in classic eugenics.

During the Council proceedings, a younger member of the Silks asserts: 'My family is honorable and it's Ina!' (278). The implication is that Shori is not Ina and not honourable, and that honour and Ina-ness go hand in hand. Against the Silks' view, Preston Gordon (Shori's 'advocate,' the Ina version of a lawyer) argues to the Ina audience: 'Shori Matthews is as Ina as the rest of us. In addition, she carries the potentially life-saving human DNA that has darkened her skin and given her something we've sought for generations: the ability to walk in sunlight, to stay awake and alert during the day' (272). Preston sees benefits for the long-term survival of the Ina as a species in having descendants with darker skin than his own. He subscribes to the view expressed by Wright that 'melanin' is 'a good part of the answer to [the Inas'] daytime problems' (147). Shori's blackness is thus a byproduct or surplus result that is a corollary of reaching the goal of creating a version of Ina who can walk in daylight. In this way *Fledgling* stages a counter-narrative of racial origin that stands in precise contrast to the way in which racial whiteness has historically been conceived of as an outcome or achievement of the evolutionary process. Shori's construction is not the would-be pseudo-opposite gesture of creating black Ina for the sake of a black, not white, version of an Ina existing. Instead, *Fledgling* imagines a reason why a people, the 'Ina people' (291), might want to increase the amount of melanin in their skin based on a reasoning that does not stem from viewing differences in skin's melanin level as racial difference. As Chuck Robinson puts it, Shori 'is genetically engineered to possess melanin as a physiological property and *not* to be "Black" as a sociocultural identity.'[9] Some Ina and some symbionts claim that the Ina are racially blind:

[9] Chuck Robinson, 'Minority and Becoming-Minor in Octavia Butler's *Fledgling*,' *Science Fiction Studies* 42. 3 (2015): 488.

> [T]he Ina weren't racist, [one Ina, Wells] insisted. Human racism meant nothing to Ina because human races meant nothing to them. They looked for congenial human symbionts wherever they happened to be, without regard for anything but personal appeal. (148)

Later, an older symbiont, Brook, explains to Wright that because the Ina are 'not human,' '[t]hey don't care about white or black' (162).

The Ina are diverse in their beliefs, however, as the Council of Judgement, with its split vote on the verdict, shows. Like many of the postmodern vampire societies depicted in texts discussed in this thesis, including the one found in the television series *True Blood* (HBO, 2008) which is discussed in the conclusion of this thesis that follows this chapter, Ina society is riven by differences in opinion among its citizens. For example, when, during the Council, Preston claims that Shori is 'as Ina as the rest of us [Ina],' another elder named Katharine Dahlman responds:

> You want your sons to mate with this person. You want them to get black, human children from her. Here in the United States, even most humans will look down on them When I came to this country, such people were kept as property, as slaves. (272)

Katherine's words demonstrate that Wells's earlier claim that 'human races mea[n] nothing to' Ina does not hold. If many people believe 'human races' mean nothing to the Ina, it is clear that 'Ina races' do, now that Shori has inaugurated racial difference within Ina society by surviving as the last black Ina in the world. By introducing Ina with visibly different amounts of melanin into a community that had been racially undifferentiated, Shori's mothers inadvertently end, or break the illusion of, the Inas' ability to resist the 'human' problem of seeing race. This is referenced when an Ina elder, Alice Rappaport**[,]** says to the Council, '[o]ver the centuries, I've seen too much racial prejudice among humans. It isn't a weed we need growing among us' (275).

Shori represents unknown possibilities for every character in the novel, including herself. The Silks want to eleminate Shori as an unknown factor whereas others are prepared to accept Shori's unknownness and live with its consequences. The word 'experiment' is used several times to describe Shori, emphasising the uncertainty of her ultimate meaning for Ina society. Preston relates to the Council that he is 'not concerned about allowing his sons to

mate with someone who [i]s, among other things, a genetic experiment' (275). A person with dark skin is one of the 'other things' that Shori is. When Shori meets her brother, Stefan, for the first time, their dark skin is immediately tied to their status as experiments:

> I could see that Stefan was darker than Iosif, darker than Wright. He was a light brown to my darker brown, and that meant…
>
> 'You're an experiment, too,' I said to him. (76)

Fledgling shows that it is not Shori's dark skin itself that motivates the Silks' violence, it is the unknownness signified by her dark skin that motivates the racist response to her existence. This reflects the way in which black skin has signified unknownness in American history, for example, as I discussed in Chapter Four on *I Am Legend*, the unknown consequences of impending racial desegregation in the early 1950s. During the Council, Katharine protests: 'No one can be certain of the truth of anything you [Shori] say because you are neither Ina nor human. Your scent, your reactions, your facial expressions, your body language – none of it is right' (271-72), registering the centrality of uncertainty about Shori to Katharine's racism. The importance of Shori's dark skin in *Fledgling*'s narrative echoes a broader concern with skin in Gothic literature identified by J. Halberstam.[10] Halberstam argues that skin 'becomes a kind of metonym for the human,'[11] allowing the abnormal skin of Gothic monsters (for example, 'too tight [or], too dark [or], too pale'[12]) to signify their monstrosity. In *Fledgling*, however, Shori's skin is a 'metonym for the human' because of her genetic hybridity. Shori's dark skin is a signifier of her human DNA, fusing human identity with black identity in a way that inverts the historical racist equation of humanity with racial whiteness. Halberstam is concerned with the ways in which monstrous skin can confound the boundary between the outside and the inside of the body. But in *Fledgling*, the way in which the Silks perceive Shori's skin as being monstrous provides a way of imaginatively exploring the fact that, as Halberstam writes, 'American racism towards black

[10] Judith Halberstam. *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995).
[11] J. Halberstam, '"Parasites and Perverts: An Introduction to Gothic Monstrosity," from *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters*' in *Classic Readings on Monster Theory: Demonstrare Volume One*, ed. Asa Simon Mittman and Marcus Hensel (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2018), 79.
[12] Halberstam (2018), 79.

Americans [is] precisely [a] Gothic discours[e] given over to the making monstrous particular kinds of bodies.'[13]

Fledgling shows that 'seeing' race installs a new form of competition for *jouissance*, a new intersubjective axis for envy and the perceived threat of castration. The Silks' belief that Shori places the 'welfare of the Ina people' (291) in danger is based on a conception of 'welfare' as a continuity of *jouissance* rather than 'welfare' as real survival. The question the Silks face is: how can Ina *jouissance* remain just that – *Ina*– if it is being enjoyed by someone who confounds the received definition of what being Ina is? Milo Silk's response to Shori's unknowable ultimate meaning is to argue that Shori is 'not Ina!' (238). Consequently, Milo claims, Shori has 'no more business at [the] Council than would a clever dog!' (238). At the end of the Council, another Silk patriarch, Russell, yells angrily at the large Ina audience, '[w]hat will [Shori] give us all? Fur? Tails?' (300). Russell's reference is exaggerated, since it is hard to see how human genes would pass on traits that humans almost always do not have but it evokes a 'lower' animal form, such as the 'clever dog.' The bestial 'fur' and 'tails' as metonyms for blackness stand for the unknown effects of Shori's existence, and, perhaps, a fear of regression the Silks believe she may cause. Contrary to what Russel's**[<sp]** question says on the face of it though, the object of his fear is not what Shori will 'give' the Ina, but what she will take away, the taking away of *jouissance* he believes she will engender. Russell's question is really a statement: Shori will lose the Ina what makes them who they are. They will become Ina who enjoy in a different mode, 'Ina with tails' and so not Ina at all.

The Silks also call Shori a 'mongrel cub' (173) and a 'black mongrel bitch' (300). The term 'mongrel' means '[t]he offspring or result of cross-breeding, miscegenation, [or] mixed marriage' but also a dog 'of no definable breed resulting from various crossings,' with connotations of 'intermediate character' and 'not belonging to any definite type'[14] ('bitch' means dog too). Though meant as a derogatory term, 'mongrel' repeats the meaning of 'experiment' in that it articulates Shori's status as unknown, and as yet undetermined character. As a representation of the future human, the figure of Shori demonstrates that a real step forward in our development as a species, from what we are now to something we have not been before, will take the form of people who appear not to belong to our species, and who might appear to some humans as a regression of ourselves.

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[13] Halberstam (2018), 77.

[14] 'mongrel, n. and adj.' *OED* Online. *OED* Third Edition, September 2002. Oxford University Press. https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/121222.

As a black vampire, the figure of Shori participates in a tradition where she represents black political agency within America, though this is not her sole meaning. A century prior to *Fledgling*, turn of the century print cartoons used the image of a black vampire as a symbol of black suffrage. The idea of allowing black Americans to vote was hyperbolically characterised as 'Negro Rule' by these cartoons.[15] As, potentially, the strongest life form on earth, Shori represents the potential for new forms of dominance and oppression. *Fledgling* imagines the paranoid caricature of black suffrage as 'Negro Rule' and as vampire being realised, yet in the form of a considerate leader rather than a brute. Shori's threatening physical prowess also gestures to another icon from black American history. The term 'cub' is applied to the young of the *Panthera* genus (the 'big cats'), meaning that when the Silks call Shori a 'mongrel club' they, perhaps unconsciously, suggest that Shori represents a young 'black panther. The 'black panther' was adopted as a symbol of the 'black power' movement of the late-1960s and 1970s, particularly by the Black Panther Party founded by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale in Oakland, California in 1966 (students of Butler's generation from her home state). The symbol of the black panther was adopted as a way for black Americans to embrace violence or aggressivity to political ends, in contrast with the strategy of non-violent civil disobedience that had largely characterised the earlier Black Civil Rights movement. In a 1966 interview, activist John Hulett explained why the symbol of the black panther was initially chosen:

> The black panther is an animal that when it is pressured it moves back until it is cornered, then it comes out fighting for life or death. We felt we had been pushed back long enough and that it was time for Negroes to come out and take over.[16]

One of the many questions *Fledgling* imaginatively explores is: what if a black person became the most physically powerful life form on earth? *Fledgling*, however, inverts the

[15] Norman Jennett [cartoonist], 'Negro Rule' [cartoon], Raleigh *News and Observer*, July 4, 1900. Also, 'The Vampire that Hovers Over North Carolina,' Raleigh *News and Observer*, September 27, 1898.

[16] John Hulett cited in Frank Miles, 'Lowndes County Freedom Organization Leaders Talk about Their Party,' *Movement* (June 1966), 3. Cited in Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (University of California Press, 2012), 90.

racist caricature of black Americans that associates them with brutish aggressivity, with vampires, and with a regressive version of humanity as a constellation of connected connotations, embracing an image of black strength that is more akin to the black panther. Instead of any stereotype, however, *Fledgling* makes Shori, as a humanoid lifeform that has never previously existed, represent an authentic step forward for the human species as a whole, not only dark-skinned humans, out of the past and into the unknown.

The Silks, meanwhile, represent a regression in much of the rhetoric of the Ina who approve of Shori's existence, or at least disapprove of the Silks' murders. Vladimir Leontyev, one of the elders on the Council, refers to a period of lawless feuding between Ina families from centuries ago, stating that those days 'are long past and nothing should be permitted to revive them' (273). Another elder, Walter Nagy, concurs, '[n]one of us wants to go back to the days of feuds' (274), and later adds, '[i]f we [Ina] excuse [mass murder] we open a door that we tried to lock tight centuries ago' (296). As in *I Am Legend*, *Fledgling* reveals that a racist refusal to accept social change may constitute an unrecognised regression. In *True Blood*, discussed in the conclusion following this chapter, vampire society similarly grapples with a change in its *jouissance*, in the form of changing to a diet of synthetic blood. *True Blood*, however, for reasons demonstrated in the conclusion, is ultimately a nostalgic text rather than one that, like *Fledgling*, tries to imagine what a future societal arrangement might look like.

The Silks' beliefs are rhetorically conveyed in a blessing performed by Milo to open the Council of Judgement. Milo implores:

> May we always remember that we are Ina. […] We are an ancient and honourable people […] well aware of our duty to our families, to our kind, and to the truths that make us who we are. […] May we put aside those things that do not honor [the Ina Goddess]. May we […] take care never again to be touched by them, never seduced by them, never soiled by them. […] [O]ur strength flows from our uniqueness and our unity. We are Ina! That is what this Council must protect. (232)

Milo invokes the Ina Goddess as a big Other or cultural superego in whose name he enacts his perceived 'duty' to defend Ina genetic purity. According to Ina mythology, a 'great mother goddess' 'created [the Ina] and gave [them] Earth to live on until [they] bec[o]me wise enough to come home to live in paradise with her' (67). The implication is that Shori,

through her miscegenetic blood, 'touches,' 'seduces' and 'soils' what Milo thinks of as the legitimate, white 'Children of the great Goddess' (292), 'true' Ina. In the terms of the mythology, Shori's existence jeopardises Ina 'paradise,' paradise being a cultural image of complete, uncastrated *jouissance*. The imploring, '[m]ay we always remember' establishes the 'duty' to 'honor the Goddess' by retaining racial integrity as an ongoing project, reaching from the past, through the present and into the future. The rhetoric of 'strength flow[ing]' suggests the flowing of racial blood from one generation to the next. 'May we always remember that we are Ina' betokens an underlying anxiety that Ina identity is more mutable than the Silks may consciously believe. While they promote an essentialist version of Ina-ness, the wording of Milo's blessing can be paraphrased as: 'may we always remember that we are what we are.' Yet if one is, essentially, what one is, why should it need remembering? This echoes the contradictory anxieties of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century eugenicists, who saw blood as both essential and, at the same time, potentially an agent of degeneration or regression.

The version of Shori whom we read about in *Fledgling* is an 'extra' person generated out of her initial being, the Shori from before the Silks' attack and the amnesia it caused. During the Council Shori is asked, 'Do you feel yourself to be a different person because of your [memory] loss?' (277). Shori angrily replies: 'My childhood is gone. My families are gone. My first symbionts are gone. Most of my education is gone. The first fifty-three years of my life are gone. Is that what you mean by "a different person"?' (277). The Silks' rhetoric states 'Ina mixed with […] human' is 'not supposed to happen. Not ever' (173). Ironically, their attack creates a new Shori who really was 'not supposed to happen' on multiple levels. The new Shori is not the person who was acculturated into the families who created her, the person they intended or 'supposed' they were raising. In the Council Shori is also asked, 'Do you simply accept your memory loss?' to which she answers, 'I have no choice' (277). Shori is not only a different, new person, but has become this different person not by her own choosing, but as a matter of survival, a matter of 'no choice.'

Analogously, black Americans are an 'extra' people generated out of the legacy of violating the original enslaved Africans who are black Americans' ancestors. Black Americans are not a simple extension of the African cultures from which they descend. Shori's violently imposed amnesia echoes the enforced erasure of black Americans' cultural memory of Africa. Science Fiction writer Samuel R. Delany details, 'until fairly recently, as a

people [black Americans] were systematically forbidden any images of [their] past.'[17] African slaves who shared a language were methodically separated from each other, and '[c]hildren were regularly sold away from their parents.'[18] Delany continues:

> [E]very effort conceivable was made to destroy all vestiges of what might endure as African consciousness. […] When, indeed, we say that [America] was founded on slavery, we must remember that we mean, specifically, that it was founded on the systematic, conscientious, and massive destruction of African cultural remnants. [19]

This is another connection between black Americans and the notion of an experiment. It is not simply that black Americans are the result of forcibly transplanting Africans to America. Black Americans are 'genetically engineered' in the sense that the slave owners constructed and manipulated, often violently, the conditions of the slaves' reproduction, including through the rape of enslaved women by their owners. Forms of enforced slave breeding were also practised historically.[20]

Shori's name itself constitutes an enigmatic link to Africa that does not provide identity in the way we might expect. Shori's brother tells her that she was named by her human mother after 'a kind of bird – an East African crested nightingale' (132). But, unexpectedly, no such subspecies of nightingale actually exists. The 'Shori' species of bird, like the 'Ina' species, is a fiction invented by Butler. Thus Shori's name, her most direct cultural link to her human origins, is not the authentic piece of African culture we are led to believe it is. The name 'Shori' is somewhat like the 'X' used by Malcolm X and other members of the Nation of Islam around the mid-twentieth century, who replaced patronymic surnames inherited from their enslaved ancestors' owners with an X. The X, a common symbol of the unknown in mathematics, was an avowal of the violent history that had imposed a kind of cultural amnesia on black Americans. The reference to the nightingale in

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[17] Mark Dery, 'Black to the Future: Interviews with Samuel R. Delany, Greg Tate and Tricia Rose,' in *Flame Wars: The Discourse of Cyberspace*, ed. Mark Dery (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1994), 190-91.
[18] Ibid., 191.
[19] Ibid.
[20] See Gregory D. Smithers, *Slave Breeding: Sex, Violence, and Memory in African American History* (University of Florida Press, 2012).

Shori's name, with the nightingale's longstanding association with mourning,[21] symbolises Shori's existence as a continuing witness to the violence that destroyed her families.

While Shori's violently imposed amnesia makes her an allegory for black American history, *Fledgling* references multiple kinds of violence from European history that shaped Shori's Ina family history. We read:

> Most of [Shori's father's] relatives used to be scattered around Romania and Russia and Hungary. They died during the twentieth century – most of them during and after World War II when a lot of European Ina were killed. His sisters died with his mothers during the war. The Nazis got them. And his brothers and fathers were killed later by the Communists. (130)

Meanwhile, Shori's 'Ina mothers were […] named Mateescu, but in the 1950s, when there was a great deal of suspicion about foreign-sounding names, they decided to Anglicize the name to Matthews' (62). '[P]hysically, […] most Ina fit in badly wherever they go […] [Ina] usually looked like foreigners, and when times got bad, they were treated like foreigners – suspected, disliked, driven out, or killed' (130). In this way, *Fledgling* highlights that survival itself, anyone's survival, constitutes a kind of testament to violence. And, as an allegory of the future human, Shori is a survivor of multiple legacies of violence (not only the legacy of American slavery) even if she does not consciously remember them.

Virtually all of the characters who are not trying to kill Shori are eager to help her build her new life. They view the change Shori embodies optimistically. Joel Harrison, a symbiont, urges her: 'let me help you make a new family' (159). An older, distant Ina relative, Margaret Braithwaite, tells Shori that she is of 'great value,' 'a treasure' who 'would be an asset to any community' (214) because of her extraordinary abilities. When Shori discovers she is pre-engaged, tentatively betrothed, to a set of Ina brothers called the Gordons, Daniel Gordon tells her:

> [My grandfather] wants you [to breed with us]. […] He says your mothers made genetic alterations directly to the germ line, so that you will be able to pass on your strengths to your children. At least some of them will be able to

[21] Michael Ferber, *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 136-140.

> be awake and alert during the day, able to walk in sunlight. [He] says you have the scent of a female who will have no trouble producing children. (218)

In one scene, Daniel Gordon offers his blood to Shori, an act that would finalise their union as mating partners, although this is deemed inappropriate in Ina society because Shori is a child. Daniel tells Shori, 'I admit […] I half-hoped you would [bite me], that maybe with your memory gone, you would simply give in [to the impulse to bite]. If you had, no one could prevent our union. No one would even try' (219). 'How can you risk yourself this way?' Shori asks Daniel, knowing that if she bites him, as he offers, he 'might age and die childless' if Shori dies before they mate (225-26). Daniel answers, 'I know what I want' (226). Shori relates, 'I decided that I had better protect him from his wants' (226), and she leaves without biting him, despite 'want[ing] so badly to taste him, drink him' (225). This is one of several times when Shori must make an ethical decision with regard to her consumption of blood.

Shori protects others from their wants and her own. Where *I Am Legend* shows blood to be an overdetermined commodity with respect to a regime of enforced normalcy, blood in *Fledgling* is a form of postmodern enjoyment, *jouissance* without traditional taboos and without prohibitions. Locating or creating a working norm for decision-making and actions with regard to the blood she needs to consume to survive is one of Shori's tasks. As in postmodernity, a definitive authority to form the basis of her actions is lacking, so Shori gathers information from a range of people (both Ina and humans) and places in order to aid her decision-making. Just as Neville in *I Am Legend* becomes 'his own ethic' (50), so does Shori – but her attitude towards the situation contrasts Neville's as she acknowledges her own ignorance.

When Shori wonders if drinking blood makes her 'a vampire or not' her narration continues: 'I realized that to avoid hurting Wright, to avoid hurting anyone, I would have to find several people to take blood from. I wasn't sure how to do that, but it had to be done' (15). The text enacts or performs the blending of the question of Shori's identity with ethical questions about Shori's consumption of blood. Here, Shori's train of thought moves immediately from the question 'what am I?' to 'how do I avoid hurting people?' (two questions Neville does not ask himself, assuming he knows the answer already). Shori expresses the need to find other Ina in order to 'learn what I need to know to do right by the family I seem to be building' (129). When wondering about the number of symbionts she might require, Shori expresses 'disgust.' 'My ignorance wasn't just annoying. It was dangerous. How could I take care of my symbionts when I didn't even know how to protect

them from me?' (126). In *Fledgling*, as is increasingly clearly the case for twenty-first-century consumers, species survival can no longer be subject to the question of individual satisfaction alone. While Shori must consume others' blood to survive, this act occurs in the context of larger questions, including the value to others of Shori's survival and how she is to ascertain what that value might be. Shori's intelligence and her ability to interpret information usefully – like Mina Harker in *Dracula* and in contrast with Neville in *I Am Legend* – keep her and her symbionts alive, making her a good leader.

Reconstructing Shori's biographical history, in this situation of lacking any trustworthy guide or authority, is both urgent and onerous. Shori has to set her own ethical limits on her enjoyment of others' blood, since her symbionts can die from the *jouissance* the blood-giving (vampiric feeding) entails. While humans can obviously die if too much blood is taken from them, the Ina symbionts can also die if too little of their blood is taken from them. Iosif, Shori's father, explains to her that the symbionts die if the symbiosis with their Ina master or mistress is broken. The symbionts 'die of strokes or heart attacks because [their Ina] aren't there to take the extra red blood cells that [Ina] venom encourages their [human] bodies to make' (73-74). Only an Ina with stronger venom can 'take […] over' (74) another Ina's symbiosis, binding the bereaved symbionts to the new, stronger venom. Shori does precisely this in order to save the lives of her deceased brother's symbionts, one of the signs of Shori's venom's super-strength. Because of Shori's uniquely strong venom, her symbionts will struggle to find another Ina to take them if Shori dies. Thus while all symbionts' survival is tied to the survival of their Ina, for Shori's symbionts this is especially so: they will die if she dies. *Fledgling* makes Shori's relationship with her symbionts an intensified version of the Ina-human symbiosis in general. The novel shows that human communities, communities of symbionts, form around their shared addiction to a particular Ina's venom, a shared sacrifice of self-mastery, in the name of *jouissance*.

That blood is a metonym for *jouissance* in *Fledgling* is clear from the start. Shori's need for human blood is what draws her out of the cave where she is sheltered at the beginning of the novel. Shori says:

> I had begun to feel dissatisfied, hungry for something other than [the] deer flesh [I had been eating]. I didn't know what I wanted but I went exploring. That was how, for the first time in my memory, I met another person. (6)

Human blood thus first appears as an absent presence, a cipher, within the text. Human blood is the 'something other' that Shori is 'dissatisfied' with not having, 'hungry for' without consciously knowing what the object of her hunger is. Shori's bloodthirst drives her to meet 'another person' 'for the first time in [her] memory' (6). Her drive to drink blood is, however, not an animal hunger but a human drive for *jouissance,* as is suggested by the fact that Shori still acts in ways that show she has been socialised in ways we recognise as human. For example, when Shori wakes in the cave she realises she is 'lying on what should have been a *bed*' (1, original emphasis). When Shori realises she is naked she 'want[s] clothing badly,' though not out of necessity, as she is 'not cold' (6). Shori also thinks to herself, 'living together with other people instead of wandering alone' 'felt like something I would want' (5). Shori's blood-drinking is, then, not mere animal instinct; she serves as a kind of allegory for the human. Shori describes drinking only 'a few drops of blood' from Wright when '[i]t wasn't necessary, but we both enjoyed it' (36), which demonstrates the management of enjoyment that distinguishes humans from the other animals.

Shori's drive to drink blood, her drive to find her *jouissance,* gets the story started. When Shori bites Wright for the first time, she relates:

> I stared down at the bleeding marks I'd made on [Wright's] hand, and suddenly I was unable to think about anything else. I ducked my head and licked away the blood, licked the wound I had made. He tensed, almost pulling his hand away. Then he stopped, seemed to relax. (11)

Here the blood-drinking is shown to be an exchange of *jouissance* between both the vampire and her victim as the vampire is 'unable to think about anything else' (11). Some time after this initial blood-taking, Shori recalls: '[t]aking Wright's blood had been the most satisfying thing I could remember doing' (15). During this first drinking of Wright's blood by Shori, he 'tense[s]' and then 'relax[es]' in a wave of *jouissance*. The car 'zigzag[s] a little on the road' (11) signalling *jouissance* too, as Wright has been overwhelmed, thrown off the 'straight,' officially designated road and into the throes of enjoyment. In the novel, human attachment to being bitten by Ina is profound. Wright says to Shori: 'I can't leave you. I can't even really want to leave you' (84). Another man bitten by Shori tells her, 'I don't want you to bite me again,' only to immediately contradict himself, shouting 'No!' (181). The man then explains, 'I'm lying. I do want it again, tomorrow, now, anytime. I need it! […] But *I don't want to need it*. It's like coke [cocaine] or something' (181, my emphasis). Another of Shori's

symbionts, Theodora Harden, describes joining the symbiotic community as feeling like 'she's died and gone to heaven' (228).

The symbionts get to live free from sickness and the stresses of being responsible for their own livelihoods. Because the Ina have virtually unlimited monetary funds their symbionts live outside the usual reality of capitalist society in twenty-first-century America. 'We get to fill our time as we please. […] We help support the community whether we bring in money or not' (164), one symbiont explains. When Shori visits the Ina family named the Gordons, she 'like[s]' the 'variety' of the symbionts' careers (163): 'a dentist, an oceanographer, a potter, a writer who also worked as a translator (Mandarin Chinese), a plumber, an internist, two nurses, a beautician who was also a barber […] farmers and winegrowers' (163-64). Shori observes 'offices, studios, [and] workshops' (164) on the Gordon compound, where human symbionts work, while others work off the compound but return periodically to get bitten. It is, then, not only the *jouissance* involved in the bite itself, but a complete 'lifestyle' – a total structure shaping their enjoyment, their life – in which the symbiosis involves the human symbionts. While they do not necessarily have to bring in money, the symbionts do pay a price for their lifestyle: giving their blood and their self-mastery for the rest of their lives. The symbionts 'bring in' blood, which not only keeps the Ina master or mistress alive, but indirectly keeps their fellow symbionts happy too, since their fellow symbionts' happiness depends on each one satisfying his or her individual addiction to the master or mistress they hold in common.

What Shori says goes for her symbionts. They can and do advise her; but, fundamentally they cannot disobey Shori or forcibly change her mind due to the chemical hypnosis under which her venom places them. She places a limit on the symbionts' enjoyment and in this sense her leadership resembles the form of leadership associated with the society of prohibition, before the shift to a society of commanded enjoyment. Shori's is leadership that can 'have the final say.' From this angle, *Fledgling* appears to reach a (perhaps surprisingly) conservative conclusion: that we would be happier if we accepted traditional leadership in order to be free to enjoy what we can within defined parameters. As Canavan puts it: in *Fledgling* 'the solution to our [human] problems is found only in a kind of BDSM sex game: we might consent (or be made to consent) to fully submit to the will of [aliens] who know better, aligning human society to *their* ends rather than to our own bad self-generated ones.'[22] From this angle, the novel suggests we would be free from the dangers

[22] Canavan, 167.

of our own death driven-ness by handing over our self-mastery altogether. But Shori also gives the symbionts a guaranteed fix of *jouissance* by satisfying their addiction when she takes their blood, which is unlike the traditional leadership style. Shori warns her symbionts, 'I won't always ask [i.e. sometimes I will give orders]' (283).

In *Fledgling*, traditional vampirism is reimagined as an interspecies blood-and-venom exchange between humans and aliens. This blood-and-venom exchange is an exchange of *jouissance* that links the individuals within the depicted 'symbiotic' society to each other through the guaranteed satisfaction they receive as individuals. The people in this novel obey the postmodern 'command to enjoy' yet at the same time they relate to the command in a highly specific, careful manner because the connection between their *jouissance* and their mortality is made visible to them through the act of vampiric biting and in the living body of the vampire. For Shori, that means 'avoid[ing] hurting people' because they sustain her. Blood emerges as a super-resource. It is the symbionts' payment of their blood that underpins, or 'buys,' their freedom from all the other payments they would have made in life were they not symbionts. In *Fledgling*, blood is not simply the fluid keeping an individual alive but the lifeblood of a wider community. It is the highest gift the individual can make to the community. And yet blood is paradoxically communal property already. To join the symbiotic community is to forfeit one's blood to the master or mistress, who in turn provides *jouissance* on every level to the symbiont. *Blood* is the point at which individual property and communal property coincide and cancel each other out, voiding the definitional boundary between 'communal' and 'individual.'

As we saw in Chapter Four, *I Am Legend* is about the fear of the past returning, a fear of future annihilation that will take humanity 'back' to its unknown beginnings, since the exact effects of a nuclear catastrophe are unknown. The fear that the prospect of nuclear catastrophe conjures in *I Am Legend*'s historical context, however, is that of the fantasy object the mid-twentieth-century America, by dint of a history of under-acknowledged racism, has created: the mass joining together of 'black-blooded' people. *Fledgling*'s beginning with Shori waking up in a cave having survived the attack that destroyed her entire community enables *Fledgling* to take the under-considered, historically racist elements informing *I Am Legend*'s conclusion, which produce only a 'new' norm of infected humans, and deploy them in support of the question of *human* survival. This is arguably a more complex task.

The advent of a new bloodline represented by Shori – promising to give rise to a new, unprecedentedly strong, life form – is met by an eruption of racism within Ina society and a

near-successful genocide carried out by the Silks. In the aftermath, competing, incompatible beliefs about nature, race, and communal survival are pitted against each other. By the end of the novel only a semblance of resolution has been achieved. But *Fledgling* also makes some definite claims. *Fledgling* makes a case for facing the radically new, not turning to defensive reactions automatically out of habit or tradition ('legends' in the language of *I Am Legend*), and it shows that blood, with its multifaceted symbolic texture, continues to speak to us about radical newness in ways that few other objects can. The man's phrase, 'I don't want to need it' encapsulates Shori's meaning for all the characters in the novel. It means, 'I don't want to need the change in my blood that Shori causes.' Shori promises to change Ina blood on an intergenerational level, while she promises to change her symbionts' and her mates' blood with her venom. In all instances the change in blood represents a change in *jouissance,* which is a breaking free from the drive to repeat the familiar. While some characters may want the change Shori's existence brings, others do not. The phrasing, 'I don't want to need it,' demonstrates, however, that it is possible to need something one does not want, as painful as the identification of a need that is not a want may be. Being able to say 'I don't want to need this change in my blood, but I will take it anyway' is what communal survival may demand.

Conclusion: 'Crossing Somebody's Line': Blood, Enjoyment and Belonging in Season One of HBO's *True Blood* (2008)

In the preceding chapters I showed that blood is the central object of the vampire genre. In the period since the entry of the vampire into Anglophone culture around 1730, human understanding of blood changed drastically, along with our ability to technologically manipulate blood. Premodern beliefs about blood as individual and collective essence never fully detached from blood, even in the face of scientific and medical discoveries that disproved them. As a racial ideology of biological determinism developed in the late-nineteenth century, older ideas about blood as heredity morphed into eugenicist beliefs that blood was the agent of racial degeneration. In many ways, Count Dacula was a dysgenic monster embodying such beliefs.

Even as, in the early twentieth century, people began to understand that racial difference was not literally a difference in blood, blood nevertheless remained a symbol for race and essence. In Chapter Three I descibed how several vampire texts from the first half of the twentieth century, including the 1933 Hollywood adaptation of Stoker's novel, incorporated elements of American eugenics discourse. In some instances, such as Edith Wharton's 'Bewitched' (1925) vampire stories satirise and question eugenics. After World War II, eugenicist beliefs were largely disavowed. In America, Jim Crow legal segregation came under increased pressure, a historical development expressed in *I Am Legend* (1954) in ways that I detailed in Chapter Four.

With the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act the following year, Jim Crow ended. At this time the ironic, comedic vampire-housewives of *The Munsters* and *The Addams Family* infiltrated the American suburbs on top-rating television sitcoms. 'Sympathetic' vampires soon proliferated, from Barnabas Collins in *Dark Shadows* (1966-1971) to Mamuwalde in *Blacula* (1972), to Louis in Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1976). These postmodern vampires relate to their blood-drinking with reluctance. The ironic distance between postmodern vampires and Stoker's Count Dracula meant that after Jim Crow ended, the vampire genre became a place for writers and readers to explore the afterlife of eugenics, given that the vampire had previously been a dysgenic monster, a racialised other. In this era western culture disowned its racist, homophobic, and sexist past and tended to idealise tolerance for historically marginalised and outcast identities and communities. While postmodern vampires were, and are, often an obvious symbol for

historically marginalised people, as more sympathetic vampires emerged vampire stories increasingly focussed on divisions within vampire society between 'ethical' vampires with a respect for human life, and more traditional monstrous ones – a trend in the genre that became more pronounced and noticeable with each decade. By the 1990s, the sympathetic vampire also morphed into a love interest for human heroines in a paranormal romance. In Chapter Six I showed how Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* used the vampire story to present an allegory for the future human, imagining a society where blood and *jouissance* are exchanged in ways that allow a new way of obeying the command to enjoy.

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In the remainder of this conclusion, I consider the first season of the television series *True Blood* (HBO, September 7 to November 23 2008) in relation to the foregoing discussion. *True Blood* is an adaptation by screenwriter Alan Ball of the *Southern Vampire Mysteries* novel series by Charlaine Harris. Season One of *True Blood* is based on the first novel in Harris's series: *Dead until Dark* (2001). Set in Bon Temps, Louisiana, a fictional small town, the plot of *True Blood*'s first season revolves around a series of murders that happen in Bon Temps, and the increasingly urgent need for the main character, Sookie Stackhouse (Anna Paquin), to identify the murderer. The murdered are all people who were known to associate with vampires and sympathise with the project of vampire integration into American society, called 'mainstreaming' in the text. Sookie soon appears to be murderer's next target. The reason for this is that Sookie – an All-American, white, blonde, mid-twenties, 'girl next door' type – begins dating a vampire named Bill Compton (Stephen Moyer), an undead Civil War soldier, and the pair fall in love. Sookie is a telepath but finds she cannot hear Bill's thoughts. Meanwhile, a major subplot of the season follows Sookie's brother, Jason (Ryan Kwanten), as he becomes addicted to ingesting vampire blood, which functions as a drug in the fictional world of *True Blood*, and how this addiction drives him to become involved in capturing and eventually killing a vampire. The theme of addiction is also central to another of the season's major subplots, which follows how Lettie Mae Thornton (Adina Porter), the mother of Sookie's best friend, Tara (Rutina Wesley), engages a 'hoodoo' healer to cure her of alcoholism. Lettie Mae, a black woman, believes her alcoholism is caused by a 'demon' 'living inside' her (Episode 3). For reasons that will be made clear in what follows, the repeated references to addiction throughout the narrative are part of *True Blood*'s overall concern with *jouissance*. Even the name of the setting, 'Bon Temps' or 'Good Times,'

connotes enjoyment, as in the expression 'let the good times roll.'[1] But the text's particular focus is on the contradiction inherent in *jouissance* as both essential and dangerous: potentially life-threatening and potentially socially destabilising. And blood is the vehicle, or device, *True Blood* uses to do this. In *True Blood*, blood is a commodity, a drug, a food source, and an erotic object for different characters – in other words, a conduit for, and symbol of *jouissance* for all different characters from different perspectives.

The opening scene of *True Blood*'s pilot episode communicates the show's themes, sets its tone, and establishes the basic premise of the fictional world the viewers are entering. These are all functions of a pilot's opening scene that, for commercial reasons, it is incumbent on the show to perform in order to win viewers for an as yet unknown show. The pilot begins by showing a woman at the steering wheel of a vehicle, driving along a deserted road at night, with a man in the passenger seat. The woman begins masturbating the man with her hand, the act itself implied to be happening just out of shot. Suddenly, the man calls out, 'Holy shit, babe, stop!' and the vehicle skids to an abrupt stop next to a sign outside a roadside convenience store reading, 'WE HAVE TRU BLOOD.' The sequence of events tells the audience that 'TRU BLOOD' is even more exciting than sex, which in the 'language' of American popular culture is conventionally a symbol for ultimate enjoyment. *True Blood* opening in this way demonstrates that *jouissance* is central to the text, as dangerous sex-while-driving – and masturbatory sex that cannot be claimed to serve a reproductive purpose, instead being performed only for enjoyment – is literally the first action of the entire series. As the episode and the season progress, more connections between blood and *jouissance* are made, to which I shall return shortly.

The scene cuts to the interior of the GrabbitKwik. The cashier watches a small television set, on which a spokesperson for the Vampire League of America (VLA), Nan Flanagan (Jessica Tuck), is being interviewed by political talk show host Bill Maher. We hear:

> Nan: We're citizens. We pay taxes. We deserve basic civil rights just like everyone else.
>
> Bill: Yeah, but, I mean, come on. Doesn't your race have a rather sordid history of exploiting and feeding off innocent people, for centuries?

[1] 'Laissez les bons temps rouler' is a Cajun French saying associated with Mardi Gras in Louisiana.

> Nan: […] Doesn't your race have a history of exploitation? We never owned slaves […] or detonated nuclear weapons. And most importantly […] now that the Japanese have perfected synthetic blood, which satisfies all of our nutritional needs, there is no reason for anyone to fear us. I can assure you that every member of our community is now drinking synthetic blood. That's why we decided to make our existence known. We just want to be part of mainstream society.

The theme of *jouissance* is posited here again. Vampires have sanitised or 'de-fanged' the threatening enjoyment of blood that made them outcasts from 'mainstream,' human society. At the same time this 'coming out of the coffin,' as it is sometimes called by characters, is only made possible by the advent of a mass produced, readily available commodity. In an echoing of the 1950s consumerism that informs *I Am Legend*, vampires can belong to American society by buying the right product: Tru Blood. As Susan Chaplin observes, the vampires also 'buy' their belonging by 'paying taxes,' as the rhetoric of the VLA quoted above makes clear.[2] The interview playing on the television functions similarly to the debate Robert Neville in *I Am Legend* voices while intoxicated, when he says, 'is the vampire so bad? All he does is drink blood.' The televised debate instructs the viewer to read *True Blood*'s vampires in terms of political allegory.

As it happens, the synthetic 'Tru Blood' is not as enjoyable for vampires as real blood. Even Bill, mainstreaming's greatest proponent in Season One, says he 'doesn't think about [the bad taste of Tru Blood]. It's sustenance and nothing more' (Episode 9). As the season progresses it emerges that vampire society is split between 'mainstreamers,' vampire integrationists, and sepratists who do not wish to give up their enjoyment of real blood. At the same time, the human society depicted in *True Blood* is split between those who accept vampires as fellow citizens and those who do not. The contested status of vampires in human, American society in *True Blood* echoes the contested status of real historically marginalised communities and identities in American society: particularly, black Americans and non-heterosexuals. When a group of humans decides to burn a group of vampires while they sleep (thus destroying them), Sookie refers to the aggressors as a 'lynch mob' and their violence is

[2] Susan Chaplin, *The Postmillennial Vampire: Power, Sacrifice and Simulation in True Blood and Other Contemporary Narratives* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 80-81.

referred to as a ‘hate crime’ (Episode 7) – making clear the parallel between vampires and marginalised identity groups.

In *True Blood*, vampire sympathisers are derisively called ‘fangbangers,’ a term that points directly at a disapproved of form of enjoyment. ‘Bang’ refers to sex, so fangbanger refers to sex with the ‘wrong’ partners, sex with vampires. When Sookie says to her grandmother, Adele Stackhouse (Lois Smith), ‘I don’t think Jesus would mind if somebody was a vampire’ (Episode 2), it echoes the scenario in which viewers might say, or hear someone say, ‘I don’t think Jesus would mind if somebody was gay.’ The use of the phrase ‘coming out of the coffin’ to describe the ‘revelation’ of vampires’ existence to humans, modelled on the phrase ‘coming out of the closet,’ furthers the parallel between vampire and gay identity. Additionally, vampires are called ‘fangers’ in a tone that echoes the word ‘faggot.’ A sign outside a church seen during the opening credits sequence reads ‘God hates fangs,’ evoking the slogan ‘God hates fags’ used by Westboro Baptist Church.

However, there is more than a parallel between non-heterosexuality and vampire being in *True Blood*, as in Episode 3 sexualised vampiric biting is shown to take place between two men, implying that, similarly to the Ina in *Fledgling*, vampires see identification in terms of ‘straight’ and ‘gay’ as a peculiarly human concern that is irrelevant to themselves as non-humans. (The homosexuality of several vampire characters is shown overtly in later seasons.) The necrophilic connotations of having sex with a vampire are often invoked by the intolerant humans to express their disgust at the idea of this kind of intercourse. For example, René Lenier (Michael Raymond-James) calls his ‘fangbanger’ sister a ‘freak,’ saying to her, ‘you spread your legs for a dead man. Mama would roll over in her grave’ (Episode 12). An amendment to the United States constitution to make vampire-human marriages legal is being advocated by the VLA, echoing the contested legal status of same-sex marriages in the United States in the early twenty-first century. When Arlene Fowler (Carrie Preston) and René get engaged, René says Bill and Sookie will ‘be next’ to get engaged, creating an awkward moment, and he has to add, ‘when it becomes legal’ (Episode 8). The issue of marriage being legally redefined was especially relevant at the time of the season’s initial broadcast, which coincided with the lead-up to, and vote on, California’s ‘Proposition 8.’ ‘Prop 8,’ a ballot that would amend the California constitution to reverse the legalisation of same-sex marriage in California, which had occurred in May 2008, made national and international news at the time. Prop 8 passed on November 5, while Season One was airing (it would later be repealed by federal courts, on August 4 2010).

Vampire identity's resemblance to a form of racial identity in *True Blood* does not replace overt explorations of race by the *True Blood*, primarily through the main black characters: Lettie Mae, Tara and her cousin, Lafayette (Nelsan Ellis), who is also Sookie's co-worker at Merlotte's Bar and Grill. In Harris's novels, Tara is white but in the television adaptation she is black. In *True Blood* Lafayette is a main character, while in the books Lafayette is killed off early, in the second novel of the series. The first time Tara meets Bill she is quick to ask him, 'Did you own slaves?' He admits, 'my father did' (Episode 2). Later Tara tells Lafayette, 'Do you know [Bill] actually owned slaves? The least he could have done is apologize to me' (Episode 3). For Tara slavery is still relevant to the present and to herself ('he could have […] apologize[d] to *me*') in a way that is not the case for the white characters; or, at least, that the white characters do not admit. Sookie bristles at the impoliteness of raising such a controversial subject at a first meeting, while Adele blithely sees slavery as a fascinating historical detail. Adele leads a local historical society called 'Descendants of the Glorious Dead,' whose name highlights the selective memory of the white residents of Bon Temps. The white residents' ancestors are not so 'glorious' from the perspective of the slave descendants, such as Tara and Lafayette, who still live in the community. On another occasion Tara says:

> People think because we got vampires out in the open now, race isn't the issue no more. You ever see the way folks look at mixed [race] couples in this town? Race may not be the hot-button issue it once was, but it's still a button you can push on people. (Episode 4)

Such attestations by *True Blood* to the ongoing lack of resolution regarding black people's belonging in America, along with the greater centrality of black characters in the television adaptation compared with the source material, are instrumental in the text's self-presentation as a parable advocating 'tolerance.' In many ways, however, the *True Blood* questions the limits of tolerance, since most of the vampires really are dangerous. It is not simply irrational bias that makes many humans fear them. Meanwhile, *True Blood* advocates that black people be tolerated – evidently, they make loyal and intelligent friends – but white American identity and history are not questioned or challenged on a deeper level. The text's fantasy of future humanity, discussed shortly, is embodied by Bill: an antebellum gentleman who does not apologise for owning other humans.

In *True Blood* competing opinions circulate regarding different groups' claims on perceived *jouissance*, but in a largely desultory manner, often framed in terms of politics, ethics or morals. Conservative vampires opine against progressive vampires ('mainstreamers') asserting their 'right' to drink real blood (that is, hold onto their status quo enjoyment); on the other hand the mainstreamers want to enjoy what they perceive as benefits intrinsic to joining human society, and they want to retain or reassert their own humanity against the prevailing norms of vampire society. Mainstreamers want to assert their own enjoyment in the sense of living according to their ethical beliefs rather than the behaviours dictated to them by vampire tradition. The division in vampire society is illustrated in a scene where Bill is summoned to meet with the 'Magister,' a high-ranking authority figure in vampire society, who states: 'Humans exist to serve us. That is their only value.' Bill contends, 'There are those among us who think differently' (Episode 10). Though the text does not highlight it, there is an obvious parallel between the Magister's attitude toward humans, and the attitudes of white American slaveowners toward black people historically.

Conservative humans, meanwhile, opine against progressive or tolerant humans ('fangbangers') and against vampires because they do not want to accept the loss of *jouissance* that they believe is entailed in extending 'civil rights' to a new type of citizen (vampires). The perceived loss of *jouissance* for these humans is highlighted as loss in a sexual competition in the scene where Jason becomes impotent when he becomes preoccupied by thinking about a male vampire who he watched have sex with one of his girlfriends on a sex tape. 'Fuck! Damn blood suckers!' he exclaims in frustration (Episode 3). Meanwhile, tolerant humans want to 'enjoy' a tolerant (changed, or changeable) society and those in relationships, such as Sookie, want to be allowed to have those relationships without being persecuted, enjoying sex and love as they chose.

The television debate in the opening scene of the pilot, with Nan advocating vampires' 'civil rights' and Bill questioning the claim, is emblematic of the circulation of competing opinions in *True Blood*, where two opposed points of view are expressed with no authority ruling as to which is right and which is wrong. Opposing views are broadcast into public where the people of Bon Temps can identify with or 'enjoy' pieces of rhetoric that appeal to them without necessarily understanding or questioning what the reason for the appeal of their opinions might be. Due to their relative poverty, the characters tend to be disempowered from asking such questions. As Chaplin observes, virtually everyone in Bon Temps is poor, many working multiple low-paid and menial jobs in their efforts to make ends

meet.[3] The town name, 'Bon Temps' is ironic in the sense that it is a place of destitution and struggle. Only the vampires appear to have material security and to not be struggling financially. The human characters are shown to parrot or ventriloquise opinions that are circulating in the culture as a means of bolstering their own sense of personal empowerment within their immediate social context, while the larger, structural causes of their powerlessness remain obscure. For example, Lettie Mae says that Christians are 'discriminated against' and bemoans that 'they took away Christmas' (who 'they' are, is never directly stated) but this opinion, coming from a desperate alcoholic, holds no credibility for the viewer (Episode 7). The audience knows that Lettie Mae, one of the most powerless characters in the story, is in no position to analyse how being black and poor are vectors of discrimination that are more likely to that have shaped her life than her religion is.

Tara and Lafayette, the main black characters, however, are somewhat of an exception to this: they have the greatest critical thinking and social awareness out of all the human characters. In the early scene introducing Tara, she is shown reading *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (2007) by Naomi Klein, a recent bestselling critique of contemporary neoliberal capitalism at the time of the season's initial broadcast.[4] Tara reads Klein's book while working in the presumably minimum wage, cashier job at Super Save-A-Bunch that she promptly quits. In *The Shock Doctrine* Klein described how capitalists profited from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which struck Louisiana and surrounding states in August 2005. Hurricane Katrina was thus fresh in the cultural memory of viewers at the time of *True Blood* Season One's initial broadcast. *The Shock Doctrine* also describes the erosion of 'public' society, as services traditionally provided by the government become privatised, which is an economic analogue for a larger theme in *True Blood* (discussed shortly): the erosion of traditional or historical norms. Tara's choice of reading material is a reiteration of the motif of the characters struggling to understand their own social and historical context without the guidance of any reliable authority. The would-be authority of church, state, family, and culture have all become compromised. *True Blood* depicts a society in which it falls to the individual to attempt to educate herself through a product (a best-selling book) while also signalling the text's self-conscious highlighting of capitalism as the larger system shaping the lives of the characters depicted. Even Lettie

[3] Chaplin, 68.
[4] Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* London: Allen Lane, 2007.

Mae's discovery of seemingly authentic African religious practice in the form of the hoodoo ritual is revealed to be a scam, an invented pseudo-ritual by a woman who perpetrates the scam not out of malice but due to her own desperation in regard to her own survival. When Tara threatens to report the healer to the police, 'Miss Jeanette' pleads: 'Look. I got a son in prison. Another one in Iraq. I got a daughter with diabetes and three grandbabies I gotta take care of. I do what have to for my family, same as you' (Episode 10). The ritual works not because it has any historical or cultural authenticity but because Lettie Mae believes it worked, 'faith is a mighty powerful thing,' says the fraudulent healer, 'Just because "Miss Jeanette" ain't real doesn't mean she can't help people' (Episode 10). This is an example of 'self-hegemony'[5] or human divinity. It is not the Christian God or pagan African gods who heal in *True Blood*, but the power of human belief itself.

In *True Blood* the people who occupy positions of authority turn out to possess only an already-undermined authority or they die, falling out of the story. The residents of Bon Temps do not respect the police officers, who supposedly embody the authority of the state. The Bon Temps police are inept: they are unable to identify the serial killer and it is left to Sookie to accomplish this herself. The state senator requires the drug 'V' to get over his stage-fright before public speaking, unable to confidently embody his Symbolic role. Community elder Adele is an authority figure of sorts,[6] embodying traditional values, but she is murdered early in the season. Remarkably, there are no fathers in all of Bon Temps. Every human character's father is either dead or has abandoned his paternal responsibilities (and thus his would-be authority). The one father who is present, the stepfather of Arlene's children, René, turns out to be the serial killer and he is killed by the end of the season. The impossibility of following a fully authorised, uncontested, way of life in *True Blood*'s America is demonstrated in a discussion between Lafayette and Sookie. Learning that Sookie lets Bill bite her during sex, Lafyette says: 'I just think that when there's blood involved [in sex], a line [is] being crossed.' Sookie happily attests, 'Oh, I definitely crossed a line. But I'm glad I did,' to which Lafayette concedes, 'Good for you. It ain't possible to live unless you're crossing somebody's line' (Episode7).

Like *Fledgling* and *I Am Legend, True Blood* imagines vampires as a new kind of people. They are not the development of a biologically new kind of living human being in the

[5] A term used by Victoria Nelson, 132.

[6] In one scene Adele chastises Jason and insists: 'You will respect me, boy' (Episode 2). In another scene, she forces Sookie to eat, saying 'I didn't *ask* if you were hungry' (Episode 3).

way that Shori is in Butler's novel, and Ruth's people are in Matheson's. Vampires in *True Blood* are magically undead, but they are a new kind of citizen seeking full civil rights under (an amendment to) the United States Constitution. The American society depicted in *True Blood* proves incapable of accepting such 'new people,' to borrow a phrase from *I Am Legend*, without outbursts of vigilante violence. The sentiment expressed in the words of Amy Burley (Lizzy Caplan), 'nothing is real, everything is permitted' (discussed shortly) describes American society in *True Blood* where all forms of authority are compromised. This is the society that develops out of the situation expressed in *Dracula*, where – as I discussed in Chapter Two – the authority of traditional prohibitions began to lose their efficacy. In *True Blood* this situation is more obvious in the human world. The social structures of the vampire society appear to operate with their authority largely intact in Season One, but the non-consensus over 'mainstreaming' (that is, changing diet, changing *jouissance*) shows that vampire society is also losing its cohesion, and the erosion of cohesion in the vampire society is a major focus of later seasons.[7] Even the historical certainty that vampires are only a superstition has been shattered for the human characters. The statement 'nothing is real' starts to mean the same thing as, 'nothing is not real': not only are vampires real but so are shapeshifters and other 'supernaturals,' such as – in later seasons – werewolves and faeries. Even the characters' certainty with regard to mundane facts is undermined, as Jason shows when he complains, 'I don't like it how they keep taking stuff away. Like, Pluto's not a planet anymore. And a brontosaurus stopped being a dinosaur. You just can't say something stopped being what it's always been' (Episode 7).

Blood, however, remains real. The synthetic replication of human blood in 'Tru Blood' cannot capture the 'real' thing. Synthetic blood provides sustenance but not *jouissance*. Meanwhile, vampire blood functions as a drug superior to any human-made or natural substance. In this way blood is *jouissance* in the text and it is *jouissance* that seems to stand in the place vacated by the now-absent Master Signifier. *True Blood* shows that while enjoyment appears to threaten and undo traditional authority, in a society where authority in the traditional sense is absent, it is enjoyment itself that becomes authority. When the superegoic command to resist enjoyment retreats, the command to enjoy takes its place.

Through Amy, the V-addict who becomes Jason's girlfriend, *True Blood* satirises the contemporary subject of commanded enjoyment. Amy is a parody of someone who feels fully

[7] In Season Five (2012), 'vampire fundamentalists' called 'Sanguinistas' bomb the Tru Blood factories and wage a vigilante campaign against mainstreaming.

entitled to pursue her own enjoyment at the expense, or to the exclusion, of any other concern. Indeed, the only reason Amy is in Bon Temps, and thus in the story, is due to her dedicated obedience of the command to enjoy. Amy, who is from 'Connecticut, originally,' has chosen to drop out of Wellesley college and run away from her privileged life in search of excitement (Episode 7). Using rhetoric from New Age spirituality and postmodern ethical consumerism, Amy is able to act monstrously whilst espousing an ad hoc ethics and politics. 'I'm an organic vegan and my carbon footprint is miniscule, [so] don't you dare get morally superior on me' (Episode 10) she declares to Eddie (Stephen Root), the docile vampire she and Jason have imprisoned in Jason's basement, while she drains Eddie of his blood. Again, opinions are shown to circulate not for their intrinsic meaning (their 'authority'), but their 'enjoyability.' Amy's many axioms are clichés that do not cohere into a reasoned philosophy. Amy 'only eat[s] organic' because, she says, 'the cleaner my body is the more intensely I feel the V' (Episode 8). This statement demonstrates how *jouissance* ('feel[ing]' 'more intensely') becomes the goal of Amy's ethics and politics. Her organic diet is not an objection to the ill effects of industrialised agriculture driven by capitalism, such as animal cruelty or the destruction of biodiversity, or the exploitation of indigenous farmers and migrant workers. The ethical and political arguments that historically informed the organic movement have been emptied out and instead 'eating organic' is merely a vehicle to 'intens[ified]' personal enjoyment. Before taking V, Amy prays narcissistically for self-realisation: 'By taking the blood of the night into our bodies we water the flowers of our souls.' Her prayer ends with the declaration (mentioned above): 'Nothing is real. Everything is permitted' (Episode 7), a statement that is antithetical to traditional religion. The statement that 'everything is permitted' not only suggests that religion is absent, but that the historical norm of a prohibition-based society, as described by Todd McGowan, has now been replaced by a society of commanded enjoyment.

The symbolic signification of V as *jouissance* is underlined by the way in which, while high on Eddie's blood, Jason and Amy have the most intense sexual experience of their lives. Again, sex in *True* Blood is a shorthand for ultimate *jouissance* in order for blood to stand for the thing that allows access to an even greater, 'beyond-ultimate' *jouissance*. Amy and Jason's V-enhanced sexual experience happens with them 'physically […] barely touch[ing]' (Episode 8). 'I told you. [V is] better than sex,' Amy tells Jason. This is a parody of commanded enjoyment and the way it atomises society into a series of individuals that are no longer bound by a shared sacrifice of *jouissance* as in the society of prohibition, and where public space and intersubjective engagement are eschewed in favour of privacy's

promise of uninterrupted enjoyment.[8] Even the potential intersubjective confrontation between individuals engaged in sex is superseded by an atomised, masturbatory illusion of sex with an other, that in fact involves only the individual him- or herself.

While *True Blood* in many ways critiques and parodies its own era, it is far less imaginative about the future of humankind than many of the vampire texts discussed in this thesis, including *Fledgling*. This is demonstrated in the character of Bill, who maintains aspects of his humanity despite being a vampire, emblematised in his 'mainstreaming.' Humanity is romanticised as an essence onto which 'good' vampires try to keep hold. Bill is an immortal, super-strong version of humanity as we know it, his difference or alien-ness softened by his underlying humanity.[9] Bill is not a new kind of human in the way that Shori is, or the Ina symbionts are in *Fledgling*, or that Ruth's people are in *I Am Legend*.

Unlike Shori, Bill is a white man who subscribes to traditional values. Bill's 'traditional' nature is underlined by his ability to 'wed' Sookie in a world where hitherto she found a total lack of worthy human suitors. In the scene where Bill and Sookie have sex for the first time, which is also Sookie's first time having sex at all, Sookie wears a white nightgown that evokes a wedding-dress, signalling that the sexual union represents a marriage. Before meeting Bill, Sookie's relationships with human men have been unsuccessful, because she can hear their thoughts, which have always turned out to be full of crude, sexually explicit, offensive content. The human men in Bon Temps thus cannot live up to the gentlemanly standards appropriate to Sookie's romance. This is another way in which *True Blood* points out that the authority of traditional roles and structures, is gone. Like there are no fathers, there are no men. .

Thus, while *True Blood* appears to be a 'progressive' parable promoting tolerance, it is also deeply nostalgic for the perceived comfort and safety of a 'simpler' time before the emergence of the society of commanded enjoyment and its political corollary, the idealisation of tolerance. Where *Dracula* celebrated the downfall of the Master Signifier, embodied in the destruction of the Count, *True Blood* mourns the loss of the Master Signifier. Where *I Am Legend* used vampires as an allegory for the unacknowledged debt owed by America to the descendants of its slaves, *True Blood* waters down the claim, making black people just another 'minority' to be tolerated within a diverse society. Tolerance is moralised as a virtue,

[8] McGowan, 155-58.

[9] *True Blood* thus fits with Victoria Nelson's observation that the vampire genre in the twenty-first century increasingly explores ideas of human divinity, where vampires resemble angels and superman more than Stoker's Count Dracula.

a version of 'love thy neighbour,' and, 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' Black characters are allowed significant subplots in *True Blood*, and they represent significant friendships for the white characters, but the basic tenets of white American identity are not fundamentally challenged: it is Sookie and Bill's heterosexual 'marriage,' romantically restoring antebellum etiquette with a (seemingly paradoxical) twist of liberation from society's expectations that is this text's image of future humanity.

Fledgling imagines a new society where a form of authority returns yet the command to enjoy also continues to be satisfied – yet, in contrast with *True Blood*, in *Fledgling* this does not involve nostalgia. The Ina symbionts place their *jouissance* in the hands of their vampire-alien master or mistress, who has total authority over them. Yet the symbionts also obey the command to enjoy within their submission due to their physical addiction to the master or the mistress's venom. Meanwhile the symbionts' shared submission to a clearly identified authority figure creates a social bond between them that is reminiscent of the social bonds in a society of prohibition. The creation of this social bond, based on shared sacrifice, however, cannot be romanticised or made an object of nostalgia, because entering into this bond means losing – not enhancing – their own identities by changing their blood.

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