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The Role of the Monster
Myths & Metaphors of Enduring Evil

Edited by

Niall Scott

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The Evil Hub
'Monsters and the Monstrous'

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Inter-Disciplinary Press

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Introduction

The monster as metaphor presents and represents the unspeakable and takes us beyond what our imagination may permit, almost into the unimaginable realm. The role of the monster in myths, literature, culture, and the political and social realm is a worthy subject of academic study because of its ability to penetrate and transform. Susan Leigh Starr says of Monsters and Metaphors in the context of power, that: "metaphors may heal or create, erase or violate, impose a voice or embody more than one voice." She also comments that metaphors have a function to bridge worlds. The combination of metaphors, monsters and bridging different worlds are an highly appropriate way to describe the third Global conference on Monsters and the Monstrous', held in the Neoclassical surroundings of the Hotel Gellert on the banks of the Danube in Budapest in May 2005. The theme of this year's conference (following from last year's) was Myths and Metaphors of enduring Evil. This, and the previous two conferences form part of ongoing research in the project 'Perspectives on Evil and Human Wickedness' (www.wickedness.net).

The gathering brought together people from a range of monstrous disciplines and backgrounds, and coincided with a conference at the same venue on the erotic. Disciplines such as Literature, Cultural Studies, Art, Philosophy, Politics and History to name but a few were represented. The sessions put this range of interests to use and also involved collaboration with the erotic with a full day's joint session on erotic monsters and the monstrous erotic, two papers of which appear here in this collection. The theme of the monstrous has been frequently used and explored as a metaphor in cinematic theory, literary theory, cultural theory, and especially feminist theory. This collection of academic papers offers features of these, but also creative and perhaps unusual insights into the role of the monster as metaphorical and in myth. The collection is divided into four chapters. The organisation of these chapters differs somewhat from the order and headings of the conference presentations (there were 14 parallel sessions in all), and covers general themes that link them.

We open in chapter one with Literary Monsters, drawing on both old and modern literary traditions. Nane Cantatore's piece introduces us to the function of the monstrous as a semantic tool through time, charting the change in 'demystification and desacrilisation' in parallel with scientific development. Where *The Mark of a Monster* gives us a perspective on what the metaphor achieves, Roberta Fornari's *Monstrous Nature; Moby Dick as Monster Between Myth and Modernity* focuses in on a specific example: the white whale as carrying an allegory of the violent relationship between man, nature and technological development. Fornari holds that although the story

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of Moby Dick leads to a negative conclusion, that man and nature are not reconciled, the narrator's survival points to the possibility of reconciliation.

Ben Barootes' *Nobody's Meat* scans use of the monster in modern literature recognising the many forms that monsters take in British fiction. He chooses to pay close attention to the monstrous woman- the she-devil, the vampire, the werewolf and the tigress. His argument suggests these manifestations and acceptance of the self as a monster demonstrates a release, an opportunity for expression of freedom.

The importance and power of the monster in a literary genre associated with youth subculture, the graphic novel should be underestimated as Phil Fitzsimmons shows. Initially based on research on school students reading habits, Fitzsimmons is led to interview the Australian graphic novelist Marcello Baez. This encounter provides an insight into the author's deliberate and subconscious expression of sexuality and beauty amongst other themes embedded in fears and concerns of Generation X.

Keeping with Australian writers, the jointly authored paper *When Charisma Breeds a Monster* by Gerardo Rodríguez Salas and Margarita Carretero González, looks at how Carmel Bird's *Mandala Trilogy* provides us with protagonists that move from the charismatic to the monstrous. Indeed it is their charismatic nature that brings about the transformation into the monster. An interpretation of three protagonist from the trilogy demonstrate this relationship; the charismatic personality that draws in others to blind obedience, rendering the protagonist to exercise power to disseminate evil.

Christopher Auld concludes this section with a response to the foregoing paper and another not included in this collection. This continues the theme of transformative power of monsters and myth, running through all the presentations. Examining Freud's view of the uncanny, we are reminded of monsters awakening cultural anxiety. Auld relates this anxiety to the contemporary political sphere where such anxieties are expressed in political discourse, exploiting the monstrous in a range of texts, not just literary, but in media such as television and news journals.

Under the heading Political Monsters, the second chapter opens role of myth at the level of the community, through a study of the anthropology of inhabitants' relationship to monsters in the Chiloé Community of Southern Chile. Whilst Giovanna Bacchiddu's fieldwork and personal reflections on the impact that fear and superstitious beliefs have on human behaviour are anthropological, it reminds us of the local, where political interactions in a sense begin blossoming into a worldview. It reminds us worldviews that can be formed and affected by story, myth and magic the efficacy of which depends on social consensus.

Two of the great monsters of literature and legend, the Werewolf and Dracula, take the monster metaphor into the establishment of ethnicity and identity in the demarcation of territories and civilisation, and the

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introduction of conflict. Transformation in the shape changing abilities of the Livonian werewolf in Stefan Donecker's piece, race imperialism and fear in Neda Atanasoski's presentation span a range at either end of 400 years of political discourse in two European events.

Both Emily Cheng's paper on *Family, Race and Citizenship Disney's Lilo and Stitch* and Wendy Bilboe's *Feeding Frenzy,* bridge the relationship between the political and the media. The former paper charts the domestication of the alien monster 'Stitch', in the Disney cartoon, into the American multicultural paradise of Hawaii. The foreigner, outsider and alien as threat to the interior, is juxtaposed against the embracing of multiculturalism and recognition of cultural difference in the U.S.'s relationship with the Pacific. The media discourses that have delivered the Shark as one of Australia's very own national monsters in the final paper of this section reflect the growth of a monster, taking on a range of roles in the cultural imagination. Bilboe analyses journalistic writings that serve to cement a national identity surrounding an object of terror and beauty.

The vast category that is the media is encountered in chapter three, giving us monsters in cinema, music, journalism and tabloid media. The role played by the media in shaping and promoting *Monstrous Mothers* is argued Nicola Goc is circular. It does damage to the 'regular mother' due to the promotion of societal expectations that oscillate between extremes from deviant mothers to the ideal mother. The formative effect that myth and fears of monsters have on childhood development into adulthood manifests itself in the cinematic text, according to Lois Drawmer. Here adult fantasies are played out in the horror films presentation of the monster under the bed, or in the cupboard, or in the television, which feeds back into adult conceptions of childhood. Such a construction is explored in *The Enemy Within: The Child As Terrorist in the Contemporary American Horror Film* by Colette Balmain delivers the monstrous child in horror cinema, where children are agents of terror. The cinematic monstrous children Balmain argues are metaphorical terrorists who threaten 'the bourgeois, patriarchal family'.

Nina Ohligschlaeger's *Gods and Monsters* takes us from the text to the screen in the film bearing the same title as the paper. It gives an analysis of one of the directors of a most famous of monsters, Victor Frankenstein's horrific creation. James Whale, who appears in the semi biographical motion picture, as the creator of *Frankenstein* in 1931 together with other characters shows no evidence of monstrosity himself, other than it existing inside the human imagination.

Returning to youth, the dysfunctional teenager represented as the vampire is subject to a wake up call; 'It's Morning in America': Sorcha Ní Fhlainn books back at the film's soundtrack as well as its story as an attempt to 'steer' the lost youth back to the Reaganite vision of a redeemed America. The religious narrative in the *Lost Boys* fable finds its complement in Niall

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Scott's exploration of the philosophical concept of radical evil through lyrics in songs offered in the Heavy Metal genre. Presented as an opportunity to use these lyrics to aid students in their understanding of Kant's concept of radical evil, he raises questions of the coherence of the possibility of the diabolical and monstrous male manifest in metal culture. The history of the monstrous in music, notably the gothic elements in Rock and Roll are traced to Screamin' Jay Hawkins and Dave 'Screamin' Lord Such by Pete Remington in *Monster Mash*. Goth culture as a subculture and lens highlighting 'serious social and psychological issues' where meaning is negotiated within the group and wider context through music fashion and a dark identity.

In chapter four, Miscellaneous Monsters are the ones that you cannot find a place for because they are unique. These are the ones that go into uncharted territory and introduce monsters in worlds and studies that go beyond the conventional. They exemplify the function of the monster and monstrous in facilitating insight, understanding with, and communication between other worlds. The shift from the traditional monster to the post human monster found in horror and science fiction draws us into the relationship between other worlds and this one in J. Randall Groves *Monsters and History*. The fascinating insight into what the portrait of the bearded woman may have communicated to its then contemporary seventeenth century audience in comparison to the present, as monstrous, is as Richard Tilbury writes, both 'comical and disturbing' in the presentation *The Renaissance of The Bearded Woman: An Examination of Ribera's Problematic Portrait of Magdalena Ventura.*

Two articles come from the collaboration between the Monsters and the Erotic conferences, one where Suzana Marjanic defines the conceptual territory of bestiality and zoophilia and is a moral discussion of abusive practice that underlines not only abuse of animals, but monstrous acts committed by human beings on living things in general. The second of these by Greg Tuck explores behaviour as monstrous in its presentation: masturbation and self-consumption in the behaviour of the cinematic serial killer. The presentation of the masturbating serial killer in the surreal horror film *The Cell* represents perverse sexuality and objectification of the victim.

One could not image a greater leap in change of topic to a discussion architectural and physical space as monstrous, rational and magical in Paul Dobraszczyk's examination of press stories surrounding the construction of the sewers system and vast chambers built to accommodate pumping stations in Victorian Britain. Yet this illustrates the broad use and application the notion of the monstrous has, as here we are drawn into the power of the metaphor as a social barometer, shifting between old and modern uses, from the monstrous to the rational, sparked by human imagination. Finally, let us not forget that there are, as Maja Brzozowska proclaims, cute monsters, that challenge the notion that monstrousness and

cuteness are mutually exclusive. Brzozowska reminds us that the monster is transformative and we should beware of the cute!

The reader will find that there is significant overlap between them to a large extent determined by the form in which Monsters are encountered- in literature, art and cinema. Thus although 'Feeding Frenzy? Media Sharks Monster Jaws' by Wendy Bilboe, fits neatly in political monsters, its subject matter having much in common with Emily Cheng's 'Family, Race and Citizenship in Disney's Lilo and Stitch' regarding in considering political issues surrounding immigration and race. Both would fit in neatly with papers based on a media and cinematic theme.

This edition is a collection of papers *as they were delivered* at the conference, only slightly edited as to be presentable in written format, as a document of the atmosphere of the event. The papers are as a result raw and alive. The intention here is not perfectly formed final versions, but an impression. Readers will have to insert, using their imagination sight, sound and taste-scapes that were woven through the fabric of this meeting. Conversations, arguments and discussions to the early hours of the morning, lubricated by the required amount of food and drink, and even for those who managed it a descent in to the depths of the hotel venue by elevator to the spa bath house. As a conference it was a monster in itself- the rarity of such harmonious interdisciplinary interaction, academics vampirishly feeding off one another for ideas an inspiration, size of the gathering and the smoothness of the organisation. On behalf of the delegates at the conference I would like to extend a warm thank you to the organisers- Stephen Morris, Rob Fisher and the steering committee of the Monsters and the Monsters research project.

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PART I

Literary Monsters

The Mark of the Monster: Limits of Knowledge and Edge of the Human in Dialogue with the Unheard-Of

Nane Cantatore

Abstract
The monster has always been a catalyst of universal semantical interactions: from the mythological strata of ancient narratives, up to the medieval allegories contained in the bestiaries, the characteristics of the monstrous corresponds to the descriptions of fundamental elements of human environment, social and moral as well. The process of demystification and desacralization that is parallel to the affirmation of the scientific standpoint directly involves this semantical universe, and deeply transforms the processes of signification and the construction of meanings of the monstrous. Taking into account this pathway, it is possible to observe the semantics of the monstrous in modern narrations, taking into consideration two basic directions from a philosophical point of view: On the one hand, there is the demystification, which comprehends the signs of the monstrous as the traces to a reality that can be explained in terms of rational thought; on the other hand, we can find investigations based on rational principles which discover the existence of magic and supernatural. In both cases, the monstrous is capable to maintain, even if reversed, its fundamental affinity with a universe of signs and to reaffirm the essentiality and centrality of the monster in the system of our cultural references.

Key Words: Semantics, cognitive space, modernity, literature, rationalisation, science, myth, knowledge

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There is a profound difference in the function, meaning and interpretation of the monstrous, as it was in the ancient and medieval order of thought, and as it is in the modern, scientific one. I will try to address this difference, recalling some traits of the classical interpretation to better define how the monstrous keeps a very specific, not to say central, place in our cognitive space.

Monstrum, in Latin, derives from the verb *moneo*, which means to indicate, to signal; in fact, a monster is always a sign to be interpreted, the trace of a discontinuity in the order of things; something to be reported to a context and to a specific meaning. In this sense, the term reveals its divinatory origin. Let us start from a passage from *De divinatione* of Cicero[1]:

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> […] as you usually say, it is demonstrated by the words
> themselves that are wisely forged by our ancestors: because
> they make to see (ostendunt), they forecast (portendunt),
> they show (monstrant), they predict (praedicunt), they are
> called miraculous appearances (ostenta), portents (portenta),
> monsters (monstra), prodigies (prodigia).

The same can be said for the Greek: teras has, in Homer and other ancient authors, the meaning of portent, prodigy, miracle, but also signal; and, as a sort of secondary sense, the meaning of monster, terrible thing. Perhaps the most accomplished analysis of the classical meaning of the monstrous is the one given, in more recent times, by Moses Maimonides.[2] The description of the Leviathan is a set of different physical properties, typical of animals that walk, that swim or that fly. The intent of all these details is to show that the comprehension we have is not able to catch the transformations of physical realities which are part of the world of birth or corruption; neither is capable to identify the origin of natural forces which lay into it.

In ancient times and Middle Ages, the monstrous has a well defined place in the cognitive space: if everything that exists is a manifestation and projection of a superior order, whether of gods, fate or an omnipotent God, if the existent has basically a value of sign, then the monster is a super sign, full of meaning because of its very exceptionality. The characterization of the monster as a unique is, after all, a binary one. On the one hand, its function of prodigy would be without implications if the monster were plural, if its existence were in some way multiple, if there were packs of monsters; on the other hand, the monster is, in most cases, sterile and its prodigious birth, being a-sexualised and exclusive, highlights its total alienation from the normal natural cycle.

Following these assumptions, the status of the monster is being progressively menaced by the new cognitive discipline, which is affirmed by the scientific knowledge. Modern thinking is interested more in the possibility to formulate general laws, which can follow a methodical and uniform development to describe an homogeneous universe, according to the idea that finds in Descartes its classical description:

> With "method" I mean some easy and safe rules so as to,
> when observing them, no one will take as true what is false,
> and without spending any effort of the Mind, but always
> gradually increasing the Knowledge, one will attain the true
> Science of all the things to his capacity[3].

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The expulsion of the monstrous from the horizon of what can be analysed with causal cognition is then the consequence of adopting a method, which, on its part, suggests a specific organization of the world. The difference between a middle age bestiary and Linnaeus' taxonomy, for example, lays not only in the presence of fabulous monsters which is a characteristic of the first one, but in a different conception of the way they are described: if the bestiary looked at the animals as symbols of God and sin, in scientific studies of Nature, animals are themselves the object of the research, and the arbitrariness of every classification is justified by its systematic exactitude.

The assumption of a centrality of the method implies the basic conquest of the modern conception of knowledge: the idea that knowledge may be extended indefinitely, following in homogeneous ways the development of the single information singularly acquired. Then, the idea of the world as a place of continuous dialogue between humanity and divinity in which any event, any animal, any monster are signs to be deciphered, is abandoned together with the conviction that they can refer to other signs and symbols. When every element must have one and only one meaning in order to be comprehended in a systematic dimension and when the classification takes the place of hermeneutics, the dialogue between humanity and divinity is interrupted. This means that the exceptionality of the monster, which was its main value, becomes an insurmountable obstacle in the presence of the monster into the scientific order that, on its part, is essentially interested only to what is uniform and replicable. It is possible to affirm that the scientific perspective is basically atheistic, at least in the sense that human reason tries to comprehend the universe putting the very idea of divine revelation aside. When there are no gods, neither monster can be found: to put it with Doctor von Frankensteen in *Young Frankenstein*[4]: "This is the Twentieth century, Kemp. Monsters are passé, like ghosts and goblins."

And still, things are slightly different: the monstrous is still present in our imagery and even in our reality and not only as a surviving presence of myths from the past. This presence has many definitely modern characteristics, which identify the monster as a figure well present in contemporary narration, right from a specificity of the monstrous, which remains, in its basic features, the same of the ancient times. There are modern mythical monsters, as the Golem or its eighteenth century incarnation that is Frankenstein. There are modern narrations of ancient monsters, which are imbibed of references to unconscious and sexuality (as werewolves and vampires). There is also a radical monstrosity in modern history, which culminates in the emblematic names of Auschwitz and Hiroshima. But there is also, and still exists, a new possibility to understand the monstrous as a sign, according to a value that is above all of cognitive nature. This last aspect is the ground that I would like to explore now.

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The identification of the monster is, first of all, the interpretation of its signs, according to a narrative practice whose model is the detective story, a model that fulfils both the deterministic need of scientific age and the explicative one of the myth age. The most classic example is represented by Edgar Allan Poe's *Murders of the Rue Morgue*, in which the monstrous, the supernatural, the inexplicable are reduced to plausible events, following a line that is less modern than what appears to be, if we recall Cicero's words[5]:

> "Everything that is born, whichever kind it might be, necessarily has its origin from Nature, and therefore, as unusual as it may seem, it can't however come into being form outside of Nature. Search then its cause, if you can, in something unusual and strange; if you will not find any, remember in any case that nothing can happen without a cause, and dispel from your soul that terror, without having to turn to supernatural, that the strangeness of the fact may have brought into you."

The process of this demystification of the supernatural is based, preliminarily, on the refusal of what we may call interpretive excess: "thus there is a thing as being too profound. Truth is not always in a well. In fact, as regards the more important knowledge, I do believe that she is invariably superficial. The depth lies in the valleys where we seek her, and not upon the mountain-tops where she is found"[6]. This methodological choice highlights the most apparent aspects of the case to be resolved, drawing for them the possibility of a *normalizing* interpretation: "it appears to me that this mystery is considered insoluble, for the very reason which should cause it to be regarded as easy of solution"[7]. What is amazing, what constitutes the primal feature of the monstrous, the original possibility for its signifying value, is in these lines completely put aside, in a context in which the *outré* character is no more as such, and it can be found a precise position in a scientific taxonomy: it is a page of Cuvier that offers the possibility to recognize the assassin as a simple orang-utan.

The same happens for the other essential character of the monstrous, its being unheard-of, without any possible recognition: the Babel of the different witnesses, from different countries, which recognize the accent of languages which they do not know in the assassin voice, is transformed from incomprehensible portent into an equivocal fact generated right from the tendency to over-interpretation (to identify a language in those that are only sounds) that any serious investigation should exclude, as we have already observed. The evidence of the normality of the framework in which the monster is led comes from the uttermost form of normalization: the one of the commodity. A seaman in the Indian islands had caught the animal, in

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order to be sold. The man was sure that he could count on the economic value of the rare and curious thing and the definitive return to normality is stressed by the fact that the orang-utan "was subsequently caught by the owner himself, who obtained for it a very large sum at the *Jardin des Plantes*"[8]. The declassing process of the monstrous is accomplished in the simplification of the economic transaction.

The commercial fruition of the monster finds its most accomplished expression in *A Mother of the Monsters,* a short story written by Guy de Maupassant. The protagonist is a peasant woman, nicknamed "the Devil" due to her monstrous issue, which is actually deliberately bred. The woman is, in fact, "a regular demon, a being who voluntarily brings into the world deformed, hideous, frightful children, monstrosities, in fact, and then sells them to showmen who exhibit such things"; the monstrous is divided between the deform monstrosity of the children and the moral abjection of their mother. And yet, this abjection is multiplied: the first monstrous child derived from the necessity to hide a pregnancy caused by an illicit relation: "wishing to conceal her misfortune, she bound her body tightly with a corset of her own invention, made of boards and cord. The more she developed, the more she bound herself with this instrument of torture, suffering martyrdom, but brave in her sorrow, not allowing anyone to see, or suspect, anything. She maimed the little unborn being, cramping it with that frightful corset, and made a monster of it"[9].

The sexual moral stance is then responsible of producing monsters, and secondarily the greed for money – and still there is something to say. The narration begins in a completely different setting, which presents the main episode from a strangely and apparently incomprehensible association: "I recalled this horrible story, the events of which occurred long ago, and this horrible woman, the other day at a fashionable seaside resort, where I saw on the beach a well-known young, elegant and charming Parisienne, adored and respected by everyone"[10]. The link between these two women is clarified only at the end of the story, when the fashionable woman's children are shown: "a pair of little crutches lay on the ground, and touched my sympathy. I then noticed that these three children were all deformed, humpbacked, or crooked; and hideous"[11]. Their deformity is caused by the corsets worn by their mother during pregnancy, in order not to lose her silhouette; beyond any attempt to condemn vanity, it is clear that the monstrous is affirmed, at this point, as the necessary production of a social bind, which forbids sexuality, imposes esthetical stereotypes and, finally, exhibits its monstrous products after they have been reduced to a commodity.

The apparition of the monstrous has, then, a function closely related to psychoanalysis, as a sort of manifestation of removed issues. In this sense, another text by Maupassant may be of some help. It is perhaps the most famous work in which the question of supernatural forces and the monstrous

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are investigated, starting from its visibility and its recognisability. This story is *The Horla*. Since the first page, the theme of invisibility as inaccessible realm of hideous forces is touched[12]:

> Where do these mysterious forces come from, which change our happiness into discomfort, and our confidence in distress? We should say that air, the invisible air, is full of unknowable powers, of which we suffer their mysterious proximity.

The knowledge the world in which we live and move around is determined, according to the perspective of *The horla*, by the things our senses can catch, and it is necessarily limited from them[13]:

> We can't fathom them with our poor senses, with our eyes that can't perceive what is too small nor what is too large, what is too close, nor what is too far, the inhabitants of a star, nor the ones of a drop of water… with our ears that cheat us, because they transmit us the vibrations of the air in the forms of sounding notes. They are fairies which perform the miracle of changing this movement into sound, and with this metamorphosis they give birth to music, making into a song the mute agitation of nature… with our sense of smell, feebler than a dog's… with our sense of taste, barely able to tell the age of a wine!

The textual strategy of Maupassant is aimed to fully involve the reader in a form of hallucination. This hallucination leads to distrust of one's own experience of the world, while the journal form of the story allows the representation, at every line, of the most radical of the doubts, that is insanity. The almost metaphysical scope of this doubt is well comprehensible if we return to Descartes, to the point that is conventionally considered as the origin of the modern scientific rationality. Just in the first pages of *Philosophical Meditations*, when the object is still the construction of the method of radical doubt, it appears also the possibility of insanity, that is, notwithstanding, excluded without any further investigation, according to a proceeding that will be particularly meaningful for Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida:

> For no reason at all it could be denied that my hands really exist, or this whole body that is mine, unless I consider myself similar to some crazy individuals who have their brain so overwhelmed by their black bile to affirm of being

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> kings, while they are really poor wrecks; or to be wearing
> purple clothes, while they are naked, or to have a clay head,
> or to be vegetables, or made of glass; but these persons are
> out of their mind, and I would not think of being less insane
> if I took them as a model in order to understand myself. [14]

Maupassant is not satisfied with such an easy solution; throughout the story, a solid doubt is still hanging over him: is the narrator sane? He undertakes a long and extenuating set of experiments in order to understand whether his weakness, unwillingness and depression are influenced by a monstrous unknown and invisible parasite or they are not caused, on the contrary, by a more conventional cause. Once again we are confronted with the conflict between science and the supernatural. The latter seems to lead to a double solution: negation as a result of imagination or inclusion as an explicable phenomenon. Besides, on the one hand eliminates the dreadful perspective, which is insanity, on the other makes reality even more dreadful. The invisible and dominating presence acquires an origin point: the *Revue du Monde Scientifique* mentions cases of "collective madness" in Brazil, the place from which a ship had come, and after whose passage the monstrous presence has begun to manifest itself. The chain of causes and effects is perfectly linked, but with it an extreme possibility arises, which is the end of human dominion upon the Earth; the name given to the creature has nothing of the rational but it seems, on the contrary, a scream of anguish[15]:

> It's come… the… the.. what is its name… it seems to cry its
> name to me and I can't understand it… the… yes. I'm
> hearing, I can't… I can't… repeat… The Horla… I
> understand now… the Horla… here it is, the horla, it has
> come!

In the end, the possibility to see the Horla, having a direct view of the object of one's own terrors, at the end of a methodical and careful waiting, does not dispel the anguish[16]:

> I stood up, my arms stretched, and turned so quickly that I
> nearly fell down. Eh! What? … One could see as in broad
> daylight, and I couldn't see myself in the mirror!… It was
> empty, clear, deep, full of light! My image wasn't there…
> and I was in front of it! I saw the large glass, clear form top
> to bottom. And I looked with maddened eyes; and I didn't
> dare to advance, to make a move, clearly feeling that it was
> there, but that it would still escape from me, that thing
> whose unperceivable body devoured my reflection.

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      The monster is no more beyond knowledge, mysterious symbol of a prophetic meaning; it is instead a knowable object, completely subdued to the totalising strength of science. Right in this way, revealing itself, it makes us know what we would prefer to ignore: it shows us the abyss of madness, the terror of destruction, the terrible falsity of the famous Baconian equation according which "knowledge is power".

Notes

[1] Cicero, *De divinatione*, II, ch, 42, par. 93.

[2] M. Maimonides, *Dalālat al-hā' irīn*, III, 23.

[3] René Descartes, *Rules For the Direction of the Intelligence*, rule IV.

[4] Gene Wilder, *Young Frankenstein* (screen edition).

[5] *De divinatione*, II, ch. 28, par. 60.

[6]. Poe, E. A. *The Murders of the Rue Morgue*, *in Complete Tales and Poems*, Penguin, London, 1982, p. 153.

[7] Ibid., p. 154.

[8] Ibid., p. 156.

[9] G. de Maupassant, *A Mother of the Monsters*, on-line edition www.gutenberg.org .

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Guy de Maupassant, *The Horla*, on-line edition (www.gutenberg.org).

[13] Ibid.

[14] René Descartes, *Medtiations on First Philosophy*, *Meditation* I.

[15] *Horla*

[16] Ibid.

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Monstrous Nature: Moby Dick as Monster Between Myth and Modernity

Roberta Fornari

Abstract

All over time and history, literature is a privileged field for representing the monstrous in all its variants: from deformity to mutation, from metamorphosis to misshape, etc. In this sense, a crucial role is represented by animals and wonderful beasts both as ambivalent symbols of enduring force and wickedness as well.

The entire history of epic literature could be defined as a "monster show". In modern times, monstrous animals enter the realm of novels as ambiguous symbols of evil and wickedness, which need to be suppressed and/or destroyed (last of all the werewolf as popular monster between legend and psychopathology).

In this wide context it could be affirmed that "national" literatures and modern cultures have elaborated and reaffirmed the presence of monsters as expression of the fears and anxiety of modern society in the age of economic and industrial development. In Minima *Moralia*, Adorno affirms that modern culture needs to create wonderful and overwhelming beasts as signs of the greatness of Nature challenging human developments (for example King Kong), only because Nature itself has already been overwhelmed by technology.

In this perspective, in *Moby Dick*, Herman Melville creates a modern American epic that is a crucial, turning point between myth and modernity and he creates a monster that is both ambivalent and impossible to define entirely and definitively. As the representation of an evil presence, the proof of wickedness and "deadliest ill" typical of monsters in literature, Moby Dick is also the overwhelming, enduring presence of Nature in a world that is on the brink of a great change. The violence and revengeful response that the animal-monster draws on itself achieves a much deeper meaning than that required by the simple hunting process and becomes the expression of what is most dangerous and wicked in human nature, that is the destruction of Nature itself in the age of technological development and economic enterprise.

Key Words: technological development; Nature; evil; myth; modernity; allegory and symbol; ambivalence

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Of all the novels in American literature, *Moby Dick* is maybe the most eccentric and astonishing work, with its epic structure and tragic ending. Written in a period in which America was expanding its territories to West, in which

> "the seas had been conquered, prairies and forests increasingly tamed; the frontier was receding so rapidly that America seemed about to inflate and extend itself to its natural geographic size, while industry and the railways were colonizing and subjugating the vast and bountiful continent in hitherto inconceivable ways."[1]

Moby Dick is also a book about the persistence of Nature and myth in a period that is a turning point of American history and modernity as well. Defined by its contemporaries "an odd book […] wantonly eccentric, outrageously bombastic; in places charmingly and vividly descriptive" *Moby Dick* was praised for the *frantic invention* of its language which creates a world that is both realistic and symbolic, epic and tragic, a work full of ambiguities and ambivalences which sometimes are difficult to circumscribe and contextualise.[2]

Around 1850, Melville was working on a book called *The Whale*, he was an experienced seaman, having spent several years working on ships, and travelling around the South Seas. When he started his novel, Melville was in search of a theme that could be highly symbolic and representative at the same time, a core theme that could represent a new start and also an investigation of different issues in American society, which could be traced back to the historical context. Among these issues there was the problem of the boundary between economy and power; between the human use of technology and total destruction; and the problem of the enemy in terms of hallucination and arbitrary construction.

In this paper I would like to address the reading of an American classic in order to show how ambivalent and misleading could be the transformation of the enemy as a monster and how dangerous can be to transform an economic enterprise into a crusade against the animal-monster.

Melting the theme of whale hunting with the personal research of Ishmael, the narrator who decides to "sail about a little and see the watery part of the world" the novel achieves a *totality of objects* and is an imaginative voyage that is archetypal and symbolic of human experience.[3] Every object, every animal and almost every character in *Moby Dick* have a sort of double and ambivalent aspect that is both referential and multifaceted. Ishmael decides to embark on the Pequod whose captain, Ahab, is an experienced and tough man. The captain's unique obsession is to catch Moby Dick, the white whale, who, some years before, had thrown off his leg and

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chewed it during a chase. The Pequod is a modern and equipped ship that can be seen also as a technological instrument, a symbol of technology into the vast territorial *wilderness* represented by the sea. Among the mythical implications underlying the character of Ahab, there are Prometeus, Faust and, obviously, the biblical king who dies in the battle against Josafat. Ahab is first of all a Faustian figure whose only obsession is to catch his enemy and accomplish his revenge against the supposed violent and cruel existence of the *monster*; but he is also the captain of the ship and the incarnation of human failure. And finally, Moby Dick is not only a great and portentous white whale but also a multiple sign, an overwhelming presence that is both monstrous and fascinating for the same people who want to catch him. The white whale is a mythical presence and an elusive sign of the persistence of Nature in the world that is bound to be dominated by human technique. Even Nature itself is sometimes showed as a mirror of wonders and portents, an open space full of possibilities and yet a menacing void.

In this multilayered context, the whole story may be seen as a process of overlapping signs and symbols, literary styles and technical languages, myths and folklore, practical assumptions and philosophical implications.

In this sense, Moby Dick appears as a mythic presence in a world in which the nature of Nature is questioned together with the idea of a hideous and evil god, which could be the white whale himself, or having the form of the white whale. Technology is showed, on the contrary, as the attempt to establish a power over nature through whale hunting technique and endurance on the one hand, and human labour and patience on the other. Among the many interpretations which can be given of this novel, I think that the one informed by the opposition between technology and Nature could be useful to understand a multiplicity of aspects, in particular the relation of Moby Dick with the violence exerted upon his supposed monstrosity, which should be, in Ahab's eyes, the sign of Evil, malevolence, negation, darkness and death.

Explaining the meaning of the pastoral in America in *The Machine and the Garden*, Leo Marx writes that, by the time Melville begins to work on *The Whale,* he

> "delineated a symbolic setting […] divided into three realms: the ship, a mobile replica of a technically advanced, complex society; an idyllic domain, a lovely green land that figures a simple harmonious accommodation to the conditions of nature; a hideous, menacing wilderness, habitat of cannibals and sharks located beyond the bland green pastures."[4]

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       The exploration of Ishmael is also an exploration of Ahab construction of Moby Dick and the ship is a device to show the social mechanism, being a social microcosm in which all kinds of human beings (all males, whites, blacks, Indians, Polynesian, etc.) work and live together. In *Moby Dick*, the image of the ship as implacable machine, especially when Ahab and his purposes are concerned, is often used. And the hideous, menacing wilderness represented by Nature, becomes the vision that inspires Ahab's quest for Moby Dick, as ultimate object of his revengeful purposes. If we read the novel in terms of a revenge directed by the captain against his mortal enemy, all the Pequod activity may be seen as the expression of a purpose that goes far beyond the economic mission for which the ship is equipped, that is the whale hunting and the processing of whaling products. Ahab transforms the ship's crew into an instrument of his "metaphysical intent", and toward the end of the novel, it has become a disciplined, committed, totalitarian unit. "They were one man, not thirty… all varieties… welded into oneness, and … all directed to that fatal goal which Ahab their one lord and keel did point to."[5]

       In this sense, Ishmael is well aware of the charming portent of Ahab and Moby Dick, and its account of the facts is the only one we have at the end of the story. After the tragic epilogue, Ishmael is alone to tell what happened. Several critics[6] pointed out that everybody on the Pequod is directed toward Ahab's goal, except Ishmael who, in the end, is saved and successful in "establishing a position independent of Ahab and the fiery quest." [7] I think that the ethical position of Ishmael is important in that his account of the facts is not completely innocent and void of revengeful implications. He is the only one to survive the catastrophe, in the end, but everything he has told in the novel, every element and description of the white whale is ambivalent because, in the investigation of the nature of whales, in the description of whale hunting and working process, he also reminds the reader a lot about the supposed monster, Moby Dick, who escapes the classification of "normal" whales, and acquires a status of exclusive, single individual among the others. Long before Ishmael encountered Ahab, the presence of the "portentous and mysterious monster" had roused his curiosity. It is Ishmael who tells us, the readers, everything about the whale, both in terms of legends and folktales common among mariners and seamen.

       Since the beginning, Moby Dick is different from the other animals that are spread all over the book; the animal kingdom goes from the strange, to the splendid, to the rare: elephants, anacondas, tigers, bears, the white albatross, and many others proceed in and out of the imagery of the book "bringing in the wondrous creatures of the land to set beside the sharks, squid, and whales we meet in the story."[8] However, only Moby Dick has something that goes beyond the status of the other animals, and enters the

realm of myth. Among the different opinions and beliefs regarding the white whale, Moby Dick is presented, first of all, as a haunting presence, as a monster of portentous force and malignity, something that is beyond the normal behaviour of an animal, though a great one, and is circumscribed of an *aura* that makes him like a phantom or a sphinx. In this reference, it is crucial the story of the Town-ho, inserted in the middle of the novel when Ishmael tells us about a fact narrated by seamen at the Golden Inn. The tale of one of the apparitions of Moby Dick is interrelated with the anecdote of a dramatic fact happened on the Town-ho ship, the story of a quasi-mutiny that ends in a tragic way with the death of one of the protagonists. The sudden apparition of Moby Dick, described as "The appalling beauty of the vast milky mass, that I lit up by a horizontal spangling sun, shifted and glistened like a living opal in the blue morning sea" interrupts the succession of ominous events occurred on the ship and the men on board prepare to the chase that ends with the death of one of them. Moby Dick devours one seaman: [9]

> "That instant, as he fell on the whale's slippery back, the boat righted, and was dashed aside by the swell, while Radney was tossed over into the sea, on the other flank of the whale. He struck out through the spray, and, for an instant, was dimly seen through that veil, wildly seeking to remove himself from the eye of Moby Dick. But the whale rushed round in a sudden maelstrom; seized the swimmer between his jaws; and rearing high up with him, plunged headlong again, and went down."[10]

As in many adventure novels, the hunted animal - object of the chase, is far from being a normal prey. In this sense Moby Dick reminds us of the many dragons, wonderful animals, and monsters of classical mythology and ancient literature, from the *True Story* of Lucian, to the Scylla and Cariddi of the *Odissey* to the legend of Middle ages of St. George and the Dragon, to the Biblical apparitions and beasts, like the Leviathan and Jonas fish. The Biblical implications and substrata are widely investigated both in American and European criticism, and in many occasions the whale is compared to the Leviathan.[11] Among the mysteries of the world and human culture, *Moby Dick* displays a collection of myths and uses comparative mythology from sources as varied as Plutarch, David Hume, and the *North American Review*. These references are all present in the novel and may help to explain the ambivalent nature of Moby Dick, although they are not capable, after all, to define him in the very essence of his being. The allusiveness of every description relative to Moby Dick is often reached during Ishmael's twice told tales which are, in the first half of the novel, the

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most effective narrative devices to convey the idea of something mysterious and hideous lurking behind the apparent surface of the visible reality. The main source of the news relative to Moby Dick obviously comes from Ahab, who is a direct witness of his evil deed. In the captain's words, the white whale is a monster, an evil presence that could be also a "mask" behind whom God or Nature hide themselves. And this monster must be destroyed, with any means necessary.

In the chapter entitled "Moby Dick", Ishmael explains to readers the myth around the white whale and the necessity to pursue Ahab's quest, which no plea for survival, no appeal to the heart can touch. "He is the perverted, monomaniac incarnation of the Age of Machinery, as he himself had admitted earlier: 'all my means are sane, my motive and my object mad.'"[12] And Ishmael confesses to his readers that:

> "A wild, mystical, sympathetical feeling was in me; Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine. With greedy ears I learned the history of that murderous monster against whom I and all the others had taken our oaths of violence and revenge."[13]

A few lines ahead he tells about the voyage of whale-cruisers that push their quest along solitary latitudes, and report the special individualizing tidings concerning Moby Dick.

> "It was hardly to be doubted, that several vessels reported to have encountered, at such or such a time, or on such or such a meridian, a Sperm Whale of uncommon magnitude and malignity, which whale, after doing great mischief to his assailants, had completely escaped them; to some minds it was not an unfair presumption, I say, that the whale in question must have been no other than Moby Dick."[14]

After these words, the mythic connotation of the "monster" is changed into a more realistic view of the fishermen beliefs, even if tales and accounts remain the substrata of the monstrous in Moby Dick:

> "No wonder, then, that ever gathering volume from the mere transit over the wildest watery spaces, the outblown rumours of the White Whale did in the end incorporate with themselves all manner of morbid hints, and half-formed foetal suggestions of supernatural agencies, which eventually invested Moby Dick with new terrors unborrowed from anything that visibly appears. So that in

many cases such a panic did he finally strike, that few who
by those rumours, at least, had heard of the White Whale,
few of those hunters were willing to encounter the perils of
his jaw."[15]

So Moby Dick, as many heroes and monsters of the ancient times,
lives upon his fame and aura acquired in the vast environment in which he
moves around. Like a mortal and dreadful enemy on a battleground, he lives
on the opinions that other people have about him. The account of Ishmael
goes on; he tells us that "in the minds of the superstitiously inclined, was the
unearthly conceit that Moby Dick was ubiquitous"[16] or immortal and that
"though groves of spears should be planted in his flanks, he would still swim
away unharmed"[17] and that he is deceptive, wonderfully white like snow,
ferocious and most of all that every dismembering or death that he caused,
was not wholly regarded as having been inflicted by an unintelligent agent.[18]

The semantic implications of language here, remind us that Moby
Dick is a monster because everybody is convinced it to be so, especially
Ahab who is the first one to look at the whale not in terms of fishery or
economic exploitation, but as a symbol of evil in Nature and the universe.

The White Whale swam before him as the monomaniac
incarnation of all those malicious agencies, which some
deep men feel eating in them, till they are left living on with
half a heart and half a lung.[19]

The white whale, then, becomes and individualized entity, a
corporeal presence that has nothing in common with other animals except his
being a whale. Other whales are chased and caught, they are showed once
they are dead, and their appearance is dissected and analysed in anatomical
terms: the position of the eyes, the mouth and the nose, the skin, the flesh, the
skeleton and bones, the oil extracted from the body to produce energy for the
ship, the aftermath of the extraction of spermaceti from his head, etc.; all
these elements are given us with a scientific purpose which, in some respects,
is a sort of a "humanization of the leviathan" as Robert Zoellner writes in *The
Salt-Sea Mastodon.* In spite of this process of humanization of the whale, the
idea of the ship as a community of intents and labour division (everyone has
his own role and function in the working process) is expression of technology
and power upon Nature. In this respect, Moby Dick is not only a myth in
himself, but also a symbol of the persistence of natural force beneath the
ongoing process of control of human technique, he is something that escapes
any attempt to be defined. In a negative sense, he is after all, the *perfect
enemy.* Other whales are simply preys, victims of human necessity (an
economy was based on the whale and the products extracted by its body in

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the age in which *Moby Dick* was written) Moby Dick is the ambivalent sign
of all the things that remain inexplicable in Nature, it is a monster because he
is impossible to be defined in *natural* terms.

In this ambiguous book, which remains an object of exploration in many
terms, the historical implications are wide recognized: the multiplicity of the
sign as a symbol and allegory, the problem of isolation and loneliness in a
society that is increasingly becoming modern and technically advanced, the
ambivalent role of the leader in a context of freedom and economic
exploitation in which the watery space becomes a metaphor of the frontier of
human experience and expansion.

In one sense the ending remains open: in the last chapters, during
the chase to Moby Dick, and the final catastrophe, in which Ahab perishes
together with his crew, except Ishmael, the revenge driven by human
willingness upon Nature is inverted into the victory of natural forces and Fate
upon man, and technology, that is the Pequod, is destroyed into the
maelstrom of Moby Dick violence. The violence of the chase in the final
scene has many resemblances with a warlike action or a battle against an
invisible enemy that suddenly is transformed into an overwhelming force.
The analogies between the fatal chase of Moby Dick and a battle not against
a giant monster, but against an enemy that is fatally destroying the enterprise
devoted to exploiting and transforming the products is the poetic counterpart
of the tragedy which was approaching the United States ten years later, that is
the Civil War and the destruction of Natives and their economic and social
life system.

At this point I would like to call the attention on the fact that Moby
Dick remains alive at the end of the story and that his evil nature survives to
every attempt of destruction or technical transformation into a product of
consumption. The mysterious monster, the giant of the abyss, described as a
white and milky mass, as a phantom, god or monster, returns to the calm and
placid waters that have devoured the Pequod and its crew, carrying on his
back the captain Ahab.

The idea of the mastodon and the individualized leviathan that
becomes the haunting presence of the novel is maybe the first apparition of
the idea elaborated by Theodor Adorno regarding the collective projections
of the total monstrous state. In *Minima Moralia*, Adorno explains how human
kind feels a desire for something that is ancient and overwhelmingly great,
and cultivates the hope that animal creation might survive the injustice
undertaken by human kind, and breeding a better and perhaps more
successful species.[20] Modern culture needs to create wonderful and
overwhelming beasts as signs of the greatness of Nature challenging human
developments (for example King Kong), only because Nature itself has
already been overwhelmed by technology. Nature, points out Adorno,
survives only in the irrationality of culture, in the groove of walls and streets,

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zoological gardens and city towers. The rationalization of the culture, open to nature, absorbs definitively nature itself and

In *Moby Dick* there is no reconciliation between man and Nature, in terms of the relation between Moby Dick and Ahab, but there is maybe a possibility of reconciliation if we regard at Ishmael survival as the chance to tell a story, that is the one of *Moby Dick*, the sea monster, with his overwhelming power of fascination and his elusiveness. The monster is a symbol of an enterprise that is after all a failure; only the narrative account may represent a possibility of reconciliation between man and Nature.

Notes

[1] T.Tanner, *Introduction* to *Moby Dick*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1988, p. vii.

[2] Ibid., p. vii.

[3] H. Melville, *Moby Dick,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1988, p. 1.

[4] L. Marx, *The Machine and the Garden. Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1964, p. 285.

[5] Quoted in Marx, p. 287.

[6] For example, Marx; L. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel*, New York, 1963.

[7] Marx, p. 287.

[8] Tanner, p. ix.

[9] Melville, p. 266.

[10] Ibid., pp. 266-267.

[11] For ex. H. B. Franklin, *The Wake of the Gods*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1963, on *Moby Dick*, Chapter 3. G. Mariani, 'Cain's Ring: Dinamiche vittimarie in *Moby Dick*', *Arcipelago*, Anno I, N. 2, Fall 2002.

[12] Marx, p. 318.

[13] Melville, p. 181.

[14] Ibid., p. 181.

[15] Ibid., p. 183.

[16] Ibid., p. 184.

[17] Ibid., p. 185.

[18] Ibid., p. 186.

[19] Ibid., p. 187.

[20] T. W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia. Reflections From Damaged Life,* New Left Books, London, 1984, point 84. The Italian edition I used is *Minima moralia. Meditazioni della vita offesa*, Einaudi, Torino, 1994.

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Nobody's Meat: Freedom Through Monstrosity in Contemporary British Fiction

Ben Barootes

Abstract

"A free woman in an unfree society will be a monster." Thus spoke Angela Carter. On the surface, this statement seems to suggest that a free woman is demonized by her unliberated society. A different reading, however, reveals a deeper truth: in order that a woman may be free within an unfree society, she must first be monstrous. It is her monstrosity – that which separates and distances her from society – that enables the woman to escape her social shackles. As Fay Weldon's *The Life and Loves of a She Devil* demonstrates, an ugly woman is not bound to a society that values beauty and the helplessness of women. Carter's fiction, specifically the short stories contained in *The Bloody Chamber*, addresses how monstrous women – vampires, tigresses, and werewolves – are freed from such bonds as time and sexual characterization. Jeannette Winterson's *Sexing the Cherry* warns of those who go too far: a monstrous woman whose expressions of her free will amount to death and destruction. Freedom through monstrosity is not limited to women alone – other marginalized groups and individuals can also achieve sovereignty by embracing their (often imposed) monstrous nature. This is the case for both Saladin Chamcha and the non-Anglo-Saxon youth of London in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. Whether the monster is a woman or an immigrant, natural or constructed, these texts all argue that freedom is gained through the acceptance and celebration of one's own monstrosity.

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In *The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography*, Angela Carter writes, "A free woman in an unfree society will be a monster."[1] On the surface, this statement seems to suggest that a free-acting or -thinking woman is demonized by her unliberated society. This is not a surprising interpretation - it is one we have all seen and heard time and again. Foucault tells us that in a disciplinary society such as our own, a person who deviates from societal norms is portrayed as a thing unnatural - or, at least, bestial. As the Carter short story "In the Company of Wolves" warns "if you stray from the path for one instant, the wolves will eat you."[2] If one deviates from the straight and narrow, one will fall prey to the wild carnal hunger of the

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licentious lupus - one will lose the human element (civilization) and become no more than a rough beast. A different reading, however, reveals a deeper truth: in order that a woman may be free within an unfree society, she must first be monstrous. It is her monstrosity - that which separates and distances her from society - that enables the woman to escape her social shackles. As Fay Weldon's *The Life and Loves of a She Devil* demonstrates, an ugly woman is not bound to a society that values beauty and the helplessness of women. Carter's fiction, specifically the short stories contained in *The Bloody Chamber*, addresses how monstrous women - vampires, tigresses, and werewolves - are freed from such bonds as time and sexual characterization. Jeannette Winterson's *Sexing the Cherry* (a novel set in and around England's Puritan uprisings and the Interregnum) warns of those who go too far: a monstrous woman whose expressions of her free will amount to death and destruction. Of course, freedom through monstrosity is not limited to women alone - other marginalized individuals and groups can also achieve sovereignty by embracing their own monstrous natures. This is the case for both Indian expat cum British citizen Saladin Chamcha and the non-Anglo-Saxon youth of London in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. Whether the monster is a woman or an immigrant, natural or constructed, these texts all argue that freedom is gained through the acceptance and celebration of one's own monstrosity.

Fay Weldon's *The Life and Loves of a She Devil* is the story of a woman scorned and her consequential quest for vengeance (with its auxiliary benefits of wealth and success). You can be sure that Ruth Patchett, the housewife turned she-devil, hath Hell's Fury at her disposal every step of the way. Ruth certainly is a woman who bursts the boundaries of her society. She belongs to a culture (reminiscent of our own) that places a high value on the physical beauty and helplessness of a woman. The beauty so treasured and praised by Ruth's society is rigidly defined and categorized: petite, preferably blond, fair of skin, effeminate. Likewise, this idealized woman should be lost in the world if not for her man. This ideal is embodied in Ruth's arch-nemesis, the romance novelist Mary Fisher.[3] Ruth, of course, is the antithesis of this ideal. She stands over six feet, with broad shoulders and hips. She is swarthy and has a quatrain of moles upon her chin - a trio of which sprouts hairs.[4] Ruth is clumsy, lacking in all womanly graces.[5] She is not, in fact, considered a woman in the least. As her husband leaves her he shouts, "You're not a woman, you're a She-Devil".[6]

Because of her departure from her culture's definition of womanhood, Ruth is not bound by the restraints that are regularly applied to women in her society. It is her monstrous nature that allows her to transcend gender stereotypes and roles. Ruth is no longer jailed in her home, tethered to the stove, watching over her brood. As she says herself: she-devil and mother

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are mutually exclusive terms. Following this, she abandons her children on the doorstep of her husband's mistress, the romance novelist Mary Fisher. Unencumbered by maternal and spousal duties, Ruth can ambitiously embark on business ventures: she owns and operates the highly successful Vesta Rose Employment Agency.[7] Through her business, Ruth is able to increase her personal agency - extending her sphere of influence to "that other world of power - of judges and priests and doctors, the ones who tell women what to do and what to think".[8] Having gained sovereignty, Ruth cannot only enter this world; she can (and does) come to dominate it.

It is not only so-called "ugly" women whose monstrous natures permit them to exist unbound. The Lady of the House of Love, an eternally young and beautiful vampiress and the title character in one of Carter's short stories from *The Bloody Chamber* collection, provides an example of monstrosity enabling an exochronic existence. At the height of modernity, she lives alone in her ancient mansion, above a timeless town devoid of citizens. (This estate is, of course, built on *that* side of the Danube.) In her castle, the Lady is forever cartomancing - day and night her "inevitable tarot" endlessly reveals the same fate.[9] She leads a life three times as tense as our own: she lives simultaneously in the past, present, and the future. Allow me, please, to unpack this statement - or to "flesh it out", as it were. In *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Ernst Cassirer discusses what he terms the *absolute past*. This is the time to which mythic beings and events belong. It is, in a sense, engaged with the historical past and yet is removed from it. As such, it is not subject to the ravages of Chronos - it does not fade, dissipate or erode. According to Cassirer, this absolute past is directly connected to a perpetual present. The unfading constant of the absolute past is just that: constant. It is perpetually occurring. Herakles is continuously slaying the Hydra, Ahab is forever hunting Moby Dick, and Medusa is endlessly confronted with her own monstrous image. As a vampire, the Lady is relegated to the absolute past of the mythic being. Her subsequent perpetual present is an endless reflection of her past. The ever-repeated spread of her tarot deck is a self-fulfilling prophesy of her future - a future as bleak and dreary as the dilapidated castle she inhabits. The Lady's vampiress identity causes her to be a singularity - a lone figure in whom all temporal periods are contained. And yet her existence is one of stasis - an unending nightmare from which she cannot awake. She does not participate in Time's forward march. The Lady is a "closed circuit" running beyond Time's mother (or should I say father?) board.[10]

Both Ruth and the Lady of the House of Love dwell on the thresholds of their societies: they are beings beyond its boundaries but are also - to varying extents - engaged with the society. In fact, all of the monstrous female characters discussed here live a liminal existence. The Lady roosts in a castle perched above a ghost town: beyond civilizations

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reach, she remains within sight of it. Similarly, although she is outside of the regular flow of time, the time-bubble of her singularity is - like a boat on a river - surrounded by it. Winterson's Dog-Woman lives littorally: her shack lies on the banks of the Thames, between London and the wild world beyond. These monstrous women, like wolves skulking just under the eaves of the forest, dwell on the threshold.

Monstrous characters are likened to beasts in more ways that this liminal existence. To hearken back to Foucault: deviants are not seen as something fully human. Likewise, they are not viewed as something supra- but rather sub-human. Contemporary British fiction is fraught with the opposition of the human and the beast and its parallel binaries - the prudish and the lusty, civility and abandon, repression and assertion, reason and passion. The oft-reproduced and reinterpreted story of Beauty and the Beast best categorizes such a contrast. Beauty, the female, is virginal and self-controlled. The male Beast, on the other hand, represents unbridled sexuality - an utter lack of restraint. Traditionally, Beauty and her social mores win, transforming the Beast into a fine gentleman of suppressed urges and desires. However, if the young woman opts to embrace her sexuality - if she gives in to her desires and becomes master of her flesh - it is she who is transformed. This is indeed the case in Carter's "The Tiger's Bride" (one of her many takes on the Beauty and the Beast story. Upon seeing La Bestia naked bare as is, the unnamed heroine recognizes a part of his animal nature within her self. She admits this seemingly monstrous sexuality is a part of her being, embraces it, and permits herself to revel in it. She decides to release her lamb-self and "run with the tigers".[11] Each lick of her tiger-lover's tongue rends her human skin, removes the veil of so-called civilization to reveal "a nascent patina of shining hairs…beautiful fur".[12]

 "In the Company of Wolves" (mentioned in my introduction) also addresses this idea of sexual liberation via an acceptance of one's own bestial (or monstrous) nature. In this riff on the Little Red Riding Hood theme, the heroine refuses to be raped by- "she knew she was nobody's meat".[13] Having accepted her monstrous assertive role, she takes to her hysteric helm. Rather than being forced, she chooses to spend her nights "between the paws of the tender wolf".[14]

Throughout these tales, we are reminded that road to emancipation can be littered with the corpses of the oppressors, paved with the cobble-bones of the unfree. The Marquis de Sade (who found freedom in his own monstrous way) wrote that the only way to gain complete freedom is through the utter domination and obliteration of the other. This is reflected in the sexual practices of these women - one of the primary means whereby these devilish dames actualise their freedom. To engage in an act of sex with these women leads to the end of one's own self: as Carter puts it, they "only

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[know] one kind of consummation".[15] The Dog-Woman, the ferocious female and monstrous mother of Jeanette Winterson's *Sexing the Cherry*, proves as much. The Dog-Woman truly devours the one man with whom she has sexual contact. When a lapsed Puritan requests that she perform oral sex upon him, the Dog-Woman obliges him as best she can. However, her physical characteristics - her mountainous body,[16] her flat nose, heavy eyebrows, her scarce and broken teeth, all surrounded by a deeply scarred face - have led her to an existence outside the realm of human sexuality (repressed or otherwise).[17] Understandably, she does not comprehend the practices and motions of a sexual relationship: she believes the phallus becomes detached during copulation and produces the new life in the woman's body.[18] She thus assumes that the male member, once having been chomped and detached, will simply - though slowly - grow anew.[19] The Dog-Woman terminates any future fuckery for her fellated fellow - she obliterates the sexual other.

Echoing the Marquis, Carter stresses the necessary subjugation of the other so that a woman may achieve and further her own liberation. This act "deprives those on which she exercises it" of their own freedom. Carter reminds us "the most extreme kind of this deprivation is murder. These women murder".[20] Winterson's Dog-Woman certainly does. She does not find herself a slave to the social taboos against murder, taking no more though of the act than she does of caring for her dogs. The Dog-Woman has a "natural capacity for murder".[21] Her first slaying - undertaken early in her youth - sees her exterminating her own father.[22] Throughout the course of *Sexing the Cherry*, she slays at least a baker's dozen of men,[23] including her nemeses and oppressors Preacher Scroggs and Neighbour Firebrace.[24]

Thus far I have spoken only of female characters. Freedom through monstrosity is certainly not limited to females alone. All marginalised groups - all demonized persons - can realize freedom by accepting and embracing the monstrous images imposed upon them by the dominant powers of society. One such group - an oft-treated subject of recent British fiction - is the immigrant population. Salman Rushdie's infamous novel, *The Satanic Verses*, is - among a great many other things - an examination of the demonized immigrant. Upon returning from a trip to his resented homeland of India, Saladin Chamcha is mistaken to be an immigrant and thus demonized by anti-immigration Thatcherist Britain. Chamcha is quite literally demonized - transformed into a behooved creature, complete with the requisite tail. With horns wreathing his head, he is long of beard, hairy of body, foul of breath and has the ability to fill the room "with dense and sulphurous smoke".[25] He spends the better part of two hundred pages in this Pan-ic state. That is, until his seething anger and hatred come to a boil. (I'm not one to advocate the Dark Side but) when Chamcha gives in to his hatred, when he submits to his anger - when he allows himself to "be what he has

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become" - he is transformed.[26] Or, to use Rushdie's term, he is
"humanized".[27] In this form (which I think of as the Al Pacino-style devil:
sporting both a well-tailored suit and glowing red eyes to match), Chamcha is
free: free to leave his temporary prison, the Shaandaar B and B; free to
interact with fellow human beings; free to carry out his revenge. This rubric
is reminiscent of Ruth Patchett's experience. Once she comes to grips with
her true and terrible identity, Ruth is free to pursue her goals, wants and
desires: revenge, power, money and the one-way street of unrequited
adoration.[28]

Saladin Chamcha is not the only character in *The Satanic Verses* to
be granted freedom via an acceptance of the labels and images others enforce
upon him. Rushdie has his version of the Prophet assume a derogatory alias.
He is "neither Mahomet or MoeHammered" - he takes on the identity of "the
medieval baby-frightener, the Devil's synonym", Mahound.[29] This is the
way, according to Rushdie, that the marginalized and demonized - woman or
immigrant or other - gain autonomy. They adopt "the names they were given
in scorn".[30]

The acceptance of monstrosity and the freedom it enables is not
restricted to the individual level. *The Satanic Verses* shows the second-
generation immigrant youth of London - those "of the tinted persuasion" as
one character puts it - adopting this same strategy. Rather than rail against the
half-devil label the dominant culture applies to them, these half-children
revel in their chthonic characteristics. The image of the horned beast appears
on "button-badges sweatshirts posters…the chests of young girls and in the
windows protected against bricks by metal grilles".[31] The Asian youth - like
many before them: Whigs, Tories, Blacks - "turn insults into strengths".[32]
This tactic culminates with a sub-cultural fad of wearing rubber and plastic
devil-horns upon their heads: a final physical manifestation of the demonic
characteristics attributed to them by the powers that be. In doing so, they free
themselves of the shackles of characterization, of definition-by-the-other -
they create a group identity, one founded firmly upon their monstrous nature.

As we have seen from this cross-section of texts contemporary
British fiction gives us a great many monstrous characters: vampires,
giantesses, lupine ladies, maternal mongrels and impish immigrants. These
monstrous figures demonstrate Carter's assertion: those who, as monsters, are
made to dwell beyond the boundaries of society are not subject to its
limitations. A she-devil is not confined to the idealized passive role of
womanhood; as an unwoman she is free to enter and succeed in the world of
male powerbrokers. An unnatural female is beyond the reach of Father Time.
Similarly, those who cease denying their monstrosity - those who embrace
their true nature, who proudly proclaim *I am that I am* - are granted release

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from the bonds of hegemony. Freedom is not the cause of monstrosity - it is the effect.

Notes

[1] A. Carter, *The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography,* Pantheon, New York, 1978, p. 94.
[2] A. Carter, 'In the Company of Wolves', *The Bloody Chamber,* Penguin Books, London, 1979, p. 111.
[3] F. Weldon, *The Life and Loves of a She Devil,* Sceptre, Chatham, Kent, 1983, p. 8.
[4] Ibid. p. 11.
[5] Ibid., p. 24.
[6] Ibid., p. 47.
[7] Ibid., pp. 131-133
[8] Ibid., p. 130.
[9] A. Carter, 'The Lady of the House of Love', *The Bloody Chamber,* Penguin, London, 1979, p. 94.
[10] Ibid. p. 93.
[11] A. Carter, 'The Tiger's Bride', *The Bloody Chamber*, Penguin, London, 1979, p. 64.
[12] Ibid., p. 67.
[13] A. Carter, 'In the Company of Wolves," *The Bloody Chamber,* Penguin, London, 1979, p. 118.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Carter, *The Bloody Chamber*, p. 103.
[16] J. Winterson, Sexing *the Cherry* Vintage, Toronto, 1989. p. 29.
[17] Ibid., p. 17.
[18] Ibid., p. 38.
[19] Ibid., p. 37.
[20] Carter, *The Sadeian Woman*, p. 94.
[21] Winterson, p. 133.
[22] Ibid., p. 110.
[23] Ibid., pp. 62-63.
[24] Ibid., p. 88.
[25] S. Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses,* Vintage, Toronto, 1988, pp. 283-285.
[26] Ibid., p.298.
[27] Ibid., 304.
[28] Weldon, p. 49.
[29] Rushdie, p. 95.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid., p. 295.
[32] Ibid., p. 95.

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Behind the Mask of the Metaphor: The Unintentional Monster in a Graphic Text

Phil Fitzsimmons

Abstract
This paper details the findings of a project that focused on illuminating how one of Australia's leading graphic-novelists, Marcello Baez, created the ideal of the monster and the monstrous in his best selling text, *Diablo*. The interviews with Baez revealed he deliberately inserted a series of symbolic elements in his visual storytelling; in particular he deliberately underpinned his text-illustration journey with what he considered to be generic view of what constitutes a more global ideal of the monster in the Western World. However, during the course of the interviews an ideographic set of highly personal fears relating to the concept of the 'monstrous' also emerged. Unaware that he had unconsciously inserted these manifestations of his "false self, or mask," Baez recognised that he had also centred on a deeply held view of the monstrous that centred on sexuality, the binding of time and the need for an affirmation of living.[1] While this paper gives further weight to Chetwynd's claim that the rise and nature of the monster in a text represents the "author's deepest repressed feelings, fears and failures," it also sheds light on one view of the nature of the monstrous as held by Generation X.[2]

Key Words: Visual literacy, monsters, myth, mask, false self

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1. Setting the Context: From accident to application

The focus of the research that led to this paper initially had nothing to do with the concept of monsters. In seeking to understand what one cohort of adolescent school aged students were actually reading, and why they were reading hard copy texts in a generational context apparently dominated by electronic visuals and a reluctance to read, inadvertently led me back to the ideal of the monstrous in concert with the concepts of myth and the "mask metaphor."[3]

While a majority of the respondents I had been interviewing did not read for pleasure at all, many of those who did reported that they had become engaged with the graphic novel. A genre that I had previously dismissed as simply being a glorified comic on steroids. An author of this text type that received repeated mention as being 'totally sick' was Marcello Baez, and in particular his graphic narrative Diabla was given the same endowment. I began to wonder what was in Baez's text that grabbed these readers.

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Obviously the research gods of 'methodological appropriateness' were smiling on me because once having tracked him down he was only too willing to be interviewed and share his work.[4]

As soon as Baez opened the drafts of his text at our initial interview I recognised that this is place of research focus where I had been before. With my eye immediately drawn to the visual elements, I could see that littered through the frames of his illustrations and filtered through his characters movements and interactions were hints of monsters and glimpses of the monstrous. These obviously carefully crafted drawings appeared to me to be elements of what Miller calls the 'animal-monstrous double.'[5] In other words, elements that are a pastiche of the human, animal and monstrous. These facets give the reader a jolt, as they do not appear to fit the fabric of the archetypal narrative or are instinctively repellent to the typical image of the central character found in narratives. These 'animal-monstrous doubles' were realised as images of dinosaurs, a 'horned' central female character, dragons, a reoccurring cat, a shrivelled demonic father and vulture like masks. As seen in the ensuing paragraphs, it these elements in concert with the literature based on this theme that formed the tools of analysis

On closer reading, the monochromatic visuals were accompanied by a story line that focused on a young girl named Lucy (the only character with horns) who wanted to be a rock star, had a broken down father, a kilt wearing boyfriend and who at the end of the novella was simply drawn as sinking into a desert.

While the text clearly suggested a storyline that focused on a young woman's lack of identity as we unpacked his drafting process and the intersection between his ideological purpose and craft, I soon realised that I was also dealing with the revealing of personal myth, "the unfolding of symbolism of self transformation, …complex, grotesque and a challenge to one's self concept."[6] He had intentionally designed to underpin his visual narrative with an insertion of layers of metaphor that he considered to be his personal slant on cultural truth. These embedded motifs signposted his personal beliefs but at the same time were also designed to be ambiguous.

However, through a series of subsequent iterative "rabbiting interviews" it soon became apparent that he also introduced a second series of unintentional layers of metaphoric meaning.[7] To paraphrase Kittleson in an attempt to personalise the generic content of his thoughts, Baez had to also created layers of meaning through visual elements that revealed; essential storylines, recurrent ones that run deep in the psyche of the culture. These mythic themes express our deepest goals and values; give credence to our everyday lives in the shape of their settings, characters, and plots. [8]

What triggered this realisation that there was an undercurrent of hidden elements was a discussion focussing on the visual literacy tools that Baez had developed to create a coherent flow between the discontinuities that

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the use of individual frames of illustrations naturally engenders. As we unpacked his notion of coherence it became apparent that he had inserted a set of what he thought were apparently benign elements as tools of syntagmic flow, visual features that draw the reader-viewer through the text to create cohesive meaning. But as we discussed these Marcello realised that these non-monstrous elements were in fact the exact opposite, and represented the human condition of being able to slip relatively easily between the "golem like shambling creation of our faults and fears" and the mask of respectability that we all hide behind in our normal daily life. [9] These visual elements of birds, flight and feathers were in fact a "buffer between others and the real self."[10] They represented his own individual fears and an insight into his own personal monsters.

2.   The Depths of the Monstrous
A. Monsters of the Cultural Unconsciousness
          As this author sees it, monsters haunt the youth of the western world at every turn. He believes these monsters are firmly entrenched in their cultural psyche and lie just below the surface of consciousness waiting to escape. While there is a realisation they are there, Baez further believes there is no real understanding of what they are let alone how to exorcise them. As this author sees it, there is a cultural malaise of cultural unconsciousness. And so the reoccurring symbols he had inserted into his text, in tandem with the accompanying succinct wording, were designed to not only focus the reader on the basic flow of the plot but also provide the reader-viewer with alley ways of reflection through which the visual elements subtlety hinted at an understanding of the nature of the monster as a social semiotic, and an insight into the behemoths that inhabit the current adolescent psyche. The primary elements of deliberate metaphor inserted into this text were Lucy's horns, the cat figure, and the ideal of horizon.

          As stated previously, the central character of Diabla is Lucy, and while the text and facial visuals reveal that she wants to be something greater than she is, that is a 'rock star', a facet Baez considers to be a generational cultural aspiration and heroic identity. Baez has drawn her having a petite set of horns and she is the only character who has. Baez inserted this focus on difference, to emphasise the duality of the human psyche. While this admitting this represents his own struggles with identity, Baez's horned female also represents what he believes are the small indicators of the larger inner struggle that all humans undergo. For Baez, the horns represent the personal deeper subconscious monsters of identity crisis that inhabit us all, and also show we keep the monsters at bay by ignoring them. As represented in this text there are occasional outbreaks and temporary flashes of this psychical monster, and it this constant battle to control these outbreaks and the polarity created by the inner battle to subdue the constant surfacing of

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these fears that not only determine our day to day existence but determine our level of personal satisfaction with self. In this case the character Lucy cannot become what she wants, and is unaware of what she truly needs because she firstly has not come to grips with who she is. This inner turmoil with monsters that she knows are alive within but can not fully articulate is also realised visually in that Baez has drawn her so that she never looks directly at the reader of text. In a constant focus of slanted vision and cropped frames, Lucy is also juxtaposed with the uncertainty of the relationship she has with her male counterpart in that he is nearly always looking up, a visual literacy device that in previous research I demonstrated often signifies uncertainty or lack of power. The one being she seems to have genuine contact with is powerless to help her.

In contrast to this direction of gaze, is the focus or vector of her demanding father. Drawn with a hint of the monstrous or demonic, the father would seem to be cast as the "beastly form of fallen grace."[11] While her father is obviously a key figure in this text and has the demeanour of a haunted being, the text also clearly reveals that he is responsible for much of Lucy's current lack of identity and past problems. The visuals and text reveal that their relationship is fraught with tension and at the end of each interaction beasts within each character are clearly seen to rise. For Lucy the monster that haunts her creates constant inner turmoil.

Another continually reoccurring motif in this text is the cat, an ever-present watching character. While obviously a major element, this deliberately inserted facet is always in the background or on the periphery but its role is not immediately clear. Baez would appear to have cast the cat as a "beautiful beast," a metaphor that Warner contends is often found in metaphoric literature.[12] In contrast to Lucy it has the appearance of beauty without any flaws and ease of movement. In this text this 'beautiful beast' also represents the trickster motif, the being that is "a border breaker, or the creature that shifts between the known and that shadowy world of unknown change."[13] Thus the figure acts a counterpoint to Lucy's inability to cope with her world and current situation.

However, the cat also has a secondary illuminative role. Just as Lorenz and Vescy contend that metaphors such as this evokes the "polysemous nature of existence", it was Baez's intention to draw the reader into seeing the cat as an alter ego, a guide always following as the unknown protector as Lucy can no longer cope with the multitude of competing tensions in her life and slips over the abyss into absolute loneliness.[14] With the loss of all genuine relationships Lucy is portrayed in the final full page spread as sinking into the barrenness of a desert.

It is this final element of the desert that completes Baez's visual and metaphoric symmetry in this text. With the opening scene portraying a city with no horizon, Baez was attempting to visually create a sense of excitement

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and vibrancy while at the same time gently easing the reader into the notion that without a personal horizon or set of goals there is no definition. For Baez, the greatest monster that Generation X has to contend with is the existential angst of not being able to clearly answer the questions of who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? As Lucy sinks into the desert sands Baez has drawn her looking down, unaware that in this place of desolation she has for the first time a clear horizon, but she is so caught up in what she thinks is her imminent demise she is unaware that the city in which she thought was her salvation was in fact deceit, and that to give purpose to her life, to find herself and a genuine relationship with another all she has to do is look up. The "journey into the void may be one of death, but it is also one of vision."[15]

B. Monsters of the Personal Unconsciousness

As detailed in previous paragraphs, Baez had unconsciously inserted a set of highly personal metaphors that appeared a critical points in the text but disappear in the central frames when the reader is introduced to Lucy's unloving and demonically drawn father. These again resurface as different motifs. Having for the first time seen the placement of the falling feather and the falling Lucy; a flying bird and the bird masks; and the appearance of the little girl who looks like Lucy, Baez commented that not only were these a further entre into Lucy's psyche and the monsters she was facing, but represented connections to his own life.

As we spoke it became clear that while he had drawn Lucy as hiding behind a mask of "self advancement and self preservation" he now understood he had drawn his own mask, one of non-disclosure.[16] A symbolic interface that held at bay his own monsters. Contending that these were also generational concerns, on a personal level these metaphors whispered trepidation about identity, belonging, spirituality and sexuality. It would appear that Baez also believes that Generation X is a possessed by lurking "beautiful beast" monsters but choose to suppress them by hiding behind masks of superficial beauty alone. The beast within is simply ignored. But there is a cost for this action. Hence, just as in the text there is a theme of falling so to Baez believes that by relying solely on the skin deep this generation is falling into realm that has no boundaries or horizons. And so in the last half of the text, Lucy sees the little girl who looks like her but she is always out of reach.

While also representing Lucy's a loss of innocence and desire for the superficial, the implanted visual motifs also represent what Baez believes is Generation X's, and his own inability to cope with the allure of beauty they are immersed in through the visual media, but in reality they are not truly comfortable with. Similar to what Walcot has termed the "homelessness of the homeland" Baez also contends that this allure is itself a mask for the

predatory nature of sexuality they are confronted with on a daily basis.[17] While they immerse themselves in visual media, and are supposedly comfortable with this world of the screen, the ideals of beauty, truth and a sense of belonging have been distorted or lost in a world where "rather than being less circumscribed by sexuality," Generation X may instead be more confused and circumscribed than ever.[18] Baez has also inadvertently created Lucy with this air of the predator by an explicit plot line and inadvertent visual sub-theme in which she is seeking to get what she believes is hers, but her focus continually shifts to the little innocent girl who she can never be again. He also views his main characters inability to catch this identical female as metaphor for a generation caught in a time not of their making and caught in a culture that has an inability to cope with transition between the warrant of virtue and the growing false sexual allure of beauty.

3.   What Does This Mean? A view from education

If the themes deliberately and subconsciously embedded in this graphic novel represent the fears and concerns of Generation X then this cohort are not as totally self absorbed as Hinds (2001) and the host of other commentators would have us believe. Rather this cohort would appear o indeed be the "Chameleon Generation"[19] and have become this way because they see no opportunity to escape the monsters within and the monsters created by what they perceive to be a society in freefall. If they are engaging with this text type and discourse elements it contains then perhaps the answer to their dilemma could be partly resolved by an education system that recognises that these children are indeed reading, but in a very different manner and for a very different purpose than the linear reading and pointless deconstruction of traditional texts as found in many schools. Perhaps the monsters dwelling within this generation could be partially exorcised by the use of appropriate culturally and community based texts that of themselves act as a mediator between the adults that teach and the students themselves. Only then may the situation exist in schools that allows for this generation genuine engagement with texts and learning. To conclude using a central metaphor contained in the text discussed in this paper, the term engagement in this sense is to "Alter what one is and has been, to place the present a risk, and to open the gates of a new city and to make it new."[20]

Notes

1 Laing. 1969, p. 39
2 Chetwynd, 1982, p. 9
3 Allport, 1937, p. 25
4 Patton, 1990, p. 39
5 Miller, 1988, p. 56
6 Larsen, 1996, p. 122

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[7]Fitzsimmons, 2001, p. 399
[8]Kittleson
[9]Larsen, 1996, p. 131
[10]Monte, 1995, p. 200
[11]Warner, 1995, p. 72
[12]Warner, 1995, p. 63
[13]Hynes, 1997, p. 39
[14]Lorenz and Vescy, 1988, p. 253
[15]Wieland, 1988, p. 254
[16]Coupland, 1992, p. 83
[17]Walcott, 1990
[18]Rakoff, 2001, p. 20
[19]Coupland, 1992, p. 86
[20]Brockheimer, Wang and Olsen, 2002, p. 297

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When Charisma Breeds a Monster: Dangerous Liaisons in Carmel Bird's *Mandala Trilogy*

Gerardo Rodríguez Salas & Margarita Carretero González

Abstract
While charisma may be considered one of the greatest possible gifts bestowed onto a person, it is also true that it can very likely be misused by its beneficiaries; the personal magnetism exerted by the charismatic endows him/her with an unusual power that is very often directed to control his/her enthusiasts. The recipient of the "divine gift" - the etymological meaning of "charisma" - is not infrequently turned into a monster who causes the destruction of an entire community. The cases of David Koresh, Luc Jouret or Joseph Di Mambro may serve as examples of incredibly charismatic leaders that died, together with their unconditional followers, in collective suicides. Anyone external to the sects where they put their doctrines into practice finds it difficult to believe how any intelligent person could fall for their statements of belief. Their charisma may offer part of the key to the answer. In this paper, we aim at studying personalities of this type as they are displayed in Australian novelist Carmel Bird's narratives *The White Garden,* 1995*, Red Shoes,* 1998, and *Cape Grimm*, 2004. The protagonists of this trilogy are examples of monstrous personalities. They become charismatic leaders and exert their magnetism even on the reader, who remains divided between the monsters s/he wants to hate, and a certain fondness for them, a fondness that impels him/her to find any possible explanation that may excuse their terrible deeds. Carmel Bird fictionalises an unfortunately frequent reality, since, like Ambrose Goddard, Petra Penfold-Knight and Caleb Mean - the protagonists of the three novels we aim to analyse - charismatic leaders keep proving to be quite a powerful weapon of mass destruction.

Key Words: Australian literature, Carmel Bird, *Mandala Trilogy*, *White Garden*, *Red Shoes*, *Cape Grimm*, charisma, monsters, mass murder

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1.   The Concept of Charisma

In a recent interview published in the Spanish weekly magazine of *El País*, actress Hilary Swank confessed that the first person ever to make her turn red the moment she met him was Clint Eastwood. "He has an amazing charisma," she said, "the moment he enters a room, everybody stares at him, their mouths open."[1] We all know what Hilary Swank means when she uses the word charisma; the problems, however, start when attempting to describe what the word really means. Associated with magnetism, attraction,

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inspiration, everyone seems to agree upon the fact that one cannot learn to be charismatic - it is, as Charles Lindholm points out, something that exists in the person, like the height or the colour of the eyes - and that, although most people may fall under the spell of the charismatic, not everybody is bound to be attracted by the same type of charisma. Some famous charismatic people had the power to transform not only those around them, but also the fate of a whole society and, in some cases, the course of history. [2]

According to Bertrand de Jouvenel,

> Informal relationships within any group are the product of an individual's "naked capacity" to "summon consent", a capacity that has nothing to do with position, power or advantages, but is born out of a personal inherent magnetism. When that person enters a room, heads turn, and those devoid of that magic attribute, try to be close to the one who has it [...] In the West, we define and "explain" this magnetic attraction by calling it "charisma". [3]

While charisma may be considered one of the greatest possible gifts bestowed onto a person, it is also true that it can very likely be misused by its beneficiaries; the personal magnetism exerted by the charismatic endows him/her with an unusual power that is quite often directed to control his/her enthusiasts. The cases of David Koresh, Luc Jouret or Joseph Di Mambro may serve as examples of incredibly charismatic leaders who died, together with their unconditional followers, in collective suicides. Anyone external to the sects where they put their doctrines into practice finds it difficult to believe how any intelligent person could fall for their statements of belief. Their charisma may offer part of the key to the answer.

Even if intrinsic to the individual - remember, like the colour of the eyes - charisma cannot be revealed in isolation; it can only be perceived when interacting with those who are affected by it. For that reason, in order to understand charisma, we need to study not only the charismatic's character, but also a deep analysis of the dynamics of the charismatic group in which leader and follower interact is required. Take the examples of Hitler or Stalin and the influence they exerted on their followers in contrast with the reaction of most external observers, for whom these characters appear as insane figures, moved by anger and violent fears which render them more repulsive than appealing.

Australian novelist Carmel Bird elaborates on this universal concept of charisma and develops her own interpretation in the *Mandala Trilogy*, which she is planning to convert into a quartet with the novel she is currently working on; *Green Language*. The pieces of this trilogy-*The White Garden*, *Red Shoes*, and *Cape Grimm*-are connected by the concept of a charisma that,

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when combined with evil, can cause extreme damage such as mass murder. Bird speaks of "The Halo Effect" that charismatic people exert on average human beings by radiating a mysterious aura and power that are finally translated into blind obedience. The danger arises when a charismatic person is absolutely evil, as is the case with the protagonists of the *Mandala Trilogy*.

In *The White Garden*, Ambrose Goddard, the psychiatrist founder of the Mandala Clinic for the Mentally Ill in Melbourne, uses his charisma to virtually imprison his patients, abuse them sexually, and let them die under the treatment of the Deep Sleep Therapy. They are mostly women who are encouraged by Goddard to adopt the personality of famous saints. The title of the novel comes from the garden that the two main patients create at the Mandala Clinic, a miniature version of Vita Sackville-West's one at Sissinghurst Castle. Following his distorting method, Goddard asks a friend, Vickie Field, to dress like Vita Sackville-West and meet the two patients in the garden. As a result of a quarrel between the patients, one of them frees some angry bees from a jug and they sting Vickie, who dies in the garden since she was allergic to their poison. It will be her sister, Laura Field, who years later discovers the truth surrounding Vickie's death through the marginal testimony of ex-patients.

Freshly narrated by a guardian angel called Beau, *Red Shoes* is the story of Petra Penfold-Knight, who leads a religious cult that plans to develop a new race of pure people by drugging them and ruining their lives. The link with *White Garden* is Ambrose Goddard, as the Mandala Clinic is the main source to captivate and recruit the members of Petra's community. The most attractive of these recruits is Celeste, Petra's first acquisition who, being only fifteen years old, rebels against Petra in a written document and is secretly annihilated for her daring act, although she remains the powerful silent force of the narrative.

In *Cape Grimm*, the youthful charismatic leader of a religious community in Tasmania, Caleb Mean, ends up incinerating his people. Once again, the link with the Mandala Clinic is clear, since the director of the psychiatric facility where Caleb is sent after his murder is Sophie Goddard, Ambrose's daughter, with whom he plans to escape. Anticipating the end of the world like the contemporary leaders we have mentioned before, Caleb's plan is to drug and incinerate the community of Skye, while only three survivor-himself, his partner Virginia and their daughter Golden- have to jump over a cliff to commune with the air and the water of the ocean. However, this plan partially fails as they do not jump in the end and are caught by the police. Caleb is imprisoned, while Virginia and Golden are taken to a hospital/prison.

Although Shirley Walker explains in her interview with Bird that the three leaders of the trilogy "are all utterly ruthless people who believe their own ideology, their own myths," a couple of questions arise that contradict this opinion and offer the key to understand Bird's progressive study and

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variations on charisma. [4] Do these leaders coincide in the ultimate purpose of their charisma? Do they actually think that their Messianic role is necessary? If so, do all of them believe in their supernatural power firmly from the beginning to the end of the novel or are they conscious of being a fraud at any point?

2.   Ambrose Goddard

Of the three characters dealt with in this paper, Ambrose Goddard fails to captivate the reader as a charismatic leader. His halo-effect certainly bedazzles the people who, desperate about the mental state of their loved ones, go to the Mandala Clinic, hoping to find a cure that will give them back the person whose mind they have lost. Although his voice opens the book, it does not dominate the narrative. Instead, an omniscient narrator collects the voices of some of the people affected by the stories at the clinic and, mingling it with its own, creates a patchwork that simply serves to corroborate what the reader already knows: that Dr. Ambrose Goddard is a fake, a character interested in self-glorification and sexual satisfaction rather than in really treating the mental maladies of all those who come into contact with him. Towards the end of the novel, the omniscient narrator steps aside and gives the leading role to Laura, one of Goddard's victims' sister. Laura is the final link which completes the puzzle and webs together all the stories previously unfolded.

Like Petra and Caleb, Ambrose Goddard thinks himself destined to do great things, his name suggesting his vision of himself as a god-like figure intent on carrying out a ground-breaking research under the title *Illumination*, "a study of the relationship between religion and psychiatry."[5] In contrast to them, however, his profession can more easily be used to explain the power and fascination he exerts over the characters surrounding him, given the tendency among humans to deify doctors, medicine men, healers, in whose hands our health or those of our loved ones - eventually our or their lives - resides. In the case of the patients at the Mandala clinic, the veneration is much stronger since they are completely at the doctor's mercy. Most of the women were secretly in love with Goddard, had sexual fantasies and dreamt about running away with him, a delusion which was encouraged by the doctor through the constant administration of drugs.

Goddard is absolutely fascinated with mental illnesses and sex, and the clinic offers him the perfect way to give free vent to his own fantasies, sexually abusing his patients, repetitively in the cases of those he felt intensely attracted to. And yet, to think that Goddard sets up the clinic simply as a centre of abuse would be too simplistic. His goal is more ambitious; even if he is aware that the means may not be the most orthodox or ethical ones, his beliefs are scientifically founded, although outdated, and he is convinced that he holds the key to the truth.

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If we focus our attention on the way Goddard's allure seems to mesmerise his interlocutor, we can easily see how Bird manages to create a discourse that fails to deceive the reader, the external observer. On one occasion, Goddard explains to the husband of an incoming patient the treatment followed at Mandala:

> "Imagine a sleeping woman. What could be more inviting? When their eyes close and their muscles relax, and the sandman comes and they go off into the Land of Nod, they are putty, just simple putty in the hand. And it does them the *world* of good. I'll stake my reputation on that any day. Zzzzz […] [T]here are such beautiful chemicals around - things to open their minds and their legs. She'll come good in the end. And so will Marjorie. I promise".[6]

Sleep and drugs give Goddard power; the patients become mere inert matter in his hands, therefore completely vulnerable, helpless victims. The addressee of Goddard's speech, however, fails to see the traces of the doctor's psychotic behaviour which the reader can perceive. Instead of leaving the clinic and find a different place for his wife, Michael Bartlett is completely taken in and leaves the clinic "overwhelmed by a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness, the only comfort coming from the light of truth and kindness in the doctor's eyes."[7] Charisma has successfully played its role.
There are other occasions when relatives of some of the patients can vaguely see behind the doctor's halo but they either fail to let their fears translate into motion or, when they decide to act it is already too late or are prevented from doing so.

However, although for decades Goddard "literally got away with murder all the time, and people still treated him like some great good god,"[8] his power is limited, his halo-effect cannot affect everyone. On Vickie's sister, Laura, Goddard's presence has quite the opposite effect: she confesses her repulsion for him and her awareness that she was "in the presence of evil."[9]

Fortunately, there were other people like Laura, even among the patients who could unmask Goddard, destroy his reputation and his terrible experimental clinic. Before killing himself, the fruit of all this horror, the pages of the unfinished, ever-growing *Illumination*, are reduced to ashes, and the typewriter flung into the water, a recurrent pattern of death by fire and water that, hopefully, should bring a renovation. Goddard's seemingly objective and scientific book of *Illumination* is destroyed and replaced by the alternative chronicle of all the female patients, supervised by Laura's careful research.

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3.   Petra Penfold-Knight

Unlike Goddard's scientific ultimate motif in becoming the charismatic leader of the Mandala clinic, Petra's purpose is clearly religious in her leadership of the Hill House Brethren. Nevertheless, rather than the Christ figure she aims to be compared to, the result is an inverted Messiah, closer to the well-known Anti-Christ image. The beginning and end of her life are linked to Jesus Christ: as a child, she was "the family's Christ Child";[10] as an adult, she celebrates "the last supper" with her community.[11] The similarities between the lives of Petra and Christ, however, strike us for their artificiality and reveal Petra's dark side. Unlike Christ, who is murdered for the sake of humankind, the way Petra dies displays her as a sinner, who has taken away her own life in a selfish act to remain an immortal myth for her community. She even manipulates her death certificate to appear as if she were sixty-six years old at that moment rather than fifty-five, her real age, just to be considered as a double of Christ, being twice the age of Jesus when he died 33/66.[12] However, the result is closer to the number associated with the Anti-Christ.

And yet, Petra's irresistible charisma is clear throughout the novel. As the angel says: "Light, I swear, emanated from that baby" and, if this charisma is joined to Petra's easiness at imitation, we can understand her ability to make people believe in her natural gift, although we can start to see the fakeness of her project.[13] Throughout the novel, Petra is presented as a liar, "a super-duper confidence trickster", a storyteller with a facility to brainwash people's minds just with the power of her word and her "spellbinding" voice.[14]

Petra's attraction for the dark side, however, is not shocking to the reader, who can see her evolution from a subjugated position in her childhood and early adolescence to her infinite power as the leader of the Hill House Brethren. While her Halo Effect is acknowledged from the beginning, as a child Petra remains a marginal figure that, as such, is not ready yet to exert her power. She was an unwanted child whose mother tried to abort, her grandparents were boot makers and she was raped several times by her best friend's father. These moments of subjugation, however, prove to be transitory since Petra eventually finds the way to exert her charisma as leader of the Hill House Brethren.

Although the angel Beau insists that Petra was self-deluded by her power and believed wholeheartedly in her own teachings, she must have been aware that her methods were fake: endless lies, including the collection of information about the patients when they were not conscious of having given it, so that later she would repeat it to them when they least expected it. "This gave the *impression* that Petra had psychic powers and special knowledge and understanding."[15] After the murder of the visionary, Celeste, Petra becomes fully aware of her fakeness and decides to put an end to her false community by burning its most enigmatic symbol: the red shoes that give the title to the

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novel, indicating Petra's and the whole community's attraction to material things. Like Goddard, she realizes she is a fake prophet, but unlike him, she decides to remain a visionary to the eyes of the world. Nevertheless, despite her lies and tricks, her Halo Effect is undeniable and she seems to be endowed with a supernatural quality that Goddard lacks in *The White Garden*, as shown in her ability to see her guardian angel. This ability seems to be absent in even the most evolved of the three charismatic figures, Caleb.

4.   Caleb Mean

Caleb Mean remains the most elusive and disturbing of all the protagonists of the *Mandala Trilogy*. His elusiveness is, in part, achieved through the type of narrative voice Bird chooses on this occasion, an active character in the story, a marginal one at the beginning, but fully immersed in it at the end: Caleb's psychiatrist, Paul Van Loon. Whilst trying to understand Caleb and the reasons behind his destruction of almost the entire community of Skye - but for himself, his partner and favourite daughter - Van Loon weaves a narrative network which includes not only his own voice, but that of Caleb's partner, Virginia, the voice that progressively dominates the tale as she recovers from the traumatic experience and finally starts a new life with Van Loon.

Both Paul Van Loon's and Virginia's lives are bound to that of the protagonist, although in different ways. Van Loon admits having been fascinated by Caleb from his childhood, a fascination increased by the fact that they were born the same year. Virginia, on the other hand, has initially no life outside Caleb, and literally no voice, since she can only communicate through writing after the massacre. However, as she emerges as an individual, Caleb steps into the background, so that she becomes the narrator of her own story, of her new life, a teller of her visions. Virginia reveals herself a true visionary, also a charismatic person, but overshadowed by Caleb's stronger halo effect. Virginia's narrative allows us to witness the mechanisms working in a charismatic relation in which the follower has certainly dissolved herself into the personality of the leader.

Like Petra, Caleb manipulates his image, using a certain degree of deception, in order to keep up his perception as a Messianic figure. And yet, despite the degree of artificiality in which both characters felt the need to be wrapped up, there is an important difference between them: unlike Petra, Caleb is not self-made, self-invented, but he was from his birth destined to be a cult leader, "raised in the expectation that he would lead his people to salvation."[16] Notwithstanding the need for props for the performance, they are just accessories to ornament Caleb's undeniable charisma. Paul Van Loon refers to the "supernatural radiance" Caleb emanated the first time he saw him. Despite the fact that he "looked ridiculous", he still "had the power to suck our whole attention towards him", before even opening his mouth.[17]

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       Like most members of the Skye community, Virginia had received a broad education, remaining, however, disconnected from the time and workings of the outside world. This isolation may explain why she is unable to offer any resistance to Caleb's charisma. Nevertheless, as we have seen, this surpassed the boundaries of his community, and a sound education or knowledge of the world could not be taken as a guarantee of invulnerability. After all, Sophie Goddard also falls under his spell and may very well be behind Caleb's escape from the mental institution she directs. Although, from the moment Caleb is born, the dual nature of his character is presented, most people tended to look at the positive one, choosing to see the angel rather than the demon. It all seems to be a question of perception, or rather of selection: the ill omen of the cry of an owl is ignored and a better one is chosen as if announcing that Caleb was "the chosen one, the prince, the preacher, the prophet."[18] Years later, interpreting Caleb as her saviour, a mature woman decides to become a member of the Skye community after a near escape from death. In cases such as the one described, no explanation is available to make us understand this type of reaction: just charisma and a will to be dissolved into the other.

       More puzzlingly, however, are the accounts - observable, objective and reported on the press, not just by one of our intrusive narrators - that seem to point at Caleb as a really chosen figure, even if questions may spring up as to who chose him and for what purpose. The disturbing account of the mother and child who were killed by a little aircraft who fell on them during a flight exhibition shortly after the mother had forbidden the little girl to come close to Caleb, opens the question as to whether there is a satanic force behind Caleb's magnetism. Maybe he is not really a Christ-figure but an authentic Anti-Christ whose presence haunts the reader even after the end of the novel. The report that he has been swallowed by a mythic creature known as the Kraken, a giant squid, allows the narrator to state, in a sort of fairy-tale happy ending: "So finally Caleb was drowned, eaten, burned and scattered."[19] However, there is still room to question Caleb's real death, a truth officially accepted even with no real proof, just the finding of his shoes and a fragment of boat.

       Caleb's creepy status in the novel is enhanced by the fact that he seems to leave a seed that threatens to be as evil as himself: his daughter Golden. There are a series of signs that foreshadow her Anti-Christ nature: she comes across a Baby Jesus figure in the garden, in line with the pervasive El Niño image of the novel; she has Caleb's "ice-bright blue eyes";[20] her name and her comparison with the "tallest sunflower" anticipate her charisma and the sun-like power of her father.[21] Although we are informed that "At least Golden has not been brought up to believe she is God's appointed," it seems that charisma, following Lindholm's theory, is innate in her and she will use it as negatively as her father, as the novel ends with Golden's dazzling words

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about the end of the world. [22] We cannot but wait until Bird releases *Green Language* and probably an answer, her answer, to the riddle of charisma.

Notes

[1] Silvia Bizio, "Segundo asalto de Hilary," *El País Semanal* 1490, 17th April 2005. P.28.
[2] Charles Lindholm, Carisma: análisis del fenómeno carismático y su relación con la conducta humana y los cambios socials, Gedisa, Barcelona, 2001, p. 22.
[3] Bertrand de Jouvenel, cf. in Lindholm, pp. 20-21. (Our translation)
[4] Shirley Walker, "Conversations at Rochester Road: Carmel Bird Discusses Her Writing with Shirley Walker," *Australian Literary Studies* 21.3, 2004, p.282.
[5] Carmel Bird, *The White Garden* (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1995), 19.
[6] Ibid, 27, 30.
[7] Ibid, 30.
[8] Ibid, 195.
[9] Ibid, 154.
[10] Carmel Bird, *Red Shoes,* Vintage, Sydney, 1998, p. 33.
[11] Ibid, 221.
[12] Ibid, 228.
[13] Ibid, 23.
[14] Ibid, 17, 101.
[15] Ibid, 120.
[16] Carmel Bird, *Cape Grimm,* Flamingo, Sydney, 2004, p. 56.
[17] Ibid, 35.
[18] Ibid, 50.
[19] Ibid, 228.
[20] Ibid, 235.
[21] Ibid, 242.
[22] Ibid, 235.

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Responses to the Uncanny

Christopher Auld

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When I was given the task of responding to these two papers on Uncanny Monsters, Fiona Peters *Monsters and Others: Mediating the Contemporary Uncanny Through Fictions*, and Gerardo Rodriguez Salas and Margarita Carretero Gomez *When Charisma Breeds a Monster: Dangerous Liaisons in Carmel Bird's Novels*, initially I noted the apparent differences between them. During the conference, though, I have noted many commonalities between papers both within individual sessions and across them, from the introduction on. I hope to highlight shared aspects, therefore, between these papers, elaborating on them while providing some observations of my own.

An initial consideration is the seeming strangeness of the notion of responding to the Uncanny, itself an elusive, ambiguous concept, as has been noted. Nicholas Royle, in *The Uncanny*, his analysis of Freud's original 1919 essay, observes the slipperiness of the subject and the inconclusive nature of Freud's attempt to define it. He notes how the reader may feel familiar with the text but then "something new and unexpected will shift into focus."[1] The diverse range of sensations, experiences that may illicit a sense of the Uncanny is expressed through Royle's inventory of the potentially uncanny in his introduction, and furthermore in the titles of his chapters: the familiar in a strange context, the strange in a familiar context, the sense of homeliness uprooted, film, déjà vu, for instance, are all credited with the possibility of provoking the feeling of the Uncanny. Freud, in a curious distancing, situates a third person representation of himself in his opening paragraph to *The Uncanny*, the inverted commas he uses in the text contributing to the alienation effect, which, through suggested impartiality, assists the addressing of that which "belongs to the realm of the frightening, of that which evokes fear and dread."[2] As Stephen Morris stated in his introduction to this conference, there is the need to face up to our fears and confront what it is about ourselves that we find monstrous, or that which is normally repressed, concealed. To attempt to elude it, to forget, is ineffective in much the same way that evasion of the Double would be. The Monstrous, the Uncanny, will persist in returning and coming back to haunt us.

What causes these uncanny sensations, then, what are they? As we have observed, Freud indicated that the return of repressed infantile fears and the reminders of surmounted beliefs were key elements in the creation of uncanny feelings and anxieties. Steven Jay Schneider, in *Monsters as*

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(Uncanny) Metaphors: Freud, Lakoff and the Representation of Monstrosity in Cinematic Horror, notes the over emphasis on Freud's identification of the return of the repressed as the sole source of uncanny feelings, stressing the importance of reminders of surmounted beliefs as a cause of uncanny effects.[3] Figures such as the Mummy, the Vampire, Zombies and the Frankenstein monster, for instance, embody our surmounted belief in the return of the dead. Freud himself mentioned ghosts in this context, noting their embodiment also of repetition. We need to understand what paradigmatic horror narrative individual monsters embody, what surmounted belief they connect us with, to know what it is about them that we find so disturbing.

As we have seen through Fiona Peters' paper, fictional texts function to mediate and channel the fear both of the Uncanny and the Monstrous, the undefined, threatening Other, providing that necessary distance. The fictional work thereby reduces our anxieties, potentially caused by the Uncanny. Schneider notes the psychological functions of horror texts, stating how they promote emotional catharsis in audiences, offering escape not only from the tedium of the everyday, but also providing a relatively safe forum, or space, for the working through of socio-cultural fears.

This, of course, connects very strongly with both papers and provides links between them. Two ideas that are especially striking are that of the stranger as Monstrous Other and the figure of the powerful, charismatic individual as monstrous. Arguably, what is uncanny about these figures is the repetition of social, cultural and political anxieties, the return of repressed fears and the presence of the charismatic leader as an embodiment of surmounted belief. It remains to be seen as to what horror paradigm, through this process, is being evoked here; possibly the belief in the divine and in divine omniscience. Rosemary Jackson, in *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, observes how narratives of the modern fantastic and the notion of The Uncanny both developed co-incidentally with increasing secularisation.[4] She notes Heidegger's reference to the empty space created by the loss of faith in the divine, which has become a site of the Uncanny. Further, the personal magnetism of leaders and their ability to control others, harks back to beliefs both in omniscience and thought transference, the once prevalent now hidden returning in uncanny repetition. The ability of certain people to exert influence over others, like the figures discussed in Gerardo Rodriguez Salas and Margarita Carretero Gomez's paper, manipulating those around them and exploiting a monstrous charisma, places them beyond rational understanding, making them Other.

In the current political world, we can see how individual leaders of political parties in the United Kingdom have been lampooned and characterised, and in the light of these papers, thereby made safe, somehow

reduced. In both the recent and previous election campaigns in Britain, Tony Blair, Prime Minister and leader of New Labour, had been demonised, while Michael Howard, leader of the Conservatives, the main opposition, has been depicted as vampirific. Steve Bell's cartoons in the *Guardian* newspaper, for instance, exploited Howards' Romanian origins, emphasising and mocking perceived Otherness. From the ideas contained within these papers, there is a sense we can view this as a monstrous aspect constructed from these figures and focused on to comment on their potential as leaders. Whether you see them as charismatic is an open question, but significantly, the notion of the foreign, the outsider, the stranger, of Otherness, becomes prominent here and a discourse of a supposed threat from outside infiltrating from within is suggested.

There is, then, a focus within current political discourse, a focus on the mysterious, threatening Other, the stranger as Monstrous Other, as highlighted by these papers. Parallels can be drawn here between the current focus on this aspect and early twentieth century cultural anxieties over race and ethnicity. The recent political changes noted in the first paper, the tearing down of state boundaries which facilitate, superficially, movement of peoples and demographic change, while simultaneously strengthening notions of 'us and them' in a discourse within Europe which separates those inside the family group from the perceived threat without, can also be found in that earlier period. The enormous impact of the 1914-1918 war; the dismantling of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman empires and the dissolution of monarchies, fluctuating borders in Europe and the creation of new states, together with the later economic upheaval of the inter-wear years, appear to coincide with the development, certainly in film, of horror narratives which attempted to mediate cultural fears and anxieties associated with these changes. As Ken Gelder discusses in *Reading the Vampire*, the Dracula text, both in literature and film, can be seen as representing a narrative of reverse colonisation;[5] the colonisers becoming the colonised as the eponymous count journeys westward complete with his own native soil in his coffins, replicating himself through vampirising his victims and appearing more vigorous then his weaker counterparts. He also is a charismatic figure, exerting powerful hypnotic influence over his prey, who willingly succumb. Their drive towards undifferentiation and entry into the liminal world of the abject figure demonstrates the power that charismatic individuals can wield over others.

Cultural anxieties, then, are re-awakened by political change and upheaval, by the familiar becoming strange, by homeliness uprooted, and a sense of the Uncanny can then be evoked though the return of repressed fears. What has been of particular note, as the papers show, is the exploitation of these fears by political discourses and their representation in a range of

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texts, from television coverage and news journals through to fictional narratives. Political events can, it seems, remind us of past tensions and conflicts that have been kept just concealed, for, as Jackson states, the world to be comfortably known.[6] While appearances suggest certainty, elements normally tucked out of sight can be forgotten, but Royle reminds us that Freud demonstrated that the Uncanny is where you become lost and "this is where thinking must begin."[7] Once the familiar has been transformed into the unfamiliar, *unheimlich*, we enter the realm of the Uncanny and we are reminded of their presence, as this creature from the depths rises to the surface once more.

Notes

[1] Nicholas Royle, *The Uncanny*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2003, p. 8.
[2] Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*, transl. D. McLintock, Penguin, London, 2003, p. 123.
[3] Steven Schneider, "Monsters as (Uncanny) Metaphors: Freud, Lakoff, and the Representation of Monstrosity in Cinematic Horror", in *Horror Film Reader*, ed. Alain Silver and James Ursini (New York: Limelight Editions, 2000),
[4] Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion,* Routledge, London and New York, 1981, p. 63.
[5] Ken Gelder, *Reading the Vampire*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, p. 12.
[6] Jackson, p. 65.
[7] Royle, p. 8.

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PART II

Political Monsters

Do You Believe in Monsters? Superstition and Fear in a Chiloé Community (Southern Chile)

Giovanna Bacchiddu

Abstract
The life of a community of islanders is regulated by silent conventions, unstated because considered obvious. However, to an anthropologist 'bizarre' beliefs call for explanations. Why were my hosts terrified of going out at night? Why, whilst outside at night, they ignored whomever they met - even close friends, neighbours or relatives? The night is terrifying: it hides dangers and it is the only time when humans are vulnerable to monsters. Monsters are able to disguise themselves as human beings, (either living or dead), and animals. Dogs, cats, pigs and birds may be just an illusion, and could in fact be dangerous monsters, willing to harm and kill innocent people. Late evenings are favourite occasions for narrating startling stories of monsters and monstrous events. With the complicity of darkness, in the unfaithful company of the only light available - that of candles, a rational Westerner can be transported into a scary world of uncontrollable evil forces. Flying witches, hairy gnomes that knock men out, women who turn into birds, fake dogs and fake pigs ….'real stories', as told by eyewitnesses, are described, including in the picture the anthropologist's first reaction of incredulity and the slow immersion in a different counter-reality.

Key Words: Fear, Superstition, Monsters, Witchcraft

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> "Truth is stranger than fiction"
> Edgar Allan Poe

The archipelago of Chiloé in southern Chile is well known for its 'colourful' system of belief, where indigenous myths are couched within a pervasive Christian framework. As often in Native American worldviews, saints, fairies and monsters blend to present unique results. The impact of evangelisation of the local indigenous inhabitants by the Jesuits at the beginning of the 17th century caused the slow disappearance of the local shamanic system. The indigenous shamans were marginalised, persecuted and condemned as antithetical to Christianity. At the same time witchcraft developed in a distinctive form, gathering powerful individuals into an organised system that, far from being adverse and opposed to Catholicism, was instead perfectly entwined in it. Chiloé witches were prestigious and influential individuals that, besides dealing with the supernatural, occupied

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social charges - often within the church - that brought them power and respect. A famous court trial in the 1880s supposedly put an end to witchcraft as organised system in Chiloé. The archipelago is nowadays home to beautiful wooden churches, declared a world heritage site by UNESCO, and to a consistent body of legends, tales and anecdotes, about monstrous creatures connected somehow to witches. These stories are the subject of endless booklets, pamphlets and articles in local folk literature, to the extent that they have been commodified and Chiloé is consistently described in tourist leaflets as "the land that bewitches". This paper will leave aside the printed versions of these folk stories and will instead concentrate on the tales of the locals, gathered as primary data during anthropological fieldwork during two years.[1] All the stories described have been narrated to me by the locals I was living with. They all reflect a pervasive belief in magic and witchcraft, which obviously permeates Chiloé living world as experienced by its inhabitants in the everyday, at present. According to Lévi-Strauss, for magic to work effectively it is necessary to have belief in magic and social consensus. The shaman, or sorcerer, will be successful only if supported by a strong social consensus, which is to say, if the supernatural powers are recognised by the group. Throughout the known history, Chiloé witches seems to have enjoyed prosperity, influence and, especially, power. From the stories that follow, it can be argued that the mysterious individuals that have a double identity and are generically called *brujos*, witches, are still highly influential, respected, and above all, they are feared. For a few centuries now they have been embodiment and representation of the powerful Otherness that, through 'special' knowledge, allows some individuals to blur the boundaries between known and unknown, animal and human, dead and alive. Fear and terror come forth at night - when a parallel, obscure reality substitutes the realm of experience upon which life in Chiloé is built, leaving everyone vulnerable, and in real danger.

When I first arrived on the tiny Chiloé island were I was to spend almost two years, I was already behind schedule and was therefore very anxious to plunge into my new life and start my job: meeting up with people, observing habits and customs, recording all my findings in carefully handwritten notes. Thus I was grateful to my host family for their willingness to fill up the long and boring southern Chilean winter nights with their thrilling stories. Every night we would gather behind the stove, comment on the usual stormy weather, and someone would say "*tiempo 'e brujos*", witches' weather: better not to go outside. Our solitary winter nights were populated by stories of pigs, dogs and birds. Not ordinary ones, though. Well, pigs don't normally haunt people in their homes at night; nor do dogs

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remain alive after being hanged on a tree; nor do birds swallow human guts to turn into women. Together with stories of 'special' animals, I was told many stories of 'special' creatures that are difficult to classify. A hairy little beast that is a martial arts champion: if you meet him, it's a very bad sign - the least that you can expect is to be assaulted and severely beaten; enchanted sailors that charm you with their magical boat with its lights and music, however if you join them they will take you to the town of the dead and you will be gone forever; a ghost woman that wanders dressed in white and screams and weeps: if you see her, you will die within a year. And flying witches. They fly all lit up, from one side of the island to the other, as well as from island to island.

What these monstrous creatures have in common is that they are all active exclusively at night, and they inspire awe and terror to people, that often say to have personally experienced a close encounter. All the stories I have been told had a protagonist - a victim - who had been a witness to the monstrosity described. At first I found these remarkable stories quite amusing, and I happily filled my notebooks with what sounded like very entertaining and creative anecdotes. Then, as I became more and more a part of the emotional landscape of the island, I shared with its inhabitants joy, pain, and fear. By the end of my stay, I was ready to become a victim myself. The 'magic' of anthropology was working: I had seemingly forgotten my logic-driven approach and I was adopting my hosts' worldview.

1.   The Night: 'As if it was a Separate World' (*"Como que fuera un mundo aparte"*)

Anthropologists often focus on what they see and can describe: rituals, events, celebrations. As anthropology students, we are very attentive and curious towards what can be carefully observed and described in detail. But this time I will try to engage with something that is very difficult to grasp, and indeed is very mysterious and cloudy. I will concentrate on what cannot be seen, described, nor explained. I will shift my focus from what is obvious, and there for everybody to see (i.e. what happens at daytime), to what is vague, cloudy and bordering on the fairy tale, where the boundaries are blurred between magic, horror and 'reality'.

On the island the night brings forth a very interesting counter-reality, "as if it was a separate world", as a local friend put it. The lovely paths that cut across the island, so familiar to every one that uses them regularly, become traps and dangerous places to be avoided; the countryside, regularly used as an alternative shortcut when going somewhere, is transformed into a forest

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of unknown wilderness; the seaside, that people know and use on an everyday basis to collect shellfish, crabs and seaweed, becomes frightening and must be avoided at all costs.

What is it that turns familiar places into threatening ones, and safe spaces into dangerous ones? What is it that makes one's knowledge, collected in a lifetime, become irrelevant, and one's friends and relatives become scarier than unknown strangers? The answer is hard to find, but what I can say is that all this seems to happen after dark. When daylight fades away and darkness falls on the island, it is as if everything belongs to another, different world.

To begin with, hardly anything can be seen: an unusual experience for people like me, who grew up surrounded by light. Whenever there is a power cut, in our industrialised realities, the lack of electricity and light is experienced quite dramatically. In my adoptive island, life is geared towards the night switch, and that means retreating to one's households, and specifically, to the kitchen, which is the only room in the house with some light. The light is the dim candlelight, often shaky as windows allow breeze or wind to come into the room. Sometimes, the light originates from a paraffin lamp, adding a hissing sound to the intimate nightly atmosphere.

2.   Not Greeting at Night

From the beginning of my stay, it became obvious that people were not very happy to go out at night. They always made sure to have finished all their duties shortly after sunset; and - if they really had to be out at night, their behaviour was rather peculiar.

One of the most fascinating issues I came across during my life in the tiny Chiloé island was the fact that people refused to greet whoever they met at night, on the island path, on the beach or anywhere. The first time I witnessed this aspect of their social life I was going back home with my host's daughter, a young woman. We passed our neighbour, and my host did not greet him: she plainly ignored him. I was very surprised by what seemed quite rude; however, I was told that at night one should never greet people. This is because, I was told, at night you cannot properly see the face of the person, therefore you cannot be sure of the identity of the person. And even if you can see clearly, you should still avoid greeting the person.

At first I was quite startled by the denial of a most simple and, in my opinion, natural social rule: that of acknowledging the presence of another human being, and a well-known person as well. On our way home after a religious festival, held at night, I asked a friend the reason for such impolite behaviour, and he said: "The fact is that at night you can't see

anything". I pointed out to him that we could actually see something, and that I could even recognise the two persons that we had just passed by. "All the same!" he said. "At night, I see no-one, I recognise no-one, for me no-one exists at night! At night I know nobody and all are enemies for me!"

When I asked my landlady, she just said that even if I recognised someone, still, I was not supposed to say Hi. I was in my initial stage of fieldwork, the stage where the student knows close to nothing and just imitates whatever it's done around her. Once, though, I just couldn't avoid it and I greeted a person I met at dusk, even if I didn't recognise the person. I had no reply to my clear and loud greeting. When I got back home and I told the story, I was scolded, and I was reminded that "*no sirve andar de noche*", "it's no good to go out at night".

3.   At Night Everyone is More Vulnerable

I once had a conversation with a man "who knows how to pray", don Francisco. Men who know how to pray usually become *fiscales*, local church representatives. When I asked him if he would be interested in being a *fiscal*, given his obvious praying skills in various religious events, the man replied straightaway with much decision and energy: "Never! Never ever! Me? Watching a dead man, put him in his coffin? And afterwards, go back to my own place? Never! Never ever! I am very scared!" I admired the man's honesty but I wanted to know more, so I asked him why was he so scared. "*Por cobardia no mas!*" "Because I am a coward, that's it!", he replied. But then he added: "A *fiscal* needs to go at night, anywhere! I am afraid of going out all alone at night. With a companion I could go everywhere, then I am not afraid anymore, but on my own…never. The point is in here…things happen. And one is afraid".

I collected a great deal of evidence of the fact that people are not willing to go out at night. Once, right after the funeral of a young man who had drowned while swimming, people told me that they had heard some strange noise outside the deceased's house. And the dead man's family told me the following story: "There was something outside the house. We went to let the dogs free, and the 'thing' ran away towards to bushes, and then we heard the neighbour's dogs barking. So after that, it must have taken the main path. And at that same time I have heard somebody moving around the house". I then asked the man's mother what seemed obvious to me, "Why didn't you just go out and have a look?" and she replied 'Because I'm scared! I would never do that! Remember what happened to granny Maria? She went out to see what was going on and she got lost! And when they found her, several hours later, she was thrown in the bushes!"

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   In fact, people in their right mind would not take any risk and would just stay in the only safe place: one's household. While during the day life goes on according to certain social rules - respect, reciprocity, courtesy, politeness and so on, at night all codes of decorum are somehow suspended. Nighttime brings forth a different environment, with other codes of communication, other wandering creatures, and other stories.

   Strange and unpleasant things happen at night. If people have no interest in getting into trouble, why on earth would they dare putting themselves at risk? If they go out at night, they might have something to do with strange creatures and powerful beings. In a word, those that go out might be witches. If you're not a victim you can be a predator. In this case, a predator means a witch.

   People talk very little about witches, but they consistently say that witches are "those who know a lot". Witches are ordinary people, fellow islanders, who happen to be evil and have special powers due to the possession of special knowledge. Witches are able to transform themselves into something else; they know how to assume the aspect of different animals, different people and especially monsters. They do this to terrify people, to harm and sometimes to kill them. The key characteristic of all witches is their double identity: during the day they act like anyone else, fooling everyone, including their own family. At night, however, they make use of their magic knowledge and they turn into other creatures.

   After a long day of activities and events to be experienced, observed, and carefully transcribed in my notebook, I would join my adoptive family for a relaxed couple of hours behind the stove, the only sound being the boiling water of the huge teapots sitting on top of the stove. And there, drinking *mate*, I would be told endless nighttime stories.

4.   Chuchibo
   One of the most common monsters of the island is a creature that has been met by many locals. The monster, called *chuchibo*[2], is so frightening that even to pronounce its name is taboo. No one has ever seen it, but people always describe it as small, very hairy, very strong, and incredibly dangerous. It attacks people from behind, hitting them very fiercely and leaving them unconscious. Once a man was going back home at night on horseback, a bit drunk, with a wine bottle in his hand. He suddenly felt that someone had mounted his horse at his back. The man did nothing but offered a drink by passing the wine bottle to whoever was sitting at his back. He received the bottle back and this went on for a good while. The

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man was reported to have felt the hairy arm of the creature, which suddenly jumped off the horse and left.

"It's a little creature that runs very fast, and it's very good at hitting people. I was once hit on the back of my neck and I fell unconscious for hours. When I woke up, I hardly remembered what had happened to me, I was very confused" a friend told me. This strange creature is said to have been seen by several people on the island, and some of them have been chased and miraculously escaped, by entering their own household premises. In fact, one is supposedly safe in one's house. Anything can happen away from home, in public places and in open, uncontained spaces. The path, the countryside and the seaside are considered particularly dangerous at night. But being on one's own land - especially the land by the house - is safe and nothing should ever happen there.

As a measure of protection, people on the island have one or more dogs that are used as guards. Dogs always stay by the house entrance and will bark at and even attack newcomers. They are considered very powerful protectors and when people have to go out at night, or early in the morning, they will always take a dog, to accompany and protect them. Dogs can sense an unusual presence and will be alert and defend their owners. However, sometimes animals are not able to react and help: as if somehow bewitched by magic creatures. If a man is on his horse and happens to meet the little creature I mentioned earlier, the horse will refuse to proceed and rear up, leaving his owner in trouble. And dogs themselves, who supposedly are the loyal and protective friends of man, may turn out to be dangerous creatures disguised as the familiar canine.

5.   Disguised Creatures

Some people have special powers that allow them to momentarily take the shape of animals such as pigs, dogs or birds. By becoming animals these creatures have an easy access to the home and therefore the private space of their targets, and cause harm to people. If they have a particular target, they would take the shape of, say, a dog, and go regularly to visit their victims. But sometimes people notice the habitual visit of a certain dog, and suspect an evil presence hidden within the dogs' body. In such cases they will ambush the dog and beat it vigorously. If a witch is punished, that means that he's been recognised and he will have to suffer for his inability to hide and his failure. When a witch disguised as a dog is beaten, the witch will run back home and resume his usual body form: he will be hurt and will need to recover. That will be the ultimate proof of his nature.

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      People often report cases of witches being 'caught' as a dog, and being beaten so hard that they had to lock themselves up for a long time, in hiding, until they are fully recovered. Being caught as a witch usually determines the end of a witch's career, and life. On the other hand, their strength in resisting attacks proves their powers. Once a suspicious dog, that used to frequently visit one household at night, was caught and hanged by the man of the house. The following day the man went to check on the dog, with the intention of burying it, to avoid being accused by its owner. Much to his surprise, though, the dog was still alive and after he freed it from the rope, the dog leapt up and ran away. The story proves the powers of some witches: some of them are so strong that they are not very easily defeated. The male witches usually turn into dogs, or pigs. The female witches instead turn into birds or, alternatively, into ghost-like white-dressed creatures that weep and scream at night. Those who see them will die within a year. When a woman turns into a bird, she needs to get rid of her guts first. This is because guts are very heavy and would prevent the witch from becoming a bird. Once a man got up in the middle of the night, and realised that his wife had been out, because she was very cold. This went on for several nights till one night the man decided to stay awake to see what was driving his wife out of the house during the cold night. So he just pretended to be asleep when his wife checked on him, and he saw her getting up, vomiting her guts into a container, and turning into a bird. Horrified at the idea of having married such an evil creature, he threw hot water on the guts. The following day he awoke to find his wife dead at his side.

      People were obviously terrified by the dangers of the nighttime and all its monstrous creatures. Just to mention them was a taboo. And the stories - even those that bordered on the mythical - were told whispering, as if some monster might be present to punish the taleteller. "It's full of ears…even the trees can hear in this place", I was told once by an old woman, who was telling me tales of monsters. There's no antidote to fear, no solution for terror - one can try and avoid exposing oneself to danger by staying inside. But that is not always possible.

      If at the beginning of my fieldwork the stories were to me entertaining intervals to what was seemingly a very boring lifestyle, with the passing of time and the attachment to the family and friends with whom I spent all my time, I got more and more involved in the day/night shift. And once I could test my emotional involvement in my research experience with an episode to which I look back with both embarrassment and amusement. I was sleeping in my bedroom when, in the middle of the night, I heard a peculiar noise: *something* was tapping my window glass, repeatedly,

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continuously. At first I dismissed the unusual sound, and I tried to go back to sleep turning my back to the window of the little bedroom. However it was impossible to sleep: the noise went on and on, a continuous, persistent tapping. The dogs should bark! I thought; they do when they sense someone approaching; the birds should have announced a visitor's presence - they always do, and very noisily. And my landlord, who was always alert and could always hear any strange noise, was pacifically snoring next door. What to do? I was still half asleep but sufficiently awake to decide that I did not want to be alone in my room with some mysterious, terrifying creature beyond my window glass. Before I realised what was to be done, I found myself leaving my room in haste and jumping into my friend Clara's bed next door. Surprised to see me, on listening to my account of the events she commented, apparently seriously worried: "Mother! That is truly terrible - and yet, I doubt *they* would come and do anything inside the house". I recounted the episode several times to investigate people's perception of monsters, and people's management of fear - my tales always produced comments that I found extremely useful and revealing of feelings that are usually kept private. Much to my surprise, though, several months later it turned out that my friend Clara was soon to be a mother…the terrifying tapping that had pushed me out of bed in the middle of the night, evoking all sorts of supernatural evil creatures, was just a lover's call - alas in the wrong window. Why didn't the dogs bark? The birds scream? My landlord heard the noise? That remained a mystery.

Notes

[1] This paper aims at presenting narratives and experiential data gathered doing anthropological fieldwork. It does not seek to give explanations, nor to interpret the data according to theoretical frameworks, due to the nature of the 'Monsters' conference and to the limited space available. The material here presented will be contextualised, expanded and explored more deeply elsewhere.
[2] The names have been changed.

Werewolves on the Baltic Seashore
Monstrous Frontier of Early Modern Europe, 1550-1700

Stefan Donecker

Abstract

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the peripheral territory of Livonia on the Eastern shores of the Baltic Sea was widely known for its abundant population of dangerous werewolves. This paper attempts to ascertain the role of these Baltic werewolves in humanist scholarship, especially in the ethnographic and historiographic descriptions of Livonia and its inhabitants. It argues that the motif of transformation and shape changing has to be perceived as part of a demarcation discourse which depicted Livonia's indigenous inhabitants as monstrous barbarians, thereby justifying their exploitation through serfdom and quasi-colonial expansion.

Key Words*:* Livonia, werewolves, shape changing, ethnicity, demarcation, frontier.

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In January 1558, an army of Russian and Tatar troops crossed the Livonian border and advanced deep into the territory of the Teutonic Order. Ivan IV, Czar of Muscovy, had decided to press his claims on the lands of the declining Order by force. The invasion plunged the region into a bitter struggle for supremacy between Russia, Sweden and Poland that would last for more than 160 years, until Sweden conceded its defeat at the treaty of Nystad in 1721.[1]

The Muscovite offensive turned public attention towards Livonia, a sparsely populated territory in the utmost periphery of early modern Europe that roughly corresponds with modern Estonia and Latvia. Even rulers without direct political ambitions in the area were eager to be informed about the progress of the Russian advance and sent observers to the region. One of them, the envoy of French King Henri II, reported to the Constable of France in 1561. After updating the Constable on recent military developments, he hastens to add that in Livonia it is still very common for people to transform into wolves. ("*... homines conuerti in lupos, quod est adhuc vsitatissimum in Liuonia...*")[2]

A remark that seems slightly peculiar, especially in the context of a military report. It is, however, just one among a great number of sources that mention Baltic werewolves in the 16th and 17th centuries. During the early modern period, Livonia was, in fact, downright notorious for its population of vicious shape-changers. Olaus Magnus, an exiled Swedish bishop and well-known humanist, discussed the topic in great detail in his influential

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treatise on Northern Europe, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (1555).[3]
The great protestant theologian Philipp Melanchthon referred to Livonian
werewolves in his lectures at Wittenberg University[4]; Robert Burton, pioneer
of cognitive science, mentioned them in his ground-breaking *Anatomy of
Melancholy* (1621).[5] The Baltic werewolves even found their way into the
arguably most important piece of 17th century German literature,
Grimmelshausen's picaresque novel *Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus
Teutsch* (1668).[6] As numerous scholars of lesser renown contributed their
own theories and observations, Livonia turned into early modern Europe's
werewolf hideout par excellence.

      This attitude is also reflected in several lycanthropy trials conducted
by the authorities in Livonia during the 16th and 17th centuries, usually -
though not always - in connection with charges of witchcraft. The majority of
these werewolf cases date from the period between 1620 and 1660. On rare
occasions, the sources mention transformations into other animals as well. In
1633, a woman was accused of appearing as a bear, while her associates
preferred the traditional wolf shape.[7]

      The source material from Livonia has been interpreted by several
historians, folklorists and anthropologists throughout the 20th century,
including, most notably, Otto Höfler and Carlo Ginzburg. Höfler referred to
the Livonian werewolves in his attempt to prove the existence of ecstatic
secret cults among the ancient Germans - a hypothesis that became infamous
as a justification for National Socialist mysticism.[8] Carlo Ginzburg compared
the Baltic werewolves to the Benandanti, a 16th century North Italian fertility
cult, and similar groups and communities throughout Europe in an attempt to
trace the shamanistic roots of early modern spirituality.[9]

      Without disregarding the importance of these theories and
interpretations, I would like to approach the topic from a different angle and
discuss the werewolf motif as part of the discursive construction and
definition of ethnicity, periphery and frontier.[10] The Livonian wars of the 16th
and 17th century and the country's importance as a key to hegemony in
North-Eastern Europe drew increased attention to this previously neglected
region. The warring powers contributed numerous attempts to justify and
legitimate their claims, stimulating historiographic and ethnographic research
on Livonia and its inhabitants.

      According to the Lutheran preacher Paul Einhorn, the indigenous
Livonians were "*ein hartes, unbändiges und böses Volck*", "grim, unruly and
evil people".[11] Einhorn's harsh judgement is typical for the biased attitude
towards the Livonians in the 16th and especially in the 17th century. They
were regarded as primitive folk, clinging to bizarre superstitions and heathen
beliefs even though they had been formally christianised. "These Latvians are
corrupt and deceitful from tip to toe," ("*Sunt hi Letti a capite ad calcem*

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corrupti, atque fraudulenti.") stated Hermann Becker, one of the leading authorities on the region, in 1700.[12]

Considering their bad reputation, it is not surprising that the strict social stratification - Germans as rulers, indigenous Livonians as serfs - was hardly questioned. In fact, the term "non-German" was used as a self-explanatory indicator for serfdom and thus became the constituting element of the indigenous Livonians' ethnicity.

The numerous accounts of Livonian werewolves can be perceived as a part of this academic discourse that constructed a stereotypical image of Livonia as the barbarous periphery of Europe. The renowned German humanist Sebastian Münster seems to have been the first early modern scholar who devoted any attention to the subject. In the extended second edition of his *Cosmographia*, Munster included a brief remark on the sorcerers and witches of Livonia. "They adhere to the superstition [...] that they can change themselves into wolves, run around, harm all those they encounter and revert to their human shape afterwards. Such people are called werewolves."[13]

Five years later, Olaus Magnus contributed the most famous description of the Baltic werewolf menace. In the *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus*, he states:

> In Prussia, Livonia, and Lithuania, although the inhabitants suffer considerably from the rapacity of wolves throughout the year, in that these animals rend their cattle, which are scattered in great numbers through the woods, whenever they stray in the very least, yet this is not regarded by them as such a serious matter as what they endure from men turned into wolves.
> On the feast of the Nativity of Christ, at night, such a multitude of wolves transformed from men gather together in a certain spot, arranged among themselves, and then spread to rage with wondrous ferocity against human beings, and those animals which are not wild, that the natives of these regions suffer more detriment from these, than they do from true and natural wolves; for when a human habitation has been detected by them isolated in the woods, they besiege it with atrocity, striving to break in the doors, and in the event of their doing so, they devour all the human beings, and every animal which is found within.[14]

Olaus proceeds with the remark that all those who crave powers forbidden by the divine order are taught to transform themselves by means of sorcery; as

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soon as they have been instructed, they can change their shape at will. Anybody willing to join the werewolf bands is allowed to do so - no matter whether he is German or Livonian.[15]

Other sources, however, indicate that the werewolf motif was by no means devoid of ethnic stratification. During one of the latest trials, dating from 1691, the accused, an old Livonian peasant named Thieß, testifies that Germans may become werewolves as well, but their community remains separate from the Livonian werewolves and has its own "hell", i.e. its own cult-place where the ritual battles between werewolves and diabolic sorcerers took place.[16]

An especially significant episode is recorded in *Nord-Schwedische Hexerei, oder Simia Dei, Gottes Affe*, a treatise on diabolic temptations compiled by the theologian and church historian Christian Kortholt under the pseudonym Theophilus Sincerus: One of Kortholt's acquaintances, a very trustworthy person, had visited Livonia in 1637. In the Couronian city of "Dublin"[17] some Germans invited him, as a fellow countryman, for a drink at the local inn. During the evening, a group of indigenous peasants approached the Germans' table, and one of them innocently raised his glass and offered a toast in his own language. The German traveller did not understand a word, but since he did not want to seem impolite, he thought it appropriate to return the favour and repeat the Livonian's words. His fellow Germans, however, immediately jumped to their feet, told him to shut up, and started to beat the friendly Livonian until he was bleeding.

After the Livonian peasants had fled the inn, the puzzled traveller demanded an explanation from his drinking companions. They answered that if he had repeated the Livonian's toast, he would have turned into a werewolf. Such trickery and deceit had sealed the fate of many a German who had been ignorant of the local language. The next morning (after a night of heavy drinking, one might assume) they showed him a large number of werewolves running home and thus proved the truth behind their warnings.[18]

Some elements of this remarkable account are mentioned in other sources as well. Both Olaus Magnus[19] and Paul Einhorn[20] know that drinking to someone may turn this person into a werewolf. Thieß also testified during his trial that he had been initiated into the werewolf community when someone offered a toast and breathed into the glass three times.[21] According to anthropological observations, similar beliefs were widespread in Livonia and Lithuania up to the 19th century.[22] More important than the drinking motif, however - at least in this context - is the idea that nefarious Livonians lure unsuspecting Germans to their doom by turning them into werewolves. Other texts leave a similar impression. Olaus Magnus relates the following two tales:

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In the first episode, a German nobleman travelled through a large and dense forest with some indigenous peasants in his retinue who dabbled in the black art. They found no house where they could lodge for the night and were quite famished. Then one of the peasants offered, if all the rest would hold their tongues as to what he should do, that he would bring them a lamb from a distant flock. He withdrew into the depths of the forest and changed his form into that of a wolf, fell upon the flock, and brought a lamb to his companions, as promised. They received it with gratitude. Then he retired once more into the thicket, and transformed himself back into his human shape.[23]

Olaus also tells the story of a noble lady of German descent who expresses her doubts whether it is possible for a man to change his shape. One of her serfs volunteers to provide evidence and asks for the permission to leave. He disappears into the cellar, and shortly afterwards, a wolf is seen roaming the estate. The dogs attack him and rip one of his eyes out, and when the serf returns the other day, he is one-eyed as well.[24]

Compared to their nasty countrymen in Kortholt's tavern story, the Livonian serfs in these two accounts appear rather benevolent, using their supernatural powers to impress and to serve their German masters. All three stories, however, share the same trait: The Germans appear uncertain about the werewolf phenomenon and seem unable to comprehend the mystery, whereas the Livonians excel at shape-changing and utilize it as they wish.

The protocol of a witch trial dating from 1651 sheds additional light on the relationship between shape-changing and ethnicity. A woman is accused of witchcraft and maleficium, and when her 18 year-old son Hans is interrogated, he confesses that he has been a werewolf, using a wolf pelt to transform himself. After their first unsuccessful hunt, Hans and a fellow werewolf had encountered the devil:

> They found nothing, so they returned to the place where the stone had been [where they had found the wolf pelts, S.D.] and dropped the pelts. Hereunto the Evil One appeared in person, in black German clothing and in the likeness of a young man without beard. He inquired in common *undeutsch* why they had brought nothing. They answered that they didn't get any prey themselves.[25]

It is interesting to note how this testimony handles the devil's ethnic affiliation. He is dressed like a German, which is quite comprehensible. After all, the devil is a great lord and would therefore probably dress like the German masters. Nonetheless, when he berates the unsuccessful werewolves he speaks *undeutsch*, non-German, the language of the indigenous peasants.

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One might assume that, from Hans' point of view, it would be inappropriate to discuss werewolf business in German, and therefore, in his account, even the devil resorts to the native tongue of the serfs.

Proceeding with his testimony, Hans explains that his frequent disappearances caused his mistress to become suspicious:

> When the boy returned home this time, she asked him: "Where have you been? You are not a werewolf, are you? If you are, you should rather confess, and we will try to get some help for you. After all, we have the pastor here and honourable Germans who can instruct you." The boy answered: "I can't help it, when I'm summoned, I have to go."[26]

The contrast between the two languages is striking. Hans receives his instructions in the black arts in *undeutsch*, whereas German is used by the priest and the good people who might help him to revert to the Christian faith. One might wonder whether Hans related common popular beliefs about the implications of these two languages, or whether he just reacted to the judges' suggestions and repeated a learned, German point of view.

Faced with the Livonians' amazing inclination to transform themselves into wolves, early modern scholarship turned to the authorities of classic antiquity for an explanation.[27] In a famous sequence in the fourth book of his *Histories*, Herodotus had written about the Neuri in Eastern Europe:

> It is not impossible that these people practise magic; for there is a story current amongst the Scythians and the Greeks in Scythia that once a year every Neurian turns into a wolf for a day or two, and then turns back into a man again. Of course, I do not believe this tale; all the same, they tell it, and even swear to the truth of it.[28]

Undeterred by Herodotus' own scepticism, several 16th and 17th century scholars could not resist locating the Neuri in Livonia, thus explaining the abundance of werewolves in the region. In the later editions of his *Commentarius de praecipuis generibus divinationum*, Caspar Peucer declares that the Neuri are in fact a part of the Livonian people before he continues to narrate several werewolf episodes.[29] The French jurist and philosopher Jean Bodin subscribes to this point of view, adding that "posterity verified many things Herodotus had written that had seemed incredible to the ancients". [30]

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After this brief survey of some relevant sources, the role of the werewolf motif as part of the ethnographic characterisation of the Livonians seems apparent. Even though the possibility of German werewolves is not entirely ruled out, most of the examined texts ascribe the ability of animal transformation especially to the indigenous serfs. Shape-changing became another component of the stereotypical image of the primitive, superstitious and devious Livonian peasant.

In his dissertation on *Greek Wolf-lore,* R.P. Eckels commented on Herodotus' informers who had depicted the Neuri as shape-changers:

> It is sufficient to note that werewolfery was ascribed, by people on the periphery of Herodotus' world, to even more remote tribes. In the same irresponsible fashion, unfamiliar or hostile tribes continue everywhere to be charged with werewolfery, necromancy, cannibalism, human sacrifice - in short, whatever gross aberration from decent demeanor happens, at a given time and place, to symbolize deviltry and loathsome iniquity.[31]

Eckels' remarks precisely match the situation in Early Modern Europe. Witchcraft and shape-changing were phenomena primarily associated with peripheral regions. Even though such sorcerous practices were thought to threaten Christianity all over Europe, the origins of these menaces were located in distant lands, especially in the North. "Sorcerers used to be less numerous than they are today," states the notorious French witch-hunter Pierre de Lancre. "They dwelt at remote places; in the mountains, in deserts or in the Northern lands, such as Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Götaland, Ireland and Livonia."[32] Johann Fischart, a widely read German moralist, agrees: "Most witches and sorcerers are to be found in the Northern lands, because the devil has more power at Septentrio. There are more warlocks in Norway and Livonia and other Septentrional areas than in the entire rest of the world."[33]

The werewolf motif can be perceived as a part of these demarcation discourses. Livonia's inhabitants were denounced as shape-changers, characterised as barbarous quasi-pagans and discursively pushed to the fringe of civilization. The monstrous became an inherent aspect of the Baltic frontier. Livonia was classified and stigmatized as a peripheral region, its inhabitants mere objects of history instead of active participants.

The anonymous envoy of Henri II, King of France, included the tale of the Baltic werewolves in a report on military conflicts and political ambitions. By doing so, he left an astonishingly precise analysis of the werewolf discourse - most likely without realising it. During the 16th and 17th

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century, werewolves were indeed a matter of politics. A land where humans regularly lost their humanity and turned into beasts was in dire need of conquest, civilization and education. Werewolves had become a discursive concept that confirmed the German nobility's rule over the indigenous peasants and justified the "civilized" countries' ambitions for hegemony and conquests in the Baltic region.

Notes

[1]For an overview of the political history of early modern Livonia and its importance for supremacy in Northern Europe, cf. David Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period. The Baltic World 1492-1772* (London and New York: Longman, 1990).

[2]I[ean] Bodin, *De la demonomanie des sorciers* (Paris: du Puys, 1580), 98v. The year 1561 is not explicitly mentioned by Bodin. It has, however, been deducted from other sources by Carl Rußwurm, "Ueber Wehrwölfe," *Das Inland. Eine Wochenschrift für Liv-, Esth- und Curland's Geschichte, Geographie, Statistik und Litteratur* 3 (1838): 264.

[3]Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (Romae: [Viottis], 1555), 642-644.

[4]*Corpus Reformatorum. Volumen XX*, ed. Henricus Ernestus Bindseil (Brunsvigae: Schwetschke, 1854), 552.

[5]Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy. Volume I*, ed. Thomas C. Fauklner et al. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 133-134.

[6]Hans Jakob Christoph von Grimmelshausen, *Der abenteuerliche Simplicius Simplicissimus*, ed. Emil Ermatinger (Köln and Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1961), 468.

[7]Cf. Maia Madar, "Estonia I: Werewolves and Poisoners," in *Early Modern Witchcraft. Centres and Peripheries*, ed. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 271.

[8]Otto Höfler, *Kultische Geheimbünde der Germanen* (Frankfurt am Main: Diesterweg, 1934).

[9]Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies. Deciphering the Wiches' Sabbath* (New York: Pantheon, 1991).

[10]Early modern debates on shape-changing were embedded in an elaborate theological, philosophical and medical framework. The majority of scholars believed that the werewolf's lupine appearance was merely an illusion, since the devil was thought to be unable to transform the human body physically. Jean Bodin was the only prominent demonologist who claimed that shape-changing sorcerers and witches did, in fact, undergo a bodily metamorphosis into animals. (For a concise summary of the debate, cf. Michael Siefener, *Hexerei im Spiegel der Rechtstheorie. Das crimen magiae in der Literatur*

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von 1574 bis 1608 [Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992], 145-153.)

16th and 17th century scholars also used the concept of pathological lycanthropy, i.e. a mental delusion that caused the patients to believe that they were wolves and behave according to their imagined transformation. This mental disturbance, which was either classified as a kind of "melancholy" or as "madness", was discussed by authors such as Reginald Scot (*The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584), King James I of England (*Daemonologie*, 1597) and Richard Burton (*The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621). Several key texts on *lupina insania*, "wolf-madness", have been compiled in: *A Lycanthropy Reader. Werewolves in Western Culture*, ed. Charlotte F. Otten (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986).

In the limited scope of this essay, it is hardly possible to discuss the theoretical background of the Baltic werewolf debate in any appropriate detail. I have therefore opted to include representative sources on all kinds of "werewolf-related phenomena" in Livonia, no matter whether the authors believe that the alleged transformations took place physically, were feigned by diabolical illusion, or were in fact mere delusions caused by mental illness. This simplification seems admissible, since this paper focuses on questions of ethnicity and identity rather than on philosophical and theological assumptions.

[11]Paul Einhorn, "Historia Lettica. Das ist Beschreibung der Lettischen Nation," in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum. Band 2* (Riga and Leipzig: Frantzen, 1848), 596.

[12]Hermann Becker and Johann Wilhelm Beator, *Livonia. Livonorum veterum naturam, Rempublicam atque ritus exponet* (Vitembergae: Schulzius, 1700), I §6.

[13]Sebastianus Munster, *Cosmographia, Das ist: Beschreibung der gantzen Welt* (Basel: Henricpetri, 1628), 1303.

[14]Olaus Magnus, 642.

[15]Olaus Magnus, 643.

[16]Hermann von Bruiningk, "Der Werwolf in Livland und das letzte im Wendenschen Landgericht und Dörptschen Hofgericht i. J. 1692 deshalb stattgehabte Strafverfahren," *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte* 22 (1924): 207.

[17]Kortholt is most likely referring to Doblen, nowadays Dobele in southern Latvia.

[18]Theophilus Sincerus, *Nord-schwedische Hexerey, oder Simia Dei, Gottes Affe* (s.l., 1677), CII.

[19]Olaus Magnus, 643.

[20]Paul Einhorn, "Wiederlegunge Der Abgötterey und nichtigen Aberglaubens, so vorzeiten auß der Heydnischen Abgötterey in diesem Lande entsprossen, und bißhero in gebrauche blieben," in *Scriptores rerum*

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Livonicarum. Band 2 (Riga and Leipzig: Frantzen, 1848), 645.

[21]Bruiningk, 208.

22Karlis Straubergs, "Om varulvarna i Baltikum," in *Studier och översikter tillägnade Erik Nylander den 30 januari 1955*, ed. Sigurd Erixon (Stockholm: Samfundet för svensk folklivsforskning, 1955), 113.

[23]Olaus Magnus, 643-644.

[24]Olaus Magnus, 644.

[25]Friedrich von Toll, "Zur Geschichte der Hexenprocesse. Auszug aus dem Protocoll des Wier- und Jerwschen Manngerichts," *Das Inland. Eine Wochenschrift für Liv-, Esth- und Curland's Geschichte, Geographie, Statistik und Litteratur* 4 (1839): 258.

[26]Toll, 262.

[27]During the 16th and 17th centuries, academic discourses in the Baltic Sea region were dominated by the paradigms and methodological doctrine of Swedish Gothicism. Johannes Magnus (*Gothorum Sueonumque Historia*, 1540), brother of the afore mentioned Olaus Magnus, adapted medieval traditions that had linked Sweden with the Goths of antiquity, creating an elaborate historical narrative based on the assumption that the Swedish kings were the legitimate heirs of the glorious Goths. Though far from unchallenged, Gothicism retained its importance until the rise of enlightenment in the early 18th century.

In the wake of Swedish Gothicism, attempts were made to trace the genealogy of other ethnic groups in a similar way. Scholarship tried to comprehend the characteristics of a given population, its vices and virtues and the foundation of its ethnicity by identifying its ancestors - usually *gentes* of antiquity that had featured in classic Greek and Roman writing. Territories in the periphery of Europe - such as Livonia - could be integrated into the civilised world as soon as the ancestors of their inhabitants had been identified and their existence had thus been validated by the authorities of ancient Greece and Rome.

[28]Herodotus, *The Histories*, ed. Aubrey de Sélincourt (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1954), 276.

[29]Casparus Peucer, *Commentarius de praecipuis divinationum generibus* (Francofurti: Wechelus, 1593), 280.

[30]Bodin, 98v.

[31]Richard Preston Eckels, *Greek Wolf-lore* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1937), 33-34.

[32]Pierre de Lancre, *Tablaeu de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et demons* (Paris: Nicolas Buon, 1613), 268.

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[33]Johann Fischart, *De magorum dæmonomania. Vom außgelasenen wütigen Teuffelsheer, allerhand Zauberern, Hexen unnd Hexenmeistern* (Straßburg: Jobin, 1591), 113-114. Fischart had published his augmented and revised translation of Bodin's *De la demonomanie des sorciers* in 1581.

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Dracula as Ethnic Conflict: Representing U.S. Humanitarianism in the Former Yugoslavia

Neda Atanasoski

Abstract
This paper considers the post-Cold War position of the U.S. in the "new" global order with respect to the ethnic violence of the civil war in the Balkans from 1992-2000. I argue that the gothic novel provides the narrative within which the U.S. role in Eastern European affairs is represented. Bram Stoker's 1897 novel *Dracula* is the exemplary gothic tale that expresses a phobia of non-Western spaces marked as racially other. Stoker's tale of the imperative to modernize non-modern spaces is especially relevant to the Balkans, a region that in the Western imagination conveys racial and continental sameness alongside a fundamental alterity from the West in terms of its economic and political development and lack of liberal consciousness. The 1990s media and political discourses recast the Dracula narrative to locate the threat to Western rationality and progress in the primordial ethnic conflicts of the Balkans, while inscribing the U.S. as a space of human rights. Highlighting media representations of ethnic conflict in the "Balkans," my paper connects the U.S. self-understanding of having overcome its past of racial inequality and of being a democracy rooted in diversity to its foreign policy that establishes its right to intervene in regions troubled by ethnic intolerance thereby displacing domestic racial anxieties through its "humanitarian" projects around the globe.

Key Words: Balkans, Media, Humanitarianism, Ethnic conflict, Ethnic cleansing, Dracula, Imperialism, Race, Multiculturalism, Democracy

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In this paper, I consider the post-Cold War position of the U.S. in the "new" global order with respect to the U.S. media's representation of "ethnic conflict" and "ethnic cleansing" as the monstrous acts of the Balkans. Although these two concepts of ethnic violence became prominent in the U.S. imaginary of the Balkans during the 1992-1995 civil war in Bosnia, my focus here is on how the redeployment of these concepts in public discourse led to NATO air strikes on Serbia and Kosovo from March 24 of 1999 to June 10 1999. The 1990s media and political discourses recast the Dracula narrative and the gothic frame to locate the threat to Western rationality and progress in the primordial ethnic conflicts of the Balkans, while inscribing the U.S. as a space of human rights.

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    I want to first of all briefly outline the key thematic and narrative
elements of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and the way in which these elements
were broadly deployed within the U.S. to justify its intervention in the
Balkans. I will then turn to my central question of how the U.S. media
represented the concept of ethnic difference in the Balkans as productive of a
cyclical violence based in blood *in contrast to* the transcendent ethnic and
racial difference supposedly within the West, which was narrated as
productive of and emergent in culture and civilization. In doing so, I hope to
begin to sketch out the racist dimensions of the ideological and political
stakes in the rise of U.S. humanitarianism, which was imagined against
Balkan "genocide" and which continues to underlie present-day U.S. neo-
colonial militancy, or what passes for "nation-building," in so-called global
trouble spots.
    Bram Stoker's 1897 *Dracula* is an exemplary gothic tale that
expresses a phobia of non-Western spaces marked as racially other. Stoker's
novelistic representation of the Transylvanian undead Count who haunts
European modernity elaborates upon the imperative to civilize pre-modern
spaces that was used to justify British imperial expansion into Asia and
Africa. At the same time, Stoker's *Dracula* dramatized the ambiguity
inherent in modernizing imperatives since the primitive, written as Eastern
European superstition, constantly reemerges at the very heart of the modern,
civilized West. This haunting interference is both spatial, since Dracula
passes unnoticed into London, and temporal, since ancient superstitions and
non-modern forms of knowledge have the power to disrupt scientific and
technological progress. In Stoker's tale, progress and technology *are*
ultimately affirmed in Dracula's death at the hands of Jonathan Harker and
the Western vampire hunters, equipped with their scientific knowledge.
However, as numerous Dracula scholars have pointed out, the adaptability of
the Dracula narrative, which has been made into countless literary, stage, and
filmic adaptations, is a testament to the unfinished project of modernity,
keeping the West ever-vigilant of others that have yet to be enlightened and
civilized.[1]
    The narrative of Stoker's *Dracula* takes the form of multiple
narrative voices that gradually reveal the full horror of the undead Count's
threat to the British Empire and, in particular, to British womanhood upon
which he preys. The novel assembles a collage of journal entries originally
written in shorthand, newspaper accounts, telegrams, and phonograph
dictations, all of which are transcribed by the competent "New Woman"
Mina Harker on her typewriter. All of the entries represent new technologies
of the Victorian era – for instance, shorthand was a new efficient method of
notation, the Dictaphone represented the ability to record voices, and Mina's
ready access to a typewriter enabled the documenting of evidence against

Dracula. Stoker's novel can therefore be read as a set of documents that build the case for assembling the vampire hunters and killing Dracula in the name of justice and to preserve Western values. This was a technological vanquishing of the centuries old, undead, and inhuman Count.

It is this trope of a rational victory over the traditional inhuman other that U.S. representations of the Balkans built on during the 1990s. In similar ways to the Count, Serbian President Slobodan Milošević was represented both by U.S. policy makers and by the U.S. media as fundamentally elusive. Like the fictional Count, he was a man who spoke excellent English and who could fool Westerners. Richard Holbrook who led U.S. diplomatic efforts in the former Yugoslavia reported that he was frequently deceived by Milošević into thinking that they had reached a settlement and that this is why the West continued to negotiate with him throughout the war in Bosnia and up until the launch of NATO air strikes. Similarly to the faith in technology in Stoker's novel, building the case against Milošević as a war criminal accused of genocide was also a technological effort – for instance, satellite and reconnaissance photographs revealed mass graves, and the fighter jets used night vision technology and remote-control precision bombing. Each time NATO took out "strategic" targets in Serbia and Kosovo, the military spokespersons and the U.S. media represented it as an attack on Milošević's body as the metonym for the entire Serbian nation. In the prominent example of NATO's demolition of the state TV building in Belgrade organic metaphors of the body were used to describe the strike as hitting the "heart of [the] propaganda machine."[2] The term "surgical air strike" therefore took on new meaning. Unlike Dracula, however, Milošević could not even hide in the dark because of the NATO fighter planes' night vision. Western discourse of "degrading" Milošević's capabilities was thus based in the extreme gap between high-tech and low-tech war-waging capabilities. At the same time, the spectacular showing of "overwhelming or decisive force" covered over the damage to civilian life, including that done to the ethnic Albanians whom the technology was supposed to rescue from the tyrant.[3] In doing so, Western violence based in technological progress was written as just against non-modern or rogue forms of aggression.

Stoker's narrative of scientific and technological progress, a narrative that is written over the space of the Balkans, continues to be relevant and adaptable to contemporary Western figurations of the Balkans as a space in addition to that of Milosević as the paramount Balkan tyrant. The West imagines the Balkans as a region that is both within and outside of Europe. In his insightful article "Vampires like Us," Tomislav Longinović has pointed out that "as a creature of history, the unfortunate count [Dracula] is formed by the colonial gaze of the West, which senses its own bloodthirsty

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past."[4] According to Longinović, in the "humanitarian" bombing of Serbia and Kosovo, the West was able to forget its own violent history of national formation and imperialism in the "dark continents."[5] Therefore, in the contemporary context "the gothic imaginary functions as a time-delayed reflection of past traumas of European collectivities, and this image is then projected onto 'the serbs' through the narratives of global news networks as they recount their Balkan histories in real time."[6] Longinović concludes, then, that the emergence of "the serbs" is a sign of the new "racism without race," a racism that is "couched in the progressive language of human rights," but one that nevertheless perpetuates the enemy within an "Other" Europe.[7]

Building on Longinović's assessment that the re-figuration of the Balkans in the 1990s Western imaginary represented the U.S. need to displace its own racist history in its racializing discourse about the Serbs, I would like to elaborate upon how the gothic frame was deployed by the U.S.-led West to promote its post-Cold War vision of race in terms of multiculturalism in which race becomes a sign of cultural diversity and how that functioned in tandem with the discourse of humanitarianism to underwrite U.S. global interventionism as moral. The emergence of multiculturalism during the 1980s and 1990s in the U.S. as the predominant mode through which to envision a pluralist democracy differs from the earlier European concept of the ethnic nation state. In the aftermath of the Civil Rights Act of 1965, when citizens in the U.S. were granted equality under the law, the racial narrative in the U.S. became one of progress in which the nation had supposedly overcome its past of illiberal racial prejudice and in which *racial* difference was re-written as *cultural* diversity. U.S. multicultural ideology in fact masked and covered over continued institutionalized racism and growing material disparities that disproportionately fell on non-white citizens throughout the 1990s.

The U.S. media's deployment of the concept of ethnic cleansing as the predominant mode of Serbian nationalist purification at this time contrasted the eruption of ethnic hatred after Communism's repression of ethnic difference to the successes of capitalism, which supposedly nurtures ethnic harmony under the banner of multiculturalism in a free market economy. Through the lens of U.S. multiculturalism, then, the so-called primordial ethnic conflicts in the Balkans symbolized in the ancient, tribal language of blood as belonging were particularly monstrous and alien to the U.S. and Western ideological construct of cultural difference as a sign of civilization, modernity, and freedom. As one U.S. Senator put it during a special hearing on Serbian war crimes in May of 1999 during the NATO air strikes, the U.S. and the West had to "let the world know that this is an unacceptable manner of behavior, and that the free world, the civilized world, is going to do something about it every time we see it."[8] Indeed, this is

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precisely how Bill Clinton asked the nation to remember the successes of NATO's campaign on his very last night as president. He said: "We achieve our aims by defending our values and leading the forces of freedom and peace. … We must remember that America cannot lead the world unless here at home we weave the threads of our coat of many colors into the fabric of one America."[9] U.S. multiculturalism thus not only legitimized U.S. military interventions, but it re-wrote U.S. militarism as a sort of global benevolence that spreads diversity and tolerance.

Throughout the 1999 NATO campaign, numerous articles addressed the fact that for an American generation who had grown up opposing the Vietnam War, Kosovo was the first chance in which a clear moral right and wrong presented themselves – it was the baby-boomer's turn to be heroes and to save the embattled Albanian minority in Kosovo. The NATO air strikes were therefore presented as the first moral war since WWII. The media cast this war as being neither against the Serbian people, nor even against the monster himself, Slobodan Milosevic. Instead, it was portrayed as a grander war of ideals – tolerance, liberalism, and freedom against intolerance, backwardness, and tribal ethnic warfare. As Bill Clinton made clear in his address to the nation explaining U.S. leadership of the NATO air strikes, in which he called the action a "moral imperative," "this is a conflict with no national boundaries. … Let a fire burn here in this area, and the flames will spread."[10] In this initial speech whose purpose was for Clinton to persuade the U.S. public that intervention in Kosovo was in the best interest of the U.S., national interests were re-presented as moral actions that "[advanced] the cause of peace" across the globe" to protect "defenseless people."

Though Clinton's rhetoric rendered U.S. national interests as morally and globally universal ones working in the service of embattled ethnic minorities everywhere, in the same speech Clinton educated the U.S. public about the particular geographic location of Kosovo that was fertile ground for festering ancient ethnic hatreds. For Clinton, Kosovo straddled the civilizational fault line between Western universality and Eastern barbarism. Like Jonathan Harker in Stoker's *Dracula*, who pores over the map of "one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe" in order to locate Dracula's castle, during Clinton's press conference the camera zoomed onto a map of the Balkans to visually demonstrate to the U.S. audience the nation's strategic interests in this obscure but volatile geographic location.[11] Clinton's disembodied voice instructed the U.S. audience to "take a look at [the] map." According to Clinton's interpretation of the map, "Kosovo is a small place, but it sits on a major fault line between Europe, Asia and the Middle East, at the meeting place of Islam and both the western and orthodox branches of Christianity. … All the ingredients for a major war are there: Ancient grievances, struggling democracies, and at the center of it all, a

dictator in Serbia who has done nothing since the cold war ended but start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division." In Clinton's rhetoric, the primordial enactment of ethnic divisions based in blood and tribalism are geographically determined and spatially fixed, erupting, as Samuel Huntington famously elaborated in the "Clash of Civilizations," at the great fault-line between Christianity and Islam.[12] Yet, like a modern day Crusader or vampire hunter, Clinton argues that it is within the West's technological power and moral know-how to put down the fire of primordial hatreds and spread democratic, multicultural ideology.

In spite of the opposition set up between the Balkans and the West, because of its geographic location in Europe, the genocide of the Jews at the hands of the Nazis emerged as the foremost analogy to help Western viewers understand the horror of what one reporter called the "blood-spattered timeline of Slobodan Milosević's Yugoslavia."[13] Both the print and televised media made the most of the Balkans ambiguously European position in the direct parallels they drew to World War II and the Jewish Holocaust. Televised reports of Albanian refugees that depicted people being crowded onto a train on their way to refugee camps in Macedonia visually alluded to the Nazi transport of Jews. Several networks' news coverage even cut directly from the scenes of Albanian refugees to black and white footage of Jews being deported to death camps. Through this insertion of historic footage of the Jewish Holocaust into the contemporary scenes of ethnic Albanian displacement from their homes, the U.S. media flattened history in order to evoke a clear moral imperative of "right" and "wrong," and "villain" and "victim." At its most extreme, this rhetoric located the origin of *all* European 20th century global violence in the Balkans. To refer again to Clinton's national address on the occasion of the start of NATO air strikes, in outlining the stakes of his intervention he made the sweeping statement that "Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where World War I began. World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region." My point here in emphasizing the U.S. media's collapsing of the Holocaust and the Serbian repression of ethnic minorities is not only to provide an example for how the Balkans function as space onto which the West projects its own violent past, but to also demonstrate that the U.S. domestic conception of racial difference is based in privileging the Holocaust and displacing other histories of racial violence that are unreadable through the contemporary framework.

Barnor Hesse has argued that since the end of World War II the international concept of racism has privileged "the anti-fascist critiques of the Jewish Holocaust, while foreclosing subaltern and anti-colonial critiques centered on Western Imperialism."[14] The result of this imbalance, according to Hesse, has been that "the concept of racism is doubly-bound into revealing (nationalism) and concealing (liberalism), foregrounding (sub-humanism)

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and foreclosing (non-Europeanism), affirming (extremist ideology) and denying (routine governmentability)."[15] Hesse's framework can help us understand what at first appears to be the incongruous equating of the Jewish Holocaust with the refugee crisis in Kosovo. In the U.S. media's emphasis on Serbian nationalism, ethnic Albanian sub-humanism, and Milosević's extremist ideology, dominant discourses that favored "humanitarian" intervention concealed how U.S. liberal multicultural ideology continued to privilege Euro-American modernity as a site of progress against non-European others. This interpretive frame for ethnic conflict in the Balkans actively denies the neo-imperial underpinnings of U.S.-led Western humanitarian benevolence. NATO's victory over Serbia eventually led to Milosević's indictment as a war criminal accused of genocide and to his extradition to the Hague. The plethora of historical allusions to the Nuremberg trials definitively inscribed the West on the side of morality and justice, giving the West the right to pass judgment for the second time in the twentieth century over extremist forms of racism and ethnic prejudice. Even with this Western judicial authority, the West could not forget that it chose to not act in time to save the European Jews. The return of most ethnic Albanian refugees to Kosovo and the creation of a United Nations protectorate there seemed to imply that Western ideals had been morally vindicated and put into practice. The West was thus able to definitively displace its own history of racism and imperialism, which are at the heart of Western modernity, onto the space of the Balkans. In Kosovo, the West was finally able to atone of its inaction on behalf of the Jews in WWII.

I conclude with a brief discussion of the contours of contemporary humanitarianism. In Stoker's *Dracula,* the end of the novel justifies British expansion through its civilizing mission by affirming British humanity over the destruction of the undead Balkan Count. Similarly, in the context of the NATO air strikes, Western humanity was affirmed in its moral intervention and in its victory over the Serbs. What, then, of the rising U.S. empire? Michael Ignatieff, a prominent North American intellectual and an avid supporter of military intervention to secure human rights, described empire as the necessary precondition for democracy in the contemporary global order.[16] What justifies the humanitarian guise of contemporary empire, in Ignatieff's view, are its moral and spiritual dimensions that allow for reconciliation amongst former enemies. Ignatieff's enthusiastic interpretation of war technologies, which, in his words, allowed "for the first time military means [to be] used to create a humanitarian space" validates Western violence as enlightened.[17] While Ignatieff emphasizes that the major difference between the current incarnation of "temporary" empire leading to democracy and earlier 18th and 19th century empires is that racist ideology has been replaced by the universal imperative of human rights, Western racializing discourse in

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fact continues to be at the center of Western humanitarianism. In the guise of humanitarianism, the West displaces and masks its domestic and global racist policies. However, as the persistence of the gothic frame deployed by the West to understand its Others demonstrates, the racial Other, the "undead," will continue to reemerge in, to structure, and to disrupt Western dominance.

Notes

[1] Auerbach and Skal, 1997, p. ix.
[2] CBS *Evening News* 21 April 1999.
[3] Mbembe, 2003, p. 30.
[4] Longinović, 2002, p. 45.
[5] Ibid., p. 47.
[6] Ibid., p.51.
[7] Ibid., p.55.
[8] U.S. Congress, 1999, p. 3.
[9] "Speech: 'I'll Leave the Presidency More Idealistic'" in the *New York Times* (Late Edition, East Coast) 19 January 2001, sec. A, p. 24.
[10] "In the President's Words: 'We act to Prevent a Wider War." *New York Times* (Late Edition, East Coast) 25 March 1999 sec. A, p.15.
[11] Stoker, 1997, p.10.
[12] Huntington, 2000, pp.27-33.
[13] Blaine Harden "What It Would Take to Cleanse Serbia" in the *New York Times* (Late Edition, East Coast) 9 May 1999, sec. 4, p.1.
[14] Hesse, 2004, p.9.
[15] Ibid., p.14.
[16] Ignatieff, 2003. p.24.
[17] Ibid., p. 59.

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Family, Race, and Citizenship in Disney's *Lilo and Stitch*

Emily Cheng

Abstract
My paper takes up Disney's 2002 animated film, Lilo and Stitch, in order to address the family, domestic space, and adoption (of the alien monster) in relation to the U.S. multicultural nation. I argue that the portrayal of the film's setting of Hawaii as multicultural paradise comes about both at the level of visual representation and of the narrative of domesticating the monstrous alien, Stitch, so that the alien threat is peacefully incorporated into the cultural pluralism of the nation. In the figure of the alien monster programmed to destroy civilization, the film references histories of anxieties over Asian labor recruitment and immigration to Hawaii and the mainland alien threat to the U.S. Pacific. I particularly focus on the film's representation of Stitch's particular threat to family and civilization as a monstrous other. Stitch's eventual incorporation into the family, and allegorically, into the U.S. nation, as the figure of state authority in the film is both the family's social worker and CIA agent specializing in protecting the U.S. from extra-terrestrial threats. In becoming part of a human family, Stitch goes through a process of becoming a citizen and a proper subject of the law.

Key Words: animated monster, family, multiculturalism, tourism, Hawaii, alien

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Disney's *Lilo and Stitch* begins on the alien planet of Turo, governed by the futuristic society of the Galactic Federation, where an "evil genius" scientist, Jumba Jookiba, has secretly created Experiment 626, a "monstrosity" that is programmed to destroy, in particular to seek out cities to attack. When his existence is revealed, the Galactic Federation orders Experiment 626 to be destroyed and his creator to be imprisoned for life. However, 626 escapes and flees to Earth, where he lands in Hawaii, and his creator is sent to retrieve him. This representation of Stitch as a monstrous alien whose only purpose in life is to wreak havoc is figured as an alien threat to the US nation-state staged in the pacific, and is a threat to civilization itself.

Along with this narrative of the alien threat to the planet and nation, is the story of the family that is formed when 626 is mistakenly adopted as a dog by two indigenous orphaned sisters. Having escaped imprisonment on Turo, 626 is taken in by an animal shelter, as a stray dog, in Hawaii. Now named "Stitch," the alien is adopted by Lilo, and her older sister, Nani, who

have been recently orphaned by the death of their parents in an accident. While Nani originally gets Stitch for Lilo to have a companion, he turns out to be a threat to the family as his destructive ways keep her from getting a job, and he destroys the house itself. Before they get Stitch, the social worker known as Mr. Bubbles, whom "they call when things go wrong," already has threatened to remove Lilo and put her under state care, and Stitch exacerbates the situation.[1] The figure of Mr. Bubbles who represents the state not only as a social worker, but also as a former CIA agent specializing in alien encounters ties family to the state explicitly. Indeed, his command that the two conditions for Nani and Lilo to stay together as a family are that Nani get a job and that Stitch become a "model citizen" links the proper form of family to citizenship and participation in the nation.

This paper addresses the film's portrayal of family and citizenship through this story of the adoption of an alien as a dog. I focus particularly on how the film locates itself in a neoliberal context, in both its production and filmic narrative, in which U.S. claims to being a multicultural nation is projected onto Hawaii as an imagined racial paradise, a process which is embedded in the tourist economy. My reading of this film focuses on the double narrative of domesticating the alien – both in the family and the nation – that also raises the contradictions of Asian immigration and fears of the Asiatic alien threat to the nation, particularly represented as a threat to the Pacific Coasts of the geographic U.S.

I would like to address a few aspects of the film's form of animation, its production, and reception. I am interested in questions of how the animation form might mask dominant narratives, or perhaps defamiliarize such narratives by disrupting the viewer's identification. In looking at reviews, I found that one common way of evaluating the film was in terms of its suitability for both parents and children, in that it teaches important lessons about family and love, while also being witty and fresh enough for adults, linking the family theme and audience. This double billing seems to delineate two overt levels on which the meaning of the text may be read. On the one hand, what makes the film suitable for children is its overriding theme of "ohana," or family, which as Calvin Trager notes, this trope is "too expository" to be missed.[2] Many of these reviews as provide a way to understand the film as a popular cultural text that is a corollary to the national project of building a multicultural citizenry. As several reviewers have pointed out, the film references many popular culture sites, for instance, Steven Spielberg's *E.T.* and Elvis's music as well as the King's legacy of impersonations, however, the list of references extends much further, to include *The Ugly Duckling*, *Frankenstein, Godzilla*, *Men In Black*, *Star Wars*, and *Gremlins*. I also am interesting in the ways in which the film also draws on other dominant narratives of the nation, especially regarding the

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figure of the Asian other and the Asia-Pacific as frontier. Specifically, the setting, content, and production of the film serve to reaffirm Hawaii as a part of the US as a multicultural nation. I read the setting of the film in the liminal US space of Hawaii as pointing to the contested boundaries of the nation in the Pacific as well as referencing lost-standing fears of the alien other of the Asia Pacific that is resolved through a national projection of multiracial paradise.

I would like to elaborate on another aspect of the film repeatedly noted in the reviews, which of the lush setting of Hawaii in which local culture is so well captured in the animation form. The interviews with co-writers and co-directors Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois on the DVD emphasize their desire to properly portray the native Hawaiian culture, in order to show their respect as well as accurately portray it in cartoon form. Such an emphasis suggests the attempts at realism through the animated form that is based on an interest in transmitting "culture" accurately through the film.

A link found on the website of the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) to a review found in about.com's Hawaii/South Pacific for Visitor's travel section suggests the film's relationship to the tourism industry. I would like to turn to this discussion to see the kinds of overt ways in which the film's content, production, and reception seem to serve as media for a transnational tourist industry, but also to set up a discussion of the entwinement of the tourism industry with representations of exoticized culture as well as universal family values. The rhetoric of a "real Hawaii" in the review posits the work of the film as a text complicit in tourism that is directed at and constructs a mainland audience. The review suggests that the animation form and attention to the film's production are two important locations to consider in this function: "it will come as a shock to many that the film that best captures the true spirit of Hawaii and the meaning of 'ohana is an animated motion picture," thus linking the desire to know Hawaiian culture as multicultural difference to both the theme of family and the animation form. Indeed, the review cites Disney's return to the 1940s watercolour, which hadn't been used since Bambi in 1942, as the "best way to re-create the island visually."[2] Going further, the review explicitly connects watching the film and physical travel in its discussion of the production of the film in establishing the producers' dedication to properly portraying Hawaii for the audience, so that the film performs a tourist experience of exploration and getting to know the native. To establish the great lengths to which the film goes in representing Hawaii for the tourist, the review points out the director's research efforts in knowing Hawaii:

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> The production team spent weeks in Hawaii studying the
> geography, buildings, vegetation, and even the way the light
> falls from the sky at different times of the day. They painted
> and photographed houses, businesses, mountains, bridges
> and sea coasts, and incorporated many actual locations into
> the film.[3]

This empirical research thus seems to ensure that the team has done the work
of exploring for the viewer and packaging the "real Hawaii" for consumption.
I suggest that this kind of verisimilitude signals a kind of epistemological
conquest of the other in the Pacific.

In his book *Reimagining the American Pacific*, Rob Wilson
discusses the processes of producing an image of Hawaii as an authentic and
indigenous Pacific space in the transnational tourist economy. As he notes,
the Hawaii Visitors Bureau is the organization that was responsible for
packaging "aloha spirit" as a multicultural self-image of Hawaii designed to
ensure an authentic pacific experience for the tourist. While he situates
Hawaii within a transnational tourist apparatus within the Pacific Rim, I am
particularly interested in Hawaii in relation to a larger U.S. imaginary. What I
find especially interesting for my paper is his articulation of Hawaii's appeal
as not only indigenous, but as gendered: he identifies the "renewed focus on
'the island lifestyle' and the push globally to market Hawaiʻi's special appeal
as a beautiful, multiculturally appealing, and world-class Pacific *woman*"
(italics in original) are copresent.[4] At the same time as Hawaii is gendered, it
is the idea of native spaces that are protected from, or at least resistant to,
capitalism that is packaged for appeal to the tourist.

I suggest, then, that the function of this film in relation to tourism is
both a "vicarious tourism" as well as an enticement for real travel following a
viewing of the film.[5] In fact, the article notes that "not only did the HVCB
sign a $1.7 million deal with Disney to promote Hawaii in conjunction with
the movie," but notes the importance of this deal to "attract children (and
their parents)" in the wake of the losses in tourism dollars after September
11. Here, the film's management of memory and history in the service of
neoliberalist business practices is made clear in its management of national
mourning for profit. Further, if we take the figure of the dog, and U.S. pet
culture in general, as a sign of an emergent neoliberal structure of feeling, in
which the ownership of a dog performs a normalizing function across
difference, then Stitch's adoption by the sisters as a dog significantly locates
the film's narrative and its construction of a national multicultural citizenry.

Within the narrative of the film, visual images serve an instructional
function as well, as Stitch's education about national belonging takes place
through his comprehension of visual culture. For instance, Lilo instructs

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Stitch about being a model citizen through the example of Elvis. Holding up a photograph of Elvis, Lilo tells Stitch: "Elvis Presley was a model citizen. I've compiled a list of his traits for you to practice. Number one is dancing."[6] Here, citizenship is performed through culture, such that national belonging seems to be defined primarily through culture as well. She repeatedly holds up pictures of Elvis when enumerating each point about Elvis. At end of the sequence with this double narrative of Nani looking for job, and Lilo trying to teach Stitch, when he starts attacking people at beach, Nani and Lilo simultaneously sit down, look at their respective papers signifying their assignments - Nani's want ads, Lilo's picture of Elvis, and throw them aside.

I would like to suggest a resonance between the film's instructive function addressed earlier, and this use of visual culture as instructive within the text itself. If Stitch's education about family and national belonging makes use of visual images, which he looks at, then performs, then perhaps this also calls attention to the promotional article's intention that watching the movie can encourage families to actually travel to Hawaii. What I think is important here is not just that this provides insight into the film's inscription into tourist industry, but what this resonance reveals about the kinds of historical amnesia and memories mediated through visual images within the film.

For instance, throughout the film, Lilo takes pictures of tourists (whose overly tropical dress, clueless expressions, and white bodies comically codes them as mainland tourists) and puts them on her wall. While these pictures, which often catch the tourists in typical tourist poses – on the beach, eating ice cream, etc. – appear to be overtly humorous, they also serve to make a relationship of tourism and fascination with other cultures visible, for while tourists go to Hawaii to experience "aloha spirit," the locals find the white mainlanders equally exotic. By positing this relationship of equal exchange, the film seems to elide the unequal political and economic power, and histories of imperialism and violence that mark Hawaii as a U.S. state.

However, by the end of the movie, Lilo's wall collection of photographs of tourists give way to pictures of her family, now made up of Nani, Stitch, and herself, along with the other characters in the film. So, if the double domestic narratives of family and nation are intertwined, this replacement can be read to indicate that both the larger mediation of Hawaii as a U.S. multicultural space and the family are about ways of managing memory. As the family mantra of 'ohana suggests, family is defined through memory: "'ohana means family, and family means no one gets left behind… or forgotten."[7] The series of photographs at the end of the film seem to document the future of the family, by providing new memories in a photo album. The content of these photos also are significant, showing them celebrating U.S. national holidays such as Thanksgiving, and travelling to

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Graceland, former home of the model citizen himself. That they have become tourists to the mainland seems to suggest that flows between Hawaii and the U.S. mainland are commensurate. That a new history of family is being made can be seen in the final image, in which Lilo's picture of her biological family that she has stared at nostalgically in the film has been reconstituted so that a picture of "Stitch" is attached to the corner. Stitch, who earlier has "no memories," according to Jookiba and therefore was all-alone, now has family as demonstrated through the documents of their memories.

I would to turn to the final sequence in which the aliens have captured Stitch to address the relation of the law to family and nation as well. When Stitch interrupts the Grand Councilwoman's speech to ask if he is allowed to say goodbye, he identifies himself as "Stitch," signalling his transformation from being the generic experiment 626 to having a name, as part of a family, in contrast to the opening scene where he was given a chance to speak and insulted them. It is this subjectivity expressed in this act that shows the alien leader that Stitch can no longer be destroyed as a prisoner who transgresses his rights, for he is not longer a monstrous other to the citizen subject.

It is Stitch's identification as a member of a family that I would like to focus on here, for his newfound affective bonds not only redeem him and render him suitable for life on earth, in Hawaii, but this formation of the family is also what transforms the two sisters into a viable family under the law. The non-nuclear family here then suggests the film's message of validating other family forms through the figure of the alien, though what exceeds the director's appeal to family is also the appeal the unity of the homogeneous nation through a the narrative of domesticity. I am particularly interested in how the legality of the family is again tied to a national narrative that categorizes normative subjects under the law. Here I focus on the competing legality of the alien Galactic Federation and the U.S. state that frames the alien law as overly rigid, and human (U.S.) law as morally right. Mr. Bubbles points out this inflexibility when he says that aliens "are all about the law," and Grand Councilwoman laments that their laws are "absolute" and do not allow deviation even when the will of the law would allow for change. In the end it is the Euro-American rule of law grounded in the market that takes primacy. Mr. Bubbles, again representing the state, instructs Lilo to show her title to Stitch she received when she adopted him at the shelter. Her adoption and her claims to him are framed, then, in terms of property rights, such that taking him away is an act of theft. The rules of the market sanctioned by the U.S. state become a justification for the Galactic Federation to submit to the sovereignty of the U.S so that the liberal contract accords with what is morally right, which in this context is leaving the family intact. Stitch's earlier transgression of the alien rules by escaping

confinement then can be figured as an act of freedom from authoritarian law, as a flight from government grounded not in the liberalism and universal humanism, but in rigid non-human rules. Supporting a teleological narrative of the assimilation of the alien then, the film upholds the U.S. as a space of freedom, in which the alien can go from destroying civilization, to become civilized as a member of a family, and of the nation.

By way of conclusion, I would like to return to the final sequence in which Stitch is shown in a series of domestic scenes, ending with the snapshots of the family in Hawaii and on the mainland. What I have tried to suggest in my reading of the film is that it seems to be embedded in a neo-liberal structure of feeling in representing Hawaii's relationship to the larger U.S. nation in terms of tourism and a celebration of indigenous culture, as well as through calling attention to the liberal market as upholding the family and nation, in a sense. However, as in the film as a whole, this ending scene also carries an ambiguity that re-articulates the kind of earlier histories that I argue that the film mediates through its attention to personal and collective memory. So, for instance, when Mr. Bubbles and the Grand Councilwoman recognize each other from the 1973 Roswell event, which Bubbles had investigated for the CIA, they note the ongoing relationship of alien threats to the globe that the U.S. must hide, and manage: the Grand Councilwoman says that "we'll be checking in now and then," to which Bubbles responds, "I was afraid of that."[8] The continued presence of the alien articulated here can be connected to the alien threat performed by Stitch in his earlier destruction of the model of San Francisco. By situating the film a neo-liberal moment, I suggest that it can be read as implicating the kinds of memories it asks us to forget, in the mode of Asiatic threats to the Pacific that marked an earlier moment of U.S. modernity. By setting the film in Hawaii (and the islands almost become a character as the reviews imply), the film seems to suggest the U.S. nation's need to constantly re-inscribe the Pacific as a U.S. site, and to project national multiculturalism. By focusing on Hawaii as a site of cultural difference, which is equally as available to the mainland, as vice versa, then the film further locates Hawaii within a national discourse of difference under multiculturalism. As the domestic narratives of family and nation are intertwined, the closure of the family narrative at the end of the film is also shown to be unstable, in that while both the Nani and Lilo need Stitch to remain a family as much as Stitch depends on family to retain his freedom, Stitch remains alien. His transition in the context of family from object/dog to productive family member, then, signifies the trace of the other in both family and nation. Also included in this ending sequence that shows Stitch as part of the family is Stitch performing the hula onstage beside Lilo, who previously could not do so properly. Taking hula as the primary sign of the indigenous in the film, and according to the DVD material I mentioned

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earlier, then Stitch seems to have achieved the status of model citizen, the traits of which the ability to dance is the first, according the Lilo. Maintaining Stitch's difference within the family also means maintaining difference in the nation, in the form of cultural difference.

Notes

[1] Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois. 2002. *Lilo & Stitch.* 1dvd. (85 min.) videorecording. Buena Vista Home Entertainment.

[2] Calvin Trager, "*Lilo and Stitch* review,"*Box Office Prophets*, 24 June 2002, (10 July 2005). <http://www.boxofficeprophets.com>.

[3] John Fischer, "*Lilo and Stitch* and the spirit of Hawaii," (May 25, 2003), <http://gohawaii.about.com/library/weekly/aa062502a.htm>.

[4] Rob Wilson. *Reimagining the American Pacific*. (Durham, North Carolina: Duke Univeristy Press, 2000), xvi.

[5] Joseph Roach. "The Enchanted island: vicarious tourism in restoration adaptations of *The Tempest*," in *The Tempest and Its Travels*, ed. Peter Hulme and William Sherman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 62.

[6] Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois. 2002. *Lilo & Stitch.* 1dvd. (85 min.) videorecording. Buena Vista Home Entertainment.

[7] *Ibid*.

[8] *Ibid*.

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Feeding Frenzy? Media Sharks Monster *Jaws*

Wendy Bilboe

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Abstract
It's estimated that about 2,000 people die in the world each year from lightning strikes. At the same time, their own pet dogs kill about 20 Australians each year while shark deaths in Australia account for two or three deaths every few years. Despite this, Australians have a morbid fear of sharks. In a country which has adopted European mythic monsters into everyday life and literature and whose indigenous monsters such as the Yowie and Bunyip are viewed as benign and friendly (by non indigenous people), the shark has unrealistically been awarded the mantle of mythic and real monster by journalists. This paper analyses the gradual rise of public fear of sharks, the journalistic "feeding frenzy" over three recent shark attack deaths and postulates that sharks remain for most Australians the last remaining "fear" of conquering our harsh environment –despite the fact that many sharks are on the endangered lists.

Key Words: Death, Australian Government, Olympic Games, Jaws, Imagination, International Shark Attack File, ISAF

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1.   Dicing with Death

Australians, whether coastal or country born, all know that when you enter the water you are dicing with death. As children we are raised on a television staple of sharks on animal and nature documentary programmes, news reports and stories of horrific shark attacks on innocent surfers, (mostly male), advertising for the ultimate thrill of swimming with sharks on adventure tours and a colloquial language full of shark metaphors.[1] More recently, the Australian Government used photographs of sharks and crocodiles to discourage asylum seekers from trying to reach our shores,[2] while a popular State Premier swam with sharks during an election campaign and changed the course of campaigning- the metaphor was not lost on the electorate.[3]

Our fears have also been enhanced by the shark attack from the 1975 classic film *Jaws* ('just when you thought it was safe to go back into the water') and more recently *Open Water* (2003) – a movie loosely based on the true story of two American divers abandoned at sea on the Great Barrier Reef to whatever fate befell them – naturally the relentless, encircling, sharks. And

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while shark attacks are prevalent in other parts of the world, there is some evidence that as a nation, Australians fear "the shark" as no others do. Even in the lead up the successful 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, the organising committee commissioned a risk assessment of the likelihood of a shark attack in Sydney Harbour where the Olympic triathlon and sailing races would be take place, partly due to Australia's reputation for shark attacks.[4] The Sydney Olympic organisers later hired six divers on underwater scooters and wearing shark-pods that emitted a low-frequency electrical pulse to keep the triathletes' swimming course in the harbour free of sharks, even though nobody had been killed there for nearly 40 years.[5]

2.   Cementing the Monstrous in the Imagination

From the 1930s to the 1960s, shark attack stories were a staple of Australian newspapers when television realised their viewing potential.[6] During this time, beaches were netted to ward off attacks since sharks were enemy number one. In recent years, dread of sharks and their monstrousness has again risen sharply in the nation's psyche, following several fatal attacks and the regular dredging up of famous shark attack stories, such as the Shark Arm Case of 1935.[7] The Shark Arm case remains a strong element in the maintenance of the "monstrous" in the national memory and as such is a worthy example of that link, and also of a comparison between the sacred and the profane that shark stories elicit.

In three weeks of February and March 1935, three young men were taken by sharks from NSW beaches, on Australia's eastern seaboard. In April, fishermen in Sydney dragged a 3.5 metre 'monster' tiger shark to an aquarium for display. Crowds flocked to see the man-eating monster and it didn't disappoint. On what was then considered to be the most sacred public holiday in Australia, Anzac Day, the agitated and restless animal disgorged, to the horror of the public, the remains of rats, birds, other sharks and a human arm, sawn off from the elbow. The arm featured a tattoo of two boxers, shaping up each other. A four-foot length of rope was attached to the wrist, so foul play was suspected and not by the shark. The arm was later identified and the case made legal history.

A 1963 book on the case was published, after being serialised in newspapers, and the author Vince Kelly noted that it was the first Australian crime to be internationally known. As Sanders points out the 'Shark Arm Case' placed Australia on the map as a 'mystery place', where strange coincidental events occur.[8] The shark arm case cemented the notion of monstrous because the arm's owner was revealed to have been a petty crook, on the edges of the underworld and involved in illegal gambling and SP bookmaking that was rife throughout Sydney at that time.

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Several other cases, widely reported, added to the general fear of sharks and to the development of a worldwide perception of a wild and untamed Australia. In 1963, a 24-year-old actress, Marcia Hathaway was attacked in Sydney Harbour while wading in very shallow water, just off a beach. In describing the woman as a "glamorous young starlet", the *Sydney Morning Herald* identified her as a good Christian woman.[9] She had starred as a nurse in a 1961 movie, Shadow of the Boomerang, a Christian Western, designed to show the role played by the Billy Graham crusade in the lives of individuals. Her rescue was far from straight forward. An ambulance rushed to the rescue but had to be pushed up a steep hill because of mechanical problems and journalists were able to capture the events firsthand, weaving into the narrative the notion of the monster as against God's natural order and profane as opposed to the sacredness of Christianity. It was this attack which in part prompted the SOCOG assessment.[10]

There are two other similar non-fatal cases, which are worthy of consideration in the way sharks are portrayed. In March 1966, at the peak of shark hysteria, a severe shark attack occurred at a beach south of Sydney in when a Blue Pointer shark mauled the legs of a 13-year-old boy. Lifesavers broke the shark's grip and carried the boy ashore and he was taken to nearby Coledale hospital. They killed the shark. After many months in hospital the boy later recovered. This attack generated much publicity and was considered so significant that it appears in history of the township.[11]

A similar case occurred in February 2004, near the NSW mid-coast city of Newcastle when 22-year-old man snorkelling on a reef off Caves Beach, south of Newcastle was attacked by a small, 60-centimetre wobbegong, or carpet shark. He grabbed hold of it with both hands to stop it shaking and swam 300 metres to shore. A couple of people tried to help him but could not remove it, so he walked to his car and drove to a local surf club to get help, with the shark still attached to his leg. Under the supervision of senior lifeguard three men took hold of the shark and attempted to flush its gills with fresh water to make it loosen its grip on his leg. With blood oozing from 70 needle-like punctures in his leg, the man then drove to the nearest hospital, taking the dead shark with him. A website report on the incident noted that Wobbegong sharks "have a reputation of being moody and short-tempered."[12] As with most of the attacks, this quirky case was reported widely overseas.[13]

There is no doubt that such attacks are newsworthy and in the history of Australian shark attacks, journalists often have had many fascinating facts to play with to highlight the stories, each of them adding to the cultural and literary myth of the monstrousness of the shark. Fiction writing could rarely be more creative, informative and fascinating and more horrifying. For instance, in 1993, within two days, a man was killed on his honeymoon and a mother of five, including six-year-old quadruplets, was

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taken while diving near a seal colony off the southern state of Tasmania.[14] A media frenzy surrounded these two stories and the death of the mother provoked some public outrage over the graphic details of her death. In this respect, shark attack stories then provide a regular topping up of the "horror' genre and its concomitant concept of monstrosity.

3.   The role of journalists

As McNair has pointed out journalism is a privileged cultural form and is the main source of our knowledge about the world and our place in it, and the point at which the individual and the social worlds meet.[15] John Fiske argues that journalism can affect what he calls the 'structure of feeling' about a society in that journalism both reflects and affects deeply rooted structures of feeling about issues.[16] He notes that the dangers or problems exposed by news coverage turn out to have far less statistical significance than the quantity or quality of their coverage would suggest. In their daily work journalists may consider they are reflecting black and white facts but they are also contributing to the continuum of literature and adding to the social discourse with their audience. As Manoff and Schudson argue: "Journalism, like any other story-telling activity, is a form of fiction, operating out of its own conventions and understandings."[17] Media critic John Hartley puts it more directly: "News is characterized by image, symbol, story telling, fiction, fantasy, propaganda, and myth — all the baggage of textuality and culture which is traditionally dismissed by journalists."[18]

In the past 18 months, there appears to have been another upsurge in the number of fatal shark attacks in Australian waters and they have, predictably, provided good fare for journalists, with horror and monster appearing in the headlines and stories. Most of the attacks have also been widely reported overseas. The resurgence of shark fears began in March of 2004 by a visit by United States' teenager, Bethany Hamilton, who lost her arm in a shark attack in Hawaii. Bethany visited Australia for a two-week vacation, setting the scene for intense media coverage. Her experience of surviving a shark attack had several added journalistic features: she was female, (most victims are male), vivacious and attractive and she was attacked on Halloween, a night when ghosties, goblins and monsters come out. Bethany was interviewed on radio and television. The *Age* newspaper reported prospective book and movie deals were in the offing.[19]   In April this year, she even featured on the cover of the conservative Australia *Readers' Digest* with her story being the main reading feature.[20]

Her visit was followed by a series of fatal shark attacks later that year. In July 2004, in Western Australia a 29-year-old surfer was attacked and killed and in March 21 this year, a shark killed a charter boat skipper of the West Australian coast while he was snorkelling on the maiden voyage of a vacation vessel. In both cases, graphic descriptions of the deaths occurred

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and the shark was identified in a criminal context, such as a quote from the dead man's father who said: "…will that shark commit another offence here or somewhere else?"[21] and a story announcing a "shoot to kill" policy was in force.[22]

In reporting the July 2004 fatality, *Times Online* reported: "the shark, described by witnesses as 'the size of a car', is thought to have been a great white, the species depicted in Steven Spielberg's film *Jaws* as a bloodthirsty, man-eating monster of the deep"[23] while CBS news.com provided the juicy details that in this year's attack "the 26-year-old man was bitten in half by the 20 foot animal and death seemed to be instantaneous."[24]

In December 2004, an 18-year-old man was killed by a shark off South Australia. Although the Murdoch tabloid the *Daily Telegraph* is not widely circulated in South Australia, it is widely read in the eastern state of NSW. The paper covered the attack on Page One on successive days. On the second day, the front page of Saturday, 18 December headlined "KILLER SHARK" and was followed by the sub-head "Face-to-face with the monster that took Nick Peterson." [25]

This story, with photograph, began; "This is the monster shark which is believed to have killed Adelaide teenager Nick Peterson. It returned to the scene yesterday as the South Australian Government gave the green light to have the predator destroyed."[26] The paper then devoted another two pages to the story. This particular story is instructive because its language restates the monstrous literally and figuratively, and employs the deliberate use of anthropomorphism to make an emotional appeal to the senses. The phrase "it returned to the scene" naturally reads, "it returned to the scene of the crime".

In the reporting of these stories, there are often comments from family members and scientists, pleading for mercy for the sharks, which are often tracked and killed.[27] But in the three cases cited, the newspapers also ran editorials and journalist's by-line pieces, calling for the sharks to be killed. In several cases, newspapers have also opened up telephone polls and editorial pages to the audience for comments. However, the reporting rarely is followed up by stories about the actual realities of being attacked and the decline in shark numbers, some species of which are now on the endangered list. Instead, journalists tend to ignore the reality in favour of the myth of the monster. In some cases, where they acknowledge the decline of shark numbers, bristling zeal against the predators and the need to defend human encroachment of the sea is evident. In the case of the July 2004 death of international surfer Adrian Smith, the *West Australian* carried a banner head over a double page spread which read: "The shark has a younger, small one with him and he's training it to kill people."[28]

Even overseas shark attacks are commonly reported, sometimes without context. For instance, the usually conservative *Canberra Times*

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printed a colour photograph of a white pointer shark breaching the water in its International section on November 2004 with the following block line: "South African woman Tyna Webb still missing, presumed dead, after being attacked on Monday by a white shark, like this, seen breaching the waters of Taksa Bay, Cape Town.[29]

So, in this case, the beautiful photograph of a magnificent shark jumping out of the water was not actually the shark responsible for Ms Webb's death and as such had no real bearing on the topic. One could be forgiven for thinking that this was a gratuitous shot from a picture library used to attract attention to a page, otherwise devoid of interesting news.

4.   The Reality
The fear of being eaten alive by a huge shadow with razor-sharp teeth is probably deeply rooted in most humans and it is known that vivid images associated with 'high dread risks' can have a stronger influence on our perceptions than even the most convincing statistics. And thus it is with the case of sharks.

The International Shark Attack File (ISAF) at the Florida Museum of Natural History maintains world records of shark attacks.[30] According to their records, seven fatalities occurred around the world in 2004, a total similar to the four in 2003, three in 2002 and four in 2001, but lower than the 11 fatalities recorded in 2000. Two fatalities occurred in Australia and single deaths were reported from Brazil, California, Egypt, Hawaii, and South Africa. The number of serious attacks in 2000-2004, as measured by fatality rate (8.9%), has been lower than that of the decade of the 1990's (12.7%), continuing a century-long trend reflective of advances in beach safety practices and medical treatment, and increased public awareness of avoiding potentially dangerous situations.

As in recent years, the majority (44%: 27 attacks) of incidents occurred in North American waters where there were 30 attacks in United States territorial waters (including Hawaii) compared to 12 in Australia. These figures were significantly fewer than totals recorded in 2003 (41), 2002 (47), 2001 (50), and 2000 (50).) Brazil recorded (5), South Africa (5), and Reunion Island (3), with single incidents reported from the Bahamas, Cuba, Egypt, Fiji, New Zealand, and Venezuela. Shark populations, by contrast, actually are declining at a serious rate or are holding at greatly reduced levels in many areas of the world due to over-fishing and habitat loss.

The Sydney Olympic Organising Committee's risk assessment also concluded the likelihood of an attack on competitors was virtually nil but the fact that a risk assessment was undertaken indicates the inherent fear and reputation of sharks.[31] The report noted that since the first attack was recorded 1791 in the 208 years up to and including 1999, a total of 94 shark

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incidents have been recorded in the greater Sydney area. Of these, 75 unprovoked shark attacks resulting in injury or death to the victim occurred. The others include 11 cases of provoked attacks that were excluded from consideration, and eight incidents involving a kayak or similar type of craft and/or no injury to the individual .Of the 83 attacks, 41 were fatal. Overall, the report fund that since the last fatality in the Sydney area in 1963, there had been only 10 shark attacks in the entire Sydney region, an average of about 3 per decade.[32]

Despite this, there appears to be an unreasonable but definite fear that shark attacks are growing, primarily because of enthusiastic journalistic reporting. Australian environmental academic Clyde Wilde has been researching Australian's fear of sharks and the risk sharks pose. To date, Wilde has surveyed 500 people. Wilde says the risk of being killed by a shark is extremely low yet the fear of attack leads to management programs which contribute to declining shark populations and damage to ecosystems Although his work is not finalised, Wilde notes that Australians have more chance of being killed by their own pet dog than by being taken by a shark. His early findings reveal that the fear of shark attack is out of all proportion to the reality of the situation.[33]

According to Wilde, about 2000 people die in the world each year from lightning strikes, around 20 Australians are killed by their own pet dogs, 12 people in Queensland (a northern state) each year from rolling tractor accidents, and there are no risk factors you can identify that are as low as shark deaths.[34] The Taronga and Western Plains Zoos' Australian Shark Attack file website, provides further perspective on shark attacks in relation to other water related activities.[35] It reveals that in 1995 (last date provided), there were 441 accidental drownings and submersions, from surfing, swimming, scuba diving, snorkelling and rock fishing, of which 68 were fatal, fatality rates way above that of sharks.

5.   Why the Shark?
A. The Absence of Fear

Australia is not unique in terms of shark attacks. Sharks are distributed worldwide yet there does not appear to be the same nationally-invested fear of sharks elsewhere. In a country renowned for its wild outback, and which also has crocodiles and a host of poisonous snakes and spiders, the shark remains the prime constant and embodiment of monstrousness.

Part of the reason must lie in the reportability of such attacks. They make for great reading, akin to reading a dramatic horror novel. Journalists instinctively feel the epic potential of such stories, albeit reduced to journalistic form. In many cases, the actual facts of the cases make for a naturally exciting plot, full of pathos, personalities and dialogue. There are always witnesses. They are stories as intense as any horror fiction. They

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present a character or a perspective which offer readers a modicum of identification - which gives us entry into a fictional world and offers vicarious risk. We are allowed to imagine being in situations we could probably encounter, however remote, and the reporting confirms our deep, dark fears running through the social and cultural narrative. But unlike fiction, shark attacks are fact: they are based on real activity and are reported so regularly as to maintain a heightened sensitivity. By contrast, crocodile attacks are less well reported and there geographic limits to northern Australia contribute to this.

Like novels, popular readings about real monsters, such as sharks, provide a pleasure-pain and fear in real time. In an essay "On The Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror," published in 1775, John Aiken and Anna Aiken questioned the pleasure readers gained from the Gothic Novel:

> But the apparent delight with which we dwell upon objects of pure terror, where our moral feelings are not in the least concerned, and no passion seems to be excited but the depressing one of fear, is a paradox of the heart much more difficult of solution.[36]

Aiken and Barbauld may have been puzzled but they rightly understood, their "paradox of the heart" is very real, the fear and the pleasure practice or pretend mastery of some fears characterises the nature of the reality of the monster in sharks: an absolute physical embodiment of the monster. Sharks as a singular entity represent the embodiment of monsters generally – fear, anxiety and fantasy. As Cohen stated the "monster is born only at a metaphoric crossroads, as an embodiment of a certain cultural moment …and the monster's body literally incorporates fear, desire, anxiety and fantasy…."[37]

Cohen also recognised that the monster simultaneously attracts and repulses. " We distrust and loathe the monster at the same time we envy its freedom, and perhaps its sublime despair",[38] O'Neill extends the notion of monstrous by adding "monsters, still serve as the ultimate incorporation of our anxieties, about history, about identify about our very humanity."[39]

But other readings may be possible in the Australian context. I suggest there are two other reasons why the shark is considered to be the most fearsome monster Australians face. Sharks represent a link to the ancient past of nature and to the necessity for humans to conquer their environment. They are culturally bound to traditional 'monsters of the deep' but I believe that the absence of fear and monsters from our national literary history and culture creates the need for our own form of fear.

And despite being known as a wild continent with its great outback and sandy deserts, the reality for most Australians is a suburban block in a

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city. Australia is one of the world's most urbanised countries, with about 70 per cent of the population living in the 10 largest cities. And most of the population is concentrated along the eastern seaboard and the south-eastern corner of the continent. The sea, in some form, represents the summer experience for most city dwellers and naturally, as the population grows, so too, do the numbers of people swimming and enjoying water sports.

As a nation of largely imported culture, Australia was founded by white Anglo-Saxons, coming from the then first world. Australia's lifestyle reflects its mainly Western origins, but Australia is also a multicultural society which has been enriched by nearly five million settlers from almost 200 nations. As a nation, we are engaged with the myths and magic of European history, vampires, ghosts and other literary monsters, but as a nation we actually lack our own form of monstrosity.

Indigenous Australians, by contrast, have a well-founded knowledge and belief system of monsters, including the Yowie and the Bunyip. The Aborigines Dreamtime stories of creation were full of fantastic and magical beasts. In Dreamtime, the Bunyip was a spirit, which inhabited river, lakes, swamps, and billabongs (former parts of rivers that were left behind when the course of the river was altered). Like other beasts in Dreamtime, the Bunyip was malevolent towards human beings. The Bunyip would defend its watery home from all who invaded it, normally devouring the invader. At night the Bunyip was said to go and prey upon women and children. Because the Bunyip was such a threat to the Aborigines of the time whenever its terrifying bellowing cry was heard Aborigines steered clear of any water sources.

The Yowie is said to be a giant beast, resembling a cross between a lizard and an ant. It appears to be similar to the American Big Foot or Himalayan Yeti. It emerges from the ground at night to eat whatever it can find - even humans. It is sometimes considered to be the same legend as the Bunyip.

Indigenous Australians show respect for their Dreamtime. Non-indigenous Australians, on the other hand, have viewed these Dreamtime creatures as furry and fun-loving. The Bunyip has been a prominent figure in the history of Australian children's book illustration and is mostly depicted as being cute although not pretty and in a light and humorous style.[40] The multinational drink and confectionary maker Cadbury Schweppes also has created a number of children's lines featuring animals, including Australia's long time favourites *Freddo Frog* and *Caramello Koala.* In 1997, Cadbury launched the *Yowie,* a product which has won the 1998 Best Global Grocery Product in the World and dominates sales in Australia. The chocolate *Yowies* called Squish, Boof, and Nap are moulded chocolate foiled characters which contain a capsule holding a token and a creature from the Australian Bush,

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explaining the rarity value, existence and habitat. The design is similar to the European Kinder Surprise.[41]

B. The emergent and primary Australian Identity

From the earliest days of white settlement in Australia the myth of the Australian outback has been perpetuated in the writings of our poets, and exploited in the speeches of our politicians, and in our popular culture and our international travel advertising.[42] We grow up with a romantic view of the bush, learning bush ballads and believing that we are intricately linked to the outback. Both the region and its people are portrayed as larger than life. The outback in all its beauty has had almost spiritual significance to many Australians, (despite the reality of our coastal existence) but this too, is a myth. Author Robert Drewe has recognised the dichotomy and considers that what he terms the "myth of the landscape" has been faltering for two or three generations.

As he says:

> Like it or not, the coast has successfully captured the spiritual consciousness of contemporary Australia. The myth of landscape also divides into two opposing myths: the Beach or the Bush, or as I like to think of it, the Shark versus the Dingo.[43]

Drewe's proposition has a resonance. If Australia is the landscape of the coast, then the shark represents the remnant fear of conquering our environment. We have learnt to accept drought, flood and fire and most of our native animals are cute, furry and harmless. Those, which are more dangerous, such as the spiders, crocodiles and snakes, hover well below our imaginations and rarely spill over to the news reports.[44] The shark is the one recurrent monster and fear with which urbanised Australians must deal with. We have created a need for our own national monster and we need to experience the fear because as city dwellers, we have so few natural environmental fears. Sharks remind us that life at the beach is not always easy and the monster regular arrives, stands at the threshold and always escapes. As Cohen says:

> They (the monster) always return, they ask us how we perceive the world. They ask us to revaluate our cultural assumptions – not only about gender, race, but the environment.[45]

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Notes

[1] They range from 'loan shark' to the more arcane; 'Wouldn't shout in a shark attack' – meaning, will not take a turn buying drinks in a bar, (taking turns is known as a shout). Expatriate golfer Greg Norman is also known as the 'Great White Shark'.

[2] Megan Saunders, "Horror footage of snakes, sharks and crocodiles designed to deter boat people," Age, 17 June 2000, p. 1,

[3] Wanna and Arklay, "Playing Smart Politics with a Divided Opposition," Australian Journal of Politics and History 47-4, (2001): 552-560

[4] Australian Museum Business Services, Likelihood of Shark Attack in Sydney Harbour During the Sept 2000 Olympic Games, SOCOG, June 1999.

[5] NSW Legislative Assembly Hansard, 28/11/200, Shark Attacks, page 10988

[6] Noel Sanders, "Crimes of Passion: TV, popular literature and the Graeme Thorne kidnapping, 1960," Australian Journal of Cultural Studies Vol 1, No 1 (May 1983): 56-70

[7] V. Kelly. The Shark Arm Case, (Horovitz, 1963). A film was also made of the case. See also A. Sharpe, The Shark Arm Case in Australian Crimes, (Ure-Smith, 1979) and Alex Castles, The Shark Arm Murders (Wakefield Press, 1995, reprinted 2003). The most recent television resurrection of the Shark Arm Case was broadcast on the national broadcaster (ABC) Dimensions program Monday 29 April 2002 – television program,

[8] Sanders, 60

[9] "Shark Victim was "Deeply Religious Girl," Sydney Morning Herald, 29 January, 1963, p. 1.

[10] Australian Museum Business Services, Likelihood of Shark Attack in Sydney Harbour During the Sept 2000 Olympic Games
SOCOG, June 1999, p. 1.

[11] www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/ library/localinfo/coledale/history.html and Barnes, G W. "History of Coledale" <http://www.coledalep.schools.nsw.edu.au/History/history.html accessed 17/10/2003>

[12] Thursday, February 12, 2004, Shark Attacks, <http://www.amazingaustralia.com.au/animals/shark_attacks.htm>

[13] Snorkeller's ordeal after shark attack, 12 February 2004, <http://www.travelbiz.com.au/articles/e2/0c01d9e2.asp>

[14] John Ford, 31, off Byron Bay and Therese Cartwright, 34, off Tasmania.

[15] Brian McNair, The Sociology of Journalism (London: Hodder Arnold, 1998), 15.

[16] John Fisk, Media Matters. Minneapolis :(University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 51

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[17] Manoff and Schudson, Reading the News. New York, Pantheon, 1986), 6

[18] John Hartley, Popular Reality: Journalism, Modernity, Popular Culture, (London: Arnold, 1996), 83.

[19] < http:.www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/03/08/10785942981.html >

[20] "Out of the Blue, I had no warning", Australian Reader's Digest, April 2005.

[21] No sign of sharks as hunt ends, The West Australian, 13 July 2004, P. 4

[22] Order to shoot them goes out, P. 6.

[23] Victim's brother seeks mercy for shark, 13 July 2004 (23 March 2005), <htttp://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,, 3-1177479,00.html>

[24] Shark Horror in Australia, 20 March 2005, (23 March 2005) <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/03/20/tech/main681797/shtml>

[25] Steve Gee, "Killer Shark", The Daily Telegraph, 18 December 2004, p. 1,

[26] ibid

[27] Eloise Dortch, "Spare the attacker, says dead mans' brother", West Australian, 12 July 2004, P. 7.

[28] The West Australian, 13 July 2004, P 14-14.

[29] Canberra Times, 17 November 2004, p 12.

[30] Florida Museum of Natural History (24 March 2005) <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/fish/sharks/attacks/perspect.htm>

[31] Australian Business Services, p. 1.

[32] ibid, p.8

[33] Clyde Wilde, Head of School of Environmental and Applied Sciences Griffith University Gold Coast Campus, personal communication, 20 and 23 March 2005

[34] ibid

[35]Australian Shark Attack File, (11 January 2005) <http://www.zoo.nsw.gov.au/content/views.asp?id=235>

[36] Aiken, John and Anna Laetitia Barbauld. "On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror," Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose. 2d ed., 119-27. (London, 1775), p. 120

[37]Jeffrey Cohen (ed.), "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)" in Monster Theory: Reading Culture, (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996), 4.

[38]ibid

[39]p cit, p.xii

[40] The first illustrated Bunyip for children appeared in 1871, in the book Old Bunyip by J.R. Lockeyer, one of the first children's books to be published in Australia.

[41] Cadbury Schweppes YOWIE, (12 February 2005) <http://www.superbrands-brands.com/volII/brand_cadbury.htm>

[42] Melinda Hinkson, "Rebranding Australia – in a different light?" Arena Journal 22 (2004): 37-43

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[43] Robert Drewe, "The beach or the bush? Or the shark vs the dingo" [Paper presented at the Coast to Coast Conference (1994: Hobart).]", Island .60/61 (1994): 4-6, see also <http://search.informit.com.au/fullText;dn=950504171;res=APAFT>, (27 March 2005)
[44] Since 1985, there has been 11 fatal crocodile attacks recorded across Northern Australia and in 10 of these cases, human remains have been recovered. (27 March 2004) (27 March 2005) <http://www.abc.net.au/tropic/stories/s1074405.htm>
[45] Cohen, p. 20.

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PART III

Media Monsters

'Monstrous Mothers' and the Media

Nicola Goc

Abstract

Mothers have been receiving bad press since that mythological 'monstrous mother', Medea, killed her children. The "Cruel Mother" motif has been a recurrent representation in plays, ballads, poems and novels for centuries and continues to survive in the 'monstrous mother' motif of contemporary media infanticide and child abuse discourses. The demonising of mothers has reached an apex in media discourses of recent years positioning mothers - Kathleen Folbigg, Sally Clarke, Angela Cannings, Andrea Yates and Donna Anthony - as "Monstrous Mothers". Contemporary media discourse places the deviant mother within news texts as wicked and cruel, the antithesis of motherhood. Through the individualising of deviance within the 'monstrous mother' paradigm the media audience, and society, is absolved of responsibility through the actions of the individual. Using contemporary media texts I will examine the role the media plays in creating the social space in which motherhood continues to be constrained within a patriarchal ideology where women as mothers continue to be categorised, idealised and demonised and where deviant mothers are understood as 'monstrous'.

Key Words: Infanticide, celebrity culture, motherhood, media discourses, master narrative, dominant ideology, representation

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1.   Celebrity Mothers

In any given week tabloid stories on celebrity mothers abound. Maternity is the new must have; must do, for the female celebrity – in contemporary parlance motherhood is 'wicked'.

In the week of April 25 *Woman's Day* and *Who* magazines both ran front-page features on Britney Spear's pregnancy. *Who* displaying a bikini-clad Spears with the heading "I'm pregnant!" followed by a four-page spread of scantily-clad Spears relaxing on a Florida beach with friends under the oversized heading: She's having a *baby*![1]

According to the tabloid Spears has been transformed from "mean and lean' to "soft and sensual". Turn to the next double-page spread and you have the "baby clues": "The hair, the clothes, the, um, expanding body of evidence" and the cravings – chilli con carne, baked potatoes and burgers.

And then of course the obligatory drama – celebrities can't have straightforward pregnancies or births. *Woman's Day,* under "Pregnant Britney's hospital dash" told its readers:

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The star spent two nights fearing for the life of her unborn baby in a leading Florida clinic after experiencing stomach cramps and severe bleeding."
"She was in a terrible amount of distress and her husband was at her side," an 'insider' said. "Kevin, 26, and a group of bodyguards were later seen pacing outside the medical facility fearing the worst. But on Sunday the young singer was given the all clear and Kevin took her home.[2]

Celebrity motherhood copy is not just the realm of tabloid magazines, now mainstream news discourses are occupied with celebrity motherhood stories beside serious news discourse. The London *Times*, the *Guardian*, the *Observer*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, all ran the story of Spear's pregnancy as a hard news story. The *Houston Chronicle*'s headline said it all:

"Britney prepares for motherhood – and we can't take our eyes off her" Our little Mouseketeer is all grown up now and ready to start a nest of her own. On Tuesday, Britney Spears confirmed what so many of the tabloids and celebrity-obsessed Web sites had mused: the pop star is pregnant with her first child. The pregnancy is just the latest headline for Spears, who in the past 16 months had married and divorced a childhood friend, wed dancer Kevin Federline, gotten a new dog, and welcomed a new stepson. We wonder what Madonna, the queen mum of music, would think of her bussing buddy's launch into motherhood. Madonna was 38 when she gave birth to her first child, Lourdes. Spears is 23. At this rate, Spears could be a grandmother by 40.[3]

Thirty years have passed since Helen Reddy empowered women with her "I am Woman … I am invincible". Now we have Britney's celebrity motherhood status appropriating the public news agenda as she sings:

My loneliness is killing me
I must confess I still believe
When I'm not with you I lose my mind
Give me a sign
Hit me baby one more time.

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Woman's Day continues with the celebrity motherhood trope with a front-page photograph of Nicole Kidman wearing a high-waisted Givenchy dress, that sparks pregnancy speculation that:

> she may already be pregnant with the baby she so desperately wants. While the star continues to deny she is expecting she has gained some new curves, and even admitted to wearing maternity clothes. And, like a little girl struggling to keep a big secret, she's been blurting out increasingly personal details about her longing to have a baby and her past struggle with miscarriage.[4]

Kidman reportedly said, "I've hormones running through my system as I sit wriggling on my chair".

The issue here is not the sagacity, the truth, of these tabloid magazine texts, but the fact that they appropriate public discourse in such a way that news outlets, driven by the profit imperative, now feel compelled to enter into this vacuous motherhood discourse. This is in part due to the cross promotion concomitant with cross-media ownership – a subversive way of promoting your tabloid magazines through elevating their 'soft' stories into the realm of serious 'hard' news texts.

In the same week the tabloid magazines brought us Nicole and Britney under the rubric of celebrity mothers, *the* iconic symbol of modern motherhood, Demi Moore, came under the tabloid radar at the other end of the motherhood spectrum, - as a BAD mother. Moore, created the idealised icon of motherhood in 1991 when, heavily pregnant to Hollywood action man Bruce Willis, she appeared nude on the front cover of *Vanity Fair.*

This iconic image is credited with starting the media obsession with celebrity motherhood, and the new sexualization of the pregnant woman. Fourteen years on and the icon of modern maternity is now the monstrous maternal. In a glossy paparazzi spread the headlines admonished: "Demi – pregnant and smoking?"

> Demi Moore's cigarette habit has landed her in hot water as she's caught on camera smoking while thought to be 11 weeks pregnant. These snaps of the star puffing away led one US magazine to exclaim, "Demi, you should be ashamed!"[5]

Keep turning the pages and you come to a full-page advertisement for face cream with the tag: "Now you don't have to be expecting to have that radiant glow everyday"[6].

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   If pregnancy is the new beauty product, then why not pregnancy as the ultimate TV reality game show? According to Endemol, the makers of Big Brother, the next reality TV programme will be Make Me A Mum. In July last year the producers launched the concept of a new show that would see 1,000 men vie for the chance to father a child. "Make Me A Mum will whittle down the candidates until two hopefuls are selected to compete against each other," press reports said

> The childless woman will choose the man she believes makes the best father – judged on sex appeal, personality, wealth and fitness. A second man will be picked on the basis of genetic compatibility and sperm quality.[7]

   The proposal is to screen a "sperm race" using new technology, which would allow viewers to see which of the two finalists' sperm reaches the woman's egg first.

   And if pregnancy is the new reality TV game show and the new beauty product, then childbirth is the new art form. A recent global news story "Performance The Art of Birth" told of Berlin artist Winfried Witt inviting 30 people to witness the birth of his child in the DNA-Galerie, claiming:

> "It's a gift to humanity, a once a lifetime thing," Witt said. He and fellow artist and partner Ramune Gele wanted to challenge artistic norms, gallery owner Joann Novak told Germany's *Bild* newspaper. The gallery, known for its installations and video art, would closed during the birth, invited guests would be summonsed as soon as Gele's contractions became regular. "The private aspect will be maintained," Noval said. Reuters reported another gallery owner in the street as saying" "I find it mad."[8]

   An AFP story quoted the artist as saying: The spectators, who registered for the exhibition via the Internet, will participate in "an exceptional experience,"

> "Man, because he is unique, is an existential object of art." Witt wants to "show living people, perceived at the same time as object and subject through a kind of magnifying glass and to expose man in the situations of his personal life."[9]

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While "man, because he is unique" may be "an existential object of art", pregnant woman, in the form of Ramune Gele, remains mute. As the "existential object" of this living art she does not need a persona beyond that of a pregnant human. Gele is in fact the perfect parturient woman, silent and submissive, captured for the voyeur's gaze in the throws of childbirth as an artistic fetish. Through the female form Witt projects himself as the winner of the ultimate sperm race. The birth was due to take place this week.

Motherhood as living art and prime time TV may be the extreme, but the idealisation of motherhood through the representation of celebrity mothers in tabloid news and magazines is now accepted unquestioningly as the crucial ingredients of a daily media diet.

Post delivery, a glamorous, fur-draped, scarlet-lipped and sultry Jerry Hall was featured on the front page of *Vanity Fair* in 1999 offering her infant son a full pendulous breast. This provocative image caused a divisive debate about mothers breastfeeding in the public, a debate which still holds news currency today. Last August *Washington Post* columnist, Roxanne Roberts, wrote a column "Do Me a Favor, Keep a Lid on Your Double Latte" in which she claimed her right to a peaceful cup of coffee was being undermined by women breastfeeding in Starbucks[10]. Her attack was on one particular mother, Lorig Charkoudian, "a Silver Spring woman who not only wants to breast-feed her daughter at Starbucks whenever she likes but expects me to avert my eyes or leave if I don't share her enthusiasm for double breast milk latte".

It's not enough that a new Maryland law supports her right
to lactate in public – no, she wants Starbucks to issue a
nationwide corporate policy supporting her position.
Speaking for the school of not letting it all hang out, let me
say: Don't. Please, please please. Just don't.

The demonising of women who breastfed in public – branded by Roxanne Roberts "Breast Nazis" is a core concept of society's expectation that motherhood is sacred. Women who openly breastfeed in public push us to acknowledge that breast-feeding is simultaneously sacred and sexual, thus creating an anxiety in Western culture which continues to inform debates about motherhood.

On the one hand the new mother is vilified for breastfeeding her baby in Starbucks and on the other hand she is pressured to "get back" her pre-pregnancy figure, to make herself sexually attractive, or run the risk of being vilified as fat and frumpy. Celebrity mothers, as personified by the gorgeous Liz Hurley, who the tabloid magazines tell us, lost all of the 24 kilos she gained during her pregnancy within ten weeks, create an ideal

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which the average woman - without the personal trainer, the nanny and the
villa in Gibraltar - can ever live up to.
Journalist Dominique Jackson posed in a recent article:

> While it is clear that glamour, social life and career do not
> have to be casualties of motherhood, what of the downside
> of the celebrity approach? The women who can't live up to
> the expectations? What if you don't feel like exercising a
> week after giving birth? What if you can't re-emerge, Liz-
> Hurley-like, more gorgeous than ever?[11]

Psychologist Helen Skouteris (lecturer in the School of
Psychological Sciences at La Trobe University, Australia) who is researching
the impact of body image on post-natal depression thinks celebrities can be
both damaging and reassuring.

> On the one hand, the models in the media make it look like
> you can regain this amazing figure weeks after having a
> baby; on the other hand, even famous, wealthy women,
> when they have babies, have fluid retention and
> stretchmarks.

What effect does the marketing of pregnancy as sexy, and of babies
as the latest must-have fashion accessory has on public opinion? How does
the formation of public opinion on the status of motherhood play out in the
general community?
I contend that the distorted representation of motherhood – from the
idealised Madonna to the evil Medea - does influence the way society
conceptualises motherhood. The publicity attendant with celebrity fame puts
celebrity women under the unrelenting scrutiny of the media gaze, as we
have seen with the transformation of Demi Moore from perinatal sex goddess
to deviant mother, but it also presents an often-unattainable ideal for the
majority of mothers.

2.   Sporting Mothers
Successful sportswomen, of child-bearing age regularly find
themselves as news copy, not for their sporting achievements, but because of
their maternal status – athleticism and motherhood, like sexuality and
breastfeeding, are an uncomfortable mix and the dominant media ideology
projects the female athlete who is a mother as within thee 'sporting mum'
rubric. When Australian diver Chantelle Newbery won gold at last year's
Olympic games she was immediately projected out of the sporting shadows

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into the media spotlight as "Gold medal mum Chantelle Newbery" thus foregoing Ian Thorpe's   sponsorship dollars, fast cars and luxury boats… and in the moment of her greatest sporting achievement Olympic Gold – she became the subject of media speculation as to whether this "mother of a two-year-old" would continue on in her sporting career or choose to give it up to be a full-time mother[12].

Britains have seen corresponding coverage with Paula Radcliffe: "Radcliffe's longing for motherhood put on hold" readers of the London *Times* were told last month, with Radcliffe's supposed *admission* that she has delayed starting motherhood while she concentrates on her running career. When Alison Hargreaves became the first British woman to climb Everest unsupported by oxygen or Sherpas, the media wanted to know how she could go off climbing mountains when she was the mother of two children? When Hargreaves tragically died on a subsequent expedition to K2 the media turned on her in an unprecedented manner. While male sporting elites who are struck down in their prime are afforded heroic status, Hargreaves was immediately vilified as a BAD mother and accused of being irresponsible to leave her children behind as she attempted her life-threatening climbs. Jim Ballard later told an *Observer* journalist: "There were some very hurtful things said in the press after Alison died." [13]

In their bid to entertain and increase profits for shareholders, media idealise motherhood in the form of celebrity mothers, but also seek out the equally newsworthy and highly saleable darker side of motherhood in the representation of the monstrous mother.

3.   Murdering Mothers

While Medea news stories entertain their audience, they also inform on many levels, and significantly impact on the ways in which society views motherhood. *GQ* magazine in 2002 managed to package sex and infanticide into a highly disturbing media discourse. Illustrated with a full-page colour photograph of a beautiful topless model, with her back to the camera, Robert Draper's article "A Prayer for Tina Marie" begins: "Gentleman, here is your child, 22, with a soft round face you could hold in one hand and chew like a peach muffin… She will have sex with you on the first night…" The subject of the article? A young woman, named Tina Marie Cornelius who is serving the rest of her life in jail in Texas for murdering her two young children. "She turned to prostitution and drugs after unwanted attentions from her former stepfather"[14]

Kathleen Folbigg in Australia, like Andrea Yates in America, became the media icon of monstrous motherhood when in 2003 she was convicted of the murder of her four infant children. The *Daily Telegraph* published a running banner: "Monstress: the diary of a child murderer"[15] as

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they catalogued Folbigg's record of infanticide through the publication of her incriminating diaries. One chilling entry:

> January 16 1998
> The gym was pivotal (sic) part of me, and now because I can't go without taking Laura its (sic) put a damper (sic) on everything. I've had my one and only escape taken away from me.

Judith Warner's new book, *Perfect Madness: Motherhood in the Age of Anxiety,* Examines the American condition she has coined 'the mommy mystique". Warner, who interviewed 150 well-off Manhattan mothers, says mothering has gone from an art to a cult, with devotees driving themselves to ever more baroque extremes to appease the goddess of perfect motherhood. Warner fails; however, to acknowledge the other end of the spectrum where poor mothers are under the increased economic, social and psychological pressure that saw a young American Mother, Christina Rugg, with no food for her children, smother her babies. She was executed in 2001.Warner believes our neurotic quest to perfect the mechanics of mothers can be interpreted as an effort to do on an individual level what we've stopped trying to do on a society-wide level.

4.   A Master Narrative – Murdering Mothers and the 10-point-Triple Back Flip

In the UK four mothers, Sally Clarke, Angela Cannings, Trupti Patel and Donna Anthony were part of a highly newsworthy master narrative of murdering mothers.

These women each became collective fodder for a media feeding frenzy on deviant motherhood, which has recently been forced to do a complete turnaround.

Sally Clark was portrayed as a selfish, career-driven drunk who resented her babies for the loss of her pre-pregnancy figure. The *Daily Telegraph* ran an article "Against the Odds" *after* Clark's conviction and when the public discourse - outside of the media - was questioning her conviction. This *Telegraph* article illustrates the media's agility in being able to spin a story 360 degrees without missing a beat, but also the way a media organisation can be at one and the same time part of the pack and apart from the pack. The *Telegraph*'s Bob Woffinden, claimed the media had treated Clark poorly. Sally Clark, he said, had been portrayed as enjoying a 'champagne lifestyle' in a luxurious cottage in the stockbroker belt of Cheshire" and was portrayed as:

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> a selfish, alcoholic, grasping, depressive, career-obsessed
> woman who liked pretty clothes, and who first abused and
> then murdered her children because they ruined her figure
> and stood in the way of her lucrative future.[16]

As Sally Clark's husband, Steven, reminds us, "in the pursuit of sensation, no media, at the time of her trial, pointed out that the prosecution's medical evidence was flawed and discredited, even by the Crown's own witnesses".

Another of these murdering mothers, Trupti Patel, was portrayed as a "qualified pharmacist", as if being qualified set her apart. She was presented as a career-driven, cold and uncaring mother. Patel's case is doubly disturbing because her media misrepresentation continues. Unlike the other women, Patel was *never* convicted of murdering her children, she was found innocent of all charges; she never spent time in gaol. And yet last month British newspapers (The *Guardian* and the *Times)* and others, were still running news stories in which all of the women, including Patel, were convicted and jailed for murder.

Donna Anthony, who spent six years in jail for the murder of her two children, was labelled a "baby-killing bitch"; and "evil mother" who killed her son to get sympathy and to make her estranged husband feel guilty after an argument[17]. Angela Cannings was portrayed as a 'dull' and 'ordinary' woman who couldn't cope with motherhood so she serially smothered her children.

So, what does the media do when the women they so energetically vilified as 'monstrous Medeas' are found to be innocent after all, the victims of faulty expert medical evidence? They seamlessly perform a 10-point-Triple Back Flip and recreate these women in another sensationalised construct as the 'martyred mothers', and at the same time find a new monster in Professor Roy Meadow, and the audiences lap it up with the voracious appetite of a gallows pack.

Dr Theodore Dalrymple wrote in a 2003 *Daily Telegraph* profile on Meadow:

> Professor Sir Roy Meadow is the villain of the week, the
> man we all love to hate. This once highly-respected indeed
> world-famous, emeritus professor of paediatrics at Leeds
> university, now 70 years old, has been called " the child-
> snatcher-in-chief" by The *Daily Mail*, a sobriquet that will
> probably further confuse the part of the population that has
> difficulty distinguishing between paediatricians and
> paedophiles.[18]

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What Dalrymple got wrong was the calculation that Meadow would be villain for a week that his newsworthiness would be transitory. The 'demon doctor' implicated in hundreds of cases is the new media monster.

The martyred mothers narrative, I suspect, with its symbiotic relationship to the demon doctor, will be consumed within this new 'Demon Doctor' master narrative, allowing the deviant mother narrative to survive in its many manifestations.

There is one category of mother who murders her children who is privy, for the most part, to a sympathetic press. The mother who murders her disabled child is regularly exculpated through media coverage with thinly veiled eugenics undertones.

5   Conclusion

The media has clearly identified motherhood's news values as coming from the two extremes: from the idealised to the demonised: from the sex goddess whose perfect body has been transformed by the seductive fecundity of maternity, to the "Monstrous Mother" who murders her own babies. In terms of media attention, outside these disparate constructs, 'regular' mothers can only register on the news values radar when they:

- are perceived as super mothers with ten kids under eight,
- give birth to quintuplets
- or deliver on the right calendar event – Christmas Day; New Year's Day; Mother's Day

Anything in between these extremes holds little or no news values. While regular sleep-deprived mothers, struggling to nurture their babies amidst household debt and stretch marks and flabby stomaches, continue to be absent from the media motherhood discourse, society's expectations of mothers and motherhood will remain trapped into a damaging circularity.

While mothers in their various constructs are defined as newsworthy or not newsworthy, women are rarely the definers of news. Newsroom culture and practice means that few women, few mothers reach the upper echelons of gate keeping. When they do the pressure is on to keep the winning status quo, to maintain the ratings, to increase the circulation figures – and as we all know the highest rating newspapers are tabloids, with Rupert Murdoch's *News of the World* and the *Sun* the highest circulation newspapers in Britain with their diet of bare-breasted page-three girls, of celebrity mums, and monstrous and deviant mothers.

Public opinion is informed by media coverage, decision makers, from policy makers to parliamentarians, from judges to juries, are all informed in part by a 'common-sense' knowledge of the world, which is

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informed by public opinion. The demonising of certain mothers and the idealisation of others creates a pattern of representation, which negatively impacts on the way society constructs motherhood.

Notes

[1] "She's Having a baby!" *Who Weekly*, 25 April 2005, 34-35.

[2] Pregnant Britney's Hospital Dash," *Woman's Day*, 25 April 2005, 10.

[3] Lana Berkowitz, "Britney prepares for motherhood – and we can't take our eyes off her," *Houston Chronicle*, 15 April 2005, sec. HLF. (24 April 2005) http://www.Houston Chronicle.com.

[4] "Nicole Reveals – 'I'm in baby mode'" *Woman's Day*, 5 April 2005, 14-15.

[5] "Demi pregnant and smoking?" *Woman's Day*, 25 April 2005, 8-9.

[6] "Now you don't have to be expecting to have that radiant glow everyday," *Woman's Day*, 25 April 2005, 27.

[7] "Sperm Race," *Metro*, 23 July 23 2004, 3.

[8] "Performance the Art of Birth," *The Weekend Australian*, 23-24 April 2005, 25.

[9] "Artist Invites Public to Birth of His Child", AFP, 25 April 2005.

[10] Roxanne Roberts, "Do Me a Favor, Keep a Lid on Your Double Latte," *Washington Post,* 11 August 2004, sec. CO1.

[11] Dominique Jackson, "Accessory after the act," *The Weekend Australian Magazine*, 29-30 March 2003, 33-37.

[12] Rebecca Williams, "Newberry keen to make new golden splash," The Hobart *Mercury*, 27 Jan 2005, 40.

[13] Dee O'Connell. "What happened Next?" *Observer,* 30 March 2003 (24 April 24 2005) <http;//observer.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,4646541-110648,00.html>

[14] Jane Hall; "Fox News Watch", "How the Media Cover Women", 8 November, 2002 (29 April 2005) <http://www.tompaine.com/feature.cfm/ID/4385>

[15] "Monstress: the diary of a child murderer," *Daily Telegraph*, 22 May 2003, 31.

[16] Bob Woffinden, "Against the Odds," The *Daily Telegraph*, 11 May 2001, Sec. 2177

[17] "Ken Norman, "Donna Anthony," 18 November, 1998, (24 April 2005). <www.portia.org/chapter04/anthony.html>

[18] Dr Theodore Dalrymple, Roy Meadow Profile," *Daily Telegraph* 14 December, 2003, sec. Op Ed.

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The Monster Under the Bed: Adult Anxieties of Childhood

Lois Drawmer

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There is a current proliferation of media programmes dealing with children, childcare and parenting (for examples *Little Angels* (BBC1)*, Tiny Tearaways* (BBC3)*, Super Nanny* (ITV1) which are striking in their discursive agenda of reinforcing 'normative' behaviour, child psychology, and the 'correct' or 'proper' child (and inversely, the 'correct' or 'proper' parent). The powerful structure of the mythology of family life underpins such media, political, and institutional interventions into the private sphere of domestic life, and reconfigures it into the public domain of social order.

The ways in which images of childhood appear in western culture are both contradictory and ambiguous, and none more so than in the recurring motifs of children linked to monsters and the monstrous. In this paper, I will explore the issues surrounding the powerful notion of the hidden monster, which lurks under the bed, in the cupboard, or just around the corner, and its links with children and the unstable construct of childhood itself. As Buckingham points out:

> Certain kinds of texts – the contemporary 'family' films of Walt Disney or Steven Spielberg for example […] tell both adults and children very powerful and seductive stories about the relative meanings of childhood and adulthood.[1]

We will be considering the ways in which the boundaries of adulthood and children are explored through the symbol of the monster in several films, including *Poltergeist, Stephen King's It,* and *They.*

The constructed category of childhood is one of the most deeply ingrained, and normalised hegemonic constructions in western society. The particular assumptions of children and the concept of childhood is not just central to the structure of the family, but have fundamental relationships to the ways in which we all perceive the world as adults. For western culture, the whole 'aim' of childhood is maturation - to become an adult: a process of becoming and transformation. The category of childhood has a lot at stake. As an experience we were all subjected to, but understand differently, childhood has been endowed with particular mystiques and expressed through adult nostalgia underpinned by a sense of loss. This is often described in terms such as 'innocence', 'freedom', and 'imagination'. As Arial Dorfman argues:

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> [Adults] create for themselves a childhood embodying their
> own angelic aspirations, which offer consolation, hope and a
> guarantee of a 'better' but unchanging future. This 'new
> reality', this autonomous realm of magic, is artfully isolated
> from the reality of everyday. Adult values are projected onto
> the child, as if childhood was a special domain where these
> values could be protected uncritically … thus, *the
> imagination of the child is conceived as the past and future
> utopia of the adult.* But set up as an inner realm of fantasy,
> this model […] enables the adult to partake of his own
> demons, provided they have been coated with the syrup of
> paradise, and that they travel there with the passport of
> innocence.[2]

However, as well as idealised nostalgia, childhood precipitates adult
fears of children and childhood. Adult anxieties underpin representations and
perceptions of children. Even the concept of 'children's culture' is an
erroneous one, as it simply doesn't exist. What we understand to be
children's culture (films, media, games, television for example) are created,
produced and disseminated by adults on behalf of children, with a specific
concept of children and childhood underpinning them. Technology, and the
rise of mass media, has increased adult concerns over children's knowledge
and power. As Marchard argues:

> The visual cliché of the family circle served to reconcile the
> past and the present, authority and democracy. It defined
> domain as security rather than as opportunity. Above all, it
> connoted stability. The products of modern technology,
> including radios and phonographs were comfortably
> accommodated within this hallowed circle. Whatever
> pressures and complexities modernity might bring, these
> images implied, the family at home would preserve an
> undaunted harmony and security.[3]

However, by the 1980s, when television and in particular video
technology enabled domestic viewing of cinema films, anxiety about
technology and children triggered moral panics. Children are seen to be good
at technology, and this provokes adult anxiety. This is particularly important
as relations between adult and child negotiated over issues around the media.
For example, as Neil Postman observes, "TV is a "total disclosure medium"
which undermines adult's control over the knowledge and experiences of
their children."[4] Adult fear of technology and children's apparent proficiency
with it is illustrated in Hooper's *Poltergeist* (1982), where the television set

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sends out messages from dead, and evil spirits, which can only be understood by the youngest daughter of the family, Carole-Anne. From the opening credits where the television plays out the closing national anthem whilst the parents are sleeping, fears of television as addictive, hypnotic force over young children are constantly reinforced, directly correlating with Marie Winn's contemporary and widely publicised claims about the inherent danger television proposes to children in *The Plug-in Drug* (1977). Carole-Anne's subsequent disappearance is related to the closet, and the television set forms her only mode of communication with her family. Indeed, in Regan's office in the 1980s, and in the UK, under the Conservative Thatcher government, the emphasis on capitalist expansion and the 'return to family values' was echoed in the moral panics about children and the perceived threat of new technology in the private, family sphere. In the UK, this resulted in the Video Recordings Act 1984, led by MP Graham Bright and the *Daily Mail*, and the subsequent media moral panic about the murder of James Bulger by 2 children was linked by the press to the viewing of what was termed a 'video nasty', in an effort to explain and to marginalize the behaviour of Thompson and Venables as 'monstrous' and therefore beyond the category of childhood.

Such moral panics expose adult fears of future, change and perceived erosion of morals, where childhood seeks gratification, has no limits and no guilt. The libidinal drive links to consumer culture, and generates fears of children/media instigating the transgression of 'proper childhood knowledge'. Such attacks on media reveal underlying fears about home, family, authority and change.

Instead of revealing the 'real' notion of childhood to us, cultural representations of children expose adult projections, desires, and anxieties about the nature of children and childhood. There are broadly two contradictory paradigms of childhood and the nature of children in western culture. Dating from the 18th century, writers such as John Locke (1632-1704) in his *Thoughts on Education*, argued that the child is a *tabula rasa*: neither good nor bad, but a kind of empty slate on which parents, society and culture write its personality traits and life course. The child here is seen as symbolising innocence. Similarly, John Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) felt that children are essentially good but corrupted by society and that humanity is characterised by natural innocence.   This dominant model of childhood as innocence or even as a metaphor for redemption and utopia, reinforced by 19th century social reform and romanticism, was challenged in the early 20th century by Freud's controversial assertion in the Oedipus complex that infants from birth were sexual, aggressive and greedy entities, driven by the libidinal id. In this paradigm, the child is potentially threatening, and the monster IS the child itself. Freud speaks of the 'magisterial' power of the baby in adult fantasy life, as a way of signifying the powerful conscious and unconscious effects the figure of the young child has upon its parents. Adults

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invest huge amounts of physical and psychic energy in their children. The demands, guilt, and pleasures afforded the parent by the child signal the way the child is a figure of affect. That is a highly charged symbolic construct as well as a real physical living being.

There are striking portrayals of childhood and the potentially disruptive figure of the monster in suburbia and family life, in films such as *Poltergeist, Stephen King's It,* and *They*. In these films, children and monsters are inextricably bound up; often to the extent that only the children in the text, and the viewer, are able to 'see' the monster. The spectator is sutured into the child's perspective through both narrative agency and through the point-of-view positioning of filming techniques. This location of the viewer/spectator into the point of view subject position of the child functions as a powerful form of childhood identification, and as such, enables the viewer to re-enact childhood nostalgia, but more importantly, childhood trauma. In this way, media depictions of childhood and the monstrous is symptomatically constructed through adult perceptions, as trauma, or through western prescribed constructs of the 'proper' child in middle-class suburban family life.

In this film, the family serves, as in many contemporary films as a moral touchstone, a guarantor of resolution and a sign of fixity and stability in a period of great flux. In numerous films the family operates as a possibility – the potential narrative outcome of the film. In this paradigm – the family is either utopian or dystopian. A utopian family structure locates the family as the solution to the narrative and its progress and obstacles.

But, in *Poltergeist,* the family is also represented as the possible solution and remedy to the problems displayed in the film. For *Poltergeist,* the children function here as a register of psychic and social closure – as the adult relationship with the children signals a movement out of a traumatised and almost infantile state of self-absorption. The schizo-psychotic state of childhood trauma, which centres around Carole-Anne is not about a pre-Oedipal return to a state of plenitude, but caused by the transitional rupture into a post-death status, similar to the anguish created by the untimely death of Georgie in *It.*

In dystopian films, such as *They* the family itself is a problem, whether in full, fractured or absent form, and can neither be achieved, represented or even desired. Families, which also need a great deal of external intervention to maintain them, are represented as dystopian. Here a sort of narrative loop occurs where the narrative is partly about liquidating the effects of the inadequate or destructive family and in particular the painful or traumatic childhood that haunts the adult protagonist. What is disturbing about *They* is the final scene where protagonist, mirroring the opening scene in the film where a small boy is dragged under the bed by monster, and is taken by the monsters from under the bed/closet and

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subsumed into a kind of monster hell in the wardrobe, where she can still see the physical, external world through a transparent barrier. Her real torment lies in the fact that she cannot be seen, or heard, by anyone in the real world; to them she has just vanished; stopped existing. The horror plays on cultural fears of ontology and death and non-existence itself: the monsters are almost incidental, as the real horror lies in the fact that she remains fully conscious but completely severed from any hope of social connection.

In *Family Fictions,* (1997) Sarah Harwood discusses the 'absent child' – the child who haunts the margins of the family scenario signifying frustration, incompleteness, loss and despair – rather than any positive value. This can be seen initially in *Stephen King's It,* where at the film's beginning the little boy Georgie is lured to his death by the monster/clown Pennywise. It is the murdered child's absence but simultaneous reminders of his presence which provide haunting motifs throughout the film and actually functions to drive the plot forward in the quest for revenge and resolution.

The very ordinariness of this suburban life is played out through a perception of the child as an open, imaginative and curious entity. Thus Georgie is not initially afraid of the figure of a clown, addressing him from a storm drain, as, in most media representations of childhood, curiosity, imagination, and the supernatural are discourses inscribed onto the category of childhood. The horror is created for us as a viewer, sutured into the text with infantilised powerlessness, but at the same time endowed with adult knowledge and able to recognise the signifiers of danger or monstrous evil, but powerless to prevent it. This duality of ordinary and uncanny is disturbing to adults as, according to Freud, adults preserve unconscious traces of their early life – the time when the ego (sense of self as 'I') was being formed. There is a sense of limitlessness but also increasingly of dependency for child at this moment. The child's fear of helplessness is disavowed by the child through an oceanic feeling: a fantasy of 'oneness with the universe', which disclaims any danger from the outside world. The child is omnipotent. Freud argues that religious or spiritual or mystical imagery could be partly understood as symbolic attempted returns to that moment.[5] In this sense, the monster Pennywise can firstly be defeated by drawing on the children's omnipotent, collective belief that if they can disavow the monster, they have the power to obliterate its very existence. However, at the ending of the film, where the (now adult) group of children face the monster once more, they have to draw upon the childlike motifs of protection (silver, and the slingshot) but ultimately can only annihilate the monster by accepting their status as rational adults, and defeat him by drawing upon a combination of physical strength and rational strategies, which in turn can be read as a final severance of the pre-symbolic state and the desire for a return to plenitude, and an acceptance of adult rationality.

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The revenge for the dead child, Georgie, who haunts the narrative throughout, operates as the rebirth of a lost innocence; the murdered child acts as both catalyst and as a redeemer of the future of the family relationships of the adults, and enabling a narrative closure in which the family and community are reconstituted.

In an examination of the pervasive motif of the monster under the bed, or the monster in the cupboard, the very concept of childhood is dichotomised as either monstrous, spiritually pure, is at stake, and the fears, desires and fantasies of adults are played out through such potent motifs.

Notes

[1] D. Buckingham, *After the Death of Childhood,* 2000, p.9
[2] A. Dorfman & A. Mattelart, *How to Read Donald Duck*, 1975, pp.30-31
[3] R.Marchand, Advertising the American Dream, 1985, p.248
[4] N. Postman, *The Disappearance of Childhood*, 1983, pp.120 - 122
[5] S. Freud, *Civilisation and its Discontents*, 1930, vol 12, pp.259-60

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The Enemy Within: The Child as Terrorist in the Contemporary American Horror Film

Colette Balmain

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1.   Cinema and National Identity

Drawing on Stephen Heath's argument that, 'nationhood is not a given, it is always something to be gained,'[1] in his article, 'The Concept of National Cinema', Andrew Higson contends that national cinema functions as one form of 'internal cultural colonialism', which works to:

> [P]ull together diverse and contradictory discourses, to articulate a contradictory unity, to play a part in the hegemonic processes of achieving consensus, and containing difference and contradiction.[2]

It is no coincidence that post World War II, it was seen that the new bludgeoning and dominant form of cultural representation, the film, had an important part to play in the [re] construction of bourgeois cultural imperialism at a time when national, economic and geographical boundaries had been placed under threat, and therefore as a mechanism for re-establishing those boundaries. As the editor of Film Daily, noted, in his comments on the American Film Industry:

> Whether one calls is propaganda or information, it is evident that as a result of World War II, the motion picture from this day must be regarded as an instrument of public policy as well as a great popular medium of entertainment.[3]

And writing about questions of national identity and cultural representation[s] of that identity, James Donald contends that questions of boundaries are at the centre of the formation of the national self:

> 'Manifest in racism, its violent misogyny, and its phobias about alien culture, alien ideologies and 'enemies within' is the terror that without known boundaries, everything will collapse into undifferentiated, miasmic chaos, that identity will disintegrate.'[4]

As the "horror" in the horror film comes about through the breaching of boundaries, it is pertinent to consider how the American horror film, as

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ideological apparatus of the state, has reconfigured itself in the light of the shocking events of 9/11 in which the colonial invader became the invaded, as the impenetrable boundaries of America as nation-state were breached by the 'Other'. In his new preface to his 1978 seminal text, *Orientalism*, Edward Said talks about the proliferation of media texts on the 'war against terror': 'all of them re-cycling the same unverifiable fictions and vast generalizations so as to stir up "America" against the foreign devil", from 'experts who have supposedly penetrated to the heart of those strange Oriental peoples over there who have been such a terrible thorn in "our" flesh.[5]

In 'The Idea of Apocalypse in The Texas Chainsaw Massacre', Christopher Sharrat argues that the development of apocalypticism in horror is distinct to the tradition of catastrophe and utopia in science fiction.[6] He cites Tobe Hooper's *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974), made at a time of crisis in American politics [the Watergate era and the Vietnam war], as one of the forerunners of the apocalyptic tradition in the horror film: a tradition which as Robin Wood points out in 'The American Horror Film', suggests that 'annihilation is inevitable, humanity is now completely powerless, there is nothing anyone can to do to arrest the process.'[7] Wood contends that the negation of the apocalyptic horror film – the idea of the end of the world – can be seen in positive rather than negative terms – the end of the world as the end of patriarchal capitalism within the recognition of the very instability of dominant ideology. However more recently, but before the events of 9/11, in his preface to *Freud's Worst Nightmares*, Robin Wood mourns the loss of the progressive features of the 1970 horror film, asking whether there are any horror films which could be championed as making some sort of radical statement about contemporary life, in the manner in which he saw *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Dawn of the Dead* as doing[8].

In light of the events of 9/11, it is no surprise that the apocalyptic horror film has emerged as the dominant trend in American horror cinema within two distinct strands: the post-modern "urbanoid horror film[9]: *Dead End*, *Cabin Fever*, *Wrong Turn*, and the remake of *the Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and or the monstrous-child horror film: such as *Godsend, Hide and Seek*, *Exorcist: The Beginning*, *The Amityville Horror* and *The Ring Two*. Whilst both types of familial horror originally emerge within what Robin Wood contends is the progressive trends the 1970s, their reconfiguration and reinterpretation in the light of the events of 9/11 seems to offer a more reactionary interpretation of the family: one that needs to be understood as articulating cultural anxieties and fears over the "Enemy Within": the repositioning of the "Other" as inherently threatening to the American way of life and its sense of a 'divinely-ordained mission.'

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In this article, I consider the re-emergence of the monstrous-child sub-genre, in which the child can be understood as a metaphorical terrorist, threatening the bourgeois, patriarchal family–the family as symbolic of the nation as a whole–from within. In what follows, I suggest that child as monster can be interpreted as signalling fears around the loss of boundaries-political, economic and cultural-as inscribed within the demonic figure of the child (the 'other'/not-America/outside), which turns against the parent (the 'self'/America/Inside). The child is not only abject [signalling in Freudian terms the return of the repressed], but is a place of becoming, in Deleuze and Guattari's terms, which places the hegemonic ideology of patriarchal capitalism under threat: articulated through the threat to the bourgeois family as the embodiment of its values. The child as metaphorical terrorist in the contemporary American Horror Film I suggest highlights the fragility of the symbolic order in the face of the threat of the "other": a fragility which was only too obvious in the light of the horrific events of 9/11. I conclude by considering whether the figuration of the monstrous-child is a progressive or reactionary figure.

2.   The Enemy Within

> '[T]he father is dead, it's my fault, who killed him? it's your fault, it's the Jews, the Arabs, the Chinese, all the sources of racism and segregation […]'[10]

In *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guattari contend that 'The familial determinations become the application of the social axiomatic.'[11] And since *Psycho*, according to Robin Wood, American cinema has 'implicitly recognized Horror as both American and familial'[12] The monstrous-child sub-genre, emerged, in the late 1960s, with *Rosemary's Baby*, quickly followed by films such as *Night of the Living Dead*, *The Exorcist* and *It's Alive*. These pre-oedipal children would subsequently grow up, as mapped out in films such as, *Carrie* and *The Fury*, before finally being punished repeatedly for their transgressions in the slasher film, by their mirror image, Michael Myers: a sub-genre which refuses to die out, just as the central male antagonists in *Halloween* and *Friday 13th*, even after being repeatedly stabbed, beheaded, electrocuted, and blown into pieces, return for the next instalment.

> From the early to mid-1970s and coincident with bourgeois society's negative response to the youth movements and drug culture of the late 1960 and early 1970s, generic

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> emphasis was on the child not as terrorized victim, but as
> cannibalistic, monstrous, murderous, selfish, sexual.'[13]

In 'The American Horror Film', Wood contends that the child as monster in the horror film – or the Terrible Child – is a 'product of the family, whether the family itself is regarded as guilty (the "psychotic family films) or innocent.[14] It is relevant that in the contemporary monstrous-child horror film, the family unit itself is figured as innocent rather than psychotic, and the child is a product of another irreducibly different world whether historically, or geographically - the old world in *Exorcist: New Beginnings* and *The Amityville Horror* and the Far East in *The Ring Two*. At the same time, the father figure is either missing as in *The Ring Two,* ineffectual and/or murderous in *Exorcist: New Beginnings*, and *The Amityville Horror*. The death of the father figure, or its monstrous reinvention, is contemporaneous with the birth of the child as terrorist who disrupts the familial structure, as articulation of the wider nation-state, from within.

The traditional function of the child within bourgeois mythology is the perpetuation of the past into the future, the propagation of the same rather than the embodiment of difference, and a promise of the continuation of the dominant ideological order. In Sobchack's words: 'The infant and the child as sign invoke nostalgia.'[15] In opposition to this is the figuration of the monstrous-child, which is:

> [F]igured as uncivilized, hostile, and powerful Others who –
> like their extra-cinematic counterparts – refuse parental love
> and authority and mock the established values of dominant
> institutions.   They are "changelings" – the horrifically
> familiar embodiment of difference.'[16]

The events of 9/11 dented America's fantasy of itself as narcissistic ego-ideal, propagator of democracy and freedom [and/or colonial invader]: an imaginary fantasy shared by the Western world as repeatedly performed through the propaganda of its systematic ideological cultural representations that have come to dominate Western culture. These monstrous-children, figurations of the terrorist threat, function as signifiers of instability and uncertainty from within, collapsing boundaries between self and other, exercising in Sobhack's words 'a powerful deconstructive force dangerous to patriarchal bourgeois culture.'[17] Their 'apocalyptic destruction' is 'generated by familial incoherence and paternal weakness.'[18] In *The Ring Two*, the father figure is absent, leaving the hysterical mother as a sole parent of the young boy-child, Aidan, whilst in *The Amityville Horror*, the biological father is

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dead and the stepfather is incapable of protecting his stepchildren from the dangerous forces that lurk in the basement of the house.

3.   It was You: You Let the Dead Get in!
        The horror in these films is generated through the fact that these children threaten the family from within: though demonic and possessed, they are part of rather than apart from the familial unit and thus much more frightening than the 'alien' invader as envisaged by science fiction cinema, or the monstrous male killer of the slasher film, who has come to function as patriarchal avenger of capitalist bourgeois ideology.
        The Ring Two, the sequel to the box-office smash, *The Ring*, clearly foregrounds the manner in which 'the child as terrorist' embodies contemporary American fears around the invasion of borders: the national as mapped onto the personal. In *The Ring*, based upon the cult Japanese film *Ringu*, mysterious videotape is discovered. Upon watching the video, the viewer is left with just seven days to live before he/she is literally scared to death. At the centre of the narrative is Karen, a newspaper reporter, and her young son, Aidan. Aidan becomes exposed to the video-virus – a critique of poor parenting and/or single parent families? Leaving Karen just seven days to solve the mystery of the video and save her child's life. In *The Ring*, the origin of the horror is emerges from outside of America and is embodied within the figure of Samara, a young girl child, a result of IVF technologies and conceived elsewhere [Japan?], before being brought back to the urban backwater in which her 'monstrosity', 'read' difference, leads to mayhem and murder. Eventually, in order to contain the 'foreign' threat as embodied by Samara, her mother, Anna, kills her and disposes of her body down a well. The cursed video is thus Samara's revenge - an unholy alliance that conflates the oriental other with alien technologies – and a curse, which can only be avoided by its transmission to another.
        Significantly, *The Ring Two*, rather than continuing Samara / Sadako's story as the Japanese sequel to *Ringu* does, transforms the cursed video theme into a 'changeling' narrative, in which the young-boy child of the first film, Aidan, becomes possessed by the vengeful spirit of Samara. In this sense, the threat moves from outside to the inside, from the external to the internal, and projection becomes introjection. In a number of places in the film, the responsibility for Aidan's possession is blamed on his mother, Karen: 'It was You: You Let the Dead Get In!' says Samara's biological mother to Karen [*The Ring Two* contradicts the narrative of the first here], apportioning fault to a lack of female parental authority and simultaneously mourning the loss of the authority as embodied within the missing father figure. In order to free Aidan, Karen is repeatedly told to listen to the 'child'. Here the good child Aidan is situated in direct opposition to the bad child

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Samara, in effect reinforcing the hierarchy of traditional binaries: male / female, outside / inside, self / other, innocence / corruption and West / East.

Further, national boundaries become projected onto gender boundaries, racial difference is sexual difference: female identity and the racial other are both situated as monstrous in their otherness. In 'Trying to Survive on The Darker Side: 1980s Family Horror, Tony Williams writes that the 'authoritarian bourgeois family' is an 'organisation attempting to repress its subjects into being conformist products.'[19] And it is the failure of the family leads to the designation of its products – or children – as monstrous. The conformation of children as patriarchal products necessitates a stable gender identity: 'An authoritarian patriarchal structure, the family attempts to produce a convenient gendered product within capitalist society.'[20] When this fails, as it does in *The Ring Two* and the boundaries between genders are transgressed: 'the horror of difference results.'[21] This is also the case in *Hide and Seek*, but this time, the young girl-child becomes possessed by the monstrous male self, and in *The Amityville Horror*, Jodie, the young girl of the previous family of the haunted house, murdered brutally by her brother, who is possessed by the spirit of an authoritarian Preacher [who murdered and tortured Indians in the basement of the house], herself becomes possessed by the monstrous primal father-figure. In all these films, the monstrous "Other" coded as either "foreign" and/or "primitive", undermines the stability of the family through threatening the gendered status of the child – multiplicity replaces/displaces unity, demonising difference and Otherness: both Samara and Jodie could almost be doubles with their long dark hair, haunted expressions and white clothes.

4.   Conclusion: You Have to Send it Back

> In the deionisation of an unknown enemy, for whom the label "terrorist" serves the general purpose of keeping people stirred up and angry, media images command too much attention and can be exploited at times of crisis and insecurity of the kind that the post 9/11 period has produced.[22]

Tony Williams contends the more repressive the society, the more monstrous the repressed.'[23] In the light of this, the monstrous-children of *The Ring Two* and *Hide and Seek* can be seen as the monstrous progeny of "The return to family values" as articulated by Bush – which repeats that of the earlier Reagan-Bush era of American politics – in the aftermath of 9/11. On one hand, the figure of the child as terrorist within the family can be seen as progressive as it functions in its apocalyptical capacity as signifier of the

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demise of a repressive, patriarchal capitalism in Wood's terms. Or in Deleuze and Guattari's terms articulates a notion of becoming which undermines fixed categories and boundaries, constituting what Conley sees in 'Becoming-Woman Now', 'the possibility of transition towards a non-phallocentric and non-capitalist space outside of a deadly and reappropriating dialectic.'[24]

However, the allusion in *The Ring Two* to 'letting the dead in' and the need 'to send them back' functions as a barely veiled metaphor for the reassertion of boundaries against incoming immigrants. This gives credence to the monstrous-child as a reactionary figure. The reassertion of the patriarchal family unit at the end of *The Ring Two* and *The Amityville Horror* can be read as an attempt to reconcile America's internal fantasy with her outward projection of reality. The fact that sequels for both *The Ring Two* and *The Amityville Horror* are in production suggests that the monstrous-child sub-genre will be around for some time: although its significations may well be subject to change.

Notes

[1] Heath cited in Higson, 2002,139
[2] Higson, 2002, 139
[3] Forbes and Street, 2000, 17
[4] Donald, 1988, 32
[5] Said, 2004, xv
[6] Sharrat, 1996, 255
[7] Wood, 1996, 187
[8] Wood, 2001
[9] Clover, 1992
[10] Clover, 1992, 269
[11] Deleuze and Guattari, 1984, 264
[12] Wood, 1996, 185
[13] Sobhack, `996, 150
[14] Wood, 1996, 181
[15] Sobhack, 1996, 149
[16] ibid,.150
[17] ibid, 151
[18] ibid, 151
[19] Williams, 1996, 169
[20] ibid, 169
[21] ibid, 169
[22] Said, 2004, p xx
[23] Williams, 1996, 170

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[24] Conley, 2000, 25

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Gods and Monsters

Nina Ohligschlaeger

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Mary Shelley's novel has inspired many artists. In the twentieth century, the story of the monster and its creator proved to be especially successful in a new art form - film. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* even labels Frankenstein's Creature "the best-known monster in the history of motion pictures".[1]

Within the horror genre it became almost a staple with famous directors trying their hands at adapting *Frankenstein*, among others there are Andy Warhol, Roger Corman and Kenneth Branagh. However, no matter how independent artistically, none of them was able to evade one of the earlier film versions, done by James Whale in 1931. Whale created the image everybody has in mind when talking about Frankenstein's creature. I am sure all of you remember the captivating performance by Boris Karloff or at least pictures or screen shots of his angular head with the scar on the forehead, the long limbs, wearing a jacket that is much too small for his big frame. Another famous monster of Whale's is the Bride of Frankenstein (with a hairdo one never forgets).

Today I would like to talk about the movie *Gods and Monsters* by Bill Condon, which was released in 1999. Condon also wrote the script for this film adapting a novel by Christopher Bram titled *The Father of Frankenstein* and won an Oscar for 'Best adapted script'. The movie is not made according to biopic fashion, where the script strings together highlights taken from the biography of the character in question. Bill Condon aims for more: He presents a fictional version of James Whale's last days in 1957 and uses flashbacks and dream sequences to give additional insights regarding his life. The images he draws upon for the flashbacks and dream sequences derive from World War I memories and from Whale's *Frankenstein* movies.

There are two central characters: James Whale and Clayton Boone. In the beginning of the film, retired movie director Whale has only just returned to his home in California after he suffered a mild stroke and spent some time in hospital. Although he luckily did not lose control over his body, his mind plays tricks on him bringing back memories - pictures, sounds and even smells.[2] These memories are related to emotionally charged moments of his life, stemming especially from three phases: his dire youth in Great Britain, the time he spent in the trenches during World War I and the production of one of his biggest successes in Hollywood, *Bride of Frankenstein*. All of them bore important consequences on his later development as a person and as an artist. (We will return to that a little later.)

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These memories arise all of a sudden overwhelming Whale with their vividness, leaving him physically weak and emotionally vulnerable. Unfortunately, there is no medical help for this ailment. Therefore, Whale has to face the fact that he will lose his mind altogether rather sooner than later.

Whereas this part of the story corresponds with what we know about the 'real' James Whale, the other main character - Clayton Boone - is completely fictional. On his return, Whale happens to meet the new gardener Hanna, his housekeeper, had employed while he was in hospital. Names in fiction are always worth a second look: Clayton introduces himself as 'Clay'. The name 'Clay Boone' already carries certain associations. 'Clay' is of course sticky earth, a kind of material that can be made into all sorts of things. 'Boon' stands for request or favour; a different meaning is advantage, blessing or comfort. Apart from that, there is another layer: it indicates a jolly or congenial companion.

Their first meeting is quite awkward: Whale watches the new gardener for a while from his living-room window, realising his physical strength. Boone seems quite dumbstruck and inarticulate when Whale talks to him.[3] In contrast to Boone, the audience very likely knows about Whale's homosexuality. It is the young man's shyness and awareness of the social gap between them - employer and his yardman - letting him react like this. A little later in the film, Whale will invite Boone for tea and the latter will accept it only reluctantly. Shortly before their next meeting, the first sitting, Hanna asks Boone about his motives for meeting with their mutual employer: "What kind of man are you? Are you a good man? You will not hurt him?"[4] It is then that she realises that Boone has no idea of who or what James Whale is. Since she is a very pious woman, Hanna is unable to explain clearly and instead she alludes to his being gay on a later occasion: "His [sin] is the worst! The unspeakable. The deed no man can name without shame."[5] Understanding that the young man is straight, she instantly tries to make him an ally in the cause of supporting and protecting their employer.

I would like to return to the scene, when Clay Boone appears on screen for the first time. This happens in a very peculiar way: First, the camera shows us his face, then his feet and his hands. One feels compelled to ask why Boone is presented like that, moreover: why in this order - face, feet, hands?

The audience very likely has a notion of who James Whale is or what made him famous. *Gods and Monsters* was promoted with catch phrases like "the father of Frankenstein" (referring to the monster, of course) or "the creator of the monster" (referring to its presentation on screen).[6] Note that these designations make him a modern version of Victor Frankenstein. To put it differently, with regard to the subtitle of Shelley's novel, the director turns into the new "modern Prometheus" - another clue we could follow up. Only so much: Prometheus is a half god in Greek mythology

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combining two roles, that of being a benefactor to mankind and that of disobeying Zeus' order. Whale himself - both in real life and in this movie - was quite irritated about the fact that everybody seemed to know his horror movies, but less so with the ones he regarded as artistically more important (like *Showboat* or *The Journey Back*, the latter dealing with World War I). Director Bill Condon takes for granted that his audience knows about the *Frankenstein* movies and the novel and this knowledge provides an additional layer of meaning for both the plot and the images of the movie. Even more so, because we know more than Clay does which creates even more suspense in the course of events when we realise that something dangerous is building up slowly.

But let me get back to the point I made earlier: the introduction of Clay Boone by way of showing his head, feet and hands. I would like to start with parallels to both novel and original movie: Being familiar with Shelley's novel, we realise that we see body parts and remember that Victor Frankenstein had fabricated his creature assembling limbs from several corpses. In his account of how he brought the creature to life he describes how he resolved to "make a being of a gigantic stature".[7] In Whale's movie, these parts of the body - head, feet, hands - are very prominent: Karloff wears extremely big shoes, which emphasises how huge his monster is. The hands appear to be very large, partly due to the fact, that they stick out from his jacket. In a very famous scene, the monster accidentally strangles a child because it misjudges its strength. Needless to say, Karloff playing the monster, his face has become *the* image for the creature.

Secondly, the order follows Whale's interest in his new gardener: After having retired from Hollywood, the former director returns to his artistic roots - he spends his time sketching and painting. (Actually, quite a few of his paintings have survived and appear in the movie.) Therefore, after he successfully started to befriend Boone, he asks him to sit for him and allow him to sketch his head: "You have the most marvellous head … the most architectural skull."[8]

Parallel to Karloff's presentation the large feet underline how big Boone is. Moreover, they serve as pars pro toto for his whole body: Together with Whale the audience watches the gardener doing his work wearing only a vest. Clay Boone does not at all resemble a monster. One cannot help but notice his sculpture-like bodily structure, indicating the young man's physical strength, his youth and beauty. This is a striking contrast to his elegantly dressed, but frail and elderly counterpart.

In both novel and original movie (although the circumstances are slightly different), the Creature kills for the first time by accident. In the novel, the Creature tells its creator about the fate of his young brother William whom he had planned to abduct and "educate him as my companion and friend": "The child still struggled, and loaded me with epithets which

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carried despair to my heart; I grasped his throat to silence him, and in a moment he lay dead at my feet."[9] After Frankenstein destroys the female companion he had made on the creature's request, it strangles Henry Clerval, Victor's best friend and a little later Elizabeth, his newly wed wife.[10]

Turning back to *Gods and Monsters*, it becomes clear only in hindsight, why Boone's hands feature so prominently in the introduction of his character. Since Whale's painful memory flashbacks occur in shrinking intervals and the former director fears to lose his mind altogether, he has scripted one last 'movie' or project - his own death from his gardener's hands.[11]

Having mentioned this scheme let me skip a considerable part of the film and stop near to its end. In the meantime, we have watched the main characters come closer, argue and reconcile, because both have something the other one wants. That is on Clay's side openness and youth and on Whale's a nice house, an interesting life and fame - many stories to tell. Every now and then Whale tries how far he can go describing his gay lifestyle, before Boone loses his temper and Boone tries to overcome his homophobia in order to establish a real friendship.

Whale even invites him to accompany him to a reception organised by George Cukor, a big gathering of everybody famous and important in Hollywood. Boone accepts, completely unaware of the fact that Whale is showing off with his escort, whom everybody takes as his new and very handsome young boy friend. What he cannot ignore is his not fitting in there. In the course of the party, a reunion of Whale's monsters takes place.[12] Boris Karloff and Elsa Lanchester, the actors of the Creature and its bride, meet their much-admired director. Clay Boone is not only witnessing this, but joining them - another signal that he is a monster as well. There even is a shot where Clay's face is zoomed next to Karloff's, thus illustrating that we see former and future creature.[13] The party is cut short by sudden rain and they arrive at Whale's home absolutely drenched.

The following part of the film, the 'stormy night' or according to the dvd menu the chapter titled 'Monsters in the Air', marks its climax. When meeting for the first time, Whale had noticed the tattoo on Boone's arm: "Death before Dishonour". Boone had told him he got it during his service as a Marine.[14] Clay allows the older man to believe that he fought in Korea. A little later, Whale in return informed the young man that he had served in World War I, trying to build up a connection: both men were soldiers. [15] In the stormy night sequence, Whale comes back to this asking Clay: "Do you believe in mercy killing?"[16] The young man replies and this is one of the few instances he speaks about himself.

Given that Boone stands in for the monster here, there is another parallel to Shelley's novel. In chapters 3 to 8, we find the Creature's narrative. This is not only a considerable part of the story regarding its

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length, but particularly important for its underlying discourse of morals. In almost all cases theatrical and filmic re-workings ignore this part and deal only with the reactions of those who meet the creature and are shocked and appalled by its hideous outward appearance. The focus lies on the reactions of the society, not on the inner life of the monster. After Frankenstein has heard the Creature's account of its life, he recognises that it is capable of fine sensations, that it has a noble and sensitive soul.[17] Its corruption is due to the evil it encounters, e.g. the rejection it has to suffer by its creator and everybody crossing its path.

We find a parallel scene in the movie: During the stormy night scene, Boone confesses he never went to war and never killed a man. He tells Whale about his father, particularly about the humiliation he had to suffer and how he ridiculed him after it was confirmed that the young man was unable to go to war due to medical reasons. Since then, Boone lost close contact to his relatives and to others in general. He is nothing more than a drifter, a vagabond. Even the woman he thought of as his girlfriend seeks only brief pleasure with him. Although she recognises some of his qualities, (e.g., "You are fun to be with."), in her view, his innocence is only immaturity and she tells him rudely: "You're not marriage material. You're not even boyfriend material. You're a kid."[18] To add up, there are no family ties and no friends. Therefore, it comes as no surprise he feels proud when Whale signals his interest to become acquainted with the young man. Again, unsurprisingly for the audience his 'pub friends' make fun of him because he is convinced that Whale is interested in him as a person. In their opinion, there is no doubt that it is merely Boone's body, which is attracting the older man.

Let me turn to the novel once more: By way of watching a family of refugees, the De Lacey family, the creature is able not only to learn a language, to read and write, but to develop his humanity. Listening to them and their life story, it finds out about the "strange system of human society": "I learned that the possessions most esteemed […] were high and unsullied descent united with riches. A man might be respected with only one of these advantages; but without either he was considered […] as a vagabond and a slave, doomed to waste his powers for the profits of the chosen few! And what was I?"[19]

The central question stated by the Creature in the novel is posed by both main characters in *Gods and Monsters*. This description of British society written in 1818 still held true for the beginning of the twentieth century (Whale was born in 1896). In the movie, during an interview Whale tries to establish a respectable middle-class background although in fact he came from a very poor family. After he had turned fourteen, his father took him out of school and sent him to work in a factory, unable to understand that his child had different needs and abilities. On one occasion, Whale finds an

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interesting description with regard to his parents: "I was an aberration in that household … a freak of nature. They meant no harm. They were like a family of farmers who've been given a giraffe and don't know what to do with it except to harness him to a plough."[20] This makes Whale a monster as well, but concerning his later life to a certain extent a creature of his own making. World War I makes and breaks him as person and artist. Only the war enabled him to break free from restrictions laid on him by society. The simple fact that so many of his generation died in the course of it, opens up an opportunity for Whale to find his way into the world of theatre despite of his background. He achieves to climb up the social ladder, something notoriously difficult in class-conscious Britain. The anti-war play *Journey's End* is a big success, brings him to Hollywood, where he starts out as a dialogue director for Howard Hughes. Today he is still famous for the horror movies he directed (*The Invisible Man*, *The Mummy*, *Frankenstein*, *The Bride of Frankenstein*). However, as I said, the war did not only make him, but broke him as well. In 1942, working on *The Road Back*, a sequel to *All quiet on the Western Front*, he loses control over the production due to changes inside Universal, the film studio. The movie is heavily recut and Whale walks out of the project and leaves Hollywood altogether.

But let us return to *Gods and Monsters*. Now, many years later, memories from his war experiences come back. Not only the horror of the trenches, but especially the memories related to a soldier called Barnett he loved and who died in most gruesome circumstances under his command.[21] Whale is harrowed by survivor's guilt and has the feeling that his dead friend calls for him. Boone is deeply touched by his story and the subsequent description of his sorry state since the stroke, so that when the old man asks him to put on his gas mask for a final sitting, he complies. Through this, Clay's individual features become invisible: "Your very human body against the inhuman mask."[22] Assuming that former marine Boone still has his trained killing instinct, Whale uses sexuality to provoke the straight man, to push him into a violent reaction - in order to bring the monster out. To put it differently, he treats him like a character in a movie, like one of his actors who do his bidding. He uses Boone ignoring that the young man is more than some material to work with: "You could be my second monster!" Accordingly, Boone refuses to take on the role Whale has assigned to him and after a brief struggle tells him so: "I am not your monster!"[23]

After this stormy night scene, Whale realises that his plan failed entirely. Therefore, he changes his attitude towards the young man completely, quits pushing Boone into the role of the monster and using him according to his own ideas and needs. Instead, he finally sees him for what he really is, a person with a similar longing for companionship and belonging. As a token for this change, he leaves him the original sketch of the monster's head with only a short note on the back of the page: "To Clayton - Friend?"[24]

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He addresses him by his full name, not its abbreviated form so that his young friend turns from 'Clay' into a person of equal standing. Through this, Whale himself is able to shed the role of Victor Frankenstein, the modern Prometheus, and switches to that of a fellow monster, asking Boone for his friendship. However, Whale does not wait for Boone's reply, but follows his suicide plan nevertheless - he drowns himself in his swimming pool. Floating on the water donning his favourite suit, Whale now resembles the movie monster of his own making.[25]

In secondary literature on the novel, Frankenstein's Creature is considered as an impersonation of Rousseau's idea of a natural state of innocence, before he turns evil due to the mistreatment he suffers by Frankenstein and others who misread him taking his outward appearance as indication for his character. In the movie, there are no characters looking like monsters. As Whale points out: "The only monsters are in here." tapping his forehead.[26] Clayton Boone is an extremely good-looking young man, James Whale a very elegant and interesting person. So what is the monstrous about them?

Notes

[1] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Deluxe Edition 2004, s.v. "Frankenstein".
[2] Bill Condon, *Gods and Monsters* (DVD, London: DownTown Pictures Ltd., UK/USA, 1998), time: 0:17:20.
[3] Ibid., 0:05:20.
[4] Ibid., 0:25:15.
[5] Ibid., 0:45:10.
[6] Ibid., dvd cover (back).
[7] Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus* (edited with an introduction and notes by Maurice Hindle. London: Penguin, 1992), 52. Frankenstein gives a practical reason for this: "The minuteness of the parts formed a great hindrance to my speed." (Ibid.)
[8] Condon, *Gods and Monsters*, 0:23:23.
[9] Shelley, 138.
[10] Shelley, 169, 189 respectively.
[11] In a conversation after lunch, Whale tries to persuade Boone that he is not interested in him sexually: "Don't be ridiculous. I know a real man like you would break my neck if I so much as laid a finger on you. Besides, you are not my type." (Condon, *Gods and Monsters*, 0:50:15)
[12] Ibid., 1:10:50.
[13] Ibid., 0:45:10. There is another instance: During the stormy night sequence (1:14:30), on entering Whale's bedroom Clay's head appears next to the framed sketch of the monster (1:15:38).

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[14] Ibid., 0:05:32.

[15] Ibid., 0:57:55.

[16] Ibid., 1:17:07. There is an earlier attempt by Whale to get to know more about Boone's war experience. During lunch, he asks him: "In Korea, did you kill anyone? … Did you ever slay anyone hand-to-hand?" Ibid., 0:47:40, 0:48:05 respectively.

[17] Shelley, 141. Condon lets Whale mention something very similar: "The monster never receives any of my jibes. He's noble. Noble and misunderstood." Condon, *Gods and Monsters*, 0:47:28.

[18] Ibid., 0:39:00. His confession takes place, again, during the stormy night sequence (1:17:25).

[19] Shelley, 116.

[20] Condon, *Gods and Monsters*, 0:29:58.

[21] Ibid., 0:58:25. Whale tells the account of Barnett's death: 1:19:57.

[22] Ibid., 1:24:11.

[23] Ibid., 1:25:00 - 1:26:37.

[24] Ibid., 1:31:27. We learn about the dedication only at the end of the film, when Clayton shows the sketch to his son: 1:36:22.

[25] Ibid., 1:32:09 and 1:33:50.

[26] Ibid., 1:13:10.

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'It's Morning in America': The Rhetoric of Religion in the Music of *The Lost Boys* and the Deserved Death of the 1980s Vampire

Sorcha Ní Fhlainn

Abstract

The Lost Boys (1987) is an effective and diverse discourse in how 1980s vampires act as portals for societal dysfunction. This film, above any other 1980s vampiric representation, explores the roles of teenagers as dysfunctional outcasts due to the breakdown of the home. The use of particular songs in the film relies heavily on the notion of being 'lost' and being 'saved' as a religious narrative. The songs illustrate, with alarming clarity, that the only redemption from the increasing problems brought about by the children of the hippy generation is one of religious salvation. These songs, *Cry Little Sister*, *Lost in the Shadows (The Lost Boys)* and *I Still Believe* are included at critical moments in the film's narrative to underline this argument. These vampires represent the darker side of the era that was coined by Ronald Reagan as the "Morning in America". This film, despite being a chic representation of 1980s culture, attempts to steer the lost generation of the 1980s, in its musical and ideological narrative, back to Reagan's ideologue and permits the vampire, in monstrous fashion, to die without remorse.

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In this paper I shall discuss the repeated messages that are presented through music in the vampire film, *The Lost Boys*, made in 1987. This film is one of the most famous and most recognised vampire films of the 1980s and has enjoyed cult status for many reasons: its recognisable soundtrack, its young stars and its absolute success in capturing the *zeitgeist*. The successful narrative of the film in the contexts of gay representations, the breakdown of the family and the over-arcing fear of AIDS are interesting, but it is also counter pointed with musical representations and arguments of the Religious Right. The choice of songs for the film, and the songs that shall be discussed here, seem at first to be odd or wholly incompatible when used in major points of the film, but as we shall see through both illustrating and understanding the motives of the film, the inclusion of these songs: *I Still*

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Believe performed by Tim Capello, *Lost in The Shadows* performed by Lou Gramm and *Cry Little Sister* performed by Gerard McMann, serve a specific function in terms of Religious Narrative, and reinforce the belief that these 1980s vampires- above all other post-modern representations of vampires- deserve to die without remorse. The rise of the gay narrative in vampire novels and films has been explored through many post-modern vampire works. Through this humanised condition, the vampire has his own specific mortal coil, which, in the 1980s, becomes the very detriment by which he is cast out of society to die. Our post-modern vampires are part of our society representing the fringes of our fragile state. Bearing in mind the rise of gay rights and the beginning of an open dialogue on the subject of sexuality, vampires of the 1980s become openly gay, but at their peril.

In discussing the scene(s) in the film where Michael (Jason Patric) is introduced to the vampire gang, we see his immediate focus shift from the lukewarm affections for the hippie girl Star (Jami Gertz) to the leader of the vampire pack, David (Kiefer Sutherland). Through looking at the shots where Michael follows the boys on their motorcycles on the beach of Santa Carla, the camera focuses more on the face of David than of Star. Only through David's repeated insistence that Michael keep up with the gang works, Star remains silent. She is the bait for Michael, not the prize. In the scene, which is sound tracked by the song *Lost In The Shadows* by Lou Gramm, the lyrics all signify the consistent theme of exploration, new territory and loneliness. In the context of seeing Michael and David face off on their motorbikes, it leads to the conclusion that this relationship between these two boys will be of wanton sexuality and competitiveness. It is David who fascinates Michael, and thus every encounter Michael has with David can be viewed as a form of gay rhetoric. The clandestine gay relations that follow in the film can be seen especially when Michael is turned into a half-vampire by drinking David's blood. This new 1980s condition of half-vampirism can be decoded as this: while Michael has experimented with a darker side of sexuality; he is not outwardly gay and can thus be 'saved'. Also, with respect to Reagan's Presidency, the 'Morning in America', Lou Gramm's lyrics seem to be fitting not only for vampires, but also for gay protesters who were virtually ignored by Reagan and his administration. "One must hide when the sun gets higher, I don't know what this madness means"[1] Indeed if this gay movement is to exist, it must stay in the shadows, hidden from the image which Reagan vehemently projected. This can also be seen in the physical location of the vampire lair- it is a sunken forgotten hotel, hidden away from the small town. The lair, like the gay theme of the film is kept underground, away from the harsh daylight of Reagan's politics. They are a hidden force by day and night, perpetually in the shadows.

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The breakdown of the Emerson family in *The Lost Boys* can be largely blamed on the hippie generation, of which the mother, Lucy, is a proud member. In the opening credits of the film, she is crooning to songs such as 'Groovin' on a Sunday Afternoon' and when we first meet her hippie father, we notice he is growing marijuana on his windowsill. Soon after the family's arrival in Santa Carla, Lucy (Diane Weist) begins to have a relationship with her new employer Max, which signals clearly that this mother, while attempting to create a structure of family for her children, openly wrecks it by having a 'boyfriend'. This is one clear fracture in the Family values narrative, where the mother invites trouble into the family home. Lawrence Rickels, author of *The Vampire Lectures* lays the blame not only on the single mother, but sees it as an eternal perpetuation of attempting to replace lost parental figures, as the grandmother of the piece is also missing. Lucy is attempting to replace her missing husband with vampire suitor Max, while her father, Grandpa, is trying to replace his dead wife with the widow Johnson. Thus, we cannot lay full blame on the single mother because she is attempting to form a nuclear family, mimicking her father in the process. "The grandfather returns …from his date with Widow Johnson, from an exercise in substitution… then, on automatic repeat, she [Lucy] turns to replace her ex-husband with her video store boss…"[2]

Another major factor in this indication of family values gone array is the consistent use of The Doors front man Jim Morrison. Morrison, an icon of the hippie generation and whose song, *People are Strange*, features in the opening credits has great symbolic meaning. Not only does the song openly comment on the diverse nature of the Lost generation of punks and rockers of the 1980s as featured in the opening credits but, in the lair of the Lost Boys, there is a huge poster of Morrison in his famous faux Christ Pose. This is extremely potent as the camera focuses in on this poster as Michael drinks David's blood and subsequently becomes a half-vampire. Morrison's image serves not only as a nod to counterculture but, in his faux Christ pose, acts as a false god due to what the Religious Right might interpret as insulting. As Michael drinks the blood, and Morrison's image is clearly seen in the background, the theme of the film *Cry Little Sister* is included. This song, by Gerard McMann, acts as the rebuttal on behalf of the Religious Right for such imagery. The song, which has overtones of both the gothic, signalled by the use of instruments such as synthesizers and an organ, and a choir of young children singing acts as both a alignment to 'dark culture' music and a Religious Service. The song is a reflection of the cracks between the two ideological settings, but the lyrics convey the religious message. The song refers to us all as Brothers and Sisters, which is directly taken from the Roman Catholic Church's Penitential Rite:

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> I confess to you Almighty God, and to you my Brothers
> and Sisters that I have sinned through my own fault, in my
> thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what
> I have failed to do…[3]

There is more to hand here than meets the eye: Michael strikes more than a mere resemblance to Jim Morrison, with similar hair and a boyish pout. So the use of Morrison as a faux Christ symbol is of a twofold nature. Morrison was known for his open sexual experimentation and his untimely death from drug overdose. The Lost Boys' attitude to sexuality is only ever expressed homoerotically; as we never see them act sexually in any form with Star, the female half-vampire, leading us to more than a stylistic comparison to Morrison. Joel Schumacher comments on this in the Director's commentary on the film, stating that "The Lost Boys would be big 'Doors' fans, as am I, because of Morrison's mixture of raw sexuality and a fascination with death".[4] Also, exemplified in Gavin Baddeley's guide to dark subculture *Goth Chic*, Morrison was, apparently, a member of a practising Wiccan coven and had allegedly drunk blood in ceremonies with his wife, Patricia Kennealy. Morrison, according to Baddeley, had engaged in this practise of drinking blood again during his affair with Ingrid Thompson.

> Both were heavily into coke at the time, and one night after
> going through nearly a film can's worth, Ingrid remarked to
> Jim that she sometimes drank blood. Jim insisted that they
> have some immediately. After some hesitation, Ingrid
> managed to slice her palm. Jim caught the blood in a
> champagne glass.[5]

While Morrison's demise came through repeated abuse of cocaine and other drugs, Michael in *The Lost Boys* does not share this same fate. He cannot bring himself to abuse his body in any drug-induced form, and thus can redeem himself. In the film, blood drinking is not only the cue for vampiric identification, but also a jaded drug metaphor. Nina Auerbach highlights this argument by stating that:

> The lost boys of 1987, dull eyed, stunted and pale, have
> become casualties of the Republican's war against drugs:
> they are so burnt out that the anti-drug message of official
> culture seems to have stifled all transformations or
> transforming conceptions. The metamorphoses of 1980s
> vampires are a cautionary warning, not an expansion of
> possibilities.[6]By seeing the vampirism as sexual deviancy

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and drugs, the music reflects the arguments of the Religious Right, stating that the highs are merely an illusion of rebellion. The overbearing tones of repeated, bloated American ideology leaves no cultural space, and permits no tolerance for such activity. This is the direct reason why these vampires are permitted to die. The Lost Boys are not fully-fledged anti-Christ's, because they seek the stability of a family environment and yet; they are not wholly or morally permissible because of their vampire state. As a result, they do not merge in with the binary code of good or evil in American culture terms and are not culturally salvageable. The music in the film acts as a warning to the youth culture not to follow in their steps, not only because it would be against the Reagan Administrations' ideology but because there is no cultural space for them.

   In the chorus of the song *Cry Little Sister* by Gerard McMann, there is, along with the 'Brothers and Sisters' references, another theme of religious descent. Sounding as though it were a recitation of the Ten Commandments: "Thou Shall not Fall, Thou Shall not Die, Thou Shall not fear, Thou Shall not Kill"[7] is heard repeatedly at moments of sin and temptation and finally salvation- such as Michael's initiation, when Michael and Star have sex and later on, when David is killed by Michael. The song acts as an accompaniment to the rite of passage that Michael goes through and explicitly depicts itself as the salvation of his soul. Because Michael is a half-vampire, he can be saved and all of his other sins are pardonable. In looking at the film in these terms, Michael has had a 'coming of age' moment and now can be seen as a man, not a boy. Michael, taking on the responsibility of murdering the head vampire Max, with the help of his hippie grandfather, has, in turn become the new father of the family. He replaces the 'lost' divorced father the family left in Phoenix, Arizona, only to become a symbolic Phoenix himself- he rises from the ashes of his own learning experience to become a fully responsible adult. Unlike J.M Barrie's Lost Boys who choose to remain boys forever by staying in Neverland, Michael rejects the false promises of remaining eternally youthful and in perpetual boyhood due to the over-arcing need for a paternal figure. He assumes this role because the only alternative is the 'bad father', which his mother has exposed the family to.

   'The Lost Boys' are presented as the victims of single parent families- David and the gang being the product of Max's faux vampire family without a maternal figure, and the Emerson family being without a father

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figure. Thus, the problems that reoccur in the film are directly blaming the previous generation for the lack of stability in the home. Politically, this is a direct correlation for the advent of the sexual liberation movement in the 1960s, the drug culture and the scars of Vietnam. The idea of re- constituting families to bring together the family unit under the Reagan ideologue is monstrous as it does not address the issue of the family break up- but actually invites the trouble into the home in the first place. In both *The Lost Boys* and *Fright Night*, another vampire discourse involving single parent families of the 1980s, the single mother invites the vampire into the home at considerable cost. Darryl Jones adds further to the argument:

> Both *Fright Night* and *The Lost Boys* are concerned with single parenthood and its effects on teenage children, and both feature identical scenes where separated mothers inadvertently invite into their homes vampires posing as suitors, replacement fathers for mixed-up teens.[8]

 In this single act, the evil of attempting to re-configure the nuclear family is a greater source of threat than the single parent family. While this discourse is a familiar one in terms of the 'bad father' or patriarch, it is focused in on in *The Lost Boys* as a source of the problem, which fits the Religious Right argument, while the solution is far more monstrous.

The last song to exemplify the Religious Right's narrative in the film is Tim Capello's *I Still Believe*. Capello, Tina Turner's saxophonist, whose notable appearance in the film can be deciphered as an attempt to appear overly masculine, while it must be noted that he is covered in baby oil and wearing electric pink hot pants. The significance of this song cannot be underestimated however, as the placement of the song in a beach party scene acts as a warning to the misled youth of America- the scene being a perfect reflection of 1960s free spirited parties. In Capello's song, Jesus and the singer are being put to the test of temptation and the test of faith. This musical emphasis is blatant at this point of explicit temptations for both Lucy, the mother of the Emerson family as she encounters the head vampire Max, and for Michael, as he first encounters the girl love interest Star. The lyrics of the song are quite simply an explicit Jesus narrative, beginning with the lyrics:

> "I've been in a cave, for forty days, with only a spark to light my way- I wanna give out, I wanna give in- this is our time, this is our sin." [9]

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The significance of this song is that the seeds for sex have been sown and as Michael's younger brother Sam (played by Corey Haim) exclaims immediately after Michael follows Star, "I'm at the mercy of your sex glands bud!"[10]

Indeed the song acts as a warning against sexual temptations and narrates a tale of suffering and redemption of religious proportions after being tested on faith, and thus, clandestinely promoting abstinence. The overriding cultural fears of the late 1980s when equated with sex, which this scene does, is due to the sequenced encounters of new sexual partners for both Lucy and Michael. This is the AIDS narrative as sexual deviancy and vampirism is equated with sin and diseased veins.

David J Skal writes of the rotten blood that pulsed in America's veins in the 1980s and that between Reagan's rhetoric and the rise in cases of the disease, America was rotting from the inside. Reagan's call for mass purification struck a deep response in a public that suddenly believed that much of the nation's blood was indeed rotten, and as black as its sins.[11]

In one extremely conservative musical tone, the equation of sin, religious wrongdoing and AIDS are equated as being related to one another through promiscuous sex. While the film does indeed contain a love scene, there are some subtle indications that the use of contraception is advocated. Just before the love scene in the film, Michael is confused by his vampiric state and encounters Star. They make love and from that point on, Michael sets about his task of murdering The Lost Boys and 'coming of age'. It can therefore be seen that the musical dialogue is to place homoeroticism as irresponsibility, and heterosexual sex as ascending into adult male responsibility. The musical inclusion at the love scene is *Cry Little Sister*, which, taken purely from a literal perspective, promotes men and women bonding together. When Michael is being turned into a vampire after the motorcycle chase, he is given a bottle of blood to drink from instead of the usual ritual of vampiric blood from the vampire's open vein. It is David's blood, we are informed, but the reasoning for it being kept in a bottle is ambiguous in the film. I believe that this is for two reasons: the first is that the bottle of blood is a direct symbol for blood testing for HIV and AIDS in 1987, when everyone's blood is subject to scrutiny, similar to a vial of blood to be tested. Secondly, it can be equated with safe sex, a promotion that no liquids (blood or semen) can be taken directly from the source, as this would be in violation of responsibility in the days of rotten blood.

As Michael is transformed into a half vampire, he becomes too sick to eat or to drink, except during his initiation with the Lost Boys. When he attempts to drink milk, when looking after his brother Sam, he spits it out and spills the contents of the carton. Symbolically, this indicates both sickness at the most basic level, where one is simply too sick to drink wholesome milk

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and also a darker comment on the spilling of semen, as the moment is contrasted with the sounds of the Lost Boys surrounding the house on their motorbikes and Michael feeling the onset of his half-vampire condition. Here, the character is conflicted between abandoning his wholesome self and his family responsibilities for a sexual thrill, which Tim Capello's song warned him about. As Nina Auerbach concludes on this topic, "While Michael's transformation makes him sicker and sicker…from paralysing allergies to food, sun and other sources of nourishment – his mother is gallivanting around with her pompous boyfriend."[12] This lack of nourishment is the underlying problem in 1980s America- while the less focus is on the construct of the family; the more the cultural sickness spreads. The finale between the half-vampire Michael and the Vampire Pack leader David embellishes on blood as disease and the justification of the vampires deserved death. In the throws of the physical battle, David snarls "It's too late… my blood is in your veins!" Michael responds to this ominous statement by declaring: "so is mine!"[13] These statements are not mere retorts but symbolic of the refusal of ongoing sexual experimentation, the promotion of safe sex or better still, abstinence, and the vampire as knowing contaminator. Drawing these symbols together, it is clearly a Religious Right criticism of the single parent families of the 1980s who have held on to the liberal ideals of the 1960s counterculture generation. As David is in the death throws of vampirey, having being impaled, the song *Cry Little Sister* is heard for the final time. As the music mimics the musical variation of the Ten Commandments, 'Thou Shall Not Kill' is particularly emphasised, as we see the vampire's face alter from demonic to angelic. It seems that only in Christian death are we to be beautiful.

These motifs and musical narratives, however clandestine, do indicate beyond doubt that the forces of a sinister Right wing agenda are at work in this film. The Lost Boys, who idolise the music and trappings of a Jim Morrison lifestyle, cannot find the cultural space to practise it above ground, and so must take to the shadows of temptations and drug induced fragile 'trips'. The swaying of Michael is noted in all of the music chosen for the film, but exclusively holds its narrative in the pieces discussed. It is in these pieces that the true nature of this vampire film is revealed in all of its conservative tones. Vampires deserve to die, and here, they die in spectacular form. The overall lack of religious emblems in the film is quite interesting, while the ideology remains firmly intact. It is not important to bear crosses to repel vampires because that requires faith, exemplified in *Fright Night*, when Chris Sarandon's vampire next-door snarls at an aging, cross bearing Roddy McDowell "You have to have faith for that to work on me!"[14] Here, in Santa Carla, we do not need to have faith, but, fitting into Reagan's saturated rhetoric, we have to be seen and to be heard to have faith.

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Notes

[1] Lou Gramm. *Lost in the Shadows (The Lost Boys)* Song available on The Lost Boys Soundtrack. © 1987. Lyrics for the songs can be found at www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/lostboys/lostintheshadows.htm. I could find no officially published lyrics and consequently had to consult these lyrics and my own interpretations. (10/042005)

[2] Lawrence Rickels. *The Vampire Lectures*. University of Minnesota Press. Minneapolis P 210

[3] "Penitential Rite": found at

www.catholic-forum.com/saints/pray0065.htm (19/07/2005)

[4] Joel Schumacher. Director's commentary on *The Lost Boys*. (1987) 2 Disk Special Edition released September 2004

[5] Gavin Baddeley. *Goth Chic: A Connoisseur's Guide to Dark Culture*. Plexus Publications. London. P 173

[6] Nina Auerbach. *Our Vampires, Ourselves*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago. P 167

[7] Michael Mainieri, Gerard McMann. *Cry Little Sister*. Performed by Gerard McMann. Featured on *The Lost Boys* Soundtrack. Published by Warner Bros. Music   Corporation.   Found   at www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/lostboys/crylittlesister.htm (10/04/2005)

[8] Darryl Jones. *Horror: A Thematic History in Fiction and Film*. Arnold Publications. London. P. 97

[9] Tim Capello. *I Still Believe*. Song featured on *The Lost Boys* soundtrack. © 1987

Lyrics   found   at   www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/lostboys/istillbelieve.htm (10/04/2005)

[10] *The Lost Boys*. Directed by Joel Schumacher © 1987. Warner Brothers.

[11] David J. Skal. *The Monster Show*. Faber and Faber, New York (2001 edition) P 345

[12] Nina Auerbach. *Our Vampires, Ourselves*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago P 168

[13] *The Lost Boys* (1987) Director Joel Schumacher. Warner Bros.

This scene is one of the most important in terms of vampires as plague carriers and infesters. Again the focus of the entire battle between David and Michael is of 'giving in', companionship and desire, followed by rhetoric of disease and infection. In this particular scene, it is no longer a clandestine comment on homophobia and condemnation by the Religious Right but an explicit unveiling of the dominant social commentary.

[14] *Fright Night*. Director: Tom Holland © 1985. Roddy McDowell's television vampire hunter is attempting to thwart the evil vampire next door but cannot actually believe that vampires exist. The remark, made by vampire

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next door Chris Sarandon, illustrates the overall lack of depth that is felt culturally in relation to religion in the 1980s. Religion is used as a totem, not as a faith.

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God Hates Us All: Kant, Radical Evil and the Monstrous Human in Heavy Metal

Niall Scott

Abstract

The recent release of Metallica's documentary 'Some Kind of Monster' and the proclamation of the band's identity as 'This Monster Lives' provides an explicit statement of a familiar theme of monstrosity in the culture surrounding Heavy Metal. This notion of monstrosity is linked to conceptions and images of human evil evident in lyrics and art work amongst other Metal themes. In this paper I will explore Kant's conception of radical evil and the evil in human nature in relation to discourses of evil and human nature in Heavy Metal culture. One of Kant's discussions on evil In Religions within the boundaries of pure Reason alone sees it in terms of a vice in the predisposition to humanity. He describes this as the human inclination to create a worth for oneself in the opinion of others occasioned by the attempts of others to gain a hated superiority of over us". Recent releases by bands such as Slayer (God hates us All), Deicide Metallica , Hatebreed and Marilyn Manson to name but a few, provide opportunities for an exegesis of Kant's conception of the evil in human nature as well as a critique of it. I argue that the commitment to the celebration of the monstrous in Heavy Metal lyrics is ambiguous. It can be read as a positive pursuit of human identity, or is dependent on human identity in the religious history of (satanic) evil as well as the desire to depart from it to an existential manifestation of evil, such as that embraced in Anton Zsander Lavey's Church of Satan.

Key Words: Kant, evil, Heavy Metal, Metallica, Slayer, diabolical, Satan satanic.

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In the world of heavy metal culture, the use of themes and metaphor of evil, the monster, the monstrous and monstrosity will be common knowledge to those who partake as well those who observe from afar. Consider one of the key festivals- Monsters of Rock, founded in 1980 at Castle Donington, England or names of bands, lyrical content and imagery that show that monsters and metal go together like vegetables and vegetarians. The following presentation emerges from a course on Kant and Kantian ethics in an attempt to explore a creative approach to teaching Kant's conception of radical evil to a class of third year undergraduate students following a course on Kantian Ethics at the University of Central Lancashire. Here, for the purposes of this short conference presentation I will provide the

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material that demonstrates how in the lecture setting, these aims were fulfilled.

This paper can be divided into three areas; one, an interest in the exploration of the manifestation male monstrosity in heavy metal culture, two, a desire to engage in a deeper understanding of the nature of discourses evil in Metal culture, and three, to use these themes as a pedagogic tool in helping students gain an understanding of Kant's rather difficult view of radical evil in human nature.

In the opening cacophony of Slayer's most recent musical presentation to the world comes the proclamation: "God Hates Us All, God hates us all". The lyrics in the second track 'Disciple', display a vehement and aggressive rejection of Christian theism, followed by what Kerry King writes as 'his own philosophy':

> "I hate every one equally, you can't tear that out of me; No segregation-separation; just me in my world of enemies; I never wanted to be God's disciple I'll never be the one to blindly follow; I'll never be the one to bear the cross-disciple I reject this fuckin' race; I despise this fuckin' place."[1]

This portrayal of a character (perhaps a Job like figure), both accepting of and promoting a supreme misanthropy, opens up a portal into the monstrous- the subject of hate and the eulogising of a venomous dissemination of hate. The album/cd sleeve has more of such lyrics, concerning subjects ranging from genocide to witch execution, through to proclamations against Christianity and expressions of individual hate written out in red ink, as additions to the book of Job. This text is presented with passages crossed out, circled and annotated. However, the album moves to a rather different conclusion from the biblical Job, rather than reconciliation, it advances themes of separation, gladly accepting rejection and revelling in it Below, we will move on to consider how this provides an example of Kant's second and third version of the propensity to evil, which he considers to be human depravity.

In the same musical genre, but on a different theme, Metallica's recent contribution in the title track of their album St Anger an image is presented of the monstrous male, and in the whole album of the band as a monster. Here they identify directly with the monster as a tormented individual stuck caught in a state of addiction and self loathing, yet needing to be a 'family man'[2] ('the Metallica Family'), a member of society and the part of the successful corporate identity that is Metallica. The monster is individual and corporate, as group. It expresses itself in hate- hatred of others, but a depressed hate, a one of being tired of monotony and boredom.

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In deep need of a therapeutic solution in this crisis, the Documentary film 'Some Kind of Monster'[3] follows a sort of healing process to allow the corporate goal and creative force to drive on. The use of the monster metaphor identifies not only the band in crisis, the band as a living, breathing leviathan, but also heavy metal as monster and in the title of book narrating the making of the documentary, the film project is treated as monster: "This book is about a period when the monster had three heads. It was a time when metallica, Phil Towle and Berlinger –Sinofky were all struggling to produce something in conjuction with the others"[4] The monster here is the band trying to make an album, Phil Towle the therapist working with the band and the documentary film being made of this process.

So what do these and other examples in metal culture and lyrics have to do with Kant? Kant's theory of radical evil supposes that humans have a propensity to evil, expressed through the capacity to the incorporation of maxims that lead to evil. This is a feature of human beings, not related to a natural state, which would be an animal state. Evil is as much a product of reason and the will as morality is. It needs to be freely chosen. It is a sophisticated alteration of moral principles, of which he identifies three kinds: Kant divides the propensity to evil into three areas:

1. the general weakness of the human heart in complying with the adopted maxims (the frailty of human nature;
2. the propensity to adulterate moral incentives with immoral ones;
3. to adopt evil maxims the depravity of human nature or the human heart.[5]

These emerge from a view of the human being predisposed to three definitional spheres:

1. The predisposition to animality- a living being vices grafted on of savagery- bestial vices: gluttony, lust and wild lawless ness
2. The predisposition to humanity- a rational being self love leads to comparison and the 'inclination to gain worth in the opinion of others' vices of culture: envy, jealousy, rivalry, ingratitude, joy in other's misfortune. These are diabolical vices
3. The predisposition to personality- a responsible being[6].

It is in the first two that we can locate the human propensity to evil. He does not permit a total commitment to evil, in that such a state is reserved for a diabolical being We can thus raise the question of whether monstrosity as a manifestation of evil in the human only ever going to be an imitation of the diabolical. The propensity to evil can be neither this nor animal, as in a

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purely sensuous nature there is not the moral content, nor the capacity for free choice that would allow the rejection of a moral maxim. This is because radical evil involves the recognition of the rational capacity to adopt and act according to maxims that conform to the moral law (the categorical imperative), but the evil person adopts maxims that are contrary to the moral law and chooses freely to act according to them.

A being with evil reason itself (diabolical) would be something different altogether, but may well have a rationale to the structure of its reasoning that is categorically evil. However Kant does not expand on this further, other than that "an absolutely evil will would contain too much, because resistance to the law would itself thereby be elevated to incentive (for without any incentive the power of choice cannot be determined)…"[7] Thus in the context of the portrayal of evil in Metal culture, my interest is in using it as tool for understanding Kant. Thus we can ignore for a moment its use as a marketing gimmick to woo an interested audience into purchasing its product (for example as a vehicle of an expression of rebellion against parental, sometimes Christian morality in western culture). It is worth noting as well that Kerry King says of his lyrics that "They're just stories, like making up your own kind of thing and don't reflect on me in any way"[8]

This presentation of monstrosity as evil in the human, is only ever going to be an imitation of the diabolical. That is if we accept the Kantian line of reasoning above. There will never be a thing possible in the human realm such as the truly diabolical, only a reflection of it. However, I am not content with Kant's lack of attention given here to the diabolical being. I would like to challenge the view that the truly diabolical is not possible in human affairs by raising the question of whether there can be such a thing as a diabolical categorical imperative- what would its nature be like? What form would it take?

According to Kant, the evil will follows the choice that is made available to it, disregarding the exercise of choice that others have. Seriol Morgan notes that the evil will concerns outer freedom, being the absence of restraint on willing[9], although the grounding of this evil is not empirical. This is a difficult aspect of Kant's doctrine to grapple with- the relationship between inner freedom and outer freedom in the context of radical evil, where free choice is a feature of the expression of inner freedom. So to exercise free choice, and be capable of performing radical evil, its grounding must be located in inner freedom. However the effect of evil willing is that it concerns itself-limits itself to outer freedom.

This can be put against the attempt in Black metal to embrace the diabolical and express it through human agency. The history of the Scandinavian and more specifically the Norwegian metal scene is notorious for its links with violent events that include associations with church burning, murder and suicide, grounded in odinism and Satanism[10]

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The first propensity to evil, the general weakness of the human heart, is rather neatly illustrated in the Metallica documentary 'Some Kind of Monster' A review of the Metallica documentary scornfully makes the point underlying the impossibility of the being truly diabolical in the human: "Berlinger and Sinofsky, with their knack for penetrating the diabolical pretensions of weak and disaffected human beings, have brought Metallica to its knees."[11] Here we are reminded of radical evil in human nature as pathetic- a game played of posturing, but ultimately highly self destructive and, for Kant irrational). It is an expression of weakness, as Kant reminds the reader, quoting Pauline scripture: "What I would, that I do not!"[12] (Rel. 6:29). The comparative weakness of moral motivation compared to inclination, is not only illustrated throughout the documentary in the constant struggle to reconcile 4 creative ego's in the pursuit of the making of St Anger, it manifests itself in the goals that are taken-financial incentives over friendship and creativity, such incentives providing enough impetus for engaging a 40,000 dollar a day therapist to sort out the bands problems and for James Hetfield to enter into rehab. The documentary explores these themes of mixed motivation, bring out that which is weak (in the male) monstrous behaviour of its protagonists: "In the end, when Ulrich claims "the band has proven that it can make aggressive music without negative energy," one can only laugh, as the film has been a wallow in the negative energy created by big egos that can't get along but must find ways to make their business entity function."[13]

The problem with the diabolical is fairly apparent in the attempt in Black Metal to embrace the diabolical and express it through human agency, but although there are serious pretenders to embrace Satanism of various kinds, for example Deicide, Ackercoke, Mayhem, Merciful Fate, this genre usually descends into a parody of itself, projecting with irony the incoherence of a truly diabolical being in the place of a human being. Either this or, "To play with the most dangerous ideas but never be defined by them, or by anything or anyone else is an aesthetic philosophy with much more artistic potential that the shriller naive pronouncements of certain Black metal bands. Listen to the best black metal of today and you'll hear the sound of 'the true', but the sound of those who know how to play with fire without getting burnt."[14]

Things don't look to good for Metallica in either state: not only is the possibility of the truly diabolical very convincing, faced with the existential satansim that demands supreme self discipline, they present us with a firm example of inauthenticity- Nietzsche would turn in his grave at the lack of consistency on display.
Let us move on to a more convincing commitment to evil which we can find in Slayer, that reflects Kant's second and third propensities to evil. Kant mentions in a quotation taken from LaRouchefoucauld, an expression of the

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worst of all vices- that which is 'hidden under virtue' – he quotes La Rochefoucauld: " dans l'adversite de nos meilleurs amis, nous trouvons toujours quelque chose qui ne nous deplait pas,": In the adversity of our best friends, we find something that is not altogether displeasing in us"[15]

This provides an example of reading, as we shall see, Kant's third version of the propensity to evil, which he considers to be human depravity. This is nicely illustrated, not just in Slayer's *God Hates Us All*, but also in the song South of Heaven from the same named album: "The root of all evil is the heart of a black soul. A force that has lived all eternity. A never ending search for a truth never told. The loss of all hope and your dignity."[16]

There are of course serious problems in the comparison with or treatment of Kant's theory in the context of Metal. One could hold that because the leaning here is towards and existential conception of evil, we are at cross purposes, because we are talking about an entirely different thing. However there of course a fair amount of incoherence in the Metal scene-there is no philosophy as such being presented. When we take interpretations of reason for metal's emergence we find differing views: Walser: the emergence of Metal "coincides exactly with the period of the greatest popularity of horror films and books" and that the metal audience is a generation of people in America that believes it will be worse off that their parents, suggesting that this "dark side of heavy metal is intimately related to the dark side of the modern capitalist security state: war greed, patriarchy, surveillance and control", where as Weinstein sees it as a response to oppression, where the metaphors of the underground, darkness and hell reflect such a culture in the dark[17].

These themes although projecting an existentialist approach to human life, are quite dependent on the Christian legacy for its imagery and as a target against which to rebel. Again, as commented on in The Black/death metal Terroizer magazine: "So Satanism tends to be expressed in the Boyd Rice sense of an extreme form of individualist anarchism. Again this is often paradoxically expressed: on the one hand the ideal Satanist celebrates the animal, the lustful, the instinctive, the 'true'. On the other hand, Satanism is is a paragon of self-control, of discipline and self sufficiency."[18] If the latter part of this quotation serves to highlight the Kantian notion of vice parading as virtue, the former demonstrates (if we consider Kant's argument as to why one cannot be evil and animal) the more incoherent position of trying to relate animality and humanity in the evil in the same breath.

In Anton Zsander Lavey's nine satanic statements found in the satanic bible, we find examples of the kind of radical evil which Kant was opposed to: I. Satan represents indulgence in stead of abstinence; VIII. Satan represents all of the so called sins, as they all lead to physical mental or emotional gratification. [19]

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Ambiguity and inconsistence in Lavey's ideas s met in Peter Gilmore's piece, where "Satanists acknowledge we are human and work towards perfection" and "the satanic code of behaviour is based on human nature as it is and thus comes naturally to most people who have not been deeply indoctrinated in anti-life and anti-rational belief systems" and Satanism embraces Man as an animal"[20].

However in this context hatred is paraded as a virtue, in an existential sense, perhaps a revaluing of values as Nietzsche would have it. This is neatly illustrated in Mercyful Fate's lyric From the song 'Evil' the 1983 album Melissa: "You know my only pleasure Is to hear you cry I'd love to hear you cry I'd love to feel you die And I'll be the first To watch your funeral And I'll be the last to leave I'd love to hear you cry"[21] This is also presented in the thoroughly existential assertion of self mastery that is presented in the Hatebreed album *The Rise of Brutality*[22] which in its entirety can be read as a celebration of the Nietzschean ubermensch and a presentation of hatred and self confidence as a virtue, especially in the context of justice.

Now this version of Satanism takes us far away from a notion of evil that seems to be the target of the Kantian position. However we can also read that this is the very target that Kant's ideas are aimed at. Felicitas Munzel holds that Kant sees evil as part of human character and a necessary component of achieving a higher moral purpose, employed by Nature to do so, rejecting entirely the idea of a state of nature where human inclination, instinct and impulse harks to a golden age[23]. Evil having such agency is nicely illustrated by the 'Satan sitting smiling' in Black Sabbath's Warpigs[24] as a figure of justice, even as a Divine agent.

Notes

[1] Kerry King, Slayer, 'Disciple' *God Hates Us All* American Records, (2001)
[2] James Hetfield, Metallica, 'Frantic', *St Anger*, Creeping Death Music & EMI Blackwood music (2003)
[3] Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky, Metallica Some Kind of Monster Los Angeles California: Paramount Home Video, 2005) DVD recording
[4] Joe Berlinger and Greg Milner, *Metallica, This Monster Lives*, (London, England: Robson Books, 2004)
[5] Immanuel Kant ,Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998) 6:29-30
[6] Ibid 6:26
[7] Ibid 6:35
[8] http://home3.inet.tele.dk/borgholt/articles/theyre_only_horrorstories.htm Author and date unknown (14 January 2005)

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[9] Seriol Morgan *The Missing Formal Proof of the Universal Human Propensity to Evil in Kant's Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* Paper presented at Lancaster University, Philosophy seminar 2004

[10] Chris Campion "In the face of Death" *The Observer*, Sunday Feb 20, 2005

[11] White, B. "Metallica doc strips down monsters of rock to egomaniacal pussycats" *Seattle post special to the post intelligencer*, Friday, July 30, 2004

[12] Immanuel Kant, Rel 6:29

[13] White, B.

[14] Terrorizer magazine, issue 128, Feb. 2005

[15] Immanuel Kant Rel.6:33

[16] Jeff Hanneman and Kerry King "South of Heaven" *South of Heaven* Def Jam Records (1988)

[17] Both authors quoted in this paragraph come from the article: *Adorno and Metal* by Thomas C. Gannon at: http://www.usd.edu/~tgannon/hm.html (06/08/03), referring to the texts of Deen Weinstein, *Heavy Metal: A cultural Sociology*, New York Mac Millan 1991 and Robert Walser, *Running With The Devil, Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* Hanover, Wesleyan UP 1993

[18] Terrorizer magazine

[19] Anton Szander La Vey, The Nine Satanic Statements. *The Satanic Bible*, (New York: Avon 1969) p. 25

[20] Peter Gilmore, High Priest of the Church of Satan, *Satanism, The Feared Religion*" (1992) http://www.churchofsatan.com/Pages/Feared.html (18 October 2004)

[21] King Diamond, Mercyful Fate, 'Evil' *Melissa*, Roadrunner records (1983)

[22] Hatebreed *The Rise of Brutalit,y* Universal, (2003)

[23] Felicitas Munzel, Kant's Conception of Moral Character; The Critical link of Morality, Anthropology and Reflective Judgement, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999)

[24] Black Sabbath *Black Sabbath* Warner Bros.(1970)

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Monster Mash: Pioneers of the Gothic Element in Rock and Roll

Pete Remington

Abstract

Contemporary Goth culture shares with 1950s and 1960s "horror rock and roll," exemplified here in the work of Screamin' Jay Hawkins and Screaming Lord Sutch, numerous themes derived from gothic representations in popular media. Whilst Goth culture has been associated with serious social and psychological issues, earlier "horror rock" has been largely ignored. It is nevertheless possible to trace a continuity between the two popular cultural forms by focusing on the relationship of fans and subcultural participants to the re-enactment such gothic themes. Bakhtin's notion of carnival has been put forward as a means of explaining the transgressive nature of both Goth culture and rock itself. Utilising the notion of the *personal construct*, as well as arguments concerning the evacuation from contemporary society of sites of shared consensual meanings, this paper suggests that this Bakhtinian explanation is not entirely adequate, and that the continuity to be observed is rather a component of general trends within the wider society.

Key Words: Carnival; construct; grotesque; Goth; gothic; fan; horror; performance; rock; subculture.

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1.   Introduction

The carnivalesque crowd in the marketplace or in the streets is not merely a crowd. It is the people as a whole, but organised *in their own way*, the way of the people. It is outside of and contrary to all existing forms of the coercive socioeconomic and political organisation, which is suspended for the time of the festivity.

Mikhael Bakhtin[1]

Fans' investment in certain practices and texts provides them with strategies which enable them to gain a certain amount of control over their affective life, which further enables them to invest in new forms of meaning, pleasure and identity in order to cope with new forms of pain, pessimism, frustration, alienation, terror and boredom. Such empowerment is increasingly important in a world in which pessimism has become common sense.

Lawrence Grossberg[2]

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> They did the mash
> They did the monster mash
> The monster mash
> It was a graveyard smash!
> Bobby 'Boris' Pickett and the Crypt Kickers[3]

My paper traverses the distance between the first two quotations, which is that between an invocation of the self-evident community inhabiting a world of shared meanings and a proffered explanation of processes by which psychologically-individuated participants construct both meaning, group, and to a large extent self. While there are some structural distinctions between fandom and subculture I suggest that members of each subgrouping are engaged in negotiations of meaning common not only to each group but also to the wider social formation. I start from an assumption that questions of adherence to particular forms of music, performance, and visual style are similar for both groupings, although subject to more complex intra-group negotiation in the case of developed subcultures. Grossberg states the similarity I wish to assert as follows: "By making certain things or practices matter, the fan 'authorizes' them to speak for him or her, not only as a spokesperson, but also as surrogate voices … Fans let them organize their emotional and narrative lives and identities."[4] Both contemporary Goth culture and horror rock and roll to some extent employ similar visual iconography and thematics. The themes of 'dark culture', death, vampirism, madness and magic are visible in both cases. For example both Hawkins' and Sutch's act commenced with emergence from a coffin whilst Sutch's paraphernalia tended toward British Victorian Gothicism. The imagery shared by both groups is moreover embedded in the broader social formations in which they exist, and hence is a factor of both internal self-identity and the external perception of each group.

It is in this light that I examine the activities, performance, and perceived identities of Screamin' Jay Hawkins and Dave 'Screaming' Lord Sutch. One limitation of my paper is its reliance on largely British sources: nevertheless I believe that the conclusions I draw have wider application, albeit subject to the local colouring of individual contexts. The data on each man is subject to disputes and inconsistencies, particularly in the case of Hawkins, who had a tendency to embroider details of his early life; but even in Sutch's case, certain press reports contradict generally accepted accounts.[5]

2.   Biographies
A. Screamin' Jay Hawkins
Born on a bus in Cleveland, Ohio in 1929, Jalacy Hawkins reportedly gained his forename from that of a nearby fruit juice stand. Abandoned by his

mother, he spent his earliest years in an orphanage, from which he was by his own account taken and brought up by a tribe of Blackfoot Native Americans. However, this account does not square easily with other reports he has given about his family. A competent pianist and saxophone player with a resounding baritone voice (some reports say he had formal training in both piano and singing, and he frequently asserted that he'd rather have been an opera singer) he allegedly lied about his age to enlist in the military special services entertaining the troops at the tail end of WWII (some sources also mention Korea). There are reports of his having been wounded and imprisoned.

According to his own account, he gained his stage name in the early 1950s as the result of being exhorted by an enthusiastic fan to scream during his performance. After a trajectory common to many African American male entertainers of the period - a boxing career followed by journeyman service with a number of R&B bands (including Tiny Grimes and his Rocking Highlanders and Fats Domino) and some unsuccessful recordings, he finally hit the charts in 1956 with a reworking of a song he had previously recorded as a straight ballad, his own *I Put A Spell On You*. The bizarre qualities of this version were reputedly the result of the producer getting the entire group of musicians roaring drunk. When first played the results Screamin' Jay claimed neither to recognise his own voice nor even to remember the session. He was subsequently encouraged by DJ Alan Freed to step up the flamboyant aspects of his act, including commencing it by emerging from a coffin. This developed into wearing a bone through his nose, carrying a skull (nicknamed Henry) impaled on a stick, explosions, and other assorted theatrical effects. As both fan sites and interviews with him show, he became increasingly involved in elaborating this stage persona in his offstage activities. Reportedly suspected of cannibalism early in his career, he later fell foul of the NAACP on the grounds of his act demeaning coloured people.

His career was marked by peaks interspersed with substantial troughs. Successful in Britain in the mid sixties, he was within a few years reduced to working as a Honolulu strip club comedian. He appeared as an actor in a number of films (including American *Hot Wax*, *Mystery Train*, and *A Rage In Harlem*,) but in his later years was probably more popular as a performer (and worked more frequently) outside of his native USA. He settled in France, where he died in 2000 of complications following surgery for an aneurysm. He left behind a wife and an estimated 57 children scattered throughout the world. A complex character, he admitted to having at one stage had a serious alcohol problem (other sources also mention drugs.) He also made frequent references suggestive of a deep anger at the situation of black people.

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B. Screaming Lord Sutch

      Born in 1940 in Kilburn, London, David Edward Sutch was brought up by his widowed mother (his policeman father having died during the Blitz.) to whom he remained devoted for the rest of his life. He was named David after the novel David Copperfield, one of his mother's favourites. He reportedly changed his name by deed poll to David Lord Sutch in 1968 (though there is at least one report of the coroner at his inquest finding no evidence of this.) He committed suicide by hanging himself in 1999 after a long battle with depression. His fiancé Yvonne Elwood is reported as using the term 'manic depression' at the inquest into his suicide, and one internet source lists him as suffering from bipolar disorder.[6] Although he was subject to financial worries in the later stages of his life, he was, at the time of his death, on the point of remarrying. It is probable that the precipitating factors in his suicide were his mother's death, followed a year later by the death of his dog.

      His career goes back to the very beginning of British Rock and Roll in the mid-1950s, when, whilst earning his living as a window cleaner, he sang in the 2 I's coffee bar from which a number of the earliest British rockers emerged. According to his own evidence, the 'Screaming' tag came to him independent of any direct influence from Hawkins, but it is generally accepted that much of his stage act, particularly emerging from a coffin, derives from Screamin' Jay. However, he also employed many individual touches such as bull horns, caveman gear, and at one point Roman soldiers' uniform. The title 'Lord' reportedly derives from his earliest stage headgear, which resembled a coronet. While Screamin' Jay Hawkins's imagery derived equally from Hollywood Gothic and voodoo, Sutch's horror themes and images had a more British inflexion, resembling the mix of Victorian graveyard and Jack the Ripper imagery that found its fullest visual representation in Hammer Horror films. His musical style also owes a lot more to Little Richard than it does to Screamin' Jay. Not much of a musician himself, Sutch nevertheless enjoyed a backing band, the Savages, which included numerous performers who went on to become stars. Despite this he never produced anything that might be identified as a major hit. One of his later albums, *Lord Sutch and Heavy Friends*, which included contributions from Keith Moon, Jimmy Page and Jeff Beck, has the distinction of having been voted (in 1998) the worst rock album of all time in a poll conducted in Britain and the USA.

      Involved through Radio Sutch with the UK pirate radio ventures of the 1960s, his later life was increasingly taken up by his participation in British politics. Beginning in 1963 he stood for parliament under a number of different party labels until in 1983 he appeared as the candidate of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party (slogan: *Vote Insanity! You know it makes sense*) which he had co-founded with Alan Hope. Supporting himself by

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continued gigging, Sutch led the party until his death, becoming the longest serving party leader in UK political history. On none of the 39 occasions that he stood (plus once for a Euro seat) did he retain his deposit, but he was proud of the fact that a few 'loony' policies (votes at 18, all-day pub opening, legalisation of cannabis, passports for pets) have eventually entered mainstream debate, and in some cases been implemented. His death produced a remarkable outpouring of tributes from both politicians and the general public. The party has split into two since his death but Loonyism itself appears still to flourish. I've been able to trace an American party and have read of (though not firmly established) the existence of parties elsewhere.

3.   Horror Rock and Contemporary Goths
        Despite Paul Hodkinson's (2002) assertion that negative UK press coverage of Goths subsided after reports of the 1999 Columbine school killings[7], there is still plenty of media evidence of hostile attitudes towards them, either in the persecution of Goths, or in the extent to which individuals or groups involved in criminal or antisocial activities are identified as 'Goth'. A search of UK online newspapers for the period between 1999 and the present reveals that, though arts reporting and features exhibit a wide range of attitudes, in news items the word 'Goth' has been linked with Satanism, the occult, individual murder and mass killings, desecration of a grave, simulated necrophilia, real vampirism, neo-Nazism, stalking and religious harassment.[8] Reports of persecution of Goths include details of attacks by a rival youth group[9]. It should be said that news items uncritically making such links are occasionally balanced by those that distinguish between specific reported events and the wider Goth movement. Nevertheless, this is hardly a good press.
        Contrast this to the relative invisibility of horror rock as a social issue through the entire half-century of its existence. Hawkins's biography leads one to infer that reporting of him during his lifetime was not always positive. However, outside of the review pages, I have found little but isolated disturbances and legal disputes.[10] Posthumous reporting centred on the 57 (in some versions 75) children he was estimated to have fathered.[11] Sutch's frequent appearances in the British press were almost entirely dependent on his leadership of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party, an activity in which his horror identity played a minor part. Horror rock never became identified as a subculture. It remained an inflection within the rock music world, peaking in its original form in the 1960s, and resurfacing as an influence (often Screamin' Jay's influence) on occasional subsequent performers such as The Crazy World of Arthur Brown, Alice Cooper and Marilyn Manson.

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4.   Carnival … or what?

          The mid 1950s, particularly in the USA, saw a growth of horror films aimed at the youth market, simultaneous with the freeing of earlier Hollywood horror products for television broadcast. The newer films showed a tendency towards infusing earlier forms of Hollywood 'Dracula Gothic' with themes derived from science fiction and voodoo, frequently placing them within contemporary settings. Such mix-and-match tendencies are traceable in genre magazine fiction at least back to the 1930s,[12] but the addition to this mix of narratives of teen life produced an unprecedented form in the shape of the comedic rock horror record. As B. Lee Cooper has noted "horror songs tend[ed] to be especially identifiable through comic delivery. Parody is quite common. So is the introduction of random absurdity. The blending of characters and creatures from horror genre with contemporary social activities…" is also a feature.[13] As Todorov has it: "each epoch has its own system of genres, which stands in some relation to the dominant ideology."[14]

          What then, of this relation, and has it to some extent transformed itself? Paul R. Kohl has put forward arguments linking Rock and Roll with the grotesque realism of the Bakhtinian carnival, as a site of the deliberate degradation of dominant values.[15] Cooper notes that horror rock records generally favour the flashier more sensationalist horror tropes over those derived from high Gothic.[16] This is in line with the trash aesthetic characterising other forms of rock discourse[17] *Degradation* signifies the literal debasement of the higher, a tendency to signify the upper body and its functions with those of the lower, and hence metaphorically articulate the higher values through the baser. "Degradation digs a bodily grave for a new birth; it is not only a destructive negative aspect, but also a regenerating one."[18] From this perspective the emergence of Screamin' Jay and Dave Sutch from their respective coffins signalled their performance as an enactment in which skull and graveyard suggest the possibility of their precise opposites. Moreover the humour attendant on this enactment expresses "the victory of laughter over fear."[19]

          Locating contemporary Goth culture as an aspect of the 'urban primitive', and focusing mainly on body piercing, Langman and Cangemi suggest that urban youth attempts to reject through such practices a globalised modernity, with its concomitant evacuation of the sense of a significant central culture.[20] Their argument makes use of carnival as a space increasingly marginalised and contained by a technology-driven culture and leading progressively to the inhabitation of remaining and newly-created ludic spaces - the amusement park, the gig, cyberspace - as sites in which meaning and identity may be contested.[21] The expansion into cyberspace of the net.goths, often explicitly to counter negative portrayals of their subculture, propound

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their own values, and offer new forms of intra-group communication may be cited as an example.[22]

5.   Cultural Contexts

However, Bakhtin himself notes a diminution in the Romantic grotesque, a primary source for much of the iconography of 20th and 21st century pop gothic, towards an individualistic outlook, which resulted in a diminished sense of laughter's regenerative capacity.[23] We have since witnessed a further fragmentation of the coherence and certainty of this 'inner subjectivity.' Kenneth J. Gergen links this to the proliferation of "technologies of human relatedness" - the very technologies that also facilitate the articulation of contemporary ludic space: "as various groups are exposed to others' modes of life, they frequently locate forms of action that can be appropriated for local use. These patterns are ripped from their typical contexts of meaning and played out in conditions that ambiguate or destroy their traditional signification." Thus "if there is no means of determining what an action is an expression of, there comes a point where we begin to doubt that actions are expressions (outward pressings) at all."[24] These considerations firstly problematise the notion of 'play' on which the concept of 'ludic spaces' is based. When asked about her son's exploits, Lord Sutch's mother is reported to have "explained that it was, after all, just an act, indeed, that his whole life was just an act."[25] As someone who has, like Sutch, suffered bouts of depression, I can't help but place this comment in the context of the wholesale evacuation of certainty in shared significations that Gergen's words exemplify, and which suggests depression as a primary mode of contemporary understanding. Here I return to my original quotation from Lawrence Grossberg concerning the effective economy of fandom. Performance, style, and stage thematics from this viewpoint become a controlled area in which the trajectory between meaning and its evaporation can be explored in relatively controlled conditions.

Moreover, if we accept Gergen's analysis, this process becomes to some extent valid for *all* cultural groupings, whether 'dominant' or subcultural. I have argued elsewhere that a development towards what I have termed *depression-analogous understandings* has characterised a plurality of discourses over the 20th century, including the very discourses of psychology and psychiatry within which depression is defined.[26] Interestingly, most negative media comment on Goth culture has stressed its gloomy, depressive characteristics. Hodkinson's study and numerous Goth websites seem to indicate that Goth self-perception is quite otherwise.[27] This may suggest a form of cultural scapegoating, by those that identify themselves as 'mainstream', in that Goth style may be construed as embodying tendencies such persons wish to deny in themselves.

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The idea of marginality as a defining factor of subcultures also becomes problematic. To some extent self-claimed marginality, or at least significant difference from a constructed 'mainstream' appears to play a role in a process of definition of self in relation to the grouping to which one professes allegiance, and in contrast or opposition to another group. As Hodkinson comments on the results of his interviews with members of a Goth community, "Distinctiveness and identity …were inextricably linked with one another." He devotes as much space to his interviewees' expressions of their difference from 'trendies' as he does to their perceptions of affiliation with each other.[28] Indeed, to some extent, a sense of marginality or minority status, coupled with feelings of unequal or even unfair treatment based on difference can be argued as major components of cultural group formation since the mid 20th century. This is not to say that the term 'subculture' is not valuable as a means of identifying a group through its adherence to a broadly defined range of practices, representations and (possibly) objectives; but it does suggest that such practices, etc. may be viewed as specific colourations, points of emphasis and intensification of much wider trends. What seems to be the common issue is the question of self-identity and perhaps more significantly narratives of self.

The terms of the Bakhtinian carnival would thus seem to have limited application contemporary culture in any sense but that of formal analogy. This transmutation of the terms of reference can perhaps be best summed up by contrasting Bakhtin's inclusion of the bowels in the grotesque body's interactivity with the outer world with the theme of a later Screamin' Jay Hawkins track, *Constipation Blues.*[29] Langman and Cangemi may be accurate in characterising Goth practices as *attempts* to reincarnate carnival, but they are attempts from within a social and psychological landscape inimical to anything but a spurious recreation, analogous to the reinvented histories of contemporary paganism. Horror Rock and contemporary Goth, then, represent two stages in a progression of the entire society in which they occur. The extent to which they represent extreme phenomena is merely a factor of the extent to which they externalise aspects of this progression. The extent to which this has positive or negative effects in the lives of individuals is entirely subject to local conditions.

6.   Conclusion: Subculture and Personal Constructs

This is not completely to deny the possibility of forms of self identity developed within the gig or subcultural practice having some effect beyond their immediate confines. Fans and adherents of all forms of cultural grouping also usually have jobs and schools to attend, even children to care for, and hence have the daily task of negotiating identities in different contexts. What the inversions, displacements. ironies and laughter of the gig or subcultural

practice bring into play is the process of construing reality. According to George A. Kelly's account of the fundamental processes by which humans make sense of the world: "A person's processes are psychologically channelised by the way he (*sic*) anticipates events."[30] Such anticipations depend on a process of continual revision of our previous constructions. Most importantly, a construct is neither necessarily cognitive nor affective but may be preverbal, being based principally on sorting reality into "like" and "unlike" dichotomous poles. Thus the inversions and displacements attendant on all aspects of participation in gigs, fan- or subcultural activities inevitably foreground radically different constructions systems in others and may necessitate equally radical revisions in one's own. Inasmuch as one's awareness or more properly construing of *self* (as "a series of events which are alike in a certain way, and, in that same way, necessarily different from other events") may be affected by such modifications, there is the possibility of developmental change:

> When the person begins to use himself as a datum in forming constructs, exciting things begin to happen. … His behaviour in relation to other people is particularly affected. Perhaps it would be better to say that his behaviour *in comparison* with other people is particularly affected. It is, of course the comparison *he* sees or construes which affects his behaviour. Thus, much of his social life is controlled by the comparisons he has come to see between himself and others.[31]

Hence Kelly's theory suggests a way of explaining how performance and participation might affect *modes* of understanding, behaviour and affect in situations far removed from their original context. Thus the quotation from Grossberg concerning the affective economy of fandom is to a large extent consistent with Kelly's approach in that also implies further cognitive and behavioural possibilities for the fan.

One factor in the utility of constructs is what Kelly terms their "range of convenience", which is to say the extent to which they are applicable to new events.[32] In this context it is interesting to note the greater impact of Sutch's performance as a parliamentary candidate than as a rock singer; a result one suspects this field of operation already being marked by formalised grotesquery. The extent to which participation may have destabilised constructions of these events in countless individuals may be hinted at in two posthumous evaluations. Peter Chippindale, co-author of Sutch's autobiography, has written of him: "Many people may have seen Sutch as just a joke. But in fact he was both an attractive eccentric and in his own person an

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ironic commentary on British politics - a sort of one-man piece of performance art."[33] In addition to this, a self-described Pagan, on the strength of one extended meeting with Sutch, contributed to an online BBC tributes page a description of him as "the true shaman."[34] While I have not been able to discover such a wealth of positive personal evaluations of Screamin' Jay Hawkins, it is nonetheless evident from the websites I have visited that there continues to flourish a remembrance of him as one of the most original voices of early Rock and Roll.

Notes

[1] Mikhael Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (trans. Hélène Iswolsky) (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 255.

[2] Lawrence Grossberg, "Is There a Fan in the House?" in *Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, ed. Lisa A. Lewis, (Florence, KY, USA: Routledge, 1992), 50-65.

[3] Bobby 'Boris' Pickett and the Crypt Kickers, *Monster Mash*. Original US release Garpax Records, 1962.

[4] Grossberg, 59.

[5] The biographical information that follows is derived from several (mainly online) sources that inevitably often reproduce much the same material. In order to minimise notes, I do not cross-reference all the data. The sources are listed separately in the bibliography.

[6] "Screaming Lord Sutch," *Wikipedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord_Sutch> (21st April, 2005).

[7] Paul Hodkinson, *Goth: Identity, Style and Subculture* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002), 113, 160.

[8] Again, in order to minimise notes I have not fully cross-referenced all items. The following are thus illustrative examples from a multitude of references. It should be said, however, that in relation to total output during the period in question, the coverage of Goth-related material is small. The point being made is that such coverage rarely occurs in a positive context.

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<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=news/2003/10/18/nvamp.18.xml>.

[9] (No Credit), "Fears over teen group rivalries," *BBC.co.uk.* 7th August 2003. <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/tyne/3132291….> (21st April, 2005).

[10] An example: Glen A. Baker, "Aussie Promoter Puts a Suit on Hawkins," *Billboard* v105 n46, Nov 13th 1993, 49.

[11] E.g. Andrew Gumbel, "The strange case of the rock star and his 75 children," *The Independent Online Edition*, 14th February 2001 (18th April, 2005).
<http://enjoyment/independent.co.uk/low_res/story.jsp?story=56086&host=5&dir=227>.

[12] For an example, see C. L. Moore, "Shambleau" in *Blood Thirst: 100 Years of Vampire Fiction*, ed. Leonard Wolf (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 136-159. The story, first published in *Weird Tales* (1933) mixes together elements of space-opera, vampire, Western, and classical mythology.

[13] B. Lee Cooper, "Terror Translated into Comedy: The Popular Music Metamorphosis of Film and Television Horror, 1956-1991," *Journal of American Culture*, Vol. 20 Issue 3 (Fall 1997): 31-42.

[14] Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres In Discourse* (trans. Catherine Porter) (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 19.

[15] Paul R. Kohl, "Looking Through a Glass Onion: Rock and Roll as a Modern Manifestation of Carnival," *Journal of Popular Culture* Vol. 27 Issue 1 (1993): 143-161.

[16] Cooper, 35.

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[17] Steven Hamelman, "But Is It Garbage? The Theme of Trash in Rock and Roll Criticism," *Popular Music and Society*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2003): 203-223.

[18] Bakhtin, 21-23.

[19] Ibid., 90.

[20] Lauren Langman and Katie Cangemi, "Globalization and the Liminal: Transgression, Identity, and the Urban Primitive," *Research in Urban Policy* Vol.9 (2003): 141-176.

[21] Both this argument and that of Paul R. Kohl rely to a large extent on Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (London: Routledge, 1986.)

[22] For the growth of the net.goths, see Hodkinson, 191-193.

[23] Bakhtin, 37-38.

[24] Kenneth J. Gergen, *Technology and the Self: From the Essential to the Sublime* [Chapter Draft for Grodin and Lindlof (eds.) *Constructing the Self in a Mediated World*, Sage, 1996], n. d., (22nd April 2005.)
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[25] Nigel Fountain, "Screaming Lord Sutch. Anarchic, irreverent performer on byelection platforms and horror-filled rock music sets," *Guardian Unlimited*, June   19th   1999   (18th   April   2005).
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/obituaries/story/0,,290823,00.html>.

[26] See my "'You're Whining Again Louis': Anne Rice's Vampires as Indices of the Depressive Self" in *Vampires: Myths and Metaphors of Enduring Evil*, ed. Peter Day (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005 – forthcoming.) My most recently developed statement of this argument occurs in my paper "Tell It Like It Is? Contributions to the Construction of Depression," to be published in the proceedings of the conference *Making Sense of Stress, Humour and Healing*, Budapest, May 2005. (ebook, Inter-disciplinary press, details forthcoming.)

[27] There's no better way to assess shifting Goth self-perception than to run periodic searches on Goth websites, which I leave to the reader. An interesting site which devotes considerable space to combating misrepresentation of Goth culture in the American local press is *Darkwaver.com*: <http:/darkwaver.com/subculture/articles/>.

[28] Hodkinson, 65-83. This work applies specifically to British Goths.

[29] Bakhtin, 317.

[30] George A. Kelly, *A Theory of Personality: The Psychology of Personal Constructs* (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1963), 46, 15.

[31] Ibid., 131.

[32] Ibid., 68.

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[33] Peter Chippindale, "Sutch, Sutch, were the joys," *Guardian Unlimited*, June 15th 2000 (18th April 2005). <http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,332111,00.html>.

[34] Numerous contributors, "UK Politics: Your Tributes to Lord Sutch," *BBC.co.uk*, June 17th 1999 (21st April 2005). <http://news.bbc.co.uk/l/hi/uk_politics/371417.stm>

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Monsters and History

J. Randall Groves

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Abstract

> "All beings so far have created something beyond themselves; and do
> you want to be the ebb of this great flood and even go back to the
> beasts rather than overcome man? What is the ape to man? A
> laughingstock or a painful embarrassment. And man shall be just that
> for the overman: a laughingstock or painful embarrassment."

The presentation of monsters in science fiction and horror as well as the
contemplation of their creation in the musings of worried medical ethicists
display fairly consistent visions of possible futures. These visions reveal an
antipathy toward the seemingly inevitable evolution of a "posthuman"
species as humans make increasing use of genetic engineering and human
interfaces with mechanical objects and digital systems. To the extent that
these alterations of our bodies become commonplace they begin to suggest a
deeper, evolutionary transformation of humanity. This evolutionary
possibility implies a philosophy of history that projects changes in our
conception of human nature, changes that make clear that human nature is
itself historical. This change in our view of human nature also affects the way
we conceive of monsters.

Key Words: Monsters, Traditional Monsters, Post-human, gargoyle, Alien,
Zenogenesis, Goya

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1.   Monsters: Traditional and Posthuman

Not all monsters imply an historical theory. Traditional monsters
such the werewolf, the dragon, the vampire and the gargoyle appeal to "dark
traditions." These dark traditions are generally the result of a dialectical
polarity with religious traditions. Although religion typically has a theory of
history, the monsters that result from the dialectical polarity are only
historical in the sense of that a being that represents "fallen nature" is a
detour from the historical process. They represent, at most, a temporary
degradation from the inevitable victory of the true faith of believers.

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All monsters, both traditional and posthuman, are typically accidents of birth. Monsters always come about in strange ways. They are either literal accidents of birth, or they result from a wolf or vampire bite, or because of a curse, to name just a few of the odd ways monsters come into existence.

Some of the best work on monsters has been done by feminists, and some have found interesting connections between women and monsters. In her book, *Monstrous Imagination*, Marie Helene-Huet makes an interesting connection between monsters and women. Like monsters, women are regarded as accidents of birth. We see this view in Empedocles and Aristotle. Biology, of course, tells us that if either sex is "accidental," it is the male sex, with the female being the "default" sex unless certain changes are brought about to transform the female into a male. But Aristotle didn't know that, and so he writes, "Anyone who does not take after his parents is really in a way a monstrosity, since in these cases Nature has in a way strayed from the generic type. The first beginning of this derivation is when a female is formed instead of a male."[1] This connection between women and monsters will turn out to be a recurrent one in our exploration of how monsters come to embody philosophies of history.

Huet also shows us the connection between bad birth and women's imagination. She writes, "Since Antiquity, even the most innocuous deformities, birthmarks, had been thought to have been caused by the mother's imagination and her capacity to imprint on her child's body the mark of a cherished object."[2] This connection to women's imagination will extend itself to imagination generally when we turn to the posthuman, since only imagination will limit the ways in which we can alter our bodies.

Finally, Huet argues that monsters are an instantiation or residue of immoral actions.[3] The monster is the curse that results from immoral actions. There is always some "original sin" at the source of the generation of the monster.

All this adds up to show that the traditional role of the monster in literature and film is to give a negative conception of "the other," as well of course, to blame women for yet one more thing. There will always be the other. Indeed, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen has as one of his seven theses concerning monster culture that "the monster always escapes."[4] The monster never dies. And since traditional monsters never die, they cannot be historical. History requires finitude. History is not the eternal recurrence of the same; it is on-going change that creates real difference.

Typical examples of traditional monsters include the vampire, the mummy, the werewolf, King Kong, the Creature from the Black Lagoon and more recently, Clive Barker's cenobites from his *Hellraiser* series. These monsters are abominations of nature, twisted versions of normality. Werewolves are generally interpreted to represent the child's fear of adolescent transformation that takes them out of their normal lives and causes

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a loss of control. The cenobites represent the dangers of overreaching desire and curiosity and the transforming effect of immoral behavior. Cenobites begin as ordinary humans, but their quest for every greater pleasure and pains as well as the quest forever more exotic and supernatural experience gradually transforms their bodies until they become monsters in the flesh to mirror the monstrosity of their minds. Werewolves are the more tragic since they are victims, while the cenobites choose to become monsters. In neither case, however, do these monsters implicate the future so as to imply a philosophy of history. There is no suggestion that we will all become cenobytes or werewolves. These creatures are always exceptional, never the rule.

2.   Posthuman Monsters

As humans become ever more intertwined with technology, they find themselves becoming something more than human, something "posthuman." Another term often used is "cyborg," which was originally reserved for human/technology mixtures, but since the work of Donna Haraway, has come to mean any blurring of the human and "other."[5] Posthumans are also likely to welcome non-humans to the posthuman future. Artificial intelligence, robots, created species, chimeras (species mixes), a global Internet consciousness, are all possible co-inhabitants of the future.

Posthuman monsters, such as Frankenstein's monster, the *Alien* monsters, the hybrids of Octavia Butler's *Zenogenesis* series, unlike traditional monsters, imply a possible future that has both positive and negative aspects, but is almost always a posthuman future. Humans are about to become something else. They are becoming posthuman, and possibly monsters. And when the monster becomes posthuman, it adds an historical dimension because the monster presents a possible form humans could take in the future. So while both traditional and posthuman monsters can be regarded as accidents of birth, only posthuman monsters can be said to evolve.

To be sure, posthuman evolution is different from biological evolution. There is not necessarily the sense that the human species will be left behind by a superior species that mutates from it because of a singular advantage. Rather, different people will deploy a range of posthuman changes to improve life or to adapt to conditions. People will *choose* their physical and mental forms, and they will not necessarily be consistent. People will choose differently according to their personal taste and according to their income. Some may not choose wisely, and they may become monsters.

The posthuman monsters of contemporary science fiction and horror suggest a different unfortunate result to human overreaching than that of traditional monsters like the cenobites. Overreaching has roots in Judeo-

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Christian religion with the stories of the Garden of Eden and the Tower of Babel. Overreaching occurs when humans attempt to move beyond traditionally defined limits. The cenobites seek an unending increase in earthly experience. They are moving beyond the moral limits imposed by religion, but they most certainly are not attempting to reach the divine, which is a key element of overreaching and a central taboo of most religion. This taboo, however, is given a positive interpretation by the Enlightenment with its belief in the perfectibility of man and universal human progress. The perfectibility of man is, of course, a theory of history. The posthuman monster tells us that just as the belief in the perfectibility of man can paradoxically lead to human terror in politics, as occurred in the French and Russian revolutions, it can also create monsters. Goya's "Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters," which is a political statement about the French Revolution also accurately predicts the coming of posthuman monsters.

While there has been little discussion of the historical implications of monsters and posthumanism, history has not been completely ignored in studies of the posthuman. Elaine Graham, in her *Representations of the Posthuman*,[6] relies heavily on the views of Michel Foucault, which are very insightful, particularly with regard to the history of posthuman-present. Monsters reveal the necessary negation, the "fracture" of the established order. Nevertheless, Graham's use of Foucault neglects how science fiction presents the posthuman future-historically. Science fiction operates with a view of history drawn largely from the Enlightenment's belief in progress but with a counterweight from the Romantic critique of this belief. While a Foucauldian analysis is helpful for explaining some of the elements of the Romantic critique in posthumanism, it misses other elements and fails to capture the Enlightenment views that underlie posthumanism. Thus we need to supplement our Foucauldian analysis with one that draws upon a historical theory that is a better fit with the posthuman ambivalence toward scientific progress.

Interestingly, given the deep connection between monsters and women alluded to earlier; it is precisely when "woman" becomes historical that monsters become historical. Mary Shelley's mother writes "Vindication of the Rights of Women" and then gives birth to Mary Shelley, who, in turn, gives birth to Frankenstein's monster, which I regard as the first posthuman monster.

3.   Some Posthuman monsters

The *Alien series* uses the monstrous vision of H.R. Giger, whose "biomechanical" aesthetic forces us to visualize a mixture of the organic and inorganic. There have been several interpretations of the *Alien* series as an exploration of the "monstrous-feminine,"[7] but it has not been noted how the changeable concept of human nature, of historical nature, is developed in

these films. The aliens impregnate humans and other creatures in a perverse version of reproduction involving oral rape. The results of these mutant pregnancies subsequently take on some of the features of humans and other creatures such as the ship creature from the first film and the dog from the third. The fourth film brings out this theme more explicitly in several ways. The hybrid nature of the cloned Ripley, the failed clones of Ripley, the "child-monster" of the queen and Ripley—these are all posthuman creatures that signal a hybrid or cyborg future. And in *Alien vs. Predator* we see an Alien/Predator combination at the end. This future history of alien contact is very dystopic since very little of humanity survives the combination.

The interpreters of the Alien series have argued whether the creature from the first film is symbolically male or female, with James Kavanaugh going with the more obvious, and in my view, more correct interpretation that the phallic looks of the creature and the face hugger's oral rape mode of reproduction make it symbolically masculine. Barbara Creed sees in the monster a walking, and in the case of the face hugger, a jumping vagina dentata. The best interpretation comes from Kelly Hurley, who believes that the argument itself points to the need for a posthumanist interpretation. The monster is supposed to break down our typical categories and standard boundaries. For not only is the alien an odd mix of sexuality, other parts of the film, particularly the alien ship, suggest a blurring of the boundary between the organic and inorganic. This is further supported by the fact that much of the work of the designer, Giger, develops what he calls a "biomechanical" aesthetic.

Very similar to the Giger/Scott aliens are Octavia Butler's Oankali of her *Zenogenesis series* and the Borg of *Star Trek*. Both of these creatures absorb some aspects of their victims and create new species, but in both cases more of humanity is maintained in the hybrid. Both still present dystopic futures, but not quite as much is lost to the monster as with the *Alien* series. In fact, arguments are made in both cases that the result is a step up from humanity, a superior hybrid. Butler attempts to help us come to terms with deviant sexuality by asking that we imagine a benevolent species that travels the universe looking for "failed species" and combining with them through genetic mixing and manipulation. An interesting twist is that the Oankali and humans initially find each other deeply repulsive. The main character, Lilith, can hardly bear to even look at an Oankali, never mind engage in sex with it and give birth to a hybrid. Although the Oankali appear to the reader to be benevolent, the humans, unsurprisingly, find the prospect of mixing species horrific. Another key to the story is that humans are presented as inherently defective because of their destructive combination of intelligence and hierarchy. Mixing with the Oankali will "cure" us of our defect and give rise to a new species. The Oankali, too, will be improved by the genetic mix. But some humans never come to terms with the Oankali and prefer to die out

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rather than combine with them. Butler manipulates the reader into thinking these recalcitrant humans exhibit precisely the defects in human nature that caused our near self-destruction and that a more progressive human will embrace the Oankali and its promise of a star-faring hybrid future.

The Borg of Star Trek are a biomechanical hybrid species that absorbs all alien races into its collective. Above all, the Borg reject individuality. As each new species is conquered, it is fitted with mechanical interfaces that enable it to perform various tasks as well as communicate with all other Borg in a collective consciousness. Individuality, the Borg argue, is flawed, and individuals lead a flawed existence. In fact, humans find removing their kind from previous incorporation into the Borg collective very difficult since these people generally agree that the Borg existence is superior. Only after a long-term reindoctrination do these former Borg embrace humanity and individuality. The Borg idea speaks to our deep-seated fear that technology may get out of control and eventually take us over. Unlike the *Terminator* series, however, humans are not eliminated, they are incorporated. Like Butler's humans, Star Trek's humans find Borg and Borg life repulsive. Unlike Butler's humans, Star Trek's humans are presented as correct in resisting incorporation. Both cases, however, ask us to consider that humanity might be improved in ways, which, while they fall short of full-scale incorporation, still present an improvement. So while we may not wish to give up our individuality altogether, we might want to consider being a little less individualistic. We even might gain by having the ability to be in constant communication with other people or by incorporating various kinds of mechanical or cybernetic interfaces into our bodies.

Cronenberg has done more than any other filmmaker to explore the limits of the posthuman. The posthumans of David Cronenberg are notable for blurring the boundaries between the human and animal and the human and computer. Existenz, Videodrome, the Brood and the Fly all explore human-animal-computer mixes. *Existenz* and *Videodrome* also blur the boundaries and nature of perception and reality. *The Brood* and *The Fly* deal with the notions of hybridity and mutation in much the same way as Butler does in the *Zenogensis* series. Existenz and *Videodrome* explore how reality itself may change in the posthuman era. The games of Existenz do not create a mere *virtual* reality; they create *another* reality, and possibly a superior reality. Cyberspace in Cronenberg's films is a highly sensual reality rather than our current, rather sterile, on-line reality. The characters in these films swear to the "higher" existence achieved and look down upon ordinary perceptual existence. Future history is therefore not only a new time; it is a new place and a new feeling. The rules of experience are changed.

Another sort of posthuman monster is the artificially intelligent beings we anticipate as robots or androids. In popular culture, such posthumans include the robots of *I, Robot*, *A.I.*, Data from *Star Trek* and the

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Terminator. These posthumans are created by humans, but they are not human hybrids. Rather, they add a new partner in the community of intelligent beings. They may be friends or partners, like the *Bicentennial Man* or Data, or they might be irrevocably hostile like the *Terminator*. They may fight for their rights like the *Bicentennial Man*, or they may fight to eliminate ours. We will not know until they exist. And when they do, it may be beyond our abilities to turn back the clock. Things may go horribly wrong with artificially intelligent beings, but things have sometimes gone horribly wrong among ordinary humans. The genocidal killers of Rwanda or Nazi Germany probably hold their own against most descriptions of possible future horror by artificially intelligent beings. Despite the misgivings of some philosophers, the future will probably bring us artificial companions, and these companions will probably be both good and evil. On this point, Nietzsche is undoubtedly wrong. What comes after humanity will not be beyond good and evil.

There is yet another type of posthuman, the inferior or fallen posthuman. The key example of this type of posthuman is the Zombie. While the Zombie is very much like traditional monsters, it has a key characteristic that links sit with the posthuman: the geometric progression of the zombie's bite. Zombies create many zombies, which, in turn, create yet other zombies, yielding a geometric progression that quickly overruns humanity. Another important element in the idea of the zombie is the fear that humans will devolve into something less than human rather than evolve into something greater than human and that this devolution will be a rapid geometric process. If we can get better, we can certainly get worse. And we sometimes do get terribly worse, worse even than the monsters that are supposed to scare us. An accurate film rendering of the Rwandan genocide would look rather more like *Dawn of the Dead* than it would *Hotel Rwanda*, and it would be just as horrific.

One might argue that the vampire idea contains posthuman elements. I have already identified the vampire as a traditional and therefore non-historical monster, but there are elements that coincide with some of the posthuman monsters. The geometrically progressing nature of vampire mirrors that of the Zombie, but rarely is geometric logic used in vampire films, with the notable exception of the film, *Lifeforce*. The notion of the separation of species is generally piecemeal. The number of vampires is typically kept small to maintain the secret of their existence. The vampires do not represent the future. In fact, Anne Rice works with the notion of vampires as preservers rather than as creators of culture.[8]

Posthuman horror is more ambivalent than traditional horror. While one might want to be immortal like a vampire, most would reject the high cost of becoming one. Posthumanity, on the other hand, offers much that we might very well accept if we could be certain of avoiding the dangers that the

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posthuman poses. Although I might worry about viruses, if I could be sure of avoiding them, or at least their more pernicious effects, I would probably agree to be fitted with internal hard drives and wireless connectivity with others. If I could grow wings that looked like angel wings rather than something horrific, I might choose to do so.

The appeal of the posthuman is partly what makes it a philosophy of history. It also relocates the fear associated with monsters from "the other" to ourselves. The Enlightenment's turn to critical self-awareness was bound to eventually become a Romantic cognizance of the dangers of our embrace of constant self-recreation. We are afraid that the changes we willingly or unwillingly undergo will turn out badly and turn us into something we abhor. The monsters we fear then will be the monsters that we become. Postmodern monsters are therefore existential. They will have to constantly recreate themselves just like us. Their existence precedes their essence just like us. So they are now moving targets. Monstrosity is in flux. It is no longer a constant counterpoint qua "other," it evolves just like we do. It is still the other, but it changes as we do since we are monsters ourselves.

The sobering thought is that we probably will become posthuman to an ever-greater degree. We might not even recognize the humans of the year 3000. And they might look back in embarrassment that we even considered saying no to posthuman evolution.

Notes

[1] Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, trans. A.L. Peck (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1963), I xxi, 113, quoted in Huet, *Monstrous Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993), 3.

[2] Huet, 16.

[3] Huet, 21.

[4] "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)," Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, in *Monster Theory*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 4.

[5] See, in particular, Donna J. Haraway's *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, (New York: Routledge, 1991).

[6] Elaine Graham, *Representations of the Post/Human: Monsters, Aliens and Others in Popular Culture*. (Manchester UP, 2002).

[7] See, for example, Barbara Creed's *The Monstrous-Feminine* (London: Routledge, 1993), 16-31.

[8] This is the argument of Frank Grady in his article on vampires in *Monster Theory*, 225-41.

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The Renaissance of the Bearded Woman: An Examination of Ribera's Problematic Portrait of Magdalena Ventura

Richard Tilbury

Figure 1. **José de Ribera,** *The Bearded Woman (Magdalena Ventura with Her Husband)*, **1631, Oil on Canvas (196 x 127 cm), Palacio Lerma, Fundación Casa Ducal de Medinaceli, Toledo displayed currently in the Prado, Madrid**

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In early 1631, the Venetian ambassador to Naples witnessed the painting of a portrait for the duke of Alcalá, Viceroy of Naples, Don Fernando Afán de Ribera y Enríquez. The duke had commissioned the Spanish artist José de Ribera to paint the portrait of one Magdalena Ventura of Abruzzo [Figure 1.][1] with her husband and a child, an astonishing work that is perhaps unique in the canon of Renaissance art in the way in which it deals with the portrayal of its central subject; a woman who was considered a true "Wonder of Nature" for the beard that she sported. [2]

As a modern viewer - belonging to a society where medicine and surgery can construct a plethora of gender variations at whim - surely this image should not arouse anything but mild bemusement; yet, the image of a bearded woman appears to us as being quite monstrous, simultaneously both comical and disturbing, causing gasps of delight, perhaps uncomfortable giggles and sometimes visible reactions of disgust and horror. [3] It seems that uncertainties of gender continue to both arouse and appal our own culture.[4] Indeed, Marsha Kinder, a professor of Critical Studies in Cinema and Television, who analyzed Ribera's portrait's effect on Spanish film, was scandalized and considered this image of conflicting genders so disturbing that she claimed that the sitter had to be a man - who had even previously sat for Ribera as *Democritus* [5] - and furthermore that the misogynistic Ribera was evoking femininity in this portrait in the same way that the wolf "evokes" the grandmother after devouring her in the story of "Little Red Riding Hood."[6] While Kinder does makes some interesting observations on the portrait, perhaps her reading of the actual work is made with far too modern eyes and suffers from the danger of projecting our cultural values onto this image created for consumption by people of a different time and thinking.[7] Indeed, the Venetian Ambassador seemed to have been genuine delighted in what he had seen. However, what is most interesting in Kinder's reading is perhaps the strong and negative reaction the image generates. Kinder simply denies that Magdalena can have a real sexual identity and that the portrait is just the fantastical fiction of a patriarchal society. So, is this alleged artistic "Frankenstein's monster", as Kinder claims, some perverse invention of the artist, or are we being shown a true representation of this woman? Furthermore; what would the renaissance viewer have ever made of this portrait?

My intention therefore is to examine the iconography of the portrait in comparison with other contemporary images and texts in an attempt to synthesize some understanding of what the early modern viewer would have "understood" about Ribera's *Bearded Woman* when confronted with the portrait.

In terms of the genre of portraiture, what we see, although surprising in content, does adhere to the expected conventions; the portrait utilizes the body of the sitter and the space around her to make her identity

manifest to the viewer.[8] Ribera defines Magdalena Ventura in renaissance terms as, interestingly, a "successful woman" who has fulfilled the roles expected of her within the early modern social structure.[9] We see that she is breast-feeding a child; we can assume therefore that she is a mother and is capable of biological reproduction. She is also accompanied and not shown alone, the mark of a respectable woman. The group can also be seen to make up a "family", an image that perhaps creates a subconscious and sympathetic association with that of the holy family.[10] Furthermore, from the Latin inscription located on the plinth, we learn that this "wonder of nature" has "borne three sons by her husband, Felici de Amici, whom you see here."[11] So, Magdalena Ventura, even for her affliction, is presented not only with an attempt at wholesomeness, but perhaps as a decent member of society, a woman who not only has married, but has been good enough to give her husband numerous sons. *Advertent* in form, the painting confronts the viewer, the sitter ready to be looked at and decked out with everything the viewer needs to understand who this person is and identify where she belongs within society.[12] Yet, Ribera seems to have all his efforts undermined by the rendering of the fulsome beard that Magdalena began to grow at the age of thirty-seven. How can a bearded woman be considered a social success, when she fails to even look like a woman? But then this begs the question; just how should a bearded woman be portrayed?

It is useful when presented with visual conundrum, such as this, to make comparisons with other works that may be considered as part of the genre. Unfortunately, however, there is no extensive genre for the portraiture of the bearded woman within which we can locate the image and so better understand it. Yet Ribera's treatment of the subject matter is not by any means unique; almost forty years before Magdalena Ventura sat for Ribera, Sánchez Cotán – the Toledean painter known only for his detailed and exquisite still-life paintings of fruits, vegetables and game – painted a rather dignified portrait of another bearded woman; one Brigida del Río of Peñaranda, who was known as "la barbuda de Peñaranda" [the bearded woman of Peñaranda]. [Figure 2.][13]

In comparison with *Magdalena Ventura*, this is a rather restrained work and upon first inspection it is the beard and quite masculine features that are most conspicuous; we first *see* a man and then *understand* that this is a woman – the understanding that we are looking at a woman only occurs later upon a closer inspection of the costume and pose. Furthermore, in contrast to *Magdalena Ventura*, there is something missing in this portrait; there are no attributes from which we could deduce a social standing, or the function of the sitter – all we are told of Brigida is her name, place of origin and age. So, to better understand *Magdalena Ventura* perhaps we can use the less theatrical and visually distracting *Brigida del Río* as a test bench to explore the construction of the ambiguous gender of both sitters.
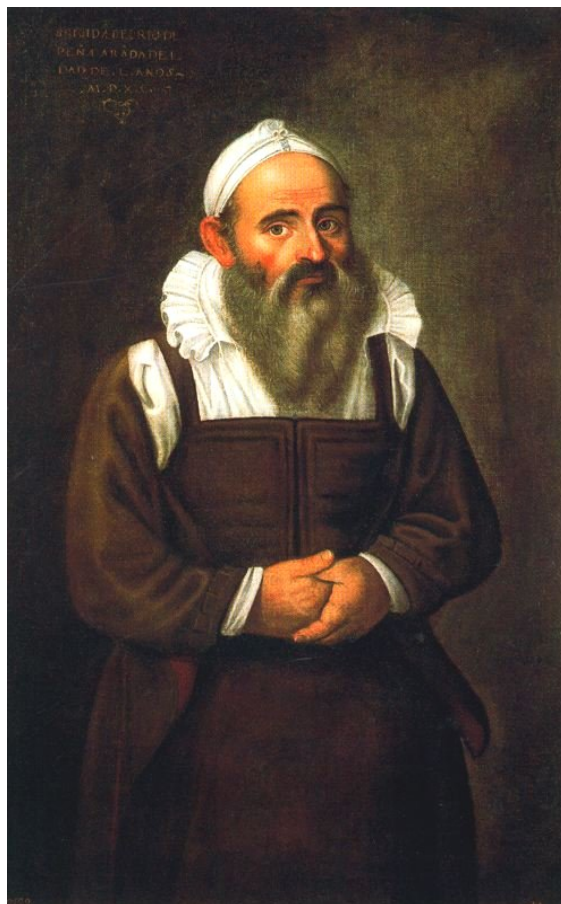
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Figure 2. Juan Sánchez Cotán, Brigida del Rio la barbuda de Peñaranda, 1590, Prado, Madrid Inscription reads: Brigida del Río of Peñaranda aged fifty.

Examining Brigida's clothes we find them to be well made and clean but seemingly utilitarian, these are the clothes of a practical woman, a housekeeper perhaps.[14] Moreover, in no way can this be seen as dynamic portrait; looking slightly nervous, the sitter meekly seems to wait for us to dismiss her – as one would a servant. Norman Bryson, in his analysis of the visual construction of culture, shows us that this portrait reveals the gender

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of the sitter in conforming to the way that "visual activity is culturally constructed across a split between active (= male) and passive (= female) roles – where the man is the bearer of the look, and the woman is the object for that looking."[15] Brigida also seems to lack in the confidence and bravura that one however sees normally in a Renaissance portrait – even in the portrait of a woman. Perhaps Sánchez Cotán constructs the feminine essence within the image simply by delivering to us the "object" for a male "optic."[16] Rather than a portrait, we are in fact presented with an enigmatic still-life; this time of an oddity of nature. Yet, with so few clues to the identity of the sitter, is the dress enough to have made the Renaissance viewer accept that Brigida was a woman and not simply a cross-dressing man?

Montaigne, in his *Complete Essays*, tells of a shepherd of Medoc who appears not to have any genitals, he does not judge the shepherd as anything other than a man, even though he obviously does not possess a penis. However, the shepherd did wear a beard and appears to have acted like a man. So what is it that confers maleness to the renaissance viewer? Thomas Laqueur in his survey of the history of the construction of gender, *Making Sex,* explores the medical aspects of gender during the early modern period.[17] He states that "Renaissance Doctors understood there to be only one sex" and yet there were "at least two social sexes with radically different rights and obligations" with the weaker and less perfect component (possessing internalised genitalia) being female and the dominant and more perfect being the male.[18] The possession of a penis was thus considered a status symbol and entitled the bearer to certain social rights and privileges.[19] Furthermore, the examination of the genitals as a diagnostic tool to determine gender was only available to Doctors and Midwives, i.e. those professionals who would have direct access to the body. Yet, it appears that in cases of undetermined sex, as in Montaigne's shepherd, society was not concerned so much with "the underlying sex of a person but with gender: what signs of status, what clothes, what postures" that individual had the "right" to adopt.[20]

Will Fisher in his seminal work on the renaissance beard demonstrates that the beard is the primary marker of gender in the Renaissance, as the beard is "visible in social situations."[21] John Bulwer, in his proto-anthropological work *Anthropometamorphosis* of 1654, illustrates this by telling us that the beard is "the sign of a man, by which he appears a man, for it is more ancient than Eve, and the sign of a better Nature."[22] For Bulwer the link in the growth of the beard indicates the God-given date of maturity of the male; "[the beard] begins to come forth at a certaine definate and specifique time … the liberation of which moments of time is chiefly conspicuous to God and confirmed by his counsell."[23] Medieval legal texts confirm Bulwer's opinion and the growth of the beard signals the attainment of legal majority, and thus manhood and the privileges associated with it. [24]

The beard also infers that the bearer possesses male genitalia, as it was widely believed that facial hair was due to "'heat and moisture' arising from the production of semen in the testicles."[25]

So, it appears that the beard certainly makes the man; however, there is one iconographical misunderstanding that perhaps demonstrates that this assumption may not necessarily be always correct – I refer to a somewhat bizarre circumstance that caused the creation of a seemingly apocryphal saint; the martyr St. Wilgefortis, allegedly the Christian daughter of a Moorish King of Portugal, who miraculously grew a beard to avoid marriage and was crucified for this transgression.[26] The cult of this saint originates in the fourteenth and fifteenth-century,[27] however, during the sixteenth-century there was a peculiarly Spanish explosion in the creation of pseudo-historiographic phenomena which attempted to create a licit Christian history for Spain and dilute the historical importance of the Moorish occupation.[28] This led to the creation and official sanction, to a number of "invented" Saints, such as St. Wilgefortis, which it seems, caused the Catholic Church embarrassment for centuries after. It is believed that the bearded and crucified St. Wilgefortis, known as *Santa Librada* in Spain, was inspired by the misidentification of the images of the draped medieval crucifixes, such as the *Volto Santo* of Lucca. In the *Volto Santo* Christ, as King, was shown robed and crucified, however, for those not familiar with this iconography the robes were interpreted as a dress and because of this it was assumed that the subject was a woman – who was bearded. If the beard is such an important indicator of masculinity then it appears that the dress overrides it, instantiating quite a different interpretation of gender, even in such a powerful sacred image that iconographically is almost exclusively used to represent Christ. It appears, therefore, that the attribute of a dress has equal, if not stronger, meaning in terms of informing the Renaissance viewer of the gender of the wearer. So, does this mean that a bearded woman would have been understood as such on account of the dress alone? Banquo's comment to the witches in Macbeth, "'You should be women, *and yet your beards forbid me to interpret you are so*' (1.3.45-47)", leads one to believe that the answer is possibly not.[29] Rather that the image would create a tension in the viewer that perhaps what they were seeing was not quite natural and belonged to the realms of the miraculous or monstrous.

For Bulwer, in his *Anthropometamorphosis* of 1654, the bearded woman is nothing more than a monster and an outcast: "if she have many haires she is a monster, as Epictetus saith, and the Probverbe abominates her, [A bearded woman must be greeted with stones from a distance]."[30] Furthermore, he states that unnatural female practices can lead to spontaneous hirsuteness: "women through discontinuance of the company of men, and defect of their courses, have grown Bearded, and passed into virile appearance, not without danger of their health and life." Fisher notes,

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however, that in Ribera's painting we see little of this type of condemnation for his subject, and the same can be said for the work by Sánchez Cotán. Yet while claiming that the bearded woman is monstrous, neither Bulwer nor Fisher's other source, Valerian, actually say that women with facial hair are masculine or unfeminine.[31] However, what is perplexing is why should such portraits as *Brigida del Río* and *Magdalena Ventura* even exist? Pérez Sánchez and Spinosa go so far as describing Ribera's work as a transformation of "an almost repugnant medical case into a superb work of art."[32] Yet why would someone pay large sums of money to own a portrait of a "repugnant medical case?"[33] It appears that Ribera's portrait of Magdalena Ventura does possibly fit within a minor and cultured genre that reflects the fashionable seventeenth-century pastime of collecting and recording curiosities;[34] a genre which is targeted for the exclusive and inquiring gaze of the learned viewer.[35]

        Over a period of one-hundred years the Spanish royal family collected illustrations of marvels of nature – both animal and human – which was housed in the gallery of *rarezas de la naturaleza* [Oddities of Nature] in the royal palace of the *Alcázar de los Asturias*. We know, from inventories taken in 1634, that the gallery contained such works as *The buffoon Pejerón* by Van Dashorst Mor, *The Madman Morata* by Coello, *The Dwarf Magdalena Ruiz* by Coello, again, and *The Giant Juan Biladons*.[36] The genre was certainly popular with the royal court; indeed, some of Velázquez's most moving portraits are of the buffoons and dwarves of the royal court of Phillip IV, painted from the late 1620s to the late 1630s.[37] Works which had been solely created for the private living or sleeping quarters of the *Buen Retiro* – note not portraits to show status, but for private consumption. Even *Las Meninas,* perhaps Velázquez's most famous work, features a group of dwarves to the right of the main subject of the painting (Again this work is known to have been originally hung in the King's private chambers.)[38] The duke of Alcalá it seems may have simply been demonstrating his fashionable, and perhaps even very Spanish, tastes in commissioning this work. Moreover, there is an interesting mythical inference in the painting. Ribera seems to cast Magdalena as Hercules, wickedly, as Hercules is the mythical patron of the Hapsburg dynasty. Legend has it that in one of his adventures Hercules was captured by and fell in love with Omphale, a woman whose incessant sexual appetite leaves him feminised; whereupon he discards his weapon and animal skins, which she dons, while he dresses as a woman and takes up the womanly job of spinning yarn, the implements of which we see on the top of the plinth. [Figure 1.] The painting's mythical allusions can be seen as simply a game, perhaps a way of adding further to the entertainment value of this "Wonder of Nature."

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       Schopenhaurer said that, "one has to isolate oneself from the world for a few moments so completely that the most commonplace happenings appear to be new and unfamiliar, and in this way reveal their true essence." [39] Ribera and Sánchez Cotán both give us works that lead us to question what is usually assumed to be the simple and binary visual construction of gender, suddenly this becomes "new and unfamiliar" territory in the context of the iconographical construction of a bearded woman. Have we discovered the true essence of these paintings? In terms of formulating and understanding the construction of the gender of either sitter, then I do not think so. I believe that what has been revealed is more a construction of ambiguity, as the masculine beard and female body seem to clash and cause instability within the image, yet this seems right for the subject matter. Fisher observes that in Ribera's painting there is "little of the rhetoric of monstrosity" which we find in Bulwer. Ribera isn't constructing a monster, he is showing us a "wonder", a woman who against all the odds, succeeded in performing the task that society required of her.[40] While today we would possibly balk at the political incorrectness of including her image in a collection of "oddities of Nature", this is her home, because like the portraits of the dwarves and buffoons of the Spanish court, we form the same connection with the sitter through that frank and unabashed gaze that most seem to possess. We are forced, though this gaze, to confront the humanity contained within that which we first perhaps perceive as a monster; it is this gaze that I believe is the essence of the portrait of Magdalena Ventura, and through this we finally are given access to the woman hidden by that monstrous beard.[41]

Notes

[1]Ibid., p. 37

[2]Ibid., p. 93

[3]I am noting here the reaction of colleagues, friends and family who have been shown reproductions of Ribera's painting.

[4]Judith Gilbert, *Early Modern Hermaphrodites: Sex and Other Stories* (Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 7

[5]I have compared both images referred to by Kinder and I can see no similarities between the sitter for Democritus and Magdalena Venture herself. There are marked differences in the shape of the nose, eyes, forehead and ears. The apparent age of the sitter for Democritus is also some ten years older than that of the age of Magdalena Venutra. Kinder sadly does not back up her arguments and observations with sources and therefore this makes her views, from the standpoint of the construction of the "woman" Magdalena

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Ventura, rather difficult to fit into this piece examining the image from the perspective of an Early Modern interpretation.

Marsha Kinder, *Blood Cinema: The Reconstruction of National Identity in Spain*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 227

[6]Kinder, op. cit., p. 228

[7]Caroline Walker Bynum warns that we should be cautious about making assumptions, as for example, Medieval people did not define themselves in terms of seuxal orientation as we do today, simply there were "different kinds of sexual acts – between people of different sexes, people of the same sex, between people and animals – and all had sone kind of taint attached."

Caroline Walker Bynum, 'The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg', *Renaissance Quarterly* Vol. 39, No. 3. (Autumn 1986), p.406

[8]Richard Leppert, *Art and the Committed Eye: The Cultural Functions of Imagery* (Boulder, Colorado; Oxford: Westview Press, 1996), p.153

[9]Will Fisher, 'The Renaissance Beard', *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. LIV, No. 1 (Spring 2001), p. 171

[10]David M. Kowal, 'Jusepe de Ribera, lo Spagnoletto'*, Art Journal*, 43:2, College Art Association, (Summer 1983), p. 190

[11]Fisher, op. cit., p. 171

[12]Leppert, op. cit., p.154

[13]Janis Tomlinson, *Painting in Spain: El Greco to Goya* (London: Everyman Art Library, 1997), pp. 58-59

[14] I was unable to find any biography on Brigida del Río.

[15]Norman Bryson, 'Gericault and "Masculinity"', *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretation* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), p. 230

[16] Ibid*.,* p. 230

[17] Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 63-113

[18] Ibid., p. 134

[19] Ibid., pp. 134-135

[20] Ibid., p. 137

[21] Fisher, op. cit., p. 167

[22] John Bulwer, *Anthropometamorphosis: Man Transform'd; or, the Artificial Changeling.* (London, 1654) [BL Shelfmark: 7742.bb.35.]*,* p. 208

[23] Ibid*.,* p. 206

[24] James A. Schultz, 'Medieval Adolescence: The Claims of History and the Silence of the German Narrative', *Speculum*, Vol. 66, No. 3 (Jul, 1991), p. 530

[25] Fisher, op. cit., p. 174

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[26] St. Wilgefortis, also known in England as St. Uncumber and in Spain as Sta. Librada, was the daughter of the pre-Reconquest Muslim King of Portugal. Horrified by marriage plans made to wed her to the Saracen King of Sicily - she had pledged herself to a life of chastity following Christianity - she prayed for deliverance from the pagan marriage. In a miracle she spouted a full beard and hairy body. The King of Sicily immediately withdrew his suit and in a fit of rage the Portuguese King had the young Saint crucified.
J Hubert Lacey, 'Anorexia Nervosa and a bearded female saint', *British Medical Journal,* Volume 285 (18-25 December 1982), pp. 1816-7
eText: at: http://philipresheph.com/a424/study/lacey.doc 27-Dec-2003
[27]Père Hippolyte. Delehaye, S.J., Bollandist, Trans. V. M. Crawford, *The Legends of the Saints: An Introduction to Hagiography* (1907. Reprint: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961) p. 109 eText: http://www.istrianet.org/istria/legends/legends-hagiography.htm 27-Dec-2003
[28]Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 107
[29] Fisher, op. cit., p. 171
[30] Bulwer, op. cit.*,* p215
[31] Fisher, op. cit., p. 170
[32] Pérez Sanchez, Spinosa, op. cit., p. 93
[33] Leppert, op. cit., p. 154
[34] Gilbert, op. cit., p. 160
[35] Gilbert, op. cit., p. 115
[36] A collection containing a similar mixture of images is also mentioned belonging to Ferdinand of Tyrol.   *"Enanos y otros…, mal llamados, monstruos   del   la   naturaleza"   en   el   Arte,* http://www.fisterra.com/human/3arte/pintura/temas/enanos/enanos.htm#Bufón%20Tejerón, 27-Dec-2003
[37] Brown, op. cit., p. 97
[38] Brown locates *Las Meninas*, via an inventory of 1666, in the King's private office (*pieza del despacho*) in the summer quarters of the Alcázar, and therefore access to the work would have been restricted. Brown, op. cit., p. 259
[39]Quoted in Herschel B Chipp, Theories in Modern Art (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 397
[40] Fisher, op. cit., p. 170

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Zoocentrically About Bestial Porn and Erotic Zoophilia

Suzana Marjanic

Abstract
As one of the unfortunately numerous incentives for writing about bestial *porno* (bestiality) and erotic zoophilia, I took the fact that zoosodomy is prohibited today by the criminal codes of many Western countries - not, of course, because of concern for *nonhuman animals* but largely as a result of the ethical paradigms of Christianised *human animals* - and the fact that the Croatian Animal Welfare Act did not express the need for prohibition of the abuse of animals in zooporno practices. However, the Bill for the new Animal Welfare Act of the Republic of Croatia, put forward by the Animal Friends Association (Croatia) in 2004, did contain, among other things, an added ban on "using animals for pornographic purposes and sexual abuse". (Unfortunately, the Croatian Parliament did not, of course, accept the proposed Bill in question.)[1]

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1.   Bestiality and/or zoophilia: *conceptually*

Within the *tentative* distinctions between zoophilia and bestiality, I shall briefly monitor the meanings of these two concepts among individual authors who have taken as their theme the mentioned sexual strategies of "human animals". For example, as opposed to the psychotherapist and professional in the field of (human) sexuality, Hani Miletski, who understands *bestiality* to mean "any sexual contact between a human being and a nonhuman animal", and defines *zoophilia* as "an emotional attachment and/or sexual attraction to an animal", pointing out that she does not give bestiality a negative connotation, since she uses it as a general term for those who practise sexual relations with animals, which includes both bestialists and zoophiles,[2] the feminist-vegetarian theorist Carol J. Adams shows that the distinctions between *bestialists* (animals sexual abusers) and *zoophiles* (those who erotically love animals) are only self-justifications.[3] I use the term *bestiality* in its meaning as the sexually brutal, sadistic, monstrous abuse of animals; and *zoophilia* in its meaning as a sexual relation with animals, in which, ostensibly, there exists attachment and love, and in which the animal itself, so to speak - as stated by the participants whose responses Hani Miletski used in her research - feel attachment and love for the *human partner*.[4] It should be noted that zoophilia bears another meaning: friendship

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towards animals and the intention to protect them, which is similar in meaning to the term *biophilia*.[5]

In this connection, it is not by chance that Carol J. Adams compares the zoophile's worldview with that of a rapist and a child sexual abuser, since "[J]ust as pedophiles differentiate between those who abuse children and those who love children - placing themselves, of course, in the latter group - zoophiles distinguish between animal sexual abusers (bestialists) and those who love animals (zoophiles)", concluding, I reiterate, that "[i]n each of these cases, these distinctions are only self-justifications".[6] Nonetheless, Hani Miletski points out that the majority of her participants, who were categorised as "both bestialists and zoophiles/zoosexuals",[7] "love their animal-partner" and many of them are members of the Humane Society and other organisations that take care of animals.[8]

I observed numerous theoretical examinations of bestial *porno* and erotic zoophilia in a threefold context.[9] We can call the first textual examination of zoophilia *kynical* (in Peter Sloterdijk's meaning of a strategy by means of which one can defeat all the spectacles of *cynical* power in authority) in the review by the bioethicist and animal rights philosopher Peter Singer (2001) of the book *Dearest Pet: On Bestiality* (1992) by Midas Dekkers, a Dutch biologist and popular naturalist, whose theme is *zoophilic erotica*.[10] Namely, Peter Singer draws his stance from the *transspeciesistic*[11] paradigm on the platform of the defence of zoophilia, negating the Great Chain of Beings, the Golden Chain (*catena aurea*) in which Man, allegedly created in God's image, is positioned between the angels and the animals, between spirit and matter,[12] thus creating an *unbridgeable gulf* that separates Man from animals. Peter Singer claims that the sexual act referred to has always been condemned as a deviation, just because of *limitational* anthropomorphism and speciesism and because of abhorrence for non-productive sexual relations.

The second textual examination of zoophilia and bestiality derives from psychiatric practice that largely cares, naturally enough, for the human animal, but, in passing, also mentions the abuse of animals in such practices. I would direct readers to Hani Miletski's *Disclaimer* as the *introduction* to her book *Understanding Bestiality and Zoophilia* (2002), otherwise, one of the rare books on this theme from the psychiatric paradigm:

> "The subject matter may be offensive to some people. If you think you may be offended by the subject matter and/or by explicit descriptions of sexual behaviors between humans and animals - don't go to the next page. Close the book and send it back for a full refund."[13]

The third method of examination of bestiality and zoophilia derives from the nonhuman animal victims paradigm, testified to by animal activists. Let us look, fortunately only in text, at a case of cruel bestiality reported by a Turkish animal welfare volunteer Ozgun Ozturk. On January 25, 2005 a group of drunken men forced their way into a dog shelter in the city of Sivas in Turkey - the shelter was a fenced area in the open air - and raped the mothers and their puppies, beat some of the dogs to death and slit open their abdomens.[14]

Let us also look at a Croatian case of bestiality: as testified to by Darko Dvorščak, a group of *enduro* fans caught sight of a terrible scene of bestiality at the top of Medvednica (a mountain near Zagreb) in April 2005:

> "Three monstrous nature park wardens attacked a fawn that
> they had just snatched away from its mother's teat, at which
> the terrified doe (…) abandoned her young fawn to the
> cruelty of those same creatures, who have sexual relations
> with animals (...)."[15]

2.   Anthropornography

On the trail of the above and the *tentative* differentiating definition of erotic zoophilia and of bestiality (bestial *porno*, bestial sadism) - the latter of which is a zoosexual strategy akin to the concept of *brutality*,[16] attention should also be drawn to the concept of *anthropornography*[17] by which Carol J. Adams designated "the depiction of nonhuman animals as whores" which one sees, for example, in advertisements.[18] The anthropornography that is pervasive in the ostensibly "innocent" advertising strategies in which animals pose as strippers and prostitutes, who allegedly "desire" to be eaten, signifies, in fact, *that* which is found in the pornographic industry and equally in the zooporno industry as well as on animal-pornography websites. In zooporno strategies, we are speaking of *androzoons* - *male* animals that are trained for sexual relations with *human females* and inversed zooporno training - of *gynezoons* that are designated for porno practices with human *males*.[19]

Despite everyday life that is still full of sadistic bestialities, as some of the examples given demonstrate, it would seem that zoophilia on the big screen is initiated in its innocence, under the framework of the zoophilia of some "lonely shepherd or curious farm boy".[20] You may remember the likeable Armenian shepherd, Milos Stavros, and the lovely sheep Daisy in the Woody Allen film, *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex But Were Afraid to Ask* (1972), the cult adaptation of David Reuben's book of the same title, in the second story of sodomy. Reminiscent of the innocent film representation of zoophilia referred to is that of the Roman taxi-driver Gino (Roberto Benigni) in Jim Jarmusch's film *Night on Earth* (1991), who,

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while driving a priest-traveller at 4 o'clock in the morning, utilises the journey to confess that, as a child-youth of 12 or 13, he had tried out his own sexuality on *lovely, warm, rounded, and damp* pumpkins (that have seeds *inside*), and then with Lola, *a refined sheep with a sweet little voice.* On learning of the *zoophilia*, his father had sold her to *a fat, hairy, coarse, bad-mannered, disgusting, odious, atrocious* butcher. Since that experience, he testifies to the priest in his taxi-confession: "*(...) I do not eat meat. (...) I don't even eat vegetables because I remember the pumpkins. I hardly eat at all.*" Despite the foregoing innocent depictions of zoophilia, one should bear in mind Alfred Ellison's conclusion (in *Sex Between Humans & Animals: The Psycho-Mythic Meaning of Bestiality*, 1970) that bestiality in pornography is not produced for secret bestialists, but just for the numerous host of people who are "otherwise sexually normal, as it were, (who) are utterly fascinated by the depiction".[21]

Unlike the innocent film representations of zoophilia above, it would be hard for anyone to remain indifferent to the practice of avisodomy - bestial sexual abuse of geese and other birds whose necks are twisted at the moment of orgasm by the *human males* in order to heighten the stimulation by the agonised contractions of the animals' sphincter. Various *zoophilic* and bestial modes have, of course, been initiated: in addition to the avisodomy mentioned above or, for example, necrobestiality (referring to the sexual act performed with dead animals), I also add ophidiophila - arousal from snakes; formicophilia - arousal with ants, or, more precisely, sexual arousal and attainment of orgasm induced by the crawling on or stinging/biting of the sexual organs (of the human animal) by snails, frogs, winged insects, and ants; cynophilia - arousal from sex with dogs, and "felching"[22] - the act of inserting a live animal into the anus or vagina, for the purpose of receiving sexual pleasure from its body movements, often done with rodents (such as hamsters, gerbils, mice, etc.) or fish...[23]

It should be added that many perpetrators of bestiality were themselves victims of sexual abuse as children.[24] I shall refer briefly to research that identified a group of children, "the youngest so far reported in the literature", that manifest not only sexual abuse of other children but also sexual practices with animals, largely household pets.[25] As a monstrous example, there is the case of a boy aged 13 years and 10 months, who was neglected and physically abused by both parents, and sexually abused by his father from 18 months of age:

> "At age 6 years he disclosed that, on weekend visits to his father, he witnessed his father and another male having sex and that both men had digitally penetrated his anus and forced him to masturbate them; and there was a suggestion

that he had been involved in sexual acts with three dogs also occupying the bed."[26]

Hani Miletski, as a psychotherapist and clinical sexologist, concludes that she doesn't feel it is in her power to condemn individual decisions to engage in sexual behaviour with their animals, adding: "As long as they don't hurt their animal sex partners, I believe they are free to do whatever they want."[27] I reiterate that it is no accident that Carol J. Adams compares the worldview of *zoophiles* with those of rapists and sexual abusers of children, where consent is assumed to be impossible, or, as stressed by The Humane Society (1998), "all 'sexual molestation' of an animal by a human is abuse, even when the 'abuse' does not involve physical injury to the animal".[28]

3.   Mythic zoophilia and/or bestiality
We find *another* form of zoophilia in mythic worlds - or, as Mircea Eliade would write, *in illo tempore* - where the animal symbolises the donor of fertility and fecundity. According to archaic beliefs, marriage between people and animals often led to the founding of a tribe.[29] Following the *story* of animal husbands and wives - within the framework of which I draw attention, for example, to the Southern Slavic *fairy* tales of the fairy pig and the hedgehog and lizard grooms, and the poem about the snake groom - Bruno Bettelheim detects how the *mythic matrices* mentioned have not only fairy tale features but also those of totemism.[30] Along these lines, I find particularly interesting the conclusion of Marijan Košiček, the psychologist, that myths rarely have male zoophilia as their theme, since the male figure is the impregnator, the bearer of the fecund semen.[31]

Within the scope of mythic zoophilia, I would like to draw attention to the fact that, in some cultures, an ethic correspondence between *zoophilia* and *monstrosity* (the mythic binomial human-animal iconographies) is established. For example, as the result of Poseidon's punishment, by which the God of the Sea revenged himself on Pasiphae's husband Minos for offending him, Pasiphae, defined by her animal love for the sacred white bull, gave birth to the Minotaur, *a creature* with a human body and the head of a bull,[32] whose iconographic attributes are more reminiscent of cyborgs from the *science fiction* genre.[33] However, in comparison with the East, where the union of the human and the animal is possible even in the creation of divine creatures (as in the case of the birth of Gautama Buddha),[34] the union of the human and the animal in Christianised western European mythology is largely associated with the initiation of a monstrosity. And while Hindus believe that certain animals are really gods, and *mating* with such an animal represents unification (*coniunctio*

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oppositorum) with God,[35] *bestiality* in European history is linked with heresy and witchcraft.[36] Namely, *witch zoophilia* with the epicentral cult of the male goat was initiated on the path of the Christianised interpretations and condemnation of zoophilia and bestiality. Witch-hunts were intensified at the end of the 15th century; namely, in 1486, the German inquisitor Heinrich Institoris published the *Malleus Maleficarum*, "the Hammer against the Witches". Somewhere around that time - during the 16th century to be more precise, as shown by Erica Fudge - bestiality became a serious offence. In other words, many of the previously held assumptions about Humankind were under "threat" during the 16th and 17th centuries. For instance, the colonialists brought back stories of monstrous races that subverted the concepts of the biblical Genesis.[37]

Something similar happened - as far as aversion to possible human-animal relationships in *Western* culture is concerned - for example, in the first explanations given for the emergence of AIDS. There were rumours that people contracted AIDS precisely because of bestiality with infected apes, which was, in fact, a variant of what had been believed a century previously; namely, that men contracted syphilis if they had a sexual relationship with a mare which was infected with the horse disease glanders, or from performing the sexual acts with apes.[38]

Zoometaphors are also very much present in expressing *our* intimacies, love, eroticism, and sexuality… And while animal metaphors of so-called small and charming animals - for example, pigeons, doves, squirrels, cats - dominate in intimacy, so-called large and, to say it incorrectly, *not so charming* animals are used in the symbolisation of the sexuality of *human animals*; for example, the pig (along with its isomorphisms: piglet, and sow) symbolically *encompasses* female sexuality, while (the stud) stallion, of course, covers male eroticism. Naturally enough, individual erotic zoolexems cover both *positively* and *negatively* qualitative meanings projected onto human sexuality as, for example, the English word *pussy,* meaning *kitten* and, in coarse language - *the female sexual organs, especially the vulva.*[39] I should add that the English word *puss/pussy* derives from the theonym Pasht as the alternative name for Bastet/Bast - the Egyptian goddess revered in the iconographic *form* of a cat, with the head of a cat and the body of the woman.[40]

In the parallelism between mythic examples and *contemporary* zoophilia, Marijan Košiček's estimation is that "the sexual inclinations of people from mythic times to the present day have not really essentially changed!".[41] As to this claimed zoophilic unchangeability, I am not convinced, since, while "zoophilic" stories once denoted close contact between the concept of animal husbands/wives and sexuality/fecundity, in today's zoosodomic practices - in which process I am thinking of ALL forms

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of bestial sadism (animal sexual abuse) - the animal is reduced solely to a source of sexual satisfaction and object of abuse, and consequently – *to nothing.*

4.   In conclusion on interspeciesistic love

As a counterpoint to the above uses of members of the nonhuman animal world, I posit a *symbolic* "zoophilic" strategy in artistic practices, within which I emphasise, for example, the deep ecology program of Oleg Kulik[42] and his call for cultivation of an interspeciesistic love, by which he negates the anthropocentric and speciesistic "comprehension" of nonhuman animals.

And while Midas Dekkers in the final chapter of his book states as one of the conclusions that love of animals "must not obscure love of human beings, otherwise our human society will disintegrate, creaking in its joints",[43] I believe that interspeciesistic love and friendship along with transspeciesism (just as all negations of racism and sexism, and, for that matter, of all monstrous *-isms*, "monstrousisms") can bring to an end the numerous monstrous HUMAN acts committed against all living creatures. But then again, not all, since it is obvious that monstrosity is a part of Humankind, as history proves to us. Moreover, we must not forget - even though it is obvious that the majority have - that concentration camps were modelled on the Chicago slaughterhouses. You may recall the statement of Elizabeth Costello in J.M. Coetzee's novel, *The Lives of Animals*: "Chicago showed us the way; it was from the Chicago stockyards that the Nazis learned how to process bodies",[44] or, as Theodor W. Adorno said, Auschwitz commences in the abattoir when people think, after all: "They're just animals".[45]

Translated by Nina H. Antoljak

Notes

[1] Although the proposed Bill (cf. *Animal Friends Croatia's Bill for the New Animal Welfare Act of the Republic of Croatia* http) was rejected on Oct. 13, 2004 it went down in the history of the animal rights movement in Croatia when the Bill for the new Croatian Animal Welfare Act, drawn up by the Animal Friends Association, was placed as the first item on the Agenda of the sitting of the Croatian Parliament.
[2] Miletski, 2002, 6.

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[3] Adams, 2003, 113.

[4] Cf. Miletski, 2002, 177.

[5] Cf. Visković, 1996, 404.

Zoophilia is given a twofold definition in the *Croatian Encyclopaedic Dictionary* [Hrvatski enciklopedijski rječnik] (2002:1496) as "1. exceptional love for animals, 2. *psych.* achieving erotic arousal and pleasure in looking at and fondling animals", but it is rarely used in conversational language in the former sense.

[6] Adams, 2003, 113.

[7] Miletski, 2002, 174.

[8] Miletski, 2002, 177.

[9] Because of page limitations for online version of the article in question, I shall not, unfortunately, be able to indicate in any detail at this juncture the fourth context of examination of zoophilia and bestiality, from the aspect of the practitioners themselves of the zoosexual practices mentioned.

[10] After Peter Singer published the review of a re-issue of Midas Dekkers' book for the online version of *Nerve* magazine, he was answered with a lashing also by animal rights groups, while one of the reasons for opposition from animal rights activists is his stance from the article mentioned: "But sex with animals does not always involve cruelty", and that "mutually satisfying activities" are also possible in zoophilia (cf. Richard 2001:3, Levy 2003:444).

[11] Namely, I conditionally define with the term *transspeciesism* the attempt to realise a bioethical encounter of the human and the nonhuman animal, both in theory and in practice, which thus covers, of course, the ethical negation of *speciesism* or, in other words - is permeated with solicitousness for all forms of life. The term *speciesism* - in analogy with horrendous concepts such as racism and sexism - was initiated by Richard Ryder, a British psychologist and one of the pioneers of the contemporary drive for the liberation of animals and the movement for animal rights, in 1970.

[12] Cf. Tillyard, 1990, 73.

[13] Miletski, 2002, iii.

[14] I took this information from the Internet page ("Animal Abuse in Turkish Shelters") http://adopt-a-dog.linkbreeze.com/articles/turkish-shelters.htm.

Ozgun Ozturk wrote: "The people who broke in entered all the cages, and one mother and her very healthy puppies were all raped. We gathered the corpses of several babies from different cages. We also found one of them in the pit outside the fences. The mother took us to her pups. A few meters ahead we all found the body of a missing dog, all destroyed. The beer and liquor bottles were scattered all around. I can't forget the mother's face, and

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her   taking   us   to   her   killed   babies"
<http://www.animalliberationfront.com/Practical/Shop--
ToDo/Activism/quitbeinghuman.html>.

[15] Dvorščak, 2005, 137.

[16] Cf. Pomeroy, 1977.

[17] The term *anthropornography* was coined by Carol J. Adams' friend, the
feminist-animal activist Amie Hamlin.

I would mention as one of the numerous visual examples of
anthropornography, which Carol J. Adams included in her book *The
Pornography of Meat* (2003), the advertisement with the *turkey hooker* in
which the pose of the turkey is the pose of a *hooker. Naturally enough*, the
turkey has been plucked (and is thus *naked*), is wearing high heels, has one
hand resting seductively on its hip and, apart from the thematic title "The
Turkey Hooker" (a play on words and/or visual combinatorial skill with
hook-hooker), the ad bears the slogan: "An easy pick up from pan to platter".
Carol J. Adams concludes that the depiction of the turkey in the ad is not just
an anthropomorphic image; it is anthropornography (Adams 2003:108).

[18] Adams, 2003, 109.

[19] Cf. Miletski, 2002, 7; digitalpurple http.

[20] Cf. Wheeler http.

[21] Alfred Ellison, *Sex Between Humans & Animals: The Psycho-Mythic
Meaning of Bestiality* (San Diego, CA: Academy Press, 1970), 215 quoted in
Miletski, 2002, 53.

[22] I would like to draw attention to the *South Park* episode "The Death Camp
of Tolerance" (2002) showing the practice of felching with a gerbil. That
South Park episode within the framework of tolerance also challenged *the
tolerance of the nation* towards homosexuality, in this case that of Mr
Garrison who, at the moment when he learns about the existence of by-laws
by which, if thrown out of the school because of undesirable sexual
orientation repulsive to society, he could receive compensation of US Dollars
25 million, tries, at all costs, to get his hands on the amount in question. So
he brings Mr Slave into the class and, during an experiment – in biology, I
assume – he demonstrates the felching experiment to the children with the set
question, *what will happen with a gerbil named Lemmiwinks when, with the
aid of a glass tube, I let him into* – his words – *Mr Slave's anus* (we later
learn that *this* is not the only small animal pushed into his rectum).

I would like to add that Kevin Speight (a moderator of the
gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender/etc. medical board) claims that felching is,

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in fact, an urban myth, originating perhaps as "a source of homophobia the medical profession gives to the general public" (cf. Epperly http). My own opinion is that it is difficult to believe in the existence of this bestial zoopractice; however, on the other hand, it is difficult to believe, for example in the reality of avisodomy which, unfortunately, has been confirmed as a bestial zoopractice.

[23] Cf. digitalpurple http.

[24] Cf. Miletski, 2002, 174.

In the case of Hani Miletski's research, which included 93 participants (82 men and 11 women) who completed her questionnaire (cf. Miletski 2002:173), and were categorised as "both bestialists and zoophiles/zoosexuals", the responses showed that four of the women (36%) had been sexually molested during childhood, as well as thirty-three (40%) of the men (Ibid.:174).

[25] Duffield, Hassiotis, Vizard, 1998, 301.

[26] Duffield, Hassiotis, Vizard, 1998, 297.

He was sent for therapy when he was found in his adoptive home touching and kissing a dog in the mouth and anus, accompanied by an 11-year-old, learning-disabled male accomplice. "At assessment he admitted to sexually exciting fantasies involving dogs, and he had a well-rehearsed procedure for targeting vulnerable boys" (Duffield, Hassiotis, Bizard 1998:297).

[27] Miletski, 2002, 175.

[28] Cf. Miletski, 2002, 49.

The dubious ethical niche about which *animalists* (animal friends and activists) and zoophiles disagree consists of the question: *Could zoophilia exist without turning sexual intercourse into sexual abuse of animals?*. And while animal rights campaigners believe that animals cannot communicate consent in zoophilic intercourse, zoophiles maintain that not all human-animal sexual relationships are abusive and that animals can also express their consent (cf. Miletski 2002:49-51, Rannoch http).

[29] Cf. Sax, 2001, xii-xiii.

[30] Cf. Bettelheim, 1979, 310.

[31] Cf. Košiček, 1991, 251.

[32] Cf. Graves, 2003, 204; Miletski, 2002, 12; Peretti, Rowan, 1982, 83.

[33] Cf. Haraway, 1991, 149.

[34] Cf. Storm, 2002, 166,

[35] Cf. Dekkers, 2000, 10.

[36] Cf. Dekkers, 2000, 16.

[37] Fudge, 2000, 21-22.

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[38] Cf. Dekkers, 2000, 129.

[39] Cf. Fiddes, 2002, 167.

[40] Cf. Sax, 2001, 58.

[41] Košiček, 1991, 252.

[42] As an example, I refer to Oleg Kulik's performance art *White Man, Black Dog*, given in Zagreb in 1999 as part of the opening of *Future is now: Ukrainian art in the nineties* Exhibition, at whose invitation, in keeping with his *kynical* calling, he appeared, naturally, as a dog. The theme of the performance art was an ostensibly erotic game with a black Labrador, while it was an *actual* joining of Man and Dog in Unity, in which the human body *regresses to the animal one* since - according to Kulik's definition - Animal is Man's *alter ego.* The adhesion of the *Man-Dog* icon awakens memories of the ritual invocation of the animal spirit, which is seen in the personage of the dog and, again in Kulik's definition - the black dog appears as our soul. Namely, some/many expected zoophilia and that is why they came. But what sort of/which zoophilia? In an interview with Darka Radosavljević, Kulik expressed regret at the reception of this performance art, which he presented in Ljubljana and in Zagreb, since the performance art was largely reduced to *a shocking sociosphere* in (some) Slovenian and Croatian newspapers, and, in addition, the reports were untrue - or as Kulik put it: "All the newspapers wrote that a man was fucking a dog for fifteen minutes" (cf. Radosavljević http). Still, there were examples of correct depictions of this performance: Spomenka Nikitović, an art historian, wrote, among other, in her review *Provocation with a Labrador* "several hundred people who tried to catch a glimpse of *something that was probably the last thing they would want to see.* It was a provocative feigned erotic game with a Labrador, accompanied by a chokingly sweet, Eastern aroma and vibrations in the chest caused by the deafening sound of a gong emitting from the powerful loudspeakers" (Nikitović 1999:37, S.M.'s italics). Nevertheless, the framed photo that accompanied the newspaper article bore the added caption: "Oleg Kulik's provocatively feigned erotic game shocked the audience" (Ibid.).

[43] Dekkers, 2000, 190-191.

[44] Coetzee, 1999, 53.

[45] Cf. Patterson, 2002, 72.

In the framework of the persistent and prolonged animal activist drive, I would like to draw attention to Vernon Coleman's detection of how pro-animal campaigners are marginalized in mainstream culture, and how the most simple technique is applied in demonising pro-animal campaigners, by branding all animal friends and activists as violent. And his further detection:

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"Journalists who are given the job of trying to make someone seem mad, bad and dangerous - whatever the truth - often describe the technique as 'monstering'" (Coleman 1999:208).

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Of Monsters, Masturbators and Markets: Autoerotic Desire, Sexual Exchange and the Cinematic Serial Killer

Greg Tuck

Abstract
Of all the sexual behaviours to gain cinematic visibility since the 'liberalisations' of the 1960s, masturbation seems to have taken the longest to establish itself. However, rather than this increased visibility reflecting a relaxation of attitudes, many representations continue to promote a negative view of masturbation. This paper argues that this attitude is informed as much by the anti-masturbation hysteria of the eighteenth and nineteenth century as by contemporary attitudes to the practice. In particular, representations of masturbation demonstrate the perverse sexuality of the serial killer, a lone individual caught in a spiral of ever increasing insanity, alienation, sadism and masturbation. What seems particularly monstrous is the total consumption and objectification of the victim by the serial killer is merely an activity that facilitates a consumption of the self. A reading of the behaviour of Carl Stargher (Vicent D'Nofrio) the serial killer of *The Cell* (Tarsem Singh, USA, 2000) will be presented, which maps the alienated and monstrous autoeroticism of the serial killer. It will suggest that rather than 'exceptional' these masturbating serial killers are merely an 'extreme' reflection and metaphor of a more general anxiety regarding the autonomy of the lone individual of both modernity and the market economy.

Key Words: Masturbation, Autoeroticism, Serial-Killers, Insanity, Alienation, Consumption, Individual, Market Economy, Postmodernism

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Following Frederic Jameson's postmodernism thesis it is tempting to describe masturbation as a specifically postmodern sexuality for a number of reasons.[1] As with the postmodern turn more generally, the masturbatory turn marks the final penetration of commodification dynamics into the realm of social and sexual relations, in which the political locus has shifted from productive classes to single and autonomous consuming subjects. We now live in a social formation where self-pleasure has become the paramount driver of economic activity so it becomes untenable for this economic logic not to effect our understanding of sexual logic. More specifically masturbatory satisfaction mimics commodity satisfaction in that it is both fully heterogeneous, it is based entirely on a conception of the monadic 'free' individual, and fully homogeneous at the same time in that all these

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individuals consume the same thing, despite the individual packaging. However, it is questionable whether we should accept the recent 'appearance' of representations of masturbation within contemporary cinema as actually signifying such a radical change or break with the past as the majority of contemporary cinematic representations of masturbation are clearly critical of the practice and critical in ways that are not particularly new. For most representations of masturbation, particularly but not exclusively male masturbation, the masturbator is a sad, bad or mad subject. The characters involved in teen 'caught-masturbating' scenes, such as in *American Pie* (Paul and Chris Weitz, USA, 2000), are usually portrayed as anxious and often physically feeble. The masturbating paedophile Bill Maplewood (Dylan Baker) and obscene telephone caller Allen (Phillip Seymour Hoffman) of *Happiness* (Todd Solondz, USA, 1999), the police Lieutenant (Harvey Keitel) in *Bad Lieutenant* (Abel Ferrara, USA, 1992) and the writer Melvin Udall (Jack Nicohlson) in *As Good As It Gets* (James L. Brooks, USA, 1997) are all represented as morally bankrupt. However, it is in the linkage between masturbation and insanity that a distinctly early modern rather than postmodern attitude can be observed to remain dominant.

Indeed, cinematic representations of mad masturbators are common and include both men and women; men such as Miggs (Stuart Rudin) in *Silence of the Lambs* (Jonathan Demme, USA, 1991), Norman Bates (Vince Vaughn) in the remake of *Psycho* (Gus Van Sant, USA, 1998), and Carl Stargher (Vincent D'Onofrio) in *The Cell* (Tarsem Singh, USA, 2000), and women such as Hedera (Jennifer Jason Leigh) in *Single White Female* (Barbet Schroeder, USA, 1992), Joanna (Ashley Judd) in *Eye of the Beholder* (Stephan Elliott, USA, 1999) and Betty/Diane (Naomi Watts) in *Mulholland Drive* (David Lynch, USA, 2001). In these films masturbation both indexes and is suggested as causal of madness, the madness of a lone individual who is caught in a spiral of ever-increasing insanity, social separation and increasing masturbation. For these text to masturbate is to commit a crime against life itself. Of particular note is that fact that their masturbations are not solitary, but usually involve an abused if not murdered other. In these text the sexuality of the serial killer is specifically described as a masturbatory one.

Consider how masturbation is represented in *The Cell*, which describes the actions of a serial killer, Carl Stargher (Vincent D'nofrio). Although Carl is in one sense 'heterosexual' in that he abducts and murders young women, he does not rape them, not even necrophilically, and in this respect his masturbatory priorities place him both inside and outside the normative sexual binary. Indeed, he is specifically represented as incapable of having any direct sexual/physical contact with them at all as even the death of Carl's victims is brought about remotely, in the absence of Carl. After their abduction in which they are rendered unconscious, Carl's victim's

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wake to find themselves alone in a prison cell, which has a glass front and side. After a short time, a powerful shower comes on and the cell automatically, but very slowly, begins to fill with water and they drown. The cell is located underground in an abandoned industrial unit in the desert. Carl is not present at the drownings although, crucially, he does video the event. We witness Carl's horror, indeed fear, of the other as a live person when we first meet him as he comes to collect his latest victim. As he passes the cell, the young woman victim shudders and kicks in either her last gasp of life, or merely in an automatic nervous reaction. Either way, rather than enjoy the unmediated spectacle, Carl retreats in horror and hides behind a desk. However, as with his previous victims, after she is dead, Carl takes the corpse home, and bleaches it until the body is white and doll like. The prepared body is then laid out on a slab in his cellar. Using a mechanical hoist and thick chains connected to large metal piercings down his back, upper arms and legs, Carl then body suspends himself above the corpse and masturbates over them while watching the video tape of their terrified reactions to their ordeal, timing his own orgasm for the moment of their deaths.

Rather than experiencing sex and death as spontaneous ontological capacities of the body, it seems Carl's subjectivity is so alienated he has to 'work' at both, rendering them remote, mechanical phenomena which can only be achieved through forms of production and labour. Carl's victim seems to be both sexualised and economised by his psychopathology. Not only are they rendered the 'other' of an alienated masturbatory sexuality, but they are also commodified by a factory system. While Carl is equally immersed and alienated by this technology, he is of course its owner. He literally controls the means of production, reminding us that alienation and exploitation are not mutually exclusive phenomena. That his masturbatory orgasm is bought at the cost of a young woman's life, that Carl is willing to exchange so much for so little, further highlights Carl's distance from any form of mutually sustaining intersubjectivity.

Furthermore, the semiotic clarity of this representation, like so many of the other representations of masturbating killers not only suggests the madness of the character but also equally tends to suggest the madness of masturbation *per se*. That is, there is no distance between the characters behaving like that, masturbating, and being like that, insane. Both act and state are manifestations of the same thing, the subject's separation from any externally mediated or determining agency or authority. Theirs is a mad, alienated sexuality through which as a direct result of the attempt to achieve primacy in matters of sex and/or sense via purely intra-subjectively generated unilateral notions of totality, that is via a desire for the self as total authority, the subject loses all contact with the other. Consequently the very fortification of the self against the authority of the other blocks the possibility of a genuine encounter and hence the possibility of establishing both the

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other as object and the self as subject in the first place. Indeed whether the insane masturbator is properly self-conscious at all is in some dispute and these particular types of representation of masturbation often present an ambiguous position that wants these characters to be both less than human, yet still culpable. They are denied both the innocence of animality and the subjectivity of a properly self-conscious, ethical subject.

This combination of both a metaphoric and causal relationship between the separation of the psychotic from social intercourse and the separation of the masturbator from sexual intercourse has a long heritage. That is, one can identify an epistemological break in attitudes towards masturbation, but it occurred, or started to occur not in our recent past, but about three hundred years. As a number of medical historians have noted, among them, Peter Lewis Allen,

> Around 1700 [...] the concept of 'self-abuse' leapt over the dividing line between religion and medicine, as doctors warned for the first time that masturbators were endangering not only their souls, but their bodies as well.[2]

Concurrent with both the age of reason and the logic of market relations an anti-masturbation hysteria began that ragged across both Europe and America for over two hundred years. Whilst history rarely offers us clear dates for such shifts, with the anonymous publication in 1715 of a pamphlet entitled *Onania, or The Heinous Sin of pollution and All its Frightful Consequences, in Both Sexes considered, with physical and spiritual advice to those who have already injured themselves by this abominable practice*, the idea that masturbation was not only sinful but that it caused physical and mental disease was establish.[3] *Onania* was incredibly successful and within a decade had sold throughout Europe and America and had run to numerous editions. *Onania* combined the absolutist morality of the bible, particularly the condemnation of Onan spilt seed (Genesis 38 4-10), with the quasi-empirical Ancient Greek model of the bodily humours developed between 500BCE to around 200 AD, to imply that the loss of vital fluids, in both male and female masturbation, was both bad and dangerous. Unlike the emphasis on balance inherent to the humoral model as previously understood, any loss was now considered dangerous. Accumulation of fluids, not their balanced expenditure was the key to a healthy life and the body was more and more viewed as an ideal rather than material system, something that was owned rather than lived.

By 1750 the support offered to these ideas by the eminent Swiss physician, Tissot had established the dangerous effects of masturbation as a 'medical fact'. Even that arch rationalist Immanuel Kant defined Onanism as an "abuse of the sexual faculty [by which] a man sets aside his person and

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degrades himself below the level of animals […] and no longer deserves to be a person".[4] By Victorian times this hysteria had reached epidemic proportions. By now the 'cures' on offer were no longer limited to potions and pamphlets but included forms of bondage clothing, toothed anti-erection rings, genital cages and even barbaric surgical intervention such as suturing closed the foreskin, cauterisation of sensitive tissue, and even castration and clitoridectomy. There were obviously a number of factors involved in this phenomenon. The rise in literacy and the growing popularity of sexually explicit literature, the development of singular rather than collective bedrooms, the fear of sexually transmitted diseases, all undoubtedly contributed to the ideological notion that masturbation was on the increase.
Of particular note however was the rise of market economy, which developed and promoted a notion of the free individual that was difficult to confine to the economic sphere. As the historian Thomas Laqueur has suggested,

> The debate over masturbation that raged from the eighteenth century onwards might best be understood as part of the more general debate about the unleashing of desire upon which a commercial economy depended and about the possibilities of human community under these circumstances - a sexual version of the classic 'Adam Smith problem.[5]

In simple terms, the problem identified by Adam Smith in his 'Theory of Moral Sentiments' (1759) was how do social and moral notions survive the self interest unleashed by a market economy? Smith held that our ability to put ourselves in the position of a neutral observer tempered our natural economic selfishness and allowed an acceptable level of self-interest to drive capitalism. As with the majority of Enlightenment thinkers Smith's appeal is to the developing notion of 'reason'. However, whilst such neutrality was presented as possible in matters of economic logic this ontological model seemed less capable when it came to matters of sexuality which seemed beyond or outside such reason. The notion of a neutral sexual body, one outside affect, makes little sense. The problem would seem to be that the development and promotion of the bourgeois individual concurrent with the rise of capitalism and the ideological role of this individual in the mechanics of a 'free' market, develops a model of the subject that is specifically vulnerable to the contradictions and limitations of masturbatory logic. That is, as the dominant object of political ontology under capitalism became the monadic human body, the prosaic if not ridiculous counterpart of the newly dominant and sublime *Cogito*, the ideological attack on masturbation increased in severity precisely as the practice became more

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logically viable. This is the paradox at the heart of the consumer capitalist model of embodiment that continues today.

In demonstrating and demanding a subjective and individual rather than collective or even hierarchical terminal point of ownership and consumption the notion of masturbation both requires and supports a capitalist notion of the subject as a free agent capable of such individual 'having'. It is no longer a commonwealth but individual wealth that indexes notions of value. Yet in being an activity outside or beyond a system of exchange, masturbation is equally anathema to such a model, as it reveals the self-subverting and inherent negativity of the logic of market freedom. It demonstrate the ideological limit of the free individual of capitalism as the one freedom capitalism cannot offer such an individual is of course freedom *from* the market, the right to withdraw or opt out of market relations. In this respect it is the metaphoric power of insane masturbating serial killer conceived as secession from both the sexual market and social relations that articulates this paradox. Masturbation stands as a concrete materialisation or demonstration of the moment when freedom conceived as a property of monadic individuals becomes isolation and the logic of consumption disintegrates due to the absence of value outside systems of accumulation and exchange. It reveals that for all the ideological attention paid to the individual under the capitalist mode of production, it is only an individual suspended within the matrix of the market (rather than over the body of a victim) that can enjoy such rights and pleasures. Furthermore, as is the case of all commercial markets, the inherent abundance or availability of masturbatory pleasure causes its own inversion into worthlessness. That which cannot be exchanged or circulated cannot attract value and so despite the promotion of individual desire encouraged by capitalism, the value that underpins that system only occurs at this social level.

In conclusion, the addition of the logic and ideology of the 'free' market from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards to existing religious and medical attitudes to masturbation created a new synthesis, or mode of address towards the practice that revealed a fundamental ideological aporia within the ontology demanded by market logic. As a moment of sheer consumption masturbation seems to generate exactly the type of monadic consuming subject required by capitalism, but in its inversion of the protestant work ethic's injunction to accumulate masturbation equally negates the ideological desirability of its own logic. This ambivalence at the abstract or theoretical level is also visible at the concrete level of capitalist practice. That is, whilst on the one hand many direct representations of masturbation, particularly on film continue to be negative, on the other, a less direct but positive appeal to masturbatory pleasure pervades consumer culture. Indeed, the promotion of consumption at an individual level, that is representation that offer positive portrayals of 'solitary' pleasures, are

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commonplace. In this respect whilst rejecting any notion that there has been an 'arrival' of masturbation in mainstream culture, a boundary that marks a postmodern scission or definitive new historic period, it does suggest that the current emphasis on consumption reveals a facet of capitalism that is particularly sensitive to both the pleasures and the costs of a masturbatory subjectivity. As always, our monsters are not monstrous in their alien otherness, but in their sameness and the masturbating serial killer of much contemporary cinema is not so much 'exceptional' as an 'extreme' reflection and metaphor of a more general anxiety regarding the autonomy of the lone individual of both modernity and the market economy.

Notes

[1] Jameson, 1991, passim.
[2] Allen, 2000, 80.
[3] Anonymous, 1723, 1.
[4] Sobel, 2002, on line.
[5] Laqueur, 1995, 157.

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Rational, Magical or Monstrous Spaces? Press Responses to London's Main Drainage System, 1865-68

Paul Dobraszczyk

Abstract

Writing in London in July 1861 - during the peak of activity in the building of the city's main drainage system - the journalist John Hollingshead (1827-1904), in *All The Year Round*, stated that "there are more ways than one of looking at sewers."[1] This small but significant observation forms the key to this paper, which considers press responses to the main drainage system, focusing on accounts describing the public ceremonies held at the Crossness (1862-1865) and Abbey Mills (1865-1868) pumping stations, which marked the opening of the system south and north of the river Thames respectively. Historians of the main drainage system have conventionally regarded these responses as uniformly homogenous and celebratory.[2] By focusing on a wide variety of press accounts documenting the same events, this paper will question such a sense of apparent uniformity. Rather, it will be shown that these accounts embody a complex variety of responses, characterised by the interplay of the rational, the magical and the monstrous.

The structure of the paper will be as follows: firstly, I will briefly outline the function of the pumping stations and their role as important sites for public awareness of the main drainage system; secondly, I will examine the press accounts themselves, drawing out their commonalities and differences and discussing in turn aspects of the rational, magical and monstrous; finally, I will assess how the sense of the monstrous relates to the wider context of mid-Victorian ideas about sewers and interpretations of these ideas by contemporary scholars.

Key Words: London Drainage System, Abbey Mills, Byzantine, monsters, pumping station, magical

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1.   The Main Drainage Pumping Stations

The Crossness and Abbey Mills pumping stations - the largest of the four connected with the main drainage - performed important engineering functions within that system.[3] London's topography made the pumping of wastewater necessary at certain points in its new sewerage system, which consisted of 83 miles of new intercepting sewers running parallel to the river Thames. The architectural features of the pumping stations were tailored to accommodate the giant steam engines that made this pumping possible.

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However, the flamboyant decoration of Crossness and Abbey Mills points to another important function of these buildings: as central sites for the promotion and presentation of the new system to the public - places where the vast invisible sewerage system could be "summed up" in a celebratory aesthetic statement.

The ceremonies held in 1865 at Crossness and 1868 at Abbey Mills marked the operational starting of the main drainage system and both were intended to be lavish events: the Prince of Wales being invited to Crossness and the Duke of Edinburgh to Abbey Mills, as well as many Members of Parliament and other important dignitaries. In the event, Crossness was the more high profile event, due to the recess of Parliament and the business of the Duke of Edinburgh in 1868. 600 guests attended the ceremony at Crossness, which began at 11am on 4 April 1865 with special trains laid on from Charing Cross to the remote site on the Essex Marshes and a steamboat carrying the Royal party from Westminster. The events of the day included tours of the underground sewage reservoir, an explanatory lecture by the engineer, Joseph Bazalgette (1819-1891), a ceremony in the lavishly decorated engine-house (where the Prince of Wales turned on the engines), and a banquet in one of the workshops. The ceremony at Abbey Mills, on 31 July 1868, took place on the same day as the opening of the Victoria Embankment, a project concurrent and connected to the main drainage, and followed a similar, if stripped-down schedule to that at Crossness. Voluminous articles in the press appeared in the days following both ceremonies, particularly after that at Crossness. In April 1865, most of London's thirty-or-so daily and weekly newspapers drew directly, for their articles, on three accounts in the *Standard*, *Morning Post* and *Times*, with the *Times* forming the main source in 1868.

2.   Rational Spaces

Large sections of the press articles describing both ceremonies were effectively technical accounts of the main drainage system and the pumping stations, drawn from descriptions by the engineer, Joseph Bazalgette. On 4 April 1865, articles in the *Times*, *Standard*, and *Morning Star* included long extracts from a lecture given by Bazalgette at the Institution of Civil Engineers in March 1865, in which he outlined, in a series of precise but impressive facts and figures, the elements of his sewerage system such as the 82 miles of new sewers, 318 million bricks, 880,000 cubic yards of concrete, and the three and a half million cubic yards of excavated earth.[4] After the ceremony at Abbey Mills in 1868, such statistics made up the bulk of the press accounts; these were drawn more directly from a descriptive account of the building written by Bazalgette especially for the occasion, with each visitor receiving an individual copy.[5] Bazalgette's description of Abbey Mills focuses on the building's qualities as an engineering achievement and he

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downplays its architectural extravagance; rather, Bazalgette presents Abbey Mills as an important part, but only a part, of his vast underground and citywide sewerage system - a system that was rationally conceived and constructed. Certainly, at Abbey Mills, there seems to have been a more direct intention on the part of Bazalgette to inform the press as to the rationalistic principles underlying his system - an intention borne out in the subsequent press accounts.

3.   Magical Spaces
However, such rationalised description cannot be considered in isolation: alongside, and often because of such facts and figures, the press accounts related a sense of the magical quality of the main drainage system. The "extraordinary statistics" provided by Bazalgette led some journalists, especially in 1865, to compare the new sewers with the wonders of the ancient world, alongside which, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, even the Pyramids of Egypt and the sewers of Rome "paled into comparison."[6] In 1868, the *Marylebone Mercury* made similar comparisons: the main drainage being described as the "representation of a mighty civilisation" - a civilisation nobler than ancient Rome because it lacked its "despotic power."[7] Such comparisons transformed statistics into myth: the impressive facts and figures provoked wonder at what many saw as a monument to the future when London, especially compared with Paris, would become the cleanest and most magnificent European, if not world, city.[8]

In relation to the events at Crossness, there were two aspects that brought out this magical quality most insistently: the interior of the engine-house and the subterranean sewage reservoir. Some press accounts described the weather on 4 April - warm, balmy and windless and seen as the first day of spring - in terms that were perhaps metaphors for a new sanitary dawn for London after a long and foul winter.[9] If, according to the *Standard*, an "enchanter's wand" had touched the whole site at Crossness, the interior of the engine-house - with its elaborate, brightly-painted decorative ironwork and giant steam engines - was described as a "perfect shrine of machinery."[10] According to the *Daily News*, the "beautiful octagon" in the centre of the engine-house resembled the interior of a Byzantine church, with the shafts of the steam engines acting as "church galleries - the pulpit being supplied by the cylinder."[11] Press accounts of the Abbey Mills engine-house lacked such direct religious associations, but some of the articles did refer to the "tremendous engines,"[12] the "wonderful machinery,"[13] and a sense of "deep wonder and admiration" at the sight of the lavish decorative ironwork.[14] The sense in which, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, the "factory becomes poetical" and the "furnace, fairy-like" strongly relates to the perceived reconciliation of the artistic and the useful in these spaces; put another way,

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the imbuing of the purely functional with symbolism normally reserved for religious buildings made the prosaic seem magical.[15]

Religious associations were also made during the visit to Crossness' vast underground sewage reservoir, where one of its compartments had been kept free of sewage for the visitors. Compared to the gigantic crypt of a gothic cathedral, it was lit especially for the occasion with, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, "100,000 coloured lamps, which produced a fairy-like appearance."[16] Some compared the effect to that experienced at night in London's pleasure gardens at Cremorne and Vauxhall;[17] all were astonished and pleased by its striking appearance – the *Daily Telegraph* stating that it was "bewildering in its beauty" and comparing the effect, oddly enough, to that experienced in the "piazza of St Mark's by night."[18] This was truly a "subterranean wonder" and was the object of greatest interest to the visitors. Without such a comparable underground reservoir at Abbey Mills, accounts of its ceremony lacked such dramatic associations: the tone of most of the articles was prosaic and explanatory, like Bazalgette's account that former their source.

4.   Monstrous Spaces

Alongside the perceived magical quality of the underground reservoir at Crossness was a more disturbing sense of the monstrous. The writer for the *City Press*, describing the descent from the "warm daylight" into "strange dimly defined vistas", confessed to a "curious nervous shock (not disagreeable)."[19] The appearance of the reservoir - brilliantly lit and empty of sewage - led the *Morning Star* to state that this was not what you would naturally expect in such a place - that is, the "foul, filthy and abominably nasty."[20] However, it was the writer for the *Daily Telegraph*, of the most "poetic turn of mind", who played most strongly on this disassociation of imagination and reality. If the reservoir was so clean "you could have eaten your dinner off it" it concealed, in the parts already filled with sewage, "a repulsive flood". If there was "no foul festona or feculent moisture" in this part of the reservoir, then "light would soon give way to darkness, dirt [and] rats" when the visitors left and the reservoir was filled with sewage and "shut away from the public gaze forever". Indeed, this writer revelled in this unique conjunction of the clean and the dirty: standing in the empty part of the reservoir, with its fairy lights and crypt-like space, the close proximity of the sewage in other unseen parts of the reservoir prompted the writer to feel "in the very jaws of peril, in the gorge of the valley of the shadow of death", separated only by bolted iron gates from the "the filthiest mess in Europe", "pent up and bridled in", "panting and ready to leap out like a black panther at the turning of a wheel, at the loosening of a trap, at the drawing of a bolt."[21] The sense of the monstrous here both plays off a reality (the proximity of sewage) and something imagined (the

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imminent fate of this magical space - to be forever severed from the world above in a sea of sewage). It is this dialectic of the visible/invisible and real/imaginary that generates, especially in this writer, a stream of monstrous oppositions to the magical.

5.   Sewers and the Monstrous

Press responses to the underground sewage reservoir at Crossness represent one instance of wider configurations of the monstrous and sewers in the mid-Victorian period. Contemporary scholars have taken great delight in highlighting such configurations: Michelle Allen sees some responses to the London sewers as voicing opposition to the sewer itself - its threat related to the way in which it invisibly and promiscuously connected the city's wastes, suggesting a monstrous counter to middle-class yearnings for individual autonomy.[22] Matthew Gandy configures the monstrous in relation to the Paris sewers and the uncanny: here, sewers are monstrous because they are unknown spaces in the city, experienced by bourgeois Parisians as a psychological space of unease - uncontrollable because invisible.[23] David Pike, in articles on sewers as London theatre sets in the 1860s and ideas of the sewer in Paris and London in the 19th century, charts all manner of monstrous associations: criminality, poverty, hell, danger and revolution - all are literally and metaphorically identified in middle-class culture with the space of the sewer.[24]

What all these admittedly rich accounts lack is a convincing explanation for the peculiar conflation of the rational, magical and monstrous seen in press responses to the ceremony at Crossness. The most striking feature of these responses is not that sewers are conceived as monstrous, but that they are simultaneously configured as rational and magical. To assess this conflation I want to return again to the articles themselves. In April 1865, anticipating the ceremony at Crossness, the leading newspapers published consecutive articles on the 4 and 5 April: the former detailing the new system of drainage as a whole and the old system it superseded; the latter concentrating on the ceremony itself. Many of the articles on the 4 April directly compared the new system with the old: if Bazalgette's sewers were stupendous, marvellous and mythic in their importance, they replaced something starkly different: an old and dilapidated system of sewers full of "pent-up refuse"[25] and cesspools - poisoning London, breeding plague, full of "monstrous impurities" and symbolised by the "disgusting occupation of the nightmen" (workers who emptied the cesspools at night).[26] According to these accounts, the "monstrous evil" that was the old system was remedied by Bazalgette's new sewers and pumping stations.[27] Here it is old sewers and cesspools that are configured as monstrous, with the new system replacing such associations with something far more elevated.

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The pervasiveness of such configurations of old and new in these press accounts from 1865 is not surprising given the very tangible reality of the main drainage system, largely built in the early 1860s, with every phase of its construction avidly followed by London's newspapers. It is within this specific context that the sense of the monstrous in the descriptions of the Crossness reservoir should be located. The main drainage pumping stations were intended by their creators to be visible symbols of a vast new underground system of sewers - a system built at great cost in order transform the old and defective sanitation of the city. In line with this symbolic status, the pumping stations were embellished with lavish architectural decoration, elevating their value above utility and imbuing their spaces with a sense of nobility. This was in effect a new vision of sewers - the magical overlaid onto the rational, the prosaic made pleasing. However, in the particular space of the reservoir, where even if the sewage was not visible it was however present in the imagination, older associations emerged - not unconsciously, as might be suggested by the psychological model - but with the writers fully alert to the contradictions of this experience and the pull of both fascination and fear. It was the character of this particular space that prompted a conflation of the rational, magical and monstrous - a point emphasised by the writers, who knew this was a unique experience never to be repeated. As if to exemplify this uniqueness, three years later, in the ceremony at Abbey Mills, visitors also wondered at the lavish building and marvellous machinery but, guided by Bazalgette's fully rationalised account, did not refer to any monstrous associations. Indeed, most visitors did not want to inspect the sewage pumps below ground[28] and even the *Daily Telegraph*, whose correspondent had three years earlier been so rampant in his imaginative prose, barely mentioned these "noisome chambers far below" the building's lavish interior.[29]

Were these visitors in 1868 now completely won over to the new vision of sewers? Or did the engineer more effectively control their responses? Certainly, the *Daily Telegraph*'s response to the Crossness reservoir, three years earlier, with its conflation of the new (the rational and the magical) and the old (the monstrous) demonstrates that at particular times and in particular places (and perhaps for particular people), rationality and imagination, and old and new might be configured in unexpected hybrid forms.

Notes

1. Hollingshead, 1861, 390.
2. Halliday, 1999, 91-99 and Owen, 1982, 58 and 60.

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3.   The two other main drainage pumping stations were constructed at
     Deptford (1859-62) and Pimlico (1870-74). Both were situated in built-
     up areas of London, were architecturally more restrained than Crossness
     and Abbey Mills, and neither were used for public ceremonies.
4.   Bazalgette, 1865, 280-314.
5.   Bazalgette, 1868, 4-9.
6.   *Daily Telegraph*, 5 April 1865, p. 2, 'Opening of the Main Drainage by
     the Prince of Wales'.
7.   *Marylebone Mercury*, 8 August 1868, p. 2, 'The Abbey Mills Pumping
     Station'.
8.   *Times*, 4 April 1865, p. 14, 'The Main Drainage of the Metropolis' and
     31 July 1868, p. 12, 'The Thames Embankment'.
9.   *Morning Star*, 5 April 1865, p. 5, 'Opening of the Main Drainage Works
     by the Prince of Wales'.
10. *Times*, 5 April 1865, p. 5, 'Opening of the Main Drainage'.
11. *Daily News*, 5 April 1865, p. 5, 'Opening of the Metropolitan Main
     Drainage Works by the Prince of Wales'.
12. *Times*, 31 July 1868, 12.
13. *Observer*, 2 August 1868, p. 3, 'Thames Embankment and Abbey Mills
     Pumping Station'.
14. *Standard*, 31 July 1868, p. 3, 'Opening of the Thames Embankment
     Footway'.
15. *Daily Telegraph*, 5 April 1865, 2.
16. *Daily Telegraph*, 5 April 1865, 2.
17. *Morning Star*, 5 April 1865, 5.
18. *Daily Telegraph*, 5 April 1865, 2.
19. *City Press*, 8 April 1865, p. 9, 'Completion and Opening of the Main
     Drainage Works at Crossness'.
20. *Morning Star*, 5 April 1865, 5.
21. *Daily Telegraph*, 5 April 1865, 2.
22. Allen, 2002, 383-402.
23. Gandy, 1998, 34-35.
24. Pike, 1999, 102-38 and 2005, 51-77.
25. *Times*, 4 April 1865, 14.
26. *Morning Post*, 5 April 1865, p. 5, 'The Main Drainage System'.
27. *Times*, 4 April 1865, 14.
28. *East London Observer*, 8 August 1868, 5.
29. *Daily Telegraph*, 31 July 1868, p. 2, 'Opening of the Thames
     Embankment Footway'.

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