

Transylvanian Society of Dracula – INTERNATIONAL OPEN DUBLIN CONFERENCE – 25 years TSD 20 & 21 October 2016, Trinity College, Dublin, Long Hub Rooms

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Overview of Workshop Abstracts

Victoria AMADOR, Ph.D., Ass. Professor of English at
the American University of Sharjah, U.A.E.:

Simply the Best: Louis Jourdan as Bram Stoker's Dracula

Of all of the film and television adaptations of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, of which, according to the Internet Movie Database, there are over 200 title matches to the word "Dracula" alone and over 330 name matches, the 1977 BBC Television production *Count Dracula*, with what Heldreth (1999) calls its "icy eroticism and muted hunger... offered a fresh view of the count in what may be the most faithful adaptation of the novel." The cool menace of the count, featured with the long drooping moustache of the text but with the hairy palms of a true Victorian decadent, finds a unique realization in Louis Jourdan's performance. While Lord Godalming has been eliminated and Mina and Lucy made literal sisters, this still-vital two-part telling of Stoker's novel provides an intelligent interpretation of many of the novel's primary concerns. This paper will address the characters, visual images (including the now-obsolete yet strangely effective special effects), locations and art direction, and thematic considerations in *Count Dracula*, reiterating for those familiar with the production, and enticing those who are novices, the pleasures of this re-envisioning of the vampire count.

Professor Marcia Heloisa AMARANTE, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:

"Crawling Down the Castle: Animality and Monstrosity in the Intersection of Count and Creature in Stoker's Dracula"

This work examines the blurred lines that separates human and monsters, analysing this challenging relationship in the horror genre. As far as the literary vampire myth is concerned, no other author deserves more credit than Bram Stoker and his 1897 spawn, *Dracula*. With its first chapters set in Transylvania, the novel shifts its unbridled action to 19th century London, where Darwinian concepts were lurking in the shadows and not even all the new scientific findings could help Victorians cope with their fear of the Other. Whether through their love/loath relationship with freaks or their hunger for penny dreadfuls, Victorians craved for monsters. No other genre could best provide the balance between fascination and fear than horror. Thus, by blending the uncanny with the bestial, the master vampire was born, creating an undying bond between animality and evil.

Dracula stands for the ultimate man-beast, a well-polished nobleman with recognizable animal traits. By giving its main character fangs and claws, Stoker set a long surviving standard. Dracula merges the dragon with the devil - vampires, animals and demons have been entwined ever since.

My work explores the endurance of animal monsters in the vampire subgenre, concluding that only by embracing our bestial nature we will be able to experience humanity as a whole. Thus, I invite you all to a closer look in the mirror so we can finally restore Dracula's image by recognizing his face in our own reflection.



Norbert BESCH, Germany, independent researcher, owner of Udolpho Press:

For the Blood is the Life: The Female Vampire as femme fatale in 19th century France

This paper seeks to discuss the development of the vampiric femme fatale in 19th century French fiction. It is a unique phenomenon that in comparison to other languages the female vampire appeared predominantly in French literature. Starting in late 1824 with the novel *La Vampire ou la Vierge de Hongrie* by Lamothe-Langon, the fatal woman immediately assumed supremacy casting off the traditional female role of passivity and submission. Confronted with a dominatrix that is driven by an unquenchable desire for love, sex and blood, the male counterpart is often torn between a ruinous addiction or bondage and the painful urgency to aim at her destruction in order to recover peace of mind and to find salvation in a world out of joint. The apogee of this mesmerizing but destructive addiction and sensuality can be found in Gautier's vampire tale par excellence, *La Morte Amoureuse* (1836). Other examples of the seductive female vampire discussed are *Isobel, La Ressuscitée* (1856) by Marie Noémi Cadiot and Ponson du Terrail's novel *La Baronne Trépassée* (1852). The paper will conclude with a glance at two decadent novels, Justine Mie d'Aghonne's *La Buveuse de Sang* (1880) and *La Marquise de Sade* (1887) by Rachilde (i.e. Marguerite Eymery) as psychological studies of burgeoning sadism.

Mathew BURR, USA, author of *In the Footsteps of the Voivode* (2015):

Discovery and Revelation from "The Land Beyond the Forest"

The purpose of this presentation is not to go over the well trodden facts of the historical Vlad Dracula that many in attendance are already aware of, but rather to illustrate the impact my scholarly research has had on my personal life. A definitive story of the unprecedented journey I made across several European countries including Romania and of the Transylvanian adventures that would ultimately lead me to the pristine hilltop German fortress called the "Pearl of Transylvania," Sighișoara, and the ceremony therein at the alleged birthplace of the historical Dracula that made me a Romanian Knight. My hope was to make a valuable contribution to *Dracula* studies, so that my work would serve as a companion and inspiration for future visitors to this irreplaceable land. My journey is a comprehensive and in-depth look at Romania's past and present. The heritage and history that the people I encountered *en route* there shared with me and the efforts of those who have since become life long friends transformed my life and course that was once so isolated and closed off.

Marius-Mircea CRIȘAN, Ass. Professor for English at West University, Timișoara, Romania:

The Perception of the Dracula Myth in Romanian Literature and Culture

From the perspective of Romanian literature and culture, the perception of the Dracula myth is both a sensitive and a contradictory topic. The transformation of a voivode significant in Romanian history, Vlad Țepeș, into a vampire prototype could hardly be accepted by historians or writers. About one century before Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Vlad Țepeș had been depicted in a heroic-comic epopee - one of the first masterpieces of Romanian literature, *Tiganiada* by Ioan Budai-Deleanu - like a great fighter against Turkish invasion. Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu also described Țepeș as a guarantor of justice in *The 3rd Letter* (1881), an image which had been developed in Romanian folklore for long. During the 20th century several historians and writers emphasised the difference between the real voivode and the invented vampire. Sometimes this difference was a starting point for discussing the reign of the Wallachian voivode even in manuals of history. The difference between the two identities is emphasised especially in translations into English. For instance, this aspect is underlined in a foreword by Dennis Deletant (English historian and translator from Romanian) to the drama *Vlad Dracula the Impaler* by Marin Sorescu (contemporary canonical Romanian writer). After 1990s, the literary answers to the relationship between the vampire and the voivode are diversified and some authors re-create the image of Dracula in a

postmodern light, in which history and imagination may be combined for the benefit of the Spectacle. In the works of D. R. Popescu, Mircea Bradu, Alexandru Muşina, Dracula is a symbol of the polyphonic dimension of literature.

Laura DAVIDEL, Ph. D. candidate at the Université de Lorraine, France:

Rice's Female Vampires: between Power and Impairment

While male vampires are described as ravishing creatures, given central places throughout the *Vampire Chronicles*, Rice's female undead are generally given secondary roles and are represented as deranged or disabled.

This paper aims to explore the condition of the female vampire in Rice's *Vampire Chronicles* and discuss the different aspects of their power and simultaneous impairment. I will be focusing on Claudia - the female vampire reduced to a little girl's body and on Gabrielle's transgender tendencies. Furthermore, I will direct my attention towards Akasha's passive and infirm posture as a stature in contrast with her hyperactive killing spree. I also believe that Mekare and Maharet's impairments are worth bringing to discussion, especially in the context of the power that the twins are depicted to possess throughout the volumes. Interestingly, in her latest volume *Prince Lestat*, Rice introduces the technological advancements in medicine as Mekare is subjected to different medical examinations that point out the degradation of her brain and her infirmity which provide a striking contrast with her assumed power as the *Queen of the Damned*.

Magdalena GRABIAS, Ass. Professor at the Cultural Studies Department at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poland:

Humanity, Gender, Tradition and Family Values: Female Vampires in Contemporary Youth Oriented Cinema and TV

The subject of the supernatural has been present in cinema and TV for as long as the the history of the media themselves. In numerous films and TV shows, the world of humans is frequently intertwined with the world of mythical demonic creatures possessed with the power to enchant, mesmerise and destroy man. In the 21st century filmic universes of numerous youth oriented films and TV series humans are found coexisting alongside vampires. Such is the case in the three examples chosen for this presentation, namely: a TV series, *The Vampire Diaries* (2009-2016), a cinema box office hit, *The Twilight Saga* (2008-2012) and an animated fantasy comedy in two parts, *Hotel Transylvania* (2012, 2015).

The 21st century vampire films display a significant modification of stereotypes of both male and female vampires. Once a ruthless and blood-lusting instinct-driven creature, a modern vampire is often torn between its nature and the desire to reacquire and retain human traits. This change is conspicuous in the case of both genders, however, a complex alteration of the female vampire pattern is particularly interesting in both sociological and psychological sense. Although dark and evil vampiresses in the vein of Carmilla are still in existence in the 21st century celluloid reality, they seem to have become a minority. Majority of the contemporary vampiresses are "humanised" characters desperately searching for ways to maintain the balance between demonic nature and their longing for humanity. Thus, human experience, including gender divisions, cultivating tradition and celebrating family values frequently seem to be the focus of the new or newly remade vampire stories.

This article aims at presenting the changing trends in contemporary vampire stories on screen. The deviations from the original patterns will be indicated on example of the modernised image of female vampires in the 21st century cinema and TV shows.

Tanja JURKOVIĆ holds an MA in English and French from the University of Zadar, Croatia. She is currently living in the UK, where she is preparing for a PhD in Film and Media:

Balkan Vampire Myth: Urban Legends or a Publicity Tool

The image of a vampire as a supernatural bloodsucking creature and a romanticised ideal has already been researched and dissected into pieces since it was created, first in 1819 in Polidori's story *The Vampyre*, and later on popularized in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). Everything we now know about the figure of the vampire came from the 18th and 19th century Gothic literature, and has gone through numerous changes in film and literary representations in different parts of the world. Figure of the vampire has become a "...literary, psychologically and socially valuable and justified statement about the state of societies, their paradoxes, injustices and moral degradation..." a statement more than applicable to the situation in the Balkans, in the past and especially today. One of the first known "real vampires" on the Balkan territory, Jure Grando, has served as a tool for expressing the fears about sexual freedom, among others, in an 18th century Balkan society constrained by its own depravity. Another, more famous figure, was Petar Blagojevi, a Serbian peasant who was terrorizing the local villagers by strangling them, in that way representing some of the concerns of rural communities of the time. Furthermore, Arnaut Pavle, a military hero who was obsessed with the thoughts of suicide, the act that supposedly turned people into vampires, and after his own death becoming one of them, terrorized the village where he lived. Nevertheless, Sava Savanovi is by far the most famous vampire figure in the Balkans, who is still being mentioned in literature and film alike (one of the first Serbian horror films, *Leptirica* (1973), is a somewhat romanticised representation of his story). One of the common denominators that all these historical/mythical figures have is overall terror and fear experienced by common people about the social, cultural and health issues of the time, that needed a plausible explanation in order to make people feel secure in their own homes and with their own existence. Today, all these cases still exist either as urban legends or simply as folk tales told to young generations, but the purpose of them still existing might be somewhat unclear, as these tales have served as a great marketing tool for developing tourism in forgotten rural parts of Balkan countries. As already known, there is always a pinch of truth in every legend, which enables the Balkan tradition to live on, even outside the borders of Balkan countries, but beware, these legends do come with a warning: "Do not call out the Devil, or he may come!"

Dr Duncan LIGHT, Department of Tourism and Hospitality, Bournemouth University, Poole:

Tourism and Travel in Bram Stoker's Dracula

Mobility is a dominant theme in *Dracula*: one of the key characteristics of the novel is that the various characters are constantly on the move. This paper focuses on one aspect of this mobility: tourism. Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* at a time when tourism was a well-established practice in Britain among both the middle classes and industrial workers. Consequently, tourism is a prominent theme in the novel, even if it has sometimes been overlooked. Moreover, in a context where *Dracula* frequently celebrates Victorian modernity, tourism can be identified as a key practice and experience of modernity. This paper focuses on a number of distinct forms of tourism in Stoker's *Dracula*: it examines Jonathan Harker's journey to Transylvania in the context of business tourism; it considers various forms of health/medical tourism (Lucy Westenra's trip to Whitby and the visits by Dr Seward and Professor Van Helsing to provide medical assistance to Lucy in London). The paper also considers the dangerous journey by Van Helsing and his colleagues to Transylvania in pursuit of Count Dracula as a form of political tourism. The paper also conceptualises Jonathan and Mina Harker's final journey to Transylvania as a form of dark tourism. Finally, the paper questions whether it is appropriate to conceptualise Count Dracula's attempted invasion of Britain as a form of tourism.

John Gordon MELTON, Distinguished Professor of American Religious History of Baylor University's Institute for Studies in Religion:

Dracula's 21st Century Resurrection: Tracing the Vampire's Permeation of the Popular Culture

At the beginning of the 19th century, Western European writers introduced the vampire to a literary public by transforming stories of Eastern European vampires into popular short stories, epic poems, and stage productions. This development culminated in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, which re-appropriated Transylvanian folklore to project a pervasive image of the vampire, and the novel's 17th chapter became for all intent and purpose the accepted correct description of the nature of vampirism.

Now, a little over a century after the novel's initial appearance, *Dracula* has led the vampire to a place as one of the most ubiquitous images of the global popular culture, instantly recognizable, widely utilized in the advertising world, broadly adopted to explain both psychological and sociological phenomena, and the subject of bestselling works of fiction, blockbuster movies, and internationally distributed television shows.

Tracing the current permeation of the popular culture by *Dracula* in particular and the vampire in general begins with the two cinematic versions of *Dracula* (1931) bringing the novel to life in both the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking world and prompting a first wave of vampire movies. It will be followed however by (1) Hammer Studio's introduction of *Dracula* to Technicolor in the 1960s (prompting responses by the emerging movie industries in Asia), (2) the re-invention of the monstrous Dracula as a secularized vampire, a more human vampire (à la Anne Rice), and/or the vampire hero (à la Chelsea Quinn Yarbro), and (3) the rise of the academic study of the vampire.

Fotina MOROZOVA, M.D., Russia, author of the novels "Chinese Box or To Kill Stalin" (2009), "Serpents" (2014); and "The Northern Rabies" audioserial (2015):

The Mist and the Dragon

First of all I have to say that though there are two names on the title – Ecaterina Buley and mine – in fact this book has three authors. And the very strange thing is that the third author had died before the book was written. But first things first.

I meet Ecaterina in 2011 at the competition of vampire fiction "Transylvania" where we both were members of the jury; I was as the author of *Muntenitsa*, Ecaterina was as the Chairman of the Russian chapter of the TSD. By the time of our meeting she had been traveled to Romania for many times. She told me many interesting things about Nicolae Paduraru who had already died by this time. He had an idea about two Draculas. There are two images of Dracula: the count-vampire and Vlad Tepeș, the medieval Voivode (prince). "The vampire and the prince are very different but in people's minds they are one man! They are like two enemies in the pouring rain," - Paduraru said. – "They hate each other but there is only one umbrella so they must stay together."

About a month after this meeting I had a dream in which Vlad Tepeș with his hand in a cast looked for Bram Stoker in Victorian London. After awakening I continued to think: how did Vlad the Impaler come to Victorian London? What did he do there? Suddenly Paduraru's idea of two Draculas began its own life in my head, and within some days the content of two novels - a struggle between two Draculas and two magical orders - had acquired distinct outlines. However, the TSD would play a great role in the second part of the action and therefore I needed more information about it first-hand. So I turned to Catherine; when she heard what I wanted to write, she began to provide such valuable ideas that I knew at once: a dilogy would not be possible without her.

This way, Catherine and I became friends and co-authors. We have written the first part of the dilogy which was edited in English and in Russian, and we are working on the second part. I have to say some words about the plot of the first part called “The Mist and the Dragon”.

The 15th century. The Prince of Wallachia, Vlad the Impaler, also known as Dracula, is wounded badly in battle. Having come to his senses, he finds himself in England, at the end of the 19th century. Besides, the prince learns that his name and reputation is encroached on by two men: a vampire from Transylvania named Count Dracula and an Irishman Stoker. The people that have saved him say that he has to stop these impostors. Vlad agrees. But he doesn't trust the people who dragged him out of the past with the aim of stopping – or even killing – vampire and Irishman.

To understand where the truth is and where the lie, Vlad escapes and meets the vampire...

Graeme MURDOCK, Assoc. Professor in Early Modern & Confessional History, Trinity College Dublin:

The Vampires of Olomouc

Vampires are rather shy creatures, and there is very limited direct evidence about their appearance in early modern Central Europe. This paper will look backwards from the history of ideas about vampires to try to piece together something of the context of their emergence in the diocese of Olomouc in the early 18th century. This path of investigation begins with Augustin Calmet's 1746 *Dissertations sur... les revenants et vampires*, widely-circulated and translated, and later influential in western literature. It follows officials of the Bishop of Olomouc, Charles III of Lorraine, who sent Calmet a copy of Karl Ferdinand Schertz's *Magia Posthuma* of 1704. And through Schertz, the director of the estates of the bishopric of Olomouc, we gain access to the records of the consistory of Olomouc, in a world of fear, as stories circulated about the deceased leaving their graves to disturb the living and the discovery of unusual signs in exhumed bodies. At the height of the panic in 1727, around 80 bodies including those of 60 children were exhumed in the small town of Libavá. This paper will attempt to identify the circumstances and contexts in which the threat of vampirism emerged in Olomouc at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Florin NECHITA, , Lecturer for Marketing, Advertising and Branding at the Transilvania University of Braşov:

Beyond Dracula Tourism in Transylvania: the Case of Rural Lăpuş Land

Dracula tourism in Romania has centered around Bran Castle in south-eastern Transylvania, although the places actually mentioned in the first part of Stoker's narrative are located in the northern part of Transylvania: Cluj (Klausenburg), Bistriţa (Bistritz) and the Borgo Pass. Additionally, Sighişoara has become well-known as the alleged birthplace of Vlad Dracula. Government initiatives have focused on the creation of a *Dracula* theme park in Disneyland style about 15 years ago, but there is no strategy on how to use *Dracula* myth in a smart and efficient way for promote Transylvania as a top tourist destination. In contrast to the trends of commercialisation, mystification and stultification observed in *Dracula* tourism, Transilvania University of Braşov has invited 23 students from Romania, Japan and Italy to explore the area of Lăpuş Land in the north of Transylvania, together with their teachers from Romania, Japan and The Netherlands and with professionals active in the Romanian communication industry. During a 6 days programme, students participated in theoretical workshops such as Visual Anthropology, Digital Media, Creative Communication and Photography and actively experienced the daily life in the villages of Lăpuş Land. As this was their first stay in the area, their experience could be equated with that of first-time tourists. For the purpose of analyzing their tourism experience, a visual approach was considered as travel photos reflect and influence destination perception. Having a strong presence of Japanese students (14 out of 23), the paper aims to go beyond *Dracula* tourism and to provide a snapshot of a relatively unexploited rural destination from Transylvania seen from an experiential tourism perspective. Some implications and suggestions for promotional themes useful to DMOs (destination marketing organizations) will be provided. Apart from the analytical insights enabled by this Transylvania Creative Camp 2016, visiting Lăpuş County has proved to be an attractive supplement to following the footsteps of Jonathan Harker through northern Transylvania.

Dr Sorcha NÍ FHLAINN, Lecturer in Film Studies and a founding member of Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University:

“Dead but Delicious”: Rewriting and Performing Vampirism in *Dracula Untold* (2014) and *What We Do in the Shadows* (2014)

Recent vampire texts including *Dracula Untold* (2014) and *What We Do in the Shadows* (2014) cogently articulate the ongoing narratives of culturally assimilated vampires in the 21st century. The Universal Studios relaunching of the Dracula brand with its superhero-inflected vampire film *Dracula Untold* unpicks the narrative stitching of the opening sequence of Francis Ford Coppola’s *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* (1992) and expands its opening framing love story to articulate the ‘origins’ prologue for Dracula’s dark journey into vampirism. *Dracula Untold* positions itself as meta-textual and contemporary by its contradictory titling – (it is retold rather than untold) and its absolute dependence upon James V. Hart’s script for Coppola’s highly influential film. Coppola has claimed his 1992 film is ‘the most authentic screen adaptation of *Dracula* to date’ (which it is not but tries to be); yet, more importantly, Hart’s narrative device provides the crucial template for later Draculas (including today’s contemporary vampires) by inserting this romantic underpinning so successfully that it becomes part of Dracula’s filmic evolution (a romance narrative that can be traced back decades earlier, but which has remarkably only matured onscreen since the 1990s). *Dracula* is now continuously overwritten and repackaged for the post-Twilight generation as a superhero cum self-reflexive sexy vampire archetype and, in an extension of this cultural saturation, as a figure of parody in the vampire mockumentary *What We Do in The Shadows* (2014). The overt infusion of tragic gothic romance which Fred Botting describes as ‘the end of gothic’ transmutes contemporary vampires (including Draculas) by sourcing its exemplary humour from the very wellspring of interviewing vampires who are desperately trying to perform for the camera as ‘vampires’. Both this satirical mockumentary concerning articulate vampires next-door, and the act of overwriting *Dracula* in line with superhero trends (now altogether unhinged from Stoker’s novel), indicates that vampires are completely assimilated, if not metaphorically jaded, in contemporary culture. Where can the vampire go from here?

Maria PARRINO, Ph.D. in English Studies from the University of Genova, Italy, currently graduate teaching assistant at the University of Venice:

His Master’s Voice: Sound Devices in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*

One year after the publication of *Dracula* (1897), the English photographer Francis Barraud was commissioned a painting from his picture of a dog listening to a cylinder phonograph. His work, entitled *His Master’s Voice*, became one of the most famous logos in the world, the machine replaced by the gramophone. Barraud’s painting was particularly meaningful for not only did it raise the issue of the amplified voice, but it also engaged with the impact that technological instruments had on human sounds. Furthermore, it made the voice appear ‘in its object-like quality by assembling together the animal and the machine, short-circuiting humanity’ (Dolar).

The phonograph shows how voices can become disconnected from the material body and raises the issue of what actually constitutes a voice. Among the modern technological devices mentioned in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, the phonograph plays an important role, a presence which is both disconcerting and reassuring. The power and the uncanny effect of the disembodied voice is evident in Mina’s reaction to Dr Seward’s phonographic recording, a ‘wonderful’ and ‘cruel’ device as it records not only the speaker’s voice but also its tone, thus revealing bodily sounds which writing, instead, hides (Picker). In *Dracula*, the distinction between speech and writing is constantly under pressure, represented by the characters’ urge to write (journals, letters, etc.), and the agency of oral interaction. From Renfield’s calling in of the vampire to Dracula’s attempt at mastering oral English in order to conceal his foreignness, the novel is an important example of how the Gothic deals with sound devices.

Niels Kristian PETERSEN, M.Sc., Independent Researcher, Denmark:

Magia Posthuma, Karl Ferdinand von Schertz and Dom Calmet: Revenant Beliefs of Moravia, Silesia and Bohemia, and their Relation to the Vampire Myth

Karl Ferdinand von Schertz's *Magia Posthuma* has been widely considered the first book about vampires. Still, this was only due to Dom Calmet's brief summary in his treatise on apparitions and vampires. Only recently with the rediscovery of Schertz's book and new research in the Czech Republic, it is possible to assess the role of *magia posthuma*, post-humous magic, in the history of revenant and vampire beliefs. The fusion between the revenant beliefs of Moravia and Silesia with the vampire as popularized in the 1730s by the so-called vampires cases of Serbia is a revealing part of the "myth" that developed into the fictional vampires of modern day vampire fiction, including Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. The speaker will provide an overview of current knowledge on the subject.

Nancy SCHUMANN, writer, vampire Expert, and Senior Administrator at Queen Mary University of London - Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry:

Sleeping with the Vampire

Vampires are mysterious and sexy. Every school girl dreams of having a vampiric boyfriend these days and the human-vampire relationship has become more a batch of honour than a dangerous liaison. Rather than being damsels in distress, modern ladies share dating tips for fanged friends. Comparing *Dracula* to contemporary YA literature, such as like the *Blue Bloods* or *House of Night* series, this paper traces a variety of vampiric characteristics that have survived the eras these works have crossed. This will include the use of gender, the vampire's attitude towards their victims and how these change through the ages, as well as vampiric sexuality and just why modern vampires love Muse.

Dr Fiona Eleanor SUBOTSKY, Royal College of Psychiatrists, London, Emeritus Consultant Psychiatrist of the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust:

Dracula and the Doctors

This presentation is intended to introduce some of the world of the doctors of the late nineteenth century in their relation to Bram Stoker and *Dracula*. Not only were the Stokers a medical family but Thornley Stoker in particular had asylum connections which have come to light in looking into the past journals of what was the Medico-Psychological Association, now the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

In order to relate to the text, the presentation is structured as: The Brothers, The Vivisectors, The Asylum Doctors, The Medico-Jurists, The Hypnotists, The Degenerationists and The Spiritists. It concludes with Other Dining Doctors from Stoker's *Reminiscences of Henry Irving* and The Trinity Tercentenary Festival, when we shall meet again several of the same characters.

Jillian WINGFIELD, Doctoral Candidate and Visiting Lecturer in the School of Humanities at the University of Hertfordshire:

'He's undead, overweight, and can't get a date': Obesity and Twenty-first Century Vampiric Abjection in Andrew Fox's *Fat White Vampire Blues* (2003)

Andrew Fox's *Fat White Vampire Blues* disturbs many 'rules' of vampire fiction, embracing as much as resisting perceptions of generic norms, focusing as it does on the tribulations of an apparently mundane undead character: the risible Jules Duchon. He is a self-pitying hypochondriac, and one among many in a modern New Orleans portrayed as the 'Fattest City in [the] Nation'. This vampire who, according to generic

tradition, should be powerful and intimidating, is anything but. Fox's characterization of Duchon is part of a growing generic trend towards portraying more humanized vampires with personal histories in dialogue with fears that govern modern America, as the contextually problematic is redirected towards a distancing of dangers within uchronic fictional spaces that house rhetorically exaggerative symbolic forms of vampirism.

By focusing on a generically dissonant central protagonist, Fox extends the significance of the vampire genre in the consciousness of a postmillennial readership. Duchon's obesity, as an ambiguous signifier, acts as an aid to his role as predator, with his appearance inspiring reactions in his victims that range from disgust to pity, but rarely inducing fear until too late. Duchon may not appear terrifying or imposing, as might be expected, but his very ordinariness, bordering on the unattractive, is as effective a predatory attribute as any possessed by generic predecessors. As a vampire, Duchon thus reflects the extremes of both genre and contemporary context as his ingesting of human life acts as a metaphor for the monstrous aberration of the epidemic of over-consumption tainting modern America.

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