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Cover Page Footnote

Jane M. Kubiesa is a PhD candidate at the University of Worcester, where her research centres on the cultural construction of the transformable body in contemporary YA vampire fiction. She has published in edited collections and journals on topics including vampiric hymenoplasty, the fan appeal of *Twilight*, food discourse in vegetarian vampire fiction for the under 12s, and physical fascination in Victorian fiction. Her specialist areas include the vampire, the Gothic body, and Victorian literature.

**Anatomy of the Victorian Vampire:
Bodily Imaginings in Four Pre-Stoker Texts**

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The figure and appearance of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* has largely subsumed the physical representations of other literary and cinematic vampires in today's popular culture, so much so that the word "Dracula" is now a synonym for the word "vampire". While *Dracula* (1897) may be the most famous nineteenth century vampire story today, it has more than twenty predecessors in the Victorian period alone, among them the oft critically discussed *Varney the Vampire* (1847) and *Carmilla* (1872). This paper aims to turn to four less popularly known pre-Stoker vampire horror stories to investigate the anatomical features and physical appearance of these particularly Victorian creatures through a close reading of the texts with regard to the body, in conjunction with a discussion of the

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vampiric traits used to foreground, contain or dispel it. Each reading will be situated within a narrative of Victorian body theory to position that vampire within the realm of audiences who would experience Stoker's *Dracula* for the first time. Vampires will be dealt with as real vampiric entities, rather than imaginary or fraudulent ones as suggested in some scholarship with regard to these texts. The texts to be used are Count Alexei Tolstoy's *La Famille du Vourdalak/The Family of the Vourdalak* (1843), Paul Féval's *Le Vampire/The Vampire Countess* (1865), Marie Nizet's *La Capitaine Vampire/Captain Vampire* (1879) and Guy de Maupassant's *Le Horla/The Horla* (1887). Each of these stories embodies a different aspect of contemporary bodily horror written through physical characterisation.

The Family of the Vourdalak and Familial Threat

The Family of the Vourdalak (1843) is a prime example of bodily horrors wrought upon the family unit when viewed through the metaphor of vampirism. It is representative of the physical threat to the sanctity of the home and its occupants, and depicts deterioration of family relations due to vampiric contagion. The Victorian notion of the home as a safe environment, free from the negative influences of the outside world was prized and Coventry Patmore's "The Angel in the House" (1862) stereotype later came to represent the female homemaker as the personification of purity in that sanctified sphere. Any attack on that setting was a source of horror to the Victorian middle classes and

its undertones would not have been lost on the period reader. In this novella, that horror is represented by vampirism and a particular variety of vampires who “prefer to suck the blood of their closest relatives” (Tolstoy 140). The danger to the familial unit originates from threats to the body, both as an individual entity and as a linked familial one.

When Gorcha, a father in a remote Moldavian village, goes hunting he warns his family of the possibility of his return as a vampire or a “vourdalak” (Tolstoy 140). This forewarning indicates the prevalence of the vampire epidemic in the region. The story is set in 1759 in what is now Serbia during a period when real-life “pestilence was rife” (Pickering 76) and where reported cases of vampires were of great concern (Pickering 76). Gorcha’s worries signal the possibility of his succumbing to this contagion, and the moral and physical implications this has. That the father figure brings this contagion into the home, acts as a metaphor for the head of the household bringing communicable disease into that sacred space via a level of contamination which results in the physical ruination of both parents and children alike once they become vampires. Consequently, they die and are ultimately reborn as Other. This was a real concern in the Balkans according to vampire scholar Michael Pickering, who cites belief in vampire husbands returning to their wives to impregnate them (76), however the perceived reality of these wives being impregnated with vampiric children does not materialise in Tolstoy’s

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tale because one mother is absent and the children in question are turned rather than born.

The trope of the father/husband bringing disease into the household mirrors real-life coeval fears and realities of sexually transmitted infections contracted via relations with prostitutes, as Sarah Dunant notes:

Men infected prostitutes who then passed it on to the next client who gave it back to a new woman in a deadly spiral. Erring husbands gave it to wives who sometimes passed it on to children (np).

This notion is cemented by the later sexually wanton behaviour of Gorcha's then-vampiric daughter Sdenka, trying to seduce her suitor into vampirism, thus homogenising the daughter/mother and the contaminator figures – the “fallen woman” in real life scenarios and the vampire in Alexei Tolstoy's fictional narrative. Therefore a “deadly spiral” (Dunant np) whereby the affliction is spread, much like syphilis in real life, is produced. The blame would most certainly have been placed with the woman, because as Brian Stableford notes of the Victorian era and vampirism: “sexy sluts were a significant reservoir of venereal disease” (“Afterword” *The Vampire Countess* 387). The epitome of this comes in a powerful tableau whereby the human narrator becomes aware the maiden he is embracing is a vampire:

I saw for the first time that her features, though still beautiful, were those of a corpse; that her eyes did not see; and that her smile was the distorted grimace of a

decaying skull. At the same time, I sensed in that room the putrid smell of the charnel-house (Tolstoy 164).

Such a horror is emblematic of the syphilitic revelation that a lover has the disease and could infect their partner resulting in death, thus the dual aspects of mortality and morality are emphasised in a disturbing bedchamber scene of a man holding, essentially, a syphilitic corpse.

The family refuse to discuss Gorcha for fear it may invite his vampire-self forth from the grave, similarly the narrator mediates the contents of his story with an apology about its subject matter and an aside about his uneasiness on the topic. The idea that discussions of vampires, or venereal disease, were taboo and avoided goes some way to perpetuating the scenarios which cause their infection due to lack of knowledge. The ruination of the family is complete when the grandfather kills his grandchild, the child kills the mother and the mother goes on to kill her other child, husband, and brother-in-law. The entire clan are reborn as vourdalaks creating an unwitting corruption of the family unit, all displaying the mania, the emaciation denoted by their corpse-like appearance, the nasal deterioration construed as their bad smell and the vision problems as denoted by dull unseeing eyes symptomatic of syphilis, whilst Sdenka further exhibits symptoms of the congenital variety of the disease with her “distorted grimace” and corpse-like features (Tolstoy 164).

The idea that overt sexuality is contagious comes to the fore, and is further distorted because

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this contagion occurs amongst the closely related who have a taste for each other's blood. It is something a father could pass onto his children, particularly his daughter as the primary focus of the narrative. The incestuous nature of this transfer, which includes a male grandchild being lured from his bed by his grandfather at night before returning transformed, is demonstrative of generational contamination. Emphasis is placed on the father and the children rather than the mother and the children, and thus the creative/transformational abilities of the mother as "The Angel in the House" are circumvented and natural reproduction within the family comes to an end. Gorcha's wife and the mother of his children has no mention in the novella, his daughter has her maternal procreative abilities removed when she is turned, whilst the daughter-in-law character is never given a name. She is moreover denied unnatural female reproductive freedom to birth vampire children in accordance with period folk beliefs (Pickering 76), and instead must bite her existing offspring to turn him. As vampires, the children are effectively genetic dead ends from the perspective of normative sexual reproduction and thus the family line ends. Instead the only offspring to continue the family name are vourdalaks produced via death and rebirth, via the transmission of disease, and the continuation of base desires such as hunger, and aberrant and overt sexuality, which draw others in and continue the cycle.

One minor character notes that vampirism is responsible for the destruction of whole families in

the village who have become undead. The village is still populated, but by “hideous famil[ies]” (Tolstoy 165) whose familial vampirism the narrator describes as “more terrifying” (Tolstoy 140) than others of the ilk. The horrifying nature of these facsimile families in combination with their assimilative needs forces human villagers to flee. Thus the area appears as a ghost town despite being home to vourdalak families. In discussing the deceptive nature of appearance, critic Andrew M. Boylan commends this story on producing both “the illusory face a vampire might wear” and “the face they are hiding behind said illusion” (95). In other words, these vampires and vampiric families can easily pass as humans when they have a need to in order to spread the pestilence, but in reality their “waxen face[s]” and the familial resemblances they all display of eyes which are “dull, glazed, deep sunk in their sockets”, “colorless lips” and “pale, emaciated features” (Tolstoy 147, 144, 145, 145) belie their true nature and display a venereal disease which in its advanced or congenital forms is quite literally written all over one’s face.

With this reading in mind, the enactment of base desires, the attraction to such desires, or the willingness to submit to those desires is written upon the familial body of these vampires because this is how their numbers are added to. Before becoming a vampire Gorcha says he must be staked if he turns, thus Tolstoy and his father character acknowledge the potential for the contraction of vampirism, show awareness of this vampiric epidemic, and the need to end it. Of course, the

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source of its real-world counterpart syphilis was not identified until more than sixty years after Tolstoy wrote this novella, so vampirism was as good an attributable cause as any other to this disease which infiltrated families. Liisa Ladouceur concurs on this point when she confirms that mass deaths in real life during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in some locations were often attributed to folkloric vampires due to lack of understating with regard to epidemics (9).

The Menacing Feminine in *The Vampire Countess*

The menace of the feminine is at the forefront of narrative development in Paul Féval's *The Vampire Countess* (1865). In continuation of Tolstoy's notion of the dangers of the unfettered female, Féval creates a vampiric antagonist who literally embodies those threats through physical manifestation. The story was written and received in an era where women could not legally own property, open a bank account or divorce their husbands. They could not keep their wages nor have guardianship of their children. It was more than fifty years before some women could vote in England and almost eighty years in France where this story was written and set. Yet this novel features a woman at the head of a secret society of men, a woman of immense physical and mental prowess capable of complex business dealings and espionage and adept in acquiring wealth. This scenario was indeed a source of horror for the male reader and is allowable because such a woman is

vilified and physically and visually denigrated to monster status. More specifically, she is not a real woman at all but a vampire, ergo the threat she represents is largely fictional for the time being.

The female vampire goes by several names including Lila, Countess Marcian Gregoryi and Countess Addhema. Each name is representative of a different aspect of the vampire's altered physicality, in line with Boylan's notions of the illusory vampiric face (95), and each face is a distinct part of the whole. This is a revenant who scalps young women to attain youth and beauty, echoing tales of the real-life Countess Elizabeth Bathory. When she is wearing a blonde-haired scalp she presents herself as the innocent Lila, when the scalped hair is black she presents as the hardened Countess Gregoryi. When the power bestowed by the scalps wanes, the vampire returns to her original appearance as little more than a skeletal homunculus, which can be labelled Addhema after the vampire's original moniker. Her beauty, which is described as a "dream of grace and youthfulness" (Féval 63), is used as a lure for men but is a façade masking something deathly and physically grotesque. The vampire deceives men and kills them for their money, she outwits them with her superior intellect and uses her multiples of assumed and performative beauty as a false attractant. Furthermore, she has mind control abilities which disorientate and compel the (male) subject to do her bidding until they become as "obedient as a slave" (Féval 65). No man is safe from such a duality of

mental and physical coercion and therefore their agency (and culpability) in the matter is removed.

These men fall victim to her because of her supernatural beauty and mind control ability, not because she is a woman. Of course, that says nothing of her natural intellect or the cunning with which she manoeuvres these men initially or of the fact that she is able to outsmart her own vampire husband. Féval creates a powerful and independent female antagonist but that genesis is mitigated by her vampirism and resultant representation as Other. That these men are habitually killed following their marriage to the vampire and that her vampiric husband is manipulating her financially in exchange for his conjugal love acts as an indictment of that institution, although this is not an opinion shared by Féval who was married and fathered eight children (Stableford "Introduction" *The Vampire Countess* 6). The notion that a beautiful, powerful woman must be monstrous is surely authorial commentary on the real life counterparts of those women, particularly since there is no mention of the male vampire having a secret monstrous appearance, although he is equally mercurial. Lila herself adds to the dialogue on the matter when she says:

I see that terrible thing called vampirism – a kind of life that is dependent on the blood of others – everywhere. And with what is all that glory made if not blood? (Féval 174).

She speaks about the political situation involving Napoleon, but the cultural vampirism she cites appears to be defence enough against her own actions in a climate where she is not the only

individual living off others and vampirising them in furtherance of her own needs. This is something Féval was familiar with and contemptuous of according to Brian Stableford (“Afterword” *The Vampire Countess* 387), who has researched this story expansively and who is responsible for its translation from French into English. Stableford goes as far as to say that the term “vampire” was used extensively in Europe during this period to mean Capitalists rather than actual vampires (“Foreword” *Captain Vampire* 9).

The monstrous feminine as embodied by Addhema is also hazardous to women because she uses them as cosmetic enhancements to restore her beauty and youthful appearance as containment for her wasted form. She purports to be one of them and carries out her atrocities in their general guise. She demonstrates no solidarity to the female sex whatever and steals their men as Lila or the Countess, leaving them suicidal. The foetally monstrous Addhema, dubbed “The demon of suicide” (Féval 304), then kills them at their lowest ebb by stripping them of their only remaining assets – their beauty and ultimately their life. For the contemporary female reader this betrayal translates as a cautionary tale about excessive sexuality and the importance of pleasing and retaining a husband or suitor. The novel warns against the dangers of involving oneself in the masculine spheres of business, finance and politics and displays Addhema as the variety of monster women who overstep their natural boundaries become. It also discourages women against the perils of vanity as a

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corruption of innocence, as an instigator of overt sexually, and as a false representation of the individual.

The face Addhema hides behind the illusion, as Boylan puts it (95), holds equal horror to the beauty demonstrated by her “illusory face[s]” (Boylan 95). The epitome of beauty is weighed against the “groaning, collapsing mass” (Féval 182) that is her real form. On both occasions when she is described in detail, the vampire is in bed with a lover, echoing Tolstoy’s vampiric revelation. Féval, however, goes to greater lengths to demonise his vampire and Addhema’s physical degradation is a whole-body transformation. She becomes “the cadaver of an old woman, fleshless, icy cold, totally bald and already turning to dust” (Féval 162), and her beauty is desecrated as

the black hair – that splendid head of hair – had slowly detached itself, like a clinging parchment shrivelling up in the fire. Then a sort of fissure had appeared above the face, extending around the temples. The dried up skin corroded, revealing a frightful skull (Féval 180).

Féval creates this visceral description to shock readers, but also to condemn extremes of feminine beauty and the esteem with which they are held. He posits this beauty as ephemeral and punishes his vampire for her vanity in wishing to retain that appearance, and her lovers for desiring such beauty.

***Captain Vampire* Negates Death**

The Victorian obsession with death as demonstrated by elaborate period funerals, grave markers and mourning rituals and the fascination with spirit mediums is undeniable. That interest turns to fear when dealing with tangible returns from death when reanimated corpses are involved and is the stuff of nightmares. In *Captain Vampire* (1879), the negation of death is the main source of horror. What is more, this is a vampire who treats death with nonchalance and dies with a shrug of the shoulders and “an enigmatic smile playing upon his features” (Nizet 123). Whilst his victims remain dead, the vampire is reanimated after being killed and appears to have won the age-old battle against death through some unknown resurrection ability. Captain Vampire, also known as Boris Liatoukine, has the ability to nullify death because once reached, it is never a permanent state. Whilst Tolstoy’s and Féval’s vampires return to life, Marie Nizet accentuates this phenomenon to multiply the fear this trope generates. The refusal to die marks Liatoukine as a variety of immortal evil which cannot be escaped and which persists eternally, stretching natural boundaries. It also raises fundamental questions concerning the existence of God and the standing of Christianity if such a thing is possible, particularly in light of The Resurrection. Liatoukine has died four times and yet returned from death each time. Nizet offers some hope that these returns might be limited when she describes this vampire as having yellow eyes with “a vertically slit pupil, such as one observes in animals

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of the feline family” (29). Such a striking physical trait has a connection with the proverbial nine lives cats are said to have, thus Liatoukine may have limited reanimations available to him, five more to be precise.

The fact that vampires are nourished by the deaths of their victims is an accepted trope of vampire fiction and folklore, just as a similar form of nourishment takes place when humans imbibe animal flesh so that notion of energy transfer is an acceptable and understandable one for readers to some degree, however terrible the idea of the human food source might be. The concept of each consumed human individual transferring either their soul, life force, or their remaining lifespan to enable the consuming vampire to return to life in some way is unnerving to say the least, and is a concept Féval takes full advantage of. Nizet conceals the method responsible for Liatoukine’s reanimations, but questions surrounding the mechanics of those returns bring the original food source to mind as the most likely anatomical difference between this vampire and his human counterparts. Thus his status as human predator is confirmed and his continued existence at the cost of his victims’ lives is emphasised.

Bearing witness to Liatoukine’s returns, or having knowledge of them brings death or madness for the individual. It is almost as if chasing those thwarted deaths results in balance being restored with the death of those with this secret knowledge. Essentially, each time Captain Vampire’s body dispels death it costs multiple lives of both victims

and witnesses. Madness also ensues for the unfortunate witnesses because the notion of these reanimations is too much for the mind to comprehend. This situation is made more dire because the novel's other characters are unaware of these reanimations, almost as if the deaths have been erased. There are rumours Liatoukine is a reanimated corpse, and he is described in the novella as "so pale and thin that he could have been taken for a dead man" or overtly as "the legendary type-specimen of the Slavic vampire" (Nizet 44, 29), and yet this evidence is dismissed. Thus survivors deal with the horror of reanimation and have to live silently with that torment or be publically ridiculed or killed by Captain Vampire if they reveal it.

Liatoukine undertakes a catalogue of abuses against humanity for his own amusement: he is a murderer and a thief; he physically abuses his military subordinates and attacks the local population; and ruins women through harassment, the destruction of their good names or rape-like sexual encounters (Stableford "Afterword" *Captain Vampire* 157). What is more, he marries rich women and they are found dead having been strangled and bitten at the neck in folkloric fashion (Pickering 72). Stableford, who is also responsible for the translation of *Captain Vampire* from French into English, notes Liatoukine's "remarkable" levels of "human predation" ("Capitaine Vampire, Le" 36) but puts them down to "fundamentally indifferent whimsy rather than active malevolence" ("Capitaine Vampire, Le" 37). I would dispute this to an extent,

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because whilst this vampire does wrong others for his own amusement, these wrongs are intentional, fully conscionable and decisive. Details of his past are not revealed so it is unclear if he has always been cruel or if cruelty has increased with each reanimation. He is referred to as having a cold touch, a “spectral form”, “livid pallor”, a “sepulchral tone” to his voice and a “funereal aspect” overall (Nizet 81, 29, 44, 29), and again it is unclear if that appearance of death increases with each dying-and-rising ritual. There is some indication that both of these scenarios are possible in the cumulative wounds Liatoukine retains after his return to life. The last death Captain Vampire returns from in the novel leaves him identifiable because of a missing finger. His finger was cut off during a fracas where he was shot in the heart and stabbed three times. That the finger does not grow back, leads to the assumption that his other wounds are also still present on his body. Furthermore, if this is the case then the wounds from his previous deaths would also still be visible, including one occasion where his men orchestrated his death by freezing. It appears these repeated deaths and rebirths not only nullify the act of dying but also support a physicality which is slowly deteriorating from injury or from the decay associated with death. This provides horror for the readership not only because the role of God is questioned, but also as an already cruel being’s brutality could be increased and because a reanimated corpse is wandering the earth potentially without end, wearing its death wounds as a physical marker. The burden of this

knowledge, were it to happen in real life, would be overwhelming and madness would ensue just as in the fictional world. The potentiality to defy death in this way also leads the reader to real-life fears of being returned with their basest essential personality traits exposed for all to see and with the likelihood of surviving with whatever physical malady or disfigurement causes their deaths, forever.

Physical Dissolution in *The Horla*

The ideation of the European mind and body's superiority stands at the core of empire-building and European expansion across the globe. Such an expansion, during the period, celebrated and highlighted the superlative qualities of those nations and their individual members. The subject body was honed with calisthenics and sporting activities and was prized for its visual perfections. *The Horla* (1887) and its invisible vampire is representative of the dissolution of that championed physical state. Guy de Maupassant creates a vampire who takes a person's will, and their physical freedom through the withdrawal of the ability to move. It steals their sustenance and the manner by which they could improve their strengths by imbibing the fluids they intend to drink. This creature produces ill health in its victim by inducing fevers and preying on the nerves, and it sucks the life force out through the lips, further weakening the corporeal vessel. Additionally, this vampire sits upon the victim's chest during sleep thus compressing the lungs and literally forcing oxygen from the body to prevent the victim from breathing, in a manner reminiscent

of Henry Fuseli's 1781 painting *The Nightmare*. At the same moment, the victim is strangled but paralysed:

I struggle, bound by that terrible sense of powerlessness which paralyzes us in our dreams; I try to cry out – but I cannot; I want to move cannot do so; I try, with the most violent efforts and breathing hard, to turn over and throw off this being who is crushing and suffocating me cannot! (de Maupassant 217)

These laborious processes remove life from the vampirised victim, gradually and concurrently destroying the body with the ultimate goal of killing the subject and consigning him to invisibility and nothingness, much like that experienced by the vampire and its dispelled form. Erik Butler translates the neological title of this story and its vampire as “*hors* (out) and *là* (there)” (84), whilst Shelley R. Adler notes it as “*hors*, meaning ‘outside’ and *de la*, meaning ‘there’” (59). As a creature which is “out there” or “outside there”, it is an apposite moniker for a vampire who takes what was once inside and part of the body and attempts to facilitate its withdrawal.

In tandem with attempts to cause physical devastation, the Horla undertakes a schema of attacks upon the mind to induce madness, thus effectively promoting the wholesale destruction of the being and sealing the dissolution of those two elements of the whole. This continues Nizet's use of madness amongst those who fall prey to vampires, because the veracity of vampiric existence calls

one's sanity into question. In this case the vampire's invisibility induces madness, as the very existence of the monster cannot be verified visually, ergo its invisible assaults could be attributed to the realm of mental invalidity. The Horla utilises the conscious mind to attack the body using mind control, which physically inhibits movement. It controls the unconscious mind through nightmares and the withholding of sleep, thereby weakening a physicality which is already inundated. Such a duality based on "the haunting...of the mind" (Aguirre 149) results in the victim having no physical or mental respite from its attacker, no assurances of sanity and the home once more, as depicted in Tolstoy's novella, becomes unsafe. Returns home are filled with foreboding and references to "misfortune" (de Maupassant 215), "impending danger" and feelings of "confused and irresistible fear" (de Maupassant 216).

Dissolution is not merely embodied by invisibility and the fading of one's bodily existence, due to death or from the visual field, it is also represented by the permeability of that body and its undesired ability to become Other through the physical and mental interference of an external entity intent on blurring the boundaries between self and other. The horror of this vampire is characterised by the danger it poses to the victim's body, whose symptoms are revealed in detail in comparison to the limited descriptions of his invisible enemy. That the physical self deals with a creature "who lives in him, or next to him" (Rank 21), or both, produces a combinatorial human

already being transformed by his vampiric attacker. Manuel Aguirre confirms this stance on the story by noting:

Nature abhors a vacuum...the man who protests that his actions are not his own is admitting that he is possessed by a Horla; the man whose soul abandons his body will see another soul entering it (159).

The idea of one body entering another, or more specifically of the Horla taking over the narrator who decries: “He is within me, he is becoming my soul” (de Maupassant 234), epitomises what Aguirre describes as the “individual’s confrontation with his personal Other” (147) from the Victorian era. In this case, the “personal Other” invades the “personal” space of the body, Othring it until it is neither “Other” nor “self” and yet both concurrently, thus confounding notions of the body’s dissolution. This horror is compounded not just by the sheer terror of something that “animate[s] the captive body” (de Maupassant 221) but because that body “obeys more than it obeys ourselves” (de Maupassant 221), therefore the body is complicit in this betrayal.

The depiction of humans as mere “cattle” (de Maupassant 232) for fodder, “chattel” or “slave[s]” (de Maupassant 233) for a more superior, if monstrous, creature harks back to the revelatory publication of Charles Darwin’s’ *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, which positioned humanity in the sphere of the animal for the first time and which rocked beliefs in the innate uniqueness of the human being, who was now just another link in the

food chain. That humans could be descended from apes suggests real-life horrors and once this idea had been published as scientific fact, almost any threat to the body became a possibility, including a loftier vampiric one. The Victorian Imperial image of superiority was now questioned due to the shifting status of humanity and it is apt that the vampire representing that horror of physical degradation is a native of Brazil, a former Portuguese colony that successfully sought independence. Thus the former colonial subject from “out(side) there” is now more powerful than its previous masters, which is very telling in the contemporary cultural climate and which demonstrates that what Europeans discover abroad may return to haunt them. (Butler 84) Interestingly, this creature does not seek to colonise the body as some vampires do (Edwards 75), but instead to destroy it. de Maupassant does not allow this victory to go unpunished and the *status quo* is regained to a degree when the victim escapes and it is assumed the vampire is dead. The somewhat dubious conclusion to the story triumphs over the bodily deterioration experienced within the narrative sphere, but nothing can rewrite the scientific discovery of evolution and the damage this does to contemporaneous conceptions of the human being. This is perhaps reflected in the victim’s mental wellness, because while his body is free from the Horla, his mind is haunted not least because he has unintentionally killed the servants in his household by burning his home down to kill the vampire.

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Each of these vampire tales reveals the corruption of form as embodied by all that is vampiric and the potentiality for corruption of the human body in each case through contact with these vampires, even if unwitting or unintentional. These variations of corruption demonstrate telling contemporary fears over the bodily horrors the human self could face via any number of avenues, warning readers to be on their guard against such Becomings which could come from any avenue of society and where not even the home is safe. The physical self was so vulnerable to degradation, corruption, unwanted containment or total dissolution and this was a great source of fear in a period where any number of diseases, societal threats from women, the colonial subject, or the foreign Other, or even from scientific discovery resulting in the further displacement of the body and of its relation to traditional religion could penetrate the stability of the human being.

These powerful narrative threats are combined and unified in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, whether by chance or design, to produce a vampire story which is remembered above all others. This is a vampire tale whereby the sometimes mist-like vampire "father figure" infects young women enabling that danger to be passed invisibly into their homes, mirroring Stoker's own status as a supposed syphilitic (Skal 2016). The dangers of the unfettered feminine are magnified by the fin de siècle with contention surrounding the New Woman and her drives for education, suffrage and independence.

The notion of immortality or outliving death is brought to the fore, not just with Count Dracula, but also with his female vampires and with the possibility of his heir through Mina Harker's pregnancy. The ability to induce mental instability through vampiric contact is also a thread carried forward in *Dracula* as Jonathan Harker struggles to reconcile the vampiric world, and by extension the vampiric body, with that of his own. However, some aspects of these foregoing tales are avoided as even too taboo a topic for Stoker, such as the transformation of vampiric children (Schillace 269), territory reserved for the twentieth and twenty-first century and its bestsellers.

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