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## Healing or Horrifying? Portrayals of Victorian Medicine in Bram Stoker's Dracula

### Cover Page Footnote

Jennifer Miles recently received her M.A. in English from the University of Louisville. She hopes to continue researching the role of medical experimentation and women's rights in vampire literature, particularly Victorian fiction.

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**Healing or Horrifying? Portrayals of  
Victorian Medicine in Bram Stoker's *Dracula***

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Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) has been analyzed from multiple perspectives, with the role of science in the novel receiving a good deal of attention, especially the issue of evolution and fears about degeneration. For instance, Victorian studies scholar Carol Senf has examined the theme of scientific control in *Dracula*, arguing that fears about scientific classification and evolution echo throughout the text<sup>4</sup>. Scholars have also examined the emphasis Stoker places upon scientific technology, shown through the characters' use of then cutting-edge tools like blood transfusions<sup>5</sup>. However, scholars have rarely touched upon the medical issues *Dracula* raises. Perhaps one of the most interesting underlying themes in the novel concerns animal research in the late nineteenth century. This article aims to show how *Dracula* depicts the dark side of animal vivisection,

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<sup>4</sup>See "For the Blood is the Life: *Dracula* and Victorian Science" published in *Dracula: Between Tradition and Modernism* (1998).

<sup>5</sup>See Leann Page's article "Phonograph, Shorthand, Typewriter: High Performance Technologies in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*" or Carol Senf's book *Science and Social Science in Bram Stoker's Fiction*, especially pages 21-23.

first illustrating how the characters of Dr. Seward and Dr. Van Helsing resemble typical nineteenth-century vivisection researchers, then reading these characters' staking of Lucy Westenra as analogous to a vivisection. Through the characterization and staking, one may see the novel taking an anti-vivisectionist stance, depicting the cruelty the practice inflicted upon animals and warning that animal research may start society down a slippery slope toward medical experimentation on humans.

Beginning in the 1870s, a sharp rise in the number of animal vivisections performed in Britain touched off debates about ethical practices in physiological research (Bodice 216). As medical historian Stewart Richards notes, at this time vivisection was "a term widely used to describe almost any procedure involving breach of an animal's skin ... but which might with greater justification be restricted to experiments involving discrete dissection for the purpose of interfering with the function of underlying structure" (39). In other words, individuals involved in the debate about vivisection most often used the word to describe invasive surgical procedures that caused serious injury or death to the animal. The publication of a *Handbook for the Physiological Laboratory* (1873), a well-known textbook for beginning research students, revealed that many vivisections had been carried out without anesthesia (Richards 33, 41). These procedures included exposing the nerves of frogs and rabbits and electrically shocking them to stimulate reflexes, gradually boiling live frogs to observe reflex actions (the authors note the container employed should be covered with netting, as the frog "makes violent attempts to escape"), and slowly suffocating dogs to observe respiration (Burdon-Sanderson et al. 252-255, 411, 330-331). As a result of experiments like these, anti-vivisectionists began to

clamor for more humane treatment for the animal test subjects (Richards 35), while experimental researchers attempted to justify procedures on the grounds that the experiments could result in medical breakthroughs for human diseases (Mayer 400; Richards 50-51).

Though Bram Stoker was not a researcher with a stake in the debate, his brother Thornley was. Thornley worked as a surgeon, a chair of anatomy at the School of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and an inspector of vivisection for Ireland under the 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act (“Obituary”). The act mandated the use of anesthesia for some experimental procedures and put restrictions on when higher mammals such as dogs and horses could be used as research subjects (“Cruelty to Animals”). Thornley would have been responsible for inspecting vivisection laboratories for compliance to these mandates (“Cruelty to Animals”), which made him well informed about vivisection and the controversies surrounding it. Since Stoker had a close relationship with Thornley, even consulting him about scientific information included in *Dracula*, Stoker would probably also have heard his brother speak of his experience as a vivisection inspector. One may conclude that Thornley’s information might have inspired certain passages in *Dracula*.

*Dracula* does explicitly reference vivisection. The most notable reference occurs in Dr. Jonathan Seward’s phonographic diary and paints Seward as a vivisection advocate. As Seward contemplates diving into ethically dubious territory by using his patient Renfield as a psychological experiment, he justifies this course of action by stating, “It might be done if only there was a sufficient cause. Men sneered at vivisection, and look at the results today!” (71). Seward’s argument that an experiment with potential to harm the subject is permissible if it benefits larger society was a common

defense for vivisection experiments at the time, showing that Seward shares the researchers' mindset (Mayer 400; Richards 50-51). He also explicitly lauds vivisection's results, dismissing the anti-vivisectionists who "sneered" at the experiments (Stoker 71).

The scene also more subtly references the vivisection debate through the scientists Seward mentions, who are all pro-vivisection. He imagines that a breakthrough in brain knowledge would "advance [his] own branch of science to a pitch compared with which Burdon-Sanderson's physiology or Ferrier's brain-knowledge would be as nothing" (Stoker 71). What Seward fails to mention is that his idols, Sir John Burdon-Sanderson and David Ferrier, both came under fire in the late nineteenth century for their use of vivisection. Burdon-Sanderson, one of several authors of the *Handbook for the Physiological Laboratory*, was accused of mistreating animal subjects by withholding anesthesia during painful experiments (Richards 41). Though his section of the *Handbook* sometimes encouraged the use of anesthetics, the book contained "extraordinary inconsistencies, anesthesia being specified for a rabbit but ignored for the dog (271)" (Richards 41). Sanderson claimed that he assumed students using the book would be supervised by teachers who would instruct them to use anesthesia, so he omitted instructions to administer the medication, a claim many doubted (Richards 43-44).

Ferrier, a British physiologist, was a vivisectionist who was tried for violating the 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act. Despite not holding a research license, Ferrier had been present and possibly assisted at a monkey's vivisection (Farmer 16). Though he was later acquitted after claiming he did not participate in dissecting the monkey's brain, the case became well-known and "infuriated his opponents [anti-vivisectionists], who

came finally to realize with the verdict that the Act of 1876 could be ignored with relative impunity” (Farmer 16). Seward glosses over Ferrier’s and Burdon-Sanderson’s ethical shortcomings, however, and portrays both these vivisection advocates in positive terms. Sanderson and Ferrier are standards against which Seward measures his own achievements; he must therefore feel their research has been extraordinarily beneficial. Seward likewise ignores the fact that the two men were widely criticized for their inhumane experiments, hinting that perhaps his enthusiasm for science has blinded him to vivisection’s cruelty, a theme which will resonate in later scenes in the novel.

Furthermore, the book’s portrayal of Seward as the protégé of a researcher from continental Europe associates Seward with vivisection researchers. Though vivisection only rose to prominence in Britain in the late eighteen hundreds, it had been a scientific method on the Continent for quite some time, where “fundamental advances were being made by this method, first in France, and then in Germany” (Richards 28). In discussing Burdon-Sanderson’s section of the *Handbook*, Richards lists many well-known physiological researchers from the Continent, stating, “On page after page we find accounts of classical experimental procedures from the laboratories of such pioneers as Bernard, Brucke, Du Bois Reymond, Brown-Sequard, Fick ... [and several other researchers from mainland Europe]” (37). Young scientists in Britain based their work on these men’s groundbreaking research (Richards 37). Likewise, Seward looks to the Dutch Dr. Van Helsing to teach him about medicine, science, and later, vampirism. Van Helsing’s nationality is one of the first bits of information we learn about the doctor. Seward tells Arthur Holmwood, “I have written to my old friend and master, Professor Van Helsing, of

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Amsterdam, who knows as much about obscure diseases as anyone in the world” (Stoker 105). The novel further emphasizes Van Helsing’s nationality each time he speaks through his foreign speech patterns and overly formal diction. Van Helsing’s foreign background, combined with his medical expertise and role as the Crew of Light’s leader, thrusts him into the role of experimental medicine expert.

Finally, Van Helsing and Seward’s emotional detachment is typical for vivisection researchers. Van Helsing is portrayed as even more emotionally detached than his medical colleagues who are not shown to be researchers. For instance, when he takes Seward to visit Lucy’s victim in the hospital, Van Helsing distances himself from the boy, calling the child “it” (Stoker 174). His medical colleague on the ward is much more affectionate and refers to the boy as “he” and by endearing pet names such as “the poor little mite” (Stoker 174). Likewise, the book hints that Seward does not become emotionally involved with his work, for when he becomes upset at the idea of beheading Lucy the vampire, Van Helsing admonishes him, “Ah! You a surgeon and so shocked! You, whom I have seen with no tremble of hand or heart, do operations of life and death that make the rest shudder” (Stoker 149). Here, Van Helsing judges Seward’s emotional reaction as out of character.

In this way, both resemble the ideal physiologist that lauded vivisection researcher Claude Bernard described: “No anatomist feels himself in a horrible slaughter house; under the influence of a scientific idea, he delightedly follows a nervous filament through stinking, livid flesh which to any other man would be an object of disgust and horror” (207). Van Helsing’s assertion that Seward can do procedures “that make the rest shudder” parallels Bernard’s statement that physiologists must

perform operations that are “object[s] of disgust and horror” to laymen. Furthermore, Bernard’s declaration that scientists should not only repress negative emotions but take pleasure in performing procedures others find ghastly calls to mind a passage from Seward’s diary about preparing for Lucy’s staking. As the group watches Van Helsing remove knives and a stake from his bag, Seward thinks, “To me, a doctor’s preparations for work of any kind are stimulating and bracing, but the effect of these things on both Arthur and Quincey was to cause them a sort of consternation” (Stoker 190). Seward is de-sensitized to the pain operations cause and eager to get to work, in contrast to his friends’ apprehension. This de-sensitization makes Seward appear abnormal and even cruel, which does not reflect well on his role as a representative of medical research.

Considering the novel’s doctors as vivisection researchers allows one to re-read the scene of Lucy’s staking as analogous to a vivisection. The scene makes Bernard’s allusions to working in a “horrible slaughter house” with “stinking livid flesh” literal, offering a tomb full of bodies as a backdrop for the action. Though Lucy’s staking has often been interpreted as sexual in nature<sup>6</sup>, it shares features in common with vivisection as well. As literary critic William Hughes notes, from the beginning, the physicians think of the staking in terms of a medical procedure (164-165). Consider this excerpt from Seward’s diary, a transcript of a conversation with Van Helsing:

VAN HELSING: “Tomorrow I want you to bring me, before night, a set of post-mortem knives.”

SEWARD: “Must we make an autopsy?”

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<sup>6</sup>For example, see Christopher Craft’s “Gender and Inversion in *Dracula*.”

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VAN HELSING: “Yes, and no. I want to operate, but not as you think.” (Stoker 149). Afterwards, Van Helsing re-iterates that he “shall operate” upon Lucy (Stoker 149). The procedure does resemble an operation in some respects: Lucy appears unconscious, lying upon a raised surface; two esteemed physicians are in attendance; surgical tools, including Van Helsing’s “post-mortem knives” are used. However, as the staking begins, Van Helsing’s implication that this is a new form of operation makes sense. In contrast to a typical operation, the patient is alive and awake (Stoker 192). In this sense, Lucy has much in common with the un-anesthetized animals vivisected in the name of science, one of several similarities to a vivisection throughout the scene. These similarities show how vivisection negatively affects all parties involved, especially the medical students and animal test subjects; ultimately the scene hints that vivisection could have unexpected consequences for the British public as well.

Lucy’s staking has an audience composed of experienced medical researchers and men with little medical experience, as vivisections often did. This allows for the scene to show the effects of the practice on students entering medicine. Though the Cruelty to Animals Act restricted when teachers could use vivisection experiments to illustrate anatomy and physiology concepts in class, students were still allowed and encouraged to participate in real research experiments (“Cruelty to Animals”). Dr. George Hoggan, a former assistant in Claude Bernard’s physiology laboratory, speaks of the pressure placed upon students to conform to scientific norms and accept vivisection’s horrors. He writes, “No student can be expected to come forward as a witness when he knows that he would be hooted, mobbed, and expelled from

among his fellows for doing so, and any rising medical man would only achieve professional ruin by following a similar course” (Hoggan 339). Students were placed in an impossible position, as refusing to accept experimentation’s role in science would result in ostracization, but not everyone felt comfortable performing such grisly procedures.

Arthur Holmwood, as an outsider with no previous knowledge about either medicine or vampirism, finds himself in a similar situation in the text. Though Van Helsing originally declared he would perform the operation himself, he pressures Arthur into staking Lucy, saying

“But is there none amongst us who has a better right? Will it be no joy to think of hereafter in the silence of the night when sleep is not: ‘It was my hand that sent her to the stars; it was the hand of him that loved her best; the hand that of all she would herself have chosen, had it been her to choose?’ Tell me if there be such a one amongst us?” (191)

Though ostensibly Arthur has a choice in whether to volunteer, in reality he has no option, much like the medical students mentioned above. Van Helsing’s questions are clearly rhetorical, and he portrays the procedure as beneficial to the public health, just as medical students were told experimental procedures would add to the public good. In this case, if Lucy remains alive, Van Helsing warns she will continue infecting others “adding new victims and multiplying the evils of the world” (Stoker 190). If Arthur chooses not to perform the staking, he may be criticized for failing to protect his homeland and socially shunned like the students Hoggan describes. Arthur may also fear the other men will think him weak, since Van Helsing shows no fear about taking up the stake.

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The novel shows that the procedure itself negatively affects Arthur, both emotionally and physically. Van Helsing's discussion with Arthur, taken out of context, could easily be mistaken as an encouraging speech to a new scientist before a grisly vivisection. He prepares Arthur for what he will see, saying, "Brave lad! A moment's courage, and it is done. ... It will be a fearful ordeal – be not deceived in that – but it will be only for a short time, and you will then rejoice more that your pain was great; from this grim tomb you will emerge as though you tread on air" (Stoker 191). Van Helsing's word choice here – "brave," "courage," "fearful ordeal" – admits the procedure is unpleasant, but he again emphasizes its positive effects and reassures Arthur that he will not regret performing the staking. Van Helsing obviously fears that the procedure would shock a layman – which it does, as Arthur's "face was as pale as snow" (Stoker 191). Though he courageously carries out the procedure, "never falter[ing]," afterwards Arthur almost faints (Stoker 192). Seward writes, "The great drops of sweat sprang out on his forehead, and his breath came in broken gasps. It had indeed been a great strain on him; and had he not been forced to his task by more than human considerations, he never would have gone through with it" (Stoker 192). Seward confirms that the procedure took a toll on Arthur and that his friend did not desire to endure such a task in the first place. One may conclude that many vivisection students suffered similar fates after experiments and wished that they had not been pushed to participate.

The staking shows that vivisections were likewise cruel to the animals being used because it argues that animals felt great pain during the procedures. To do this, the novel repeatedly encourages readers to view the vampires as animals. For instance, as the staking occurs, Seward depicts Lucy's state as similar to a frenzied

animal “champing” at the bit (Stoker 192). Seward continues stripping Lucy of her humanity throughout her staking, calling her “the Thing in the coffin” and again “the foul Thing” (Stoker 192). Comparing Lucy to an animal may help Seward emotionally distance himself from his friend, giving him courage to witness the staking. However, the animal references have a deeper significance because they are repeated throughout the novel and attached to other vampire characters. For instance, scholar Carol Senf points out that in an earlier meeting at the graveyard, Seward says Lucy “drew back with an angry snarl, such as a cat gives when taken unawares” (Senf 82; Stoker 188). She also hunches over her child victim “growling over it as a dog growls over a bone” (Senf 82; Stoker 188). Senf notes that Stoker draws attention to all the vampires’ inhuman qualities, writing of Dracula that there was something “so panther-like in the movement – something so inhuman” and that his “evil smile as quickly passed into a cold stare of lion-like disdain” (Senf 83; Stoker 266). These repeated comparisons show that Stoker’s vampires are very much animalistic, though they retain their human appearance.

In comparing vampires to animals, Stoker implicitly enters the discussion between researchers and animal activists about the extent of animal emotions. Some vivisectionists insisted that animals did not feel the same emotional impulses as humans (Mayer 403). Jed Mayer, a scholar specializing in the role of the nonhuman animal in Victorian society, relates that a “kind of hermeneutics of suspicion regarding the interpretation of nonhuman emotions” developed around vivisections (Mayer 403). Scientists insisted that what people took to be cries of suffering actually were not indicating pain (Mayer 403). Here, Stoker’s description sides with the anti-vivisectionists. The previous scene at the cemetery where the men confronted Lucy shows that even though

she is no longer human, she still communicates using the same language as her human counterparts – literally so, as she speaks to them in English (Stoker 188). Seward also indicates that he had no trouble reading Lucy’s emotions, stating, “If ever a face meant death – if looks could kill – we saw it at that moment” (Stoker 188). Since the novel has already drawn a clear parallel between vampires and animals, this means that *Dracula* encourages readers to interpret animal emotions as they would human emotions. In other words, cries of pain really are cries of pain.

The staking scene has no shortage of cries of pain; Lucy is in pain verging on torture, clearly illustrating the agonizing suffering animals endured during vivisections. Dr. Seward notes, “The Thing in the coffin writhed; and a hideous, blood-curdling screech came from the opened red lips. The body shook and quivered and twisted in wild contortions; the sharp white teeth champed together till the lips were cut, and the mouth was smeared with crimson blood” (Stoker 192). If one substitutes the phrase “on the operating table” for “in the coffin,” the passage could easily describe a painful vivisection. Dr. Seward’s wording here leaves no room for error; words and phrases such as “writhed,” “hideous, blood-curdling,” and “twisted in contortions” show that not only is Lucy in a great deal of pain, but that the tableaux was gruesome to observe. The scene sends the message that vivisections were terrible for the animals involved.

Lucy’s immobility further coincides with the conditions vivisected animals endured, showing the cruel way researchers restrained animals in the laboratory. Experimenters would often administer a medication called curare rather than anesthesia for animals undergoing procedures (Richards 41). In his oft-reprinted letter to the *Morning Post*, anti-vivisectionist George Hoggan decried such chemicals,

writing, “An animal is sometimes kept quiet by the administration of a poison called ‘droorara,’ which paralyses voluntary motion...” (341). The animals could not move, but still experienced pain (Hoggan 341). The stake immobilizes Lucy in much the same way. True, Lucy has more range of motion than an animal under curare’s effects, as her “body shook and quivered and twisted in wild contortions,” but she appears unable to rise (Stoker 192). Here Stoker follows the folkloric tradition that the stake immobilizes the vampire, rendering it unable to stand and escape (fn. Auerbach and Skal 190). The stake alone proves insufficient to kill the undead Lucy and merely acts as a restraint (Stoker 193). Without the stake, one may safely assume that Lucy would have fled the torture chamber, as would many of the animals used for research.

Ultimately, the scene moves beyond arguing that vivisection is cruel to animals or difficult for students. It offers readers a reason to care about animal suffering: someday, humans may find themselves in Lucy’s position. Though the men would loathe to admit it, Lucy still looks human – she is not, in fact, wholly different from the woman they knew. Whatever cravings she may have developed for human blood and lascivious behavior, she still lives in a human body. Lucy’s human appearance touches upon a fear rampant among anti-vivisectionists: that experimental medicine may one day be practiced not only on animals, but on humans as well, a fear which permeates *Dracula*.

This fear was well-established at the time. For instance, anti-vivisectionist Lewis Carroll once warned that accepting animal experimentation would set Britain on a slippery slope to allowing medical experimentation on defenseless human populations. He writes about

“...the possible advent of a day when anatomy shall claim, as legitimate subjects for

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experiment, first, our condemned criminals – next, perhaps, the inmates of our refuges for incurables – then the hopeless lunatic, the pauper hospital-patient, and generally ‘him that hath no helper,’ – a day when successive generations of students, trained from their earliest years to the repression of all human sympathies, shall have developed a new and more hideous Frankenstein – a soulless being to whom science shall be all in all” (Carroll 854).

*Dracula* implies a similar chain of causality, not only through the staking of a vampire bearing a human face but also through Seward’s work in the hospital. The novel has already shown that one of the classes Carroll mentions – “the hopeless lunatic” – is fair game for experimentation, though not yet vivisection. Throughout the novel Seward uses his patient Renfield as a research tool. Though *The Cambridge World History of Medical Ethics* reports that physicians at the time had an imperative to conduct research and add to the medical knowledge base, Seward errs in letting his research come before Renfield’s health (Baker 447). On several occasions, Seward’s personal quest for knowledge leads him to encourage Renfield’s mania. Once, Seward questions Renfield extensively, but afterwards admits, “In my manner of doing it there was, I now see, something of cruelty. I seemed *to wish to keep him on the point of madness* – a thing which I avoid with the patients...” (Stoker 61, emphasis added). Seward acknowledges that he has broken his normal medical practice for his research goals, and in doing so he reinforced Renfield’s mental illness instead of diminishing it. The last phrase hints that Renfield’s role as research subject takes precedence over his condition as a patient, since Seward treats him differently from the other inmates in the asylum.

Renfield's death scene hints that the drive for knowledge may lead researchers down the path to medical experimentation on humans. The final operation Seward and Van Helsing perform upon the madman has a key similarity to a medical experiment: its sole purpose is to prolong Renfield's life to give the doctors more information. As Van Helsing prepares to trephine Renfield's skull he notes, "There is no time to lose. His words may be worth many lives; I have been thinking so, as I stood here" (Stoker 243). Here, as in the vivisection experiments discussed above, the goal is not to help the patient but to gather data that will save other lives. The idea that he should work to save Renfield, or that he has an ethical duty to a fellow human, appears never to have crossed Van Helsing's mind. Renfield's insanity has rendered him an inhuman "other" to the men. Furthermore, the scene again bears a resemblance to a medical experiment in that the patient is paralyzed (Seward notes that even attempting to turn his head causes Renfield's eyes to "grow glassy") and observed by an audience of men (Stoker 242-243). Of course, like a vivisectioned animal, Renfield dies shortly after the trephining, an event which the men do not even stay around to witness (Stoker 246).

Thus, by mid-novel Seward and Van Helsing have already used their power as medical doctors to exploit not only the "hopeless lunatics" but those like Lucy who "hath no helper." Lucy's plight would have especially resonated with readers, as women were particular targets for medical power during the Victorian era. *Dracula* was written when "new legislation and policies were emerging which gave medical doctors *themselves* unprecedented rights of physical intervention with women" (Scott 629, emphasis in original). The Contagious Disease Acts of 1864, 1866, and 1869 gave physicians huge amounts of power over women's health.

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The acts, which applied to districts near military garrisons, forced women that police identified as prostitutes to undergo internal examinations for venereal disease every two weeks or face a jail sentence (Scott 633). Women determined to be infected could be hospitalized against their will for up to nine months (Scott 633). Of course, women wished to avoid hospitalization at all costs, as a poor woman receiving medical charity was treated “less [as] a patient than a subject for study and research” as well as a learning tool for medical students (Lansbury 416). Under these laws, vulnerable populations – “him that hath no helper,” as Carroll termed it – were at physicians’ mercy.

Even wealthier women at the time might be subjected to unnecessary medical interventions and restraint. Coral Lansbury writes that doctors might prescribe removing a woman’s healthy ovaries to alleviate menstrual or psychological problems (418). She states, “Blackwell and Kingsford [female physicians Elizabeth Blackwell and Anna Kingsford] both saw such surgery as an extension of vivisection, with doctors using women in place of dogs and cats” (418). Women were also regularly strapped “across saddles and tables for the purposes of examination and operation” by gynecologists, which many recognized as similar to the plight of animals restrained for vivisections (Lansbury 421, 415). Victorian pornography likewise saw women as animalistic (Lansbury 421). Pornographic stories fetishized the restraint of women and spoke about them like animals, particularly horses, as “women are made to ‘show their paces’ and ‘present themselves’ at the command of the riding master who flogs and seduces them into submission” (Lansbury 421). Because Victorian medicine had already stripped women of their agency and systematically treated them as less than human, it did not take a huge leap of logic to imagine the

legalization of human vivisection among women, particularly lower class women. During Lucy's staking, *Dracula* reflects this fear of medical violence against women, as men led by two physicians hold her down and carry out what they deem to be necessary for public health.

One should also note that though Van Helsing touts staking as the proper "cure" for vampirism, only female vampires are staked, namely Lucy and the three females Van Helsing encounters near Dracula's castle. The staking of the three women bears remarkable similarities to Lucy's staking, as they writhe in agony with "lips of bloody foam" (Stoker 320). The only male vampire, Dracula himself, is not subjected to a prolonged death by staking, but is stabbed in the heart with Morris's bowie knife (Stoker 325). He dies quickly – Mina Harker notes that Dracula turns to dust "almost in the drawing of a breath" – and without evidence of pain (325). The fact that only female vampires are tortured with the staking ritual provides further evidence that the practice represents Victorian medical violence against women.

These fears about medical ethics, particularly the ethics of vivisection and exploitation of the weak, place *Dracula* within a tradition of late-nineteenth century texts. For instance, H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, published the year before *Dracula*, shares themes with Stoker's novel. Notably, in *Dr. Moreau*, the fear that vivisection may be applied to humans is explicitly expressed, as the character of Edward Prendick mistakenly believes Dr. Moreau is experimenting upon people; the monstrous results of Moreau's attempts to turn animals into human-like creatures also blur the line between human and animal. Likewise, Wilkie Collins' anti-vivisection text *Heart and Science* (1883) touches upon fears that vivisection may be used upon humans and also illustrates how such

experiments were torturous for the animals involved. *Dracula's* warning that vivisection harms not only the animals used, but also vulnerable human populations, carries on the tradition of these earlier novels in expressing the general population's concerns about scientific practices. Taken as a whole, these works capture the sense of fear and panic the surge in vivisection experiments managed to create at the time, raising questions about morality in science that are still applicable today.

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