

notion of the One Life" (158). Whether or not such fusion is Romantic, it can be claimed as a valid reading, but at the same time the poem's Shelleyan influence intimates the possibility of a growth where "identity [and individuality] remains intact despite expansion," which Raymond denies. Once again such divergence may be explained as a result of the Romantics' own dual, and at times contradictory, emphasis upon both the universal and the individual. Indeed, Raymond herself later claims the poem is to be read as a "record" of "the growth of a poet's mind" (114), contradictorily allowing the self to reenter the picture. Wisely, Riede qualifies his own assertion more consciously, claiming Swinburne "is entirely aware that the only thing unifying the landscape is his perception of it" (Swinburne 159).

In his essay "On Life" Shelley writes, "Nothing exists but as it is perceived" (477). Riede's statement itself, then, would seem to echo a Shelleyan poetics. For a truly powerful example of landscape unified by perception one need only turn to the concluding lines of "Mont Blanc": "And what were thou [Mont Blanc], and earth, and stars, and sea, / If to the human mind's imaginings / Silence and solitude were vacancy?" (142-44). Thus the crucial role of the poet as listener in "To a Sky-Lark" becomes significantly relevant in a Shelleyan reading of "On the Cliffs." Because the poet hears (or listens to) the nightingale's song, there arises a hope for change in the "word unchangeable." This is how the possibility of transcendence is created out of the very experience of temporal existence itself. Thus the Swinburnean speaker can say, of the Sapphic Bird-God's "Song, and the secrets of it, and their might, / What blessings curse it and what curses bless, / I know them" (413-15, my emphasis). In his own skeptical idealism, Swinburne knows that, though he cannot claim the "blessings" of its song, the lack of an answer (as for Sappho) does not ultimately deny them either. It is this knowledge alone that allows for the final affirmation of faith in the powers of the poetic imagination, that "Fire everlasting of eternal life."

## Love at First Beet: Vegetarian Critical Theory Meats *Dracula*

J. e. d. Stavick

In Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Victorian Jonathan Harker (and, presumably his friends and most other Victorians) eat meat.<sup>1</sup> Harker enjoys eating meat so much that he records in his journal menus and recipe notations while he travels to Transylvania to conduct business with Count Dracula, a creature who drinks blood. Jonathan Harker and Count Dracula

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Viterbo College

have this in common: both consume creatures for their own sustenance and power; both are carnivores. The trouble—or conflict—between Harker and his friends, and Count Dracula is that Dracula consumes at a "higher," taboo level of carnivorousness than do Harker and the other Victorians. The Victorians are threatened—literally and figuratively—by

<sup>1</sup>The use of the term *meat* itself makes the animal an absent referent. "Meat" denies community, depersonalizes, and alienates the animal from the act of consumption. It is no longer a creature, but is "meat," which humans can eat without regard to the animal's welfare, since "meat" makes the animal a thing.

The term is retained in this paper out of consideration for the reader, who may find the lexical alternatives offensive. One can read this paper, however, substituting "flesh" or "dead animal" wherever "meat" appears.

Dracula's subsistence on the higher order, cannibalism: it threatens their own English sense of patriarchal order.

When Dracula invades England and overpowers the dominating patriarchal system by biting and claiming the women, consuming their blood, and colonizing the land, the Victorian men, who are accustomed to being the consumers, must recognize that they have become the consumed commodity of Dracula colonization. In their efforts to restore England to their patriarchal hierarchy, the men must reverse their present state of being consumed by Dracula to their previous state of being consumers of the "Other"—women, class, and race (including Dracula). In other words, England has colonized the "Other" in its own patriarchal system in England, Asia, Africa, and America, but now it has become the colonized by the "Other," in the form of Dracula. England—Western culture—must overpower and destroy Dracula in order to occupy the highest level of the meat hierarchy: consumer of Others.

Although *Dracula* has been interpreted within the theoretical frameworks that include sexism and feminism, psychoanalysis, and Marxism, in this paper I wish to argue a vegetarian critical theory of *Dracula* in which I set forth the problems of colonization and reverse colonization in terms of consumption.<sup>2</sup> In order to do so, I must first discuss some vegetarian ideology. While I will depend primarily on vegetarian theory for my interpretation, I will necessarily borrow some ideology and terminology from Marxist theory, as the theories are complementary.

Food is culturally ordered in the West, and bears symbolic meanings. Western culture has had a tendency to treat itself in a privileged, rationalistic manner, which has led it to overlook deeply embedded, fundamental patterns in its culture. Vegetarianism provides a rare example of an explicit food ideology in the West, which, as vegetarian theorist Julia Twigg says, can "offer us an entree into the much more pervasive, though largely implicit, ideology of dominant meat culture" (18).

In the West, vegetarianism is clearly a product of individual choice, requiring a person to step outside of the culturally-prescribed ways of eating, and to develop a strong sense of self. There are four major arguments for vegetarianism: health, animal welfare, economic and ecological welfare, and spiritual fulfillment (20). These arguments are interconnected and supportive of one another: just as it is wrong to exploit animals, it is also wrong to exploit the Third World, and the Earth itself. The devastation of nature is related to the rights of animals to exist and to spiritual conceptions of the Earth as a whole. A balance in nature connects to healthful living. In vegetarianism, health means more than the absence of illness: it means spiritual well-being, which comes from "right action in the world" (20).

In the nineteenth century, the vegetarian movement gained prominence under the leadership of enthusiasts such as Sylvester Graham (for whom the cracker is named), and Ellen G. White, a Seventh-Day Adventist who advocated a diet free

of meat, eggs, dairy products, and "all exciting substances" (qtd. in Levitt 384), which, she warned, caused illness and promoted lustful desires. The movement abated in England when the first president of the Vegetarian Society (founded in 1847 in Ramsgate, England) died, but it regained popularity in the late nineteenth century, when famous intellectuals such as George Bernard Shaw, Leo Tolstoy, and Mahatma Gandhi advocated a vegetarian diet (Akers 198). Nineteenth-century vegetarians viewed meat-eating as a sign of domination of others, but saw their own diet as a symbol of self-identity and, for some, feminism (Adams 156). According to feminist literary theorist Elaine Showalter, "in late Victorian women's literature, feminism, chastity, and vegetarianism often appear together as connected values; in feminist utopias such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* (1915), the virginal heroines abstain from the 'heating diet' of red meat" (129). Turn-of-the-century London observed the opening of two vegetarian restaurants, which coincided with the introduction of the practice of society women eating out as part of their emancipation (Burnett 228).

In Western culture, however, meat has always been the most prized food: it remains the center around which the meal is created (note, for example, that all of Jonathan Harker's recorded meals are meat-centered: "chicken done up some way with red pepper" (1), "egg-plant stuffed with forcemeat, a very excellent dish" (2), "robber's steak" (5), and "an excellent roast chicken" (17). Eating meat, Twigg says, "involves a literal incorporation of the animal, and as such presents us with the ambivalence and complexities of our own attitudes to animals and the animal, nature and the natural" (18).

Meat culture follows a food hierarchy that privileges bloody meat, especially beef, over all other foods, followed by chicken and fish, then by eggs and dairy products, and finally by plant foods—fruit, vegetables, and grains—which hold no status in the hierarchy (22; Rifkin 239). The higher the food appears on the hierarchy, the more powerful it is in the culture. The dominant meat culture has long believed that bloody meat has a certain power—strength, aggression, passion, sexuality—things that the dominant culture has also considered to be the nature of animals (22; 239). Soldiers and athletes have traditionally been given bloody meat to strengthen themselves for battle and competition. In the nineteenth century, school boys were often told to abandon meat eating in favor of a vegetarian diet in order that they might avoid masturbation (Rifkin 239-40). Bloody red meats, particularly beef, have been associated with masculinity, while "bloodless" white meats, such as chicken, have been associated with femininity (240). Showalter explains that Victorian girls avoided beef and other meats, because "a carnivorous diet was associated with sexual precocity, especially with an abundant menstrual flow, and even with nymphomania" (129). During the Victorian era, pregnant and lactating women were frequently advised to reduce their red meat consumption in favor of "delicate, light dishes like chicken, fish or eggs," which com-

<sup>2</sup>For discussion of sexism and feminism in *Dracula*, see Cranny-Francis and Craft; for a discussion of psychoanalysis in *Dracula*, see Bentley; for a discussion of Marxism in *Dracula*, see Wilt, Boone, Williams and Hatlen.

plemented women's "delicate condition" while avoiding the stimulating qualities of masculine food—bloody red meat (240). Invalids were recommended the same diet, and, says Jeremy Rifkin, "red meat was even considered too strong to be consumed by the more bookish types, men of letters, accountants, and clerks" (240). This dietary precaution may explain Jonathan Harker's preference for chicken dishes. According to the Victorian dominant meat ideology, Harker is apparently not strong, powerful, and masculine enough to consume a steady diet of bloody red meat, unlike his foe, the strong, aggressive, and manly Count Dracula, who drinks pure blood.

Meat has never been taboo in Western culture, but the tradition of encouraging women, children, the sick, and other "weaklings" to eat meat less frequently suggests that the vulnerable members of the culture should eat lower on the hierarchy. It is notable, however, that the dominant culture generally does not eat carnivores and uncastrated animals: the assumption is that the meat of these animals is too strong and vile for the diet of members of civilized cultures (Twigg 22). Eating these animals (and eating other people, of course) is the only taboo level of the meat hierarchy.

At the same time, most members of Western dominant culture cook their meat, which serves to alienate the consumer from the source of the bloody food. Vegetarians say that people cook meat in order to disguise what it really is; vegetarian theorist Carol J. Adams explains further: cooking "masks the horrors of a corpse and makes meat eating psychologically and aesthetically acceptable" (114). Citing French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, Rifkin says that cooking is the "primary mediator between culture and nature. Only the human species cooks its meat, creating an essential boundary between civilization and the natural world. Cooking is also the universal means 'by which nature is transformed into culture'" (qtd. in Rifkin 237). Cooking increases the status of food in Western dominant culture, while in the non-dominant culture, vegetarians value raw food more than cooked. Vegetarians, then, eat lowest on the meat culture hierarchy, setting them at ideological odds with members of the dominant meat culture.

Meat eating has largely been the domain of powerful people: in Victorian England, meat consumption was a class marker, differentiating the social classes. While the aristocracy ate large quantities of meat, the common people subsisted mostly on carbohydrates—potatoes and bread. A 1902 Statistical Society survey of food consumption in England reports that the upper classes consumed over 300 pounds of meat per person each year, while the laboring class consumed only one-third of that amount (Burnett 202). The classes differed not only in the quantity of meat consumed, but also in the quality of the meat they ate: the rich ate fresh beef, mutton and chicken, while the poor settled for pickled and smoked pork and pork fat (161).

The upper and professional classes considered meat necessary to a high lifestyle: they correlated meat-eating with wisdom, but vegetarianism with bizarre behavior (Giehl 128-29). England was so beef-centered in its diet that it came to be associated with beef more than any other food; in fact, members of the royal guard were known as Beefeaters. Queen Victoria preferred plain meals for herself, but as head of the British Empire, the powerful consumer of "Others," she set a

lavish dining standard, keeping nineteen chefs who served excessive meat-based meals of five to fourteen courses daily (Burnett 215-16). The upper and professional classes who mimicked the royal dining practices featured their own banquets that moved up the meat hierarchy with each course: fish, then chicken, and then beef (227).

When meat was not plentiful, the poor were denied access to it, particularly women and children. Bread was the principle food of the English laboring class, seconded by potatoes, not meat, which was a rare luxury (160). When laborers did get meat, it was often diseased beef or mutton, given to them by their employers as payment in kind (157). Charles Dickens depicts this reality in the story of young Oliver Twist, who is offered the meat scraps saved for the Sowerberry's dog:

"Here, Charlotte," said Mrs. Sowerberry, who had followed Oliver down, "give this boy some of the cold bits that were put by for Trip. . . . I dare say the boy isn't too dainty to eat 'em—are you, boy." (31)

While the class distinctions of diet may be more clearly observable, it should also be noted that the same distinctions apply to gender. As second-class citizens, women were more likely to eat "second-class food" in the Victorian patriarchal meat culture: fruits, vegetables, and mostly grains. What little meat was available in poor households was reserved for the men. Rifkin explains that "nowhere is the meat hierarchy more in evidence than in England. In the first national survey of British dietary habits, conducted in 1863, investigators were told that in rural communities the women and children 'eat the potatoes and look at the meat'" (242). One rural butcher reportedly testified that "'the women say they live on tea'" (qtd. in Burnett 45).

In Western culture, meat-eating has been a privileged male activity, enjoyed by "meat and potatoes" men (recall the "real men don't eat quiche" slogan of the 1980s). Meat-eating symbolizes male power, but it also points to racism, which Adams defines as "the requirement that power arrangements and customs that favor white people prevail, and that the acculturation of people of color to this standard includes the imposition of white habits of meat eating" (30).

In the nineteenth century, meat was endorsed as a superior food meant first for white palates. Nineteenth-century physician George Beard considered meat the food of choice for white middle-class men, while vegetables and grains, lowest on the meat hierarchy, were left for women and non-white races. Beard provides his 1898 dietary prescription for white men:

In proportion as man grows sensitive through civilization or through disease, he should diminish the quantity of cereals and fruits, which are far below him on the scale of evolution, and increase the quantity of animal food, which is nearly related to him in the scale of evolution, and therefore more easily assimilated. (qtd. in Adams 30)

Beard rationalizes, however, that "savages" can and should live on lower forms of food because they are

little removed from the common animal stock from which they are derived. They are much nearer to the forms of life from which they feed than are the highly civilized brain-workers, and can therefore subsist on forms of life which would be most poisonous to us. Secondly, savages who feed on poor food are poor savages, and intellectually far inferior to the beef-eaters of any race. (qtd in Adams 31)

After Oliver Twist eats the dog's scraps, meat consumption is blamed for his "mad" behavior, as Bumble explains to Mrs. Sowerberry:

"Meat, ma'am," meat, replied Bumble, with stern emphasis. "You've over-fed him, ma'am. You've raised a artificial soul and spirit in him, ma'am, unbecoming a person of his condition: as the board, Mrs. Sowerberry, who are practical philosophers, will tell you. What have paupers to do with soul or spirit? It's quite enough that we let 'em have live bodies. If you had kept the boy on gruel, ma'am, this would never have happened." (52)

Whenever, meat is held up as the best protein source, racism and sexism are indicated. Such a bias distorts the reality of the dietary history of many cultures in which vegetation supplied complete protein sources. But the white male political commitment to meat-eating has long prevailed.

In this sense, then, meat as a commodity of consumption is a very powerful feature of Western culture. As Western cultures have colonized the Third World, they have taken their food ideology with them. It is germane to this discussion that the term "cannibalism," that most taboo level of meat consumption, is rooted in a variation or mispronunciation of the name "Carib" by Spaniards during their exploration and colonization of the West Indies. Perceiving the Carib people to be eaters of human flesh, the Spaniards called the people "cannibals." The term became powerful when Europeans explored North and South America and Africa, since identifying people as cannibals provided justification for white colonization, evangelism, and enslavement of the local people (31; Ayto 94).

A vegetarian theoretical framework offers a critical perspective to the study of *Dracula*. It does not intend to replace or compete with other theoretical perspectives; rather, vegetarianism joins other ideologies by adding a world view largely overlooked by other theories.

Jonathan Harker, English solicitor traveling by train to Transylvania to conduct real-estate business with Count Dracula, notes rather meticulously in his journal the foods that he consumes on his journey. He records that on the train he has eaten a chicken dish, "which was very good but thirsty. (mem. get recipe for Mina)" (1). Harker records having eaten the chicken again the next morning, along with a meat stuffed eggplant: "(mem. get recipe for this also)" (2). Two days later, as Harker prepares to ride to Castle Dracula, he again lists in some detail his recent meal:

... let me put down my dinner exactly. I dined on what they call 'robber's steak'—bits of bacon, onion, and beef, seasoned with red pepper, and strung on sticks and roasted over the fire, in the simple style of the London's cat's-

meat! The wine was Golden Mediasch, which produces a queer sting on the tongue, which is, however, not disagreeable. I had only a couple of glasses of this, and nothing else. (5)

Harker eats his next meal at Castle Dracula, prepared by the Count himself, and Harker again notes the menu. "The Count himself came forward and took off the cover of a dish, and I fell to at once on an excellent roast of chicken. This with some cheese and a salad and a bottle of old Tokay, of which I had two glasses, was my supper" (17).

Thus, the patriarchal politics of meat emerge early in *Dracula*. In a three-day period at the outset of the story, Harker records the details of four meat-based meals. Clearly, Harker enjoys consuming meat, so much so that he writes reminders to himself to secure the recipes for his future wife to cook for him. Women emerge, then, not as meat consumers, but as meat laborers. Harker's third meal, "robber's steak," is, in Harker's opinion, a simple meal that apparently is not up to his regular dining standards. He does not record a memo to secure the recipe for robber's steak, nor does he call the meal "excellent," as he does when he eats chicken at Castle Dracula. Harker does not praise or wish to duplicate the robber's steak because it is a Third-World meal, and therefore is strange to him; it is meat, but it is peasant meat, lower on the meat hierarchy than he is accustomed to consuming. The meal is the typical fare of nineteenth-century country inns, according to Albert Smith's 1855 *The English Hotel Nuisance*: "'chop, sir, steak, broiled fowl,'" (qtd. in Burnett 96). What is noteworthy, though, is that Harker's Transylvanian meals are roasted, a cooking method which maintains the bloody rawness of slaughter, blurring the distinction between nature and culture (Rifkin 237). Because roasting meat embodies this ambiguity, it is associated with power and virility, and therefore is suitable for masculine consumption (238). As Harker approaches Count Dracula, the "Other," he also approaches a diet of bloody, masculine meat.

Taken as representative of nineteenth-century Englishness, Harker's enthusiasm for dining on meat-centered meals reveals England as consumer—of meat, women, the lower class and Third-World cultures. Vegetarian ideology, considered feminine and low-class, is at odds with an ideology based on a consumption of others. The threat to English consumption is the threat of reverse colonization, which in this text is manifested in the vampiric invasion of England by the powerful consumer "Other," Count Dracula, who threatens England with his violation of the meat hierarchy. By consuming on the taboo level of the meat hierarchy, Dracula becomes different, "Other," as Thomas Byers explains: "Dracula is not portrayed as part of 'nature' or the 'normal' world of men, but as apart from it. Not only in his essence but in his origins, his habits, even his nationality, he is an alien creature, exotic to the point of being unique" (26). Dracula has exceeded the limits of the hierarchy by practicing the taboo: he not only consumes carnivores, but he also consumes humans by drinking their blood. His human-blood consumption is so strong, vile, and taboo that Dracula conquers and converts his victims, thereby overpowering the weaker consumers of Victorian England.

Frederic Jameson considers the concept of Otherness,

reflecting on a perspective that the reveals the thinking of Victorians in *Dracula*:

It is becoming increasingly clear that the concept of evil is at one with the category of Otherness itself; evil characterizes whatever is radically different from me, whatever by virtue of precisely that difference seems to constitute a very real and urgent threat to my existence. . . . The point is not that in such figures the Other is feared because he is evil; rather he is evil *because* he is Other, alien, different, strange, unclean, and unfamiliar. (140)

Dracula represents the "Other"—the oppressed of the Victorian World. Those who are Dracula's opposite (the "Same," perhaps) are members of Western culture, primarily England. Members of the bourgeoisie, these characters are either independently wealthy or are professionals. Although Quincey Morris and Dr. Van Helsing are not English, they are loyal to Englishness, and they devote themselves to protecting and restoring England to its patriarchal order.

A feature of Victorian England's patriarchal order is reification—Georg Lukacs', and later, Jameson's term for "the total transformation of the world into a sphere where relations among rational or conscious beings altogether cease and there are left only relations among things" (Dowling 26). William Dowling cites Stanley Cavell's scenario of one way in which this concept might be manifested:

If I could plunge an axe into the body of another person with just the same cheerful unconcern as I chop logs for tonight's fire, I would seem to exist outside anything that could be called, even in the most minimal sense, a human community. If I did this to you, I would be seeing you, as I saw the log I was chopping for the fire, as a thing. (28)

As Dowling explains it, reification becomes a process in which people become commodities in a world given over completely to production and consumption of commodities; people, then, become nothing more to society and to each other than commodities or things. Moving beyond Marxist economic determinism, Jameson considers Lukacs' concept of reification as a way of experiencing the world (27). Karl Marx himself said that there is something psychotic in this dominant relation, which can be made possible only by maintaining impersonal forces at work (28).

The dominant meat culture of Victorian England was able to use its power to conquer and colonize "Others"—women, who lacked the vote, fair property rights, and status; the lower class, who served the upper and professional classes; and races of other cultures who were exploited and enslaved—precisely by maintaining the impersonal relations with which Marx was concerned. When one denies community, whether with animals or humans, it follows that one can exploit the "Other" without recognizing the "Other" as a "Being." The Victorian patriarchal hierarchy practiced this exploitation-consumption of the impersonalized "Other," so it follows that Victorians would certainly treat Count Dracula not only as impersonalized Other," but also as a threat to England's system of exploiting and consuming "Others."

At this point, another character in *Dracula* deserves

attention in a vegetarian critical discussion of the text: Renfield. While he may not be considered central to the story, Renfield is far from insignificant: as a foil to Harker, Renfield reflects the necessity for Harker to grow in purpose and determination in order to reclaim his consumer role from Dracula. Renfield is, of course, mentally ill, and as such represents the sickness and evil that Dracula brings to England. But England is already marked with disease before Dracula invades and colonizes England, having invaded other lands, and exploited and consumed the lives of people in Asia, Africa, and America. Renfield, then, may represent the threat of England consuming "Others," and of England itself being consumed by "Others."

Renfield eats living creatures, mostly flies, spiders, and sparrows (the order in which the same animals are consumed in the food chain). The Victorians may be repulsed by Renfield's diet, but he is eating on the same level on the meat hierarchy as the "sane" people are. Harker eats chickens, while Renfield eats sparrows: both men eat birds. The difference is that Harker, by eating his birds dead and cooked, makes the animals impersonal and absent, enabling him to consume the animals without regard for their welfare. Renfield, on the other hand, eats his birds alive and raw, acknowledging the fact that he is indeed consuming creatures.

Rifkin says that "the identification of raw meat with power, male dominance, and privilege, is among the oldest and most archaic cultural symbols" of Western civilization (244). By eating his creatures raw, Renfield does not enculturate his food; instead, he attempts to reach for the virile power of taboo meat consumption. But the power associated with eating raw meat also corresponds with hunting and consuming large animals. Renfield does not hunt, and he does not consume large animals, or mammals of any size, for that matter: he eats at the bottom of the meat hierarchy. Dracula, on the other hand, consumes at the top—taboo—level of the hierarchy, hunting for his human-blood meals and maintaining the masculine power associated with consuming raw meat. An avid disciple of Dracula, Renfield tries to move up the meat hierarchy, but he is rendered incapable of doing so: Dr. Seward denies him the cat he wants, and Dracula himself does not deliver on his promise to provide Renfield with an all-you-can-eat feast of live rats, cats, and dogs. When Seward is injured in the madman's cell, Renfield swallows the doctor's blood, licking it from the floor. But his drink of human blood remains more reminiscent of tasting roadkill than of toasting a successful hunt. A free sample of Seward's blood does not advance Renfield in the meat hierarchy: he is immobilized by his own weakness and lack of purpose.

Because Renfield has failed to alienate his animals by making them "meat" and cooking them, as Harker does, he is prevented from functioning in the patriarchal meat hierarchy of Western culture. This may account for his failure to convince Dr. Seward to free him on the night that Dracula appears and bites Mina. Had Renfield conformed to the restrictions of the meat hierarchy, Seward may have released him, thus preventing Dracula's admittance to the asylum where he consumes Mina's blood. In this way, Renfield may represent the dangers of violating the restrictions of the meat hierarchy of Western culture: anarchy results, and offenders must be stopped.

Because his dietary habits exemplify the ideologies of consumption and colonization, Renfield may be seen as an early hybridized figure in the reverse colonization of England: as a foil to Harker, Renfield's weak distorted acts prompt the Victorians to approach the taboo level of consumption by hunting Dracula with their own "acceptable" version of cannibalistic power. Renfield resembles the other Victorian men (with the exception of Quincey Morris and Dr. Seward, who hunt for sport) in that he does not hunt for meat, and he is not bitten by Dracula. But he resembles Dracula in his preference for consuming living creatures. His acts remain meaningless and ineffective, however, in the battle which ensues between the Victorians and Count Dracula to control England. But, unlike both Harker and the other Victorians, who successfully advance on the hierarchy of consumption, and Dracula, who successfully creates a hybrid race in England, Renfield lingers as a weakling, in effect, consumed by Dracula in his ultimate murder.

Renfield's meaningless consumption prevents him from participating in the conflict between the Victorians and Dracula in any effective way. The other men, however, consume within the restrictions of the hierarchy, and are better suited to take action. In order to combat Dracula and drive him out of England, the patriarchal-ruling class Victorians become predators themselves. Harker transforms from a collector of chicken recipes to a hunter of vampires, wielding not one, but two hunting knives as he joins the others in pursuit of Dracula.

When Dracula bites Lucy and Mina and consumes their blood, the women's own repressed sexuality is unleashed, and their servitude transfers from the Western men to Dracula, the powerful eastern "Other." The Victorian patriarchal system that oppresses and consumes "Others" is, therefore, undermined on English soil. As Stephen D. Arata puts it,

the colonizer finds himself in the position to the colonized, the exploiter becomes the exploited, the victimizer victimized. Such fears are linked to a perceived decline—racial, moral, spiritual—which makes the nation vulnerable to attack from more vigorous, "primitive" peoples. (623)

Harker, Seward, Van Helsing, Morris, and Godalming cannot advance themselves to the taboo level of the meat hierarchy in order to conquer Dracula: to do so would destroy the order of England that they wish to regain—it would disrupt the culture of the white male hierarchy. Instead, the men—and Mina Harker, with her man-brain—resort to overpowering Dracula with the Catholic consecrated Host: the Flesh of Jesus Christ Himself.<sup>3</sup> Although It is a positive symbol of redemption, the Host is, at the same time, a symbol of cannibalism. The characters in *Dracula* do not appear to be Catholic or otherwise religious, but they do seem Christian (Mina prays), and they readily accept the power of redemptive sacrifice—Divine Cannibalism—in order to battle Dracula. However, they accept the Host as a powerful magic trick, not

as the sacramental meal for which It is intended. Neither Van Helsing nor the others consume the Host, which is Its material purpose. Rather, Van Helsing desecrates It by grinding It up and mixing It with some kind of putty in order to seal Lucy's tomb (209-10). In this way, the Westerners can successfully advance against Dracula: by desecrating the Host, the Victorians advance on the meat hierarchy to the taboo level of cannibalism (by sacramental proxy), thereby overpowering Dracula.

Of course, it is notable that the Victorians cannot derive their power—their ultimate power, the Flesh of Jesus Christ—from within their own culture: Van Helsing brings the Host from Amsterdam. England's (and the West's) dependence on some "Other" culture for its own redemption suggests the vulnerability and inherent weakness of a master power that takes its strength from consuming "Others": women, classes, and cultures.

Using the Host, not to celebrate their ultimate redemption, but to restore their temporal power of consuming "Others," Van Helsing and the other men use the Host as a hunting weapon. Although Harker and the others do not seem to understand the force of the Host's power, they readily accept Van Helsing's plan to attack the vampire with It. They do, however, understand consumption, and they appreciate the Host for what It can do for them: regain their power to consume "Others," particularly Dracula. Once the men have the Host, they become consumers of "Others," particularly Dracula. Once the men have the Host, they become consumers of "Others" once again, so that hunting down and destroying Dracula becomes little more than a thrilling adventure; the Victorian patriarchal hierarchy of consumption is restored once the men get the Supernatural power of the Host.

Although Quincey Morris and Dr. Seward have hunted for sport, the other men have not. For all of them, the act of hunting down Dracula with the Host, guns, and knives constitutes their transition to the taboo level on the meat-consumption hierarchy. Not just using superstitious religious symbols, Harker and the others also fight Dracula with real hunting weapons. Harker's transformation from chicken-connoisseur to vampire-slayer collapses the distinctions between civilization and savagery, modernity and superstition, consumer and consumed.

Although they kill to restore England to its previous order, the Victorians cannot erase the fact that they have allied themselves with cannibalism in the process. England the colonizer has become England the colonized: the restored order of England that follows Dracula's defeat and death is a hybrid of patriarchal hierarchy. The people have been changed by Dracula the colonizer: the women, who have been consumed, become (temporarily) the consumers, while the men, who have been the consumers, are also consumed by the powerful "Other," Dracula. The men have, after all, given their own blood to Dracula through their transfusions to Lucy. Blood, thought to be a vital living force, has been viewed as the carrier of inheritance. Bloodlines have been the method of

<sup>3</sup>In keeping with the rhetoric of reverence used in the Catholic Church, I have opted to capitalize all references to the consecrated Host, which suggests Its power in the text.



the British for establishing social hierarchies and maintaining pure bloodlines for generations of aristocratic and upper-class families (Rifkin 239).

In the end, though, it remains the case that Dracula has consumed Lucy's blood, which contains the blood (and bloodlines) of Godalming, Seward, Van Helsing, and Morris. And Mina, bitten by Dracula and then oddly forced to drink the vampire's own blood, consumes a hybrid bloodline including that of Lucy and all of the men who gave her the transfusions, Dracula, and the countless "Others" whose blood Dracula has previously consumed. When Mina and Harker become parents, their son Quincey Harker is born a hybrid of the English, Dutch, American, and Transylvanian people whose blood flows in his mother's veins. Young Quincey, then, embodies the many layers of identities that have formed him: he represents a new, mixed race, born of reverse colonization in the Western world. He is as much a descendant of Dracula, the "Other," as he is of Harker, his Victorian father.

The Victorian patriarchal hierarchy of consumption has itself become a hybrid since Dracula left his mark on the people of England. The Victorians may have restored the outward order of the culture's patriarchal structure, but the people themselves have been changed. None are exactly as they once were, even if one can assume that, while Harker pens his final Note in his journal, Mina is obediently preparing chicken for her husband's dinner.

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Harmony Hill Campus, Mt. Marty College

## Gray's *Elegy* and Browning's "Apparent Failure"

Ernest Fontana

Although Tennyson's specific evocation, in *In Memoriam* 64, of Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" has been acknowledged (Pattison 120), Browning's more original and disguised engagement with Gray's classic poem in "Apparent Failure" (*Dramatis Personae*, 1864) has passed unregarded. If, however, the engagement of "Apparent Failure" with Gray's *Elegy* is acknowledged, one of Browning's most overlooked poems assumes greater interest and can be read as an interpretation and revision of the earlier text.<sup>1</sup>

Both poem's are "graveyard" meditations. Browning, however, substitutes for Gray's rural churchyard the threatened Paris morgue. Instead of a meditation spoken amid the enduring and perennial images of an English countryside—the tolling of curfew bells, the lowing of cattle, the droning of a beetle—Browning's reflection is inspired by the decidedly urban Paris morgue, which is itself ephemeral and threatened in the poem by Baron Hausmann's project to

transform and modernize the Paris of the Second Empire (Gridley 1877). If Gray's *Elegy*, reassuringly, emphasizes the perennial, the rooted, and enduring, Browning's "Apparent Failure" is charged with the anxiety of modern impermanence. Not only is the Doric morgue threatened by demolition, the speaker in "Apparent Failure" is not the rooted, melancholy recluse of Gray's *Elegy*, but a modern cosmopolitan. He is in motion as he remembers, in a location that is not Paris,<sup>2</sup> visiting Paris seven years before. Furthermore, instead of Gray's perennial images of natural, agricultural, and familial process, Browning's speaker remembers his one day visit to Paris in 1857 in terms of the ephemera of social—"the baptism of your prince"—and political life—"Cavour's appeal and Buol's replies." Analogously, the melancholy and euphemistic diction and tone of Gray's speaker is replaced by a frank, almost rude directness—"The dead-house where you show your drowned."

<sup>1</sup>Maynard points out that Reuben Browning's memoir of his half-brother, Robert, Browning's father, has as its motto lines 53-56 of the *Elegy* (115).

<sup>2</sup>The poem was probably written at Pornic on the Brittany coast (Gridley 187).

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