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Too retro for religion: Self-identity and the presence of God in the works of L. J. Smith and Bram Stoker

Abstract

Since vampirism threatens the psychological stability of human beings, religion is utilized to combat vampires in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Jutta Schulze alludes to a dominant discourse that establishes moral binaries through religion. However, when the presence of God is limited or non-existent, individuals within L. J. Smith's *Secret Vampire* cannot rely on moral binaries to understand vampires. Instead, they must redefine their self-identity without Christian beliefs that would otherwise deem vampires unacceptable. "Too Retro for Religion" examines the exclusive nature presented by religious binaries in Victorian literature in comparison with the transformative human-vampire relationship in modern fiction.

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**Too Retro for Religion: Self-Identity and the Presence of God in the
works of L.J. Smith and Bram Stoker**

By
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to the Honors College
at Eastern Michigan University

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in Language, Literature, and Writing

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In my thesis, I demonstrate the role religion plays as a discourse within Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) and compare it to the naturalized discourse used in L.J. Smith's *Secret Vampire* (1996). I chose these texts to undertake a comparative study of two novels that were written nearly one hundred years apart. I use the term "discourse" when referring to a culture and its human agents' tendency to compile the beliefs, roles, and expectations of a community. The compilation of a discourse promotes stability and attempts to address instability. Discourses are effective because human agents invest and act according to the expectations established by a discourse. Examining the role of religion and naturalization helps us understand how moral binaries are applied to vampires. The binaries formulated in either discourse will direct the acceptance or extermination of vampires. Christianity encourages the extermination of vampires. By contrast, a naturalized discourse places the vampire on a natural continuum with humans, instead of ascribing inherently negative spiritual connotations to vampires. The naturalized discourse emphasizes ethical behavior, where "good" vampires preserve human life and the "evil" vampire kills without conscience. In comparison, vampires within a religious discourse, like Christianity, are inevitably assumed to be a threat to humanity because they have contaminated bodies. For my analysis of Christian attitudes toward vampirism, I rely on Foucault's concept of "moral physiology" or the representation of the duality between body and spirit, where the spirit is affected by the behaviors, choices, and thoughts that a person entertains throughout their lives (189). Moral physiology applies moral expectations to a person's body so that the choices they make directly influence whether they can reach salvation. Employing

Foucault's construction of moral physiology, vampirism can be represented as a disease with natural and spiritual connotations. The application of moral physiology, or the belief that one's choices correlate with salvation or damnation, encourages individuals to invest in religious discourses as a means to foster psychological and social stability.

Moral physiology did not originate in Victorian publications like Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819), Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872), or Stoker's *Dracula*. Moral physiology can be found in earlier vampire folklore. Vampire myths originated largely in Eastern Europe including Poland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Albania, Greece, and Romania (Garza 7). Thomas J. Garza offers a rather simplified definition of the vampire as a creature that finds sustenance "by taking away the 'life force' of other living beings" (1). This definition is universal. However, many of the local legends around the world vary to accommodate different cultures. For instance in Hungary, the vampire is described as having to hunt through the night searching for blood until the sun rises; those bitten by a vampire will turn to vampires upon death (Garza 7). There are several myths associated with burial that determine whether a corpse will become a vampire. One myth proclaims that if a corpse has its mouth open when it is buried, the body will transform into a vampire. According to another belief, corpses suspected of being a vampire must be dug up, examined, decapitated out of precaution, and then buried at a crossroad for further protection against the evil creature (7). One commonality is the usage of garlic, iron, and wooden stakes to further prevent vampire attacks (14). According to Slavic mythology, the "upyr" can also create terrifying nightmares when feeding on

sleeping victims (14). This is certainly reminiscent of Mina Harker's experiences with the great Count Dracula. While these myths are interesting, there are religious implications of a vampire's existence. Garza includes that the vampire can exist due to a person's being "cursed by their parents or by the Church" (15). Specifically, I refer to excommunication as a curse, which includes one's inability to receive holy sacraments that are necessary to reach salvation. Here, moral physiology or the duality of body and spirit is represented in early vampire mythology. The Church excommunicates human beings and as a result they transform into a vampire. The vampire then rises as a walking plague to spread vampirism and damnation.

Since vampire mythology is universal, these beliefs have a place in a widespread collection of discourses. However, some discourses' founding justifications are in conflict with vampire legends. Supernatural vampires are not real and pose no actual threat to human populations. As figments of the cultural imagination, however, vampires represent the evil "Other" that is to be condemned, often hunted, stigmatized, and silenced. Within human history there have always been marginalized groups that are signified as the evil "Other." Though vampires are not real, my thesis attempts to understand vampires as vehicles of proscribed meaning within both religious and naturalized discourses. By doing so, I can examine the effects each of these discourses has on the vampire's self-identity and the perception of vampires.

In a game of sardines, children wander in darkness hunting to find the first sardine. As more children locate the "sardines" packed in a secluded area, they

crowd together and stay quiet until the very last child is left wandering with a flashlight and mild panic. Isn't this the human condition when sorting through discourses? Like the sardine playing children, individuals make great efforts to define their places in the world. It is essential that individuals formulate an understanding of their self-identity and place in a larger scheme. We are all prompted to ask: "Where do I, as a closely packed sardine, fit in this business of the world?" Perhaps, even with a flashlight or the burning desire to belong, we fumble in search of an identity that functions well with our individual paths. For some, it might be easier to rely on religion to answer such a complex inquiry. This is one function religion might satisfy as a cultural phenomenon. Religion both influences, and can be manipulated by, the men and women that adhere to a certain belief system. Religious discourses provide psychological stability through interaction with, and submission to, deities, but such benefits may conceal a religious discourse's debilitating characteristics.

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* makes apparent how religion stimulates adherence to religious moral binaries which justify Dracula's extermination. Such moral binaries cast Dracula as the evil "Other" or as the animalistic, savage non-human. According to this construction Dracula is not deserving of human rights, a premise clearly reflected in the discourse Abraham Van Helsing utilizes to repel vampires. Christian traditions offer psychological stability when the vampire hunters' social norms are threatened (Seul 558). The pervasiveness of religious discourse allows the vampire-hunting majority to ignore the self-identity of vampires. By contrast, L.J. Smith's *Secret Vampire* depicts a contemporary secular society without a spiritual realm,

religion, or divinity that plays a dominant and moral role within the text. Smith creates a vampire that is not damned, thus cannot be held to typical religiously motivated modes of extermination as those used against Dracula. Since religion is not a threat or concern, the characters of *Secret Vampire* cannot rely on religious moral binaries to form their self-identity. Religious dichotomies disrupt the vampire-human relationship, and cause for vampires to be targeted as the sinful "Other." Consequently, the potential for vampires to build relationships with humans becomes non-existent. Relying on religion to support positive self-concept may be beneficial for communities; however, as my comparative study will show, religious moral binaries often stimulate prejudiced behaviors resulting in the destruction of individuals who do not fit a community's construction of normalcy.

There are various scholars who would disagree with my argument because of the transformations authors have imposed on the original Gothic vampire. In contrast to my argument, Jules Zanger proposes in *Blood Read* "that the construction and popularity of the 'new' vampire represents demoticizing of the metaphoric vampire from the Anti-Christ, from magical, meta-physical 'Other' toward the metonymic vampire as social deviant, eroding in that process of transformation many of the qualities that generated its original appeal" (17). Zanger is indeed correct about the re-vamping of modern vampires, which has transformed their previous mystical natures into ethical beings that are closer to humans than their former terrifying glory. However, such a transformation provides vampires with the opportunity to develop relationships with humans. If the loss of the mighty shape-shifting vampire fiend in Gothic literature can be counted a loss, then the exchange

of unconditional love between humans and vampires in modern vampire literature can be considered beneficial. Zanger approaches the modern, empathetic vampire as an erosion of traditional vampires and declares: "All this results in a kind of entropic reductivism, a dialogue of attrition and subtraction, suffering and smoothing over the hard-edged definitions of the vampire provided for us by Stoker's *Dracula*" (18). One might visualize Zanger pouting while exclaiming, Vampires just aren't cool anymore. But it is exactly the demystifying of the "Other," in this case, vampires, that frees new vampires from religious moral binaries that require their extermination. Zanger posits that the "entropic reductivism" of traditional vampires causes the "diminishing of the role of the human victim," so that "the sympathies of the reader or viewer no longer have a human focus to which they can attain a human character with whom to identify. Lacking a Van Helsing for whom to root, or a Mina for whom to fear, the contemporary audience must identify with the 'good' vampire" (21). This is certainly valid for L.J. Smith's *Secret Vampire*. James is a melancholic vampire, and does not kill humans. He transforms Poppy and Miss Emma in order to save their lives. James commits both acts out of love. But unlike Zanger's assertions, we do find a human component in this novel with which to relate. In *Secret Vampire*, the protagonists Poppy and Phillip North provide human relations for whom we fear and root. Poppy is vulnerable, not because James threatens her life, but due to her own shockingly apparent mortality. A human's enemy is not the vampire alone. Disease and death prevent the pursuit of happiness during finite lives. We fear for Poppy because as an adolescent she comes face to face with death. For James, as a vampire, and Poppy, as his human counterpart, vampirism is neither curse nor

disease. On the contrary, in an ironic twist, Vampirism, as a metaphorical infection, cures Poppy's pancreatic cancer. Vampires, as Smith's novel suggests, need not foster human death and unhappiness, but can aid in the health of humans and prevent war between humans and vampires. As a result James is not simply an example of "entropic reductivism" as Zanger suggests; instead he becomes a savior, companion, and *lover* in a manner that the hauntingly ferocious Dracula could never be to Mina Harker.

Christianity, Discipline, and Damnation in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

What is a religious discourse? At its roots, religious discourses formulate cosmologies to define the unknown. In understanding Christianity as a type of discourse, the founding mythic assumptions of the religion must be considered "true" in that Christian doctrine satisfies some useful function to its believers. I shall utilize Eastern Michigan University Professor Ronald Rich's model of how discourses are created to examine the role of Christianity within Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Rich defines a "discourse as sets of narratives we tell ourselves that serve as unquestioned background context, making some things evident and hiding others" (Rich). For example, a person operates within a discourse if they assert, based on their unquestioned background knowledge that any religion other than their own, is incorrect. Such a belief would "make evident" that this person's religion is the only true way, while it might "conceal" that the person feels they have a right to be judgmental when in contact with other religions. With this in mind, I seek to demonstrate Christianity's ability to posit salvation as a need for human beings,

while permitting the destruction of Dracula based on his being cast as the evil cultural "Other." Rich proposes that discourses operate in daily activities. Discourses are made through our actions, which are founded in beliefs that any one person maintains throughout their lives. As conscious individuals, humans have the ability to absorb social norms or reject them and the customs that enforce them. A discourse is created when those customs are internalized and acted upon. Rich organizes the creation of a discourse into four stages: (1) *A discourse creates its own object*. The object then becomes the focus of the entire circumstance on which individuals will act. When creating meaning, human beings are active agents of culture, and are prone to formulate a sort of guidebook that contains lessons, definitions, and approaches. Often the guidebook or discourse addresses the object. Objects can be any number of things that are organized and expounded upon as a culture expands or changes. In this manner, the object then becomes the focus of the entire circumstance according to which individuals will make choices. People make decisions in relation to the discourses they have invested in. Here, damnation and salvation are objects within the discourse of Christianity. Within a Christian community, individuals will critique their thoughts and behaviors in relation to salvation and damnation. Such a thought process can be demonstrated by the inquiry: "What can I do to be saved?" And as a result, the person might tailor their thoughts and behaviors to reach salvation. For some, this could be simply having faith, for others this could be completing works in the name of their God, but each choice a person makes is a direct result of their having invested in Christianity as a discourse. (2) *Discourses consist of unquestioned assumptions*. Those that internalize

Christian doctrine might assume that because vampirism results in damnation, vampires should be exterminated in order to ensure the salvation of human beings. As a result Christian vampire hunters are acting on these unquestioned assumptions when they target vampires. (3) *Diverse meaning is developed and applied to a discourse.* Christian doctrine can be applied to various aspects of vampirism in relation to unconditional love, blood, and spiritual salvation so that the justification for Dracula's murder greatly exceeds, and allows no consideration of, Dracula's self-identity. (4) *Every discourse is selective and makes some things evident by concealing others.* Christianity emphasizes the importance of maintaining one's favor with God, but anyone that falls out of favor with God by having a sinful body is ostracized. For the sake of my argument, I utilize scripture to operate as a literal "guidebook" in demonstrating the extent of Christianity's ability to cast vampires as the evil "Other" according to Christian doctrine.

The basic belief, Christ gave his life for the sins of humanity, instills procedures to ensure that individuals can comprehend their relation to Christ and other human beings. Jonathan Harker, Abraham Van Helsing, Dr. John Seward, Quincy Morris, and Arthur Holmwood are Protestants. All denominations of Christianity rely on "moral physiology," or the supposed duality of the body and spirit, as discourses. The Eucharist is used within each denomination of Christianity because practitioners identify the Eucharist as the metaphorical or literal body of Christ to be consumed during communion. Whether one considers it metaphorically or literally the body of Christ is irrelevant, the mere usage of the Eucharist can be identified as a staple of Christianity. The Christian vampire hunters use the

Eucharist, a universal symbol of the unifying nature of the Christian Church against evil, as a weapon to repel Dracula (Stoker 272). To completely integrate Protestant scripture with vampires, one must explore the institutions formerly established by Catholicism as a discourse. Discourses often do not dissipate over-time, rather their recursive nature allows even miniscule factors to reincarnate throughout history.

Spiritual faith is a prominent aspect of Christianity; however, within Catholicism, faith is not sufficient to purify a contaminated body. Contaminated bodies exist because humans are born into sin, and are therefore inherently sinful. Due to such an inherently sinful nature, spiritual faith is not redemptive alone. Further sacraments are necessary to cleanse a contaminated body. The Council of Trent (1545) established that human beings are meant to be baptized as a sacrament “performed by a priest” (Saunders 1). Once an individual has been baptized, “merit” is gained through a person’s work. Salvation is then a state to be earned: When individuals are “moved by the Holy Spirit, we can MERIT for ourselves and for all the graces needed to attain eternal life” (CCC, 2027). This discourse would apply responsibility to sinners who struggle against their contaminated bodies to obtain righteousness. Faith alone cannot secure the salvation of an individual; the behaviors and consequential circumstances ultimately determine whether a person is deemed “saved” or not. As a result, salvation is not a goal attained on earth, but a process that Roman Catholics must endure to gain forgiveness after every transgression (Saunders 2). It should be noted that salvation is not to be awarded by a priest; however, priests can instruct congregations to incorporate prayers that involve the temporary rejuvenation of spiritual purity (2).

Foucault, in *Abnormal*, demonstrates that in Catholicism penance and restitution transforms from a spiritual process to a discourse that establishes the Church's manipulation of the metaphysical, natural, and supernatural. Institutionalizing penance and restitution as a means to gain salvation increases the Church's control of the human psyche and behavior. Although Catholics still adhere to such beliefs, Protestants follow a similar discipline of the mind and body. The Church's manipulation of the metaphysical, natural, and supernatural integrates everyday life with eventual salvation or damnation. In other words, both (salvation and damnation) are future states that are dependent on the behaviors and thoughts that a person entertains on a regular basis. We must comprehend that it is not enough to control simple thought processes, but to penetrate the dark desires that create thoughts, and examine the effects these actions have on our souls. The process of seeking penance through confession is more successful because it promotes "dependence on the Roman Catholic Church as the only means by which salvation can be distributed and maintained" (Saunders 2). In this manner, Catholicism created objects like penance and restitution so that followers will make decisions based on these objects. Catholicism, as a discourse, is enacted by individuals. "Dependence," in these circumstances, refers to religion's innate ability to provide psychologically stable environments. Religion evolves from a belief system to a discourse that defines and limits the self, regardless of how invasive certain limitations might be. Foucault demonstrates this evolution: "one must deal with ... one's inner being: temptations ... along with the sources from which they spring and the means... to correct them" (183). Confession is meant to examine

transgressions to address the wrong committed against God, Christ, and the body of the sinner. Upon commencing confession with a well-appointed priest the person utters a prayer to invoke the grace of God and demonstrate humility. A prayer for a good confession might read as follows:

O my God, by my grievous sins I have re-crucified Thy divine Son to myself and have deserved Thy everlasting wrath in the fires of hell....I have been most ungrateful by my sins to Thee, my Heavenly Father, Who have created me out of nothing, redeemed me by Thy Son...But Thou hast spared me to make this confession. Receive me back as Thy prodigal son and grant me to confess myself well, that I may BEGIN anew to love Thee with my whole heart and soul...I hope by Thy goodness and power to obtain everlasting life in paradise through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.
(Announcements 1, my italics)

Through this prayer, the guilt of a repentant spirit is communicated. The person should maintain an afflicted perspective because they must beseech God for mercy. Jesus Christ is “re-crucified” when an individual sins. The “re-crucifying” of Christ lends an immediate danger to the sinful where they are not just responsible for their soul, but are also to blame for further torturing the Son of God. This grievance is especially horrific since humans have been “made from nothing,” which alludes to the perception that we are physically invaluable. Human beings are “spared God’s wrath” to confess their sins because it provides us an opportunity to take responsibility for the wrongs committed on Earth. Foucault tells us “One absolutely must confess. One must confess everything. Nothing must be left out” (176). It is crucial that an individual makes a complete examination of their conscience because over-looking sins risks the individual’s body to be permanently stained as sinful and banished to Hell. Foucault cites the meditations of Beuvelet concerning confession, “If the body’s health requires one to consult a doctor... how much more must we consult those who are experts in the salvation of our soul?”

(183). This implies the dire need to address sinful states as one might see a doctor concerning physical ailments. Priests are spiritual doctors. Contaminated bodies are out of control and must be brought under spiritual subjection by seeking the support of a priest. Physical sickness, or contamination, is likened to a sinful state, thus vampirism creates infected bodies and is addressed like a sickness with physical and spiritual connotations. Van Helsing is an established authority due to his knowledge of the occult and medicine. While observing Lucy Westenra to determine whether or not she has become a vampire, Helsing places garlic blossoms throughout Westenra's bedroom and about her bodice as she sleeps to prevent Dracula from feeding on her (Stoker 179). This apparently scientific approach is enveloped in supernatural reasoning. In other words, Helsing attempts to medically diagnose Westenra with a supernatural malady. In such a case, Helsing becomes priest and doctor.

Christianity, as a discourse, has evolved from a religious movement in response to Jewish law, to a powerful institution manipulating individual behavior through "moral physiology." As both the priest and doctor of the novel, Van Helsing assumes the position of ordering a discourse the other gentlemen follow closely:

Professor [Helsing] had gained his feet, and was holding towards him the envelope which contained the Sacred Wafer. The Count suddenly stopped, just as poor Lucy had done outside the tomb, and cowered back. Further and further back he cowered, as we, lifting our crucifixes, advanced. (272)

Helsing is the first to approach Dracula with "the Sacred Wafer" or the actual body of Christ according to Catholic tradition (Saunders 2). If the wafer is the body of Christ, then Dracula is repelled by holiness. The "Army of Light," which includes

Dr. John Seward, Arthur Holmwood, Quincy Morris, and Jonathan Harker, advance with raised crucifixes. Why might Dracula be repelled by such symbols of righteousness? During the course of *Dracula*, vampirism operates as a disease, corrupting the soul and removing one from right standing with God. This process exemplifies what Foucault terms moral physiology, thus “placing the body in the forefront” of religious condemnation (189). Moral physiology applies binaries like “good” and “evil” to the choices individuals make, and as a result a person’s body is the physical manifestation of sin.

When Christian individuals become vampires they experience several debilitating symptoms according to the faith. Upon transforming into a vampire, the process results in complete carnality, abandonment of ordained duties, and the loss of faith. Galatians 5:17 explains the duality of flesh and spirit within humans: “For the flesh sets its desire against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, for these are in opposition to one another.” Upon becoming a vampire, one’s flesh succumbs to complete carnality because the person dies without a means of gaining forgiveness for their sins. One cannot feasibly argue that vampires do not have souls. Souls are eternal, our bodies are not sent to heaven or hell. Our bodies are a type of vessel for our souls. A vampire’s soul does not become non-existent, on account of their human body’s transformation. On the contrary, the restoration (or staking) of vampires is only possible because vampires have souls that are perpetually contaminated by vampirism. In Gothic texts, staking actually restores the vampire’s soul.

A carnal vampire will not adhere to the ordained duties given by God according to Genesis 1:28. Humans are commanded to “be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth... and have dominion over the fish... over the fowl of the air, and every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Gen. 1:28). To the contrary, Dracula consumes humans, manipulates animals with demonic forces, and creates filthy creatures in his image, with his likeness and his behaviors. When Dracula brings Jonathan Harker to his Castle, the Count demonstrates his demonic power over animals when, with only a flick of his hand, he forces wolves out of the path of his carriage (44). Van Helsing explains that to become a vampire is to be an immortal who “must go on age after age multiplying the evils of the world” (252). Instead of being fruitful and multiplying as a human being to father more humans for godly interaction with Christ, Dracula commits the opposite, and inverse. He multiplies the number of “evil” or devilish creatures that will feed on other humans. Helsing depicts the process of becoming a vampire: “It is that we become as him, that we henceforward become foul things preying on the bodies and souls of those we love best” (276). Helsing is implying the duality of flesh and spirit that is threatened by vampirism. If a vampire’s flesh cannot be brought under spiritual subjection, then all vampires abandon their ordained duties including caring for the earth, animals, and other human beings. Vampires also abandon their obligation of repentance. John, one of Jesus’s disciples, gives an explanation of the importance of repentance “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life” (Revelation 22:14). Vampires cannot “wash their robes,” or be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins because the disease casts

individuals into damnation. Vampires also achieve eternal life without obedience to God. Faith is effectively deconstructed if Christians can reach an imitation of immortality; thus the traditions, doctrine, and Eucharist become useless. Therefore, the best manner to prevent loss of faith, abandonment of ordained duties, and carnality from spreading, is to quench the disease at the source of contagion, Dracula.

Damnation is a future state of existence after God judges the souls that have chosen not to believe or do not repent for their sins. In the novel, Dracula is perceived as a kind of Lucifer. Lucifer or the Morning Star, was cast from heaven because the angel wanted to be a God. Van Helsing claims Dracula "is devil in callous, and the heart of him is not" (276), thus comparing Dracula to Lucifer. If Dracula is a type of Lucifer, Dracula must seek to debase as many human souls as he can because vampirism leads to damnation. Mina Harker presents Dracula's attack against her as an attempt to force her to drink. Dracula supposedly seized both her wrists and suffocates Mina, so she must swallow his blood (328.) Unlike Dracula, Satan seems only to be able to tempt humans, but in this scene it is clear Dracula can hinder free will. Dracula poses as an Anti-Christ because he introduces sin permanently to the human spirit and body, but cannot absolve sins, whereas God creates man, man falls into sin, and Jesus sacrifices himself to redeem man for spiritual interaction. Dracula attempts to surpass God's omnipotence. Such menace cannot be tolerated because of its blasphemous nature. If all vampires follow in Dracula's likeness, then they too will transcend from humans to gods that can contaminate other human souls without providing salvation. Dracula is king, but all

vampires become kings who can make “the world as a wilderness” (Isaiah 14:17). Vampires are humbled or “brought down to hell” (Isaiah 14:15), because they jeopardize the salvation of others without the ability to redeem humans unto God.

Vampirism without Religion

Since moral physiology is an object within Christian discourses, Dracula is incapable of confessing his sins. Therefore, Dracula cannot invest in Christianity as a discourse and is effectively portrayed as an abomination due to moral binaries or the juxtaposition of good and evil. Nevertheless, without the discursive filter of religion, a “filter through which one must pass every thought, pleasure, and passion” (Foucault 184), the vampire-human relationship is transformed. James Rasmussen is a vampire who is intimately involved with his human lover Poppy North in *Secret Vampire*. The vampire-human relationship evolves in part through the physiological explanation of vampirism. By relying on science to explain the existence of vampires, Smith introduces a vampire who is not categorized within a religious discourse. Naturalization is frequently addressed in *Secret Vampire* so that characters like Poppy and Phillip North question whether it is natural or unnatural for vampires to exist. Comparatively, the inquiry “Are vampires *unnatural*?” attempts to place vampires on a natural continuum. By contrast, the question “Are vampires *unholy*?” forces humans to assume vampires are spiritual abominations. Naturalizing vampires prevents moral physiology from being applicable to their persons. Created vampires do exist, but the majority of vampires are “lamia.” James

defines the “lamia” for Poppy according to his experience: “We’re born and we age like humans—except that we can stop aging whenever we want” (Smith 61). Birth and aging are perhaps the most symbolic of the human experience because of the meaning attached to them. Birth initiates a sacred bond between a child and its parents, especially the mother. As a vampire, James is expected to interact with humans while maintaining a certain detachment in order to protect his family and friends from being exterminated. Extermination still exists as a threat within a naturalized discourse due to “the menace of a monster hidden among us” because the vampire’s concealment operates as an unknown threat to human populations (Garza 24). Ignorance instigates fear of supernatural species within Smith’s *Secret Vampire*. Supernatural species are made more terrifying because they must remain hidden from humans. As a result, those species impose punishments on anyone who reveals a nonhuman’s existence, all in order to protect witches, werewolves, shape-shifters, and vampires from the human tendency to proscribe the unknown as the evil “Other.”

Despite the concern of being targeted as a vampire, James takes risks to save Poppy’s life. Upon discovering that Poppy has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, James informs his parents of Poppy’s illness. His mother is especially concerned about James’s psychological state and uses telepathy to search her son’s mind: “James willed every muscle to stay relaxed as he felt the thought-tendrils tighten suddenly, coiling around him, looking for a chink in his armor” (49). James must “will every muscle to stay relaxed” because he loves Poppy dearly and her disease illuminates this love. Mrs. Rasmussen seeks to protect James from being

condemned by the entire supernatural community for exposing non-humans. James has a mother, whereas Dracula roams about a dark, dank castle alone with an ambiguous history that he relays to Jonathan Harker:

We Szekelys have a right to be proud, for in our veins flows the blood of many brave races that fought as the lion fights, for lordship. Here, in the whirlpool of European races, the Ugric tribe bore down from Iceland the fighting spirit which Thor and Wodin gave them, which their Berserkers displayed to such fell intent on the seaboards of Europe, aye, and of Asia and Africa too, till the people thought that the werewolves themselves had come. (Stoker 27)

All that can be understood from Dracula's experience of being the surviving prince of Transylvania is that he was a successful war-lord who bears the ferocity of lions. The Szekelys apparently have the favor of Thor, the Norse god of thunder and lightning or the equivalent of Zeus, a prominent figure of patriarchy and power. Dracula's clan is so mighty in spirit that he implies Europeans would liken his ancestors to werewolves while engaging in war. However courageous Dracula's clan was, he has no physical relations to interact with outside of his three brides. Dracula's form can then be placed within a strange paradox where his mind and memories are possessed by the past, but his body exists in the present, which is regulated by discourses that do not acknowledge ambiguous histories. Ambiguity is significant because it alters a human's reasonable ability to obtain and refer to personal histories. Because of impartial personal histories, the vampire is cast as a supernatural being. Dracula does not have a mother. He is compared to gods and werewolves, making Dracula entirely *unnatural*.

Because humans invest a significant amount of trust in their acquired knowledge, ambiguity hinders vampires from being placed on a natural continuum

because it alludes to the supernatural. Poppy does not believe James is a vampire and counters his argument by using her prior knowledge of vampires to claim that he cannot be a vampire because he has grown older like her (Smith 59-60). She concludes that since James has parents his seemingly "human" history annuls the ambiguity of surviving for centuries. Naturalization occurs not only in science, but also in developing tangible histories for the vampire with living, breathing relations. James expounds: "We breathe. We walk around in the daylight. We can eat regular food" (Smith 61). The vampire is not a form to be banished or scorched by the sun, and they have no problem consuming food for sustenance. Such distinctions build a body that is inescapably human despite increased strength (or the odd urge to consume blood). Sunshine can touch James because, as he explains, vampirism is an evolutionary advancement, rather than a spiritual abomination: "Vampire blood destroys hemoglobin—the red cells—in human blood. Once it destroys enough of the red cells, you stop getting the oxygen you need to think straight. And when it destroys more, you don't have the oxygen you need to live" (127). However problematic the blood's destruction of red blood cells might be, vampirism results in greater strength, speed, telepathy, and eternal life. James ultimately proposes to assist Poppy in her transformation into a vampire because she will gain resilience to diseases, but specifically her pancreatic cancer. Margaret L. Carter posits that exclusion of moral physiology within vampire literature "suggests that vampirism is simply an altered condition, morally neutral, which permits each vampire (allowing for the complications of blood need) to be good or evil on the same terms as ordinary mortals" (1). Good and evil then become concepts that pertain to an

individual's capacity to be ethical in any given circumstance. Religious discourses are not the only source of moral binaries. Moral binaries still exist in a secular world because inhumane behavior signifies whether vampires and humans are "evil." The main difference is that these moral binaries are not rooted in religious tradition.

One allusion to religion within *Secret Vampire* is especially captivating. During Poppy's transformation and the last night of her human life, she requests that her brother Phillip collect candles to light her bedroom while she sinks into a hypnotic sleep: "Phil came back with candles, Christmas candles, emergency candles, scented votive candles" (137). Notably, even votive candles are gathered for this scene. Father William Saunders expounds on the symbolic nature of candles: "in our Catholic tradition, in early times as well as today, light has a special significance" because Jesus Christ metaphorically relates himself to light, "I have come to the world as its light, to keep anyone who believes in Me from remaining in the dark" (Saunders 1; John 12:46). Due to such associations between salvation and light, baptized individuals receive the "Rite of Christian Initiation" when priests instruct Catholics "You have been *enlightened* by Christ. Walk always as children of the *light* and keep the *flame of faith* alive in your hearts" (Saunders 1-2). Humans are purified by the "light" of Christ, but must work to maintain the zeal of passion for righteousness that is described as "the flame of faith." "Keeping the flame alive" will surely lead the penitent soul to the Lord. Dilman emphasizes the significance of illumination further: "The light of God, the framework of our religious beliefs, puts things in a certain light for us," and causes individuals to "see them in certain aspects under which we would not see them but for those beliefs" (159). In other

words, the light encourages believers to seek moral change. However, we find that Poppy North has used votive candles to guide her ascendance from a human body to her perfected vampire form (Smith 137). Smith has applied candles that are typically used as symbolism for salvation without spiritual bias. Light from any candle could illuminate a room, saint, or statue of Christ. However, Christianity applies further meaning to flames, wicks, and wax that Poppy does not value over the other candles she has Phillip gather; therefore Christianity would not appear to be an influential discourse when Poppy and Phillip address vampirism.

James confirms the naturalization of vampires himself. James relays to Phil, Poppy's brother: "We're not like what you see in the movies. We're not all powerful. We can't dematerialize through walls or travel through time, and we don't need to kill to feed. We're not evil, at least not all of us. We're not damned" (109). Rasmussen is able to disrobe all of the presumptions that are superimposed onto vampires based on religious moral binaries. In the movies, vampires are based on Dracula and they flee from crucifixes and Sacred Wafers. Strikingly, James admits that killing is not necessary when drinking blood. The ethical vampire spares human life because uncontrolled consumption would be unethical. For James, control is a characteristic that demonstrates his respect for human life. In comparison, Dracula is depicted to have no control over his desire to consume human blood and souls (Stoker 252). A group's perception of vampires determines the degree of control a vampire possesses, and whether the vampire's self-identity is disregarded or accepted.

Self-Identity vs. Perception

A group's perception determines whether an individual will be accepted or avoided (or worse). An individual's perceived aspirations can be significantly different in comparison to their self-identity, as we shall discover in Dracula's case. When examining self-identity, Jeffrey R. Seul likens the personality to an individual's "identity card" containing "one's values, motives, emotions, feelings, attitudes... and the like" (555). Seul suggests that self-identity goes beyond one's name, but rather exists as a continuous cycle of internalizing and devaluing social content one is exposed to overtime (555). Highly valued content is described as "closer to the core" revealing "what one considers oneself essentially to be" (555). Dracula's self-identity entails more than vampirism, which describes *what* Dracula is, and not *who*. Dracula defines himself in conversation with Jonathan Harker. He states that as a Wallachian noble with great pride he would prefer that his bones not lie with common people because Dracula believes he deserves the burial of an aristocrat (Stoker 54). The Count proceeds to explain his emotional disposition: "I am not young; and my heart, through weary years of mourning over the dead, is not attuned to mirth" (54). The phrase "through weary years of mourning" depicts the concept of time Seul uses to define how self-identity is formed. Dracula's "heart," or ability to love has been dwindled by the reality of sorrow and death. Dracula tells Harker he is not young, and therefore implying that he has outlived everyone within his kingdom. The Count seems quite depressed, but he is accustomed to these feelings because he declares "I love the shade and the

shadow, and would be alone with my thoughts when I may" (55). It is clear Dracula perceives himself as aristocratic and melancholic.

James entertains a melancholic self-identity as well. His perspective is marked by death and emotional loss. When Poppy is diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, James has a difficult time trying to console his life-long friend because of his own decrepit perspective. James admits to himself, "To give comfort you had to have a comfortable view of the world. And James had seen too much of the world to have any illusions" (Smith 30). According to James's opinion reality is too brutal to maintain a view that relies on warmth to construct one's reality; He does not have a "comfortable view of the world" and therefore cannot create a fantasy where Poppy will somehow survive cancer by her own volition. James's familiarity with death is devastating:

He'd seen a lot of death in seventeen years. He knew the stages of dying, knew the difference between the moment breathing stopped and the moment the brain turned off; knew the unmistakable ghostlike pallor of a fresh corpse. The way the eyeballs flattened out about five minutes after expiration. (32)

Though James is seventeen years old, he is an adolescent not given to nostalgic childhood memories. Instead, James must cope with his exposure to death and loneliness. Later in the novel, James's experience with death is explained. As a four-year-old boy, James had a beloved nanny named Miss Emma who cared for him better than his own mother (111). James's first loving relationship developed with a human being. Mrs. and Mr. Rasmussen recognized the strong bond growing between Miss Emma and James, and decided to take James on a vacation without allowing him to feed for three days (111). Since vampires do not have enough oxygen in their

blood to survive, they must feed on human beings. Without this oxygen, the vampire's body becomes a clump of muscles agonized by cramps (127). James's parents sent Miss Emma to tuck him in bed and he bit her (112). James drained her almost completely, but realized he could save her life by turning her into a vampire (113). He gave her some of his blood, but not enough to change her completely. Miss Emma became a walking corpse, rotting in their home, until Mr. Rasmussen buries her. James hopes his father killed her first instead of burying Miss Emma alive (113). Due to this incident, James loathes himself and is filled with guilt because he attacked Miss Emma, the only person who had showed him physical affection. Seul suggests an individual's "efforts to achieve a sense of connection or belonging, self-esteem, and even self-actualization help people establish and maintain positive, secure identities" (553). When individuals maintain loving bonds it allows them to view themselves and their place in the world positively. Because Mr. and Mrs. Rasmussen disrupted James's relationship with Miss Emma they caused James to forfeit an opportunity to build a positive identity. After revealing himself as a vampire to Phillip, James admits the following: "And Phillip North thought he was unnatural and evil. What Phil didn't know was that most of the time James thought the same thing" (114). Unlike Dracula, James's self-loathing and guilt is not created because James has outlived everyone he loves or because he has an ambiguous history. Instead, James has low self-esteem because his actions are not aligned with his morals. James believes that killing is unnecessary and unethical thus views himself as an abomination because of Miss Emma's death. Clearly, James values humans in a way that Stoker does not demonstrate in Dracula's character.

Rasmussen is a representation of kindness and altruism. Ironically, the lack of Christianity in James's world allows Christ-like behavior in James. However, it is the perception of others that determines what conclusions are made pertaining to one's character. For James Rasmussen this process is redeeming. Unfortunately for Dracula, the "Army of Light" perceives him as a threat to all humanity.

Van Helsing's perception is noteworthy because Helsing views Dracula as a damned vampire. Helsing levels many accusations of evil at Dracula to rally the group against him. Helsing imparts "He is devil in callous, and the heart of him is not" (276), a comment on Dracula's non-existent compassion. From Helsing's perspective, Dracula threatens the salvation of others: "For it is not the least of its terrors that this evil thing is rooted deep in all good; in soil barren of holy memories it cannot rest" (280). As a human, Dracula was blessed, but since becoming a vampire he has been deconsecrated and made wicked. Thus, Dracula is not just a plant or "the least of its terrors," but a weed that will consume the nutrients of others without compassion or reverence for God.

While Dracula projects a persona of emotion and dignity, Helsing constantly reiterates an image of Dracula that presents him as a demonic abstraction. Holmwood, Morris, Mrs. and Mr. Harker, and Dr. Seward then internalize this information provided by Helsing. According to Seul, internalization can only happen "when one aligns oneself with others and adopts aspects of their behavior because it is consistent with one's own values" (555). Hence the group becomes one in mindset. At this point in the novel, each participant agrees that the enemy is

Dracula, whereas Helsing originally battled with unbelief in vampirism. The shift in psychological understanding is based on “a collective motivation to serve the purposes and goals on which the survival of the group depend” (556). Helsing persuades the “Army of Light” using religious motivation: “It is that we become like him... To us forever are the gates of heaven shut,” and “We go on for all time abhorred by all; an arrow in the side of Him who died for man” (276-277). Helsing refers to the re-crucifying of Christ to inspire guilt in his followers. Guilt is a powerful tool because it reminds Helsing’s followers that they are sinful, but have the opportunity to purge the world of vampirism or, in other words, of sin. These statements are framed so each member of the hunting party understands they will re-crucify Christ by neglecting their duty of killing Dracula. By emphasizing the negative spiritual perception of Dracula, Helsing is able to make Dracula’s murder a matter of necessity. The religious discourse Helsing utilizes to justify assassinating Dracula molds each person’s perception of the vampire.

In *Secret Vampire*, Phillip and Poppy North account for negative and positive perceptions of James. Phillip represents the “Army of Light,” while Poppy represents Mina Harker and Lucy Westenra in *Dracula*. Phillip is disturbed, as the “Army of Light” was, when James reveals himself. Phillip claims: “If you’re not a monster, I don’t know what is” (109) and “So vampire blood is like poison” (127), thus depicting his tendency to assume the worst concerning vampires. Phillip does not recognize the benefits of transforming Poppy into a vampire; one of these benefits would include curing her of pancreatic cancer. Instead, Phillip accuses James’s veins of coursing with poison. From Phillip’s perspective, despite James having been born

from a woman and aging, James has no humanity and is a monster simply by definition. Later in *Secret Vampire*, Phillip tells James ““You’re unnatural... and James could feel that he meant it from his heart. ‘You’re wrong. You shouldn’t exist”” (109). Phillip has internalized the same discourse that would explain vampires as atrocities, except his views are not founded in religious moral binaries, but in the dichotomy between natural and supernatural. According to Phillip, the supernatural should not exist because it disrupts Nature’s established order. Phillip’s reaction leads James to tell him that vampires “can’t dematerialize through walls or travel through time, and we don’t need to kill to feed” (109). Dracula is never allowed an opportunity to justify his position as a vampire, but James can define vampirism according to a naturalized discourse without religious binaries to dictate Phillip or Poppy’s perception of his identity. Though Poppy fears James, she recognizes that James’s self-identity is separate from vampirism. She states “He may be some god-awful undead fiend, but he still cares about you” (63), clearly conveying her understanding that vampirism only changes James’s body, but does not alter his inclination to preserve human beings. This perspective is only possible because religious doctrine does not dominate Poppy and James’ relationship.

By happenstance, when James changes Poppy to a vampire, Phillip is not completely rid of his prejudice. Poppy develops telepathy and hears her brother’s thoughts: “He was appalled, and Poppy could feel it. She could even pick up words he was thinking—words like ghastly and amoral. A whole sentence that went something like ‘Is it worth it to save her life if she’s lost her soul?’” (176). Phillip adopts an understanding of vampires that is akin to Helsing’s, and even questions

whether death is better than vampirism. He visualizes his sister Poppy “as a Hollywood monster” with “red eyes, chalky skin, and dripping teeth” (160). Demonic renditions of the vampire are present in Phillip’s mind, but despite his assumptions, Phillip admits “If she came out like that, he’d try to love her. But part of him might want to get a stake” (160). Phillip cannot be rid of his perception of vampires until, like Poppy, he comprehends that a vampire only defines *what* James is, not *who* he is. His self-identity is separate. This insight occurs to Phillip when he allows himself to abandon any moral physiological assumptions about James and to naturalize vampires:

I still don’t approve of vampires, but it occurs to me that maybe they’re not as completely bad as they seem. I mean, vampires don’t treat their food any better than humans do. When you think about what we do to cows... But my other thought was that you’re part of Nature and Nature just is what it is.” Poppy felt a sting in her eyes. If he admits we’re part of Nature, she thought, then he doesn’t believe we’re unnatural anymore. It meant a lot. (238-239)

Phillip compares vampires feeding on humans to the human treatment of cows, which is far from ethical. It is this realization that helps Phillip to change his moral physiological perspective, a perspective that would eventually lead him to ostracize and stake James like the “Army of Light” in *Dracula*. Phillip views vampires as “part of Nature” and do not inherently deserve to be hunted or ostracized. Naturalizing vampires prevents what Alar Kilp describes as “the process of construction of a cultural ‘Other’... made meaningful by a reliance on religious or ideological values, beliefs, myths and narratives, and ... framed with general moral binaries” (199). The construction of “Other” is made possible due to religious doctrine in the form of Christianity within *Dracula*, but because *Secret Vampire* lacks

a religious discourse that manipulates the perceptions of vampires the construction of “Other” is not motivated by religious beliefs. Consequently, Poppy and Phillip are able to develop relationships with James. Kilp explains that the “negative cultural ‘Other’ does not have to be ‘morally or religiously deficient’ for a group to establish the individual as such” (205). Therefore, Dracula does not have to be “evil.” All that is necessary to accuse him of being ‘morally deficient’ is the perception that he is a threat. Rich explains that discourses inherently “make some things visible, and hide others” (Rich). Religious moral binaries conceal that individuals who are otherized are not necessarily evil, but declared evil because these individuals, and especially Dracula, oppose the expectations of Christianity. Such binaries make it visible that the Christian vampire hunters are justified, but they also conceal that Dracula is potentially hunted and destroyed for arbitrary reasons.

Possession is one thing, Unconditional Love is another

A significant aspect of Christianity is the concept of unconditional love. In order to build a stable self-identity within a religious context, one must trust to be valued and loved in God’s eyes. Seul explains: “If one considers oneself to be in ‘right relationship’ with God, one may feel assured that one is loved, and that one is justified in regarding oneself positively” (559). To create a positive self-concept one might think: “If God loves me, I am precious in his sight.” Since Dracula is damned, and therefore opposes God, the scripture “He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love” (1 John4:8) attributes Dracula’s lack of compassion to his damnation. But the same reasoning also implies that Dracula is incapable of positive self-

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Keynesian Income Multiplier Model

Ch. 13(B) The Keynesian Income Multiplier and Equilibrium Income:

For Y_{eq} , we need $Y = AE = C + I + G + X - IM$, where:

$$C = C_0 + mpc(Y - T),$$

$$T = T_0 + t(Y),$$

$$\text{so } C = C_0 + mpc(Y) - mpc(T_0) - mpc(t)(Y) \quad \text{or } C = C_0 - mpc(T_0) + mpc(1 - t)Y$$

$$G = G_0,$$

$$I = I_0,$$

$$X = X_0,$$

$$IM = IM_0 + im(Y).$$

$$\text{Thus, } AE = C_0 - mpc(T_0) + I_0 + G_0 + X_0 - IM_0 + mpc(1 - t)Y - im(Y). \quad \text{EQ(1)}$$

Note that $AE_0 = C_0 - mpc(T_0) + I_0 + G_0 + X_0 - IM_0$ are all independent of Y , so these will give us the vertical intercept or constant term in the AE equation, with AE_0 used as a shorthand expression for this constant term.

In addition, $+mpc(1 - t)Y - im(Y)$ give the responses of consumption and imports to changes in Y in the AE equation, so $mpc(1 - t) - im$ gives the slope of AE curve in an AE:Y graph.

Therefore, the AE equation could be written as $AE = AE_0 + [mpc(1 - t) - im](Y)$,

We set EQ(1) above equal to Y and solve for Y to determine the value of Y where $Y = AE$.

$$Y = AE = C_0 - mpc(T_0) + I_0 + G_0 + X_0 - IM_0 + \underline{[mpc(1 - t) - im]}(Y)$$

To solve the above expression for Y , all Y terms must be moved to the same side of the equation, so $[mpc(1 - t) - im](Y)$ is subtracted from both sides of the equation giving:

$$Y - \underline{[mpc(1 - t) - im]}(Y) \text{ or } Y(1.0 - mpc(1 - t) + im) = C_0 - mpc(T_0) + I_0 + G_0 + X_0 - IM_0$$

To complete the solution for equilibrium Y or Y_{eq} , both sides of the equation are divided by $(1.0 - mpc(1 - t) + im)$. As a convenience, before we do this, we multiply the right hand side of the equation by 1.0 which will not change its value, and then divide the 1.0 by $(1.0 - mpc(1 - t) + im)$. This gives the final equation for Y_{eq} :

$$Y_{eq} = \frac{1.0}{1.0 - mpc(1 - t) + im} * [C_0 - mpc(T_0) + I_0 + G_0 + X_0 - IM_0] \quad \text{EQ(2)}$$

Note: $Y_{eq} = \text{Multiplier} * AE_0$,

$\text{Multiplier} = \frac{1.0}{1.0 - mpc(1 - t) + im}$ where the denominator is 1.0 minus the slope of the AE curve

And where $AE_0 = C_0 - mpc(T_0) + I_0 + G_0 + X_0 - IM_0$ which is AE at $Y = 0$.

Finally, the Y_{eq} formula in EQ(2) is often used in change form, for example, to determine how much G_0 or T_0 would need to be changed by to change Y_{eq} by a certain amount. Using Δ to represent "change in" EQ(2) can be rewritten in change form as shown in EQ(3):

$$\Delta Y_{eq} = \frac{1.0}{1.0 - mpc(1 - t) + im} * [\Delta C_0 - mpc(\Delta T_0) + \Delta I_0 + \Delta G_0 + \Delta X_0 - \Delta IM_0] \quad \text{EQ(3)}$$

Note that changes in C_0 , I_0 , X_0 and IM_0 will also change Y_{eq} , and changes in T_0 and G_0 are what Keynes recommended to offset changes in these other variables if they changed to give $Y_{eq} < Y_N$ or $Y_{eq} > Y_N$.

concept because God does not favor him. Dilman acknowledges this comparison of identifying God as love and the bringer of understanding in executing unconditional love: “‘God is love’. In other words God is not an object. He dwells in the believer’s love, his love of another human being, when that love is absolutely pure. Thus the believer knows Him there” (159). The ability to know God and dwell in his presence, as well as to show compassion to others, is dependent on a person’s ability to maintain unconditional approaches in love. By contrast, the inability to demonstrate love becomes a symptom of vampirism. The Count reminds his brides of his capacity for affection, when he was human (36), but since becoming a vampire Dracula simulates love through demonic possession. When speaking of Harker with his brides, Dracula whispers angrily “How dare you cast your eyes on him when I had forbidden it? This man belongs to me!” (70). It is apparent that Dracula wields ownership over his brides and Harker because Dracula orders his brides to never approach Harker for blood, then proceeds to undress Harker like a child and place him in pajamas. Perhaps undressing Harker is compassionate, but Dracula also carries Harker to a designated room, and keeps him, as the fearful young man admits, in “a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!” (57). Later in the novel, Dracula demonstrates the same possessive tendencies when chastising Mina for joining against him: “When my brain says ‘Come!’ to you, you shall cross land or sea to do my bidding” (328). He does wish for Mina to be his helper, with the intent to love her; she will exist merely as a servant to him. Both Jonathan and Mina Harker serve a purpose in that they are subordinates to be ruled by Dracula’s every word.

Demonic possession, caused by vampirism, deteriorates traditional Christian notions of marriage because each vampire created by Dracula suffers from the inability to express unconditional love. Biblical verses provide instruction on the behavior of each spouse: "Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands" (Eph. 5:22) and "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). Both partners are expected to demonstrate unconditional love; however, women are instructed to limit their self-assertion because they are supposed to have a natural capability to rule themselves, while men should *sacrifice* themselves on a regular basis by making decisions for the good of their families. In the scene where Lucy Westenra exclaims upon seeing her fiancé, "Come to me, Arthur... My arms are hungry for you" (252), Lucy assumes the dominant role, and commands that Arthur come to her so she might consume his blood, revealing her desires to exploit Arthur instead of caring for him. Lucy has forfeited submission in favor of consuming her husband and ruling herself. Because Lucy has become "Undead," Arthur must rely on Christian doctrine and sacrifice his love for her salvation. He is expected to stake Lucy and "strike in God's name," so as to perform a figurative baptism of her soul (254). Lucy's behavior introduces instability to religious norms required of marriage, perpetuating "feelings of insecurity, chaos, and vulnerability" (Kilp 199) within Arthur. As a result, Arthur is forced to rely on religious frameworks of love requiring that he kill Lucy. Dracula must be terminated because he cannot love, and dooms others to be incapable of building or maintaining intimate relationships, leading to the exploitation of humans merely for sustenance, rather than demonstrating the ordained construction of marriage provided by

biblical texts. According to this religiously based understanding, vampires are incapable of developing relationships with humans that are beneficial or mutually gratifying.

In *Abnormal*, Foucault gives a great deal of attention to defining the Christian understanding of demonic possession. He shows that the possession of the nun and witch were understood as two separate processes with different experiences for both women (207-209). The devil penetrates a nun as an insidious force, thus causing convulsions in her body because she resists the Devil's internal influence (208). The witch, as a willing participant, is described as entering a contract where she exchanges her soul for a sample of the devil's power: "the witch's body was ... simply in the service of, or penetrated by, the countless armies of Satan" (207). With Dracula as the representation of Satan, I might argue that Mina Harker is both "witch" and "nun" because her body is marked with power by Dracula and subservient to him. Foucault claims that the witch enters a contract with Satan: "I [Satan] will possess you carnally whenever I like. As a reward, or in exchange, you will be able to call upon my supernatural presence" (208). Mina shall be able to "call upon Dracula's presence" because as a vampire all of his abilities will be available to her. Mina will depend on Dracula in the same manner as his brides, and in exchange she will become his servant. Foucault further clarifies in the case of the nun, "in possession, however, rather than a pact sealed by an action, there is an invasion; the devil's insidious and invincible penetration of the body" (208). Mina is possessed because vampirism infests her body and embodies the insidious nature that cannot be readily uprooted unless Dracula is staked through the heart. A terrified Mina

explains to the "Army of Light": "I did not want to hinder him [Dracula]. I suppose it is a part of the horrible curse that such is, when his touch is on his victim. And oh, my God, my God, pity me! He placed his reeking lips upon my throat!" (277). Mina reports she was under the Count's influence, a type of hypnosis that vampires employ before feeding. Mina's retelling of Dracula's attack demonstrates her discomfort and shame, while also marking her physically as if she were a nun being marked and possessed by the Devil. Dracula possesses Mina when feeding. Unlike Poppy's experience in *Secret Vampire*, Mina is distressed and disgusted. She refers to Dracula's lips as "reeking" and juxtaposes her purity with the filth or damnation of Dracula. The excerpt containing Mina's disgust and terror illuminates the extent of Dracula's possession and incapability of unconditional love because he forces her to become his servant through what she calls a "curse" or in other words, a demonic possession.

As *Secret Vampire* suggests, the absence of a religious discourse alters the vampire-human relationship in several notable aspects. James never seeks demonic possession of Poppy. Instead, James practices altruistic behavior in addressing Poppy's cancer. Feeding is a representation of ownership for Dracula. To the contrary, James and Poppy's experience of exchanging blood is not reminiscent of a traditional vampire dominating their human object, but rather becomes a mode of communication amongst lovers and *equals*. Finally, Poppy and James experience unconditional love since demonic possession does not corrupt their personal experiences. James and Poppy's blood exchanges are drastically different in comparison to possession. Poppy describes feelings of euphoria and contentment:

“The feeling of heat was actually pleasant. A sensation of release, of giving—and closeness. She and James were getting closer and closer, like two drops of water moving together until they merged” (67). Imagine watching water trickle into one trail of moisture; one droplet is not superior to the other, they are both halves of one whole. The same can be said of James and Poppy. The two exist as separate people, but when James feeds on Poppy they are unified because they complete one another. In *Love’s Confusions*, Dr. Reeve expounds on the intricacies of being in love with another: “Being able to accept love—being able to lower our defenses in the face of it— is just as active a thing as loving, just as much a part of love” (24-25). Lowering defenses can be understood in several ways. One might be that James is able to project a mental barrier to protect his thoughts from Poppy’s inspection. He “lowers his defenses” by not utilizing that barrier when engaging with Poppy. Therefore, James is actively loving Poppy. Another possibility might include the religious background provided. Since the presence of God is not a force to manipulate discourses in *Secret Vampire*, Poppy and James have no defenses to lower on a religious front. Thus they can remain transparent with one another without the fear of being ostracized and exterminated.

Dilman suggests “One can only love God in humility, and the need that characterizes a human being’s love of God is an expression of humility, it is recognition of his incompleteness without God” (165). Dracula cannot love because he is a reflection of Satan’s pride and his incompleteness; Satan wished to be God, thus Satan cannot love God in humility. However, James and Poppy are complete because they love in humility; they recognize that they would be incomplete without

the other. Poppy declares: "It was as if they were one being, together, not predator and prey" (Smith 67), while James believes "You don't love a girl because of beauty. You love her because she sings a song only you can understand..." (68). Both of their perceptions of love, Poppy's sense of togetherness and James's sense of understanding, demonstrate that they are equals in their relationship. Rather than the hierarchal relationship that is established between Dracula and Mina Harker, a different "possession" is born of James and Poppy's love. Jean Paul Sartre writes "The lover does not desire to possess the beloved as one possesses a thing," which is true in James and Poppy's case, but a lover "demands a special sort of appropriation ... he wants to possess a freedom as freedom ... he wishes that the Other's freedom should determine itself to become love ... at the same time he wants this same freedom to be captured by itself, to turn back upon itself ... so as to will its own captivity" (qtd. Reeve 77). This process creates freedom where the beloved can utilize her agency, thus James allows Poppy to be free in order for her to bound herself to him through intimacy. James tells her "It's your choice, Poppy. It's up to you" (65). By allowing Poppy to utilize her agency in deciding whether she would like to become a vampire, James provides freedom and trust in their relationship. Poppy can then transform: "She felt poetic and ... sloughed off her old body like a snake shedding its skin, to reveal a fresh new body underneath" (169). No longer will Poppy suffer from pancreatic cancer and die as a mortal; she can redefine herself with James's help and give her "fresh new body" to him.

Let's Declare War on Dracula, Quincy!

Due to the religious connotations of Stoker's *Dracula*, humans and vampires entertain different motives. Dracula wants to consume blood freely as his appetite inspires bloodlust, while also maintaining his prerogative to transform women into vampires. By contrast, the "Army of Light" aims to cleanse the women Dracula has touched, free their souls, and re-establish them as a resource to the family-unit, but also to prevent the further contamination of human beings. These contradictory goals illicit a volley of attacks and retaliations, that ultimately give rise to Dracula's demise. Dracula can be understood as a war novel as well as a Gothic text. Declarations of war are salient throughout the volume: Van Helsing implores the group to hunt Dracula: "But we are face to face with duty; and in such case must we shrink?" (277). Their "duty" is to assassinate Dracula. In retaliation to such declarations of war, Dracula responds with a direct attack upon the "Army of Light" by committing sexual assault on Mina Harker. When the gentlemen corner Dracula at one of his places of retreat, Dracula clamors indignantly:

You think to baffle me, you with your pale faces all in a row, like sheep in a butcher's. You shall be sorry yet, each one of you! You think you have left me without a place to rest, but I have more. My revenge is just begun! I spread it over centuries, and time is on my side. Your girls that you all love are mine already. And through them you and others shall yet be mine, my creatures, to do my bidding and to be my jackals when I want to feed. Bah! (295)

The "Army of Light" has declared war, and Dracula, having been a warlord for centuries, accepts the challenge by vowing to conquer all of London and the known world. Dracula outlines his strategy when he announces: "Your girls that you all love are mine already. And through them you and others shall yet be mine." Dracula is

referring to the transformation of Lucy Westenra, Arthur Holmwood's fiancé, and Jonathan Harker's wife, Mina. By transforming Lucy and Mina, Dracula is commencing a direct and demoralizing attack on the "Army of Light" in the hopes of eventually transforming these men into vampires. Dracula's threat directs a subtle sexual menace towards the "Army of Light." Dracula will possess their women, but also he will possess them. Dracula effectively emasculates the "Army of Light" through sexual assault. Cunningham posits in her work "Rape as a Weapon of Genocide," that women are often targeted during war for their central position within the family and community (281-82): "To the victor go the spoils can mean that the victor has 'the right to exert violence against women ... during campaigns of conquest or in the immediate post-war period'" (279). Sexual assault can then be understood as a privilege and a weapon to further humiliate the enemy during times of conflict. In other words, "rape can be a strategy of war, ethnic cleansing, and genocide because it reduces the civilian population through a variety of practical means while instilling fear, submission, compliance, and flight from areas of contested territory" (281). The "contested territory," must be defined very specifically within *Dracula*; this "territory" includes human souls, the human body, *female* bodies, Victorian social structures, and the physical location of London. To defend this "contested territory," Van Helsing and his followers, Jonathan Harker, Quincy Morris, Arthur Holmwood, and Dr. John Seward, rally together forming what Zanger conceives as the "Army of Light" (24). This juxtaposition of darkness and light, evil and good, imbalance and balance is formulated "precisely as the British Empire balanced itself against the 'lesser breed,' as civilization balanced itself

against savagery" (25). The "us versus them" or human versus vampire dichotomies formulate a mentality that is rooted in religion and justified by Christianity, but also maintains the status quo that is Victorian culture. The "Army of Light" are as the early crusaders, reclaiming "contested territory" in the name of God, but such declarations of war are entangled with simpler and self-serving motives of maintaining control over women's sexuality and access to partners. Count Dracula and the "Army of Light" are both guilty of rape during their time of conflict, albeit different kinds of rape, but the premise of rape as a weapon is still prevalent in both human and vampire parties. While Dracula forces women to drink his blood, the "Army of Light" forcibly stakes female vampires in an evocative and gruesome manner that is reminiscent of rape. Arthur Holmwood must be the one to stake his fiancée Lucy Westenra because she belongs to him as a possession. Arthur's redemptive rape of Lucy Westenra reads as follows: "He struck with all his might.... Lucy's body shook... and twisted in wild contortions; but Arthur never faltered. He looked like the figure of Thor... driving deeper and deeper the mercy bearing stake whilst the blood...welled and spurted up" (Stoker 192). Because Arthur is justified by religion, it is possible to argue that this scene is not a representation of rape, however, when considering the phallic symbolism, the stake is identified as an erect penis within this scene. Arthur is literally driving his "stake" into Lucy's unwilling body. After Arthur drives the "stake" through her, Lucy's head is then cut off, and her mouth is stuffed with garlic (193). Lucy Westenra has been effectively raped, rendered incapable of aspirations, and silenced. This violation restores her as a Christian Victorian woman. The "Army of Light" and Dracula both utilize rape as a

weapon. The Victorian gentlemen “rape” or perform a type of spiritual cleansing when staking women, while Dracula “rapes” women when forcing them to feed on his blood against their will. In either case, the abuse of women is a direct effect of the “Army of Light’s” declarations of war against Dracula due to the religious moral binaries that justify their antagonism against Count Dracula.

Unlike the blood feud bubbling in *Dracula*, Smith’s *Secret Vampire* limits the opportunity for humans to declare war due to the naturalization of vampires. There exists animosity between humans and vampires, but it is not rooted in religious dichotomies that support manipulation of a woman’s sexuality. Poppy North is confronted with a pancreatic cancer diagnosis and panics only to find comfort in her friend James Rasmussen (14). James is so overcome with despair at the thought of losing Poppy forever that he risks his family and life to transform her into a vampire. Despite the risks involved, James is careful to make Poppy aware that becoming a vampire is her choice. When Poppy claims that she “can’t be—like that,” while referring to vampirism, James responds “Then you’re going to die. You don’t have any other choice ... What it comes down to is: Do you want to live or not?” (63). Poppy can choose to let death overtake her or she can rally for one more chance at life by becoming a vampire. By giving Poppy a choice, James does not commit rape by forcing her to feed on his blood. Whereas Dracula decides to seize both Mina’s hands and force his blood into her mouth by suffocation, James embraces Poppy and their experience is sensual and welcoming. Poppy explains, as she consumes James’s blood, “She had never been so close to anybody. It was as if they were ... but

partners in a dance" (67). Poppy claims they are "partners in a dance" because James is leading her, but Poppy persists for the eventual joy she will gain.

Despite the beauty that is forged between James and Poppy, the threat of war lingers. Even without the justification of religious doctrine, the threat that Poppy's brother Phillip perceives is of a sexually exploitative nature. Phillip is face to face with the impending loss Death brings, "Phil was clearly in a mood to see everything in the world as a threat to his sister" (34). Disease creates vulnerability in Phillip. Phil believes James is trying to persuade Poppy to engage in sexual escapades. Phil rather angrily announces he does not trust James, "Because I know you. You and your-girlfriends ... You go through six or seven a year—and when you're through with them, you dump them like trash" (36). Phil misunderstands James and Poppy's relationship and the benefits that Poppy can gain simply because he is ignorant that vampires exist, and that James is a vampire. Phil, at this point, assumes that James is another human attempting to have intercourse with Poppy; in reality, James needs several blood donors because he must avoid creating intimate bonds with his female donors (36). Such intimacy is dangerous because if vampires fall in love with humans they must reveal themselves to maintain the intimacy within the relationship. In other words, to create intimacy every barrier, wall, or mental smokescreen must be dropped from a vampire's mind to allow rapport where thoughts can pass freely between two people. Intimacy is banned because the knowledge of vampires, witches, and werewolves allows humans to identify the supernatural "Other" as an enemy and declare war on the Night people. James explains "None of the Night People could fall in love with a human. The sentence for

breaking the law was death" (16). War is defined not only by the threat that vampires pose to humans, but also the threat that humans pose to vampires. To avoid war, the Night people swear to secrecy. When James reveals himself to Poppy and Phil, he breaks the law that has been established to protect himself and his people. Phil, as a potential substitute for the "Army of Light," declares: "You're wrong. You shouldn't exist" (109). Phil equates humans with nature, and vampires with the supernatural or unnatural. By his statement "You're wrong" when referring to James's existence as a vampire, Phil implies that humans are the only humanoid species that should exist on the Earth. His beliefs are reminiscent of the "Army of Light"; however, his convictions lack the religious connotations that would justify James's assassination. The naturalization of vampires explains that vampires are not all-powerful beings and are not damned; and perhaps like Zanger argues, this approach might be a kind of "entropic reductivism," but it also provides an attempt to transform the way humans comprehend vampirism. After Poppy is transformed and Phil deliberates over his sister's and James's condition, he announces "you're part of Nature and Nature just is what it is" (238-39). Phil might not like that he is vulnerable as a form of sustenance, yet he concludes that if vampires exist within the realm of Nature, they must be natural, and therefore the supernatural is not something he must dedicate himself to eradicating at all costs. Damnation is not to be questioned because it is not a threat. There is no God to cast out the vampire, as unnatural servants of Satan. The spiritual ramifications of the Victorian war evaporate in the face of naturalization.

In the place of religious moral binaries, the physical and social realities of going to war with the Night World as a secret organization become prominent. Phil unknowingly commits a declaration of war in an attempt to blackmail James into agreeing that he will never visit Poppy again; as a result, James is duty-bound to kill Phil because a human “actively threatening to tell about the Night World had to die immediately, no questions asked, no mercy given” (55). Here, James and Phillip are not attempting to engage in war because of dependence on religious moral binaries, which might consider Poppy’s opportunity to become a vampire as bloodthirsty exogamy. Instead, James and Phil will go to war because Phil has jeopardized the safety of Night people across America. Humans are a threat to Night people because of the construction of the evil, conspicuous “Other.” In *Secret Vampire*, humans are identified as “prey,” but they are also hunters that will destroy any being that cannot be categorized as subordinate, non-lethal, or normal. Vampires are unnatural because they threaten the absolute control that humans maintain. Hence, Phil is appalled at the idea of allowing his sister to be transformed. In Phil’s mind, humanity is associated with purity and compassion, and vampirism with savagery and cannibalism. Phil argues against vampires “because people weren’t meant to ... feed ... on other people” (53). Phil does not want his sister to be a cannibal, which is perhaps the closest a human being could get to vampirism, as a supernatural phenomenon. Yet Phil constructs his disapproval within a naturalized discourse, not a religious one. If his perspective were strictly religious, Phil would argue, like the “Army of Light,” that vampires are a spiritual threat and deserve a stake through the heart to end their demonic reign. Since war is shaped by a naturalized discourse,

James is able to convince Phil that vampires have the *right* to exist, thus narrowly avoiding a catastrophic end for himself and Poppy.

There's Life in the Blood, Don't Drink it

The spiritual and physical ramifications of blood are also affected by discourses. A vampire's influence over a person is possible through the manipulation of a person's etheric body or soul. As a significant fluid, blood is tied to a human's ethereal body (Steiner 1). As a result, when vampires transform a human being into their likeness, that human cannot be absolved of their sins because they are contaminated by an unrepentant vampire. From a scientific standpoint, blood contains white and red blood cells with functions including fighting foreign bacteria and viruses, while carrying oxygen throughout our bodies. It is the process of respiration that allows our circulatory system to engage in absorbing oxygen in order to maintain active brains; oxygen keeps us alive. Dr. Minor suggests that this process has spiritual implications: "the etheric body is said to be in immediate contact with the physical body, to sustain it and connect it with 'higher' bodies" (qtd. Steiner 1). Our blood allows us to breathe, and our breath is a manifestation of the connection between our ethereal bodies and our physical inhabitations. In other words, the "breath of life" that is given to Adam, according to religious doctrine is both the respiratory system and spirit that brings beings to life. The passage indicating such etheric ties reads: "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living

soul" (Gen. 2:7). The "breath of life" is both oxygen and a spirit or ethereal body that creates what Steiner acknowledges as a person's aura or soul.

The significance of ethereal ties in blood implies a great reverence for blood, emphasized, for instance, in Leviticus 17:13-14: "For as for the life of all flesh, its blood is identified with its life. Therefore I said to the Son of Israel, 'You are not to eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off.'" Consumption of blood is abhorred because the blood is life, thus a human being's essence becomes a vampire's sustenance. Damnation is necessary for vampires because Dracula converts humans without the power to restore their souls through the spilling of blood as sacrificial lambs. In other words, Dracula is not Christ. A vampire then sacrifices other humans to feed his own pleasure and power. Dracula notably claims to the "Army of Light": "you and others shall yet be mine, my creatures to do my bidding and to be my jackals when I want to feed" (Stoker 295). Dracula acknowledges the cycle that he initiated by consuming first Lucy Westenra's life, then Mina Harker's, and through them that of their partners. Dracula seeks to build a connection with these men that causes for them to become subordinate to him. Dr. Minor infers "he who gains power over a man's blood gains power over the man" (qtd. Steiner 1). For example, when selling his soul to Satan all that is necessary of Faustus is one drop of blood (Marlowe 14). Vampirism, within a religious context, inspires the manipulation of a human's metaphysical state. Such destruction is Lucifer's desire, and by way of association, becomes Dracula's desire as well. Van Helsing alludes to Dracula's inclination to consume all vestiges of life with a similar ardor as the Prince of Hell himself. Blood is a sacred fluid with

ethereal ties to a human's life force. Consuming a person's blood inherently results in the consumption of the person. An example of the ethereal component of blood is apparent within the Japanese manga *Helsing*, where the head vampire Alucard consistently peruses the essences of individuals he has fed on in the past (Hirano). Consuming a person's blood allows the vampire to have untold influence over humans, even before they have been completely transformed. Foucault discusses precisely this influence when expounding upon the Devil's ability to enter and utilize the bodies of women through demonic possession. Foucault suggests, "In possession, there is an invasion ... a habitat, residence, and impregnation" (208). In Mina Harker's case, if Dracula is of the devil, then his internal influence is identifiable by the power he wields over her blood. Mina is able to be restored because her freedom is bought when Dracula is staked through the heart, thus there exists no contract between Mina and Dracula. Mina Harker is simply a means of habitation and impregnation, as Foucault suggests. Jonathan Harker exclaims that his wife Mina is "tainted with the devil's illness," and associates the Count's castle with that of an impregnated beast: "that awful den of hellish infamy ... with the very moonlight alive with grisly shapes, and every speck of dust that whirls in the wind a devouring monster in embryo" (396). As a woman, Mina bears her womb in the same way that a house might be habitable. Mina's body is inhabited by Dracula for his use. Dracula and Mina are tied to one another in an etheric bond. Mina is not literally pregnant with a vampire child, rather she is the vampire child, who has been both mothered and fathered by Dracula. Her entire body is the womb that

nurtures the “devouring monster in embryo” or the vampire that Mina will become. All of this is made possible by the unholy consumption of blood by vampires.

Secret Vampire operates in a naturalized discourse, which regulates vampirism. The etheric value of blood still exists; however, it is not exploited in the same manner as Dracula manipulates Mina Harker’s blood. As James explains, vampire blood destroys hemoglobin and thereby causes difficulties in a vampire’s ability to carry oxygen throughout the circulatory system, and justifies why vampires must feed. Vampires do not feed to feast on the ethereal lifelines of other humans. Vampires feed simply to provide enough oxygen to their systems (Smith 127). It is for this reason that young vampires are taught to “block” or shield their minds from the ethereal essence of the human being they are feeding on. By doing so, a vampire is able to stave off the intense, intimate relationship that is developed when two human beings share their ethereal selves with one another. Due to this connection, Poppy becomes aware of James’s perspective of her as “a sylph—with a core of pure steel” (68). Because of the absence of God and religion, James is provided with an opportunity that is not available to Dracula. James is able to forfeit his fear and demonstrate the purity of binding his ethereal body to Poppy’s. In conjunction, Poppy’s experience is not one of being possessed and impregnated like Mina Harker. Poppy explains:

she could sense James’s mind. His thoughts—and his feelings. His emotions flowed into her, through her. Tenderness ... concern ... caring. A cold black rage at the disease that was threatening her. And longing—longing to share with her, to make her happy” (67)

Dracula is not afforded his self-identity, nor is he perceived to be anything less than a demonic monster. James’s true nature of sincerity and compassion is perceived by

Poppy because she was able to interact with James's ethereal body. A naturalized discourse of vampirism allows Poppy and James to share a bond that cannot be experienced by Dracula and Mina, though etheric bonds are present in traditional Gothic literature. However present etheric bonds might be in literature, religious contexts dictate the understanding of a vampire's blood, and in essence, a vampire's most private self.

The far-reaching influence of Christianity for the self-identity and perception of vampires and their human protagonists is not limited to one aspect of a vampire's life. Dracula and James's persons, partners, and ways of living are affected by religious binaries, or the lack thereof. Christians must denounce vampires because of their literature. Their scriptures make Dracula's murder necessary. However, once God is removed, a dynamic shift within the humans-vampire relationship occurs. James is an altruist, Dracula a sadistic opportunist. The distinction is made through social norms, not personality. Both have similar melancholic demeanors, but James exists in a naturalized discourse, while Dracula exists within a religious one. How might Dracula's tale have ended if the Count were allowed to define himself instead of being established by his enemies? One cannot say. The winners write history.

Religion fosters great harm within early vampire texts. Since "group identity is a manifestation of the individual identity" (Seul 556) and each character has internalized religious doctrine, Dracula becomes an abomination threatening stability within Gothic traditional texts. By examining the effect religion has on group perception, it can be understood that vampirism, damnation, and Dracula's

inability to love hinders a vampire's opportunity to form relationships. Kilp believes moral binaries are a result of social constructions (204), and "social ideas are convincing not because of their logical content, but to the extent that other individuals and groups follow these ideas" (201). Religion may support positive self-concept; however, moral binaries often stimulate prejudiced behaviors resulting in the destruction of ostracized individuals, like Dracula. Religion itself is not evil, and nor are the people that practice it, but "the more the 'Other' is demonized, the less critically the ... present actions and behaviors of' religious persons are examined for injustice (204). It should be considered an injustice when perceptions are valued without allowing individuals to define their self-identities. Religious binaries justify the roles of "good" and "evil" with age-old dogma. Perhaps it is best we no longer rely on religious dichotomies and allow people to define themselves and their relationships. If social ideas are convincing because communities practice internalization, then the reduction of dependence on religious binaries should be employed to prevent the further isolation and extermination of the constructed "Other."

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