

**Paper Reference:**

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In 'Dracula', Van Helsing describes the so called "crew of light" (cross) as being "knights of the old cross". Indeed this statement portrays very well the transgressive nature of the novel. Religiously the In. regard to religion the "crew of light" transgress from their normal, middle-class Victorian values ~~and transgress~~ to crusade like warriors determined to defeat the invading Count. The same is true for their sexuality, with numerous dubious "stakings" involving orgasm like reactions from the "quivering and writhing" female vampires, as well as semen like blood which, as Reffield describes it, is "the life", whilst initially questioning Van Helsing's actions, the "crew of light" are also transgressing beyond the boundaries of scientific reasoning, wielding "whitknives" and "garlic paste". Yet all of this does seem to have a purpose, the group need to ~~transgress~~ transgress the boundaries of their common way of thinking in order to "restore a sense of purity and bourgeois values" (Bostery). Whilst on his way to Count Dracula's castle, Jonathan Harker describes himself as being a "good English churchman" and one would have to assume that the rest of the "crew of light" were indeed "good English churchmen". Harker even describes the crucifix given to him as being "blasphemous". Yet from the moment Van Helsing arrives there seems to be a transgression of the constraints of the

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laws of the English Church. Seward, on first encountering Van Helsing, is touched "on the heart and then on the forehead" in a gesture very much reminiscent of ~~the~~ Catholic representation of the Holy Trinity. Indeed despite Harker's self-filled role as a "good English churchman" and despite his description of a crucifix as "blasphemous", it is not long before he and the rest of "the knights of the old cross" are wielding large "golden crucifixes" in the faces of Lucy and the Count himself. The very description of the party as "knights of the old cross", suggests a ~~and~~ transgression to medieval ~~and~~ religious values being used to purge the Count from his eastern, mysterious abode. Van Helsing even supports this idea by claiming the Arthur that he "has a duty to God" in his efforts to defeat the Count. Yet this strange, hypocritical transgression does seem necessary in order to defeat the Count; without transgressing their normal beliefs it would be impossible for them to destroy something that, as it is, entirely defies their normal beliefs anyway. "The blood is the life" is a statement made by Renfield that is vital for the entirety of the novel in regard to sexual transgression. Blood is frequently depicted as being sewer like throughout 'Dracula'. It is Mina's ~~by~~ "white nightdress" that is "smeared with blood" that seems to have made her "impure", to have almost taken her virginity. It is



Mina who is forced, in a rape like scene to drink "blood" from Dracula's "throbbing vein" with her arms ~~being~~ held at "full tension" by the count. Yet the sexual deviancy of the novel is not limited to the count, rather it is most surprisingly enacted by "the crew of Wight" through various incidents. It is initially ~~John~~ Arthur, who in a bizarre reversal of the sexes, awakes with "delightful agony" and "languorous ecstasy" whilst looking up through his "eyelashes" to be penetrated by the "two dots" of one of the sister's teeth. Yet however, the most significant sexual transgression is undertaken by Arthur. It is Lucy, who wished that she could be allowed to "marry three men", who is stalked most desirably by Arthur. Arthur is described as being "thor like" and as driving his stake "deeper and deeper" into the now "voluptuous" Lucy. In turn Lucy is "writhing and quivering" in an orgasm like fashion which is also depicted when Van Helsing states the "sisters" later on. To finish it off, Lucy is left with a sewer like "crimson foam" on her lips in a scene that boasts extreme sexual transgression from Arthur who one would have expected to be a "good English Churchman". However, it should be recognised that, yet again, ~~sexual transgression~~ is vital in the destruction of the count. It is Lucy's loss of purity that

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allows her to reach the court and it is the initial Stalking of Lucy that demonstrates to the "Crew of Light" the strange reality of their opponent.

Given that the court is hundreds of years old, sleeps during the day in a coffin and drinks blood rather than eating food, one would have to expect that those trying to defeat him would have to transgress the boundaries of their normal scientific or logical way of thinking. Indeed it is Seward who first questions & Wuthersay "Are you mad?" and later Arthur "is this a game?". Yet even the most modern scientific method of "blood transfusions" could not save Lucy, not even with the blood of a "brave man". The "Crew of Light" therefore quickly change their way of thinking towards the occult. They arm themselves with "garlic paste", "wafers" knives, "holy wafers" and golden "crucifixes". Whilst the situation may have seemed "mad" to them before, they are soon huddled together in one of the Court's London resting points "like sheep in a butcher's shop", with revolvers in one hand, and crucifixes in the other. The fact that they listen out to and use Mina's ~~the~~ liminal state of being in order to pursue the court is tribute to the extent to which they transgress the boundaries of their normal belief. Beforehand we cannot imagine a group of ~~strongly~~ Victorian men with strong



'stiff upper lip' type beliefs, listening to a young woman using ~~some~~ telepathic powers. yet they do and it should be recognised that without help so, they would not have been able to pursue the count, and defeat him, in the manner in which they did.

One would <sup>therefore</sup> have to agree entirely with the view that in 'Dracula', there is an obsession with the transgression of boundaries. This comes from the fact that a group of people with very strong beliefs ~~are~~ set up against a belief that defies all of those beliefs. In order for the "knights of the old cross" to be victorious in their crusade they have to transgress beyond the boundaries of ~~those~~ <sup>their</sup> beliefs. If they did not then they simply would not be able to defeat the count and return to ~~their~~ normality in which, as Balfour puts it, "a great sense of family and bourgeois values is restored".

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In Dr Faustus, the duped horse seller exclaims that he has traded "forty dollars for a bottle of hay". Indeed, much of Gothic literature conceivably has a ~~falsely~~ false-like or mimatory value. One can see that in "Dr Faustus", Faustus is punished ~~and~~ <sup>by</sup> sent to hell for his disruption of the natural order of things. The same is conceivably true for 'Frankenstein' in which Victor Frankenstein finds his wife being torn apart by the monster he has created, with "deep, dark, death-like solitude" being his only "consolation". In 'Dracula', an alien being is brought to Victorian England. In this <sup>regard</sup> ~~instance~~ the novel seems to portray the reaction of a group of Victorian Englishmen to a being that is disrupting the natural order of their lives, most significantly through his declaration that "all your women will be mine". Gothic literature, therefore, does seem to very much illustrate the consequences of the disruption of the natural order of things.

Perhaps the first example of a disruption of the natural order in 'Dr Faustus' comes when Dr Faustus attempts to sign over his soul to the devil. He cuts himself in order to use his blood as make-shift ink, only for his blood to "congeal" in a rejection of the sin he is about to commit. In a gross violation of nature Mephistophilis fetches "hot coals" and melts Faustus's blood, allowing him to reject God. Despite committing such a grave crime against the natural order of things, Faustus never is



fact uses his power for anything particularly unnatural. He desires "fancy fruits", "oriental pearl" and brings "grapes" (out of season in January) to impress a queen. Faustus even exclaims "thou art deceived!" on realizing that just as the horse seller has traded "fifty dollars for a bottle of hay", so he has traded his soul for far less than its worth. Faustus, in his actions therefore, never really does disrupt the natural order of events. Despite the constant talk of heaven and the divine, he never does anything divine or heavenly, he does very earthly things. However, Faustus does disrupt the natural order simply by rejecting God and his conscience repeatedly. He dismisses hell as "old wives tales" and a "fable" (comically telling Medea to tear out his "manly partitude" & arse to deal with his suffering). Faustus rejects his conscience, first by using his own blood but in a frenzied and a schizophrenic manner declaring "what buzzeth in mine ears?", whilst calling for "Christ my saviour" he then instantly says that he will "turn his scriptures" and "consecrate his churches". Faustus's ultimate punishment for falling into "that damned art" is to be dragged off to hell. Marlowe, therefore seems to have intended a minor, like story as "Dr Faustus" clearly warns of the consequences of the disrupting of natural order through arrogance and vanity. The Chorus, at the beginning of the play depicts Faustus to "Icarus" and thus indeed

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seems a very apt comparison, especially in regard to the disruption of nature. From a psychoanalytic point of view, 'Frankenstein' seems to be an example of the consequences parents can have on their children or "creations". Shelley's mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, once wrote that "much of the misery that wanders the world today in hideous forms is allowed to arise from the negligence of parents". This seems entirely applicable to 'Frankenstein'. It is conceivably the death of Frankenstein's mother that constitutes the strange obsessive character who spends "two years" in year total isolation creating a monster. The effect of his mother's death is most notable in his dream in which on "imprinting the first kiss" on Elizabeth "she turned 'liquid with the wave of death'" and Frankenstein was left holding the corpse of his mother. Yet this is conceivably not the most important parental bond. It is Frankenstein that creates the monster in a birth like scene. He describes it as an "anxiety that amounted almost to agony". This "agony" seems very ~~much~~ reminiscent of the "agony" of child birth and indeed it does seem as though Frankenstein is the parent of the monster. He is frequently described as "creator", ~~in~~ in God like comparisons in which the monster calls himself Adam.

However, what is conceivably most significant about the relationship between Frankenstein and the monster, is the



effect of Frankenstein's negligence. The monster claims that he "seems like with benevolent intentions" and indeed his victims appreciate it for the security of nature would seem to support this. Yet he soon descends into wretchedness. He states that he had "no property, no possessions, no friends" and that "misery made me a wretch". The reason behind the monster's sadness is Frankenstein's rejection of him, and quite literally Frankenstein creates a wretched, miserable "wretched form", very similar to the one spoken of by Wolstenclough. Frankenstein's ultimate punishment is death and misery. The novel seems to be a ~~cautionary~~ minatory tale, aimed to warn of the dangers of disrupting the natural order of nature.

In 'Dracula' Stoker demonstrates the effect of the plague like count, who comes in the form of rats, swallows and bats, to Victorian England. The crew of "H.M.S. (Cross)" go from being a group of "good English chaps" to crucifix wielding, "war like" "moral Vikings" on a crusade of destruction aimed to restore the natural order of middle-class Victorian England. Whilst Arthur and Seward initially ask Van Helsing, "is this a game?" and "are you mad?", they too are soon "crucifix wielding and Stabbing" "voluptuous" female vampires. 'Dracula' therefore seems to demonstrate the clash of two very different mindsets.

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From a rather anti-semitic point of view the work can be seen as representing the influx of Jews to England from Eastern Europe, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He is depicted as being "pale skin" and a "hooked nose" and when attacked by bats at one point he appears to bleed money. The fact that he comes by the form of plague carrying animals, most notably rats, seems to suggest the idea that the influx of Jews into England would destroy the natural order of Victorian England like the plague did. However, it should be recognized that the novel can also be seen as being a simple clash of cultures. The natural order of English life is clearly disrupted by the work, and the consequences are clearly shown through the reactions of the "knights of the old cross".

To conclude, it seems very much conceivable that ~~gothic~~ Gothic literature tends to demonstrate the ~~consequences~~ consequences of the natural order of things. ~~instead~~ This can come in the form of a cautionary tale such as 'Frankenstein' or 'Dr. Faustus', however, it can also come in the form of entertainment, such as in 'Dracula'.

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