WILLIAM WILSON'S ECHOES: THE DOPPELGÄNGER

THEME IN LATE VICTORIAN

HORROR FICTION

by

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DEDICATION

      This project dedicated to my great-grandmother Mildred S. May, whose poetry

taught me that the context of a piece can be just as significant as the text itself.

      It is also dedicated to my great-grandfather Charles ("Pow-Pow") Southerland,

who taught me as a child that the drive to learn is a spiritual one not measured in degrees

or qualifications, but in the arches of bowing bookshelves and the comfort of knowing

that there will *always* be another chapter to read.

      I remain inspired by you both.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

<u>The "Magnificent Disaster" of Modernism and William Wilson's Echoes</u>

In his book on modern critical theory, Peter Barry introduces his chapter on modernism by billing it as "the earthquake of the arts that came before it" (81). This phrase, while somewhat restrictive in its oversimplification, nonetheless captures the overall upheaval of modernism's historical moment. Coinciding fundamentally with the rapid social and technological advances of the late nineteenth century, modernism in its earliest form provided a cultural buffer between the retreating Romantic era and the approaching modern one. In a world tensely occupied at once by traditional and futuristic ideals, modernism arose as a means to resolve the resulting friction by examining and reinventing the past in order to navigate the future. At its internally self-contradictory and resilient core, modernism resists all outside attempts to define it, while instead defining itself in its own juxtaposed character.

As new and more innovative modes of transportation, production, and communication filtered into nineteenth-century life and literature, they met and destabilized the old, provoking a powerful tension between the two. Modern devices like the typewriter and phonogram recorded the tumultuous, global shift from the annals of history into the modern future. Traditionally held values intersected with new ones, suspending the themes of both in chaotic conflict with one another. To say of modernism then, as Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane do in their *Modernism: A Guide to*

European Literature, that "its character was catastrophic" (20) is almost an understatement. The character of modernism is therefore one of chaotic oppositions, of destruction and renewal, so that as Marshall Berman writes in *All That is Solid Melts Into Air,* "to be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are" (15).

Out of this modern tension arose the impulse to both look backward to the past and forward to the future simultaneously. The effect is one that, as Stephen Kern writes of the modern public in *The Culture of Time and Space*, "this generation looked to [its past] for stability in the face of rapid technological, cultural, and social change" (36). Such a perspective, like modernism itself, was always in flux, and rendered the modern public examining the artefacts of the past with the overall goal of revising them for the thrilling, if terrifying, future. As such, an interest in the subversion of history in order to avoid regression back into the past became an essential component of modernism. The movement, itself a schizophrenic condition of cultural fissures that leave the past and future in constant subversive overlap, fundamentally resists definition. "Modernism" is, to borrow from Susan Friedman's own valiant attempts to outline the phenomenon in her article "Definitional Excursions," "a term at war with itself, a term that unravels its own definition, a term that codifies the principle of indeterminacy and in so doing opposes its own commitment to perpetual change" (505). Delightfully in keeping with its own character, *modernism* is a term that disallows definition by simultaneously breaking down and rebuilding itself under the fertile strain of its own pervasive volatility. It is inherently,

as Bradbury and McFarlane call it, "a magnificent disaster" (26).

From the chaos of this disaster, "there came a restructuring of parts, a re-relating of the fragmented concepts, a re-ordering of the linguistic entities to match what was felt to be the new order of reality" (Bradbury and McFarlane 80). As part of this restructuring, older forms were resurrected and brought to bear on the new social conditions. In this thesis, I investigate the resurrection of the Gothic for the purposes of this modernist tendency. The Gothic offers a particularly rich field for such an investigation, in that, as David Glover writes in *Vampires, Mummies, and Liberals: Bram Stoker and the Politics of Popular Fiction*: "The incursion of the Gothic into English modernism marks the point at which liberal modernity's continuous assault upon traditional cultural forms begins to unleash an uncontainable and radically disruptive reaction from within, cracking under the strain of its own constantly redoubled efforts at expansion and renewal" (42). While the junction of Gothic and modern offers fertile ground for analysis, with almost innumerable elements to be explored, I will focus specifically on one of the most frightening relics of the Gothic mode as it appears in late Victorian horror fiction: the doppelgänger.

A haunting theme throughout the Romantic period, the doppelgänger figure stalks the plotlines of several prominent texts of the nineteenth century. These include E. T. A. Hoffman's convoluted *The Devil's Elixirs* (1815) and his short story "The Sandman" (1816), works from both Shelleys (*Frankenstein* from Mary in 1818 and *Prometheus Unbound* from Percy in 1820), and James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confession of a Justified Sinner* (1824), to name but a few. Each of these narratives hinges upon the complicated associations between central characters (subjects) and their mirrored

doubles, inspiring both a fascination and a horror. The doppelgänger theme would much later fascinate folklorist Otto Rank, whose 1914 book *The Doppelgänger* analyzed the theme in terms of anthropology; it would prompt revolutionary psychological research by Sigmund Freud into the uncanny, by Carl Jung into the shadow archetype, and by Jacques Lacan into the mirror stage.

The incarnations of the doppelgänger that intrigue me most, however, and which inform this thesis, are those that are revived after the Romantic period, in the sort of transitory gap situated after the Romantic period yet slightly ahead of the era of so-called high modernism. I propose that the impulse to resurrect the doppelgänger, a Gothic figure from the past, in late Victorian horror fiction is a forerunner to the modernist effort to stabilize the future by recoding that past. The duality inherent to the doppelgänger theme makes it a superb case study of this modern impulse for reinvention, for, as Fred Botting writes in his *Limits of Horror: Technology, Bodies, Gothic*:

> The uncanny announces the doubleness of modernity: fantasy irrupts into reality, ghosts, death, darkness and monstrosity crossing lines of exclusion, otherness returning upon the same. At the same time, in giving form to the disturbing locus of otherness, dressing it up as a monster or vampire, modernity partially stabilizes anxiety with objects of fear, exclusion, or repugnance. (8)

From the plethora of doppelgänger-related themes on display in texts from the period, I have isolated three key phases of the double-binding conflict that I will discuss at length in this thesis: the subject's initial recognition of his or her doppelgänger, the inversion of power that occurs as the doppelgänger drains the strength of its subject, and the final self-

destruction. I will look at three late Victorian texts that revive the Gothic doppelgänger for the purpose of reconfiguring it. In fact, these texts provide a somewhat linear trajectory that charts the development of the impulse to modernize as it leads out of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. These are Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) .

I want to begin, however, by introducing these texts within the framework of another that cannily anticipates the trend of all three: Edgar Allan Poe's short story "William Wilson." As the title of my thesis suggests, the use of the doppelgänger in late Victorian horror fiction might be considered in terms of the lingering echoes of Poe's mysterious tale of doubling. It is not that I argue for any sort of direct influence of Poe on these other writers, but that Poe's exemplary short story raises intriguing questions that will be addressed, in different ways, by the late Victorian horror narratives I discuss.

First published in an 1839 issue of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, "William Wilson" presents itself in the form of a deathbed confession and follows the earlier conflict between its narrator (who, we are told, is not actually named "William Wilson" at all) and his doppelgänger. Wilson, as the narrator dubs himself in the first line lest "the fair page" lying before him "be sullied with [his] real appellation" (Poe 216), endeavors to explain the conditions under which he became an "outcast of all outcasts most abandoned" (217). Arrogant and headstrong from an early age, Wilson spends his formative years ensconced in the labyrinthine, Gothic halls of Dr. Bransby's academy in England, where he lords with gusto over the other children at the school. Not long after his arrival, however, Wilson finds himself tormented by the presence of another boy who

shares his name, date of birth, and even some of his physical characteristics, and who infuriates Wilson by challenging his authority at every turn.

The two boys engage in a bitter rivalry, wherein they each seek to thwart and outdo the actions of the other. The second Wilson becomes a source of endless frustration for the narrator, who nevertheless finds that he "could not bring himself to hate [the other boy] altogether" (221). Indeed, Wilson finds it troublesome "to define, or even to describe, [his] real feelings towards [the second Wilson]," for "they formed a motely and heterogeneous admixture; —some petulant animosity, which was not yet hatred, some esteem, more respect, much fear, with a world of uneasy curiosity" (221). This curiosity is in fact piqued by Wilson's haunting sense of familiarity with the other boy. The narrator discovers in the second Wilson, "in his accent, his air, and general appearance, a something which first startled, and then deeply interested [him], by bringing to mind dim visions of [his] earliest infancy—wild, confused and thronging memories of a time when memory herself was yet unborn" (223). Wilson cannot "shake off the belief of [his] having been acquainted with" the other Wilson "at some epoch very long ago—some point of the past even infinitely remote" (224). In this sense, the other Wilson becomes associated with a previous time, and his efforts to control Wilson become an allegory for the lingering effects of history upon Wilson's present. Wilson's critical recognition of his double is one that anticipates similar scenes in the three late Victorian novels I will discuss, most prevalently in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and serves to better carve out the undeniable, almost primal familiarity between Wilson the subject and his mirrored double. In his influential 1919 essay "The Uncanny," Freud defines the critical psychological sense of the uncanny as "that class of the terrifying which leads

back to something long ago known to us, once very familiar" (1-2). This problematic familiarity is what makes the doppelgänger so frightening, for recognizing the self in the other conversely facilitates the recognition of the other in the self, and presupposes that the two can be confused, and their identities confounded.

Wilson anguishes over this possibility for misidentification in relation to his double, whose concerns, because the two boys bear the same name, "must inevitably, on account of the detestable coincidence, be often confounded with [his] own" (222). Indeed, "nothing could more seriously disturb" the young Wilson "than any allusion to a similarity of mind, person, or condition existing between" the two boys (222). Before long, Wilson believes that the other boy realizes his apprehension, and in fact suspects that he begins capitalizing on it by assuming Wilson's own mannerisms in traditional doppelgänger fashion, though curiously unable to elevate his voice above a whisper. His double's seemingly malignant mimicry goads Wilson into stealing into the second Wilson's bedroom late one night with the intention of playing a prank on the sleeping boy. Instead, Wilson finds "objectless yet intolerable horror" (224) when he draws aside his double's bed curtains and realizes at once that the two now share "the same contour of person" (224). Terrified by his double's similarities to himself, Wilson quits the room and the academy immediately.

Later, supposedly safe from his rival at Eton, Wilson quickly represses the memory of the events at Dr. Bransby's school. His new life "washed away all but the froth of his past hours," leaving "only the veriest levities of a former existence" (225). Naturally, though, what Wilson represses returns in the form of his enemy obstructing his plans at an evening of revelry with a warning issued in the second Wilson's trademark

whisper. Reeling from this unexpected encounter, Wilson travels next to Oxford in another bid to escape his double. This attempt, too, proves unsuccessful when his pursuer arrives to frustrate Wilson's attempts to cheat a wealthy lord in a high-stakes card game. Panicked now, Wilson flees to the continent. Again, his double pursues him, "as if in exultation," proving, "indeed, that the exercise of its mysterious dominion has yet only begun" (229). Over the span of several years, Wilson's nemesis frustrates his disreputable designs in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Naples, and Egypt, his whispered admonitions imperiously pushing the man further and further into a state of hysteria. All the while, his pursuer meticulously hides his face as he interferes with Wilson's plans, a brilliant narrative decision on Poe's part which successfully confounds the line between subject and double.

Wilson soon perceives a crucial inverse relationship of power between himself and his double, one that predicts similar power inversions in the three novels that I'll discuss in depth later, most notably in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Wilson finds that "the sentiment of deep awe with which [he] habitually regarded the elevated character, the majestic wisdom, the apparent omnipresence and omnipotence of [the second] Wilson, added to a feeling of even terror" (230). The second Wilson appears to derive strength from the subordination brought on by the original's growing horror. Conversely, when, under the influence of an abundance of wine, Wilson begins to resist his fear of his double, he notices the scale of power shift the other direction, this time in his favor. He suspects that "with the increase of [his] own firmness, that of [his] tormentor underwent a proportional diminution" (230).

Reveling in his recently reacquired autonomy, Wilson's towering rage prompts

him to confront his masked nemesis at a ball in Rome and shove him unceremoniously into a small antechamber. Wilson furiously bolts the door and commands his enemy to draw his sword before quickly overpowering him and stabbing him repeatedly. Distracted for a moment, Wilson glances away from his dying nemesis before returning his gaze to the scene of attack and discovering a large mirror. He notes with distress his bloody countenance before realizing with a start that it is not his reflection after all, but rather the now undisguised figure of his exact double. Intriguingly, Wilson's double seems to gain the ability to speak in a voice above his typical whisper (perhaps a confirmation of the original Wilson's suspicion that his doppelgänger gets stronger as he himself gets weaker) in order to deliver a final message in words that Wilson fancies for a moment that *he* might have spoken. "In me didst thou exist," the double announces. "And, in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hath murdered thyself" (232). This significant theme of self-destruction, too, will find its echoes in the later three novels, particularly in *Dracula*. In Poe's story, it presumably signals the end of Wilson's restraint, the death of his own conscience, which is the traumatic event that will allow him to go on to commit the unpardonable crimes he mentioned in the beginning of the tale.

"William Wilson" bears the markers of the Romantic era that inspired it. In addition to the obvious presence of a figure from the Gothic style in Wilson's doppelgänger, the tale is itself a response to Washington Irving's solicitation in the 1836 edition of *The Gift* that a poet or a dramatist of "the Byron school" complete his rough outline for a story. In his book on Poe's work, Daniel Hoffman notes the success of a Byronic presence in the tale, in that the "schoolboy remembrances" in the story "are

conflated in a tone and style of Byronic intensity" (210). Meanwhile, the tale sounds various themes of the Gothic, including its depiction of Dr. Bransby's sweeping, cathedral-like architecture and the various aristocratic circles that Wilson enters along his travels.

On the surface Poe's story may appear to be an embrace of the Gothic that was so popular in his time (e.g., in the work of Hawthorne, Irving, Melville, not to mention the Brontës, and so on). A closer examination, however, might complicate such a reading. Though writing not so far outside the Romantic period himself, and though his work has certainly been traditionally lumped in with its literature, recent scholarship on Poe attributes the Romantic Gothicism of his style to the writer's exceptionally shrewd strategy of mastering and manipulating the literary nuances of his time in order to increase the marketability of his works. Indeed, in "The 'Mysteries' of Edgar Poe: The Quest for a Monomyth in Gothic Literature," Barton St. Armand describes Poe as "an anatomist of the imagination," who "had mastered all of the genre's obvious popular elements and even felt some condescension toward it as a set of counters which he could manipulate at will" (877). Similarly, in *Poe and the Subversion of American Literature*, Robert Tally notes Poe's prodigious abilities to increase the circulation of every periodical on which he worked, indicating an advanced mastery of the conventions that his readers preferred. "It is a picture quite different from that of the forlorn dreamer and otherworldly aesthete," Tally writes, "but Poe proved to be a top-notch magazinist, keeping his finger firmly on the pulse of the public's ever shifting and fickle tastes" (18).

Poe himself demonstrates his awareness of his readership's desires. In his preface to his collection *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, Poe claims that when the thesis

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of his work has been terror, he has "deduced this terror only from its legitimate sources, and urged it only to its legitimate results" (621). He concludes that "these brief compositions are, in chief part, the results of matured purpose and very careful elaboration" (621). In addition to being the very collection that republishes "William Wilson," *Tales* also features "The Signora Zenobia" and "The Scythe of Time," two conjoined, deliberate parodies that mock his rival *Blackwood's Magazine* for its all-too-predictably sensational, Gothic material. As an exceptionally gifted magazinist, Poe discerningly familiarizes himself with the conventions of his past, perhaps with condescension as St. Armand posits, certainly with an eye for subversion, as Tally recognizes. This stylistic decision to mobilize past forms in order to criticize present conditions, so instinctive for Poe, establishes "William Wilson" as an excellent framing text for the overall trajectory of the three doppelgänger tales I have chosen to examine.

"William Wilson" perfectly anticipates the first critical phase of a doppelgänger conflict: the subject's crucial recognition of his doppelgänger, and sense of familiarity with him. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* will emphasize this moment in its famously doubled pair, and will resurrect the haunting Gothic figure as a stand-in for the late nineteenth century's anxieties about the destabilizing effects of an unknown future. The inversion of power between Wilson and the other Wilson, whereby the doppelgänger grows stronger at the expense of the original subject, serves as the second key phase of the doppelgänger tradition. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* will visit this inversion in the steady increase of the cursed portrait's influence over Dorian as his own mental state rapidly deteriorates in tandem. Wilde's novel again makes use of the doppelgänger figure to typify a turn-of-the-century anxiety, this time in regards to the fragility of the present

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and its inherent capacity for corruption.

Finally, and most critically, "William Wilson" dramatizes the stage of self-destruction that typically concludes a doppelgänger conflict. However, it does so with an intriguing twist. Whereas most doubled pairs end with a climactic destruction of the self in an attempt to destroy the other—in poisoning Mr. Hyde, Dr. Jekyll murders himself, in Dorian's attempt to stab his portrait, he, too, expires—Wilson is able to survive the murder of his doppelgänger. This peculiar turn of events envisions the similarly strange conclusion of *Dracula*, in which Jonathan successfully manages to destroy his double, a vaguely ancient vampire who represents the past's ability to influence the future, and live to tell (or meticulously write) the tale. The difference lies in Wilson's—and Jonathan's—handling of their doppelgängers. All three of these late Victorian horror texts depict the phases of the traditional doppelgänger encounter, and all for the purpose of investing early modern concerns about (respectively) future, present, and past into a figure from the Gothic mode. However, only Jonathan manages to neutralize his double, and only after consciously engaging with and internalizing the implications of Dracula, and of the control of the past the vampire represents. Stoker conjures in Dracula a creature whose every supernatural ability mirrors the modern technology the novel celebrates, and it is through Jonathan's interaction with both the past and the future that he is able to come to terms with the past he fears in Dracula. Like "William Wilson," the intentional subversion of the Gothic mode, whether consciously as with Poe or unconsciously as with Stoker, exempts both characters from sharing their doubles' deaths. Moreover, *Dracula*'s celebration of this very subversion situates it into the hopeful pre- modernist period, just before the turmoil of the "great" war that would define the contours of high

modernism, where, Berman writes, "modern mankind found itself in the midst of a great

absence and emptiness of values and yet, at the same time, a remarkable abundance of

possibilities" (21).

CHAPTER II

RECOGNIZING THE FUTURE IN A FIGURE FROM THE PAST

IN *THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*

In his essay on Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 novella *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, which was later included as an Introduction to the Signet Classic edition, Vladimir Nabokov enjoins us to "completely forget, disremember, obliterate, unlearn," and "consign to oblivion any notion" of our previous exposure to the book (8). This is a tall order, as Dan Chaon would argue, because the tale has become "an icon of horror, a Halloween staple," and because "for more than a hundred years, it's been a part of the cultural air around us" (125). In addition to its wealth of direct stage, radio, film, and television adaptations over the years, the dichotomized image of the jovial-scientist-turned-brutish-monster has filtered into our popular culture so thoroughly that versions of it occupy media from Broadway musicals to comic books. The image has formed the basis for critically acclaimed television dramas and made cameos on children's cartoons; it has inspired musical retellings in songs whose genres range from hard rock to Korean pop.

The tale's wild popularity, though, grew out of a twentieth-century tradition that turned the tale into a myth of the polarized moral conflict between a genteel Victorian gentleman and his darker impulses personified. In addition to this morality play, the novella works to dramatize early *fin de siècle* tensions about disunity and the fracturing of identity in the face of the quickly approaching modern future. Irving S. Saposnik

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argues in "The Anatomy of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" that, as a consequence of the tale's

sensational popularity "as pulpit oratory, as starring vehicle on stage and screen, as

colloquial metaphor for the good-evil antithesis that lurks in all men, it has become the

victim of its own success" (715). Thus subsequent generations often confuse what

Saposnik calls "the translation," or the pop-culture icon of the story that all too often

stresses a clean division of man's personality into good and evil halves, for Stevenson's

original, more complicated Jekyll-Hyde dynamic. Our pop-culture "translation," while

entertaining, sometimes neglects the intriguing complexity of Dr. Jekyll's relationship

with his doppelgänger. By painting Mr. Hyde as a decisively negative image specific to

Dr. Jekyll's definitively positive one, the popular and melodramatic interpretation of the

tale ignores Hyde's deeper, more troubling role as a representation of late nineteenth-

century anxieties about the instability of identity in the face of a modern, metropolitan

society. More than a projection of Jekyll's darker impulses, Hyde represents a frightening

future.

Hyde's creation by way of Dr. Jekyll's scientific innovations, as well as his active

use of metropolitan crowds to conceal his indiscretions, makes him more than the

popularized image of a shadowy, malevolent villain in line with the Gothic tradition, an

entirely modern monster appropriate for Stevenson's modern audience. Henry Jekyll—

presumably like his creator Stevenson and like late Victorian public—considers the

future of science and society through the mirror of modernity, and enters into a complex

internal conflict, an intricate psychomachia between himself and his doubled image, the

product of Jekyll's own displaced misgivings about the future. Stevenson's audience,

through Jekyll, is met with its own distorted reflection, the personification of the

phenomenon that Botting refers to as the "systematic entanglement in a modernity that invents the human figure as itself doubly constructed" (9). Stevenson's readers see Hyde in this mirror, and like Jekyll, they cannot ignore a familiar "leap of welcome" at finding him there (108).

The twentieth-century image of a clean Jekyll/Hyde division neglects these very crucial sensations of recognition and intrigue. Stevenson's novel must be examined, as Nabokov urges, outside the restrictive scope of its popularized format. This over-simplified image of an all-good doctor battling his all-bad doppelgänger must be "disremembered" and "consigned to oblivion" in the interest of examining the intricacies of Jekyll and Hyde's interaction as a representation of an early modern impulse to stabilize the frightening future be neutralizing the monster which embodies it.

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In *The Fragile Absolute*, the Marxist critic Slavoj Žižek suggests that the best way to understand any historical moment is to "focus not on the explicit features that define its social and ideological edifices," but rather "on the disavowed ghosts that haunt it, dwelling in a mysterious region of nonexistent entities which none the less persist, continue to exert their efficacy" (3). Certainly, as Chaon observed, Dr. Jekyll's ghoulish doppelgänger is one of the most persistent icons of the horror genre, a part of the "cultural air" surrounding us. And while the doppelgänger theme was by no means new to Stevenson's audience—indeed, the double-walker figure was a staple of the Gothic tradition—Mr. Hyde's clear connections with the future of the late Victorian moment in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* give him a distinctly modern flavor, as a Gothic figure recalled for the purposes of personifying modern fear. In this case, a

previously Gothic theme is reconstituted as a means to navigate the apprehensions of a

moment in modern flux. In the words of Richard Walker in *Labyrinths of Deceit:*

Culture, Modernity, and Identity in the Nineteenth Century, the Gothic here:

> performs a metaphoric function, opening up a series of interpretative
>
> possibilities when reading the monstrous, particularly as the notion of
>
> monstrosity itself taps into anxieties that are themselves fluid, determined
>
> as they are by dominant social, cultural, political and scientific modes of
>
> thought at a particular moment. (71)

Thus, Hyde is less a Gothic villain than a modern monster; or, more accurately, he is a

Gothic villain *reconstructed* as a modern monster.

Edward Hyde's very conception is facilitated by Dr. Jekyll's passionate desire to

scientifically quantify and identify the dualism he believes is inherent to the human

condition, his hypothesis "that man is not truly one, but truly two" (104). Perpetually

trapped between these warring tensions, Dr. Jekyll confides in the tale's closing

confession that he felt before creating Mr. Hyde: "no more myself when I laid aside

restraint and plunged in shame, than when I labored, in the eye of day, at the furtherance

of knowledge or the relief of sorrow or suffering" (104). The result, Walker argues, is

"the beginning of the collapse of an integrated and cohesive identity" that "starts to take

place as binaries begin to break down" (79). The division of the public and private selves

becomes Dr. Jekyll's scientific obsession, a fixation that reads at first as one anchored by

moral, optimistic intentions for the betterment of his fellow men. If each half of the

personality, he tells himself, "could be housed in separate identities, life would be

relieved of all that was unbearable" (105). Such a preoccupation with the oscillatory

potential of the self reveals Jekyll's awareness of the instability of personal identity, of its capacity for fluidity. Peter Garrett notes this instability with interest in his *Gothic Reflections*, suggesting that "such a radically disunified model of the self displaces traditional dualities and seems to anticipate postmodern deconstruction of the unitary subject" (107). Such themes would appeal to Nabokov, himself a postmodernist, and perhaps account for his vehement rejection of the polarized, pop-culture reading of the story. In the novella, Dr. Jekyll's deconstruction of his sense of self renders his identity fluid rather than completely divided, with disastrous consequences.

In essence, Dr. Jekyll conjures his doppelgänger with an unstable cocktail of various chemicals and salts; for this reason especially, Mr. Hyde is consistently associated with science in the tale, and more specifically with the laboratory in which his activating drug is first concocted. Our very first glimpse of Hyde comes from Mr. Enfield's account of an apparently calm, late-night trampling of a little girl in the street, after which the perpetrator disappeared through a door located in "a certain sinister block of building" (39) to collect compensation for the girl's outraged family. We later learn that this door is the entrance into Jekyll's disheveled laboratory, used exclusively by Hyde. In fact, when the tale's narrator Mr. Utterson questions Jekyll's butler, Mr. Poole, about Hyde's movements through Jekyll's house, Poole insists emphatically that Hyde never dines there, that Jekyll's staff sees "very little of him on this side of the house," for Hyde "mostly comes and goes by the laboratory" (54). Later, when Poole communicates his concern about Jekyll's ill-fated disappearance, he suspects Hyde's involvement when he glimpses a strange figure enter the house, "for who else," he asks Utterson, "could have got in by the laboratory door?" (86). Who else, indeed, might infiltrate the domestic

sphere by way of science, but a figure meant to stand in for an anxiety of the future?

In Jekyll's final confession, we learn that the laboratory, and the liberating emergence of Hyde that it represents for the doctor, had become Jekyll's haven. After a day spent "plod[ding] in the public eye with a load of genial respectability," Jekyll confides, he could "spring headlong into the sea of liberty" as Hyde (110). Afterward, he continues: "Let me but escape into my laboratory door, give me but a second or two to mix and swallow the draught that I had always standing ready; and whatever he had done, Edward Hyde would pass away like a stain of breath upon a mirror" (110). No matter what he does as Hyde, Jekyll removes himself from the crime by escaping into the laboratory and taking the drug to reverse the transformation.

Nabokov posits a connection between the convoluted architecture of Jekyll's house and the complex nature of the Jekyll-Hyde dynamic. The exact layout of the doctor's house, he claims, "is curiously distorted and concealed," so that "in the composite Jekyll building with its mellow and grand front hall there are corridors leading to Hyde, to the old surgery theatre" (14). Though the entirely separate figures of the upstanding Jekyll and the impish Mr. Hyde prevailed during the twentieth century, this confused image of overlapping eaves and shared spaces where "it's hard to say where one ends and another begins" is a far more accurate illustration of the Jekyll-Hyde relationship (Stevenson 43).

The dynamic between doctor and doppelgänger is in truth far from dichotomous. While Jekyll views Hyde, like the drug that summons him, as "neither diabolical nor divine," he admits that both "[shake] the doors of the prisonhouse of [his] disposition" (109). The chemistry behind Hyde permanently destabilizes Jekyll's identity, leaving him

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shifting fluidly between both aspects of his character. The confounded result, an overlap of present and future, offers a critical investigation of *fin de siècle* apprehensions about the dissolving effects of modernity on selfhood. Bradbury and McFarlane's argument supports this theme by suggesting that the earliest modern texts contained a focus on just this sort of fragmentation, "on the breaking up and the progressive disintegration of those meticulously constructed 'systems' and 'types' and 'absolutes' that lived on from the earlier years of the century," as well as "on the destruction of the belief in large general laws to which all life and conduct could be claimed to be the subject" (64).

This assertion also highlights Jekyll's duplicity, despite the doctor's insistence that he is "in no sense a hypocrite" (104). Jekyll's initially humanitarian claim that the division of the self would better the human condition at large proves dishonest when he continues that, with the separation of man's good and evil halves, "the unjust might go his way, delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright twin" (105). What at first appears as a philanthropic desire to use science to improve the "primitive" dual situation of man turns out to have a more selfish motivation: separating his own, conflicting personalities would allow the good doctor the anonymity to oppose the social constraints placed upon him and commit the crimes he wants to while suffering no consequences himself. He could indulge in public and private pleasures with impunity, thereby exempting himself from the traditional mores of his society.

The private pleasures in which Hyde indulges for Jekyll involve ambiguous violence. Indeed, our first encounter with Mr. Hyde in the book comes from Mr. Enfield's account of Hyde's nighttime trampling of a little girl in the street. Not long after that, a maid observes Hyde's vicious murder of Sir Danvers Carew, again in the city

streets, "in a great flame of anger" (60). These attacks—one calm and unaffected and the other brutal and carried out "like a madman" (60)—differ in temperament but share a marked lack of any discernable motivation. And while Hyde is apprehended after his first attack, Mr. Utterson notes with unease that after murdering Sir Carew, Hyde "had disappeared out of the ken of the police as though he had never existed" (71), vanishing in his unique way into the air. In disconcertion, Mr. Utterson suspects that this is due to the fact that "Hyde had numbered few familiars […] his family could nowhere be traced; he had never been photographed; and the few who could describe him differed widely" (64). Despite various witnesses to his crimes and his own very singular appearance, Hyde's anonymity allows him to seemingly melt into the London crowds and avoid detection. Richard Walker suggests that the social horror of Hyde "lies not so much in the fact that the urban criminal can disappear within the crowded metropolis, but that the identity of the individual can be lost or at least troubled within the structures, institutions and symptoms of modernity" (76). Hyde becomes, in this sense, a nightmare figure of the burgeoning modern metropolis: he is untraceable, uncontainable, and unknowable. The absence of any recognizable identity of his own makes him a metropolitan monster, a fascinating prediction of the real-life urban predator that would emerge a few years later in the form of Jack the Ripper.

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Despite Hyde's unsettling appearance in the novella, and despite his undeniable monstrousness, the fact remains that Jekyll welcomes his double's arrival, and privately marvels at his existence. Hyde, a representation of the frightening image of an unstable modern future, invites from Jekyll feelings of apprehension, certainly, but also of

begrudging welcome. Jekyll's closing confession helpfully catalogues his feelings after taking the first dose of his drug. It details his transformation into Hyde, in which he revealingly describes "something strange in [his] sensations," immediately after drinking the chemical cocktail, "something indescribably new and, from its very novelty, incredibly sweet" (106). Once again we see Hyde associated with scientific innovation and the modern; however, unlike the conventionally restrictive image of Hyde as a straightforward monster, and of modernity as strictly frightening, Jekyll views him with some degree of reverence.

Vitally important to this reading of Hyde as a manifestation of modern anxieties is Jekyll's complicated reception of his double. Divided after the drug, Jekyll and Hyde each have distinct personas. However, they are also still deeply entangled, so that while Hyde assumes physical control of their body, which alters to accommodate him, Jekyll is still able to view Hyde's image in the laboratory mirror. They are enmeshed in, to borrow from Berman, "a unity of disunity" (15). Jekyll confesses that upon viewing Hyde for the first time, he "was conscious of no repugnance, rather a leap of welcome" (Stevenson 108). This curious sensation echoes William Wilson's vague sense of "having been acquainted with" his doppelgänger "at some epoch very long ago—some point of the past even infinitely remote" (Poe 224).

In addition, Jekyll's moment of greeting is suggestive of Hegel's work on the unity of identity and difference in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which describes the experience of one's sense of self as it faces another. One, he claims, emerges from the other, with two major consequences: "First, it has lost itself, or it finds itself as an *other* being" (Hegel 541). In dividing his identity, Jekyll loses his original sense of self,

becoming the *other* being, or the manifestation of himself outside the physical control of his own body. "Secondly," Hegel continues, "in doing so it has superseded the other, for it does not see the other as an essential being, but in the other sees its own self" (541). On first seeing Hyde's image in the mirror, Jekyll admits: "This, too, was myself. It seemed natural and human. In my eyes it bore a livelier image of the spirit, it seemed more express and single, than the imperfect and divided countenance I had been hitherto accustomed to call mine" (108). Hegel calls this encounter between opposing selves *anerkennen*, or the process of recognition. Jekyll recognizes himself in Hyde's reflection. However, the image is, to revisit Botting, "doubly constructed" by the mirror of modernity, reflected back when compared to Hegel's *anerkennen* model as "an unessential, negatively characterized subject" (Hegel 542).

The effects of Hyde's presence go beyond his personal relationship with Jekyll, though, as Hyde illustrates a greater, temporal tension. In fact, Hyde displays an unsettling ability to transform those around him by reflecting them as doubles of himself. From the very first description of Hyde in Mr. Enfield's story of the injured little girl, Hyde's immediate and potent effects on those around him are apparent: Enfield remarks that he "had taken a loathing to [Hyde] on first sight" (40). In addition, he notes that the girl's family had reacted negatively to him as well, and that the other witness, an apothecary, would "turn sick and white with desire to kill him" each time he glanced at Hyde. In retrospect, Enfield tells Utterson: "there is something wrong with [Hyde's] appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why" (43).

In fact, after merely hearing of Hyde from Enfield, Utterson finds himself

afflicted with "a singularly strong, almost an inordinate, curiosity to behold the features of the real Mr. Hyde" (49). After much time spent attempting to seek out the elusive Hyde, Utterson finally glimpses him entering his side door, "and the look of him, even at that distance, went somehow strongly against the watcher's inclination" (50). Utterson catches up to Hyde and carefully memorizes his face, surprised at the level of "hitherto unknown disgust, loathing and fear" that the man brings out in him. Intriguingly, he is puzzled by his own reaction to Hyde. "There must be something else," he wonders aloud. "There *is* something more, if I could find a name for it" (52). Hyde has a mysteriously profound effect on those who meet him, and a remarkable ability to engage the subjects around him, producing a doubled relationship to rival his own with Jekyll.

This chaotic instability produces the complex power struggle between Jekyll and his double at the heart of the novella. As time passes, Jekyll finds himself more and more indulgent of Hyde's insidious behavior. Rationalizing the situation as "apart from ordinary laws," he grants Hyde a growing amount of freedom to do as he wishes, contenting himself instead to "make haste, where it was possible, to undo the evil done by Hyde" in his waking hours (111). Jekyll takes great pleasure in operating outside the laws of his society by way of Hyde's inherent anonymity and powers of transformation, but is also committed to undoing Hyde's damage after the fact. Though fascinated by, and fatally indulgent of Hyde's activities, Jekyll elects to clean up the monster's messes. He remains both enthralled and horrified by his doppelgänger, and the future he represents. Such a chaotic tension aligns with Jürgen Habermas's description of the modern consciousness in his essay "Modernity—An Incomplete Project" as one that "continually stages a dialectical play between secrecy and public scandal; it is addicted to

a fascination with that horror which accompanies the act of profaning, and yet is always in flight from the trivial results of profanation" (1579). Despite his mixed emotions toward Hyde, Jekyll soon realizes that his rapid oscillation between respecting and rejecting normality has given Hyde the means to grow stronger, and finds himself increasingly dependent on the antidote in order to overcome Hyde and take back his physical shape. He admits: "That part of me which I had the power of projecting, had lately been much exercised and nourished; it had seemed to me of late as though the body of Edward Hyde had grown in stature, as though (when I wore that form) I were conscious of a more generous tide of blood" (113).

Jekyll does irreparable damage to his own identity by traveling so completely between his and Hyde's personalities, and finds that he "was slowly losing hold of [his] original" sense of self, "and becoming slowly incorporated with [his] second" (114). This has disastrous consequences for his health, as Jekyll becomes "a creature eaten up and emptied by fever, languidly weak both in body and mind, and solely occupied by one thought: the horror of [his] other self" (122). "The powers of Hyde," the doctor's confession reads, "seemed to have grown with the sickliness of Jekyll" (122). As Hyde gains more and more of Jekyll's strength, he stands to usurp the doctor's identity completely.

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The only option left to Jekyll is to destroy his double by destroying himself. Even then, he laments the necessity, as he deeply admires Hyde's love of life. He admits that when he remembers "the abjection and passion of this attachment," and when he knows how Hyde "fears [Jekyll's] power to cut him off by suicide," that he finds it in his

heart to pity his double (123). In a final act of desperation, Jekyll writes out his confession before poisoning himself, effectively eliminating his other self in the process. "This, as much as anything else, is Henry Jekyll's tragedy," Saposnik concludes his essay on the Jekyll-Hyde dynamic. "By seeing Hyde as another being rather than as part of himself, he is forced to deny the most significant result of his experiment and indeed of his entire story, the inescapable conclusion that man must dwell in uncomfortable but necessary harmony with his multiple selves" (724).

Hyde's existence is born out of Jekyll's desire to prove the duality of identity. His presence complicates those around him, awakening passions both hostile and reverent, by forcing those he meets to recognize their own anxieties about the potentially monstrous effects of the future. What's more, Hyde as a doppelgänger provides Stevenson's audience with an image that, albeit monstrous, is still significantly, recognizably human enough to be grappled with. Botting writes in *Limits of Horror* that "doubleness clings to modernity: if it invents the liberties, it also produces an array of disciplinary mechanisms; if it seeks to enlighten, it also conjures up realms of darkness to penetrate and illuminate; if it realizes a spirit of human progress, it also imagines spectres of regression" (9). The Gothic doppelgänger figure is reinvented in Stevenson's tale in order to characterize, interact with, and ultimately to neutralize the fears he represents about the transformative and yet destabilizing powers of the modern future.

Hyde's beguiling, yet disturbing influence, however, does not end with his destruction. Though Jekyll kills both himself and his doppelgänger, he cannot successfully eliminate the mirror of modernity through which Hyde appears. This is best noted as Utterson and Poole finally manage to enter Jekyll's laboratory and discover the

doctor's body, which, in death reverts to Hyde's form. The two men search the laboratory

for Jekyll, not yet understanding that Hyde's corpse is also Jekyll's, yet cannot help but

find themselves drawn to the cheval-glass Jekyll acquired specifically to see Hyde's

image after his transformations. A moment passes while they forget their search and look

into its depths "with involuntary horror," finding "their own pale and fearful

countenances stooping to look in" (91). "This glass has seen some strange things, sir," the

butler whispers. Surveying the mirror at length, Utterson finds himself startled by the

intrigue and horror with which it fills him, and quietly agrees with Poole. "And surely,"

he replies, held in the mirror's power despite Hyde's death, "none stranger than itself"

(91).

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The echoes of "William Wilson" resound in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and*

Mr. Hyde in that both texts recall the doppelgänger figure from its Gothic past. However,

whereas Poe's tale does so deliberately as a means of critiquing generic convention,

Stevenson's novella rewrites modern fears into its shadowy shape, investing the

projection of the past with a temporal apprehension of the future.

While both doubled conflicts begin with a critical moment of recognition between

the subject and his doppelgänger, their conclusions differ considerably. Wilson manages

to destroy his doppelgänger and live on, albeit surreptitiously and with infamous (at least

according to the narrator) moral deficiency. Jekyll, on the other hand, dies in the final

conflict with his double, because despite his attempts all along to exorcise his demon by

splitting it from himself entirely, Jekyll remains too enmeshed in Hyde. The powerful

influence of the future, however frightening, enthralls Jekyll completely, binding him to

it in identity and form, to the effect that neither Jekyll nor Hyde, neither present nor future, can exist without the other.

CHAPTER III

INVERTING PAST AND FUTURE IN AN UNSTABLE PRESENT

IN *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*

The year after *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* was published, Friedrich Nietzsche quipped in his book *On The Genealogy of Morals* that "nothing is more corruptible than an artist" (114). Oscar Wilde's sensational novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* would consider a similar idea in 1891, and in fact complicate it by suggesting that there is nothing more corruptible than an artist's creation. In Wilde's novel, the lovelorn artist Basil Hallward paints a portrait of Dorian Gray, the young man he secretly adores, in hopes of preserving his beauty and purity from what Basil views as the unavoidable decay of time. Influenced at the beginning of the novel by this impulse of Basil's, and by the sway of the artist's charismatic friend Lord Henry Wotton, Dorian desperately wishes that the portrait would grow old and ugly in his stead. His wish is granted, albeit at a devastating cost.

This Faustian transaction sets up Dorian's portrait as his doppelgänger in the novel. In addition to aging in Dorian's place, the picture also becomes "the image of his sin," so that it appears that its features are marred by Dorian's crimes rather than Dorian's own soul. Delighting in this exemption from both time and the stain of guilt, Dorian hides the painting in an attic room and pursues a life of debauchery, all the while watching in fascination as "the mirror of his soul" acquires an increasingly monstrous reflection. Soon, however, his interest leads to obsession, and Dorian reaches a state wherein he

cannot function without his growing horror of the portrait's ugly image haunting his every action. As the painting records more and more of his past sins, the present Dorian devolves into a paranoid shadow of himself, and must confront his doppelgänger in order to free himself from the paralyzing psychodrama of his doubled relationship.

Its central conflict between past and present selves situates *Dorian Gray* into the framework of its historical moment. At the time Wilde was writing the novel, Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer were diagnosing the patients who would inspire their groundbreaking work in psychoanalysis, a clinical approach that investigates the residual effects of the past on the present psyche. Three years before *Dorian Gray*'s publication, Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* cautioned about the self-contempt that arises with the accumulation of guilt. In fact, the novel offers its own speculations about the future of psychology as the field turned in the late nineteenth century toward the investigation of the personal past, and whether "the arbitrary definitions of ordinary psychologists" would ever become "so absolute a science that each little spring of life would be revealed to us" (Wilde 60). Kern points to this *fin de siècle* preoccupation with personal history as a critical shift from Romantic to modern interests. Whereas the Romantics prized the historical past as an escape from what they viewed as the vulgarity of the industrial age, Kern claims that, "around the turn of the century, artists and intellectuals turned from the glorification of the historical past and from the method of historicism and began to consider the personal past, thereby generating an unprecedented concentration of interest in the way the personal past works on the present" (64). Such a focus on the present, he argues, belonged to the modern impulse "to shake off the burden of history" (Kern 63).

The Picture of Dorian Gray is replete with this impulse to depart from the

restrictions of history. However, it also hinges on the futility of this drive. Despite Dorian's best efforts to embrace a modern lifestyle, to cleave himself from the dated values and other markers of both his cultural and personal history, he is shadowed by the form of his doppelgänger, which haunts his present while bearing the physical implications of his past. Like Mr. Hyde before it, the sinister painting reinvents a figure from the Gothic mode as a means to navigate the anxieties brought on by a world in modern flux. Whereas Mr. Hyde represented a collective anxiety about the fragmentary effects of the future on the nineteenth-century sense of identity, the conflict between Dorian Gray and *his* doppelgänger reflects the modern apprehension of Wilde's audience about the fragile present and its inherent potential for corruption.

At the beginning of the novel, Dorian represents both past and future, for it is his past purity that attracts the attention of Basil, an artist of the Romantic school; conversely, his potential for future malleability draws Lord Henry, a thoroughly modern dandy with a passion for corruption. Immediately after coming under the influence of both men, Dorian trades his ability to reflect the past and to age into the future, bestowing both onto his portrait and rendering himself suspended in a static present. His portrait, on the other hand, becomes a junction of past and future while reflecting the corruption of Dorian's present. Dorian remains inherently connected to his doppelgänger—so that his actions affect its appearance enough to serve as a visible record of his behavior—yet he remains separate enough from the picture to occupy his own space, unlike his predecessor Dr. Jekyll.

Though Dorian and the portrait are more distinctly separated than Jekyll and Hyde, they remain conjoined enough that the result of their conflict is the same: Dorian

confronts his doppelgänger as a desperate means to deal with the fear modernization inspires in him in its ability to corrupt his present, and to regain his ability to move forward into the future, but destroys himself as a result of their connection.

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The narrative of Wilde's novel begins in Basil Hallward's studio as the artist himself passionately debates the nature of art with his canny friend Lord Henry Wotton over Basil's most recent—and in their mutual opinion, his greatest—work, a portrait of a beautiful young man named Dorian Gray. Lord Henry languidly urges Basil to send the painting to a gallery in order to increase his value as an artist, "for," he claims, "there is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about" (6). Basil fervently opposes this idea, bashfully confiding that he will never display the painting because he has put too much of himself into it. Lord Henry laughs outright at this, much to Basil's discomfort, accusing the artist of vanity before wondering aloud why Basil has kept the identity of the young man in the painting a secret. "I have grown to love secrecy," Basil explains. "It seems to be the one thing that can make modern life mysterious or marvelous to us" (8).

In fact, the two men have dramatically different views of modern life, and this opening scene serves the narrative well in illustrating just how opposed their perspectives are. Basil, we see from this exchange, is a sensitive gentleman of Romantic thought. Given to impassioned defenses of the spirituality of art, Basil feverishly insists that it is "the painter who, on the colored canvas, reveals himself" (9), and that "there is nothing that art cannot express" (13). In "German Romanticism and French Aesthetic Theory," Wendy S. Mercer attributes to the Romantics a fervent desire to "apprehend the

mysterious beauties of existence which defied rational explanation, and to communicate them through art" (152). The resulting product, she claims, is the expression of a "purely metaphysical longing for an abstract and unattainable ideal, or that of the search for an ideal love, or the struggle of the artist to produce an ideal work of art" (Mercer 152). Basil's views fall neatly in line with the values of the Romantic school of art; indeed, when Basil later confesses his love for Dorian, he describes the youth as "the visible incarnation of that unseen ideal whose memory haunts us artists like an exquisite dream" (114). Dorian's presence for Basil invigorates his work, and Basil suspects that this painting is his best yet because the youth was sitting next to him as he created it. "Some subtle influence passed from him to me," he recalls, "and for the first time in my life I saw in the plain woodland the wonder I had always looked for and always missed" (14). Dorian represents for Basil the highest order of artistic expression, the Platonic form, which he finds "in the curves of certain lines, in the loveliness and subtleties of certain colors" (14).

As a representative of the Romantic past, Basil naturally chafes against the modern tendencies of his *fin de siècle* moment. "We in our madness," he complains, have separated soul and body, "and have invented a realism that is vulgar, an ideality that is void" (14). He fears that the rise of modern values cheapens the ideals of art and beauty he so cherishes. "We live in an age when men treat art as if it were meant to be a form of autobiography," he tells Lord Henry. "We have lost the abstract sense of beauty" (15). Perhaps the worst consequence of this loss, in Basil's view, is that it renders his precious adoration for Dorian merely "a dream of form in days of thought" (14), a phrase he borrows from Austin Dobson's poem "To a Greek Girl." Basil resents the desire of the

modern world to quantify the ideals he views as unquantifiable, passionately declaring that his heart "shall never be put under their microscope" (15).

"Poets are not so scrupulous as you are," Lord Henry retorts. "They know how useful passion is for publication. Nowadays a broken heart will run to many editions" (15). Basil's exceptionally calculating foil, Lord Henry, regularly challenges his counterpart by exhibiting the quantifying impulse that so conjures the artist's contempt. He consistently thinks in terms of the material value Basil distrusts. In contrast to Basil's Romantic ideals, Henry prizes the modern ones, countering that "the thoroughly well-informed man—that is the modern ideal. And the mind of the thoroughly well-informed man is a dreadful thing. It is like a bric-á-brac shop, all monsters and dust, with everything priced above its proper value" (15). Intriguingly, Lord Henry suggests that a condition of the modernity he praises is a mind that harbors lingering monsters.

Lord Henry analyzes the world around him with exceptional clarity, defining it in terms of antithesis to the point that he is known to his acquaintances as "Prince Paradox." His appreciation for this form of critical observation grants him a natural affinity for psychology, a burgeoning science at the time of the novel's publication for which he holds a great regard. "To note the curious hard logic of passion," he thinks, "and the emotional colored life of the intellect—to observe where they met, and where they separated, at what point they were in unison, and at what point they were in discord—there was a delight in that!" (59). Lord Henry receives great pleasure from observing the machinations of the mind, likening it to the more tangible science of vivisection, and using his particular aptitude for it to manipulate those around him.

Lord Henry's attention to materiality and his affinity for social manipulation are

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trappings of his blatant dandyism, a quality that, according to Jim Hansen in his *Terror and Irish Modernism*, marks him as fundamentally modern. In much the same way that Habermas asserts that modernity "revolts against the normalizing functions of tradition" and "lives on the experience of rebelling against all that is normative" (1579), Hansen argues that Wilde uses the dandy role as a platform for his characters to rebel against the normalizing structures of their time. Particularly, he argues, Wilde's dandies revolt quietly, as a means to "influence the boundaries of the confining social conventions" (Hansen 66). Whereas Dorian will become very literally contained by the frame of the portrait that ultimately constrains his identity, Lord Henry redraws these confines by way of manipulating social situations. "Although Lord Henry certainly enjoys appearing scandalous," Hansen asserts, "he readily accepts the basic principles of social convention. […] He is the urbane wit who never truly offends or violates the social world that he pretends to detest" (66).

Lord Henry's prodigious skill for delicate social management invariably enters into his interactions with Basil. As representatives of the interlocking Romantic and modern moments, the relationship between Basil and Lord Henry is a complicated and ambiguous one that they themselves struggle to define, albeit without success. In the first chapter, Basil assiduously accuses Lord Henry of viewing him as merely an acquaintance. At Lord Henry's insistence that they are closer than acquaintances, Basil responds that they are still less than friends, perhaps brothers. "Oh, brothers!" Henry exclaims noncommittally, neither confirming nor denying the label. "I don't care for brothers" (12).The subject dissolves awkwardly into a disjointed rant by Lord Henry about the English proletariat. However, the meaning beneath this unresolved conversation

is clear: the two recognize that they are bound up in an uncertain, tense dynamic that both conflates and separates them. They are neither acquaintances nor friends, simultaneously something closer and yet more at odds, and if they are brothers, Henry has little regard for those. Closer than acquaintances yet not quite friends, potentially brothers yet only if the role holds little affection, Basil and Lord Henry, as characterizations of the past and future, occupy a tense connection that wearies of the contact.

While the tension between the Romantic and the modern ideals is never so overtly revisited, the novel seeks to resolve the underlying opposition between them by in fact joining them together in the characterization of Dorian Gray. Not long after Basil and Lord Henry's strange conversation, Dorian arrives at the studio, and immediately receives the attention of both men. Henry, who is meeting Dorian for the first time, considers Dorian's physical beauty, and registers that "one felt that he had kept himself unspotted from the world," concluding that it was "no wonder Basil Hallward worshipped him" (19). Henry acknowledges Basil's attraction to Dorian's purity, and he admits some appreciation for it himself. But whereas Basil seeks to preserve that past purity in his portrait of Dorian, Henry hopes to transform it. Basil senses Henry's interest in corrupting Dorian immediately, and in fact begs him not to pursue or "spoil" Dorian, for "[Lord Henry's] influence would be bad" (17). This anxiety over the possibility that Henry will seek to ruin Dorian plagues Basil so intensely that he reminds Henry of his plea the moment Henry begins making plans to see Dorian again. If Basil's adoration for Dorian stems from his connection to the grand ideals of the past, then the thought of his blatantly modern friend transforming Dorian fills Basil with a passionate dread.

Suspended between the interests of Basil and Lord Henry, Dorian himself

becomes a blank canvas both men seek to fill with their separate imaginings of reality. That Dorian represents an invigorated fusion between Basil and Lord Henry is an assertion that has already been made quite convincingly by scholars such as Alan Sinfield in *The Wilde Century*, John Paul Riquelme in "Oscar Wilde's Aesthetic Gothic," and Jim Hansen in *Terror and Irish Modernism*. However, linking Basil to the Romantic and Lord Henry to the modern opens up their dynamic for valuable expansion. To Basil, Dorian represents the purity of an undefiled past; to Lord Henry, the capacity for a transformed future. To both, he epitomizes the point at which past and future converge: the present and all of its potential for corruption.

Basil initially paints Dorian's portrait in order to secure the youth's innocence against the vulgarity the artist associates with his time. Meanwhile, Lord Henry quickly engages his extensive manipulative skill in molding Dorian's potential to suit his whim. "Grace," Henry reflects, was Dorian's, "and the white purity of boyhood, and beauty such as old Greek marbles kept for us. There was nothing one could not do with him. He could be made a Titan or a toy" (39). Henry commits to dominating Dorian, and after their first meeting "had already, indeed, half done so. He would make that wonderful spirit his own" (39). Henry's first attempt at this domination comes as Dorian resumes sitting for Basil's final touches on the portrait. Having secured a captive audience in Dorian, Henry delivers an astute lecture on the hazardous effects of repressing one's desires on a soul that "grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself, with desire for what its monstrous laws have made monstrous and unlawful" (21). In addition to foreshadowing the monstrous doubled relationship at the heart of the novel, Lord Henry's dialogue also represents the spirit of contemporary psychological

investigations, resonating with themes sounded earlier by Nietzsche, and later elaborated upon in more scientific detail by Freud.

Lord Henry's talk of repressed desires returning as monsters deeply disturbs Dorian, who feels that "the few words that Basil's friend had said to him—words spoken by chance, no doubt, and with willful paradox in them—had touched some secret chord that had never been touched before, but that he felt was now vibrating and throbbing to curious pulses" (22). This revelatory moment for Dorian, combined with Lord Henry's subsequent lesson on the ephemerality of Dorian's coveted beauty, leaves the youth in a state of reeling vulnerability and terror of his own mortality. Under the traumatic strain, Dorian's sense of self fragments, so that when Basil completes the painting shortly thereafter, Dorian confuses his replicated image in the painting with his own identity.

Much as Dr. Jekyll experiences his "familiar leap of welcome" at seeing Hyde in the mirror for the first time, and Wilson acknowledges a sense of knowing his double from a time before memory, Dorian feels "as if he had recognized himself for the first time" when he first glimpses his image in the portrait (27). While he may feel repelled by his double later, Dorian's first contact with it, his Hegelian *Anerkennen*, or the moment of his self-consciousness recognizing itself in the painting, is one of deep, familiar kinship. Dorian proclaims his love for it immediately, concluding this pronouncement with the line: "It is a part of myself. I feel that" (30).

The degree of Dorian's separation from his doppelgänger is noted quite soon afterward in a sarcastic exchange between Basil and Lord Henry. After Basil chastises Henry for colorfully denouncing the closing century's fashion and praising the significance of sin to modern life in front of Dorian, Henry retorts: "Before which

Dorian? The one who is pouring out tea for us, or the one in the picture?" (31). This question, although asked in jest, falls logically in line with Dr. Jekyll's conclusion that "man is not truly one, but truly two" (Stevenson 104). Similarly, Basil's unamused reply of "Before either," brings to mind a line from Jekyll's confession: "of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both" (Stevenson 104). Like Dr. Jekyll before him, Dorian's selfhood has been fractured into two entities as he recognizes the corruptive potential of the present reflected back at him from the painting. While Dorian is still very much himself, he is also, to some degree, the painting, and the painting is, to some degree, Dorian. Whereas Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde occupied the same body, epitomizing the interiority of the self in modern crisis, Dorian and his painting complicate the relationship by illustrating the identity seeking to reject itself, ultimately splitting itself entirely as a means to be rid of its past. Thus Dorian enters into a struggle for control with his doppelgänger as a means to neutralize his past, while the painting persists against his efforts in order to make him recognize the vulnerability of his present.

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

Dorian's inherent conflict with his doppelgänger begins just after he announces his love for it. Almost immediately after recognizing himself in the painting, Dorian's infatuation with it abruptly dissolves into a bitter jealousy, and he resentfully complains that "every moment that passes takes something away from [himself] and gives something to it" (29). This aligns with Hegel's framework, which asserts that once faced with a self-consciousness that has come *out of itself,* the natural progression between two conflicting self-consciousnesses is a fundamental desire to "supersede the otherness of

itself" (541). Each consciousness—here Dorian and his double—"is for the other a middle term, through which each mediates itself with itself and unites with itself; and each is for itself, and for the other, an immediate being to its own account, which at the same time is such only through this mediation" (Hegel 542). In Wilde's novel, Dorian and his doppelgänger are in constant conflict as each struggles to subjugate the other. While Dorian conceals the portrait and represses the present it represents, the picture soon begins to fill Dorian with the sense that it watches and judges him. The line between them, while more distinct than the line between Jekyll and Hyde, is still a blurred one, and their two consciousnesses—and the opposing ideals they represent—tend to overlap.

When Dorian makes the deal that grants him immortality, his physical form no longer registers the progression of time, which now can be marked only in the figure of his doppelgänger. The painting records Dorian's sins as they become his past crimes, while also reflecting the future where Dorian cannot. It thus marks a junction of past, present, and future. This preoccupation with the abstract intersection of past, present, and future is in keeping with the times. Kern devotes an excellent chapter of *The Culture of Time and Space* to the *fin de siècle* interest in chronological simultaneity, citing studies by various scientists across different disciplines in the 1880s intended to quantify where one state ended and the next began. He suggests that the Modernist paintings of the early twentieth century developed as a reaction to this nineteenth-century investigation. Like the separate stages of a dachshund's trotting feet in Giacomo Balla's *Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash* or the progress of a body's spatial movement through time in Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*, Basil's portrait of Dorian in Wilde's novel serves as an abstract point of focus for the inversion of past and present. It offers a

sinister reflection of fear of the present's degeneration at the arrival of modernity, meeting Dorian's *potential* for present corruption with a negative image that ensures it.

Like William Wilson and Dr. Jekyll, Dorian enters the power struggle with his doppelgänger as stronger of the two, and in fact, Dorian embraces his "separation" from his past by dismissing Basil and throwing himself fully into Lord Henry's inner circle, acquiring status and prestige through their association. He becomes an avid follower of the man, hanging dutifully on his every paradox before learning to parrot them back himself. Before long, Dorian begins to emulate Lord Henry, using his new social position to throw wild parties and reveling in wanton decadence. He soon indulges in dandyism, which Wilde remarks is, "in its own way, an attempt to assert the absolute modernity of beauty" (129). The French poet Charles Baudelaire offered his own commentary on the rebellious power of the dandy in an 1863 essay, "The Painter of Modern Life": "Whether these men are nicknamed exquisites, *incroyables*, beaux, lions or dandies, they all spring from the same womb; they all partake of the same characteristic quality of opposition and revolt" (28). Hansen comes to similar conclusions about dandyism, arguing that such characters "must balance accepting social conventions with becoming self-stylized, innovative artistic commentaries on those conventions" (75). In this way Lord Henry, and to some degree Dorian, seeks to reinvent the normative restrictions of their world in a fundamentally modern fashion. They must, however, do so from within the confines of their world, and so they seek always to comment on, but never to disturb, the society in which they operate. "They can only consider themselves radical, then," Hansen concludes, "if they exist within the conventions they necessarily and readily accept but against which they languidly and noncommittally inveigh" (75).

Dorian begins adopting dandyish qualities of social manipulation and rebellion against tradition in order to avail himself of Henry's attention, but he only succeeds in becoming a very good copy of his mentor, who himself will always be the better manipulator. When Dorian falls for Sibyl Vane, a local actress, he does so only because he finds himself attracted to her potential for malleability, just as Henry was attracted to Dorian's own such potential. In love more with Shakespeare's imaginary women than with Sibyl herself, Dorian delights in the possibility of having Rosalind's arms around him and of kissing Juliet at the same time, all the time knowing that he can leave her in the forest of Arden and find her again in an orchard in Verona (57). Though Dorian remains ignorant of this fact, Lord Henry notes with intrigue "that it was through certain words of his, musical words said with musical utterance, that Dorian Gray's soul had turned to this white girl and bowed in worship before her. To a large extent the lad was his own creation" (59). When Dorian breaks things off with Sibyl, it is because her love for him has inhibited her skill for acting, and she no longer possesses the ability to transform from one role into another. Additionally, her stagnation on stage embarrasses Dorian in front of Lord Henry and Basil. Dorian can forgive neither transgression, and subsequently breaks her heart, driving her to commit suicide later that night. Just as Basil had feared, Dorian slowly transforms into a facsimile of Lord Henry under the elder man's careful guidance, and the painting slowly reflects this transformation: after Sibyl's suicide, Dorian notes that the portrait's expression would resemble his own "if he had been looking into a mirror after he had done some dreadful thing" (91).

This cruelty serves as the first in a long line of blemishes that the portrait would record, the first of many crimes that can be attributed to Henry's influence. As it mutates,

Dorian correctly deduces that "the picture, changed or unchanged, would be to him the visible emblem of conscience" (93). It "would be to him the most magical of mirrors. As it revealed to him his own body, so it would reveal to him his own soul" (107). While Dorian's subsequent exploits are more alluded to than described, Basil hints that they are so horrible that people say "it is quite sufficient for [Dorian] to enter a house for shame of some kind to follow after" (151). Basil sadly recounts a lengthy, if indistinct list of Dorian's misdeeds after Sibyl's death. Omitting the details, Basil claims that Dorian's involvement causes a duke to leave a club whenever Dorian enters it, another aristocrat to leave the country in disgrace, still another to meet a vaguely "dreadful end" (149); others are broken by shame, and ladies with whom Dorian has associated have become pariahs and named him in sensationally scandalous deathbed confessions. Through all of this, Dorian observes that the portrait's "changing features showed him the real degradation of his life" (139). As William Wilson before him, Dorian notes that "with the increase of [his] own firmness, that of [his] tormentor underwent a proportional diminution" (Poe 230).

After the initial shock of seeing the effects of his treatment of Sibyl on the portrait, Dorian comes to find himself enthralled by the steady transformation of his image in the painting. He stands before it with a hand mirror, delighting in the contrast between its increasing decay and the reflection of his own permanently beautiful face in the mirror. Ever Lord Henry's pupil, he begins taking pleasure from manipulating the picture's transformation, growing "more and more enamored of his own beauty, and more and more interested in the corruption of his own soul" (128). Peter Nichols argues in *Modernisms* that this *fin de siècle* period displayed a "preoccupation with death and

decay which […] denigrates life and the body but at the same time, vampire-like, it seems to appropriate human energies for itself, becoming monumental in just the proportion that its protagonists are drained of energy and life" (53). Later, Dorian's relationship with his doppelgänger becomes complicated, as he begins spending more and more time with the portrait, and he must rely on an endless parade of decadent ornaments to distract himself from the undeniable fear it soon inspires in him. He begins collecting jewels, elaborate fabrics, perfumes, and other fine trinkets that become to him a "means of forgetfulness, modes by which he could escape, for a season, from the fear that seemed to him at times to be almost too great to be borne" (130). While some scholars point to Dorian's preoccupation with decadence as a reference back to an earlier period, Peter Nicholls's reading of decadence as a consequence of modernism lends to Dorian's actions a distinctly modern flavor. Decadence, in Nicholls's view, "expresses the inner logic of modernity which has reached the terminal point in a cultural parabola already traced by the ancient civilizations," its style aiming "at impossible horizons and are condemned to endless disappointment" (45). The result of this disappointment in Wilde's novel is the pervasive *ennui* that takes hold of Dorian and that leaves him desperately searching for some new means of sensation. This listlessness, Henry cautions Dorian, is "the one sin for which there is no forgiveness" (201).

Dorian's *ennui* quickly gives way to a paranoia as the painting gains power over him. He begins to suspect that the figure in the portrait has agency of its own, and thus the power to actively watch him "with its beautiful marred face and its cruel smile" (92). Dorian passes the years growing steadily more fearful of his double's power over him, of its unique ability to reveal to the world every sin of his past. With increasing frequency as

time goes on, Dorian abandons any plans that take him too far away from the painting, and when he does leave, he rushes home to ensure that no one had found it. "The mere thought made him cold with horror" (140). Dorian falls so thoroughly under the painting's sway that he eventually snaps, murdering Basil because "an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil came over him, as though it had been suggested to him by the image on the canvas, whispered into his ear by those grinning lips" (157).

Killing Basil exacerbates Dorian's decline, so that before long "the consciousness of being hunted, snared, tracked down, had begun to dominate him" (198). The painting gains control as Dorian loses it, and it begins haunting him not only in creeping sensations, but through outright hallucinations that, tellingly, borrow images from his past. For example, a passing glimpse of Sibyl's brother James peering through his window actually triggers a violent flashback in Dorian, so that "each hideous detail" of Basil's murder "came back to him with added horror. Out of the black cave of time, terrible and swathed in scarlet, rose the image of his sin" (199). The painting's influence over Dorian is so great that even at a distance, the very thought of it turns him into a shuddering wreck. "How terrible it was," Dorian marvels in horror, "to think that conscience could raise such fearful phantoms, and give them visible form, and make them move before one!" (199). It is in this moment that Dorian at last recognizes the danger of his situation. He is trapped and at the mercy of a figure with the power to threaten him with his past while withholding from him any redemptive promise for his future. In a panic, Dorian returns home to confront his doppelgänger at last.

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The complete intrusion of the painting into Dorian's mind forces him to

recognize that the only way to move past his preoccupation with the negative image of his present is to move forward into the future. He realizes that he has been "too much concentrated on [him]self," that his "own personality had become a burden" to him (203). Dorian longs for a new start, but cannot achieve one as long as the painting continues to hold his future ransom with its command of his past. "I want to escape," he confides, "to go away, to forget" (203). He experiences "a wild longing for the unstained purity of his boyhood—his rose-white boyhood, as Lord Henry had once called it" (217). "It was better not to think of the past," though, he concludes. "Nothing could alter that. It was of himself, and of his own future, that he had to think" (218). He decides that if he can just advance into the future, that the sins of his past will fade as they would have done before he made his fateful bargain.

He suddenly hopes that he might be able to reverse the painting's hateful transformation and take back the power he has lost by performing enough good deeds to compensate for his bad. Remembering as he arrives home the one good deed he has done in years (that is, breaking things off with a girl from a local village before sullying her reputation), Dorian expects the portrait to have regained some of its initial beauty, and rushes to pull back the curtain concealing it.

His hopes are dashed when he finds his image in the painting more distorted than ever, and realizes that the painting means for him to confess the sins of his past and thus take responsibility for them. Dorian laughs somewhat manically, for "he felt that the idea was monstrous" (220). "It was an unjust mirror," he fumes, "this mirror of his soul that he was looking at. […] It had kept him awake at night. When he had been away, he had been filled with terror lest other eyes look upon it. It had brought melancholy across

his passions. Its mere memory had marred many moments of joy" (220). It had acted as his conscience, a visceral agent of the personal past on his present. With no other options, Dorian finally decides to destroy the image with the same knife he used to murder Basil. The knife "would kill his monstrous soul-life," his static present, "and without its hideous warnings, he would be at peace" (221). In a poignant, desperate attempt to overcome the stagnation of his present, Dorian destroys the painting, and though Dorian and his double are more distinctly separated than Dr. Jekyll and his, they are each still too bound together to exist without the other, and the outcome is the same. Dorian ends up murdering himself by proxy in an effort to reach the future, and even posthumously he is still so enmeshed in his double that, like Jekyll, no one can even tell them apart without careful examination.

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Whereas the conflict between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde illustrated nineteenth-century anxieties about the fragmentation of identity as a result of the future's creeping infiltration, the dynamic between Dorian and his double represents *fin de siècle* apprehensions about the self in crisis as a reaction to a vulnerable, highly corruptible present. Faced with the reality of his own mortality, Dorian strikes a deadly bargain that costs him the ability to transition from past to future while locking him into an inert and unsatisfying present. His form remains frozen, while the image of him in the painting does not; it is by this very dynamic that Dorian's confrontation of his doppelgänger ends in his death, for while each may occupy different spaces, both share an identity that prevents either from outliving the other. Dorian's deal is unsurprising, perhaps, given the historical context of the novel, and it is not so hard to imagine Wilde's public straddling

the same impulses—to both expel and cling to the past, to welcome and shirk from the future. Such competing desires, after all, came with the reality of the moment. In "Literary History and Literary Modernity," Paul de Man proposes that the relationship between modernity and history "goes beyond antithesis or opposition. If history is not to become sheer regression or paralysis, it depends on modernity for its duration and renewal; but modernity cannot assert itself without being at once swallowed up and reintegrated into a regressive historical process" (391). Dorian's ultimate need to transition out of his static personal present, and finally to overthrow its negative image in his doppelgänger, emerges from the modern impulse to manage the markers of the past by reconfiguring them for the future. Such a desire is inherent to modernism, as Habermas writes, because it "discloses a longing for an undefiled, immaculate and stable present" (1578).

Below the surface of this literary double bind lies another element in the modernization of the Gothic doppelgänger in late Victorian horror. As in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* revises a feature of the Gothic mode of the past in order to rework and deal with the tension of its uncertain future. While contemplating the "enduring vitality" of Gothic art, Dorian associates its phantoms to the illusions of nighttime reveries, and he muses that it retreats with the arrival of day. "The wan mirrors get back their mimic life," resulting in "a wild longing" that the morning might dawn on "a world that had been refashioned anew in the darkness […] in which the past would have little or no place, or survive at any rate" (131-132). In dramatizing the modern inclination to "refashion anew," as it were, Wilde expands the traditional Gothic mode, but, as in Stevenson's novella, the monstrous double is

introduced, then countered, but not defeated. In order to more successfully deal with the monster of modernity, and to prevail after confronting it as did William Wilson, the *fin de siècle* audience required a more cleanly divided doubled pair; they would get one, in fact, six years later in Bram Stoker's iconic horror novel *Dracula*.

CHAPTER IV

SUBVERTING THE FUTURE: RETURNING THE PAST

IN *DRACULA*

In her influential investigation into the role of vampires in nineteenth- and twentieth-century popular culture *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, Nina Auerbach stakes the claim that these haunting figures hold a particular permanence in our literature "because when properly understood, they make us see that our lives are implicated in theirs and our times are inescapable" (9). Vampires are intrinsically bound up in the cultures that produce them, she claims, so that they come to reflect the deepest anxieties of their manufacturers at any given time. Therefore the vampire, very much like the doppelgänger figure by Auerbach's estimation, offers a shadowy negative of the age that imagines it, an image that is constantly the subject of reinvention, to the effect that "every age embraces the vampire it needs" (145).

No vampire in literary history has been so well embraced and consistently reimagined as that of Count Dracula. And yet, before the *Dracula* Hammer Films of the 1960s, before Bela Lugosi gave Dracula his still-standard vocal inflections in 1931, before even Max Schreck's sinister silhouette crept onto the screen in 1922, the Count first horrified and mesmerized his audience with his glowing eyes and, of course, his sharp teeth, in Bram Stoker's 1897 novel *Dracula*. It was through this original incarnation that Dracula's *fin de siècle* audience spied itself in the frightening mirror of the vampire, glimpsing a haunting version of itself that gazed back with a paralyzing

"blaze of basilisk horror" that would haunt the ages (54).

As a lingering relic of the Gothic form, the vampire represents the haunting pre-modern past. Additionally, Dracula's status as Jonathan Harker's doppelgänger renders his attempts to assume Jonathan's identity and to occupy London as analogous to that pre-modern past's ability to impinge upon the future. Dracula and Jonathan thus engage in a doppelgänger conflict in which one seeks to neutralize the other. As with the similar struggles between Jekyll and Hyde (representing the fracturing effect of the future on the traditional sense of identity) and between Dorian and his portrait (dramatizing the corruptibility of the unstable present), the conflict between Jonathan and Dracula represents the modern desire to rid itself of the past as it entered the twentieth century.

Berman reflects that "the nineteenth-century modern public can remember what it is like to live, both materially and spiritually, in worlds that are not modern at all" (17). *Dracula* dramatizes this element of temporal convergence with remarkable clarity in its jarring juxtaposition of both Gothic and modern trappings. With a setting that oscillates, sometimes with disorienting sharpness, between a decrepit Gothic castle and the burgeoning streets of London, the past and the future often transpose one another in the novel. The effect is a puzzling one, wherein we find modern train schedules and Kodak prints occupying the remote Castle Dracula's gloomy study, and the nightmare of the vampire's influence is combated with both medieval methods such as garlic and holy water in conjunction with modern blood transfusions. This conflation of distant past and up-to-the-minute present situates *Dracula* into its historical moment between two epochs. Such liminality characterizes this *fin de siècle* moment, which, as Berman continues, is the fertile ground for the development of the literary modernism emerging in the early

twentieth century. Berman argues that it is from just this sort of between-the-ages confluence of the nineteenth century, "from this inner dichotomy, this sense of living in two worlds simultaneously," that "the ideas of modernization and modernism merge and unfold" (17).

Jennifer Wicke's "Vampiric Typewriting: *Dracula* and Its Media" offers a reading of Stoker's novel that aligns with Berman's conclusions about the age that produced it. She indicates that despite the novel's historical position outside the accepted high modern literary period, the overlap of both antiquity and modernity present in *Dracula* renders it "a liminal modernist artifact, an exemplary text that then lies hauntingly behind the uncanny creations of modernism, at the borders of what is accepted as 'high modernism'" (469). The novel, then, becomes representative of a stage on which the pre-modern past and the modernist future meet and interact in its doubled pair. When Jonathan the modern Englishman meets the vaguely ancient Count at Castle Dracula, he encounters a negative image of the past, recognizing in the vampire the residual threat that the past might yet infiltrate the future. The two enter into a doubled conflict, with Dracula slowly assuming Jonathan's identity, weakening the young solicitor as the Count himself grows stronger. As with Jekyll and Hyde and with Dorian and his portrait, Jonathan's only hope of neutralizing his double is to destroy him.

Unlike the doubled pairs in the previous chapters of this thesis, though, Jonathan manages to successfully dispatch his doppelgänger without murdering himself in the process. The difference lies in the structure of the double dynamic. Whereas Jekyll and Dorian remain inherently connected to their doppelgängers by sharing the same body or the same image, Jonathan and Dracula occupy separate spaces. And yet, the conflict into

which the two enter follows the doppelgänger theme previously outlined, with each character recognizing himself in the other, struggling for control, and ultimately facing off against one another.

In addition, rather than rejecting or repressing his double, as do Jekyll and Dorian, Jonathan instead chooses to assimilate Dracula, and everything his double entails, by engaging with the very past that Dracula represents and using its symbols to destroy him. In this sense, Wicke's ultimate claim, that the novel "refracts the hysterical images of modernity," so that "one could call it a chaotic reaction-formation in advance of modernism" is an excellent one (469). Indeed, while Stoker's novel functions sometimes like a narrative showcase of his contemporary technology, Dracula is ultimately destroyed, not in London and not by any modern means, but on a Gothic battlefield, and by medieval methods. Once again in *Dracula*, as in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, a residual figure of the Gothic mode is recoded to typify the anxieties elicited by an emergent modernity, and the monstrousness of the modernist future wears a face from the past.

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The novel opens with what David Seed dubs in his article "The Narrative Method of *Dracula*," a "miniature pastiche-Gothic novel" (69). Through a series of diary entries, the ambitious, newly appointed solicitor Jonathan Harker describes his journey across the Carpathians to meet his first client. His travels seem to take him backwards through time itself as he leaves his native London for the rural Transylvania. Though excited by his new appointment, Jonathan laments leaving the modern center of his homeland for one where it seems to him as if "every known superstition in the world is gathered […] as if it

were the center of some sort of imaginative whirlpool" (10). Indeed, he finds himself

straining against the regressive track of his journey, complaining in his notes that "the

further East you go, the more unpunctual the trains" (11), and he becomes increasingly

impatient with the "many ghostly traditions of this place" and its people (13).

Jonathan's travels lead him into the haunting, pre-modern lair of Dracula's

gloomy castle, to a realm that Hansen describes in *Terror and Irish Modernism* as one

"outside of the ordered and punctual capital of modernity," where "time seems to creep

along at a petty pace and at some points stop all together" (72). Far from the regulated

chronology of synchronized watches to which he is accustomed, this capacity of the pre-

modern world to interrupt the flow of time perturbs Jonathan. He finds that the fact he

can now glance at his watch and be so mistaken about the time gives him "a sort of

shock" that inspires in him "a sick feeling of suspense" (18). As Hansen continues,

"Outside of the thriving, cosmopolitan London, a sphere ruled by civility and exchange,

lies a world of lost time and superstition, a pre-modern, emotionally ignoble and barbaric

society" (Hansen 72).

Driving the second carriage tasked with delivering Jonathan to the castle is a

living artifact of this pre-modern society, Count Dracula. Kern off-handedly labels

Dracula "a ghoulish elaboration of the idea of an organic persistence of the past" (41),

and rightfully so, as Dracula himself boasts not long after Jonathan arrives at the castle

that his bloodline is ancient, and that his veins run with the blood of the Hapsburgs and

the Romanovs. "In speaking of things and people, and especially of battles," Jonathan

notes, Dracula "spoke as if he had been present at them all" (33). The effect is that

Jonathan sincerely believes anything Dracula says "seemed to have in it a whole history

of the country" (33). The interaction between Jonathan and Dracula, then, becomes highly charged with the weight of temporality, as their contact becomes representative of an intersection of past and future that denotes the anxiety about the former's lingering sway over the latter.

Naturally, it does not take long for Jonathan to realize the gravity of his relationship with the Count; indeed, he recognizes Dracula as his doppelgänger even before he recognizes Dracula as Dracula. The Count, disguised as Jonathan's final chauffeur to the castle, meets Jonathan when he comes to collect the young solicitor from a local carriage driver. The mysterious driver immediately frightens Jonathan, so that upon finding himself alone with him, Jonathan "felt a strange chill, and a lonely feeling came over" him (20). Jonathan acknowledges that "this was all so strange and uncanny," that "a dreadful fear came over [him], and [he] was afraid to speak or move" (20). Even before he suspects that the driver is in fact his client the Count, Jonathan experiences an immediate thrill of the uncanny when he meets him, as well he should. For Jonathan's modern characterization will be brought into better focus by Dracula's pre-modern one.

Not long after arriving at the castle, Jonathan notes a curious absence of all mirrors and reflective surfaces in Dracula's domain. The answer to this puzzling omission offers further proof of Dracula's role as Jonathan's doppelgänger. As Jonathan blearily reflects on his new nocturnal lifestyle while shaving one morning, he is startled out of his thoughts by the Count's hand on his shoulder. Curious that he could have missed his arrival, Jonathan peers into the shaving glass and notes with a jolt that while "the whole room behind [Jonathan] was displayed […] there was no sign of a man in it, except [him]self" (31). It is no coincidence that, while searching the mirror solely for

Dracula, Jonathan sees only himself. Dracula's mission as a doppelgänger lies in the assumption of Jonathan's identity. This process thus far can be measured, then, by the fact that his own form does not register outside Jonathan's in the frame of the mirror. Originally an invention of Stoker's, the vampire's lack of reflection implies that Dracula's identity is transitive, and has latched onto Jonathan's so thoroughly that his reflection does not measure outside Jonathan's. Similarly, Jonathan and Dracula's encounter in the mirror typifies the modern anxiety about mankind's potential for atavism, in that while Jonathan looks into it specifically seeking Dracula, seeking the past in its Gothic figure, he realizes to his horror that it looks no different from his own.

To that effect, Jonathan discovers in the Count a figure that seems both familiar and strange to him, and he is immediately repelled by it. Jonathan encounters his doppelgänger in Dracula, and their inevitable double-conflict becomes one not restricted to the sphere of human-versus-supernatural, but in fact it can be seen as an archetype of the liminal tension present in the gap between the Romantic and modern epochs at the time the novel was published. Their complicated dynamic reflects that of Stoker's age as a sort of conflation of two eras, a period wherein, to borrow from Marx, "everything seem[ed] pregnant with its contrary" (qtd. in Berman 20). Like Dr. Jekyll with Mr. Hyde and like Dorian and his portrait, Jonathan experiences a critical recognition of his doppelgänger, which this time represents the past's ability to influence the future. Though Jonathan and Dracula are separate entities, they still engage in a doppelgänger conflict of inverted power, each acquiring his strength at the cost of the other's.

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The Count begins assuming Jonathan Harker's identity in true doppelganger

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fashion within the first few chapters of the novel. In fact, one of the first things Jonathan notices about Dracula is his proficiency for mimicry. Within a few days of arriving at Castle Dracula, Jonathan spies the Count poring over books on English law and economics; this observation precedes the Count's admission that, while he sounds as if he knows English quite proficiently, he has in fact only learned phrases and grammar from books, and does not feel comfortable speaking them yet. Significantly, the Count then admits that he hopes to learn English from his interaction with Jonathan, setting up a relationship of imitation between them so that the Count can better assimilate in London without being marked a stranger. In an initially nuanced fashion, Dracula relies on Jonathan's intermediation in order to better establish his own identity while abroad, enough so as to fool anyone who might suspect his motives.

From this small exchange onward, an inverse power dynamic arises between Jonathan and Dracula. While the Count's inner predatory cunning begins to show increasingly through his genteel veneer, Jonathan's confidence and sense of security rapidly deplete. As Dracula commits each evening to voraciously consuming all the details that Jonathan can provide of English life and of his newly acquired estate, the bewildered solicitor notes with alarm that he is "beginning to feel this nocturnal existence tell on [him]," so that "it is destroying [his] nerve" (38).

The natural progression of this inverted relationship occurs when Dracula hauntingly appropriates Jonathan's identity outside the isolated space of his domain. In yet another display of Dracula's increasing power over Jonathan, he coerces the solicitor into writing and postdating three letters—to the latter's chagrin, for he does so only because he feels "it would be madness to quarrel openly with the count" while "so

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absolutely in his power" (45)—and Jonathan makes a chilling discovery. He is horrified

to spy Dracula climbing lizard-like down the castle battlements wearing Jonathan's own

suit, so that "any wickedness which he may do shall by the local people be attributed to"

Jonathan himself (47). This is both a frightening and very concrete illustration of

Dracula's "new scheme of evil" (47), or his total assumption of Jonathan's identity, to the

degree that he removes Jonathan from a position of power within the doppelgänger

dynamic altogether, and relegates him to a role of submission.

Jonathan's weighty first interactions with Dracula forever alter the man.

However, the previously described inverse power relationship between the two exists

throughout the novel, and is in fact physically marked by the new gray in Jonathan's hair

after he escapes from the castle. Taken in isolation, this fact may seem minor; however,

in conjunction with the Count's own altered appearance, the two instances reflect back on

each other. Just before Jonathan escapes, he sneaks into Dracula's room, and finds him

resting in his coffin, "looking as if his youth had been half renewed, for the white hair

and moustache were changed to dark iron-grey" (53). Curiously, though Jonathan finds

Dracula in a rare state of vulnerability here, and although "a terrible drive came upon

[him] to rid the world of such a monster," in a scene suspiciously reminiscent of one from

"William Wilson," just before Jonathan can bring an abandoned shovel down on the

Count and destroy his vampire double, Dracula turns to face him. Jonathan, like Wilson

in the dormitory at Dr. Bransby's school, is paralyzed by terror at the sight, and flees.

Like Poe's doubles, Stoker's are, after all, two sides of the same sometimes frightening

coin, and though more clearly separate and distinct than the previous doppelgänger pairs

discussed in the previous chapters, Jonathan's and Dracula's identities have become

deeply enmeshed in each other, as we see when finally the Count has absorbed enough of Jonathan's English-ness to feel comfortable leaving his isolation at Castle Dracula.

Throughout Jonathan's stay at the castle, Dracula's increasing command of English custom parallels Jonathan's slow spiral into "all sorts of horrible imaginings" (38), the terror of which drives him to rely on the Old World superstitions he originally spurned on his trip to Transylvania, such as the crucifix he hangs over his bed and the rosary he wears under his clothes. Glover dubs Dracula "a horror whose very existence seems to compromise any possibility of securing the line between modern and pre-modern" (58). By way of his doppelgänger conflict with Jonathan, Dracula's singular ability to obscure that line in fact reverses the forward momentum of modernity. He comes to represent, temporally, as Erik Marshall argues in *The Gothic Other: Racial and Social Constructions in the Literary Imagination*, "the underside of this technological advance, the fear that an as yet unknown, primitive force of nature will be able to enter England (and the West, by extension), and conquer it, causing technological relapse" (290).

That Dracula represents a modern fear of the past's capacity to threaten the future is further revealed in his confession to Jonathan about his motives for relocating to England. "I long to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London," the Count admits, "to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity, to share its life, its change, its death" (26). In this confession, Dracula discloses his desire to interact with three key facets of London: he wants to experience its *life* and its *death* (the latter being the inescapable fate of the former, given the Count's life-draining nature as both vampire and doppelgänger), and its *change*. Dracula's attention to London's change is quite telling,

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given that it is by just such change, by the rapid technological shift forward into a modern future, that Dracula will be best tested.

Dracula is a narrative showcase of turn-of-the-century technology, featuring with unmistakable authorial pride new equipment such as Kodak cameras, phonographs, and typewriters. After Jonathan fails to destroy Dracula when he has the chance, he flees the castle and Transylvania, escaping to the relative safety of an abbey in Budapest, where he recovers from his ordeal at the castle and marries his fiancée Mina. The two soon return to London, only to discover to Jonathan's absolute horror that Dracula has beaten them there. The newly married couple join forces with the eclectic metaphysicist Abraham Van Helsing and his group of moonlighting vampire hunters, who intend to battle Dracula using both medieval and modern technologies. This might seem a strange tactic; however, as Marshall argues, "Dracula's emergence in the West threatens […] technological hegemony and threatens an effacement of the line between modern and pre-modern" (292) and requires measures of both to defuse his influence.

So it is that the novel's greatest juxtaposition of the pre-modern and the modern lies in its comingling of technologies from both periods. The band of dilettante vampire hunters works passionately to record the details of their various interactions with Dracula at Van Helsing's behest. The good doctor's insistence that "knowledge is stronger than memory" (130) inspires, as Allan Johnson notes in "Modernity and Anxiety in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, "the insistence throughout the text of the fundamental value of recorded, empirical knowledge in the fight against the mysterious unknown" (Johnson 74-75). In the interest of the scientific method, all of the members of Van Helsing's group catalogue their perceptions of Dracula, in handwritten detail, and submit them to

the industrious Mina, who collects and transcribes them on her typewriter. The only exception to this format is the meticulous psychiatrist Dr. Seward, who records his thoughts via the "wonderful machine" of his phonogram before submitting the cylinders to Mina (197). The result, Wicke concludes, is a specimen of "nineteenth-century diaristic and epistolary effusion which is invaded by cutting edge technology, in a transformation of the generic materials of the text into a motley fusion of speech and writing, recording and transcribing, image and typography" (470). The novel's preoccupation with up-to-the-minute documentation sets it, by its very narrative style, in line with the so-called 'high' modernist texts that would come after it.

Andrew Smith and Jeff Wallace argue in the introduction to their *Gothic Modernisms* that "*Dracula*'s use of diary extracts, newspaper cuttings and letters evidences an interest in the material here-and-now and is further underlined by reference to modish technologies such as a voice recorder and Kodak cameras." At the same time, however, "these images of the modern are, of course, threatened by the Count who represents an older, darker world" (2). Indeed, in his assessment of modernism in the *fin de siècle* period, Kern suggests that one of the main appeals of the phonograph and similar devices at this time was that it "provided direct access to the past and made it possible to exercise greater control over what would become the historical past" (38). Van Helsing's gang makes use of the technologies available to it in order to make sense of Dracula and all of the history he signifies.

Significantly, however, the coalition against Dracula also unquestioningly resorts to medieval tactics in conjunction with their modern ones in order to subdue the vampire, a telling parallel of Jonathan's reversion to continental traditionalism during his

stay at the castle. The group attempts to save Mina's best friend Lucy from Dracula's influence by way of both modern blood transfusions and herbal remedies. They compile evidence using the phonogram and typewriter, yet rely on holy wafers and stakes to combat the vampire.

The modern technology on which the group of vampire hunters relies acts as a negative reflection of the supernatural powers Dracula uses to oppose them. Dracula's power to telepathically connect with his victims (as he does with Mina, and with the unfortunate lunatic Renfield) and to project his voice across time and space finds its match in Dr. Seward's "wonderful" phonograph. Mina's handy typewriter mirrors Dracula's ability to replicate himself by creating new vampires; indeed, her beloved Manifold function, which she proudly announces allows her to create three copies of her work at once, is a perfect echo of the three strange vampire brides Dracula keeps at his castle. Most notably, the group modernizes Dracula's very vampirism in the form of its blood transfusions, which returns the blood he steals. In this vein, Susan Friedman's conclusion that "the lifeblood of modernity's chaos is its order" is apt (510). And as a reaction, "the impulse to order is the product of the chaos. Modernism requires tradition to 'make it new.' Tradition comes into being only as it is rebelled against" (510).

Jonathan, Mina, and Van Helsing's group deal with the twin menaces of Dracula and the past by reimagining both, and by "making it new" in a way that makes sense for the novel's time. In this respect, Stoker created in Dracula the perfect monster to plague a modern audience, a creature that meets that public's own anxieties with the frightening promise: "time is on my side" (267). In the doppelgänger conflict between Jonathan and Dracula, the latter's powers appear to prove "poorly matched against the new

technologies and conveniences of everyday life in England" (Johnson 76). However, the vampire's influence, just like the influence of history, is not to be underestimated, and there proves to be some truth to the eerily foreshadowing suspicion that Jonathan writes down while still at the castle, that "the old centuries had, and have, powers of their own which mere 'modernity' cannot kill" (41).

<div align="center">*</div>

During his carriage ride to Dracula's castle at the beginning of the novel, Jonathan considers the mechanics of fear, concluding that "It is only when a man feels himself face to face with such horrors that he can understand their true import" (20). While the final scene of the novel is regularly criticized as an anti-climax at the surface level—the last confrontation with Dracula occurs from start to finish in a mere few pages, followed by a meager four paragraphs of epilogue—the true significance of Jonathan's final encounter with his doppelgänger lies on a deeper level. The conditions of the final conflict between Jonathan and Dracula are in truth ideal for this reading of the text as an allegory for the tension present in the gap between the retreating Romantic and advancing modern epochs.

The climax of the novel finds the coalition against Dracula hot on the Count's trail as he lies immobilized in a coffin, temporarily imprisoned by the presence of the sunlight, red eyes glaring "with the horrible vindictive look" at which he seems to excel (325). After a lengthy pursuit of the vampire that led out of London and back across the Carpathians (back across time, figuratively speaking) to Castle Dracula, the group corners him at the castle gates. While the other members of the band of vampire hunters engage the gypsies Dracula has enlisted to transport his inert, corpse-like body to his

castle, Jonathan bears down on his double. For the second time, Jonathan approaches

Dracula in a vulnerable state. However, this time he does so after the critical process of

incorporating Dracula's vampiric characteristics into his own modern life, by recoding

and in effect modernizing the Count's vampirism. Jonathan's modern tendency to

reconstruct and reorder the vampire aligns with Friedman's argument, then, that

modernism "establishes a cult of the new that constructs retrospectively a sense of

tradition from which it declares independence (503). "Paradoxically," she continues,

"such a tradition—or, the awareness of it as a 'tradition'—might come into existence

only at the moment of rebellion against it" (503). In a reversal of the traditional

doppelgänger dynamic that predates yet anticipates Jung's work with the archetypal

shadow, Jonathan internalizes his double by assimilating him. Jonathan's successful

integration of Dracula and thus of the past is evidenced by the critical moment when, as

Jonathan drives his knife into Dracula's throat, "there was in the face a look of peace"

(325), before the vampire's body crumbles away.

Such a resolution brings me one last time to Hegel's model, which asserts that in a

consciousness-recognizing-consciousness situation, much like Jonathan and Dracula's,

"In so far as it is the action of the other, each seeks the death of the other" (543). The

nature of their conflict necessitates that in their aim to destroy one another, "their act is

an abstract negation, not the negation coming from consciousness, which supersedes in

such a way as to preserve and maintain what is superseded, and consequently survives its

own supersession" (Hegel 544). Though Dracula, as a Gothic relic, is destroyed by

Jonathan, the past he represents survives him in the reappropriation of that past into

Jonathan's life, a life of modern momentum.

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Whereas Hyde represented to Jekyll the monstrousness of the future and
Dorian's portrait showed him the fragility of the present, the lingering influence of the
past haunts Jonathan in the form of Count Dracula. As a haunting artifact of the Gothic,
Dracula embodies the past and its ability to throw the future into technological and social
regression. When faced with this nightmarish concept, Jonathan flees from his
doppelgänger after unwittingly giving Dracula the means to follow him, thus unleashing
the Gothic monster on the modern world. It is only by accepting Dracula, by recoding his
strengths and ensuring that they translate into a modern future, that Jonathan can defeat
the vampire. By engaging with the trappings of the pre-modern past and redefining them
in modern terms, Jonathan accomplishes what Dr. Jekyll and what Dorian could not. The
act of restructuring the past gives Jonathan some measure of control over it, and courage
enough to meet his doppelgänger—to confront the past—the second time without fear.

By incorporating Dracula into himself, Jonathan strips the chaotic meanings of
the past from the doppelgänger figure, releasing the fear of the past from the confines of a
Gothic form. Devoid of the added symbolism, Dracula can be destroyed while the past
progresses assuredly into the modern future. So it is that when, seven years after Jonathan
kills the Count, the Harkers return to Castle Dracula, and find it "almost impossible to
believe that the things which [they] had seen with [their] own eyes and heard with [their]
own ears were living truths" (326). The memories remain, "which [they] could all look
back on without despair" (326). "The castle stood as before" (326), but its significance
has been dulled. The memory of the vampire, of the doppelgänger, remains and is
brought into the future, but its Gothic form has been returned to the past from whence it

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came.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane contend that alive in the late nineteenth century "was a confident faith in social advance, a readiness to believe that to expose abuses was to invite their annihilation, that to repudiate the conventional past was to clear the way for a healthy moral growth, for welcome ideals" (41). The two-fold threat of the lingering past and the unstable future necessitated a means to deal with both. From this milieu emerged the modernist impulse to redefine the past in modern terms. The goal was to establish stability against both the regressive atavism of the past and the irruptive change of the future. From this middle ground, the relics of the past were exhumed and reanimated for modern reconstruction.

The duality between such violently opposing forces invited a reconsideration of the doppelgänger figure, which was revived at the turn of the century in order to fill in its Gothic outline with the fears of a modern audience. The resurrected doppelgängers in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* terrorize their doubles as modern monsters made to typify the monstrousness of the future and the present, respectively. The doubled conflict between both doppelgänger pairs ends in tragedy, however, for they remain too bound up in the new meanings assigned to them.

The key to surviving the doppelgänger, "William Wilson" and *Dracula* reveal, lies in subversion. While Poe consciously revives the doppelgänger in his short story, he does so as a tongue-in-cheek means of critiquing the standards of his time, and the

traditional outcome, by his satire, must be reversed in Wilson's survival. After all, in "William Wilson," it is the "evil twin" who survives and thrives, while the double, the avatar of his own "conscience," is vanquished. Likewise, by his own pre-modern, supernatural abilities, Dracula subverts the modern technology Stoker's novel celebrates, countering it with such apparently equal force that Jonathan is required to utilize the trappings of both modernity *and* pre-modernity in order to beat him. Jonathan's willful engagement with the past allows him to internalize that past, and to release his fear of it from its Gothic shape. Though the vampire is defeated and the past laid to rest, Jonathan carries its symbolism forward into the future by celebrating the modernity that dispelled it. Such a celebration would be temporary, however. Kern asserts that this *fin de siècle* age "had its doubts and hesitations," which were swiftly managed. "But it was essentially characterized by hubris that ignored the warning messages and pushed the throttle full speed ahead" (108) into a time where the present had enough nightmares to leave those of the past to their rest.

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