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關於非人類族群：

解析《德古拉》與《莫羅博士島》中人類與非人類的等級制度

Concerning Nonhuman Folk:

Dismantling the Human/Nonhuman Hierarchy in

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and H.G. Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau*

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摘要

本論文擬從進化論的角度探討維多利亞時期的文學作品如何挑戰人類中心主義思想。在此框架下，本文主要的研究文本為布拉姆·斯托克（**Bram Stoker**）的《德拉庫拉》（*Dracula*）和 H·G·威爾斯（**H.G. Wells**）的《莫洛博士島》（*The Island of Doctor Moreau*）。筆者聚焦查爾斯·達爾文（**Charles Darwin**）的進化論，考察在人類和非人類生物邊界的相互交織之下，闡明兩部小說中人類和非人的本體論之別實則沒有那麼大。人和其它生物並舉，讀者的視野在兩者的邊界間，因此對所有生命都產生更深刻的共情。本文亦展現了從人類中心主義剝離的傾向。

關鍵詞： 布拉姆·斯托克，《德拉庫拉》，《莫洛博士島》，H·G·威爾斯，查爾斯·達爾文，進化論。



Abstract

My intention in this thesis is to examine how literature uses evolutionary theory discourse to challenge the anthropocentric mindset from the Victorian period. This thesis will analyze two primary texts in this context: Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) and H.G. Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896). This thesis mainly focuses on Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. I am interested in investigating the permeability of the boundaries between humans and nonhumans and illustrating how the ontological divide between the two sides is closer than it may seem in these two novels. By juxtaposing the human and nonhuman species while seeing how pervious the boundaries between them are in these texts, our empathy towards all beings is increased. This thesis demonstrates a desire to depart from anthropocentrism.

Keywords: *Dracula*, Bram Stoker, *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, H.G. Wells, Charles Darwin, Evolution.



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Chapter One: Introduction

I. Background and Motivation

My intention in this thesis is to examine how literature uses evolutionary theory discourse to challenge the anthropocentric mindset from the Victorian period. This thesis will analyze two primary texts in this context: Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) and H.G. Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896). This thesis mainly focuses on Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. I am interested in investigating the permeability of the boundaries between humans and nonhumans and illustrating how the ontological divide between the two sides is closer than it may seem in these two novels. By juxtaposing the human and nonhuman species while seeing how pervious the boundaries between them are in these texts, our empathy towards all beings is increased. This undermines the hierarchy between humans and animals.

This thesis thus demonstrates a desire to depart from anthropocentrism, and raises several questions: What do we exclude from our social circle of sympathy? Do what we view as outcasts define what is it like to be human as well? Why is it significant to view the world from a nonhuman perspective and probe into this subject of blurring the boundaries between human and nonhuman? What exactly makes humans so special? Why should we empathize with other species? These questions will be explored by first looking into the works within the context of scholarship on evolution and literature. I will conclude my thesis and fulfill its aim: to promote how interconnected all beings are and thus encourages empathy and compassion towards all beings.

II. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

1. Evolution and Literature

Scholarship on evolution and literature addresses how Charles Darwin's evolutionary theories shifted the Victorian idea of what is it like to be a human, displacing human's superior position in nature. Gillian Beer and George Levine have written classic texts in this scholarly tradition. According to Beer, "[t]hroughout [Darwin's] use of metaphor and analogy one can feel the double stress – the attempt to create exact predications and the attempt to press upon the boundaries of the knowable within a human order. His text is an unusually extensive fiction – one which deliberately extends itself towards the boundaries of the literally unthinkable, which displaces the absoluteness of man's power of reason as an instrument for measuring the world" (92). In other words, Darwin dismantles the idea of how humans are the center of the universe and eliminates an anthropocentric worldview. He challenges both traditional understandings of the natural world and the social and cultural order of the Victorian Period. His evolutionary theory opened a space to explore the progress of change, possible effects of degeneration, and how human morals interfere with the natural order for their best interests. Beer explores how Darwin's theory also led to many inspirations in literature with "particular implications for narrative and for the composition of fiction" because of the "imaginative development of his ideas" (5, 27). This is exemplified in all two of the novels in this thesis.

Illustrating Darwin's point of view, Levine indicates how Darwin's theory may appear close to natural theology. For example, both have a similar idea towards adaption for "survival and development" (43). Nevertheless, Darwin refuses the idea of the world having a certain law or plan. Levine observes how all living things in Darwin's world are in relation to each other, and all these things and relations change: "everything is always or potentially changing, and

nothing can be understood without its history.” Furthermore, “[t]he earth and all of its local ecological conditions are shifting” (18). Darwin asserts that humans are not in control, but subject to a larger ecological system. He brings apprehension to the world as he raises awareness of how the world is not designed with “an all -provident creator, but waste, loss, trial and error, the absence of design” (43). Darwin refuses to view how “all phenomena... [are] designed and teleological,” and rejects how natural theology sees the world as a “perfectly adapted and benevolent” world (43). The observation made by Darwin challenges the belief in religion, and “displaces god as [the] designer” (50). This in turn challenges the anthropocentric worldview and reiterates how the world exceeds human control.

For more recent work on Darwin and his impact, I will also consider Elizabeth Grosz. Grosz offers a perspective on Darwin’s attempt to dismantle the hierarchy between humans and animals. In *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely*, Grosz states that mankind, animals, and plants are all part of an “interlocking” system, and Darwin’s *The Descent of Man* leads to the conclusion that “man, too, must be considered part of the world of animals and of nature... a vast interlocking of species, varieties, plants, and animals, whose only missing component was man” (57). Grosz remarks that Darwin’s purpose in *The Descent of Man* is to suggest how humans belong to a dynamic world full of sexual and racial differences. The variations of beings, along with natural and sexual selection, link man to the natural world. This leads to a break between the barriers within all living organisms: “Man’s relation to the natural world is one of containment (man is in a dynamic and ever-changing natural milieu) and one of degree (man’s resemblances to and affinities with the natural world are greater than his divergences from it)” (57). Grosz further elaborates on an opened-ended possibility in life, and like Levine, emphasizes the unpredictability and constant change of life. She draws on Darwin’s

theory of natural selection and sexual selection, stating how life is filled with “dynamism, growth, and transformability of living systems, indeed the impossibility of stasis and mere reproduction, the impulse toward a future that is unknown in and uncontained by the present and its history” (32). She offers this notion that life is full of living systems, and how life is unpredictable, and always shifting and changing.

The works of Darwin, and the publications inspired by his concepts, draw attention to diminishing the distinction between the human and animal and implicitly reject anthropocentrism. They suggest the displacement of human’s place in nature and illustrate humans’ lack of control over their fate. Humans are just an outcome of random occurrences, just like the animals on earth. This led to an unnerving feeling felt by humanity towards Darwin’s evolutionary theories – a fear of backward progress, instead of constant evolution. All three novels can be read as exploring the same questions that Beer, Levine, and Grosz raise.

Darwin’s evolutionary theory of the struggle for existence and sexual selection can be seen among the vampires and human characters in *Dracula*. This helps illustrate an even level among both species and removes humans from a superior status. Without question, Stoker directly draws on Darwin’s concepts in his novel. It can be seen in this novel, when it even demonstrates an animal-like competition between the human and vampire species — just like what Darwin proposed in *On The Origin of Species* when animals compete and “struggle for existence” (109). By constantly comparing his characters with animals or describing them using animalistic features, Stoker has the characters in the novel mirror the way animals would compete and successfully produce offspring. The novel does not just focus on the humans but also centers around Dracula and his species struggling to survive along with the human characters. Both species are struggling to survive.

How Dracula wants to “defeat” or “outbreed” the human species also reflect what Darwin calls in *The Descent of Man* “the principle of sexual selection.” He writes how this “depends on the advantage which certain individuals have over others of the same sex and species solely in respect of reproduction” (230). Dracula has the advantage of being a vampire, with many skills and superpowers, so he has the upper hand in sexually selecting female humans compared with the males of the human species. This means Dracula can use his advantageous traits in the environment they are in to get to the female characters first. The mixing of blood with each other can symbolize a sense of “mating” or “marriage” between the two organisms. Sexual selection occurs when the males depending on “the advantage which certain individuals have over others” could mate with the females of their choice first (230). The character of Dracula is a perfect example. Because of the special and advantageous traits that he has over humans, he pursues Mina. In addition, as Stoker also illustrates this constant comparison between humans to animals, sexual selection can also be seen in the human characters. The human male characters also pursue Lucy secretly behind each other to transfuse blood. This reiterates how both the human and non-human characters perform the sexual selection. Stoker undercuts the barriers between humans and nonhumans, illustrating how they behave similarly. How the characters try to survive among each other, along with sexual selection, all resemble a striking parallel of Darwin’s research.

This novel, by showing Darwin’s concept of the struggle for existence and sexual selection between the characters, presents a world that illustrates what Grosz mentions in *Becoming Undone: Darwinian Reflections on Life, Politics, and Art*: Through natural and sexual selection, life “envelop[es] forces that make up the environment of a living being with the forces of attraction and appeal to create individuals and species” (3). In addition, the life here “does not

privilege humans as the aim or end of evolution, but sees the human as one among many species”

(3). Stoker’s text also depicts humans as one of the species that play a role in sexual selection and creating a new being. The role they play is equal to the vampires, and humans are not at the center of life.

The Island of Doctor Moreau similarly allows us to probe into the nonhuman's perspective when we see Doctor Moreau performing vivisections on animals on an island where there are only three humans: Doctor Moreau, Montgomery, and Prendick. Prendick even becomes the outcast and finds himself in danger. He is not the superior species anymore. The "struggle for existence" presented in *Dracula*, is also reflected in Wells’ novel through the struggle to survive on the island among the humans and nonhumans. Prendick must conform to a nonhuman society and try to survive among the beast folk. Furthermore, Wells allows us into the perspective by constantly blurring the human and nonhuman characters by having the human characters act like certain animals. Virginia Richter elaborates how Wells’ depiction of the interaction between the humans and the animals shows a perfect example “of a post-Darwinian negative anthropology in which the fear that humans are really animals is, in the end, not alleviated but confirmed” (100). This corresponds to the end of the novel when Prendick himself reaches the state where he is “hovering... between animality and humanity” (105). Consequently, Richter concludes that “[t]he difference[s] between humans and animals is progressively erased” in the text (104). Richter’s analysis, along with the “struggle for existence” seen between the characters, leads us to reconsider the hierarchy between the human and nonhuman characters in the novel. These readings reinforce how Wells’ novel indicates a blurred boundary between the two sides, and that the nonhumans are not at a lower rank at all.

Rob Boddice remarks how the practice of vivisection was against “Darwin’s morality” and notes that vivisection was not focused on the pain of the animals, as “[s]ympathy in the immediate setting of the laboratory was therefore rationally limited” (86, 88). The focus was on trusting the scientist performing the procedure “for the good of everybody” (87). Boddice comments how the kind of scientists he describes is reflected in Doctor Moreau, and “sympathetic pain in the laboratory [is] shut off” in the novel (61). What Doctor Moreau “switch[es] off is sympathy,” and he “fail[s] to retain a grip on the moral purpose of this emotional control” (61). Therefore, Doctor Moreau, who has no sympathy and disregards the pain of others, becomes the monster in this story. Doctor Moreau is not the only one who ignores the agony of the animals being experimented on. Prendick also does not show empathy when he hears “the pitiful moaning of the puma” that was being experimented on (47). In addition, this “pitiful moaning” is also repeated in the novel to remind us of the animal’s pain.

This decenters the human and puts forth how humans are not the only ones that experience such senses or feelings. This illustrates how not only does Wells draw on Darwin’s concept of survival, but he also conveys what Darwin speaks of in *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. Darwin writes and records a list of emotions that not just humans, but animals also experience, such as fear, anxiety, guilt, surprise, and shame. Regarding emotions, he clearly states in *The Descent of Man* how animals, “like man, manifestly feel pleasure and pain, happiness and misery” (214). Wells, acknowledging Darwin’s findings, seeks to deliver how the animals being experimented on by Doctor Moreau also – like the human characters – feel emotions and pain. As a result, Wells demonstrates how Darwin’s writings marked importance by encouraging sympathy and empathy toward nonhuman animals.

2. Degeneration Theories

Recent scholarship on degeneration, like that by Ann-Barbara Graff, reveals how the concepts of evolution "problematized the prevailing Victorian idea about the inevitability of progress by arguing that evolution causes change and adaptation, but not necessarily progress and never perfection. Evolution spawned a sense of impotence and a frenzy of activity in the face of fears about degeneration and decline" (48-49). Ray Lankester's *Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism*, published in 1880, signals this pessimistic reading of Darwin's theory of evolution. Although a supporter of Darwin's theory, Lankester proposes this new concept of "degeneration," stating how it is "a gradual change of the structure in which the organism becomes adapted to less varied and less complex conditions of life" (32). For Lankester, evolution is not always an improvement. The idea of degeneration was familiar during the late-Victorian period, and many other works regarding degeneration were published. For example, Henry Maudsley was another key figure that popularized this concept by stating that there will always be a potential for more "varied degeneration," since there is a potential for complex progressive development (242). He outlines a "guilty degradation" of animal nature in humans and explains how because of this guilt, might turn people from "the wrong way of degeneration and urge [them] to pursue the right way of evolution" (242). Fears of having a certain aspect of animality in humans, like Maudsley's, were widespread after Darwin's theory. Both *Dracula* and *The Island of Doctor Moreau* are filled with this notion where the nonhuman characters are illustrated with animality or as degenerative forms of humankind.

Valerie Pedlar is one of the scholars that has read the vampires of *Dracula* as degenerate forms. She remarks how "[t]hrough the excessive egoism of the figures of both Dracula and Renfield...the novel articulates symbolically the fears of degeneracy that were so prevalent in the

last quarter of the nineteenth century” (139). Therefore, it is the humans’ responsibility to stop this degeneracy from spreading. For example, Dr. Seward tries to figure out his patient, Renfield, to cure. Pedlar signals how by depicting Dracula and Renfield as degenerates, Stoker pushes the “[r]esponsibility for the degeneracy” to the “outsider, who becomes a scapegoat for the ills of modern society” (140). Both nonhumans demonstrate degenerates and outcasts of society. Tim Youngs also confirms how *Dracula* “shares with many contemporary texts a morbid fascination with degeneration and atavism marked by the assumption of animal characteristics” (75).

However, the text does not settle for the “straightforward opposition between the human and bestial or the uncomplicated posing of an unanswerable question about where the animal ends and the human begins” that we find in several other works regarding degeneration (78). Youngs concludes that the only reason why the human characters in the novel are perceived as “winners” against the vampire is because they believed in faith and spirituality. Having faith and spirituality elevates the human characters to more superior and moral status, hence giving them the upper hand to defeat the vampire. Otherwise, the malleability of Dracula’s identity complicates his ontological being, and he is not to be viewed as a lower rank compared to the human characters.

My own view echoes with Youngs in how Dracula’s elasticity in shifting into both living and nonliving organisms makes his identity confusing. First, Dracula is not only seen as a nonhuman vampire but as a human breeder too. He strategically hand picks whom to feed on and reproduce with next. When he pursues Mina, he clearly states how he picks her because she otherwise would help the men to “hunt” him (267). He chooses her to mate and breed with. Furthermore, Professor Van Helsing remarks on how Dracula morphs into animals: “he can transform himself to wolf...[and] he can be as bat” (223). Dracula himself crosses the boundaries back and forth when he morphs into different animals. Nonetheless, he complicates the

nonhuman and human blend when he does not just identify with animals, he also acts as a human-like entity with magical powers as Van Helsing points out Dracula's complicated ontological being: "he is brute, and more than brute" and "he is devil" (221). He explains how "he can, within his range, direct the elements: the storm, the fog, the thunder; he can command all the meaner things: the rat and the owl, and the bat—the moth, and the fox and the wolf" (221). He does not just become the animal, he commands them.

Yet Dracula complicates the boundaries even more: he can shapeshift and change his being into mists or smoke as the professor further notes how "he can come in mist which he create" (223). This complicates Dracula's identity as he is not just crossing the boundaries between humans and animals, but also non-living things, breaking the boundaries even greater. This departs the narrative from a "human vs nonhuman" angle to a narrative that is presenting different kinds of species interacting with each other through a biological process of natural and sexual selection and ecological entanglement.

Wells also engaged in thoughts on degeneration influenced by Lankester. Nevertheless, Wells changed his mind during the 1890s. When Wells wrote about degeneration in *Zoological Retrogression* (1891), he argues that humans are just one of the random outcomes of natural processes. Humans should not be privileged species. This less negative theme of degeneration is also expressed in *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. Whereas Wells emphasizes how humans are not privileged, scholars like Steven McLean still offer a critique on the theme of degeneration in *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. He asserts how the novel "represents the superiority of human evolution as a futile achievement" (49). McLean states that even though the language is not what separates humans from animals, the animals in the novel are only "temporarily endowed with linguistic abilities," and the novel "does not support the view that animals can reason

through the use of language” (48, italics in original). Thus, McLean still insists that the novel shows a hierarchical relationship between the human and nonhuman characters. McLean proposes how the characters in the novel still illustrate human degeneration and a graded relationship between humans and nonhumans.

However, Darwin attempted in *The Descent of Man* to show how intelligence and language between man and animals are different in degree. He writes how there is a “variability or diversities of mental faculties in men of the same race.” There are also “differences between the men of distinct race...So it is with the lower animals” (195). He emphasizes how intelligence is “manifest[ed]” in several animals, just like humans. Darwin’s discovery and publication shift the Victorian worldview and decenter the human. Wells’ novel exposes what Darwin proposes in his publication by illustrating animals with a certain level of their intelligence, not a “degenerate form” of humans. Intelligence, like Darwin shows, is in degrees of difference. They are different, but humans do not have a superior status.

III. Outline of Chapters

This thesis will be divided into four chapters. The introduction of my thesis will be presented in chapter 1. Here I will provide my claim, literature review, methodology, and a chapter outline.

In the second chapter, I will survey research on degeneration theories that encourages a new mindset in viewing the relationship between the human and the nonhuman characters in *Dracula*. I will present several readings to imply how Stoker uses Darwin’s theory to express anxieties surrounding human animality or degeneration. Monika Tomaszewska draws on the concept of degeneration, suggesting how “Stoker refers explicitly to these principal assumptions

of degeneration theory and criminal anthropology” (1). She suggests how Dracula has an infantile brain and equates Dracula to a degenerate criminal, without a fully human brain. Tomaszewska asserts that this is an “explicit confirmation that Stoker consciously modeled his vampire on the figure of the degenerate criminal” (2). In other words, Dracula, compared with humans, holds less intelligence. The reading demonstrates how Darwin’s evolutionary theory is used in Stoker’s novel and proposes the idea that Dracula has an “affinity with animals,” and represents “an exemplary degenerate” (2). Tomaszewska and Youngs (whom I discussed earlier) imply how Dracula portrays animalistic behaviors and represent Dracula as a degenerate human. In this chapter, I will extend the readings of Tomaszewska and Youngs to put forth an argument that illustrates a non-hierarchical relationship between the human and nonhuman characters. Especially following Youngs’ argument on Dracula’s ontological relation with the human characters, along with Darwin’s evolutionary discoveries, I will present how the vampires of the novel do not represent degenerate humans, but a different species.

In chapter three the degeneration theories expressed in H.G. Wells’ *The Island of Doctor Moreau* will be presented. Youngs draws attention to the theme of degeneration in the fin de siècle. He conveys how there were fears of regression and degeneration, and how “Darwinian thinking encouraged the idea that this ‘adapting down’ to one’s surroundings would have increasingly deleterious effects through the generations” (43). Rather than viewing the novel as a social critique of the Victorian age, Youngs sees Wells’ novel as “allying itself with contemporary debates about the direction and shape of human development” (122). He suggests that Wells uses Prendick to suggest that it is not possible to “accept the incorporation of the animal and the human; of nature and society.” *The Island of Doctor Moreau* shows a “systematic study of the evolutionary dilemma, arrives at no conclusions” and Wells illustrates a biological

conflict instead of a social one (124). According to Youngs, Wells' depiction shows an unequal hierarchical relationship between the human and the animal. Therefore, the creatures and beast people will be viewed as lesser than the humans (because they are degenerative). Additionally, Prendick is seen struggling to incorporate himself with the nonhumans. In the third chapter, I will use these strands of readings, along with Mclean's, to help support my argument for Wells' novel, which will suggest how the text eliminates the distinction between the two species.

Chapter four will conclude by restating my objective for this thesis: By addressing evolutionary and degeneration theories in the two novels of my thesis can propel readers to rethink the relationship between humans and nonhumans while opening more ways to view the connection between the two. Mark Payne remarks how "since we share the same ground of our being with all the other animals, thinking our way into the life of any one of them only requires us to extend to them the same imaginative sympathy that we use to think about the lives of other human beings" (15). It is by reading literature, we can do just that. Most importantly, imaginative sympathy has no limitations and "no obstacles [in] being able to imagine their lives" (16).

Chapter Two: Dismantling the Hierarchy: Interspecies Relations in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

One of the most remarkable scenes in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is Lucy Westenra's transformation into a vampire. Seward describes how "she drew back with an angry snarl, such as a cat gives when taken unawares." Her "eyes blazed with unholy light, and the face became wreathed with a voluptuous smile" (197). When Lucy morphs into a vampire, all her pure and gentle aspects are overtaken by this "unholy" inhumanness. Once Lucy converts, and steps away from the human social world, her animalistic side surfaces. In fact, it can be seen right away how Lucy reflects a "cat" and even gives "an angry snarl." Lucy is no longer the image of an obedient Victorian angel, but a feral cat. In addition, Lucy then gets compared with "a dog" that is "growling"—all her humanity washes away as soon as she converts and breaks out of her human form (197). This is not surprising because the novel centers on Dracula, a non-human, who holds the goal of wanting to convert the human characters into vampires — one of his kind. In the scene above, once Lucy converts, all the social etiquette that she learned when she was a human within a human society evaporates and she behaves animalistically.

This suggests that humans, underneath the façade of societal expectations, are not as far off as how animals would behave. Once Charles Darwin's work came into the public eye in Victorian England, a new view toward anthropocentrism emerged. Evolution theories like Darwin's started questioning where the human position in the world. This revelation concluded from Darwin's theory turned the hierarchy completely around and even further, dismantled it. The link between humans and animals slowly became closer than before. Even culture and social etiquette, which seem to be uniquely a human aspect, are not what makes humans superior anymore. Darwin proposed that social instincts in cooperating within a community are descended from our non-human ancestors. Eve-Marie Engels explains that "our moral sense, like

the instinct of sympathy, is directed towards the good of the community, not egoistically towards our own happiness.” In addition, those “possessed well-developed social instincts like those already to be found in many animals” (239). Darwin’s *The Descent of Man* also offers an observation where animals are also “endowed with the social instincts,” and “social animals are impelled partly by a wish to aid the members of their community.” On the other hand, “Man is impelled by the same general wish to aid his general fellows” (247). Therefore, this kind of façade that society brings is not as far off from being animalistic as well. It can barely hide true animalistic behavior. The idea of societal behaviors is attuned across all species depending on their mental powers, which are all the same kind, just different in degrees.

Without any question, Stoker directly draws on Darwin’s concepts in his theory. It can be seen in this novel when it even demonstrates an animal-like competition between the human and vampire species — just like what Darwin proposed in *On the Origin of Species*, when animals compete and “struggle for existence” (109). Comparing his characters with animals and characterizing them with animalistic features, allows the characters in the novel to mirror the way animals would compete and successfully produce offspring. The novel centers around Dracula and his species competing with the human characters. This is just like a “battle between species” — the vampire species against the human species. How Dracula wants to “defeat” or “outbreed” the human species also reflect what Darwin calls in *The Descent of Man* “the principle of sexual selection.” He writes how this “depends on the advantage which certain individuals have over others of the same sex and species solely in respect of reproduction” (230). Dracula has the advantage of being a vampire, with many skills and superpowers, so he has the upper hand in sexually selecting female humans compared with the males of the human species.

Dracula can, in Darwin's words, "drive away the weaker" (231). This means Dracula can use his advantageous traits to get to the characters first.

The mixing of blood with each other can symbolize a sense of "mating" or "marriage" between the two organisms. Sexual selection occurs when the males depending on "the advantage which certain individuals have over others" could out-compete and mate with the females of their choice (230). The character of Dracula is a perfect example. Because of his special and more prominent state over humans, he outcompetes Jonathan Harker in pursuing Mina. In addition, as Stoker also illustrates this constant comparison between humans and animals, sexual selection can also be seen in the human characters. The human male characters also compete secretly with each other to transfuse blood to Lucy. This reiterates how both the human and non-human characters perform Darwin's theory of sexual selection. Stoker undercuts the barriers between humans and nonhumans, illustrating how they behave similarly. How the characters perform the battle between the two species, along with sexual selection, all resemble a striking parallel of Darwin's research. A Darwinian reading of the novel suggests that the boundaries of the human and the non-human, although seemingly solid, are quite thin.

The novel illustrates that humans and non-humans also do not differentiate by kind but in degrees of variations on the same plane. Elizabeth Grosz, in *The Nick of Time*, emphasizes how "[t]here is only a difference in degree, not in kind, between the mental and moral capacities of man and those of animals" (58). Humans and animals are not as different as they may seem; evolution creates not a binary opposite of species, but rather different degrees of beings on the same plane. That is all because of sexual selection. Sexual selection helps both animals and humans in that role. Grosz states in *Becoming Undone: Darwinian Reflections on Life, Politics, and Art* that "[s]exual selection is arguably the greatest invention of natural selection." In

addition, “Darwin claims that it is responsible, not only for the vast range of variations of life on earth ...” It also “played a powerful role in the creation of human” (165). The sexual selection allows both humans and the many “variations of life on earth” to produce many “differences” altogether. All these variations of life form an entanglement of non-hierarchical ground between all species. Both Darwin and Grosz support the dissolution of the boundaries of human and non-human species.

Darwin’s theoretical framework, along with Grosz’s, can be seen when examining the human and non-human characters in *Dracula*. I am therefore offering a Darwinian rereading of the novel to suggest how similar the humans and the nonhumans are in the novel. This kind of collapse between the difference can especially be seen in the ways the characters of the novel compete for survival and imitate the role of sexual selection. We need to investigate the use of blood in *Dracula* to better understand these concepts. Critics like Elizabeth Miller link the use of blood with diseases or a kind of sexual infectious tool. She comments, “[i]ndeed, every imaginable sexual practice, fantasy and fear have been thrust upon the pages of the novel [Dracula]: rape (including gang rape), aggressive female sexuality, fellatio, homoeroticism, incest, bestiality, necrophilia, pedophilia, and sexually transmitted disease” (Miller). I, however, view the blood as a symbol of transferring genetic traits when animals mate and reproduce offspring carrying the traits from their parents. When Dracula “mates” with the female humans, he is transferring the traits which could lead them to become a vampire. After he successfully “mates,” his blood flows through the female humans, and hence they successfully wield the trait of being vampires. I see the blood as a tool for what Darwin calls natural selection. In other words, the blood in the novel functions as a link between humans and non-humans. It is through

the blood that Stoker illustrates the sexual selection behavior between the human and the nonhuman characters in the novel.

In the remaining sections, I will use Darwin's evolutionary theories about animals to demonstrate how Stoker's characters reflect animals, especially in the way they fight for survival. In addition, because of the need to reproduce and carry on their population, just like animals, they go through the principle of sexual selection. I will then turn to Elizabeth Grosz's research to emphasize how humans are not as different from other species as they seem, and Stoker presents that in his novel. In other words, Stoker, like Darwin and Grosz, dissolves the boundaries between humans and animals. This further implies how the text suggests that all living beings might not be as different as they seem, and how they differentiate in degree, and not kind.

To illustrate how both species in the novel compete and struggle for survival, we need to start by focusing on the main source of threat: the character of Dracula. From the beginning, when Jonathan Harker meets Dracula, we see how closely Dracula's appearance is to an animal. Harker's description of Dracula is extremely close to a werewolf-like creature: "His ears were pale and at the tops extremely pointed; the chin was broad and strong, and cheeks firm ...broad, squat fingers." (20). Moreover, the most animalistic features Harker remarks on are "[the] hairs in the center of the palm. The nails were long and fine, and cut to a sharp point" (20). Dracula does not just behave like an animal throughout the novel, his whole appearance resembles a wolf-like creature. Particularly when Dracula feeds, he is described as a bloodthirsty, violent animal: "His eyes flamed red with devilish passion. The great nostrils of the white aquiline nose opened wide and quivered at the edge, and the white sharp teeth, behind the full lips of the blood dripping mouth, clamped together like those of a wild beast" (262). This image illustrates a

“beast” full of savagery, in the middle of devouring its prey with its “white sharp teeth.” The depiction of “blood dripping mouth” makes this picture more horrid and animalistic.

Dracula’s animalistic behavior of breeding begins when he starts to select his targets to fuse his blood with his victims. Once the process is done, the victims transform into vampires just like him. This is a sign of reproduction and expansion of the vampiric population. The non-human Dracula's ways of selecting humans to reproduce with or to mix blood mirrors what Carolus Linnaeus discovered in 1744: two different species crossing with each other. This is what biological sciences¹ call “hybridization.” How the characters in *Dracula* crossbreed with each other (especially how Dracula picks and penetrates the human species) is like hybridization in the animal world. For instance, the naturalist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck remarks that “the hybrids so common among plants, and the copulations so often noticed between animals of very different species, disclose the fact that the boundaries between these alleged constant species are not so impassable as had been imagined” (39). He explains how hybridity between two species is deemed possible, and this concept plays out in the novel. This mating of two species and the creation of a new “being” mirror the relationship between Dracula and his human victims: Dracula, a foreign breed, merges with the human species. When Dracula finishes merging with the human species, he creates a supposedly stronger species (vampire) than the original human species. This also exemplifies the process of reproduction. The creation of a new species equates to producing an “offspring” and an increase of the vampiric population after Dracula mates with the female characters. This shows how in both the human and animal world, the female plays a very important role in procreating and reproducing the population.

¹ Carolus Linnaeus developed a Linnaean system of biological classification to showcase different kinds of relationships between different species. For example, horses and donkeys are drawn in the same line in his system.

The ways in which the vampire mates with the human female characters to reproduce to compete with the human population can be seen in this key scene when Dracula speaks to Mina:

“You would help these men to hunt me and frustrate me in my design! You know now, and they know in part already, and will know in full before long, what it is to cross my path. They should have kept their energies for use closer to home. Whilst they played wits against me, against me who commanded nations, and intrigued for them, and fought for them, hundreds of years before they were born, I was countermining them. And you, their best beloved one, are now to me, flesh of my flesh, blood of my blood, kin of my kin, my bountiful winepress for a while, and shall be later on my companion and my helper. You shall be avenged in turn, for not one of them but shall minister to your needs. But as yet you are to be punished for what you have done. You have aided in thwarting me. Now you shall come to my call. When my brain says ‘Come!’ to you, you shall cross land or sea to do my bidding. And to that end this!’ ‘With that he pulled open his shirt, and with his long sharp nails opened a vein in his breast. When the blood began to spurt out, he took my hands in one of his, holding them tight, and with the other seized my neck and pressed my mouth to the wound, so that I must either suffocate or swallow.” (267-68)

This scene reflects Darwin’s idea of how “as more individuals are produced than can possibly survive, there must in every case be a struggle for existence” (109). Darwin, in *On the Origin of Species*, talks about how the same species or different species (in this case it is vampires and humans) must fight and compete in order to reproduce and procreate. Here, Dracula states how Mina helps the men to hunt, frustrate, and thwart him. In other words, Dracula’s existence is

threatened by the human population. The way Dracula “merges” with Mina, attempting to reproduce by morphing Mina into one of his kind, is a way of populating his species. Dracula says, “And you, their best beloved one, are now to me, flesh of my flesh, blood of my blood, kin of my kin, my bountiful wine-press for a while, and shall be later on my companion and my helper” (267). Mina now shares the blood, flesh, and the same kin with Dracula, meaning she is now a new form of her offspring of Dracula.

This is another way Stoker shows how small the lines between the roles of the humans—here, female — and the animal are. The way Dracula then starts to order and suppress Mina even further shows how she still needs to be obedient and an aide to men even when departing from the human world. Specifically, the liminality of the human and the nonhuman in the novel invokes a reading to show how Dracula being a nonhuman, blurs the boundaries and acts like a human. On the other hand, the human characters, showing this animal-like competition, erode the boundaries and act like animals. The border between humans and nonhumans is crossed from both directions.

In the novel, not only do we see the female characters being passive and obedient, but we also see them being pursued by more than one man. This idea reflects how the males depending on “the advantage which certain individuals have over others” could outcompete and mate with the females of their choice (230). The character of Dracula is a perfect example as because of his special and more prominent state over humans, he outcompetes Jonathan Harker in pursuing Mina. The passage above illustrates how Dracula breaks into a house in the middle of the night to merge with Mina when she already belongs to another man, Jonathan. This further shows how the struggle for existence is not the only battle between the two species. Darwin also sees the competition of males competing with one another to mate with the female. In his work *The*

Descent of Man, he points out how “with social animals, the young males have to pass through a contest before they win a female” (235). Darwin suggests that sexual selection comes from the competition between the males of a species to access mates. The human male characters secretly “competing” with one another to provide blood to Lucy is a prime example of that.

Stoker’s novel demonstrates how the human characters compete with one another to transfuse blood to Lucy, by having multiple men go behind one another in order to give blood to Lucy. The blood in this context equates to marriage or mating. Even Arthur feels that “the transfusion of his blood to her veins...made her truly his bride” (164). Stoker references Darwin’s animal-like competitiveness among the human characters by having more than one male suitor “fight” for Lucy behind Arthur’s back. The parallel drawn between the young male animals Darwin states in his research, and the human characters in the novel, can be seen as the characters fight about who is “younger and stronger” (114). Arthur, showing his devotion to Lucy, says ““Tell me, and I shall do it. My life is hers, and I would give the last drop of blood in my body for her.”” (114). Arthur is the main suitor and addresses how giving blood is an intimate act. However, Dr. Seward still attempts to provide his blood, and is therefore warned how giving blood to Lucy will “frighten...and enjealous” Lucy’s fiancé. As a result, his transfusion should be kept a secret, and “nothing must be said of this” (121). This reemphasizes how transfusing blood is more than just a medical procedure and resembles marriage or mating in the Darwinian sense. The fact that the human characters behave like animals under the veil of societal expectations reiterates how even moral behaviors differ in degrees through species and are not unique to human beings.

Other than the human characters competing to gain access to Lucy, Dracula is also one of the males involved in transfusing his blood to her. This reemphasizes how both the human

characters and the non-human characters are leveled in the way they compete with one another in accessing females. He infiltrates between the men to “mate” with Lucy. Dracula is just like what Darwin describes how the males that are among the ones that are a part of “the more vigorous and better-nourished individuals” and “would be ready to breed” before the others (231). Dracula, with his advantageous traits, outcompetes the other candidates. When Lucy turns into a vampire, all the animalistic behavior comes out and she acts aggressively sexual and makes her choice. Dr. Seward documents this moment in his diary:

At that moment the remnant of my love passed into hate and loathing. Had she then to be killed, I could have done it with savage delight. As she looked, her eyes blazed with unholy light, and the face became wreathed with a voluptuous smile. Oh, God, how it made me shudder to see it! With a careless motion, she flung to the ground, callous as a devil, the child that up to now she had clutched strenuously to her breast, growling over it as a dog growls over a bone. The child gave a sharp cry and lay there moaning. There was a cold-bloodedness in the act which wrung a groan from Arthur. When she advanced to him with outstretched arms and a wanton smile he fell back and hid his face in his hands. She still advanced, however, and with a languorous, voluptuous grace, said, ‘Come to me, Arthur. Leave these others and come to me. My arms are hungry for you. Come, and we can rest together. Come, my husband, come!’ (197)

After Lucy turns into a vampire, that once sweet conservative Victorian angel, who writes how it is a heresy to choose between three men, changes. She is not the same woman anymore. In fact, all her humanity is wiped out. She is first compared with a “dog” and then a “devil.” She has then seen “moaning,” “crying,” and “growling.” However, in this scene, Arthur is also seen

groaning. This whole scene can be compared to a scene of animals interacting with each other. In this scene, Lucy immediately advances toward Arthur with “outstretched arms and a wanton smile,” while he falls “back and [hides] his face in his hands.” Even after Arthur falls back, she still pursues him and says, “Come to me, Arthur. Leave these others and come to me.” She behaves like an animal as soon as she is stripped away from human social conventions.

Without human-created societal conventions, humans to some degree will behave like animals. The expectation of how a female should appear in society can also be seen in this passage as Lucy is also described as “unholy” as soon as she behaves in this manner. The scene of the three vampiric women that Harker encounters foreshadows this kind of animalistic behavior seen when Lucy becomes a vampire as well. From the appearance, Harker notes that they are “fair, as fair as can be,” and all three of them have “brilliant white teeth, that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips” (38). Harker even straightforwardly writes how one of the girls “licked her lips like an animal” (39). All the women are described in sexual tones and in an animalistic manner.

Darwin’s principle of sexual selection notes that specific male animals would develop “organs of sense and locomotion...through natural selection,” which leads them to procure “an advantage over [one] another.” And “with sufficient time... [they] would succeed in pairing with the females” (230). Dracula reflects this, as he demonstrates locomotor movements throughout the novel. One scene that exemplifies this is when “his fingers and toes grasp the corners of the stones, worn clear of the mortar by the stress of years, and by thus using every projection and inequality move downwards with considerable speed, just as a lizard moves along a wall” (35). The way he can morph into different creatures and adapt to different kinds of situation is a huge advantage. Dracula through his “sense and locomotion” can move swiftly through every

occasion to get to places and mate faster than the other human characters. This arouses fear in his competitors, as right after Harker sees Dracula crawling around, he feels “fear...awful fear” (35). Another trait that Dracula possesses that gives him an advantage over the rest of his male competitors in mating is how he can shapeshift. Dracula can show up as mists wherever he likes. In fact, this is what he does when he approaches Mina advantageously. He transforms himself into a mist, “like a smoke — or with the white energy of boiling water — pouring in, not through the window, but through the joinings of the door” (241). This suggests how the vampire can use his skill of shapeshifting to go through many obstacles in order to mate. Despite the closed door, he successfully shapeshifts to smoke and slips into the room.

There is another kind of selection in the novel that portrays Dracula as a human. The way Dracula picks his victims also mirrors what Darwin calls “methodical selection” in his work *On The Origin of Species* (120). This is one type of artificial selection proposed by Darwin where humans or “eminent breeders... by methodical selection,” choose individual animals to breed and pass on certain traits “with a distinct object in view, to make a new strain or sub-breed” (104). Dracula picking out his victims equates to how men “have a nearly common standard of perfection” and how they “try to get and breed from the best animals” (118). Dracula strategically hand-picks whom to feed on and reproduces with them. When he pursues Mina, he clearly states how he picks her because she otherwise would help the men to “hunt” and “thwart” him. He chooses her to mate and breed with. He, like Darwin states, “selects only for his own good” (113). This kind of behavior in which Dracula seemingly “hand-picks” and “breeds” shows a “domestication” of the female characters by a male, Dracula. This is further reflected in Keridiana Chez’s suggestion that the relationship between the male characters and the female characters of the novel is a “master-dog relationship” (88). The women of the novel and how

they are being treated by men, and domesticated, show a “master-pet” relation (89). This kind of power dynamic illustrates the human world as it “resonated discursively with wife management” during the Victorian period (78). This further complicates the blur between nonhumans and humans, as Dracula plays both the role of a human breeder and the one being bred.

Stoker’s depiction of Dracula as both nonhuman and a human-like entity can be further demonstrated when Professor Van Helsing remarks on all the powers Dracula possesses. He notes how Dracula morphs into animals: “he can transform himself to wolf...[and] he can be as bat” (223). Dracula himself crosses the boundaries back and forth when he morphs into different animals. Nonetheless, he complicates the nonhuman and human blend when he does not just identify with animals, he also acts as a human-like entity with magical powers as Van Helsing points out Dracula’s complicated ontological being: “he is brute, and more than brute” and “he is devil” (221). He explains how “he can, within his range, direct the elements: the storm, the fog, the thunder; he can command all the meaner things: the rat and the owl, and the bat—the moth, and the fox and the wolf” (221). He does not just become the animal, he commands them. Yet Dracula even complicates the boundaries even more: He can even shapeshift and change his being into mists or smoke as the professor further notes how “he can come in mist which he create” (223). This complicates Dracula’s identity as he is not just crossing the boundaries between humans and animals. Dracula morphing himself into not just animals, but non-living organisms break the boundaries even greater.

There is a striking parallel between the ways in which characters of the novel act and the way Darwin describes the animals in his work regarding the struggle for survival and sexual selection. Darwin’s theory can be applied to *Dracula* to demonstrate how humans are more alike to animals than they seem — just like what he proposed in his discovery of evolution. In an

interview with Katve-Kaisa Kontturi and Milla Tiainen, Grosz further elaborates on this idea of how humans may not be so superior after all:

What Darwin offers us is a notion of life as not only open-ended, but as directed to forces in the future, which we cannot predict in the present. This is what the theory of evolution entails; that all of life is open-ended, that its direction is not predictable, that human is an unexpected outcome of animal development, and the human may not be the last stage of evolutionary elaboration. (Grosz 248-49)

Grosz further emphasizes how human may not be special after all. She states how Darwin, through his theory of evolution shows “that human is an unexpected outcome of animal development, and the human may not be the last stage of evolutionary elaboration.” This points to how humans are not a special creation, and like other animals, evolved from other species. Life is still “open-ended,” and “not predictable.” This can suggest how there could be a much more superior or advanced species ahead of humans and show how they are not on top of the hierarchy. In the novel, the ways where the vampires and the humans compete with one another show no hierarchical status. They are two different species fighting against each other for survival and trying to outbreed one another. Even though a “winner” does emerge, the ways in which the species act are similar. The novel reveals how even though vampires and humans are two distinct species, humans, just like Grosz suggests, are not on top of the hierarchy.

Cross-species interaction like Grosz suggests is evident in a scene when the vampires and human species clamor together and the vampires “fight” for Harker. This demonstrates an ontological ground of an entanglement of both species. At this moment, the three vampiric women are seen desiring to feed on Harker, when Dracula then infiltrates into the mix enmeshing into the group. Harker writes how when the three vampiric women are approaching her, “there

[is] a deliberate voluptuousness which [is] both thrilling and repulsive” and when one of the vampiric women “arche[s] her neck [and] actually lick[s] her lips like an animal” showing her “white sharp teeth” (39). The three women emulate animalistic behaviors. The competition begins when the Count rushes in and “grasp[s] the slender neck of the fair woman,” while his “blue eyes transformed with fury, the white teeth champing with rage, and the fair cheeks blazing red” when he sees the three vampiric women acting “like an animal,” while they bend over Harker. Dracula, upon seeing his prey about to get devoured by others, sweeps in full of “wrath and fury” (39). He immediately exclaims how Harker belongs to him. The three other women end up leaving, while they “fade into the rays of the moonlight and pass out through the window.” Harker then falls “unconscious” (40).

This paints a picture where Harker finds himself in “horror” while the vampires act like animals competing over him. The vampire even beats the women back, using “the same imperious gesture,” like “wolves” (39). It seems that the vampires here are more hierarchal in this situation, but that is not the case. The vampires are only in an advantageous situation because they are in their well-suited environment, and their beneficial traits give them the upper hand. Whereas Harker, on the other hand, is not seen in his favorable environment. Harker and the vampires compete and produce this environment that leads one of them to “[s]truggle for life.” As Darwin has suggested, this “[s]truggle” will produce a leveled and “entangled” environment when the two species interact with each other to create an interconnection. In *On The Origin of Species*, Darwin notes how “[i]t is interesting to contemplate this entangled bank,” and how many forms of lives are “so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner.” It is this entanglement that leads to “a Struggle for life, and as a consequence of Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of less

improved forms” (174). The vampires and humans are “different from each other,” and it is exactly how they “[s]truggle for life” that creates a connection and entanglement between the two species here. This scene reveals how the two species interact and compete to create such an interconnection.

Again, the way the human characters describe Dracula and decide how to defeat him pits the narrative to be a “human vs nonhuman” situation. Professor Van Helsing directly states that Dracula is the enemy: “I tell you something of the kind of enemy with which we have to deal” (220). Moreover, The human characters then ruminate together on how to deal with Dracula: “[h]ow then are we to begin our strike to destroy him? How shall we find his where; and having found it, how can we destroy? My friends, this is much; it is a terrible task that we undertake, and there may be consequence to make the brave shudder. For if we fail in this our fight he must surely win” (221). Here, other than illustrating Darwin’s “struggle for existence,” Stoker also attempts to write Dracula as a malleable being as well: from being a “wolf,” to “moonlight,” “bat,” a “small” version of himself, to a being with magic powers who can “see in the dark” and “fly” (223). Whereas Dracula might be read as being a nonhuman, his malleable being makes his being not to be read as that straightforward. His being - this malleable being - adds to this confusion and “entanglement” that Darwin illustrates.

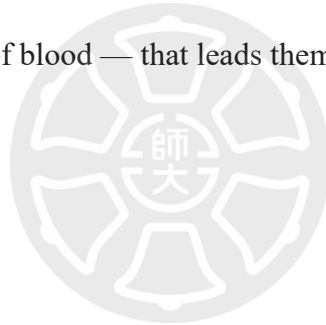
In *The Nick of Time*, Grosz states that Darwin's theory is significant because evolution is counted on having differences among individuals and that there could not be a survival or reproduction rate if there are no differences. Grosz suggests that life is filled with “dynamism, growth, and transformability of living systems,” along with the “impossibility of stasis and mere reproduction, the impulse toward a future that is unknown in and uncontained by the present and its history” (32). In addition, “it is only differentiating, distinguishing, rendering more distinct,

specializing and adapting that characterize life in its essence. Its essence is in differentiation, in making a difference” (46). In other words, how this scene demonstrated, that the two different species competing and trying to adapt to an environment create “dynamism, growth, and transformability of living systems” (32). The scene reveals how the interaction between the two species can create a chance of “reproduction” (the vampires procreating), and with the “transformability” after they “reproduce,” it illustrates this “unknown” future. As a result, the “entanglement” that Darwin sketches in his work are present in this scene (174).

The importance of this rereading is an attempt to reassess the text. A Darwinian reading of *Dracula* reveals how the novel constructs a narrative that is used to suggest how small the boundaries between humans and animals are. Especially through the study of how the human and nonhuman characters behave in the novel, Stoker shows quite a flat interaction between the humans and nonhuman subjects. The ways in which the vampires and human characters interact with each other, through Darwin’s sexual selection and competition are on an equal level. Therefore, I propose that the human characters banding together to plot a plan to defeat Dracula do not make the human characters more intelligent or superior to the Vampire species. Even Darwin documents how the difference between human and animal intelligence is also by differences of degree, rather than kind in *The Descent of Man*: “the mental powers of the higher animals, which are the same in kind with those of man, though so different in degree, are capable of advancement” (246). Dracula possesses superpowers that the human characters do not hold as well. It is only the traits that they possess that allow them to outcompete one another, which also happens in the natural world that Darwin observes.

This further elaborates what Darwin suggests in *On the Origin of Species* where he outlined the process of cumulative change in the variation of species: natural selection takes time,

and species are always changing. Things are always different: “natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world” and there are “changes in progress” (113). In addition, there are always “forms of life that are now different from what they formerly are” (113). Species differ in differences of degree, rather than kind. Grosz also supports this claim in *Becoming Undone*. She comments on the relationship between man and animal: “[i]f man is understood, following Darwin, as one among many animals, not as a rational animal who has what other animals lack, but an animal who has perhaps different degrees of development” (15). The vampire species and the human species in the novel relate to each other on a leveled ground. Stoker invokes both Darwin and Grosz’s research in order to illuminate the delineation between humans and non-humans. It is exactly the battle of the two species, and the sexual relationship between them — through the link of blood — that leads them to cross each other’s boundaries.



Chapter Three: Evolving Empathy: Dissolving the boundaries in H.G. Wells'

The Island of Doctor Moreau

From these though descended
 our manners are mended,
 Though still we can grin and backbite;
 We cut up each other,
 be *he* friend or brother,
 And tales are the fashion--at night.
 This origination
 is all speculation--
 We gamble in various shapes;
 So MR. DARWIN may speculate in
 Our Ancestors having been Apes.
 - *Punch*, June 10th, 1871, p. 234

The Darwinian Ballad ² published in *Punch* magazine in 1871 speaks to one of the major anxieties that surfaced after Charles Darwin published his notable *The Descent of Man* (1871): the fear of human degeneration. Stephan Karschay states how “degeneration can be understood as inverse processes, which share the same developmental endpoint: both phenomena can be conceptualised as abnormal or pathological deviations from a given norm” (39) Like *Dracula*, *The Island of Doctor Moreau* shares the same theme of human degeneration with its portrayals of nonhuman characters. Both novels illustrate characters being critiqued as symbols of humans that are “abnormal” because of their “inverse process.” Not only does *The Island of Doctor Moreau* depict how language is affected in terms of degeneration with the nonhuman characters'

1. ² Darwinian Ballad taken from *The Smiling Muse: Victoriana in the Comic Press* by Patricia Marks and Jerold Savory.

speech when they are cut and sewed up together, Wells also illustrates how language is still seen as a degenerate factor in nonhumans when they are in the process of slowly returning to its natural form. Prendick states with one example of the Ape Man, that his speech “grew less and less comprehensible, more and more simian” (122). In addition, Prendick even comments how the “Dog-Man imperceptibly slipped back to the dog again; day by day he became dumb, quadrupedal, hairy” (123). Prendick obviously looks down on the nonhuman characters as soon as “the human semblance left them” (123). Depictions like those demonstrated above, along with the issue of having no sympathy or empathy towards the nonhuman animals are shown through the practice of vivisection by Dr. Moreau. It may seem as if there is a constant depiction of a hierarchical relationship between the human and nonhuman characters.

However, in this chapter I argue that Wells’ novel can be used to encourage a positive message: *The Island of the Doctor Moreau* evinces the importance of feeling sympathy or empathy towards the nonhuman characters. Throughout the novel, like the “pitiful moaning of the puma,” Wells highlights how nonhuman animals do have emotions, and tries to provoke sympathy or empathy in his readers (47). A Darwinian reading of this novel helps deliver this important message. In Darwin’s comprehension, animals explicitly express emotions and feel sensations. As he writes in his notable work *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, animals “suffer from...agony of pain,” and indeed show “outward signs of ... stronger sensation and emotions” (69). In the same light, Wells vividly draws attention to nonhuman emotions. It is by using Darwin’s evolution theory that allows Wells to address this significant message as Darwin's writings marked the importance of closing the gap between humans and animals.

This is not a surprise because Wells' novel has been associated by scholars with the Darwinian model. Remarking on how Wells’ novel directly corresponds to Darwin’s theory,

John Glendening contends, “[r]esponding to the controversies about evolutionary theory that Darwin’s work catalyzed and that permeated the late nineteenth century, Wells’s narrative follows a negative path in exploring the problematic biological and cultural foundations of human life” (40). Certainly, this is true, for example, Doctor Moreau’s vivisection experiments drive the plot. *The Island of Doctor Moreau* centers around the evil doctor trying to perform experiments on the nonhuman characters and exploring the biological limitations of these creatures. In the story, as Bernard Bergonzi suggests, Doctor Moreau keeps exploring his “superiority to conventional ethics, and his desire to make a new man on his own terms” (107).

Doctor Moreau

This results in how not only Darwin’s theory but also issues regarding animal rights and ethics surface in the novel. Thus, Wells’ novel also raises a couple of questions: How does the theme of evolution in this novel encourage sympathy and ethics? How does Wells outline the gap between the human and nonhuman characters to show that the boundaries between them are closer than they may seem? In this chapter, I will argue that Wells does depict a novel that encourages a rethinking of human and nonhuman relationships. Like *Dracula*, I consider the nonhuman characters of this novel just as important as the human characters. Wells achieves this by embracing topics of degeneration, evolutionary sympathy, and ethics.

To begin with, this chapter will first focus on the degeneration theories that emerged after Darwin published his works. By focusing on Lankester’s work, and the degeneration theories that he notes in his book, I will introduce how degeneration theories emerged during Wells’ time. Next, I will show through both argument and historical context that the nonhuman characters do not have degenerated language at the end of the novel. As a result, there is ultimately a non-hierarchical relationship between the human and nonhuman characters. This first section will be

then devoted to sharing how the language starts to decline or degenerate near the end of *The Island of Doctor Moreau* does not indicate a sign of degeneration, but rather, a sign of the beast people returning to their most natural forms. This section will end by demonstrating how the human and nonhuman characters are only different species. The two groups are only two distinct species with a “noncalculable measure of degrees of difference between individuals and groups” and both with “a kind of biological pure difference” as Elizabeth Grosz elaborates in *The Nick of Time* about speciation (23-24). Next, there will be two sections that provide Darwin’s evolution theories to support how the human and nonhuman characters of this novel are closer than they may seem and shows how it promotes sympathetic and ethical behaviors toward nonhuman animals.

The ontological relationship between the human and nonhuman characters of this novel need to be readdressed. Instead of looking at every interaction between the human and nonhuman characters of the novel, here, I focus on their relationship after the language declines with the beast people. Therefore, in this second section by implementing Darwin’s concept of “struggle for existence,” I propose how after the degeneration of the nonhuman characters transform back to their natural form. They are a different species than humans, and not of a degenerate form. Hence, to survive on this island, they would need to compete with the human species in order to survive. Kelly Hurley reveals how Wells rejects “the belief which comforted Huxley, that the human species has managed biologically to evolve such attributes as a moral sense” (64). He argues that morals cannot be evolved from descendants and that evolution “has no favorites - its only criterion for success is adaptive capability in response to environment” (64). This is exemplified in the novel when we see how the human and the nonhuman characters learn to

adapt on the island and struggle for survival. They are both equal hierarchically in this novel, and evolution “has no favorites.”

I directly engage with how evolutionary theories encourage sympathy/ethics. As Peter Singer puts it, “[i]f we define altruistic behavior as behavior which benefits others at some cost to oneself, altruism in non-human animals is well documented” since Darwinian theory (5). For example, I take note of how compassion and altruism in society are encouraged in Wells’ work, which in turn creates this oneness, and this “social harmony” that Scott M. James mentions Darwin had in mind when he writes about Natural Selection (125). Darwin proposes that natural selection illustrates how society evolves from helping each other. James continues addressing how “Darwin’s ideas...revealed not only how we came to be creatures that we are, but how we ought to be. Morality runs parallel to the tree of life,” just like “compassion” (126). Leslie Stephen, a Victorian, already expands on this point in *The Science of Ethics* and confirms that “sympathy and intelligence” and “moral progress” is a trait that has been passed down by evolution as well (379). This illustrates how this is prevalent in the novel when we compare the degrees of intelligence and morals of the human and nonhuman characters.

Through the depiction of the struggle for existence between the human and nonhuman characters, Wells additionally brings the importance of ethics to light. In fact, Thomas Henry Huxley investigates the issue of morality and human ethics in one of his most notable lectures *Evolution and Ethics* as well. Huxley emphasizes how ethics needs to be a part of the “struggle for existence” and these traits have been passed down from animals: “[f]or his successful progress, as far as the savage state, man has been largely indebted to those qualities which he shares with the ape and the tiger; his exceptional physical organization; his cunning, his sociability, his curiosity and his imitateness; his ruthless and ferocious destructiveness when

his anger is roused by opposition” (6). In addition, regarding the importance of having ethics, Klára Netíková remarks how “Thomas Henry Huxley... stressed [how] ethics and morality as the key characteristics of humankind” Huxley emphasizes how “[e]thics and sympathy in human society were, in short, the essence of humanity” (5-6).

E.E. Synder similarly states that “[v]ivisection raises problems of ethics, of the ends and means of scientific investigation; it pits Huxley’s cosmic evolutionary process against the civilizing ethical process” (220). The novel reveals how vivisection is indeed an attempt to intervene with the “cosmic evolutionary process” and to control the natural process of being in these animals. For instance, even though the nonhuman animals already have a natural state of being like the human characters who also possess emotions, Doctor Moreau still manipulates them around. He even insists that “[i]t’s not simply the outward form of an animal which I can change. The physiology, the chemical rhythm of the creature, may also be made to undergo an enduring modification” (72). Doctor Moreau has a very strong sense of desire to control and manipulate what is already naturally there, like “physiology, the chemical rhythm of the creature.” This mirrors back to what Huxley believes how vivisection only creates ethical concerns. Is it ethical to manipulate and harm these animals just for selfish desires?

Bernard Begonzi similarly points out how vivisection, “for Huxley, they must be opposed in the interests of ethics; for Moreau, who is untroubled by ethical considerations, they should be imitated in the pursuit of pure knowledge” (107). Correspondingly, Darwin also provides an empathetic angle toward vivisection. He refers to vivisection in *The Descent*: “every one has heard of the dog suffering under vivisection, who licked the hand of the operator; this man, unless he had a heart of stone, must have felt remorse to the last hour of his life” (40). Both Darwin and Huxley both strongly show sympathy and empathy towards the animals being

exposed to vivisection. However, Moreau does not stop there. Other than the act of controlling the natural processes in these animals through vivisection, he even produces the animals' offspring. The text follows with, "Montgomery called my attention to certain little pink animals with long hind-legs, that went leaping through the undergrowth. He told me they were creatures made of the offspring of the Beast People, that Moreau had invented" (85). Moreau does not just perform vivisection to sew the beasts and humans together; he even manipulates the natural process of reproduction of the animals. Moreau is expressing a huge sign of human superiority and plays God through vivisection.

Moreau, after all, did create a law system and force the beast people to recite certain laws. This is another example of how Moreau portrays a God-like figure. First, just by creating this law system, it portrays how Dr. Moreau wants to create a humanlike society on this island full of animals and beast people. In addition, Moreau even has the beast people even recite them out loud like a religious group chanting mantras together. In the scene where the reciting happens, it can be seen how Moreau brainwashes the beast people to the extent of how when they see Prendick, they exclaim "[i]t is a man!" and "a man, a man, a live man, like me" (38). Meaning they have already associated themselves with Prendick. This confusion and blur between humans and nonhumans draw out another permeable boundary between humans and nonhumans. This is yet another example of how Wells illustrates "entanglement" in his fiction showing - as Glendening explains it - "a mixture of sophistication, confusion, and poignancy, to the scientific and cultural opportunities and frustrations of evolutionism" (17). This is the scene where Dr. Moreau utilizes the laws, by even arousing religious tones:

That dark hut, these grotesque dim figures, just flecked here and there by a glimmer of light, and all of them swaying in unison and chanting: -

“Not to go on all-fours; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?

“Not to suck up Drink; *that* is the Law. Are we Not Men?

“Not to eat Flesh or Fish; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?

“Now to claw Bark of Trees; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?

“Not to chase other Men; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?”

and so from the prohibition of these acts of folly, on to the prohibition of what I thought then were the maddest, most impossible, and most indecent things one could well imagine. A kind of rhythmic fervour fell on all of us; we gabbled and swayed faster and faster, repeating this amazing Law.

(59)

In this scene, Prendick states how they are “grotesque dim figures” illustrating how he already views the beast people in a certain way. Even though Prendick continues to look down on these beast people stating, “deep down within [him] laughter and disgust struggled together,” and how “these [are] acts of folly,” they continue to run “through a long list of prohibitions, and then...chant swung around to a new formula” (59). This is enhanced by how Dr. Moreau alters the beast people and forces them to behave like humans and forces them not to “[n]ot to go on all-Fours” (38). Which is usually associated with an animal-like behavior – to walk on all fours. After some time, Prendick also notices how Moreau brainwashed these beast people as he states how “Moreau, after animalizing these men, had infected their dwarfed brains with a kind of deification of himself” (59).

The next set of chants that the beast people perform illustrates this perfectly:

“*His* is the House of Pain.

“*His* is the Hand that makes.

“*His* is the Hand that wounds.

“*His* is the Hand that heals”

(59)

These lyrics to this chant celebrate Moreau like God. The beast men praise how he is everything from the “[h]and that makes” to even the “[h]and that heals” (59). Just like a religious sermon, the beast men put Moreau in a superior position. Not only does his hand “heals” and “makes” the chant even adds how he is “the deep salt sea” and “the stars in the sky” showing how he is everywhere, an all-encompassing God. After these laws that celebrate Moreau as God, the beast people start to even chant more laws like “Not to run on all-Fours; that is the Law” (60).

Moreover, this set of laws, like religion, even has punishments, The grey figure even states how “[e]vil are the punishments of those who break the Law” (60). Furthermore, Prendick also learns that “the punishments are “sharp and sure. Therefore learn the Law” (61). The power of the Godly laws towards these beast men shines when the Beast Folk contributes by saying “[n]one escape[s]” (60). Here we have a perfect picture of entanglement between the humans and nonhumans where Prendick “and all of them [are] swaying in unison and chanting.” (59). This all shows ways how Doctor Moreau plays God and displays no empathy when he intervenes in the natural processes of these animals. He believes that he can make these beast people more human than ever. Despite the fact the animals already have emotions.

The text, however, in the end, illustrates the opposite. Doctor Moreau fails to “make” these animals humans. For instance, the Leopard Man returns to his “beast-like” form. He even illustrates the same kind of fear the cat shows in Darwin’s sketches in the *Expression*, “with eyes aflame and his huge feline tusks flashing out from under his curling lips, leapt towards his tormentor.” Not just the Leopard Man, “the yellow eyes of the Hyena-Swine [blazes] with excitement,” and wants to “attack” Prendick (91). The nonhuman animals all revert to their nature. While they are run, they even “” gone all-fours” (92). Moreover, even in this situation, the human characters still are the ones that resolve into violence. Moreau immediately takes out his “pistol” and Prendick “drew [his] revolver” (91). This display of violence is also prevalent throughout the novel. Robert M. Philmus and David Y. Hughes write that “Wells regarded evolution less as a ‘theory’ than as the central fact of biology, geology, and solar physics. Its corollary, diametrically at odds with anthropocentrism, was that homo sapiens is an accident and an episode of natural history” (8). Like how Darwin illustrates evolutionary processes cannot be intervened, at the end of the novel, Dr. Moreau’s attempt obviously fails. This illustrates the results of humans intervening in evolution’s natural processes in unethical ways. In addition, as Glendening also writes, it can be clearly seen how H.G. Wells shows if the natural processes are being controlled or messed with, this kind of entanglement will result in “chaos, not order or harmony” (41).

Darwin's evolutionary ideas and theories are what will constitute the primary focus of the close reading. Right at the beginning of the novel, Wells provides a sense of Darwinian “struggle for existence” like the one in *Dracula*. In addition, in much of the same way as *Dracula* presents human degeneration, Wells also depicts human characters endowed with animal traits. Consider, for example, the theme of degeneration and struggle for existence comes

into focus when the human and nonhuman characters are seen fighting against each other. This also results in the effect of the human and nonhuman characters mirroring each other. This happens when Wells shows how they both feel pain.

Wells does not only depict pain stemming from Dr. Moreau's experiment but also from the human characters that are trying to survive on a remote island together with the beasts. Wells uses this depiction to blur the lines between humans and nonhumans while illustrating how pain is the common thread that connects all the species. Wells, here, is suggesting that the two distinct groups are not as different from one another as they seem. Again, showing another way (through pain) that the boundaries cross between them. However, Prendick, the main protagonist of the novel, seems oblivious to this fact. He does not think or care about how the other species feel and even further amplifies their pain in order to survive on this island. Prendick not caring about the nonhuman characters in the novel reflects the claim that humans ironically are the ones that are hurting the nonhuman characters in the novel.

For example, in a key scene, Prendick, in order to survive, strikes a beastly man with a stone. There are several moments in this scene that show how both Prendick and the non-human creatures both suffer from pain. Again, showing how the boundaries cross: First, Prendick feels a "pain like a knife" in his side while he is running away from the beast-man (47). The pain he feels is from the side. This kind of pain coming from the side is also reflected upon the beastly man as Prendick throws a stone and it "fell fair on" the beastly man's "left temple" – a body part from the side. The mirroring of both characters' pain shows how both the human character and the beastly man feel pain similarly. This illustrates how Wells blurs the line between human and non-human characters. Even though they are different species, both have the capability to sense pain.

However, Prendick fails to sympathize with the beastly man and does not even regard how the latter will feel pain, as after the beastly man “falls headlong upon the sand with its face in the water,” Prendick does not even have any emotion or reaction (47). He even refers to him as a “black heap” right away, and how he calls the beastly man “it” when he refers to him in the water. This suggests how Prendick does not even acknowledge him as a living being and does not even register what action he just committed. In fact, Prendick constantly goes back and forth in referring to the beastly man with different pronouns. First, it was “the thing,” and then it becomes an “animal- man” (47). This constant shifting of reference to the beastly man shows that Prendick does not regard the animals on the island as his kind, and probably does not even care about how they feel.

One might argue that Prendick would not sympathize or empathize with the beastly men, as the beast-man was trying to attack him. However, at the end of this scene, Prendick hears the crying of the puma once again. The puma has never done anything harmful or violent toward Prendick, yet Prendick does not even feel sorry after hearing the “pitiful moaning of the puma.” Furthermore, after hearing the mournful cry, Prendick even records that moan as a sign, or a “calling” for him. It is just a direction to leave the dreadful situation he is in. So not only is he apathetic towards the pain that the puma is feeling, but he also even further uses it as a signal to his advantage. Wells, through the character of Prendick, illustrates how humans have always thought that they are the most superior species and think of themselves as being special. In this novel, they clearly lack empathy and sympathy. However, Wells uses the sensation of pain to dictate a similarity between the human and nonhuman characters. He suggests how humans are not very different after all.

The act of sewing together parts is also a representative of crossing boundaries between man and animal. This is also another example of how the human characters show a lack of empathy. Wells states in *H.G. Wells: Early Writings in Science and Science Fiction* that "there seem to be no definite limits to what might be accomplished upon living flesh by surgery, chemical treatment, and hypnosis" (11-12). What Moreau does in the novel clearly reflects Wells' own statement. Moreau uses his scientific knowledge to test all sorts of different combinations. Doctor Moreau even states how his life is dedicated to "the study of the plasticity of living forms," and how in his work, "animals [are] carven and wrought into new shapes" (71). Moreau even gloats about how there are no limits to "the possibilities of vivisection" (72). It is this act of science that illustrates the crossing of boundaries between man and animal. Moreau shows no lack of empathy towards how painful the animals will be and only focuses on how powerful vivisection practice is. Moreau even confesses how he even sometimes chooses the human "by chance" (73).

Robert Philmus and David Y. Hughes write in *H. G. Wells: Early Writings in Science and Science Fiction* how "[l]ike many of his contemporaries, Wells did not think of science and ethics as separate and distinct from one another...he constantly relies on science as the basis for defining possibilities of *homo sapiens*, both as an individual and socially, and thence he infers judgments of value as to man's role and destiny" (179). This reflects what Wells' work illustrates as the character Moreau does constantly "relies on science as the basis for defining possibilities" for humanity. Dr. Moreau is a character that constantly intervenes in the evolutionary process through painful, aggressive surgery to transform the beasts into men. Huxley, Wells' teacher, states how humans' need for control disrupts evolution's natural

progress³. Moreau displays the same kind of desire when he shows his determination to vivisect the nonhuman characters in the novel. This connects to how a lack of empathy is involved when the character disregards the pain the animals feel.

However, unlike Prendick who shows no empathy for the crying of the puma or the beastmen, Moreau does know that the animal will suffer any pain. This just further shows how cruel Moreau is. He even admits himself that he “took another sheep and made a thing of pain and fear,” meaning he knows how painful the animals will be (75). When explaining his experiments, Doctor Moreau states how his trouble lies in getting rid of the “animal trait” within the creatures he vivisects on. He lists how “[c]ravings, instincts, desires,” and “are the traits that trouble him and how it “harms humanity.” His goal is to make them “rational creature[s]” and how it is hard because “the intelligence is often oddly low” (78). This illustrates again how human characters look down upon the animals’ intelligence.

Karschay states how “[e]ven though Darwin emphasised that Man was far superior to any other mammal because of his highly evolved intellectual faculties and a strong sense of morality, he deemed the moral-psychological difference between humans and animals one of degree and not of kind” In addition, “[t]he dissolution of essential and definitive boundaries between varyingly evolved species – already evident in the image of *The Origin*’s ‘tree of life’ – is here complemented with evidence suggesting that humans and animals can be placed on an evolutionary continuum with regard to their respective psychological development as well” (40). Darwin although did illustrate how Man was “far superior” than other mammals because of their intelligence, the ways they are compared to other animals are not in a straight hierarchical form,

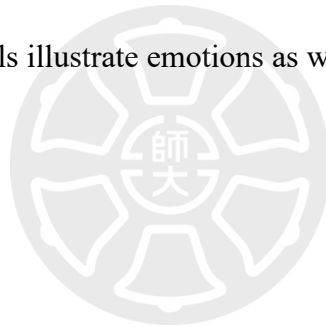
³ Read from T.H. Huxley’s *Man's Place in Nature*

as it is in difference in degree, and this lead to the boundaries between humans and animals to be dissolved – without drawing a line between them.

Apart from looking down upon the animals' intelligence, the humans in the text also do not respect or treat them empathetically. The ironic part is when Doctor Moreau was explaining all his passion and vivisection ideas, he already became a beast himself, without any empathy and full of savagery. Pendrick even “shivered,” when he set eyes on Moreau (79). The craving and desires that Moreau detests so much are ironically what he is showing as well when he so thirstily describes his passion for vivisection. Darwin confirms this by stating in *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* that animals and humans show emotions in remarkably similar ways. He uses photographs to illustrate how similar humans and animals express emotions. As he shows the photographs of how similar humans and animals express emotions, at the same time, he confirms how animals, like humans, can express a huge range of emotions. One of the examples that Darwin displays how wide the range of emotions in animals is, is in photographs. First, he records the “action of a cat feeling savage and not terrified” (125). Then, he shows a dog that is “snarling” and angry (117). Darwin even provides evidence of a cat being “in an affectionate state of mind” (59). These wide ranges of emotions show all exemplify how animals and humans are similar in the ways they show such a broad range of emotions.

First, *Figure 1* illustrates a cat interacting with humans, and displaying signs of affection. This also further sketches the narrowing of the boundaries between humans and nonhumans. The affection and emotion connect both sides of the group. Just like how emotions of fear banded the human characters together in both *Dracula* and *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, human and nonhuman characters also connect because of emotions. Darwin continues to show how broad the range of emotions that are embedded in nonhumans is in *Figure 2*. A dog displaying an

expression of anger with gritted teeth is shown. Here, Darwin argues that animals also have emotions such as anger. The picture shows the dog “snarling,” just like how the nonhuman animals, being aroused with anger, are shown “running lightly on all-fours and snarling” in the novel (92). The same kind of context is also shown in *Figure 3*. Not just dogs, but cats, also display a wide variety of emotions. Other than these pictures shown in these figures, Darwin documents, “[w]e have also seen that some porcupines, when angered or alarmed at the sight of a snake, rapidly vibrate their tails, thus producing a peculiar sound by the striking together of the hollow quill” (110). In fact, in general, “[a]nimals have been repeatedly excited by rage and terror during many generations;” (confirming how it is prevalent throughout the animal kingdom (103). This suggests how not just animals that are domesticated by humans have shown emotions, but all varieties of animals illustrate emotions as well.



Figures 1, 2, and 3 are the three illustrations mentioned above from Darwin's records:



Figure 1

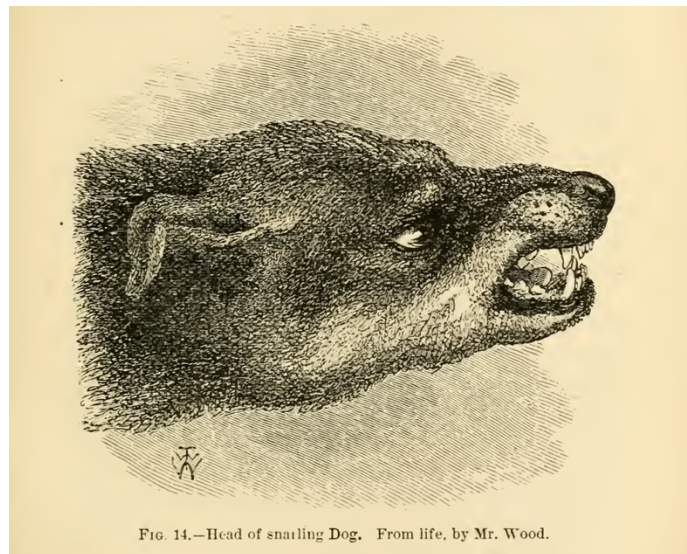


Figure 2

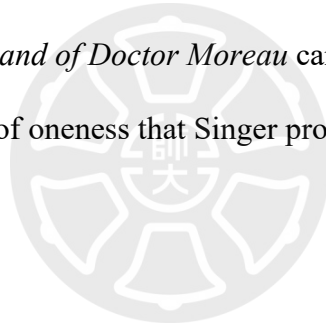


Figure 3

In Darwin's *The Descent of Man*, he writes, "[a]rticulate language is, however, peculiar to man; but he uses in common with the lower animals inarticulate cries to express his meaning, aided by gestures and the movements of the muscles of the face" (54). Darwin claims that man and animals expressions of emotions are common to humans as well. The emotions express even though animals are inarticulate, it is common when they express with their "gestures" and "movements of the muscles" of their "face." In the *Descent*, he even further emphasizes how "[t]he fact that the lower animals are excited by the same emotions as ourselves is so well established, that it will not be necessary to weary the reader by many details" (39). He clearly put forth how animals and humans possess the same emotional functions. Especially the feelings of fear, which is the main emotion that both the human and nonhuman characters both feel in the novel.

Both Prendick and the animals on the island experience the emotion of terror. Darwin further suggests in the *Descent* how "[t]error acts in the same manner on them as on us, causing the muscles to tremble, the heart to palpitate, the sphincters to be relaxed, and the hair to stand on end. Suspicion, the offspring of fear, is eminently characteristic of most wild animals" (39). Therefore, indicating how there is not really a difference between both humans and nonhuman animals when it comes to experiencing fear. In the novel, it reflects as such. Prendick mirrors the nonhuman animals or beast people when many accounts he admits he is endowed with fear. For example, being "anxious not to show the fear that seemed chilling [his] backbone," or "too fearful to move, and indeed too fearful even to plan a course of action" (43, 53). His reactions to his fears parallel to the nonhuman animals and beast people on the island that commonly gets "scared out of their wits by the sight of" the human characters (76).

In conclusion, H.G. Well's *The Island of Doctor Moreau* through evolution theories and ethics exemplifies how the human and nonhuman characters in the novel are both commonly leveled. In the novel, we clearly see how both the human and nonhuman characters are sentient, and how they both create expressions and react in similar ways. This can lead to a reading of the novel that encourages Empathy. Empathy is present because of the non-hierarchical interaction and difference between the human and nonhuman characters of the novel. Peter Singer, who has been an advocate for how animals are sentient beings, also makes a similar point. He even brings the importance of this ethical stance further to nature: “[o]nce the expansion of ethics to all sentient creatures has been accepted, it is only a small step to extend this expansion until it takes in plants and even inanimate natural objects like the land, streams, and mountains” (123). For further research, novels like *The Island of Doctor Moreau* can even further expand the importance of looking at the sense of oneness that Singer provides here.



Chapter Four: Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, I will restate my argument and bring my argument forward to Oneness in all beings. Ultimately, I believe that Both *Dracula* and *The Island of Doctor Moreau* allude to evolutionary theories to encourage us to rethink the relationship between human and nonhuman animals. These two novels play a powerful role in dismantling the hierarchal relationship between human and nonhuman animals. Even though there is indeed little sympathy for the nonhuman characters in these two novels, when providing a Darwinian reading of the novel, new insights can be made. These two works can like, Mark Payne suggests, “acknowledge how little difference there is between the pains of our own zoological existence and those that we inflict on other animals” (15). Both works constantly draw parallels between how the human and nonhuman characters both suffer and show emotions like pain, fear, and even joy. Darwinian publications and the fears of human degeneration largely affected Victorian culture in 19th-century Britain. In this chapter, I will go through how those fears have also affected the culture and society of the Victorian Era.

Of course, like H.G. Wells and Bram Stoker, Darwin’s publications also lead to a lot of writers who exemplify the ideas of Darwinian publications. Other authors like Thomas Hardy, and Sir Henry Rider Haggard illustrate the theory of evolution and fears of degeneration in their writing. For instance, Hardy also evokes sympathy towards non-human animals in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Anna West states, “Hardy uses the word creature to appeal to sympathy for animals and to compare human and animal worlds” (25). Furthermore, Hardy in *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* illustrates the fears of degeneration, as “Tess’s training to imitate bird-tone in order to instruct birds in human- song, then, is layered with tension” and “[b]ound up with the scene

are worries about degeneration” (95). These sketches of human and animal interaction blend the boundaries together as well, illustrating the dangerous minimal gap between humans and animals that Darwin points out.

Other than inspiring lots of novels showing the closeness between human and nonhuman boundaries, which invoke fear or sympathy between the human and nonhuman gap, Darwin’s publications also lead to the fear of losing human control. This fear is especially related to religion. In fact, the two novels presented in this thesis do shed light on this: Snyder remarks how *Moreau* “displays real fear: a fear of the power of the ceremony to induce others” (233). This fear reflects the fear of going against religion during the Victorian Era. Snyder continues to comment how “*Moreau* is a mockery of Christianity: the Beast Men’s experience of religion is based on pain underlying their propositions about sin, and the whole experience of religious feeling is a farce with terrifying power” (233). He continues explaining how “Darwin maintained that neither his theory nor his book were in any way attacks on religious faith. They did, however reposition humans as simply one species among others, rather than as uniquely privileged in creation” (298). Peter Bowler also writes, “[o]nce published, the theory of evolution by natural selection obviously affected Victorian culture because it undermined traditional religion” (8). In other words, even though Darwin’s works did not intend to throw “attacks” on religion, they really shocked the public and threw humans into a place of uncertainty.

Other than fears relating to religion, fears of degeneration also affected Victorian culture and religion. In this thesis, I have included how degeneration prompted fears about how humans are in danger of NOT progressing, and slowly declining into savages or beasts. Unlike fears surrounding the delineation between animals and humans, the fears that affected Victorian culture were related to racial and social fears. Bill Luckin writes, “Extrapolating from the

zoological to the human and social, [Lankester's] *Degeneration* contended that the mechanism of natural selection could not be made to ensure or even imply the inevitability of biological, 'race' progress. Like certain types of mollusc, human beings might regress to lower and less complex forms of life." Therefore, these types of fears of degeneration had permeated into "urban environments" (239). The fears within Victorian society, and "the idea of social betterment through better breeding (indeed, the notion of better anything through breeding) led to a horrifying era of social supremacism" (Helfand). In other words, Eugenics, invented by Francis Galton happened because of this fear. I want to emphasize how Darwin himself, "never became a eugenicist" and his work on selective breeding focuses on animals and plants. George Levine in his work *Darwin Loves You* explains how even when Darwin writes about humans, he is caution and states how Darwin "is a celebrant of the natural world who is awed and enchanted by the complexity, intelligence, and variety of the lower animals" (68, 63). However, many Darwinians took Darwin's ideas and reread Darwin's publications to apply his ideas to the social context.

Ultimately, Darwin triggered a new fear in the Victorian age. The fear of the unknown future, and new threatening views of religion. In addition, the discovery of evolution means that humans can now evolve or even "devolve." However, in this thesis, I wish to have taken that fear and reread the texts that illustrate those fears. Instead of seeing how the fear divides the boundaries between humans and nonhumans, to use that opportunity to see how instead of division, it shows how closely the bond between humans and nonhuman animals could be. Instead of spreading fear, to see how the texts can spread sympathy among all beings.

Due to the limited time for this thesis, I did not have the space to extend this thesis and bring forth my argument further. I would have added another chapter to extend the connection between all beings further.



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