

**Queer Interpretations and Identifications of The Picture of Dorian Gray, Dracula, and
Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde**

by

Tristan Oscar Smith

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of MA by Research in English Literature

April 2022

Copyright Statement

The following notes on copyright and the ownership of intellectual property rights must be included as written below:

- I. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/ or schedules to this thesis) owns any copyright in it (the “Copyright”) and s/he has given The University of Huddersfield the right to use such Copyright for any administrative, promotional, educational and/or teaching purposes.
- II. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts, may be made only in accordance with the regulations of the University Library. Details of these regulations may be obtained from the Librarian. Details of these regulations may be obtained from the Librarian. This page must form part of any such copies made.
- III. The ownership of any patents, designs, trademarks and any and all other intellectual property rights except for the Copyright (the “Intellectual Property Rights”) and any reproductions of copyright works, for example graphs and tables (“Reproductions”), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property Rights and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property Rights and/or Reproductions.

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my thanks to Dr Merrick Burrow for his support and guidance as my supervisor for this project. I would also like to thank Dr David Rudrum for offering both advice and perspective when I encountered difficulties and stalling blocks during this research. Finally, I would like to thank Siobhan Haimé for her support during the writing process and her willingness to honestly answer the question of ‘does this make sense?’.

Abstract

Though fin de siècle texts were some of the first to be examined through a queer lens in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's seminal book *Between Men*, the almost four decades since have not exhausted the conversation surrounding them. As media and literary representations of marginalised groups remain a subject of conversation and these late Victorian texts continue to enjoy cultural ubiquity, this warrants a discussion of not returning to the fin de siècle, but of reading it in our contemporary contexts. In this thesis, I will therefore examine the ways in which *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and *Dracula* can be read as queer texts by LGBTQ+ readers in the twenty-first century. By applying reader response and presentist theories to these readings and the justifications behind them, I examine subtextual and contextual elements of the three texts. This includes how relationships between men and the Gothic ideas of transformation and the Other within the text and associations in the readers' minds lead to these queer readings. I propose that queer reading is an umbrella term which can be divided into two distinct but coexisting categories: interpretation and identification. To demonstrate this, I will provide examples of each type of reading from each of the texts, including existing analysis around homosexual and bisexual readings as well as further analyses and some investigation into transgender readings. Through this, I will show not only that the way queer readings are discussed can be more specific, but that there are still underexplored elements when it comes to queer readings of these texts.

Contents

Introduction	6
Chapter One: Queer Readings	20
What is Queer?	20
Interpretive Communities and Schemas	25
Presentism	33
Queer Interpretations and Queer Identifications	36
Chapter Two: Queer Interpretations	38
The Picture of Dorian Gray	38
Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde	47
Dracula	56
Chapter Three: Queer Identifications	67
The Queer Author	69
Homosocial Relationships	81
Demonisation and Monstrosity	85
Social Exclusion and Secret Lives	95
Conclusion	101
References	103

Introduction

With the release of the BBC adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in late 2020, there were two types of reactions to the portrayals of sexuality in the series. The first found it shocking and in some cases even distasteful that the Count could be portrayed as anything other than entirely, indisputably heterosexual and cisgender (or, in a more succinct term which I will later discuss in more depth and will use throughout this thesis, anything queer). In their eyes, the BBC was doing a disservice to Stoker's original text (Miller, 2020). The second not only welcomed it, but – to quote one commenter – were of the belief that he 'has always been bisexual' (Bell, 2020).

This is not the only BBC adaptation of fin de siècle literature which has been discussed in these terms. Their adaptation of Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* stories – coincidentally produced by the same writers as the *Dracula* series – has been at the centre of discussions around queer readings and the ways in which queer people engage with these stories, both in adaptations and in relation to the original texts (McDermott, 2021; Clausson, 2020; Ross, 2019; Anselmo, 2018).

Moving beyond the base level of homophobia which motivates negative reactions to adaptations of previously existing texts that feature queer characters, these reactions raise the question of how these readings diverge so dramatically? While it is impossible to know without doubt the sexual orientations and gender identities of all those commenters discussing the BBC's *Dracula* in my first example, the trend seems to lean towards self-described queer outlets and

non-cisgender, non-heterosexual viewers (that is to say, queer viewers) occupying the latter group (Slyter, 2021; Megarry, 2020). Why and how do queer individuals formulate queer readings of texts like *Dracula*?

In this thesis, I focus on the original *Dracula* and on two other contemporaneous texts from the fin de siècle which have a strong body of queer readings behind them: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. I investigate the numerous justifications which can be provided for these queer readings in the twenty-first century both by examining existing scholarship and by providing additional justifications, particularly around transgender identity where relevant. Although the term ‘queer’ is used throughout, queer theory as an academic field is secondary to the use of reader response and presentist theory; the reasoning for this is explored in Chapter One, in which I elucidate on and critique the field.

I have chosen these three texts based on three main factors which make them ideal candidates to demonstrate the types of queer readings. The first factor which I will address here is the firm foundation of existing scholarship and discussions surrounding queerness in relation to them. While I will not address every scholar who has investigated these texts as queer, gay, bisexual, or otherwise LGBTQ+, I will examine a mix of the frequently cited originators of these readings in academia and those continuing and developing these readings today.

To begin with, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s works are instrumental not just in queer theory but also in understanding *The Picture of Dorian Gray* particularly as a queer text. She writes that ‘the triangular relationship of Basil, Dorian, and Lord Henry makes sense only in homosexual

terms' (1985, p.176), and remarks that the text is 'a perfect rhetorical distillation of the open secret, the glass closet, shaped by the conjunction of an extravagance of deniability and an extravagance of flamboyant display' (1990, p.165). As one of the founders of queer theory as a field, it is crucial to note how much time Sedgwick spends discussing Wilde and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* specifically across her body of work. In her words, 'parts of Dorian Gray were, or were used as, a handbook of gay style and behaviour' (1985, p.95). It is no wonder, then, that it is a text which is practically synonymous with queer readings and literature.

Interest in and discussion around *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and queer sexuality is still occurring well into the twenty-first century, which indicates not just a strong foundation, but that there is plenty of space to expand upon her work. In a 2014 article for *The Gay and Lesbian Review*, Michael Hattersley writes that 'Dorian may well have been as far "out" as any literary figure could be at the time, making Wilde's novel the gayest to date'. This is a bold claim and one which the article does not support with detailed textual analysis. However, he is by no means the only person to comment on the 'outness' of Dorian Gray, with multiple scholars contributing significantly to twenty-first-century academic discourse around the topic. Denton (2012) focuses specifically on Dorian Gray as a bisexual figure, which influences my own decision to use 'queer' and 'gay' over 'homosexual'. Whether his interpretation of Dorian as a solidly bisexual figure holds more merit than reading him as a homosexual figure who maintains a front of heterosexuality either due to internalised heteronormativity or to avoid persecution is unclear, but both perspectives can agree that Dorian Gray is a queer character.

Unlike Denton, Rohy (2014) and Sanna (2012) read Dorian as homosexual. In both Sanna and Rohy's analysis, Dorian is both out and not out, reproducing the concepts which Sedgwick developed in *Epistemology of the Closet* that posit the closet as more complex than a simple binary of 'out' vs 'not out'. Rohy sees influence as 'caus[ing] something not called, but fully legible as, homosexuality' (pp.56-57), and writes of the queer readings of the novel:

Each reader attempts to register his recognition of sexual impropriety while unable to declare, and thus decisively to condemn, the nature of that transgression. In 1964, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart famously asserted that even if he could not define "hard-core" pornography, "I know it when I see it," and much the same logic is at work in readers' responses to Dorian Gray, whether past or present, appalled or approving.
(p.65)

Sanna does not just see the ability to locate and define homosexuality in Dorian alone, however; he writes that 'Dorian is not the only character in the text that could be interpreted as homosexual. In fact, the fascination he inspires in other males is repeatedly stressed throughout the narrative and thus possibly assumes a homoerotic characterization' (p.31) and on the homosexuality of Basil Hallward. Analysis of Basil as a queer character is expanded on by Alley (2009). He identifies Hallward as the 'principal hero' of the novel, despite the fact he appears comparatively less than both Dorian and Lord Henry. He positions Basil's experience of love and longing and death as an Aristotelean or Shakespearean tragedy which places him into a sympathetic role. In his eyes, Basil is what allows the text to be an 'impassioned affirmation of homoerotic love and its healthy potential since such love comprises the interior theatre for a compelling tragic drama'. He challenges the traditional notions of the central conflict in the novel, stating that 'the problem is not with homosexuality itself', as can potentially be seen as the

case if the dimension of sexuality is only analysed in relation to Dorian. This point is an important one to consider, as is his point that Basil is primarily good. His article is strong in its analysis of Basil Hallward and produces some interesting points surrounding Dorian and internalised homophobia. However, the article was never meant to be an analysis of the queerness of the whole text, nor even every aspect of Basil's queerness.

Similarly, Sanna points to the 'silence' of homosexuality within the narrative of not just *The Picture of Dorian Gray* but also *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. This is a particularly poignant turn of phrase when it comes to assessing homosexuality as a simultaneously ever-presence yet unmentioned theme, and one which harkens back to Sedgwick's theories surrounding the glass closet, in which queerness is evident but still unspoken. Though the characters are not explicitly and fully openly queer, their queerness is not so much concealed as it is ignored. But while silence and homosexuality remain intertwined, he nonetheless claims that 'homosexuality is not silenced in these narratives; rather it is given a voice and therefore manages to make, though indirectly, its demand for recognition' (p.37). The function of silence in these texts is consistent; it pervades the actions of the protagonist and the lives of his acquaintances. The fact that both Dorian and Jekyll are, as he says, 'very concerned with the judgement or condemnation that could be given by contemporary culture and law, precisely as in the case of many late-Victorian homosexuals' (p.25) only compounds this reading.

Perhaps a better concept than 'silence' is that of Davis's 'circumnarration' (2013), a term which she applies to reading *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. She defines the term as 'a narrative act

that functions alongside disnarration and unnarration as part of the unnarratable' (p.199). On this topic, she writes:

Most of the circumnarration in the text is in the form of coded representations of homoerotic desire that permeate the novel. Dorian's name itself is a veiled reference to Greek culture; the little yellow book that Lord Henry gives Dorian is an allusion to French Decadent writing, which is also connected to homosexuality; and Dorian and Lord Henry rent a house in Algiers, "a vacation place frequented by British homosexuals" (Frankel 10). The attempt to successfully circumnarrate homoerotic desire—which would be accomplished if the desire is sufficiently present to be decodable without losing narrative authority—can be clearly seen in the novel's publication history. (p.213)

The distinction here comes in 'should' versus 'is'. Or, in Sanna's words, '[homosexuality] was a subject that should not have been mentioned because it was not officially recognized as part of the status quo, because it was seen as both immoral and unlawful' (p.28). In this context, the moments of silence within the narrative should not speak according to Victorian social codes, yet they still do, and what they speak is a representation of queer lives and desires.

However, when it comes to *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Hall (2003) remarks, 'Jekyll's silence does not "repress" meaning at all, rather it proliferates possible meanings' and that it is this silence which makes the 'indescribable nature of Hyde's indulgences and pleasure-seeking is open fully to any reader's wishes or desires' (pp.136-137). Hall's understanding that a reader's wishes and desires inform these readings (I posit that schemas are relevant here, though unmentioned by Hall) is a key element of all of my arguments when it comes to why a reader might favour these interpretations. Beyond this, Hall sees *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr*

Hyde as a queer text due to the way in which it ‘unsettles thoroughly any facile notion that any of us is any one thing, solely and forever’ (p.133).

Arguably the most influential piece on the queerness of this text, however, is Elaine Showalter’s *Dr Jekyll’s Closet* (1999). She names Stevenson ‘the fin-de-siècle laureate of the double life’ (p.2) and goes on to situate the ideas of double lives and Stevenson’s metaphors within the context of fin-de-siècle homosexuality. This is not to say that she was the first to discuss this, though. Over a decade before, Koestenbaum (1988) wrote that *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is a clear example of what he terms ‘bachelor literature’ with a strong focus on relationships between men. He identifies the text in the context of the Labouchere Amendment, which became law shortly before the novella was written, and the ways in which this affected the lives that fin-de-siècle queer men lived. Though this reading focuses on a more historical element, the ideas which it raises remain relevant even in presentist and reader-response analysis.

More recently, Corlett (2018) has also contributed to this discussion, indicating a level of ongoing interest and further insights to be made. Corlett is able to situate the text within our current understandings of both internalised and systemic homophobia and the dangers of both, although does not go into particularly deep detail. This is something which I aim to do here, by analysing and providing specific examples of the ways in which the text can be read as queer to a twenty-first-century reader.

Of those writing about queer readings of *Dracula*, the final text in my trio of fin de siècle literature, there are few writers cited as frequently as Talia Schaffer (1994). She covers both types of queer reading – interpretation and identification – though she does not differentiate between them as different forms of reading. Schaffer traces the links between Wilde and Stoker’s lives and works, with particular references to the similarities between media portrayals of Wilde as a queer villain and *Dracula* (pp.398-399), and how ‘images, themes, and even phrases from Wilde’s trial reappear in the horror novel, barely disguised’ (p.405). She acknowledges and deftly dissects the contradictions of desire/disgust and anxieties surrounding queerness present in both *Dracula* and Stoker’s wider fiction and non-fiction writings,

Like Schaffer, Christopher Craft has also played a significant role in shaping discussion around *Dracula* and queerness. The term ‘inversion’ in the title of his 1984 essay on the topic does not solely cover that which would be meant by the fin de siècle term ‘invert’, but there is still a significant level of critical analysis that would relate to queerness. His discussions around triangulated desire, metaphors around blood and penetration, and anxieties around otherness and gender and sexual boundaries have formed a solid foundation for discussions of the homoeroticism of *Dracula*, both the text and the titular character.

Similarly, Reyes (2017) investigates homoerotic readings of the text. His work brings the concepts that Craft (and Schaffer, although Reyes does not reference her directly) discuss into a central discursive position. He describes Dracula as ‘the most sexually fluid of vampires, speaking his desire for Harker, yet potentially harbouring other desires for the women he preys upon’ (p.133). His assessment of *Dracula* as a queer text is not exclusive to representations of

gender and sexuality as he considers queerness ‘a more open and non-specific non-heteronormative form of desire and identity’ (p.125), encompassing anything outside of the ‘mainstream’. His analysis continues a tradition established by the aforementioned critics, finding queerness primarily in Dracula himself and other characters reactions to and interactions with him. He places some limitations on the study, claiming that a truly unpathologised queer reading of *Dracula* is not possible ‘without uprooting the text from its late Victorian context’ (p.130), but this is where I find a presentist approach valuable. When melding writer and reader contexts, we are able to achieve a more nuanced viewpoint which allows for the greater variety of reading strategies and is not limited by attempts to historicise. We should not be limited by fin de siècle understandings of queerness, but equally are not required to disregard them if they feel useful or relevant to our reading strategies, or if they exist within our preconceived schemas. In this approach, we can acknowledge the pathologization without dwelling on or being constrained by it; we can recognise that as a product of the time while simultaneously bringing the queerness into our own cultural moment, allowing for a more positive reading. In this instance, we can recognise that pathologization was the socially safest form of investigating any form of queerness for the era while using our own, more accepting moment to examine potentials and subtexts which may have been inaccessible or unacceptable at the time.

But if we are to truly look at reader responses, we cannot limit ourselves solely to the work of academics. This area is harder to examine as the responses are less accessible, but there are nonetheless avenues of possibility to determine non-academic interests and engagement. For instance, the self-described LGBT+ bookshop The Bookish Type sells no fewer than four different editions of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* on their online shop as of March 2021, the most

editions of any singular text which they offer (The Bookish Type, 2021). This is a commercial decision, but one which reflects a continued interest in and connection to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in twenty-first-century queer spaces. The most obvious and most discussed reasoning for this presence is subtextual: the characters are written as being as openly homosexual or bisexual as was possible for the era. Arguably more so than was possible, given the backlash which Wilde experienced even before his famous trials and his novel's use within it (Rohy, 2014). That is not to say that its representation of sexuality is the only reason that there was controversy surrounding the text, but it is a significant one.

We also see evidence of maintained queer readings of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in adaptations: a form of reader engagement outside of academia. While analysis of these adaptations themselves are out of the scope of this paper, their existence is evidence of queer readings by non-academics and therefore is relevant to note. For instance, Will Self's *Dorian: An Imitation* (2009) and the 2009 film *Dorian Gray* (Parker, 2009) both present the story as explicitly gay or bisexual.

Film and television adaptations have also done much to further the discourse surrounding *Dracula* (both the text and the character) and vampires more broadly as queer figures (see, for instance, Primuth, 2014; Tringali, 2016; Hoda, 2019; Mercurio, 2019; Bachy, 2021). Dyer (2002) writes that 'there is a line of vampire or Gothic writing that is predominantly queer/gay produced, or which at any rate forms part of a queer/gay male reading tradition' (p.71). This trend significantly contributes to a mental schema in which queer readers in the twenty-first

century are able to place or potentially place any vampire novel, but particularly *Dracula* as the vampire novel.

There are also two key examples of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* adaptations which contribute to queer – specifically transgender – readings (Baker, 1971; Price, 1995). However, these are not created by transgender individuals, which limits their usage in terms of identifying and analysing queer reader responses. That said, given that they show evidence of queer potentials, they still merit mention. This is particularly the case when openly transgender authored adaptations and scholarship are still in relative infancy.

When it comes to adaptations, there is also slightly more said on all three texts by the same critic. Benshoff (1997) has written about homosexuality and monstrosity in cinematic adaptations of these texts (among others) while Marks (2014) studies pornographic adaptations (again, among others), but neither of these scholars were comparative in their analyses and their engagements were not primarily with the source texts.

This lack of simultaneous engagement which addresses textual similarities specifically in relation to queerness as opposed to addressing the three texts in isolation provides a gap in the research which this thesis intends to fill. While this thesis will engage with adaptations when they provide insight into ways in which queer people engage with the original text, the lens will be on the adaptation as either the reader response of the creator or as a potential part of a schema for readers of the original who have also engaged with the adaptation. This is opposed to

examining the adaptations as texts themselves: the framing which Benshoff (1997) and Marks (2014) use.

This, combined with the fact that some areas still seem underexplored, is my second reasoning for selecting these texts. While each text has been explored extensively through the lens of queer readings, these tend to focus on associations contemporary to the text rather than the reading of it. For instance, Schaffer (1994) looks to the images of queerness – and Oscar Wilde’s queerness specifically – in media during the fin de siècle and the similarities which these have with Stoker’s descriptions of Dracula. Koestenbaum (1988) addresses the narrative of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* within the context of the Labouchere Amendment. Davis (2014) considers the hidden codes and symbols which may allow Dorian specifically to be read as queer through the knowledge held by Wilde’s queer contemporaries. Yet there is little consideration of how our subsequent – and particularly our current – moments may influence readings. The exception to this is the wealth of analysis which considers Dracula and the vampire more broadly in the wake of the AIDS crisis (see Gelder, 1994; Dyer, 2002; Lavigne, 2004; Bak, 2007; Primuth, 2014). Another component to consider is transgender identity; although this is much less evident in these texts than homosexual or bisexual queerness, it is by no means absent entirely. I therefore selected these texts in order to bring to light such possibilities of queer reading, although they do not feature it as a main focus and this thesis reflects that.

The third and final factor is based on the texts’ cultural ubiquity and similarities. All three of these texts occupy prominent positions in both the literary and pop culture canons and all three of them are Gothic tales from the same period in time and which deal with similar themes and

anxieties. The fact that they are well-known does not only translate to more scholarship surrounding them, but also to more engagement from readers today. This allows for a more grounded analysis in the reader responses from a presentist perspective.

Beyond this, I will be splitting the term ‘queer readings’ into two categories as opposed to a singular term; this is not something which has been done in prior scholarship but is something which adds greater nuance and specificity to the discussion. I have decided to refer to these two categories as interpretation and identification: terms which I would suggest are not inherently unique to queer readings, but which could be applied to any type of literary analysis. By interpretation, I am referring to the exploration of subtextual elements. Meanwhile by identification, I am referring to the contextual elements which may cause a text to resonate with – in this case – queer readers. To be clear, I am not opposed to surface reading as part of textual queerness, but the term ‘queer reading’ as a whole connotes a level of subjectivity and disputability. It would be tautologous to discuss, for example, queer readings of E.M. Forster’s *Maurice* or James Baldwin’s *Giovanni’s Room*; the texts are already queer. In queer readings – and specifically queer interpretations – the queerness of the text is up for interpretation. It is a potential rather than a definite thing. As McCann and Monaghan define it, queer readings are a ‘process of challenging the dominance of heterosexual representation by making hidden desires visible, making inferred relations overt, and smuggling queerness into texts that were previously thought to deny it’ (p.145). These elements may be textual, but never literal. The key difference between the two types of reading I propose is the difference between subtextual queerness and allegorical queerness. Are readers noting LGBTQ+ characters and implications, or themes and ideas which resonate and apply specifically in LGBTQ+ contexts and communities? The former

would apply to a reading of a character as implying they experience same-sex desire. The latter would apply to a story centring forbidden love in a relationship seen as taboo and unacceptable by some facets of a society being read as symbolically queer by LGBTQ+ readers. For both of these approaches, I will be applying schema theory where relevant. In this context, a schema refers to the ‘organised representations of background knowledge which readers bring to texts’ (Short, 1996, p.231). Here, the background knowledge is relating to the shared knowledge of queerness, queer symbols and indicators, and queer (sub)cultures.

Throughout this thesis, I examine the ways in which *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Dracula*, and *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* can be interpreted as queer: the ways in which subtextual elements lead to queer readings irrespective of author intentions, and identified with as queer: the ways in which contextual elements (referring to the contexts of writer, text, and/or reader) lead to queer readings.

Chapter One: Queer Readings

What is Queer?

Before any form of queer reading can be addressed, it is necessary to understand what is meant by queer. As a word with both multiple definitions and a problematic history, 'queer' is admittedly a loaded term and could initially appear to be contradictions and instability. Who or what is queer?

In the context of queer theory, definitions typically originate with theorists of the 1980s and 1990s. Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Michael Warner were especially influential in the development of this field, drawing on and developing Foucaultian concepts of sexualities. Sedgwick's work is particularly foundational to queer theory in English Literature. In an article for the New York Times in 1998, which both remarked upon and expanded the notoriety of queer studies and Sedgwick's work specifically, it is claimed that 'queer theory is entering the literary mainstream' – and that Sedgwick is responsible (Smith, 1998). The latter part of this decade was a crucial moment for the development of queer theory within literary studies and culture more broadly, and while there has been progress in the field since, this moment remains a crucial one when it comes to understanding mainstream perceptions particularly. Through this article, Smith furthers this mainstreaming of queer theory by featuring her in this paper, which was prolific enough to earn \$2.8million in revenue in 1998 (The New York Times Company, 2001). While the mainstreaming of academic concepts like queer theory and, in more recent discussions, critical race theory, is out of the scope of this specific paper, it is

still notable as part of how Sedgwick's queer theories became increasingly well-known during the 1990s, and increasingly part of the discussion around defining queerness.

Sedgwick defines queer as 'same-sex sexual object choice, lesbian or gay, whether or not it is organized around multiple criss-crossings of definitional line' and as 'the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone's gender, of anyone's sexuality aren't made (or can't be made) to signify monolithically' (1993, pp.7-8). Queer, in her work, is primarily focused on sexuality and on the continuum between heterosexual and homosexual.

To look at queer theory more broadly and in more current discourse, I will refer to McCann and Monaghan (2020) and to Nichols (2020). The former reflect upon the history of the field, making reference to foundational theorists like the aforementioned Sedgwick, Jagose, Foucault, Hall, and Butler, the current debates and discussions (particularly surrounding intersectionality), and the potential futures of queer theory. The latter, meanwhile, redirects and reconsiders the idea of 'difference' which remains central to queer theory as a whole, offering a contemporary critique of the field from an LGBTQ+ perspective. To McCann and Monaghan, it is 'antithetical to the spirit of the theory to tie it down to a single meaning' but they nonetheless define queer theory by its ability to 'challenge, interrogate, destabilise and subvert' (p.1). They posit that 'queer theory now means much more than a focus on "same-sex" desire, pushing beyond the concept of identity itself' (p.4). In other terms, it includes concepts and ways of being far beyond those which come under the umbrella of sex, gender, and sexuality to encompass all that can be non-normative or non-assimilationist. Though they offer some critique of this, they

posit that ‘it offers a substantial means of expanding the purview of queer theory as it pushes beyond sexuality and the limits of identity more broadly’ (p.5).

Nichols describes queer theory as ‘arguably the most prestigious framework for scholarly understanding of non-heterosexual desire and culture in Anglophone academia’ (2020, p.2). Yet he problematises the field through examining the rejections of sameness and associated traits which make up ‘a paradoxical gay-aversiveness’ in the field (p.22). He asks the question of what, precisely, queer theory’s investments are and whether the field should be more ‘interested in all the manifold ways of living, of giving expression and form to, non-heterosexual existence, even as this may conflict with the imperatives of that field as it is currently imagined’ (p.26). In other terms, is this widened remit a positive one for gay people?

Criticism of queer theory from LGBTQ+ people is not a new one; du Plessis (1996) critiques the field for too often making bisexuals and bisexuality ‘invisible, trivial, insubstantial, irrelevant’ (p.21) and ‘treat[ing] bisexuality and transsexuality quite shabbily’ (p.32) through the tendency to prioritise homosexuality over other categories, even while claiming to push back against categorisation. The problem is not with ‘queer’ as a word itself, however, but with the way that it is deployed and by whom. For instance, when ‘queer’ is treated as synonymous with ‘lesbian and gay’ or as a framework that places ‘bisexuality’ as the name of the continuum between heterosexual and homosexual as opposed to a concept and identity in its own right, by ‘monosexual non-transgenders that pontificate so comfortably about themselves as the sole arbiters of “queerness”’ (p.38). He cites bisexual activists Robyn Ochs and Pam Ellis as saying ‘categorizing all sexual behavior [sic] which cannot be categorized as heterosexual as ‘lesbian

and gay' is an oppressive act in language', and further emphasises that this is 'oppressive in more than just language, just as language is always more than "just" language' (pp.23-24). This remains the case even when the categorisation is less overt, as in the cases in which 'queer' is said and 'lesbian and gay' is implied.

Though using terminology like Sinfield's 'same-sex passion' (1994, p.3) would technically be a subsumption of all non-heterosexuality into 'lesbian and gay', it does still see bisexuality through its proximity to homosexuality. In his work, the fact that terms like 'queer' (and indeed 'homosexual' and 'gay') did not exist or were not widespread in the vast majority of the historical moments which he addresses contributes to this linguistic choice, but the focus is still on a very binary understanding of sexual identity and behaviour, a same-sex/opposite-sex dichotomy. To avoid this, 'queer' remains the best terminology - provided the same subsumption is consciously avoided. Part of Sinfield's terminological decision was made due to the aforementioned historical dimension, and I would be remiss not to mention this. He does not ignore presentist concerns, but the historical perspective remains more central to his scholarship, However, I will be leaning more towards the more presentist approach employed by Felski (2015), in which historicism is not ignored but is not as prominent. As she says, 'standard ways of thinking about historical contexts are unable to explain how works of art move across time' (p.154). As said works of art move into a moment where 'queer' is the established and most relevant terminology, the fact that this was not always the case does not negate that this is the terminology of the twenty-first century. We are reading – interpreting and identifying with texts – in our own moment and with the linguistic conventions associated with it.

In our moment, Kolker et al. (2020) argue that ‘queer has become more commonplace in modern media and television as well as being more readily adopted by LGBTQ organizations [. . .] as an umbrella term to describe non-cisgender and non-heterosexual individuals or those outside of traditional gender roles or sexual binaries’ (p.1340). It is not just solely LGBTQ organisations that use this terminology, however; the website for US-based healthcare charity Planned Parenthood (n.d.) defines ‘queer’ thusly:

Queer is a word that describes sexual and gender identities other than straight and cisgender. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people may all identify with the word queer. Queer is sometimes used to express that sexuality and gender can be complicated, change over time, and might not fit neatly into either/or identities, like male or female, gay or straight.

These definitions are not dissimilar to those used by the aforementioned queer theorists (including foundational theorists like Jagose and Sedgwick), although arguably do more to destabilise rigid binaries by not focusing solely on proximity to homosexuality or heterosexuality, and instead acknowledge the multiple dimensions of sexuality and gender identity. This is why, despite the criticisms of queer theory as a field, I will continue to use queer as a term and engage in critical queer readings.

The definition of queerness as ‘sexual and gender identities other than straight and cisgender’ is the most succinct and accurate form for my purposes. I use queer and queerness as an umbrella term - that is to say, as an overarching label that encompasses other labels, including but not limited to ‘lesbian’ and ‘gay’, as well as labels like ‘bisexual’ and ‘transgender’. By

using queer as opposed to one of these more specific terms, the possibility for any one of these – or another label entirely – remains open.

That said, there are instances in which ‘queer’ is vaguer than necessary and it becomes useful to be more precise with language: to use ‘gay’, ‘bisexual’, or ‘transgender’, for instance. This is not counter to my decision to use the label of ‘queer’ for the most part, but instead an investigation into specific aspects of queerness as a whole.

Within this paper, I focus primarily on queer men with a secondary focus on transgender identity. This is not because these are the only or most important form of queerness but because the texts in question are heavily androcentric, featuring strong bonds between and discussions surrounding the identities of men, and that they involve pushing boundaries, including those around gender and sex. That is not to suggest that there is nothing to be said about queer women within any of these texts, simply that it is out of the scope of this paper. Beyond this, a different selection of texts would likely be more appropriate if one were to seek to discuss female queerness in and more specifically sapphic¹ readings of fin de siècle literature.

Interpretive Communities and Schemas

Doty (1993) writes that ‘unless [a] text is about queers, it seems to me the queerness of most mass culture texts is less an essential, waiting-to-be-discovered property than the result of acts of production or reception’ (p.xi). It is these acts that make up queer readings, but this does not account for how exactly this process occurs. There are two theoretical frameworks that work

¹ In this context, ‘sapphic’ meaning ‘relating to lesbian and bisexual women’ as opposed to ‘relating specifically to Sappho of Lesbos’.

together to explain how these ‘acts of production [and] reception’ take place. These frameworks are the concept of interpretive communities within reader-response theory and schema theory, which - although rooted more in linguistics, cognitive science, and education - has had some applications to literary studies (Bracher, 2013; Freundlieb, 1982; Alhassan and Omar, 2020).

To begin with: reader-response. In the Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Wilde writes that ‘it is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors’ (p.4). This is not entirely true, although it is clear why Wilde would insist as much, given the reception to the first edition of his novel. However, the subtext does – or at the very least can – act as a mirror, showing the reader both what they expect to see and a reflection of themselves and their own cultural situation. While the text must bring a significant amount to the metaphorical table, the reader does not and cannot come empty-handed. And while queer readings can be made by any reader, I have a particular interest in the ways in which queer people develop queer readings.

I look to Stanley Fish’s framework of interpretive communities in order to conceptualise the ways in which queerness informs and influences the reading of a text. Fish writes:

[M]embers of the same community will necessarily agree because they will see (and by seeing, make) everything in relation to that community's assumed purposes and goals; and conversely, members of different communities will disagree because from each of their respective positions the other “simply” cannot see what is obviously and inescapably there: This, then, is the explanation for the stability of interpretation among different readers (they belong to the same community). (2000, p.15)

I argue that queer readers are what Fish would call an ‘interpretive community’ (p.14); they share a context, or a ‘cultural situation’ as Brooks and Browne (2012) may put it. In simpler terms, being a member of a queer community creates both the capacity and the desire for textual interpretations which are rooted in queerness in ways that are less likely to be the case for cisgender, heterosexual readers.

This concept connects to that of schemas. When the text is read, it becomes situated in the existing knowledge and experiences of the reader. In this context, a schema refers to that mental framework or collection of knowledge, beliefs, and assumptions through which an individual processes and understands information (Short, 1996; An, 2013; Stockwell, 2020). Stuart and Valian (2013) identify that ‘gender schemas are hypotheses about what it means to be male or female; race and ethnicity schemas are hypotheses about what it means to be a particular race or ethnicity’ (p.80). Similarly, queer schemas are hypotheses about what it means to be queer. Stuart and Valian go on to say:

In the case of gender, men and women are similar in how they see the sexes. The content of male schemas, as we describe below, is shared by both men and women, as is the content of female schemas. That is probably a function of the fact that men and women grow up together as part of the same community. In the case of race and ethnicity, however, the groups in question sometimes make similar judgments and sometimes differ. For example, while the schemas of African Americans and Whites about Whites include some elements in common (e.g., “good at school”), they may not share others (e.g., “likely to be racist”; see also Conley, Rabinowitz, & Rabow, 2010). Similarly, African Americans and Whites do not necessarily have identical schemas about African

Americans. Studies of Hispanics and Asian Americans similarly find conflicting evidence, but there is some evidence that members of both groups internalize—to some extent—the views of themselves that Whites have of them (Jones, 2001; Pittinsky, Shih, & Ambady, 1999; Steele, 2011). (pp.82-83)

In this framework, queer schemas can be extrapolated to function in a way that falls somewhere in between gender and race and ethnicity schemas. Though queer readers do grow up in cisgender and heterosexual communities, which would suggest that schemas would be the same for all groups (as it is for gender schemas), the subsequent involvement in separate community allows for non-identical schemas between queer and cisgender heterosexual individuals.

Research has established that there are differences between LGB+ individuals and heterosexual individuals when it comes to attitudes towards sexuality (Grollman, 2017) and that LGB+ people can internalise heterosexist and homophobic ideas to some extent (Ventriglio, 2021), creating a similar experience to those outlined above of Hispanics and Asian Americans.

With regards to schemas in literary analysis, it is not solely attitudes around sexuality which becomes relevant, but the ideas of what queerness is, what it means to be queer, and what is associated with or representative of queerness. This is what allows queer readers to read subtext and implication, particularly in ways in which cisgender heterosexual readers may not. This typically comes from experiences of queer identity and communities/(sub)cultures which cisgender heterosexuals are less likely to have had.

With the ‘how’ established, it is also crucial to consider the ‘why?’ of queer readings.

Gerbner and Gross (1976) wrote on the topic of seeing oneself in fiction: ‘representation in the fictional world signifies social existence; absence means symbolic annihilation’ (p.182). Censorship, social and legal risks, and societal attitudes have led to the symbolic annihilation of queer people and queerness; queer readings can combat this. In searching for representations of oneself in the fictional world, no matter how small or debatable, the searcher refuses to acquiesce to their own symbolic annihilation. Both queer interpretations – searching for subtextual hints at the representation of the queer self – and queer identifications – searching for contextual and allegorical ways to feel understood by and understand oneself through fiction – function as mechanisms for this refusal. Queer readers become an interpretive community, their reader response situated in not only a specific schema (that of what queerness looks like) but also a form of defiance in a way that – even when engaging in queer readings – is not the case for cisgender, heterosexual readers.

Returning briefly to Doty (1993), he identifies three reasons which could lead to a text being read as queer:

(1) influences during the production of texts; (2) historically specific cultural readings and uses of texts by self-identified gays, lesbians, bisexuals, queers; and (3) adopting reception positions that can be considered "queer" in some way, regardless of a person's declared sexual and gender allegiances. (p.xi)

The second point that Doty makes here echoes the concept of interpretive communities; I would argue that the ‘specific cultural readings and uses of texts’ exist among multiple queer readers because queerness itself is a specific culture and community (Alexander, 1999).

Both 'community' and 'culture' (and the more commonly used 'subculture') are also potentially problematic terms, almost as much as queer has the potential to be. For instance, does a South African lesbian share a culture with a gay man from Mexico? Does a racist and transphobic white bisexual woman share a community with a Black transgender woman? There is no concrete yes or no answer, but it is a question that must nonetheless be considered in relation to how we use these terms. Recognition of diversity under umbrella terms does not make the terms themselves overtly problematic, but the implication regarding the extent of shared interests and experiences has the potential to erase that diversity. In the framework of 'interpretive communities', the word 'community' refers simply to a group with interpretations (or frameworks for doing so) in common as opposed to an individual. But in the sense of 'queer communities', the issue becomes more fraught, as the precise meaning of 'community' is rarely defined in such explicit terms and can exist on macro- and micro- levels. There is, for instance, often a specific lesbian community within a broader queer community, and there may even be a Black lesbian community within that (Battle and Bennett, 2005). When it comes to (queer) community and subculture, the two terms are frequently employed as fundamentally synonymous, with the decision to favour one over the other largely coming down to personal preference. Sinfield (1994) writes that he favours 'subculture' over 'community' 'partly because it doesn't have cosy, togetherness connotations' (p.206), but 'subculture' connotes a degree of shared ideas and practices which do not necessarily exist across all groups under the umbrella of queer, particularly along lines of race, gender, class, and nationality.

George Chauncey's work in this field rejects the idea of a universal singular gay experience, instead focusing on the rich expanse of 'overlapping social networks' that form a

subculture (2019, p.2). He identifies a history of not just sexual but social networks based on shared sexuality, a long-standing desire to have a sense of community in which participants are no longer forced to wear metaphorical masks to assimilate with wider heteronormative society. The emphasis on this social element, the creation of community, focused not on queer's existence in relation to cisgender heterosexuality but on queerness as its own entity, is crucial to understanding how queer communities and subcultures are formed.

Sinfield (1994) also discusses subcultural strategies and the formation of queer subcultures. He sees queer subcultures as inherently reactive, responding to the dominant culture which treats gay people as 'intolerable' (p.177). Given the ways in which 'gay men since the time of Wilde have been casting around for identity and status in a system that sets out to disqualify them from anything they attempt' (p.195), the creation and maintenance of subculture allows them the freedom that dominant culture does not. But how does it form? Like Chauncey, Sinfield sees retrospect as the only true way to identify gay subculture; that is to say that it is only once something becomes established as part of gay subculture can we know that it is part of it. He makes reference to Michael Bronski's claim that 'if gay men, as a group, decided to attend baseball games as gay men, to socialize during them as gay men, and to center a large part of their cultural interest around baseball gossip, a whole new set of stereotypes would grow up around baseball as the national gay sport' (p.197). He makes the point that much of what we associate with the Western gay subculture is born from Oscar Wilde, which draws anything linked to Wilde or in what he refers to as 'the Wildean model' as being linked with 'same-sex passion' in the same way as baseball is within the hypothetical scenario. Or, in other terms, Wilde and the Wildean model are a key part of shared schemas of what queerness looks like.

However, it is crucial that we do not see these subcultural strategies as meaning everyone shares the same interests or opinions. He makes the point that ‘subculture does not mean establishing a party line’ (p.206). It is a set of associations rather than a checklist.

That said, the term ‘subculture’ is not without its controversies. Doty (1993) objects to the positioning of queer culture as ‘subculture’ at all, insisting that ‘if mass culture remains by, for, and about straight culture, it will be so through our silences, or by our continued acquiescence to such cultural paradigms as connotation, subcultures, subcultural studies, subtexting, the closet, and other heterocentrist ploys positioning straightness as the norm’ (p.104). Doty does not address whether this is perhaps idealistic, since queer culture cannot exist fully outside of a mainstream which remains predominantly heterosexual. It also neglects to acknowledge that ‘queer culture’ is not monolithic and may be highly dependent on other factors, including class, race, nationality, etc. (see Rosenberg, 2021; Seidman, 2011; Greene, 2019). Queer culture, in this sense, is plural. It is for this reason that – with the exception of references to other theorists’ work in which the term ‘subculture’ is used – I will acknowledge both points by referring to (sub)cultures.

With this established, I return to how elements of queer (sub)cultures interact with the reading process. Once part of queer (sub)cultures, everything is seen and made in relation to the assumed purposes and goals of said (sub)cultures. Queer reading and being part of a queer interpretive community is both an ‘opt-in’ and an inescapable fact; this may seem contradictory, but in fact is an essential element of Fish’s work and cements the fact that it is in fact an interpretive community. In the example Fish (2000) uses, his class sees a list of linguists’ names

as a religious poem because they chose to take this specific class, but simultaneously do not consciously choose to approach their reading from the perspective of their interpretive community. In the case of queerness, people choose to participate in queer/LGBTQ+ (sub)cultures and to think of and describe themselves as queer, but simultaneously cannot force themselves to be cisgender and heterosexual, or to approach anything from the perspective of such.

To claim to be examining and exploring queer readings or queer people as an interpretive community but to only look at academic reader responses is to do a disservice to both academics and non-academics. Though the reader responses of academics are easier to directly discover in the form of published scholarship, it is not impossible to make deductions and form conclusions based on the ways in which non-academics publicly display their responses, often in the form of fan engagement and communities, and wider cultural discourses. These will be mentioned in places, but it is also an area for further study, particularly by those specialising in media.

Presentism

When assessing reader response, that acknowledgement of the fact that said response is occurring within the context of their present is crucial. In her essay ‘Context Stinks!’, critic Rita Felski makes the point that there are two key questions which ought to be central in literary criticism: ‘why past texts still matter and how they speak to us now’ (2015, p.156). Presentism as a method of literary theory and criticism is interested in answering these questions and understanding how literary texts are understood in the present day by ‘explicitly evoking the present concerns that motivate a desire to reread old literature’ (Egan, 2013, p.39). Similarly to

reader response theory, presentism takes the sole power of creating meaning away from the originator of the text - including the originator's contexts - and allows for the reader to take on part of this role. To prominent presentist Evelyn Gajowski, the critic is able to become a 'temporal mediator who owns up to constructing meaning' (2010, p.674); that is to say, they are able to (or more accurately, unable not to) bring their own contexts to finding meanings within texts. The use of the term 'mediator' is a significant one; conflicts (or supposed conflicts in the reader's mind) between past and present must be resolved in order for meaning to be produced. In relation to this, Felski states:

Time is not a tidy sequence of partitioned units, but a profusion of whirlpools and rapids, eddies and flows, in which objects, ideas, images and texts from different moments swirl, tumble, and collide in ever-changing combinations and constellations. (2015, p.158)

Texts exist across time, not solely in one of several, linearly organised, singular 'partitioned units', as Felski put it. Textual relevance, too, is non-linear; sales of George Orwell's dystopian novel *1984* skyrocketed in 2017 after comparisons were drawn between the comments made by members of the Trump administration and Oceania superstate featured in Orwell's novel. Advisor to then-President Donald Trump, Kellyanne Conway, using the phrase 'alternative facts' to deny that members of the administration had lied to the press, was branded as highly reminiscent of the 'newspeak' and 'doublethink' Orwell wrote about almost seventy years prior. Discussion of the book prompted the aforementioned skyrocketing sales and demand for more copies to be printed (Andrews, 2017). Though most prominent presentist work is done in the field of Shakespeare studies, the approach is highly applicable to any study of texts written in eras significantly different to our own, and even more so for those which still maintain or have developed another form of cultural significance.

Presentism as an approach is certainly not without criticism, however. John Holbo, an internationally acclaimed philosopher, writes that ‘the presentists are not ‘doing theory’, yet they are not doing anything else. There is no ‘good’ to what they are doing besides the good of theory, which is defended only on the grounds of its ‘presentness’. Yet ‘theory’ is, in fact, not present here. There is nothing to take or leave.’ (2008, pp.1102-1103). He speaks damningly of the ways in which presentism ‘has no sense unless these notions are admitted to have practical application’ (p.1098), and perhaps in some disciplines, this is true. But when it comes to fiction, the practical application of presentist analysis is much more evident. An unread book is doing nothing; it is only through the act of reading it – an action which by nature takes place in the present – that the text is anything at all. Therefore, applying presentist frameworks to the study of literature has the practical application of helping to further understandings of why texts remain relevant, what parts of society they speak to (and in what ways), and addressing the creation of meanings that occur when the text is read as opposed to solely when it is written.

Wilson (2019) remarks on six different types of presentism, but there are two of these which I find to be the most central to this work and to the field of literature. The first of these he calls ‘strategic presentism’, defined as ‘deliberately using concerns of the present to motivate our study of the past; here the present is a lens for looking at the past, which is the object of study’. The second is ‘analytical presentism: using an interpretation of the past to cultivate an interpretation of the present; here the past is a lens for looking at the present, which is the object of study’. Given the two-way process that is reading, the ‘mediation’ between past and present, both of these forms of presentist analysis are simultaneously relevant.

Queer Interpretations and Queer Identifications

Queer theorists have well established that texts can be read as queer without containing indisputable references, but the term ‘queer readings’ is one which I feel does not adequately distinguish between the types of queer readings. While previous critics (e.g. Björklund, 2018; Doty, 1997) have considered queer readings as a whole, I find it crucial to distinguish between queer interpretations and queer identifications. There is a difference between positing that situations and characters within the text are themselves queer and seeing a text which is not itself queer as in some way parallel or allegorical to queer identity. Queer interpretations are based in subtexts, queer identifications are based in contexts (those of the reader and/or the text). That is not to say that they do not overlap or interact in any way – contexts may strengthen subtexts and subtexts may allude to contexts – but the distinction is one that matters when it comes to identifying the source and reasoning behind referring to a text as queer. In making this distinction, we move beyond simply the ‘what’ and into discussing and analysing the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ of queer readings with greater nuance.

To provide examples: a view that the unnamed, socially unacceptable desires which Dr Jekyll seeks to enact are literal same-sex desire would be a queer interpretation; a view that the act of creating Mr Hyde is representative of transgender identity and internalised transphobia through the harbouring of an internal, socially ostracised self which one wishes to become yet at the same time fears would be a queer identification. A view that Basil Hallward is in love with Dorian Gray would be a queer interpretation; a view that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is a queer text because Wilde himself was queer would be a queer identification. And a view that Dracula

was sexually attracted to Jonathan Harker would be a queer interpretation; a view that it is easy for queer men specifically to relate to Dracula as being portrayed as a predator who infects the innocent with a blood-borne infection considering the demonization of queer men during and subsequent to the AIDS epidemic would be a queer identification. To treat the two as synonymous or to only view them under the overarching descriptor of 'queer reading' is to do a disservice to both forms and the differences between them. For this reason, I will address these forms of queer readings separately.

Chapter Two: Queer Interpretations

To begin with, my focus is on interpretations of the text: that is to say the readings which very literally believe the characters to be themselves queer as opposed to allegorically or based solely on presentist speculations and connections. This kind of queer reading is focused on the internal elements of the text, the content itself and what may be implied or hidden beneath the surface. I am at no point arguing that this implication or hiding must have been deliberate on the part of the author, merely that it is possible to infer or find such readings based on how queer readers particularly engage with the texts. The fundamental question addressed in this chapter is this: what is it within these texts could and does prompt queer readers to interpret the characters, situations, and relationships depicted as being queer?

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Of the texts I have selected, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is perhaps the most widely and consistently read as a queer text, to the point that queer readings of it are arguably mainstream. But what about it has prompted over a century of queer interpretations? To begin with, the worship of a youthful male body as the pinnacle of beauty and desirability. Dorian is worshipped by those around him, but also worships and fetishizes his own youth and beauty. This desirability narrative is almost auto-sexual, narcissistic in the original sense – and indeed one of the first descriptions given of Dorian is for Lord Henry to describe him as ‘a Narcissus’ (p.7). But the auto-sexual component is only applicable if Dorian is read as an autonomous person. Cohen (1987) writes that ‘Dorian Gray provides the surface on which the characters project their self-representations. His is the body on which Basil's and Lord Henry's desires are inscribed’ (p.806),

making Dorian not a queer individual, but representative of a queer act through embodying and externalising desire. He is that desire, whether it is in Basil's worship or Lord Henry's desire to influence. Both are in a way claiming Dorian as their own, albeit from different positions. If we approach this claiming with an awareness of modern sexual terminology, the power and relationship dynamics of BDSM can be applied to both Basil and Lord Henry's interactions with and desire for Dorian. Basil is emotionally dominated by Dorian and worships him, but in a way which places Dorian as an object to be possessed. Lord Henry is more directly dominant in his possession of Dorian, equally possessive but with a greater desire to mould Dorian - to 'influence' him (p.16) - into his ideal, submissive object. Dorian, in both cases, is desired as a possession, but this does not preclude being desired sexually. Those familiar with the established relationship between kink and queer sexual (sub)cultures (Kingsbury, 2021; Sprott et al., 2020) can read dynamics which they associate with queerness in the text, strengthening the association between *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and queer sexuality. The desire for and structure of these sexual roles is projected and acted out upon Dorian by both men, even with no actual sexual contact taking place.

But it is not just a purely sexual desire towards Dorian, but desire for a romantic relationship too. This is seen in both Sibyl Vane and Basil Hallward. His declaration in Chapter Nine mirrors that of Sibyl Vane in Chapter Seven, casting them as clear parallels. To Sibyl, Dorian is her 'Prince Charming' who 'freed [her] soul from prison', 'taught [her] what reality really is', and 'made [her] understand what love really is' (pp.73-74). Basil, too, is changed irreparably by Dorian. In a confession which reads as a form of love, he says:

[F]rom the moment I met you, your personality had the most extraordinary influence over me. I was dominated soul, brain, and power by you. You became to me the visible incarnation of that unseen ideal whose memory haunts us artists like an exquisite dream. I worshipped you. I grew jealous of everyone to whom you spoke. I wanted to have you all to myself. I was only happy when I was with you. When you were away from me you were still present in my art. (p.95).

In this passage, Basil is both a parallel and an opposite to Sybil. They are both madly, obsessively in love with Dorian in a way that will ultimately end in their downfall. Yet while Sybil positions her love for Dorian as something which inhibits her acting prowess, Basil considers it to be precisely what allows him to create beautiful art. This is not simply their individual opinions but is also reflected in the attitudes of their observers. When Sybil is in love, ‘even the common uneducated audience of the pit and gallery [lose] their interest’ in her acting (p.72), while love for Dorian is what inspires that which Lord Henry refers to as ‘Basil’s best period’ (p.176). It is queer love and not heteronormative love which leads to good art within the narrative.

Basil’s love for Dorian did not solely allow him to create better paintings. According to Lord Henry, ‘[Basil] only interested [him] once, and that was when he told [him], years ago, that he had a wild adoration for [Dorian] and that [Dorian was] the dominant motive of his art’ (p.175). In this line, we can infer that it is Basil’s queerness which makes him ‘interesting’ and that the open expression of it was rare. This reading is reinforced by the fact that Dorian falling for Sybil ‘made him a more interesting study’ (p.51) to Lord Henry; people become more interesting to him when they are in love. Queerness, at least for the character of Basil, is not a

negative or harmful thing. It does not inherently lead him to harm or to ruin in the ways one might expect from a fin de siècle text; though his end is tragic, it is specifically because of who Dorian became rather than the fact he is a man.

For both Sybil and Basil, the lover's involvement with Dorian ends with their demise. Yet this is also an instance where they diverge significantly. In the case of Sibyl Vane, this death is detached and impersonal, a suicide for which Dorian deems himself responsible but in which he had no direct involvement. Meanwhile Basil Hallward's death is far more personal, with Dorian being the one to '[dig] the knife into the great vein that is behind the ear, crushing the man's head down on the table and [stab] again and again' (p.132). Given the Gothic propensity for the intertwining of sex and death, the greater degree of intimacy of the latter and the penetrative symbolism of repeated stabbing cannot be ignored. Dorian's relationship with Sibyl (and therefore Sibyl's life) ends because of a lack of emotional response to her; his relationship with Basil (and therefore Basil's life) ends because of an excess of emotional response. Simply put, when it comes to death (which we can read as sex), he can muster the murderous/sexual passion for Basil, but not for Sibyl.

Those who see the character of Dorian Gray as predominantly or entirely heterosexual will regardless point to his relationship with Sibyl Vane - he cannot be queer, he was in love with a woman! Leaving aside the erasure of multi-gender attraction in what we now would term bisexual or pansexual identities, even an entirely homosexual reading of this character is not discounted by Sibyl Vane's presence in the narrative. To begin with, Dorian's proposal to Sybil comes after he sees her perform as Rosalind (p.48), a role which involves her crossdressing. It is

doubly significant considering Rosalind's male disguise in *As You Like It* is named Ganymede: a classical homosexual figure (Saslow, 1986). It is art that Dorian values most, and in this particular artistic endeavour, Sybil is a divine, queer man.

Even disregarding this, the phenomenon of attraction solely to fictional or unattainable people of the opposite gender, although seemingly not widely studied, is seen and accepted particularly within lesbian communities as a component of compulsory heterosexuality - a term which is now used in a way that has evolved significantly since Adrienne Rich's *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence* (1980), which coined the term. A document colloquially referred to as 'the lesbian masterdoc' (King-Miller, 2020; Raga, 2020; Tempesta, 2020) lists 'only/mostly being attracted to unattainable, disinterested, or fictional guys or guys you never or rarely interact with' as one of the many symptoms of compulsory heterosexuality and as a sign that the reader might be a lesbian. This online resource was originally posted anonymously on Tumblr by Anjeli Luz and though both the lesbian masterdoc and compulsory heterosexuality are not without criticism (Feys, 2021; Seidman, 2009), the fact that such an experience resonates with multiple lesbians (Tempesta, 2020) suggests that there is clear merit to Luz's work. Although it would be a mistake to completely transpose lesbian experiences onto gay male experiences, there is evidence to suggest gay men share this particular experience (Box, 2019; Guilbert, 2018). Using this framework, there is potential for Dorian's change in affection toward Sybil to be read as a signifier of homosexuality. Dorian loves her when she is 'all the great heroines of the world in one' (p.49) and 'never' simply Sibyl Vane. The moment she becomes a real human who has come to exist beyond 'the hollowness, the sham, the silliness of the empty pageant in which [she] had always played' (p.73), he loses his attraction to her. He loves Sibyl

when she is ‘a dream, a phantom that flitted through Shakespeare’s plays and left them lovelier for its presence’ (p.87): unattainable and fictional. In Dorian’s eyes, ‘ordinary women never appeal to one’s imagination’ (p.46): yet this is demonstrably false; heterosexual men regularly find their imaginations (and desires) stimulated by ‘ordinary women’. Such is not the case for Dorian, however. ‘Ordinary’, as it is used here, can be read as ‘real’; Sybil is ‘ordinary’ when she no longer represents a fantasy and instead exists solely as a woman.

I would not say that aesthetic ideals play no part in Dorian’s rejection of Sibyl Vane. The more ‘standard’ interpretation is that of the ultimate aesthete, who cannot abide by poor art (Sheehan, 2005). But there is room for both ideas to coexist, which they do. Dorian’s disgust is an aesthetic notion; his loss of attraction is a queer one. We see this played out in his initial remorse: he is no longer disgusted, yet his love remains performative. He will love Sibyl because it is correct and moral, not because it is a true reflection of his emotions. It is at this point in the narrative that the representation or appearance and the reality diverge, and that is significant. Aesthetically, Dorian has made his peace with the sub-par actress he deemed Sibyl Vane to be. But no amount of guilt nor desire to do so can reignite the genuine passion which is, at this point in the narrative, replaced with a sense of obligation. Fundamentally, Dorian Gray is unable to force himself to be attracted to a real, human woman.

As in many other works by Wilde, the sentiment towards marriage and relationships with women is one of dismissal; even if interest is displayed, there is a degree of cynicism and exaggeration which borders on mockery (Clum, 2012; Bochman, 2005). Gender segregation in Victorian culture and narratives is far more pronounced than in twenty-first-century Britain, but

beyond the aforementioned interest in Sibyl Vane, the rest of the narrative in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* contains apathy at best towards cross-gender relationships. Lord Henry makes no secret of his desire to maintain a separate life from and lack of interest in his wife, stating that ‘the one charm of marriage is that it makes a life of deception absolutely necessary for both parties’ (p.8), although Basil does suggest that these comments are an artifice and his marriage is in fact a happy one. One can read misogyny into these sentiments – and in the case of those such as the following from Lord Henry Wotton, misogyny is particularly evident: ‘no woman is a genius. Women are a decorative sex. They never have anything to say, but they say it charmingly’ (p.43). However, this is not the only dimension. It is easy to read the mindset of a homosexual man incapable of experiencing attraction or desire towards a woman but required to adhere to heterosexual social norms within Wilde’s discussions of women and marriage. Lord Henry claims all marriage and all relationships with women to be loveless; though Basil questions the truth in this, the theme arises in multiple works by Wilde to the point that it would be remiss not to remark upon it as a Wildean motif. The three central characters of the novel – with varying degrees of success and within the constraints of late Victorian society – avoid heteronormative lifestyles.

While Basil is able to be read as abstinent, Dorian’s potential queer encounters are implied through textual evidence of general debauchery. While ‘it was rumoured that he had been seen brawling with foreign sailors in a low den in the distant parts of Whitechapel, and that he consorted with thieves and coiners and knew the mysteries of their trade’, these remain only rumours, and ‘men would whisper to each other in corners, or pass [Dorian] with a sneer, or look at him with cold searching eyes, as though they were determined to discover his secret.’ (p.118).

Beyond this, multiple references are made to ‘sin’ and ‘sins’, the most notable of which being Dorian’s realisation that ‘eternal youth, infinite passion, pleasures subtle and secret, wild joys and wilder sins—he was to have all these things’ (p.88). The word ‘sins’ in this context is almost out of place when compared to words like ‘passion’, ‘pleasures’, and ‘joys’, and compounds the fact that it is not necessarily or exclusively evil acts which Dorian seeks to commit. ‘Passion’ and ‘pleasures’ especially carry connotations of sexuality and sensuality, lending themselves to identifying them as queerness. When Basil confronts Dorian about his actions, they are primarily described as ‘all these hideous things that people are whispering about [him]’ (p.126). In this phrasing, Basil creates ambiguity around whether it is the actions themselves or the speaking of them which he finds ‘hideous’. This is further compounded by the fact that it is not Dorian’s relationships with men which he seems to find appalling, but the way in which he is ‘so fatal to young men’ (p.126). It is in many cases the destruction of reputations and not the acts themselves which are deplorable. Dorian suggests that he did not ‘teach the one his vices, and the other his debauchery’ (p.127), but this is not quite the issue at hand.

Yet the vices and debauchery Dorian speaks of are as unsayable as ‘the love that dare not speak its name’ (Sanna, 2012). It is not difficult to read omission as a form of admission here. To noticeably leave something unsaid is to confess that there is something to say - a fact which has more or less defined literary criticism as a field. Wilde himself posits that what this something is will be in fact found within the reader as opposed to the text, or in his own words: ‘criticism is a mode of autobiography’ (p.3). Though this process requires the writer to provide the pieces, he is right that it is the reader who assembles them. In the case of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Sanna remarks that ‘silence and homosexuality could be seen as strictly interrelated’ (p.31). Consider

each invocation of silence or marked omission and find that what each has in common with the other is a relationship, encounter, or engagement between men, or some form of scandal or taboo behaviour. From Basil working in silence to the unnamed scandals and disgraces which befall Dorian's acquaintances, each instance can be read as in some way queer. And when silence and the unsaid are woven throughout the narrative, this means that so too is queerness.

Similar vagueness is brought in relating to the specifics of Dorian's blackmail of Alan Campbell:

"I am so sorry for you, Alan," he murmured, "but you leave me no alternative. I have a letter written already. Here it is. You see the address. If you don't help me, I must send it. If you don't help me, I will send it. You know what the result will be. But you are going to help me. It is impossible for you to refuse now. (p.143)

In the context of the Labouchere Amendment, which criminalised 'gross indecency' between men, blackmail became commonly associated with homosexuality, to the extent that Bristow (2014) claims that this specific part of the amendment was 'commonly known as 'the blackmailer's charter'' (p.48). This link is only compounded by the fact that the relationship between the two men is twice described as having once been 'intimacy' (pp.138-139). Though there is no concrete evidence of what precisely Dorian could reveal that would so destroy Campbell, it is clear that the social and potentially even legal consequences would be severe. With these facts and the rest of the text supporting the reading, it is hardly a leap to interpret Dorian's blackmail as revealing Campbell's sexuality.

In a cruel twist of fate, it was a blackmail letter which brought Wilde himself into disrepute and this very text was used in his later trial for gross indecency. Though this knowledge is not required to read the text, it is evidence that such interpretations of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* are hardly niche ones. The queerness hidden in plain sight within the narrative meant something very different to those looking to prosecute Wilde, however, than it would have done to queer readers looking for a reflection themselves or a notion that they are not alone, both at the time and in the twenty-first century.

Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

Though it has been discussed less than *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* has also been read as a text containing coded or silent representations of queer sexuality.

Once again, the desires, crimes, and sins committed by the text's titular character(s) are broadly unspeakable. Jekyll seeks to separate himself from his socially unacceptable desires through Hyde, to create literal and mental distinctions between himself and the Hyde alter-ego. The double life which Jekyll-Hyde is forced to lead in combination with the shame which he experiences around desires is one which speaks to both Victorian and twenty-first-century queerness. Even before the experiments which lead to the physical separation, Jekyll 'concealed [his] pleasures' and 'regarded and hid them with an almost morbid sense of shame' (p.52). The fact that he frames these unnameable thoughts and actions as 'pleasures', 'liberty', 'irregularities', 'undignified', 'depravity', and even 'evil' (pp.52-57) is significant; there is no consistency, even as he attempts to moralise in his own account of the case. He cannot bring

himself to fully condemn as he remains, in his own words ‘a double-dealer’ (p.52). Cortlett (2018) remarks that ‘the character of Jekyll could represent the perfect example of a self-repressed homosexual living in the hostile Victorian community’, but Jekyll is self-admittedly not fully repressed, having ‘laid aside restraint and plunged in shame’ (p.52). Nor does he want to be, as it is the conflict between his desire to be a well-regarded gentleman who conforms to contemporary morality and his desire to seek these pleasures which leads him to find life ‘unbearable’. If Jekyll were truly self-repressed, he would seek to eradicate this aspect of himself. But he does not. Even after ‘they soon began to turn toward the monstrous’ (p.57), Jekyll’s terror only truly arises when the transformations begin to become involuntary. Or, in other words, when he can no longer guarantee that his secret pleasures will not be linked back to him as Dr Jekyll. It is the fear of social and legal consequences, the fear of exposure, and the fear of loss of control which Jekyll is struck by. It is not a condemnation of the desires and pleasures experienced through the body of Edward Hyde. To both the Victorian and the twenty-first-century queer reader, this experience can be read clearly as a queer man longing for the freedom to engage in those queer acts and relationships which society sees as somehow deviant without sacrificing his safety and status. The element of safety versus openness is a consideration which is still made and which the vast majority of LGBTQ+ people will be familiar with, at least to some extent (Todd, 2016).

It is not just Jekyll-Hyde’s crimes and desires which remain unspeakable, but also Hyde’s appearance. When asked to describe Hyde, Enfield remarks that ‘he is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable’ (p.9), and every other character who encounters Hyde feels much the same way. Just

as Dorian Gray's acts are written upon his portrait, Jekyll-Hyde's are present on Hyde's countenance. But the precise manner in which they appear is not written anywhere. In the same way as vague references to pleasures and vice can conceal the specifics of Hyde's behaviour and Jekyll-Hyde's desires, the references to the 'impression of deformity without any nameable malformation' (p.15) which Hyde gives is also able to conceal. It is notable that it is not that there is no 'malformation', but rather that this 'malformation' is unnameable. Victorian ideas surrounding degeneration and the association between morality and appearance (Jasper, 1994; Burdett, 2014) feed into this, and these attitudes are still present in the twenty-first century (Royer, 2018; Stinson, 2021). Hyde is deformed - and therefore degenerate - in a way that is either unspeakable or unidentifiable. The unspeakable as a sign of queerness has already been discussed and would have still been legible even before the infamous Wilde trial as a coded symbol. But it is notable that, unlike race and ethnicity, queerness as an inherent characteristic which leads to marginalisation is not immediately identifiable through appearance. Yet the idea that queerness can be perceived in the appearance of others is one that was and is still believed, particularly when there is any transgression of gender norms. Cortlett (2018) remarks that 'it is evident due to the ambiguity of [Hyde's] appearance that he does not fit the stereotypical norm of a Victorian man', and it is this nonnormative masculinity which typically leads to a man to be read as queer. The invisible and yet inherent deviance which people see in Hyde is not indisputably queerness, but it is a compelling possibility and one which fits in with other elements of the narrative.

While Hyde is surrounded by unspeakability, the exceptions to this in terms of his actions are the trampling of an unnamed child and the murder of Sir Danvers Carew. Both of these

instances are representative of queerness in their own ways. In the former case, Hyde's destruction is specifically targeted at the manifestation of dominant heterosexual desires, both in the sense of desiring to procreate and of the conclusion of sexual desire in its only socially acceptable sense: reproduction. As this child is the only representation of the family and reproduction (and one of very few female characters) within the narrative the trampling becomes a symbolic act, a rejection of both concepts. Hyde destroys the family and the female encroaching upon the otherwise homosocial space which he inhabits.

Yet when it comes to the Carew murder, it is only the immediate act of the fatal brutalisation which is direct and clear. The act is very much a spontaneous crime of passion, beginning when 'all of a sudden [Hyde] broke out in a great flame of anger, stamping with his foot, brandishing the cane, and carrying on (as the maid described it) like a madman' (p.20) and coming to a grisly end when 'with ape-like fury, he was trampling his victim under foot and hailing down a storm of blows, under which the bones were audibly shattered and the body jumped upon the roadway' (pp.20-21). But the events leading up to this are never revealed. What so angered Hyde? The facts, as we have them, are 'an aged beautiful gentleman with white hair' (p.20), who we later discover to be Sir Danvers Carew, making an inquiry of Mr Hyde while alone on the street late at night, and said inquiry infuriating Hyde. Hyde's response had Sir Carew 'very much surprised and a trifle hurt' (p.20) before it turned violent, and that is all we as readers or Utterson as our narrator are told. But what is it that caused such anger? And why was Sir Carew walking alone so late at night and approaching a strange individual on the street?

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, it was not unheard of for upper-class gay and bisexual men to cross the typically strict boundaries between classes in order to pursue working-class men for sex, a fact which was highlighted during the Cleveland Street Scandal (Betsky, 1997; Robb, 2005; Robinson, 2017). Oscar Wilde was later to shock the English public due to his liaisons with working-class men (Adut, 2005; McKenna, 2006), but not because this was particularly remarkable within queer (sub)cultures of the time. With this background in mind, a potential motive for Carew's presence arises. As Koestenbaum (1988) posits, 'Stevenson implies that this "beautiful" gentleman propositions Hyde'. But it is only able to be an implication, as the reader does not 'see' the encounter directly, but instead through the witness accounts along with Utterson. The entire situation is relayed via a maid looking out onto the street through her bedroom window, from the safety of the domestic sphere. Koestenbaum further remarks that 'by having a woman witness and narrate the homosexual proposition and the murder, Stevenson associates women with surveillance of private life'. Incidentally, this relaying functions in the same way as the gossip and scandal which loomed over all forms of deviance in Victorian society (Adut, 2005). And much like in the case of gossip and scandal, speculation is able to run rampant.

Extrapolating from the implication that Carew was cruising for sex with lower-class men, Hyde's anger could stem from two potential sources. The first of these is that it was something specific that Carew said. Early in their interaction, Hyde is calm, if impatient. The trigger for his outburst occurs while Carew is speaking, but the specifics are, once again, silent. In a queer reading which presumes that Carew is cruising, the gaps can be filled in with the assumption that either his propositions were disrespectful enough or presumptuous enough to spark anger. Even

if Hyde and Carew are both read as queer, this does not automatically mean that there is mutual desire or consent between them. It is notable that Hyde is not a member of the lower classes despite the ‘degenerate’ appearance which could lead people to assume so, and therefore if Carew were to proposition him under that assumption, this may contribute to his rage. The second potential cause of Hyde’s anger is that Carew is a man with status who holds the same desires Jekyll and wider society treats as monstrous, but who does not repress them to the same extent as Jekyll. He therefore becomes representative of what Jekyll-Hyde cannot have: Jekyll cannot express his desires and Hyde cannot have Jekyll’s status, but Carew is living both. Carew is both a representative of the unavailable and a risk to Hyde’s very existence, for if Jekyll can accept that he too may have both and may accept that duality in his own self, he has no need of Hyde as his cover. Hyde, knowing this, has both anger and fear to motivate his destructive rampage and maintain his position as Jekyll’s only way to fully and safely engage in this secret double life.

The world of secrets and the unsaid is not strictly unique to Jekyll-Hyde, although it does become most evident in relation to him. The bachelor space surrounding him is based upon silences and unspeakabilities. From the very beginning of the novella, Stevenson’s bachelors are defined by their silences and the reticence in their relationships to one another. On the relationship between Utterson and Enfield, Stevenson writes that ‘It was reported by those who encountered them in their Sunday walks, that they said nothing’ (although despite these silences, ‘the two men put the greatest store by these excursions’) (p.5). When Utterson and Poole are discussing the disappearance of Dr Jekyll, Utterson remarks that ‘[they] both think more than [they] have said’ (p.39). And at the beginning of the novel, Enfield says that ‘I make it a rule of

mine: the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask' (p.9). In all of these cases, reticence is a staple of their interactions and approaches. The 'don't ask, don't tell' approach is extremely reminiscent of the treatment of queerness, to the extent that this became the name of a legal policy within the United States military for several years (National Defense Research Institute, 2010). In any context, reticence is a form of mutual protection when a society is hostile to queerness.

Utterson particularly, as the text's primary narrator, is worthy of further discussion. Though he features primarily as an observer rather than active participant in the proceedings, his observation frequently lets through hints of his own hidden desires. He takes pride in his status as 'the last good influence in the lives of down-going men' (p.5), giving himself an excuse to spend time around those deemed to be somehow socially unacceptable while still maintaining his own credibility and social standing. But it is never made explicit precisely what he does to influence these men, nor what would class them as 'down-going'. However, his desire to be around men of ill repute is not the only factor which suggests he has some secret nature of his own in the form of queer sexuality. For instance, his account of a dream shortly following his discovery of Hyde's existence is as follows:

[He] would see a room in a rich house, where his friend lay asleep, dreaming and smiling at his dreams; and then the door of that room would be opened, the curtains of the bed plucked apart, the sleeper recalled, and lo! there would stand by his side a figure to whom power was given, and even at that dead hour, he must rise and do its bidding (p.13)

The image is tinted with eroticism and, as Hall (2002) remarks, at this point in the narrative 'we know almost nothing about Jekyll-and-Hyde's terrible activities and transgressive desires, but do

know that Utterson dreams of men and beds and having the power to make a man in a bed do one's bidding (or having a man tell one what to do while one is in bed)' (p.137). As his unconscious mind ruminates on 'a reason for his friend's strange preference or bondage (call it which you please)' (p.13), the sexual elements of this image are hard to ignore. Though he is not referring to his own preferences here, Utterson still manages to reveal much about them. The term 'bondage' – particularly for a twenty-first-century reader – is far more likely to carry associations of BDSM than anything else, particularly when combined with the image of power given to another in the bedroom, of doing the bidding of another individual, and of (sexual) 'preference'. Yet even in these images, Utterson remains an observer or, more accurately, a voyeur in this kinky tableau that both frightens and fascinates him. At no point within the narrative does he show any interest towards women; but he is instead consistently seeking entry into the private spaces, cabinets, and closets of other men, opening closed doors to transgress that literal boundary.

Having already addressed the linguistic choice of 'bondage', it would be remiss not to remark on the use of 'queer' in the narrative. This word is used – as mentioned previously – by Enfield stating that 'the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask' (p.9) and then again by Poole, who remarks having noticed 'something queer' about Hyde (p.39). When addressing this, it is also worth including the later use of 'faggots', when Jekyll describes himself and Hyde as 'incongruous faggots [. . .] bound together' (p.53). Koestenbaum (1988) writes that 'Though no dictionaries trace this slippage of meaning, I suspect that "faggot" and "queer" began to connote "homosexual" long before the meaning became standard', and while he is correct, this becomes less relevant when considering twenty-first-century reader responses. The connotations in our

time are indisputably LGBTQ+, and this creates a mental link between Jekyll and Hyde and queerness as a whole. As ‘queer’ is used once close to the beginning and once near to the end of the narrative, and ‘faggot’ In Jekyll’s full statement of the case, this language bookends the tale and therefore informs the reading to a higher degree.

When analysing the linguistic elements within this text, it is also worth addressing the metaphors of how ‘fin-de-siècle images of forced penetration through locked doors into private cabinets, rooms and closets permeate Utterson’s narrative’ (Showalter, 1999, p.6). This includes allusions to anal penetration specifically via the focus on entries through back entrances and the ‘back-end of the evening’ (p.22). A reader making these associations may be seen as juvenile, but it is nonetheless relevant in terms of mental links between anal sex and *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. As anal sex is typically included in schemas around queer men (although in reality it is by no means an exclusively queer male practice or a practice which all queer men engage in), this then creates a mental link between this text and queer men.

Much like *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is a story of a man who takes the company of other men and is ultimately destroyed not directly by his ‘sins’, but by his desire and ability to hide them completely. It is the double life, or attempt to live it, which drives them to insanity. In this way, it is a mixture of internalised and societal homophobia which kills them. Had Jekyll been able to be openly the complex creature of multiple sides and to engage in his unnamed pleasures without losing everything, the story would have been very different. Though at first glance it may appear that the story reinforces

homophobia through Hyde's evilness, Hyde turns the mirror onto society and speaks of the dangers of homophobia and nonacceptance.

Dracula

Thus far, I have addressed two remarkably similar texts in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. *Dracula* serves as a slight departure from a theme, although still a fin-de-siecle Gothic text which remains highly relevant in pop culture and general knowledge which deals with threats of monstrosity and relationships between men. Unlike the other two texts, however, *Dracula* contains far more in the way of female characters and far more divide between good and evil, with a clearer fight against the non-normative (or, in the very loosest sense of the term, the queer). However, that does not mean that it cannot also be interpreted as dealing with male queerness in more nuanced and complex ways.

Just as with the previous texts, the titular character is ostensibly the most obvious queer character within the narrative. Dracula's queerness is primarily bisexual, coveting both male and female individuals in a boundary-blurring Gothic mix of the violent and the sexual. While it has been quipped by Steven Moffat, the creator of the BBC *Dracula* series, that Dracula is 'bi-homicidal' as opposed to bisexual (Milton, 2019), the textual evidence within the novel includes coded bierotic desire. Yet it is not just Dracula himself who can be read as representative of bisexuality, as Stuart (2018) remarks, 'as Dracula's victims come to inhabit non-normative erotics, the representation of vampirism becomes an examination of queer appetites' (p.219) – both the appetites of the vampire and, in this case, of the vampire's victims.

During Harker's stay in Dracula's Transylvanian castle, Dracula bursts in on the encounter between Harker and the three vampire women with the insistence that 'this man belongs to me!' (p.43). The vampire women accuse Dracula of having 'never loved; you never love!', and Dracula's response includes the insistence that '[he] too can love' (p.43). If it were these women who he supposedly loved, it would make more sense for him to relinquish Harker to them than to insist on claiming the object of their desires for himself. But if the rationale behind the argument is that the women should be able to lay claim to Harker is that they are capable of loving him while Dracula is not, this insistence is a counterclaim which asserts that Dracula has at least equal rights to Harker under these terms. That is to say, Dracula and the women are both capable of loving Harker and therefore the women have no extra point in their favour.

The appearance of the three vampire women in Harker's bedroom is easily interpreted as sexually predatory, with their desire for Harker's body existing in multiple senses of the term. Yet Dracula is equally as covetous in the same way. Dracula's desire for Harker is vampiric predation, but also sexual predation. Yet Harker is not the unwilling participant he frames himself to be. His acquiescence to the male and female suggests a level of bisexual desire, albeit a conflicted one. Harker experiences a blended disgust/desire, finding the women and the situation 'both thrilling and repulsive' as he 'felt in [his] heart a wicked, burning desire that they would kiss [him] with those red lips' (p.42), and that is through his self-reported narrative. In the epistolary format, characters are able to omit and disguise, to express themselves with the restraint and self-policing which Stoker himself was known to employ (Schaffer, 1994; Skal,

2017). Yet even in this self-reported narrative, Harker is remarkably candid. His descriptions are blatantly sexual:

I was afraid to raise my eyelids, but looked out and saw perfectly under the lashes. The girl went on her knees, and bent over me, simply gloating. There was a deliberate voluptuousness which was both thrilling and repulsive, and as she arched her neck she actually licked her lips like an animal, till I could see in the moonlight the moisture shining on the scarlet lips and on the red tongue as it lapped the white sharp teeth. Lower and lower went her head as the lips went below the range of my mouth and chin and seemed about to fasten on my throat. Then she paused, and I could hear the churning sound of her tongue as it licked her teeth and lips, and could feel the hot breath on my neck. Then the skin of my throat began to tingle as one's flesh does when the hand that is to tickle it approaches nearer—nearer. I could feel the soft, shivering touch of the lips on the super-sensitive skin of my throat, and the hard dents of two sharp teeth, just touching and pausing there. I closed my eyes in a languorous ecstasy and waited—waited with beating heart. (pp.42-43)

If the throat— as the source of the life-giving blood and centre of vampiric reproduction— is read as a substitute of the genitalia, this passage is indistinguishable from a description of sex. Craft (1984) identifies the inherent queerness of the scene through the disruptions of gender and sex, as 'Dracula's daughters offer Harker a feminine form but a masculine penetration' (p.110). And though it is with vampire women rather than with the vampire man, the comparisons between these women and Dracula and the fact that they function more as an extension of the Count than characters in their own right suggests their positions as surrogates for the man himself. Reyes (2017) remarks that 'Dracula becomes Harker's monstrous and unsatisfied desire, and the

novel's turn to vampiric women is a re-direction of Harker's horror of falling prey to the Count. This, in turn, belies a deeper fear of emasculation through the feminisation entailed by an acceptance of desire for another male' (pp.127-128). Harker remains in as similar a position as Stoker could allow him to be with male and female vampires alike, providing justification for a bisexual reading.

Craft (1984) positions Harker in the bed before the three vampire women and Dracula himself as having a 'feminine passivity' (p.109) as a sign of queerness. Although the equation of (potentially) receiving penetration and domination as feminine is based in heteronormative mindsets. That said, this is not the only instance of Harker being seen as feminine and the gender presentations in *Dracula* are notable, particularly from a transgender lens. Harker feminises himself, comparing himself to 'some fair lady sat to pen, with much thought and many blushes, her ill-spelt love-letter' (p.40) and the 'old ladies [who] had sat and sung and lived sweet lives whilst their gentle breasts were sad for their menfolk away in the midst of remorseless wars' (p.41). He is feminised by others, as his captivity and lack of sexual autonomy during his time in Castle Dracula are reflections of Victorian womanhood and the confinement to the domestic sphere and the will of their husbands, which women had up until that point been expected to endure. He is also portrayed as weak, fainting, and in need of the specific nursing back to both health and consciousness that seems more typically associated with women in the Victorian era and twenty-first-century perceptions of it (Kniggendorf, n.d.; van Dijk and Wieling, 2009). Not only does he require rescue from his second imprisonment in the hospital after succumbing to a 'violent brain fever' (p.95) which seems comparable to the feminised diagnosis of hysteria, he needs rescuing specifically by a woman. His presence in the Crew of Light never quite reaches

the level of the other men, even as his involvement in the hunt for Dracula grows. He is one of them, but remains an outsider. Some of this comes from his entering into their lives at a later date, but in that heavily homosocial space, Harker is in a way un-manned by his covert exclusion. Yet this is not something which he objects to at any point.

In contrast, Mina objects far more heavily. While Harker is feminised, she is masculinised. She has ‘a man’s brain’ (p.207) and she claims that both she and Lucy ‘should have shocked the “New Woman” with [their] appetites’ (p.86). And while she, like the others in the Crew of Light, has enough investment in the social order of things to not go too far in her objections, they read as her need to remind herself that she is a woman. Her gender is marked for her; critics have positioned her as the perfect wife (Al Ibrahim, 2019; Mewald, 2008), but she embraces masculinity and the male-dominated spaces. It is Mina who protects her husband, and though attempts are made for the inverse, they do not hold in the same way. It is Mina’s logic and detective skills above Harker’s which assist the Crew of Light. And it is Mina who becomes mentally linked to Dracula, experiencing the world through his body – a man’s body – during her hypnosis. She is not distressed during these inhabitations, nor does she succumb to shock and fright in the same way as her husband does, despite his expressed fears around her constitution. Though this combination of masculinity and femininity has primarily been treated as female empowerment, it is worth analysing in terms of transgender identity and in terms of Harker’s sexuality. His attraction is to someone with masculine characteristics, in some occasions equally or even more masculine to himself. This is atypical, particularly for the era. Yet this is not uncommon for bisexual individuals, whose gender performances and roles, even in relationships with someone of another gender, are less confined to the traditional (Pennington, 2009).

The representations of gender are inescapably a product of their time. The correlation of female masculinity and male femininity with queer sexuality, however, remains to some extent, albeit less so than when inversion theory was the dominant narrative to explain the latter (Chauncey, 2019; Sedgwick, 1991). The gender-based element leans more towards a queer identification in pushing the representation of a person assigned male but who engages in self-feminisation and is feminised by others and/or a person assigned female but who self-masculinises and is masculinised by others to its furthest conclusion. There is tenuous but potential evidence to argue that Harker is transfeminine or that Mina is transmasculine within the text, although this is only possible through a presentist lens which allows us to see queer gender and queer sexuality as interrelated but not synonymous. That presentist lens allows us to both acknowledge the text as a product of late-Victorian shibboleths and to analyse it within our own understandings of sex and gender. Whether Harker's femininity and Mina's masculinity is queer in the sense that I use the term is dependent on the reader, but is a dimension of the novel which can be read as such and would be an interesting point for further interpretation and reader interactions through a transgender lens.

Returning to the representations of relationships between men, Harker is not the only male character whose relationship with Dracula is worthy of note, and it is not entirely unique. The similarities between Renfield and Harker are not immediately obvious; one is a respectable professional while the other is a long-term mental patient with no social standing. But both men are avid journal-keepers: Renfield is 'always jotting down something' (p.69) in his journal, and Harker's regular and detailed journal entries are an essential part of the novel. Both are

imprisoned: Harker in Castle Dracula and Renfield in Seward's sanatorium. And most importantly, both are enthralled by Dracula. The sexual component of Harker's simultaneous disgust and desire has already been established, but what of Renfield's? Renfield's worship of Dracula is far less conflicted than Harker's, at least for the bulk of the novel. In his almost prayer-like devotion, he says:

I am here to do Your bidding, Master. I am Your slave, and You will reward me, for I shall be faithful. I have worshipped You long and afar off. Now that You are near, I await Your commands, and You will not pass me by, You, dear Master, in Your distribution of good things? (p.98)

From these lines, it is evident that Renfield is submissive to him. The capitalisation is particularly interesting, as it speaks to Renfield's framing of Dracula as God-like – or, alternatively, following honorific conventions used by some participants in BDSM scenarios, in which the pronouns of the dominant partner are capitalised (Kinkly, 2015). As is the case for Harker, Renfield is positioned as sexually submissive. But he appears to lack the conflicted emotions which Harker expresses.

In this regard, Renfield is much more similar to the Count. His desires, particularly surrounding the act of consumption, are monstrous and deviant to Victorian society, but this is not a barrier to him enacting them. Instead, society can only attempt to prevent it. The metaphor of the vampire bite as sexual has already been discussed, but this is able to be expanded to hunger and consumption more broadly. Durot-Bouc  (2001) links the act of overconsumption of food within early Gothic to 'sexual overindulgence and excess' (p.101); if we take this reading, non-normative consumption becomes linked to non-normative sexuality. Dracula consumes

blood, Renfield consumes spiders, flies, and birds. This shared non-normativity is, in the loosest sense of the term, queer. But it becomes linked with queerness in the sense of male-male desire when accompanied by his obsessive desire for Dracula and his actions upon meeting Mina.

When Renfield allows Mina into his room, he insists he must ‘tidy up’ first. Seward observes this and describes how Renfield ‘swallowed all the flies and spiders in the boxes before [he] could stop him. It was quite evident that he feared, or was jealous of, some interference’ (p.205). The idea of jealousy here is an interesting one; does he believe Mina would wish to consume as he does? Seward and the other doctors pose no such threat to him; he is content to keep his spiders and his flies around them. But if, in Renfield’s mind, the consumption is linked with sexuality, someone he perceives as also attracted to men would be a threat. Or, alternatively, someone who would disrupt the homosocial space that allows for male/male encounters. In this, we can read Renfield as a queer figure who devotes himself to, is voluntarily dominated by and has shared desires with a man, who symbolically as well as literally hungers for non-normative satiation to his wants, and who sees a woman as more likely to interfere in his satiation than a man would.

The relationship between Lucy Westenra’s suitors is also able to be read as queer in the sense of non-normative most easily, but also with same-sex desire in a deeper reading. Lucy expresses a desire for polyamory, saying ‘why can’t they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her’ (p.60). Whether polyamory is in itself inherently queer is a topic of debate (Cardoso et al., 2021; Schippers, 2016; Klesse, 2014) and dependent on perspective on what ‘queer’ means, but depending on the relationship structure, certain forms of polyamory are unable to be

entirely heterosexual; if all participants are in some way involved with each other, there must be at least two who are involved in a non-heterosexual engagement. In this case, although Lucy is involved only in opposite-gender relations, Arthur Holmwood, Quincey Morris, and Dr Seward are all involved with each other as well as with Lucy. That is not to say that they express explicit romantic or sexual interest in one another in the text, although it is possible to read such emotions as covertly expressed within the narrative. Though Lucy is unable to engage in direct and explicit polygamy or polyamory, the transfusions of blood from multiple men into her is in itself a substitute for the act of orgiastic sex, leading her to be described as ‘a polyandrist’ (p.158). Craft (1984) remarks that ‘Lucy, the woman in the middle, connects libidinous males. [. . .] Men touching women touch each other, and desire discovers itself to be more fluid than the Crew of Light would consciously allow’ (p.128). Again, the concept of Sedgwick’s erotic triangle – although it is less of a triangle and more of a pentagon in this scenario – is worth considering; Lucy is the conduit through which the mixing of men’s bodily fluids may occur.

The blood/semen link is one which has been explored at length in relation to the vampire as a whole, not necessarily specific to *Dracula* (Craft, 1984; Muskovitz, 2010; Marks, 2019). The vampire bite is fundamentally a procreative sex act: an exchange of bodily fluids in order to further the existence of a species. With this understanding in place, the multiple transfusions which occur during Van Helsing’s efforts to rehumanise Lucy are also sexual. And when four men simultaneously penetrate Lucy’s body with a wooden stake - the phallic symbolism of which is obvious - to release her from vampirism, this too reads as orgiastic. It is an outlet for the sexual contact which the men cannot have within their society, with Lucy and her vampirism as the mediator, the laundering of desire in order to make it permissible.

The ending of the text surrounding the birth of Quincey Harker, too, is significant. On the topic of the Harker's son, Craft (1984) remarks:

His official genesis is, obviously enough, heterosexual, but Stoker's prose quietly suggests an alternative paternity: "His bundle of names links all our little band of men together." This is the fantasy child of those sexualized transfusions, son of an illicit and nearly invisible homosexual union. (p.129)

Schaffer (1994) takes this analysis a step further, relinking the blood/semen connection to the child's birth: 'Quincey's spirit fled his dying body, swirled along in his blood, soaked into Harker and became the 'seed' of Harker's son. Harker transmits Quincey's blood to Mina, just as Mina had stained her husband's body with Dracula's blood' (p.419). Whatever the degree of the symbolic paternity of this child, Quincey Harker is a representative of queer sexuality and sexual reproduction within the narrative. While Dracula's queer forms of reproduction are ostensibly evil, the Crew of Light have their own, silent form of queer reproduction through the birth of the Harkers' child.

While the inability to accept queerness in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* feeds the central action and conflict for those of us who interpret these texts as queer, it is more fraught in *Dracula*. The conflict, in this sense, is the queerness. The Crew of Light must suppress their own queer desires and eradicate that 'monstrosity'. They must destroy the figures of deviant sexual desire, including those of their own who succumb to it. And they must enforce the silences that exist across these texts, policing themselves and each other, in order to return to their normality. But despite the name, the text is less about the character of

Dracula and more about the bonds between these men, their desires and their fears, and the threat to them, particularly as respectable men, of succumbing to sexual deviance. Yet even with this (grounded) fear taking centre stage in the narrative, their queerness is neither literally nor metaphorically eradicated in the way that vampirism is.

It is possible to locate this queer subtext in these three works regardless of the reader's own identity and contexts. However, I argue that it is more likely for queer people to use and recognise these subtextual elements as members of an interpretive community. This is a community which has a vested interest in finding queerness in texts and a particular ability to do so, both due to their desire to see and familiarity with models of queerness. As such, many of these ideas, moments, and interactions which may seem insignificant to other readers can take on a greater importance if they are able to be perceived as signifiers of potential hidden queerness. It is possible but not necessary that the allusions to queerness are the conscious or subconscious intent of the author, but this is ultimately irrelevant. The fact remains that queerness is able to be found within, and therefore is present as a valid way to interpret these texts.

Chapter Three: Queer Identifications

Presentism is a crucial component of queer identifications. The context is not just that of the text's creation, but of the reading. These readings may – as has already been addressed – be based in subtextual features, but may be based in the reader's schemas, or set of associations and mental frameworks which allow them to comprehend and contextualise information. Cognitive linguists Giovanelli and Mason (2018) argue that:

'Narrative schemas are not only accreted during the reading experience but can also include any information we attach to that narrative. This might include things such as how and where it was first encountered, events, situations and memories associated with the text, and any comments others may have said or written about it. Since narrative schemas are unique to the individual, themes, characters and events which particularly resonate with one reader might be of no interest to another.'

It is this 'information we attach to that narrative' which makes up identification-based reading. To treat this attached information as a subtextual element or queer reading of the text in the same way or on the same level as the previously addressed interpretations would be inaccurate; they are not based on the same type of justifications. But because they remain part of the reading experience and form an aspect of queer readings, they form a queer identification.

For example, a transgender reader may read *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* as an allegory for internalised transphobia. In this narrative, a respected individual who should be content with their life knows that there is something which they want to be yet simultaneously fear being. They wish to destroy that part of themselves but grow attached to this 'other' self in

many ways. They cannot settle their conflicting desires to both be and not be that something. They both desire and fear the ingestion of a chemical solution which would cause their body to transform into something which they desire and fear. Unable to reconcile or overcome either emotion, they take their own life. In this allegory, it is not the transition itself that is monstrous, but the inability to accept one's whole self. Showalter (1990) reads *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* as 'a fable of fin-de-siècle homosexual panic, the discovery and resistance of the homosexual self' (p.4), but the element of bodily transformation lends itself to transgender readings to an even greater degree than homosexual readings. However, because there is minimal textual evidence to support a literal transgender reading of these characters, this falls under the umbrella of queer identifications as opposed to interpretations. In this reading, there is no claim that Dr Jekyll is secretly transgender or that Stevenson intended him to be read as such – Jekyll did not choose a female form to enact his desires and Hyde is not linked directly with femininity. The reading is based on the information attached to the narrative: in this case, a noticed similarity between the experiences of Dr Jekyll and the fates of an unfortunate number of transgender people who can neither fully transition nor fully repress their gender (Perez-Brumer et al., 2015).

The main justifications for queer identifications with the texts which I have selected are recurring and have been grouped into four categories: 1) the queer author, 2) homosocial relationships, 3) demonisation and monstrosity, and 4) social exclusion and secret lives. This is not to say that these are the only possible justifications, simply that these four are the most significant and most commonly occurring within these texts.

The Queer Author

Critic Michael Halpin writes that ‘knowing Barthes’ sexuality does not instantly solve all questions about his writing; but [he does] believe that it informs some of his work on desire and pleasure’ (2009, p.221), and this is a conclusion which can be applied to all writers and their work. Knowing Wilde, Stoker, and Stevenson were or may have been queer informs how one approaches and understands their work. It does not solve all questions, but it does have the potential to affect how all questions are approached. In an article about the question of who tells the stories of those groups who – in one way or another – have been and continue to be socially marginalised, gay author Lev Rosen is quoted as saying that “when a straight person is telling a gay story, they’re almost always telling that for a straight audience through the ‘straight gaze’” (Kheraj, 2018). If a ‘gay story’ maintains proximity to heterosexuality through the sexuality of the author, surely the inverse is true for authors of other sexualities?

I would take this a step further; when a straight person is telling or reading any story, they are telling or reading it through that ‘straight gaze’. Likewise, when a queer person is telling or reading any story, they are telling or reading it through what could be referred to as a ‘queer gaze’. This is not to say that queerness is the only lens of note, but that it is one of the many. If the lenses of the person telling and the person reading the story match up, this is a different experience to if they do not: the meeting is eye-to-eye, the gaze is mutual. This brings to mind a quote from gay actor and playwright Harvey Fierstein from his interview during the documentary film *The Celluloid Closet* (Epstein and Friedman, 1996), based on the book by Vito Russo of the same name.

Every time I watched a straight scene, I had to do this massive translation for myself.

Then I did Torch Song Trilogy. I get these straight people saying to me 'you know, it's not really gay, it's universal'. I say 'up yours, it's gay'. That you can take it and apply it to yourself is wonderful, but at last I don't have to do the translating, you do.

If this translation has to occur for a gay reader during the reading process, presumably the same translation must occur when a gay author is writing covertly, and writing for what Kubowitz (2012) refers to as the 'default reader' (p.207), who is – among other things – almost always heterosexual and cisgender. To extend the translation metaphor, idiomatic expressions are rarely perfectly translated and as such, when a reader is incredibly familiar with the language of the original, they are potentially able to spot signs of its presence in the translation. And while this may not be relevant or important for cisgender heterosexuals, who have a multitude of stories written by, for, and about people who are like them in those regards, I once again turn to a particularly meaningful statement from Fierstein: 'there are lots of needs for art and the greatest one is the mirror of our own lives and our own existence. And that hunger that I felt as a kid, looking for gay images, was to not be alone' (Epstein and Friedman, 1996).

Surrounding the question of queer authors, we must look again to Sedgwick's work: she sees a series of dismissals which are lobbied against those who look to see or uncover same-sex desire or what we in the twenty-first-century would refer to as queerness in historical contexts. These dismissals posit that the evidence used in these efforts to see or uncover queerness is either meaningless or non-existent; she summarises said dismissals as 'don't ask; you shouldn't know' (1990, pp.52-53).

With regards to Wilde, none of the dismissals which she outlines are applicable. We know that Wilde was convicted due to his sexual encounters with men; Wilde is not just a queer man but *the* queen man, the template for modern perceptions of what a queer man looks like (Sinfield, 1994). McKenna (2004) covers Wilde's sexual and emotional trysts to the point that it is an indisputable fact that Wilde was attracted to men, and it is even more evident to us in the twenty-first century than it was to a jury of his peers. With continued references to Wilde when discussing queer history and literature (Akbar, 2009; Burton, 2017; George, 2020), this information clearly still holds significance. Wilde as a not just a cultural figure but a queer cultural figure specifically is present in all contemporary engagement with his work. This is true regardless of the medium; scholar of literature and pornography Dr Laura Helen Marks sees Wilde as 'a queer spectral presence' (2018, p.143) in even the pornographic adaptations of his work; this is true in not just pornography. Wilde himself is inseparable from the text, present even without direct mention. The desire to separate the art from the artist exists in many, but it is extraordinarily difficult – if it is even possible – to do so when it comes to Wilde and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. In all cases, Marks sees that 'even when adaptations of Dorian Gray aren't explicitly articulated as homoerotic, the source text connotes a secret and transgressive sexuality' (p.144). That detachment cannot and does not occur. But it is not just through textual content that this connotation exists; it is the connotation of Wilde.

Neil Bartlett's acclaimed book *Who Was That Man?: A Present for Mr Oscar Wilde* clearly demonstrates how far Wilde's legacy can affect, resonate with, and be mapped onto the life of a gay man living a century later. He writes:

If a stranger asked you to name a homosexual, would you give your own name in reply? Or if you asked someone else, your sister, for instance, or your father, to name a homosexual, what would their response be? There is one, just one, whose name everyone knows. In fact he is famous above all else for being a homosexual. And since his name alone can conjure my past, it was his name I started with, the first entry I looked up in the catalogue. His words began to ghost my writing. (Bartlett, 1988, p.26).

He does not position this experience as unique and nor should he; he is not alone in approaching Wilde's work precisely because Wilde was queer. I myself did the same thing as a teenager with no in-depth knowledge of LGBTQ+ people or history. Wilde remains a cultural touchstone and one of the few authors whose sexuality is not consistently and constantly either omitted entirely or debated during discussions and teaching surrounding his work – although teachers in the UK doubted their ability to mention it during the period in which Clause 28 was in place (UNISON, 2018), banning the 'promoting' of homosexuality (Local Government Act 1988). And yet, as Bartlett laments, 'The Complete Works are not complete' (p.27) when it comes to telling the whole story of Wilde. That is not to say that nothing has improved since Bartlett was writing; Wilde's queerness is less often omitted in overviews of his work where it is not the focal point. There has been progress to uncover and discuss queer figures and subcultures beyond Wilde, creating a broader range for those 'looking for [their] story' to choose from. Yet still, the stigmatisation and erasure of queer history, and the cultural notion of Wilde as *the* gay man (to the exclusion of others) remain relevant.

We can safely label Wilde as a queer author through a presentist lens which allows the application of modern labels to historical figures. That said, we still must acknowledge that our

language for and approach towards sexuality and sexual identity labels is markedly different to that of Wilde's era, and the debate surrounding the more specific labels of gay/homosexual versus bisexual is one which we cannot sufficiently resolve or conclusively claim either way. In this case, 'queer' continues to be a helpful catch-all label.

But what of Stoker and Stevenson? While socially ingrained heteronormativity leads to the default assumption being that an individual is heterosexual until proven otherwise, there is evidence to suggest that both Stoker and Stevenson may have expressed and experienced some degree of attraction to men.

Biographer and scholar of the Gothic David J Skal writes extensively of what the blurb of his book refers to as Stoker's 'ambiguous sexuality' in his biography of the author, although 'ambiguity' in this context is rather heteronormative. Is it ambiguous or are we as a society so invested in the presumption that everyone must be heterosexual until conclusively told otherwise that evidence suggesting homo- or bisexuality – particularly in a context in which any more obvious evidence would have had to be suppressed or hidden – is inherently regarded as ambiguous? But within the over 600 pages which Skal devotes to Stoker's life, he writes that while 'Stoker lived in a time when the lines between same-sex friendship and same-sex sex often blurred, and people didn't necessarily worry about it' (p.100), there is significant evidence to suggest some degree of the non-heterosexual (or perhaps even non-cisgender) about him. Schaffer (1994) is even more direct on the matter, describing Stoker as 'a closeted homosexual man' (p.381). Both Skal and Schaffer address the facts of Stoker's relationships and interactions

not only with Wilde, who remains in a central part of the web which we weave around these texts, authors, and queerness. Schaffer writes:

Wilde's ghost hovers behind all of Stoker's writings on sexuality. He is the absent antagonist of "The Censorship of Fiction" and "The Censorship of Stage Plays." In *Personal Reminiscences* his name has been ostentatiously erased. Although Stoker and Wilde socialized frequently, Stoker never mentions him, even in a twelve-page list of his famous acquaintances. Wilde is a vampire who stalks the margins of Stoker's texts, leaving behind a thread of blood that Stoker tries to staunch with words like "reticent" and "discretion." But how can he be discreet unless he has a secret? And the vampire is famously hard to kill. (p.390)

Much as we should be hesitant to apply the reading strategies which we would apply to fictional characters to real individuals, Sedgwick's concept of triangulated desire, in which women serve as the conduits through which male/male desire and bonds are expressed, is a relevant one when it comes to the Stoker/Wilde relationship. Stoker's wife Florence Balcombe was formerly in a romantic relationship with Wilde, and only ended said relationship once engaged to Stoker (Skal, 2015). Schaffer states that 'Florence became the conduit through which Wilde's and Stoker's complex feelings about each other could flow', making reference to Sedgwick's theories. She remarks that 'the situation was doubly complicated, since Wilde and Stoker also competed for Henry Irving' (p.392): even if Stoker and Wilde were not romantically and/or sexually entangled directly (and whether they were or not is impossible to say), it is not possible to separate their romantic lives. As Schaffer and Skal both suggest that it is Wilde's influence which introduces the implication of homosexuality to the narrative of *Dracula*,

Stoker's relationships with both men are significant to our understanding of the triangle of Stoker, *Dracula*, and queerness.

But it is not just Wilde with whom Stoker had a relationship worthy of analysis. There are multiple other men for whom Stoker expressed or may have experienced passion or desire. One such man is American poet Walt Whitman, another figure noted for his same-sex desire (Schmidgall, 1997; Reynolds, 2020). While Whitman may not have been the subject of a public scandal in the way that Wilde was, there was a degree of acknowledgement that he was engaged in – in the words of Rufus Wilmot Griswold, who reviewed Whitman's poetry collection in 1855 – “that horrible sin not to be mentioned among Christians” (translated and quoted in Skal, 2015). Biographers of Whitman and scholars of his work identify him and his work as queer, to the point that scholar of gay history and literature Rictor Norton describes him as a ‘prophet of gay liberation’ (1999). In an interview featured in LGBTQ+ magazine *Advocate* (Reynolds, 2020), Whitman scholar Mark Doty is quoted as saying ‘people who have sex as Whitman did read his poems. And you know it, you recognize your kinship with him’. The accompanying article's author and moderator of Doty's discussion with queer poet Jericho Brown remarks that ‘[Whitman's] work spoke to and inspired a generation of queer men from that era, among them writers Oscar Wilde and Bram Stoker’.

As a young man, Stoker idolised Whitman and wrote a lengthy letter which has been described by academics and non-academics alike as a ‘love letter’ (Horbelt, 2021; Popova, 2019; Schaffer, 1994; Skal, 2017). Sedgwick remarks that ‘Whitman - visiting Whitman, liking Whitman, giving gifts of "Whitman" - was of course a Victorian homosexual shibboleth, and

much more than that, a step in the consciousness and self-formation of many members of that new Victorian class, the bourgeois homosexual' (2016, p.28), and Stoker certainly liked Whitman. Within this letter are passages which do not so much speak as sing – to use a Whitmanian turn of phrase – of desire and passion. Within this letter, Stoker described himself as 'a man living in an atmosphere prejudiced to the truths you sing and your manner of singing them', but does not elucidate what these 'truths' are. He describes Whitman as 'different from other men' without specifying in what way, and thanks him 'for all the love and sympathy you have given me in common with my kind' without specifying what 'kind' this is. What type of person is Whitman kind and sympathetic to in a way that would prompt thanks from a man whom he has never met? These types of linguistic choices obfuscate in a way that both conceals and reveals. What is it that cannot be said? Or what is it that the speaker is reluctant to say? This same reluctance appears more explicitly later in Stoker's letter:

You have shaken off the shackles and your wings are free. I have the shackles on my shoulders still — but I have no wings. If you are going to read this letter any further I should tell you that I am not prepared to "give up all else" so far as words go. The only thing I am prepared to give up is prejudice, and before I knew you I had begun to throw overboard my cargo, but it is not all gone yet.

Despite this reluctance, he remarks explicitly on his comparative openness, saying 'I have been more candid with you — have said more about myself to you than I have said to anyone before'. But what has he said? Explicitly, very little worthy of being called a secret. Implicitly? Given the context of Whitman as a cultural touchpoint for his queer contemporaries and the 'unspeakableness' of queer sexuality in this cultural moment, it is not a leap to suggest that Stoker's letter is a coming out, in much the same way as E.M. Forster's *Maurice* comes out as

‘an unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort’ (2005, p.138). For both Maurice and Stoker, they look to an older, established queer man to express an identity which they cannot name, providing a cultural reference point and reassurance that they are not an anomaly.

Stoker’s correspondence with Whitman goes beyond simply seeing himself in Whitman, however. He writes:

If I were before your face I would like to shake hands with you, for I feel that I would like you. I would like to call YOU Comrade and to talk to you as men who are not poets do not often talk. I think that at first a man would be ashamed, for a man cannot in a moment break the habit of comparative reticence that has become second nature to him; but I know I would not long be ashamed to be natural before you.

Sinfield (1995) remarks on the fact that art and position as an artist ‘afforded some protection’ (p.198) when it came to queer expression; those with the characteristics associated with homosexuality could avoid a degree of discrimination or suspicion if they invoked the association those characteristics also held with the arts. With this in mind, Stoker’s reference to talking ‘as men who are not poets do not often talk’ is interesting, particularly when compounded with ‘the habit of comparative reticence’ and concept of ‘be[ing] natural before [Whitman]’. Even before Wildean associations linking poets with homosexuality reached their peak, the world of intense emotion and metaphors provided some cover for queerness to be expressed. Poetry provided a convenient cover for expressions of love and lust while maintaining plausible deniability. Given that poetry is explicitly concerned with admirations of beauty, this phrasing becomes even more loaded with that poetic hidden meaning. It is possible that this was a purely platonic interaction, but if so, why the euphemism?

Stoker reads Whitman's work as a queer reader himself and responds in kind. The parasocial relationship (Giles 2002; Horton & Wohl, 1956) which he has developed is one of a man who feels isolated from and different to those around him, and who is reaching out to a man with whom he feels both kinship and camaraderie. Through evidence of Stoker seeing himself in Whitman, queer readers of Stoker's can see themselves in him.

It is notable, too, that it is not solely within academia in which these letters are known. While they are by no means even a fraction as culturally ubiquitous as *Dracula*, Stoker's affection for and letters to Whitman have been referenced on pop culture sites like *The Marginalian* and *The Sun* (Popova, 2019; Jackson, 2020), and on viral posts from social media networks like Tumblr and Twitter. One such post compares Stoker's message to content from the gay dating app Grindr (astrangertomykin, 2019), and has received over 118,000 engagements. With the nature of social media, true engagement levels cannot be fully estimated, but one reproduction of the post on image sharing site iFunny has received over 27,000 likes (marxvalente12, 2019). This indicates a degree of awareness outside of academia, and that the concept of Stoker (and therefore Stoker's writings) as queer is one which has been potentially introduced to the schemas of several thousand readers.

Stoker's potential as a queer figure is acknowledged more broadly across popular media, not solely in conjunction with his relationships with Wilde and Whitman. As the recent BBC television adaptation aired, popular press on multiple occasions included details of Stoker's sexuality. For instance, there was an article in *The Sun* referring to how he 'may have been gay'

and how the ‘hidden sexuality of [the] author shaped [*Dracula*]’ (Jackson, 2020), one in The Daily Mail making reference to ‘theories that the writer was homosexual’ (Simons, 2019), and a piece in Digital Spy which claims that ‘Stoker himself might have been a closeted homosexual’ (Opie, 2020). The point of mentioning all of this is not to say that it must be true merely because these publications have commented on it, but to indicate how this meta-contextually may become a part of a reader’s narrative schemas, particularly if said reader has a vested interest in queer appropriations of and approaches to texts.

With regards to Stevenson, biographer Claire Harman writes that ‘he can’t have been unaware of the homoerotic forcefield he generated. One has to assume that he rather enjoyed it. Stevenson was a man with an insatiable appetite for attention and affection’ (2005, p.212). Whether this is due to a reciprocation or simply a mix of open mindedness and propensity towards being flattered by such affections is not something which can be conclusively claimed either way. One such example of this is found in the recently published correspondence between Stevenson and fellow author J.M. Barrie. One notable line from Barrie to Stevenson reprinted in Michael Shaw’s 2020 collection *A Friendship in Letters: Robert Louis Stevenson & J.M. Barrie* reads ‘To be blunt I have discovered (have suspected it for some time) that I love you, and if you had been a woman...’ with the sentence left unfinished. Even if the man himself were firmly heterosexual, the potential creates a level of appeal and interest for queer readers through the desire for representation and to locate our own histories and legacies (see, for instance, Bartlett, 1988). We are invited to fill in the gaps of the unsaid, and once again the mind jumps to ‘the love that dare not speak its name’. Though Shaw dubbed their relationship a ‘friendship’, many members of the LGBTQ+ community had a different interpretation.

LGBTQ+ news site PinkNews reported on the publishing of these letters, opening with a rather tongue-in-cheek claim that ‘never-seen-before letters reveal JM Barrie telling Robert Louis Stevenson “I have discovered that I love you” – and the only possible explanation is that they were “the greatest of friends”’ (Parsons, 2020). The piece then goes on to embed the comments made about the letters by LGBTQ+ individuals online which read the letters as expressions of same-sex desire, demonstrating and furthering the spread of such interpretations outside of academia. In a similar article for *The Mary Sue*, the letters are described as ‘full of gay longing’ (Weekes, 2020). And while the particular quote focused on most is from Barrie to Stevenson, it is still linked with Stevenson and therefore associates him with queer desire in the consciousnesses of those aware of this particular internet discourse, regardless of whether or not said desire was reciprocated.

Stevenson was not only involved but an active participant in that queer desire, and this was hardly an isolated incident. Kostenbaum (1988) remarks that ‘Robert Louis Stevenson served as a lightning rod for the fantasies of other male writers, some of whom were self-identified homosexuals’. He goes on to cite the literary critic Andrew Lang, who he quotes as saying ‘[Stevenson] looked ... more like a lass than a lad. ...Mr. Stevenson possessed, more than any other man I ever met, the power of making other men fall in love with him. I mean that he excited a passionate admiration and affection, so much so that I verily believe some men were jealous of other men's place in his liking’ (Kostenbaum, 1998). It remains unclear as to whether Stevenson was queer in either sexuality or gender, but he was invested in the idea of male-centric spaces and double lives, surrounded by the love of other men and destabilised the rigid

categories of masculinity and femininity. This cannot definitively be understood to be what we in the twenty-first century would consider to be entirely cisgender and heterosexual.

If we as queer readers approach a text from a particular perspective based on queerness, it is reasonable to assume that writers do the same. Though their contexts are automatically different, it gives credence to the belief that there are hidden queer themes within a text if we believe that the author may have had a vested interest in or inclination towards expressing them.

Homosocial Relationships

Much as the attitudes towards and ability to discuss queerness are culturally, temporally, and contextually dependent, so too are the borders between homosexuality and homosociality: the bonds between men outside of sexual/romantic or familial relationships. What reads to a twenty-first-century reader as leaning more towards the homosexual end of that particular continuum may not have done so for a fin de siècle reader. And in reverse, a twenty-first-century reader's concept of who can be or is queer will likely be more expansive than that of a fin de siècle reader.

But the boundaries between homosexual and homosocial are in constant flux, not just based on temporal or cultural norms, but on far more individual factors. That is to say that even in the same time and place, consistency and rigid boundaries are not guaranteed. Hammarén and Johansson (2019) suggest that there is often 'a blurred boundary and distinction between homosociality and homoeroticism' (p.216). However, there is some resistance to this concept. Britton (1990) posits that higher empirical research shows homosociality correlates with

increased levels of homophobia, suggesting that this ought to be a well-maintained boundary. However, this could easily be interpreted as part of the ‘continuous boundary work being done to uphold and defend the heterosexual order’ (Hammarén and Johansson, 2019, p.216) and in fact reinforce the existence of the ‘invisible, carefully blurred, always-already-crossed line’ (Sedgwick, 1985, p.89) that separates the two and holds the contradictions.

In fiction, however, there is more space to explore potentials along this continuum. It allows for exploration and for more experimental reading strategies, as well as having the ability to apply personal experiences and desires to fill the empty or underutilised spaces. This is most evident in transformative works and adaptations. By their very nature, these works are not claiming to be interpretations of the original text but an answer to these originals containing new elements based on what the creator desires to see. Often, what is desired is romantic relationships.

In her book on fanfiction in a literary context, Pugh (2005) suggests that the popularity of ‘slash fiction’, or fan-written stories which pair two male characters together, was in part influenced by a lack of developed female characters. The practice of ‘shipping’, or desiring to see certain characters together in a romantic and/or sexual relationship, has become even more ubiquitous since Pugh’s book was released; it has entered the mainstream (Arslan, 2021) to the extent that it has changed how those most aware of it engage with texts altogether. The idea of reading for queer relationships, even when there is no subtextual evidence of such, has become far more prevalent. While some fans do still seek subtext as justification and to focus on queer reading through interpretation, others are happy to work on the basis of identification alone:

simply seeing two male characters interacting in a way which they can envision being compelling in a romantic and/or sexual relationship can be enough to prompt the repositioning and reimagining of the homosocial into the homosexual.

In the three texts examined here, homosociality is a prominent feature, albeit to varying degrees. With the exception of Sibyl Vane in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, female characters have very little impact on the main plot. In *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, there are almost no women at all. And in *Dracula*, while Lucy Westenra and Mina Murray are significant characters who are by no means side-lined, the Crew of Light remains male-dominated and the bonds between men form a significant part of the narrative.

The relationships between the trio of central characters in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* are the most important interpersonal relationships within the narrative. Though these relationships have already been discussed as implied homosexual through queer interpretations, addressing them solely at face value as homosocial for the purposes of identifications still does have a level of merit. The world in which they reside is one which bonds between and appreciating the beauty of men is something which is normalised and unremarkable. While a twentieth or twenty-first-century reader may incur some raised eyebrows at the least at comments as passionate as those made by Basil and Lord Henry in relation to Dorian's beauty, there is no accusation made within the text. The particular style of intense friendship predicated on appreciating masculine beauty is enough to potentially strike a chord with queer readers, for whom this behaviour would be either marked or policed either by the self or externally (Maine, 2022; Gorman-Murray, 2012). In this,

it is not solely homosociality but the specific type of homosociality which leads to queer identification via the desire for such utterances to be unremarkable.

In *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, as previously mentioned, women are barely present. The narrative focuses solely on the male characters, with women as incidental figures in the background rather than active agents. Vedeer (2009) asks the question of ‘why are there, for all practical purposes, no women in Stevenson's novella? And why are the major characters, Jekyll, Utterson, and Lanyon, all professional men as well as celibates?’ (p.107). In this regard, these men all have lives almost entirely devoid of meaningful relationships with women. They find their fulfilment only in other men. Whether you believe these men are engaged in any form of queer relationships or not, the mere fact that these relationships between men are prioritised gives the text an appeal when it comes to queer identifications. In this sense, it is easier to imagine changing the -social to -sexual than it is to imagine changing the hetero- to homo- when it comes to seeking and enjoying texts for queer readers. Marks (2018) states that ‘Stevenson creates a homosocial fantasy world of bachelors’ (p.119) in his novella, and goes on to discuss how easily erotic adaptations can be created by focusing in on this fantasy world and tweaking it slightly to become what she terms a ‘homotopia’, a world in which every man can be safely assumed to be interested in other men. These adaptations are evidence of a queer identification in which the homosocial world of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* becomes appealing because of its proximity to homosexuality.

With regards to *Dracula*, the group dubbed the Crew of Light by Craft (1985) is a homosocial space. With her ‘man’s brain’ (p.207), Mina is allowed into this space to some

extent, though she is temporarily expelled or side-lined at multiple points during the narrative in ways in which the men are not. Though Mina and Jonathan are married, and Lucy has three male suitors in whom she expresses interest and who seem to reciprocate, their relationships are not given significant precedence over the bonds between men. Gelder (1994) identifies the bond between Lucy and each of her suitors (and indeed the bonds between men and women in general within the narrative) as secondary to the bonds between the men themselves (p.59). When Lucy's suitors in particular spend more time within the story around each other in ways which are conducive to forming relationships, it is little surprise that these bonds take precedence. We know that Lucy likes each of them and they like her, but we are shown these men interacting with each other and with Van Helsing far more than we are with her. Admittedly, much of this comes down to two factors: social codes at the time regarding appropriate behaviour around unmarried women, and the fact that Lucy spends a significant part of the narrative as the vampirised 'bloofer lady' (p.159). However, the narrative reason for this is not inherently more relevant to the reading process than the awareness that these connections are strong and that the boundaries between homosexual and homosocial are not quite as rigid as some might like to think.

Demonisation and Monstrosity

Transgender author Austin Chant opens his novel *Peter Darling* (2017), a queer identification based adaptation of *Peter Pan*, with the dedication 'This book is for every villain who ever inspired a queer awakening, and for every queer child who ever saw a piece of themselves in the enemy'. This is a particularly meaningful dedication given the ways in which representations of and allusions to queerness have been presented as negative and associated

with undesirable traits. In some cases, this is due to outright homophobia and transphobia from the creator. In others, this is due to legal or social obligations placed upon creators in order to avoid total censorship of their works.

One of the most notable of these forces of censorship comes from The Motion Picture Production Code, known colloquially as the Hays Code, set out to dictate acceptable versus unacceptable depictions within films made in the United States from 1934-1968. Under this code, representation of ‘sexual perversions’ (including any form of queerness) were banned (Chandler and Murray, 2016), and the closest any filmmaker was able to get was to either include coded references that would go unnoticed by censors, or to present those coded allusions to homosexuality in such a way that the portrayal is sufficiently negative (Russo, 1987).

Why is this relevant? There are two reasons.

The first of these comes from Nora Gilbert, who has dedicated much of her scholarly career to examining the ways in which censorship functions in both Hays Code era cinema and Victorian literature. She posits that ‘by studying the implicit injunctions of Victorian morality alongside the explicit edicts of Hollywood’s Production Code, however, we can understand more about both versions of censorship’ (2013, p.3). With this in mind, we can apply discourses surrounding queer representations and readings of film created during the Hays Code to those of texts created during the Victorian era, particularly from a presentist standpoint which allows us to view both through a similar lens. While homoeroticism and intense relationships between men were able to exist in these spaces, it was only so when they had plausible deniability to be read as

heterosexual. In both cases, queerness that was difficult or impossible to deny was unable to be shown in a positive light. It was always to be subtly implied instead of outright stated, and associated with moral failings, monstrosity, evil, and pain in order to be considered socially acceptable enough to reach an audience and avoid legal and social consequences for the creator. A text could not be seen to be putting the idea of queerness into the heads of impressionable audience members or to be promoting it as something positive or even neutral (Kim, 2017; Doherty, 1999).

The second reason to think about the Hays Code and other similar strategies and cultural discourses which limit representations of queerness to something associated with monstrosity is because of their legacies. The Hays Code is no longer in place and we as a culture have come a long way from convictions of gross indecency over even implied homosexual content. However, we still have fictional media – including media aimed at children – which gives its villainous characters traits associated with queerness as a way to signal their deviancy (Li-Vollmer and LaPointe, 2009; Kim, 2017, Feder, 2020). When these early forms of media and genres follow patterns and conventions which were established under implicit or explicit restrictions, Kim (2017) identifies how this ‘set the stage for a culture in which the stereotypical behavior of homosexuals, or any behavior deviating from the traditional gender roles, is seen as dangerous, evil, and even fatal [sic]’ (p.158).

Although it would be remiss of me not to remark that positive representation of LGBTQ+ people has progressed immeasurably over the last twenty years, the associations with deviance are not entirely equalised, and it is not solely fictional media which creates this association

between queerness and monstrosity. For instance, everyone who attended schools in the UK between 1988 and 2003 was taught under the previously mentioned Section 28 (Local Government Act 1988), banning any content or discussion thought to be ‘promoting’ homosexuality. It is *promotion* that was specifically outlawed here; to espouse the message that queerness is wrong, deviant, or even monstrous was perfectly legal, and to counter that message was not. These attitudes were commonplace enough to exist in law for almost fifteen years and for the attempts to repeal said law to fail, and the effects are still felt even today (Todd, 2016). Even today, there is still a problem with the treatment of LGBTQ+ people – especially transgender people – as somehow monstrous or evil (Hickey, 2022; Strudwick, 2022).

It is due to this collective build-up of messages and links that ‘queer viewers are thus more likely than straight ones to experience the monster's plight in more personal, individualized terms’ (p.13) according to Benshoff (1997), a film scholar with a focus on sexuality and horror films. He remarks that frequently, ‘homosexuality is used to further delineate the depravity of the villain’ (p.15), and though this does not seem to hold as true in the 2020s, the association remains. The monster is not evil because he is queer, but he simply happens to be both evil and queer in a narrative in which the non-monstrous characters are not. In isolation, this would be unremarkable, but as Li-Vollmer and LaPointe (2009) suggest, ‘although no single film can suggest anything about the general state of affairs for its genre or filmhood in general, there does indeed seem to be something at work when we look at the selected movies all together’ (p.103). With this repeated trope in place, his initial hypothesis still holds weight.

Above all monsters, there is one which holds the top position when it comes to associations with queerness: the vampire. The vampire has always been a queer figure. They are ‘culturally embedded’ (Gelder, 1994, p.63) as such, ‘queer liberator[s]’ (Hoda, 2019), and ‘metaphors for the place that gays and lesbians held in American culture’ (Primuth, 2014). Benschhoff (1997) identifies the vampire as one of the classic iconographic figures to look to for implicit or explicit gay or bisexual representation within horror (p.48), and this trend provides even stronger reasoning for any depiction of the vampire to be read as queer. If all or most of the vampires a reader has encountered have been coded as queer, the association exists within the schema of the vampire in a reader’s mind and extends to Dracula himself.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the AIDS epidemic and ensuing moral panic changed the way both cisgender heterosexual and queer people across the world viewed queer men in particular (Schüklenk, 2018). It is hard not to see the parallel with the portrayal of the vampire when approaching vampire texts from our current temporal situation. As Lavigne (2004) remarks, ‘It seems impossible that anyone living post-1982 could write about the act of blood drinking and avoid bringing up the subject of HIV – let alone gay and lesbian authors, for whose social communities the disease has had a profound impact’ following the AIDS crisis. And though Lavigne has since been proven wrong in that contemporary vampire portrayals do not always refer to HIV even in passing or through allusions, the point still remains that the concept of infection spread through penetration links both fears around sex between men and the vampire. Though she references only gay and lesbian authors, the same is true of queer readers. Via this commonality, the vampire and the queer man are linked in a post-AIDS reader’s mind whether the author made the link or not; particularly when those readers are queer, and therefore

more likely to be familiar with this stigmatisation. Even in the 2020s, the legacy of the AIDS crisis is still present in LGBTQ+ consciousness and groups, including youth groups. For instance, many sexual health charities with a focus on HIV/AIDS run groups for LGBTQ+ youth (Yorkshire Mesmac, 2021; The Brunswick Centre, 2021), meaning that a degree of the pain and aftereffects of the crisis are still felt by those who did not directly live it. For those without personal experience (either of witnessing the cultural discourse first-hand during the 1980s and 1990s or of living with or knowing someone who lives or lived with HIV), this level of engagement with HIV/AIDS cultural awareness is seemingly specific to those engaged with LGBTQ+ groups and media (Schifano, 2021). This means that the knowledge is more likely to be part of a queer reader's schemas around LGBTQ+ iconography and metaphor, and those readers are then in a position to read *Dracula* as a queer (or queer-adjacent) text.

Not only are vampires in general queered through the AIDS metaphor, but *Dracula* specifically was also queered even before that through his association with Oscar Wilde's public portrayal. The demonisation of Wilde in the popular press following his conviction was expansive and vicious; Talia Schaffer remarks that:

‘[N]ewspaper editorials portrayed Wilde as the modern monster, thereby inventing monstrosity for the new century. The modern monster causes moral harm by perverting cultural or religious ideas. He is associated with dirt and stench. He is artificial rather than natural. Most importantly, his sin is infectious, which marks a departure from the Gothic monster whose horror is underscored by his solitude.’ (p.407).

Schaffer identifies Wilde as one of the key figures inspiring the Count as a character, and it is unlikely to be a coincidence that the monstrosity which characterises *Dracula* was also applied to

Wilde, specifically because Wilde was gay. In this way, monstrosity is queer and queerness is monstrous; textual portrayals of both are inspired and influenced by each other.

In the case of *Dracula*, Stuart (2018) remarks that ‘a melding of biological sex is encoded into the very weapon of the vampire. The “hard” phallic teeth combined with “the soft, shivering touch of the lips,” the focus on blood, temptation, and penetration mark the vampiric mouth as a sexual mixture. This is a transfiguration of the organ, on the border between phallic and vaginal’ (p.220) and that ‘the boundary-crossing that marks these characters as supernatural antagonists extends far beyond gender transformation, but, for a Victorian audience obsessed with taxonomies and sexual categories, it is this trans- impulse that establishes their monstrosities’ (p.221). Part of *Dracula*’s monstrosity comes from destabilising of male/female boundaries through mixed sex characteristics; part of the bigotry and disgust responses towards transgender and intersex individuals has the same cause.

The same is true of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*; the idea that a body is monstrous due to its inability or refusal to stay within predetermined categories or go through a normative process of development is one which holds a lot of resonance for transgender and intersex readers. A body that changes in ways that it should not or does not change in ways that it should is a Gothic trope, and the demonisation of this transformation functions in a very similar way to the demonisation of gender transition. This transgression through bodily change that violates the supposedly natural is present in all three of these texts. Yet in queer readings, this idea is comparatively under-explored compared to readings centring homosexuality.

Two notable film adaptations have been made of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* which take this path: *Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde* (Baker, 1971) and *Dr Jekyll and Ms Hyde* (Price, 1995). *Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde* is a horror film in which Dr Jekyll creates a serum which he hopes will extend his lifespan. He uses hormones from female cadavers in its creation, believing that the women's longer average lifespan will make it more effective, and in taking the serum, both his character and sex are changed. In contrast, *Dr Jekyll and Ms Hyde* is a comedy in which a great-grandson of Dr Jekyll's uses his experiments in the modern day and creates a serum which turns him into a woman. In these films, the incongruities in sex and sexuality are approached from the explicit position that they ought to be either shocking or ridiculous and the audience is encouraged to recoil in horror or openly laugh at the idea of gender and sex transformations and of one body having both male and female traits. In this sense, these adaptations themselves would not class as queer identifications with *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, given the queerness in them is added solely to be a negative trait by cisgender, heterosexual creators for a cisgender, heterosexual audience. They are less about how queer people read and more about how cisgender heterosexual people experience fears and anxieties around transgender existence. Transgender identity could be reclaimed by a viewer of the films, but the existence of the films is not a claiming of queer identity within the original text.

However, the ability for a cisgender heterosexual filmmaker to identify potential transgender themes within the original text does speak to the validity of their presence. Would these adaptations be able to exist were it not for the ability to identify something of the transgender experience within the source material? In Stevenson's original text, Jekyll never

transforms into a woman, but he does transform into a previously secret self with a body seen as unnatural and grotesque, deemed deviant, unacceptable and monstrous by society. This is a description which, as Baker (1971) and Price (1995) are also able to note, could equally be a description of a transgender woman through the eyes of the mainstream. But the location of tragedy – that is to say, whether the true horror is the world that drove Jekyll to split himself rather than accept his whole being or if it is the fact that Jekyll was anything more than a socially normative man – is dependent on the reader's attitudes. Given that LGBTQ+ individuals are more likely to be knowledgeable about, sympathetic towards and supportive of transgender people than cisgender heterosexual people (Warriner et al., 2013), it is statistically more likely that a queer reader response which locates parallels to trans identity in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* will fall into the former rather than the latter.

For the characters undergoing transformations in these adaptations as well as in Stevenson's original text, there is a mix of desire for and fear of that metamorphosis. The Jekyll characters simultaneously both want and do not want to transform and to allow the socially unacceptable side of themselves to be free, albeit in fluctuating degrees. In contrast, Dorian Gray longs not to go through any changes to his physicality. But this, too, is part of what makes him monstrous, and part of what makes him allegorically transgender. Dorian wishes to avoid going through a natural ageing process in a way that is reminiscent of the horror and terror which puberty can inspire in transgender individuals as bodies change without consent or intent. He wishes to separate his body and soul in a way that resonates with both the Victorian idea of inversion - that homosexuality was caused by a female soul existing in a male body - and of the simplified and somewhat reductive notion that transgender people are 'born in the wrong body'.

It is not the transformation or changing of bodies inherently which carries the connotation of monstrosity, but specifically the ways in which bodies act in non-normative or supposedly unnatural ways. The idea of queerness (in terms of both gender and sexuality) as unnatural is a staple in homophobic and transphobic discourses (Fone, 2001) and remains so even well into this decade (Hemmings, 2021); demonisation of 'unnatural' bodies will always be linked with anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments.

Another element of Dorian's monstrosity is far more human than those discussed prior. Dorian's cruelty and his concern with only appearances and pleasure and not with people is one of the few explicit representations of Dorian's sins which we see directly. While much of these actions are hidden behind references to 'scandal' and 'sins', the treatment of others and his hedonistic, superficial attitudes more broadly are not. These aspects of Dorian are in many ways some of the more cruel stereotypes against gay men (Sinfield, 1990). That is not to say that gay men relate to Dorian because they are these things, just as gay men do not relate to the vampire because they are predatory and infect others with blood-borne diseases. Rather, the link comes not from what gay men are, but from what heterosexual society purports them to be.

When it comes to demonisation and monstrosity as a motivation of and source for queer identifications, it is a complex issue. As Benshoff (1997) remarks:

Identification with the monster can mean many different things to many different people, and is not necessarily always a negative thing for the individual spectators in question,

even as some depictions of queer monsters undoubtedly conflate and reinforce certain sexist or homophobic fears within the public sphere. (p.13).

Given that it is common practice for a monster to consciously or unconsciously be given traits which are associated with queerness, this opens up the possibility for queer people to identify with any depictions of monstrosity and of those demonised by society at large. There are too many factors at play for this process to be uniform, but it is a phenomenon which continues to attract study (Wright, 2018).

Social Exclusion and Secret Lives

Even when not outwardly demonised, queerness remains a state of otherness. Even in affirming contexts, the fact that it is outside of and excluded from the mainstream remains a defining factor in conceptualising queerness. Therefore, it is no surprise that queer individuals may gravitate towards and identify with narratives of other outsiders.

I have already addressed the queerness of silence and the unspoken, but it is worth reiterating here. Not only is queerness a form of difference which places queer readers in a position to empathise with other forms of being ‘abnormal’, rejected, or otherwise excluded from society, it is a transgressive behaviour which is still seen as secondary to cisgender heterosexuality. This, in itself, is a form of social exclusion, and one which exists even in spaces which are inclusive of queerness.

I have already discussed censorship banning and limiting media portrayals of queerness, but this is not the only form of relegation and removal which effectively forces LGBTQ+ people

into secret lives and outsider status. The precise figures for how many LGBTQ+ people feel comfortable being open about their identity are difficult to estimate, but research from the UK Government Equalities Office (2018) estimates that up to 70% of LGBTQ+ people feel pressured to hide their sexual orientation in some or all contexts out of fear of negative reactions. The notion of having to hide a part of oneself is something which still resonates with and echoes the experiences of queer people in the twenty-first century.

Dorian Gray is a prime example of this. Even if we were to be confident that he is not engaged in any literal homosexual behaviour, the parallels remain. His 'hidden' self can only exist in his own home, kept behind closed doors. Should anyone perceive even a hint of it, he will be ruined. And it is this fear of discovery which plagues him.

Yet he was afraid. Sometimes when he was down at his great house in Nottinghamshire, entertaining the fashionable young men of his own rank who were his chief companions, and astounding the county by the wanton luxury and gorgeous splendour of his mode of life, he would suddenly leave his guests and rush back to town to see that the door had not been tampered with and that the picture was still there. What if it should be stolen? The mere thought made him cold with horror. Surely the world would know his secret then. Perhaps the world already suspected it. (p.118).

It is specifically the discovery of his transgression which Dorian most fears, that he will somehow be *found out*. The parallel to the closet is evident, and queer readers are most likely able to empathise and recognise a comparable fear, regardless of whether it was intended as such.

We see the same fear in Basil Hallward, although it is harder to read that as something which is not inherently queer, since there seems to be little else that he could mean when he says that he ‘really can’t exhibit [a painting of Dorian]’ and that he has ‘put too much of [himself] into it’ (p.7). While Lord Henry promotes the philosophy that ‘the only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it’ (pp.19-20) and Dorian evidently succumbs to vices, Basil’s life follows the opposite route. He does not yield to his temptations and desires, and instead works to conceal them by refusing to exhibit the painting of Dorian: he claims that ‘the reason [he] will not exhibit this picture is that [he is] afraid that [he has] shown in it the secret of [his] own soul’ (p.9). In order for him to fully recognise this, Basil must be cognisant of not only what that secret is, but that it would be damaging to him for it to be revealed. He recognises that it is socially unaccepted, but his ability to find beauty in those secrets of his soul suggests that it is the consequences he fears rather than the desires themselves. Therefore, Basil must close himself off to those around him and self-monitor in order to maintain his own safety rather than because he is truly ashamed. Here, it is evident that queer interpretations and queer identifications are not mutually exclusive categories but exist on a continuum of queer readings.

Perhaps an even more obvious example of the secret – or double – life is that of Jekyll/Hyde. These themes are central, with Jekyll forced to choose between living a second, secret life and social exclusion. He laments in his final statement how ‘to cast in [his] lot with Jekyll, was to die to those appetites which [he] had long secretly indulged and had of late begun to pamper. To cast it in with Hyde, was to die to a thousand interests and aspirations, and to become, at a blow and forever, despised and friendless’ (p.59). Even if those appetites themselves are not queer, the face of that decision is a familiar one for queer people, particularly when one is aware

that their sexuality or gender is unacceptable to all or most people within a specific context. It is poignant that Jekyll's indulgences, despite his attempt to keep his second life secret, threaten to spill over into his life as the respectable Dr Jekyll, making the situation of attempting both deeply taxing and ultimately unsustainable.

Dracula, too, lives in social exclusion. Harker remarks with surprise and fear about the lack of servants in his castle: 'I went cautiously to my own room and found him making the bed. This was odd, but only confirmed what I had all along thought—that there were no servants in the house' (p.32). His separation from the normative social lives is one which further marks him as a deviant to be feared, yet it is his attempts to enter that normative space which drives the plot of the novel forward. Dracula is monstrous, at least in part, because he seeks to enter the spaces which he is barred from due to his deviant status. Had he stayed in Transylvania, alone and separated from the 'acceptable' society, the events of the novel would never have taken place. We also see this social exclusion in the treatment of those becoming vampirised, primarily Mina. Yet the Crew of Light cannot quite bring themselves to fully exclude her. Mina represents the breaking down of the barriers and codes of social exclusion, the first cracks in the strict moralistic code. She is still not wholly included, but they cannot wholly exclude her either. Isolation, vampirism, and queerness are all tied together.

The notion of social exclusion and secret lives inherently links to the concept of scandal and disclosure. This is a fear which haunts Dorian Gray and Jekyll/ Hyde, and which haunted all queer people of the fin de siècle, whose lives could be destroyed by scandal. In an article on Victorian scandal, Adut (2005) remarks that 'scandals often turn into dramas of disclosure with

no natural limits to what can be made public about the associates of those snarled in them. They can thus end up airing the dirty linen of whole collectivities,' (p.220). That said, queerness was not only act cause of scandal or these 'dramas of disclosure'. Two individuals can have very different reasons for fearing scandal but still be empathetic through personal experience to the reasonings of another. Or, to put it a different way, a queer reader is in a position to understand why and how someone who maintains a secret life for an entirely different reason may want to do so.

Similarly, a queer reader is in a position to empathise with those subjected to social exclusion. This functions similarly to the ways in which queer people may sympathise with monsters but the identification with feelings of exclusion and of not belonging does not come from the same sources. While identifications with monstrosity come from what queer people are told that they are, identifications with social exclusion come far more from queer people's lived experiences.

These four examples are the most evident when it comes to causes for queer identifications within these three texts, but that is not to say that they are the only ones which exist. For instance, though the AIDS metaphor has been discussed in terms of monstrosity, it could also be considered a source of queer identification in its own right and applied to other instances beyond Dracula. Fundamentally, the queer identification originates with external contexts, allegory, metaphor, or experiences which – while not directly queer – resonate with queer people and allow for queerness to be seen within text which may or may not directly include it (explicitly or subtextually). (Sub)cultural engagements play a significant role in the

development of queer identifications, as they typically form the basis for schema development that enables both knowledge and recognition of the external factors contributing to this type of queer reading. While there is not one unifying queer experience, the commonalities and the trends, particularly when it comes to the experience of marginalisation, give particular significance to the factors which enable queer readings. For this reason, looking beyond the direct content of a text itself in order to find queerness is particularly appealing to queer readers. This remains the case even when this is found in marginalisation itself; that is to say, the shared experience between queer people and monsters of being shunned, of being seen as deviant and predatory, of our very existence being a source of both terror and disgust. We see ourselves in queer identifications not because we are directly present, but because we are alike.

Conclusion

Across the different forms of and justifications for queer readings, there is significant evidence that *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and *Dracula* could be read as queer texts, by academics and non-academics alike. One key thing to consider is that these are able to be both interpreted as and identified with as queer, and this framework is one which challenges and adds complexity to the current discussion surrounding queer readings by adding a level of specificity. This framework makes it possible to focus solely on identifications, for instance, and delve deeper into the role of schemas in how marginalised people read. It is, however, not an absolute categorisation, nor is it always completely clear cut; there may be circumstances when a reading has elements which fall into both categories. It is not intended to be restrictive but descriptive, not to create a solid and immovable binary but to attempt to describe specific types of reading in more detail, bringing together reader response and presentist principles in order to do so. It also creates space for marginalised peoples and identities to have their forms of reading recognised and validated beyond the support offered by 'queer readings' as a descriptor. This is particularly true for those outside of the hetero-homo binary or those who are transgender or non-binary and who may be excluded or decentred in traditional discourses around queer readings which originate from queer theory. This is simply a starting point for this greater inclusion; there is much to still be done within the field here.

The differentiation in this framework allows for more clarity when it comes to discussions of readings; it can easily be argued that a transgender reading of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is unfounded, as there is not adequate textual or subtextual evidence.

However, if we specify that this is a transgender identification, the argument against it loses validity. In both cases, much of this is dependent upon individual readers' positions, as is the case with all reader response work. While queer readers can form an interpretive community, there are other factors which contribute to the position from which the reader interprets. Again, this is not meant to be limiting or to imply that queer readings are in any way monolithic, but instead to note trends and potentials which expand how we think about reading methods.

The texts examined here have an established history of being read as queer in order to demonstrate the use of the interpretation/identification framework and to demonstrate that these readings continue to develop beyond the aforementioned history. This thesis synthesises existing arguments and contributes perspectives beyond a solely historicist lens, allowing for direct close reading which comes from reader experience and understandings as well as textual content. This method of reading not only contributes the lens of twenty-first-century queer (sub)cultures to the literary texts, but also provides room to hypothesise, at least in part, why these texts remain so culturally ubiquitous. If we can continue to read them in new or continuously developing ways from our own cultural backgrounds and moments or this background and moment allows us to connect with the original in a specific way – in this context, as queer readers – it legitimises the continued study of both popular texts in general and these texts specifically.

There is space for this framework to be used to analyse other texts which have connections to queer culture, including those with primarily sapphic and transgender readings and significance, and for texts with comparatively less academic recognition for their queer connections and potential. It would also be interesting to see the interpretation/identification

framework applied to other identities and communities or (sub)cultures beyond queerness. This thesis and these texts is a starting point in a new direction, an alley of study off of the main road which has strong potential to lead and connect to other places and journeys.

References

- Adut, A. (2005). A theory of scandal: Victorians, homosexuality, and the fall of Oscar Wilde. *American Journal of Sociology*, 111(1), 213–248.
- Akbar, A. (2009). The top gay icons (straight up!). *The Independent*.
<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/the-top-gay-icons-straight-up-1655362.html>
- Alexander, J. (1999). Beyond identity: Queer values and community. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*, 4(4), 293–314.
- Alhasan, A., & Omar, N. (2020). Empowerment of love for Jane Austen's females: A case of creativity in familiarity. *Arab World English Journal For Translation and Literary Studies*, 4(4), 131–150.
- Alley, H. (2009). The gay artist as tragic hero in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 11(2).
- An, S. (2013). Schema theory in reading. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(1), 130–134.
- Andrews, T. M. (2017). Sales of Orwell's '1984' spike after Kellyanne Conway's 'alternative facts'. *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/01/25/sales-of-orwells-1984-spike-after-kellyanne-conways-alternative-facts/>
- Anselmo, D. W. (2018). Gender and queer fan labor on Tumblr: The case of BBC's *Sherlock*. *Feminist Media Histories*, 4(1), 84–114.

- Arslan, S. (2021). Public pedagogy approach towards online language instruction: Use of fandom with a dialogic perspective. In *Handbook of research on developing a post-pandemic paradigm for virtual technologies in higher education* (pp. 241–260). IGI Global.
- astrangertomykin. (2019). [Tumblr]. *Autumn rain on a foggy day in May*.
<https://astrangertomykin.tumblr.com/post/182918241913/conan-doyles-carnations-cant-believe-bram>
- Bachy, R. (2021). The queer corner | Surprise! Vampires have always been gay. *The Pitt News*. <https://pittnews.com/article/166607/blogs/the-queer-corner-surprise-vampires-have-always-been-gay/>
- Bak, J. S. (2007). *Post/modern Dracula: From Victorian themes to postmodern praxis*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Baker, R. W. (1971). *Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde*. Hammer Film Productions Ltd.
- Bartlett, N. (1988). *Who was that man? A present for Mr Oscar Wilde*. Serpent's Tail.
- Battle, J. J., & Bennett, N. D. A. (2005). Striving for place: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. In A. Hornsby Jr (Ed.), *A companion to African American history*.
- Bell, R. (2020). Dracula writer addresses viewers' shock at vampire being 'bisexual'. *Entertainment Daily*. <https://www.entertainmentdaily.co.uk/tv/bbc-viewers-defend-bisexual-dracula/>
- Benshoff, H. M. (1997). *Monsters in the closet: Homosexuality and the horror film*. Manchester University Press.
- Betsky, A. (1997). *Queer space: Architecture and same-sex desire*. Morrow.

- Björklund, J. (2018). Queer readings/Reading the queer. *Lambda Nordica*, 23(1–2), 7–15.
- Bochman, S. (2005). *Less than ideal husbands and wives: Satiric and serious marriage themes in the works of Jane Austen and Oscar Wilde*. City University of New York.
- Bouet, E. (2018). Utopian leprosy: Transforming gender in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and history in the Strugatsky Brothers' *The Ugly Swans*. In K. Wright (Ed.), *Disgust and desire: The paradox of the monster* (pp. 113–141). Brill Rodopi.
- Box, B. (2019). Why do gay men idolize female pop stars? *IN Magazine*.
<http://inmagazine.ca/2019/10/why-do-gay-men-idolize-female-pop-stars/>
- Boyd, K. (2014). *Making sense of Mina: Stoker's vampirization of the Victorian woman in Dracula*. Trinity University.
- Bracher, M. (2014). *Literature and social justice: Protest novels, cognitive politics, and schema criticism*. University of Texas Press.
- Bristow, J. (2014). Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, and gross indecency. In *Sexual sameness: Textual differences in lesbian and gay writing* (pp. 44–64). Routledge.
- Britton, D. M. (1990). Homophobia and homosociality: An analysis of boundary maintenance. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 31(3), 423–439.
- Brooks, W., & Browne, S. (2012). Towards a culturally situated reader response theory. *Children's Literature in Education*, 43(1), 74–85.
- Burdett, C. (2014). Post Darwin: Social Darwinism, degeneration, eugenics. *The British Library*. <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/post-darwin-social-darwinism-degeneration-eugenics>

- Burton, T. I. (2017). New York's Oscar Wilde Temple makes a saint out of an LGBTQ icon. *Vox*. <https://www.vox.com/identities/2017/9/14/16290048/new-york-oscar-wilde-temple-lgbtq-mcdermott-mcgough>
- Campbell, J. (2008). The beast within: Interpreting Jekyll and Hyde. *The Guardian*. <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/dec/13/dr-jekyll-mr-hyde-stevenson>
- Caprioglio, T. (2021). Does 'queer narrative' mean 'trauma narrative' on TV? Exploring television's traumatized queer identity. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 22(4), 452–464.
- Cardamone, T. (2020). Oscar Wilde is still alive! The best books about Oscar Wilde. *Lambda Literary*. <https://lambdaliterary.mystagingwebsite.com/2020/10/oscar-wilde-2/>
- Cardoso, D., Pascoal, P. M., & Maiochi, F. H. (2021). Defining polyamory: A thematic analysis of lay people's definitions. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 50(4), 1239–1252.
- Chandler, D., & Munday, R. (2016). Hays code. In *A Dictionary of Media and Communications* (2nd edition). Oxford University Press.
- Chant, A. (2017). *Peter Darling*. Less Than Three Press.
- Chauncey, G. (2019). *Gay New York: Gender, urban culture, and the making of the gay male world, 1890-1940*. BasicBooks.
- Claussion, N. (2020). Arthur Conan Doyle's darker mystery. *The Gay & Lesbian Review*, 27(4).
- Clum, J. (2012). *The drama of marriage: Gay playwrights/straight unions from Oscar Wilde to the present*. Springer.
- Cohen, E. (1987). Writing gone Wilde: Homoerotic desire in the closet of representation. *PMLA*, 102(5), 801–813.

- Corlett, M. (2018). Sexual orientation and identity in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. *Literary Cultures*, 1(1), Article 1.
- Craft, C. (1984). 'Kiss me with those red lips': Gender and inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. *Representations*, 1984(8), 107–133.
- Davis, H. H. (2013). 'I seemed to hold two lives': Disclosing circumnarration in 'Villette' and 'The Picture of Dorian Gray'. *Narrative*, 21(2), 198–220.
- Denton, N. R. (2012). Dare not speak its name: Bisexuality in Victorian fin de siècle literature. *Journal of Bisexuality*, 12(4), 461–483.
- Doane, J., & Hodges, D. (1989). Demonic disturbances of sexual identity: The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr/s Hyde. *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, 23(1), 63.
- Doherty, T. P. (1999). *Pre-code Hollywood: Sex, immorality, and insurrection in American cinema, 1930-1934*. Columbia University Press.
- Dollimore, J. (1991). *Sexual dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault*. Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press.
- Doty, A. (1997). *Making things perfectly queer: Interpreting mass culture*. University of Minnesota Press.
- du Plessis, M. (1996). Blatantly bisexual; or, unthinking queer theory. In M. Pramaggiore & D. E. Hall (Eds.), *RePresenting bisexualities: Subjects and cultures of fluid desire* (pp. 19–54). New York University Press.
- Dumortier, L. (2015). Oscar Wilde's multitudes: Against limiting his photographic iconography. *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 58(2), 147–163.
- Durot-Boucé, E. (2001). Sophisticated nourishment in the early Gothic novel: Food for life and death. *Mentalities / Mentalités*, 16, 99–105.

- Dyer, R. (2002). It's in his kiss!: Vampirism as homosexuality, homosexuality as vampirism. In *The culture of queers* (pp. 70–89). Taylor & Francis Group.
- Egan, G. (2013). The presentist threat to editions of Shakespeare. In C. DiPietro & H. Grady (Eds.), *Shakespeare and the urgency of now: Criticism and theory in the 21st century* (pp. 38–59). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Epstein, R., & Friedman, J. (1996). *The celluloid closet*. Sony Pictures Classics.
- Eribon, D. (2004). *Insult and the making of the gay self*. Duke University Press.
- Feder, S. (2020). *Disclosure: Trans lives on screen*. Netflix.
- Felski, R. (2015). *The limits of critique*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Feys, E. (2021). The problem with 'comphet'. *UNDIVIDED BLOG*.
<https://undividedforkuleuven.com/2021/02/10/the-problem-with-comphet/>
- Fish, S. E. (2000). *Is there a text in this class? The authority of interpretive communities*. Harvard University Press.
- Floegel, D., & Costello, K. L. (2019). Entertainment media and the information practices of queer individuals. *Library & Information Science Research*, 41(1), 31–38.
- Foldy, M. S. (1997). *The trials of Oscar Wilde: Deviance, morality, and late-Victorian society*. Yale University Press.
- Fone, B. R. S. (2001). *Homophobia: A history*. Picador.
- Forster, E. M. (2005). *Maurice*. Penguin.
- Freundlieb, D. (1982). Understanding Poe's tales: A schema-theoretic view. *Poetics*, 11(1), 25–44.
- Gagnier, R. (1997). Wilde and the Victorians. In P. Raby (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Oscar Wilde*. Cambridge University Press.

- Gajowski, E. (2010). Beyond historicism: Presentism, subjectivity, politics. *Literature Compass*, 7(8), 674–691.
- Gambino, E. (2020). “A more thorough resistance”? Coalition, critique, and the intersectional promise of queer theory. *Political Theory*, 48(2), 218–244.
- Gelder, K. (1994). *Reading the vampire*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Genç, K. (2012). Coming out of the coffin. *The New Inquiry*.
<https://thenewinquiry.com/coming-out-of-the-coffin/>
- Gilbert, G. (2019). Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss interview: How do you solve a problem like Dracula? *The Independent*. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/features/dracula-bbc-netflix-review-stein-moffat-mark-gatiss-sherlock-a9258606.html>
- Gilbert, N. (2013). *Better left unsaid: Victorian novels, Hays code films, and the benefits of censorship*. Stanford University Press.
- Giles, D. C. (2002). Parasocial interaction: A review of the literature and a model for future research. *Media Psychology*, 4(3), 279–305.
- Giovanelli, M., & Mason, J. (2015). ‘Well I don’t feel that’: Schemas, worlds and authentic reading in the classroom. *English in Education*, 49(1), 41–55.
- Gomel, E. (2004). Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray, and the (un)death of the author. *Narrative*, 12(1), 74–92.
- Gorman-Murray, A. (2012). Queer politics at home: Gay men’s management of the public/private boundary. *New Zealand Geographer*, 68(2), 111–120.
- Government Equalities Office. (2018). National LGBT survey: summary report. *Government Equalities Office*.

- Grady, H. (2009). Presentism, Walter Benjamin and the search for meaning in King Lear. *Shakespeare (London, England)*, 5(1–4), 144.
- Grady, H. (2014). Terence Hawkes and presentism. *Critical Survey*, 26(3), 6–14.
- Greene, T. (2019). Queer cultural archipelagos are new to us. *City & Community*, 18(1), 23–29.
- Grollman, E. A. (2017). Sexual orientation differences in attitudes about sexuality, race, and gender. *Social Science Research*, 61, 126–141.
- Guilbert, G. C. (2018). *Gay icons: The (mostly) female entertainers gay men love*. McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.
- Hajek, C., & Giles, H. (2005). Intergroup communication schemas: Cognitive representations of talk with gay men. *Language & Communication*, 25(2), 161–181.
- Hall, D. E. (2003). Queering the self: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. In *Queer theories*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hammarén, N., & Johansson, T. (2019). The transformation of homosociality. In L. Gottzén, U. Mellström, & T. Shefer (Eds.), *Routledge international handbook of masculinity studies*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Hardin, M. (2009). Was killing the queer author necessary to liberate the queer text?: The case of Andy Warhol's A: A Novel. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 56(2), 218–232.
- Harman, C. (2006). *Robert Louis Stevenson: A biography*. Harper Perennial.
- Hattersley, M. (2014). How gay was Dorian Gray? *The Gay & Lesbian Review*.
<https://glreview.org/article/how-gay-was-dorian-gray/>
- Hemmings, C. (2021). Unnatural feelings: The affective life of 'anti-gender' mobilisations. *Radical Philosophy*, 2.

- heystacks. (2019). Copy of Am I a Lesbian? masterdoc. *heystacks*.
<https://heystacks.org/doc/308/copy-of-am-i-a-lesbian-masterdoc>
- Hickey, S. (2022). UK ‘leads the charge’ in demonising trans people, Natasha Devon declares. *LBC*. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/radio/presenters/natasha-devon/uk-leads-the-charge-in-demonising-trans-people-lgbtq-rights/>
- Hindmarch-Watson, K. (2016). Sex, services, and surveillance: The Cleveland Street scandal revisited. *History Compass*, 14(6), 283–291.
- Hoda, S. (2019). Dracula’s greatest triumph: The vampire as a queer liberator. *Sublime Horror*. <https://www.sublimehorror.com/books/draculas-greatest-triumph-the-vampire-as-a-queer-liberator/>
- Hofmann, M. A. (2018). Johnlock meta and authorial intent in Sherlock fandom: Affirmational or transformational? *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 28.
- Holbo, J. (2008). Shakespeare now: The function of presentism at the critical time. *Literature Compass*, 5(6), 1097–1110.
- Horton, D., & Wohl, R. R. (1956). Mass communication and para-social interaction. *Psychiatry*, 19(3), 215–229.
- Howes, M. (1988). The mediation of the feminine: Bisexuality, homoerotic desire, and self-expression in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*. *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 30(1), 104–119.
- Ibrahim, H. S. A. A. (2019). The Victorian society’s fear of the New Woman in Bram. *Journal of the College of Languages (JCL)*, 39, 165–179.
- Jackson, K. (2020). BBC’s *Dracula*: Everything you need to know from the history of the savage vampire to the drama’s goriest moments. *The Sun*.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/tvandshowbiz/10660291/bbc-dracula-goriest-moments-vampire/>

Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer theory: An introduction*. New York University Press.

Janicki, S. (2019). Our monsters, ourselves: Desire, death and deviance in the Gothic narratives and how they in-form an inquiry of currere. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 34(5), 4–17.

Jasper, M. B. (1994). *'A double monster born dead': The degenerate and the criminal in Victorian Britain*. Kent State University.

Johnson, M. L. (2021). “All art is quite useless” The Gothic doubling of the portrait in Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. *Otherness: Essays and studies*, 8(1), 25.

Juárez, S. F. (2018). Creeper bogeyman: Cultural narratives of gay as monstrous. In K. Wright (Ed.), *Disgust and desire: The paradox of the monster* (pp. 226–249). Brill Rodopi.

Just Like Us. (2021). One in five teachers is uncomfortable discussing LGBT+ topics with pupils, Just Like Us’ poll finds. *Just Like Us*. <https://www.justlikeus.org/single-post/one-in-five-teachers-uncomfortable-discussing-lgbt-topics-with-pupils>

Kheraj, A. (2018). Does it matter who writes queer stories? *i-D*. https://i-d.vice.com/en_uk/article/8xeg4b/does-it-matter-who-writes-queer-stories

Kim, K. (2017). Queer-coded villains (and why you should care). *Dialogues@ RU*, 156–165.

King-Miller, L. (2020). How Tumblr’s ‘Am I a Lesbian?’ Google Doc became internet canon. *Vice*. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/5dzd3k/am-i-a-lesbian-tumblr-google-doc-internet-canon>

- Kingsbury, K. (2021). A history of leather at Pride. *Aphyr*.
<https://aphyr.com/data/posts/358/leather-pride.pdf>
- Kinkly. (2015). What is BDSM capitalization?. *Kinkly.com*.
<http://www.kinkly.com/definition/8493/bdsm-capitalization>
- Klesse, C. (2014). Polyamory: Intimate practice, identity or sexual orientation? *Sexualities*, 17(1–2), 81–99.
- Kniggendorf, A. (n.d.). Fainting in Victorian novels and Victorian life. *NINES*.
https://nines.org/exhibits/Fainting_in_Victorian_Novels_a
- Koestenbaum, W. (1988). The shadow on the bed: Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, and the Labouchere Amendment. *Critical Matrix*, 4(1), 35.
- Kolker, Z. M., Taylor, P. C., & Galupo, M. P. (2020). “As a sort of blanket term”:
 Qualitative analysis of queer sexual identity marking. *Sexuality & Culture*, 24(5), 1337–1357.
- Kubowitz, H. (2012). The default reader and a model of queer reading and writing strategies or: Obituary for the implied reader. *Style*, 46(2), 201–228.
- Kuzmanovic, D. (2009). Vampiric seduction and vicissitudes of masculine identity in Bram Stoker’s ‘Dracula’. *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 37(2), 411–425.
- Lavigne, C. (2004). Sex, blood and (un)death: The queer vampire and HIV. *Journal of Dracula Studies*, 6(4), 1–9.
- Lipton, M. (2008). Queer readings of popular culture: Searching [to] out the subtext. In S. Driver, *Queer youth cultures*. State University of New York Press.
- Li-Vollmer, M., & LaPointe, M. E. (2009). Gender transgression and villainy in animated film. *Popular Communication*, 1(2), 89–109.

- Love, H. (2014). Queer. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 1(1–2), 172–176.
- Maine, A. (2022). Perceptions of violence and the self-regulation of identity for LGBTQ people in the UK. *The Journal of Criminal Law*.
- Marks, L. H. (2018). *Alice in pornoland: Hardcore encounters with the Victorian gothic*. University of Illinois Press.
- Mart, C. (2019). Reader-response theory and literature discussions: A springboard for exploring literary texts. *The New Educational Review*, 56.
- marxvalente12. (n.d.). *IFunny*. <https://ifunny.co/picture/conan-doyles-carnations-can-t-believe-bram-stoker-once-sent-SSf7zRmG7>
- McCann, H., & Monaghan, W. (2020). *Queer theory now: From foundations to futures*. Red Globe Press.
- McCormack, J. (1997). Wilde's fiction(s). In P. Raby (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Oscar Wilde*. Cambridge University Press.
- McCrea, B. (2010). Heterosexual horror: Dracula, the closet, and the marriage-plot. *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, 43(2), 251–270.
- McDermott, M. (2021). The (broken) promise of queerbaiting: Happiness and futurity in politics of queer representation. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 24(5), 844–859.
- McKenna, N. (2006). *The secret life of Oscar Wilde*. Basic Books.
- Megarry, D. (2020). Viewers defend Dracula being 'bisexual' in terrifying new BBC series. *GAY TIMES*. <https://www.gaytimes.co.uk/culture/viewers-defend-dracula-being-bisexual-in-terrifying-new-bbc-series/>

- Mercurio, M. (2019). Fearful desire: Male homoeroticism in vampire media from Dracula to The Lost Boys. *Sublime Horror*. <https://www.sublimehorror.com/books/fearful-desire-male-homoeroticism-in-vampire-media-from-dracula-to-the-lost-boys/>
- Mewald, K. (2008). The Emancipation of Mina? The Portrayal of Mina in Stoker's Dracula and Coppola's Bram Stoker's Dracula. *Journal of Dracula Studies*, 10.
- Michelson, M. R., & Harrison, B. F. (2020). *Transforming prejudice: Identity, fear, and transgender rights*. Oxford University Press.
- Miller, A. (2020). So what if Dracula is gay? *Metro*. <https://metro.co.uk/2020/01/02/calling-dracula-gay-vampire-totally-misses-point-11991772/>
- Miller, D. A. (1989). *The novel and the police* (Reprint). University of California Press.
- Milton, J. (2019). BBC's new Dracula is 'bi-homicidal' not bisexual. Yes, really. *PinkNews*. <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2019/12/28/bbcs-new-dracula-is-bi-homicidal-not-bisexual-yes-really/>
- Muskovits, E. (2010). The threat of otherness in Bram Stoker's Dracula. *TRANS-*, 10.
- National Defense Research Institute. (2010). The history of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell". In *Sexual Orientation and U.S. Military Personnel Policy* (pp. 39–68). RAND Corporation.
- Nichols, B. (2020). *Same old: Queer theory, literature and the politics of sameness*. Manchester University Press.
- Norton, R. (1999). Walt Whitman, prophet of gay liberation. *Gay History and Literature*. <http://rictornorton.co.uk/whitman.htm>
- Norton, R. (2002). Queer subcultures. *A Critique of Social Constructionism and Postmodern Queer Theory*. <https://rictornorton.co.uk/social27.htm>

- O’Callaghan, C. (2020). ‘Pronouns are problematic’: The trans* body and gender theory; or, revisiting the Neo-Victorian Wo/Man’. *Neo-Victorian Studies*, 13(1), 75–99.
- O’Connor, S. (1998). *Straight acting: Popular gay drama from Wilde to Rattigan*. Cassell.
- Opie, D. (2020). Is BBC’s Dracula gay, or very gay? *Digital Spy*.
<https://www.digitalspy.com/tv/a30415965/dracula-bbc-tv-gay-lgbtq-queer-netflix/>
- Parker, O. (2009). *Dorian Gray*. Momentum Pictures.
- Parsons, V. (2020). JM Barrie told Robert Louis Stevenson he loved him. Apparently, it’s because they were ‘great friends’. *PinkNews*.
<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/10/25/jm-barrie-robert-louis-stevenson-letters-eter-pan-i-love-you/>
- Pennington, S. (2009). Bisexuals “doing gender” in romantic relationships. *Journal of Bisexuality*, 9(1), 33–69.
- Perez-Brumer, A., Hatzenbuehler, M. L., Oldenburg, C. E., & Bockting, W. (2015). Individual- and structural-level risk factors for suicide attempts among transgender adults. *Behavioral Medicine*, 41(3), 164–171.
- Planned Parenthood. (n.d.). What does queer mean? Planned Parenthood.
<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/teens/sexual-orientation/what-does-queer-mean>
- Poletti, J. (2021). *The queer life of Bram Stoker*. Medium.
<https://medium.com/queertheory/the-sexuality-of-bram-stoker-8aacd96cc74d>
- Popova, M. (2019). “Dracula” author Bram Stoker’s extraordinary love letter to Walt Whitman. *Brain Pickings*. <https://www.brainpickings.org/2019/01/09/bram-stoker-walt-whitman-letter/>

- Potter, T. (2022). Queer literacies: Queer objects, disorientation, and sponsors of literacy. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 54(1), 98–106.
- Price, D. (1995). *Dr Jekyll and Ms Hyde*. Savoy Pictures.
- Primuth, R. (2014). Vampires are US. *The Gay and Lesbian Review*.
<https://glreview.org/article/vampires-are-us/>
- Pugh, S. (2005). *The democratic genre: Fan fiction in a literary context*. Seren.
- Raga, P. (2020). TikTok has officially discovered the Lesbian Masterdoc. *Distractify*.
<https://www.distractify.com/p/am-i-a-lesbian-masterdoc-tiktok>
- Ravenhill, M. (2013). An appreciation: Oscar Wilde: The art of the sodomite. In K. Powell & P. Raby (Eds.), *Oscar Wilde in context* (pp. 1–3). Cambridge University Press.
- Reyes, X. A. (2017). Dracula queered. In R. Luckhurst, *The Cambridge companion to 'Dracula'* (pp. 125–135). Cambridge University Press.
- Reynolds, D. (2020). Why Walt Whitman, 'America's poet,' was a queer pioneer. *The Advocate*. <https://www.advocate.com/books/2020/7/03/why-walt-whitman-americas-poet-was-queer-pioneer>
- Rich, A. (1980). Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. *Signs*, 5(4), 631–660.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3173834>
- Robb, G. (2005). *Strangers: Homosexual love in the nineteenth century*. W.W. Norton & Company.
- Robinson, E. (2017). *Bodies and money: Mapping homosexual interactions in late-Victorian London*. Skidmore College.
- Rohy, V. (2014). *Lost causes: Narrative, etiology, and queer theory*. Oxford University Press.

- Rohy, V. (2016). Strange influence: Queer etiology in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. In R. Warhol & S. S. Lanser (Eds.), *Narrative theory unbound: Queer and feminist interventions* (pp. 275–292). Ohio State University Press.
- Rosenberg, R. (2021). Psychic geographies of queer multiculturalism: Reading Fanon, settler colonialism and race in queer space. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 39(6), 1129–1146.
- Ross, E. (2019). *The elephant in the room: Authorship, queerbaiting and Sherlock*. London College of Communication.
- Royer, C. E. (2018). *Convictable faces: Attributions of future criminality from facial appearance*. Cornell University.
- Russo, V. (1987). *The celluloid closet: Homosexuality in the movies*. Harper & Row.
- Sanna, A. (2012). Silent homosexuality in Oscar Wilde's *Teleny* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. *Law and Literature*, 24(1), 21–39.
- Saslow, J. M. (1986). *Ganymede in the Renaissance: Homosexuality in art and society*. Yale University Press New Haven.
- Schaffer, T. (1994). 'A Wilde desire took me': The homoerotic history of *Dracula*. *ELH*, 61(2), 381–425.
- Schifano, I. (2021). It's A Sin taught me more about LGBTQ+ history and sex education than school ever did. *The Tab*. <https://thetab.com/uk/2021/01/25/its-a-sin-taught-me-more-about-lgbtq-history-and-sex-education-than-school-ever-did-191697>
- Schippers, M. (2016). *Beyond monogamy: Polyamory and the future of polyqueer sexualities*. New York University Press.

- Schmidgall, G. (1997). *Walt Whitman: A gay life*. Dutton.
- Schüklenk, U. (2018). *AIDS: Society, ethics and law*. Routledge.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1985). *Between men: English literature and male homosocial desire*.
Columbia University Press.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1990). *Epistemology of the closet*. Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1994). *Tendencies*. Routledge.
- Seidman, S. (2009). Critique of compulsory heterosexuality. *Social Policy*, 6(1), 11.
- Seidman, S. (2011). Class matters ... but how much? Class, nation, and queer life.
Sexualities, 14(1), 36–41.
- Shaw, A., & Persaud, C. J. (2020). Beyond texts: Using queer readings to document
LGBTQ game content. *First Monday*, 25(8).
- Shaw, M. (2020). *A friendship in letters: Robert Louis Stevenson & J.M. Barrie*. Sandstone
Press.
- Short, M. (1996). *Exploring the language of poems, plays, and prose*. Longman.
- Showalter, E. (1999). Dr Jekyll's closet. In *Sexual anarchy: Gender and culture at the fin de
siècle* (pp. 105–126). Viking.
- Simons, R. (2019). BBC's Dracula adaptation implies the vampire sleeps with both men and
women. *Mail Online*. [https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-7784579/BBCs-
Dracula-adaptation-implies-vampire-sleeps-men-women.html](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-7784579/BBCs-Dracula-adaptation-implies-vampire-sleeps-men-women.html)
- Sinfield, A. (1994). *The Wilde century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde and the queer moment*.
Cassell.
- Skal, D. J. (2017). *Something in the blood: The untold story of Bram Stoker, the man who
wrote Dracula*. Liveright.

- Slyter, R. S. (2021). "Mirrors can give us space to imagine..." *Representations of gender and sexuality in BBC's Dracula (2020)*. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
- Smith, D. (1998). 'Queer theory' is entering the literary mainstream. *The New York Times*.
<https://www.nytimes.com/1998/01/17/books/queer-theory-is-entering-the-literary-mainstream.html>
- Spoerhase, C. (2008). Presentism and precursorship in intellectual history. *Culture, Theory and Critique*, 49(1), 49–72.
- Sprott, R. A., Vivid, J., Vilkin, E., Swallow, L., Lev, E. M., Orejudos, J., & Schnittman, D. (2020). A queer boundary: How sex and BDSM interact for people who identify as kinky. *Sexualities*, 24(5–6), 708–732.
- Steinmeyer, J. (2013). *Who was Dracula?* Penguin Publishing Group.
- Stevenson, R. L. (2006). *Strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and other tales*. Oxford University Press.
- Stewart, A. J., & Valian, V. (2018). Understanding inequities: The role of schemas. In *An inclusive academy: Achieving diversity and excellence* (pp. 71–119).
- Stinson, C. (2021). The dark past of algorithms that associate appearance and criminality: Machine learning that links personality and physical traits warrants critical review. *American Scientist*, 109(1).
- Stockwell, P. (2013). The positioned reader. *Language and Literature*, 22(3), 263–277.
- Stockwell, P. (2020). *Cognitive poetics: A new introduction* (2nd edition). Routledge.
- Stoker, B. (1997). *Dracula*. W.W. Norton.

- Strudwick, P. (2022). How ‘groomer’, the dangerous new anti-LGBT slur from America, is taking hold in Britain. *i News*. <https://inews.co.uk/news/long-reads/groomer-new-lgbt-slur-ignite-hatred-spark-violence-1585179>
- Stuart, T. M. (2018). Out of time: Queer temporality and eugenic monstrosity. *Victorian Studies*, 60(2), 218.
- Tempesta, E. (2020). 21-year-old pens guide to lesbianism for tens of thousands of women. *Mail Online*. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-8475881/Viral-30-page-Google-Doc-lesbianism-turns-guide-women-questioning-sexuality.html>
- The Bookish Type. (n.d.). Search: Dorian Gray. *The Bookish Type*. <https://thebookishtype.co.uk/search?q=dorian+gray&type=product>
- The New York Times Company. (2001). *The New York Times Company 2001 annual report*.
- Thurman, T. (2020). Gender-bending a classic literary monster in ‘Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde’. *Bloody Disgusting!*. <https://bloody-disgusting.com/editorials/3602425/horror-queers-dr-jekyll-sister-hyde/>
- Todd, M. (2016). *Straight jacket*. Bantam Books.
- Tringali, W. A. (2016). *Not just dead, but gay! Queerness and the vampire*. Bridgewater State University.
- UNISON. (2018). LGBT History Month helps us challenge prejudice. *UNISON National*. <https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2018/02/lgbt-history/>
- van Dijk, N., & Wieling, W. (2009). Fainting, emancipation and the ‘weak and sensitive’ sex. *The Journal of Physiology*, 587(Pt 13), 3063–3064.

- Veeder, W. (2009). Children of the night: Stevenson and patriarchy. In H. Bloom (Ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson* (pp. 103–158). Chelsea.
- Ventriglio, A., Castaldelli-Maia, J. M., Torales, J., De Berardis, D., & Bhugra, D. (2021). Homophobia and mental health: A scourge of modern era. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*, 30.
- Walsham, A. (2017). Introduction: Past and ... Presentism. *Past & Present*, 234(1), 213–217.
- Warriner, K., Nagoshi, C. T., & Nagoshi, J. L. (2013). Correlates of homophobia, transphobia, and internalized homophobia in gay or lesbian and heterosexual samples. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 60(9), 1297–1314.
- Weekes, P. (2020). JM Barrie and Robert Louis Stevenson's lost letters are full of gay longing. *The Mary Sue*. <https://www.themarysue.com/jm-barrie-robert-louis-stevenson-letters-gay-longing/>
- Wilde, O. (2007). *The picture of Dorian Gray: Authoritative texts, backgrounds, reviews and reactions, criticism*. W. W. Norton & Co.
- Wilper, J. P. (2016). A tough act to follow: Homosexuality in fiction after Oscar Wilde. In *Reconsidering the emergence of the gay novel in English and German* (pp. 137–152). Purdue University Press.
- Wilson, J. R. (2019). Historicizing presentism: Toward the creation of a Journal of the Public Humanities – Profession. *Journal of the Public Humanities*.
- Wright, K. (2018). *Disgust and desire: The paradox of the monster*. Brill Rodopi.
- Younge, G. (2013). The margins and the mainstream. In *Museums, Equality and Social Justice* (Vol. 1–Book, Section, pp. 105–113).