

**(M)other *Dracula* and its Adaptations**

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At first *Dracula* may seem to challenge patriarchy, but then reneges and returns to the atavistic standards of gender specificity. The novel's women, specifically Mina and her friend Lucy, head for autonomy by transgressing the boundaries of what may have typically been considered "female" standards. The female characters that are initially allowed to challenge the boundaries set by men are eventually seen as a threat and their climb toward equality is destroyed.

Considering that Stoker's novel is the motivating factor behind hundreds of adaptations *Dracula* could easily be considered a mother, whose traits and characteristics may or may not be passed on to her children, or adaptations. Motherhood is one of the female standards heavily discussed in *Dracula* and to understand children we must first comprehend the mother. There is one constant throughout *Dracula* and its adaptations: the threats to the patriarchal Western tradition, specifically, women and foreigners, and the fear of these "others" crossing the boundaries set by the dominant ideology.

The boundaries of gender are discussed in Judith Butler's text *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Butler likens the body to a blank canvas, to which "mute" and socially constructed norms, like paint, are applied which shape and convey the meaning shown by the body. If gender norms are applied by cultural ideals, then it stands to reason that these specific expectations of gender can be recreated or done away with all together. Marc Silverstein, in his article "'Make Us the Women We Can't Be' Cloud Nine and The Female Imaginary," discusses how women are not simply seeking better employment or relief from child-bearing, but are actually suffering from "their 'unquenchable longing to be'." This "longing," Silverstein mentions, "takes the form of a gender-specific (rather than an universalizable ontological) desire – a desire to effect a new discursive ordering and production of the body. In other words, their desire proves inseparable from 'a social logic' and the structures of representation articulating that logic" (8). This "desire" focused on women, in this case, is due to the marginalization of women. While men are subjected to the same gender assignment via cultural signifiers, they remain the group in power and therefore are not often marginalized by such cultural constructions.

*Dracula* and its many adaptations serve as good examples for the discussion of gender as the vampire story, in its many variations, pays great attention to gender expectations. These expectations can be placed on women and men alike, but because the men in *Dracula* and its adaptations, tend to end up less negatively affected under the pressures of "gender" this study will focus on the women. More specifically, this examination will focus on Mina and Lucy, and how the assaults on their bodies through gender has been conveyed in adaptations over a century.

To begin a discussion of gender, controlled through vampirism, with Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is certainly not to imply that it is the first novel on the subject, nor is it the first tale to mention vampirism. Legends of vampires and the Undead have been seen in Vlad the Impaler and in Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*. Stoker wrote with his reading audience in mind because *Dracula* was, for Stoker, a way to make money. Stoker succeeds in predicting what his audience wanted to read about and as a result his novel remains the most popular vampire narrative. With a close reading of the text and its various criticisms it becomes apparent that the focus of the text is not simply the invasion of a foreign "other," but the dread of the feminine "other" termed the "New Woman" in Stoker's time.

The use of vampires as the agent for destruction is quite fitting, since the vampire's way of attacking their victim is by taking what is inside the body to the outside through atypical and created orifices. The body as merely a shell or reflection, encasing or conveying what society expects it to, subjects the body to attack by other invading or contradictory ideas. So real is the balance in, out, and through the body that Mina and Lucy become extremely changed when Dracula begins removing their blood from their body, or putting his own into theirs. The modes of transmission between the vampire and female bodies are also violent; orifices are created by cutting and penetrating areas of the body such as the neck and male breast, which are not intended to give or receive fluid transfusion. The unique exchanges of fluid create a race of beings different from the patriarchal norm and therefore seemingly threatening to their dominant status. *Dracula* then represents the threat of invasion, whether real or perceived, and how the ruling social group combats it, in this case through a return to the subjugation of "others," the reapplication of socially prescribed gender roles, and specifically, the campaign against the "New Woman."

The threat of the "New Woman" is placed in novel where its importance cannot be missed. Mina believes that she and Lucy would have, with their appetites, shocked the "New Woman" and continues to discuss how "'New Women' writers will some day start an idea that men and women should be allowed to see each other asleep before proposing or accepting" (87). Mina suggestively mentions, "I am now sitting by his bedside, where I can see his face while he sleeps" before her and Jonathan's marriage, when she goes to Buda-Pesth to nurse him back to health (99). While it can be argued sickness makes an exception to the rule, it is no doubt beyond coincidence that this movement towards the "New Woman" comes alongside Mina's trip to the East and thus away from Western ideals. While it seems as though Mina's move toward the "New Woman" is inevitable, the moment when she marries Jonathan actually begins her discovery that the "New Woman" is dangerous. Before marrying Harker she was practically without men in her life, especially not in any sort of authoritative role. Marriage, the male influence, is important to Stoker's works, as well as other Victorian texts, because the male presence could determine what women's allegiances and conduct towards men would be.

From the earliest journal entries by Mina and Lucy it is clear that, of the two, Mina is the more morally superior woman. However, does that mean she was conventionally modest from the onset, or merely seen as such in contrast to the wanton ways of Lucy? Arguably, Lucy Westenra could make most women look like prudes. The inclusion of Lucy in the novel offers another example of the threat of the “New Woman” as sexually driven. She is less harmful than Mina because she will likely bear children but her heightened sexuality threatens her allegiance to men. While she ascribes to many of the typical “female” traits that male societal norms would have her display, she also threatens the hegemony by disrespecting male honor and friendship. Specifically, in her attraction to Holmwood, Seward, and Morris she is potentially threatening their social and professional relationships with each other. Mina, on the other hand, respects these friendships and in her collating of all journals, phonographs, etcetera, is actually working to make the male society work as a well-oiled machine. Her threat, however, is in taking the power and knowledge away from men by having too much of it herself. By taking on the attributes of men she is also casting aside her desire for motherhood, a feminine trait Stoker conveys in *Dracula* that all women should have. As Mina seems to be straying from motherhood, Stoker brings in Van Helsing, the representation of atavistic ideas, who encourages Mina to reframe her priorities as woman. The closing of the novel represents the return to a gender-specific interest in motherhood with Mina to fulfilling her womanly obligation to reproduce.

The return to earlier societal beliefs in women as essential to procreation is written as a solution for the problem of potential ascribed-gender redefinition. This atavism is shown by Van Helsing referring to a future generation, Mina’s son, and that this story may serve as a warning. Van Helsing says that “This boy will some day know what a brave and gallant woman his mother is” (327). The discussion of motherhood at the conclusion heightens its effect on the reader as marriage is normally the closing act of Victorian fiction, yet Stoker focuses not on the new marriages of Godalming and Seward, but on the mothering that will be done by Mina. Moreover, the significance of mothering in the closing passage is that Van Helsing, not only delivers the news about how fine of a mother Mina will be, but appears a lecturer while holding her child. This passage, being controlled by men, demonstrates that the act of mothering, or assurance that mothering will be done, will also be controlled by men. Further, it is not women who have decided to become mothers, but the men who have told them that that is what they will do. Earlier in the novel, Van Helsing tells Mina she should eventually be excluded from the group of men trying to exterminate Dracula because “she is young woman and not so long married; there may be other things to think of some time, if not now” (207).

Van Helsing’s warning that Mina “is a young woman and not so long married” has been cited by Matthew C. Brennan, who suggests that “though more mature and stable and psychologically developed than Lucy, Mina is still creating her identity and thus needs yet more knowledge about herself” (5). Brennan argues that what

gets Dracula's victims in trouble is not their quest for knowledge, but their lack of ambition. Mina's willing abstention from the Crew of Light keeps her passive and in the dark; a sin punishable by vampirism. Van Helsing's advocacy of procreation reinforces standards of female conduct through Mina and Lucy: do not be sexually aggressive, have children, and gain intelligence for the sake of benefiting your husband and family.

Mina and Lucy represent two different forms of female threats and together could possibly wreak complete havoc on the male-gendered system. The possibility of the two women joining forces can even be seen in their potential homosexual relationship. While this relationship is not portrayed as directly threatening it still suggests that such an alliance would be dangerous to patriarchy.

In the correspondence of the two women, one could call into question the purity of their relationship. Mina almost seems to make apologies, or excuses, for why she must focus her full attention on Harker, and perhaps not as much as usual on Lucy. The lesbianism in *Dracula*, which would further threaten the patriarchy, is inherent in letter exchanges between Lucy and Mina which read "I wish I were with you dear, sitting by the fire undressing, as we used to sit" (57) or sending "Oceans of love and millions of kisses" (101) and better yet "It must be so nice to see strange countries. I wonder if we – I mean Jonathan and I – shall ever see them together," (56) as if there may have been some confusion as to whom the couple would otherwise be.

Beyond the threat to men that lesbianism would represent, it also threatens society-at-large.

If the body is synecdochal for the social system *per se* or a site in which open systems converge, then any kind of unregulated permeability constitutes a site of pollution and endangerment," in this case lesbianism, because "all social systems are vulnerable at their margins, and that all margins are accordingly considered dangerous. (Butler 168)

Even if the lesbianism between the two friends can be argued away, and that threat eradicated, there are still features to the early stages of Mina's character that suggest she is not exactly the pious woman men might most desire. The first thing that Mina mentions in the novel is that she is overwhelmed with work and longing to be with Lucy. In fact, in a letter to Lucy, Mina places her priorities in the following order:

Forgive my long delay in writing, but I have been simply overwhelmed with work. The life of an assistant schoolmistress is sometimes trying. I am longing to be with you, and by the sea, where we can talk together freely and build our castles in the air. I have been working very hard lately, because I want to keep up with

Jonathan's studies, and I have been practicing shorthand very assiduously. When we are married I shall be able to be useful to Jonathan. (55)

First Mina apologizes because she has been buried in work – her main focus. Although Mina mentions her wishes to be useful to Jonathan, the role of dutiful wife still follows her vocation and additionally her friend, or perhaps more-than-friend. The second point she draws attention to is how badly she misses what she and Lucy used to have together. This makes it seem as though Jonathan has usurped Lucy, and in an effort to make her feel better about her choice, Mina returns to the importance of her work, or as she might say, Jonathan's work.

After Mina marries Jonathan and returns with him to London, she gestures toward casting off her gender-prescribed femininity. While walking down the street with Jonathan she realizes he is holding her by the arm and recalls:

I felt it very improper, for you can't go on for some years teaching etiquette and decorum to other girls without the pedantry of it biting into yourself a bit; but it was Jonathan, and he was my husband, and we didn't know anybody who saw us – and we didn't care if they did – so on we walked.

Not only does she realize that her public interaction with Harker is improper, but she even mentions that his hold on her was in the same manner as “he used to in old days before I went to school,” insinuating that Mina has been improper for quite some time. If this is not enough sacrilege for their stroll through Picadilly Mina further identifies with the “New Woman”:

I was looking at a very beautiful girl, in a big cartwheel hat, sitting in a victoria outside Giulian's, when I felt Jonathan clutch my arm so tight that he hurt me...he gazed at a tall, thin man, with a beaky nose and black moustache and pointed beard, who was also observing the pretty girl. (155)

Mina has now aligned not only with the “New Woman,” but also with Dracula. At this moment, the whole novel's moral gauge seems to reach its peak, thus calling attention to the need for change in the eyes of men.

Events requiring correction include Lucy's death, the hysteria of men (hysteria being derived from the Latin word for 'uterus' typically applied to women), and a role reversal in the emotional aspects of marriage between Mina and Jonathan. Not only does Jonathan balance on Mina's arm, but he also puts his head on her shoulder and seems in utter disorder until Van Helsing comes to visit the couple, at which time Mina mentions her fear for the mental health of her husband. Once Jonathan feels like something can be done about Dracula, he seems to have restored his “typical” male abilities which also coincides with the male desire for

Mina to succumb once again to the will of man, and she slowly begins her exclusion from their plans and missions.

While Lucy is punished for her forward ways with men and hyper-sexuality, it is Mina's lack of ambition for child-bearing that gets her into trouble with the count. In the most intimate scene between her and Dracula, Mina is made to suck the blood from his breast or drown in the liquid. Mina is now like a child sucking life from the breast of a mother, Dracula. By not becoming the mother she should have, she has been further demoted to the status of child, and it is only the chivalric men, in their quest to destroy Dracula, that can restore her opportunity to become a mother. In so doing, the men of *Dracula* may be able to heed Stoker's warning regarding the dangers in the autonomy of women, and that their roles as prescribed by "social logic" need to be permanently codified on the body.

*Dracula* seems to flirt with reorienting the bounds of gender but ultimately reneges. As a result, the narrative returns to gender-specific customs of the past which held the gender dichotomy in a working and productive, although unequal, balance. As such autonomy was at least discussed and the idea entertained to some extent in the *fin de siècle*, it stands to reason that such an idea would re-emerge in future, but to what degree? If future generations are assumed to learn from their ancestors' mistakes how might they re-approach gender? Perhaps the best way to answer such questions would be to explore future adaptations of a similar narrative through various time periods. Some adaptations are like children carrying or combating the patriarchal ideals of the mother-text; some children and texts are influenced by their parent or predecessor while others are not.

### ***Horror of Dracula* – Terence Fisher – (1958)**

This dependent child of mother *Dracula* may be the most similar in ambivalence toward women. Like Stoker, Fisher plays with the idea of separating the mind and body in women but reneges when the autonomous women appear threatening to male dominance.

This film focuses on family and, according to traditional standards, the men remain dominant in the familial hierarchy. Jonathan Harker is engaged to Lucy Holmwood, sister of Arthur Holmwood who is married to Mina Holmwood. Arthur is clearly the head of the family and all women, children, and individuals outside of the family are measured by his standards. Mina even tells the housemaid's child to comply with the adults' request to hear of an incident with Ms. Lucy or, if she did not, Mr. Holmwood may think ill of her. Alongside this familial hierarchy is the gender expectations initially communicated in the ambivalence toward the names of female characters. This is not the only adaptation of Stoker's *Dracula* that liberally alters the names of women while preserving those of men, thus indicating the gender hierarchy.

Fisher's adaptation, *Horror of Dracula*, begins by preserving the typical gender roles of man as protector and woman as in need of protection. Only when giving women power under the control of Dracula, are they able to fight against the patriarchal family that existed before the count's presence. The rise of autonomy in the female characters is conveyed, according to Auerbach, by the "autoeroticism" of Mina and Lucy (125). As evidence Auerbach points to a scene where Lucy locks out the rest of the world from her bedroom in order to allow herself to be visited by the vampire, and while waiting she erotically fingers the wounds on her neck. Similarly, Mina, who was once a "leaden, matronly presence," returns home after Dracula's bite "sparkling, clutching the fur collar around her neck...she smiles deliciously and snuggles into the fur, seeming to caress her animal self" (125). The female characters' quest for autonomy, by replacing the men in their lives with Dracula, was caused by their displeasure with being mere pawns of their controlling husband, father, and doctors.

Fisher may have focused his film around family values, because, as Auerbach mentions, postwar America was "preaching the health of domesticity (national and familial) and the horror of the world beyond" (125). Although the message of family is strong in *Horror of Dracula*, what did Lucy or Mina do to deserve the vampiric embrace? According to Van Helsing, "This is Dracula's revenge. Lucy was to replace that woman [Jonathan killed]," because Jonathan had set in motion an invasion of a man's right to rule his own household.

The men almost did the women a favor by inviting change into their midst, however, being the power-hungry Western men they defeat the threat and patriarchy rules again. Similarly, Stoker almost allows women autonomy in *Dracula* but reneges as soon as a threat is perceived. According to *Dracula* and, its adaptation, *Horror of Dracula*, feminine purpose is to occupy the correct place in the familial hierarchy: near, but below, the man; much like a marionette to its manipulator.

### ***Dracula* – Tod Browning – (1931)**

Perhaps the best known version of *Dracula* is Tod Browning's 1931 film starring Bela Lugosi. The popularity of Lugosi's representation of Count Dracula has branded the character as a foreigner with odd speech patterns that simply wants to drink blood. More specifically, this very old vampire wants to drink the life/blood from the new and relatively young group of people for his own self-preservation. Browning's adaptation moves further away from merely the threat of a familial or gender hierarchy seen in *Horror of Dracula*, and closer to that of the more inclusive "other." The expansive range of fears in this adaptation render it the hyper-sensitive child of Stoker's *Dracula*. As opposed to fearing a direct threat, perceived in other versions, this child fears anything different from its ethnocentric vantage point. The broader range of threats conveyed in this version would resonate with a larger audience, just as Stoker's inclusion of the woman and the foreigner had in the novel.

Although Stoker's novel discusses women and foreigners as a threat he treats them as individuals with careful description, use, and intent. Browning's *Dracula* does not select his victims with such care but will choose them somewhat randomly, if necessary. He takes men and women alike, exemplified in Renfield who is actually bitten in the film while only mind controlled in the novel. The 1931 Count, upon his arrival in England, also feeds on insignificant lower-class women such as the flower-girl. By Dracula infecting the flower girl, Gregory A. Waller concludes that "Dracula murders a lower-class young woman...and this brief, seemingly digressive episode pointedly suggests how successfully the formally dressed vampire can thrive in the open, unprotected modern world" (384). Thus, Lugosi's character represents the foreign invasion of the Western world, more so than it does the threat of the "New Woman." The count and Renfield's journey to Transylvania may be even more important in this version because the Eastern influence, while typically present, has attained an all-time high through Browning's film.

Such heightened Eastern awareness may have been due to the global climate just prior to 1931, which featured Mahatma Gandhi's civil disobedience toward the British, the Turkish War of Independence, and the spread of communism. These global events created xenophobia which offered a catch-all for any threat to the dominant Western tradition. Being an open expression of fear, xenophobia created an environment for Western masses to align against potential foreign invaders, even without good reason. Waller deems Mina the "avatar of normal" and she becomes the way that Browning suggests the idea that England is too "normal" for its own good. The foreign invasion is seen as a threat to traditional standards and, thus, to defeat the new Eastern threat the characters enlist the help of the old Western tradition – Val Helsing.

Van Helsing has intelligence, faith, and spirituality - three things that Waller accuses Mina of lacking, and the same three things that ultimately rid England of Dracula. Mina is not the only character lacking these three characteristics, as the men understood do as well. Waller points to multiple episodes in which the Englishmen are unable to match wits with the other foreign men:

Thus when these two foreigners first confront each other in the parlor of Seward's home, the other characters stand apart, unaware that the parlor – another embodiment of the normal – has become the setting for a struggle that will determine their fate. And when Dracula and Van Helsing match wits in the parlor for the second time, none of the Englishmen is even present in the room (386).

As normalcy is clearly at stake in this film version, Mina's role seems to have fallen into the shadows. While she is used to convey the threat to normalcy and the return to it, via her and Harker's ascension of the stairs of Carfax Abbey and into the light, her sexuality and presence specifically as a woman is hardly



noticeable. Men remain her protectors but they are equally protectors of their own country and race, two categories which Mina happens to fall into.

### ***Nosferatu* - F.W. Murnau - (1922)**

Murnau's version presents a gentler correction of feminine norm-breaking than does Stoker's novel. This adaptation questions the mind of the woman and gives this mind a chance to obtain freedom. *Nosferatu* initially maintains some of its mother's ideas but ultimately rebels and moves toward a more progressive attitude. Unlike *Dracula*, the mind of the woman proves necessary to the survival of the society in question and therefore does not evoke the cerebrocide of women common in the *Dracula* family. In fact, the acknowledgement that there is a relationship between mind and body is what allows this story its conclusion. The mind serves as the mechanism that recognizes the needs of the society and the body, and being barren of the responsibility of procreation, is able to serve the society as a whole as opposed to one individual child.

Murnau's 1922 adaptation may convey the most pious Mina that *Dracula* has ever known, and continues to question the need for gender-specificity. Throughout the entire film Mina, named Ellen to observe copyright, is almost the perfect housewife. She yearns when her husband, Hutter, tells her that he has to go away on business. Ellen seems upset by her husband's departure which affords the film to communicate the patriarchal control Hutter has over Ellen. When she begins to pout Hutter insinuates that if she is a good woman she will not be outwardly upset and she quickly corrects her mistake by forcing a smile.

Meanwhile the town has fallen under a plague brought by Count Orlok (*Dracula*). Ellen reads a book about "Vampyres," though her husband "pleaded" for her not to, that informs her "only a maiden can save the world by willingly giving her blood which will make *Nosferatu* heed not the cock crow." As this is a silent film we do not get Hutter's exact words but, his actions state that Ellen's feminine mind is too delicate to read such a book.

Differing from *Dracula*, the transference of blood, mentioned in the book passage, causes not the change from human to vampire, but death to both. This death to male and female begins to balance the sexes and also represents what Butler points to as the relationship between mind and culture, body and nature. The mind/body of Ellen are two different things, the mind being alive to figure out how she can save the town, and the body being merely the vehicle to do so.

The mind/body relationship can help to explain how culture imprints on the mind modes of behavior (which can be false) in contrast to the true abilities instilled by nature. Naturally, Ellen has the power to kill *Nosferatu* through her womanly and barren body, and her mind, when not allowed to be tarnished by society's standards, provides the moving mechanism for such a vehicle to work. Therefore, only by ignoring the presence of the culture and Hutter's insistence

that she not read the book is Ellen able to save the culture. Murnau's adaptation, then, implies that a culture should cease gender-specificity and simply give into the body as a natural creation. If this is in fact what *Nosferatu* communicates, then what is the vehicle for communication?

Perhaps, the key to centering this narrative on gender dissolution lies in the word "maiden" and Ellen's reading of the book regardless of her husband's wishes. Though maiden typically refers to an unmarried woman, which in this case Ellen is not, it can also refer to a virgin. While she and Hutter are married, if sex was strictly for procreation – and they in fact do not have a child – then it is logical to assume the couple has not had intercourse or is not able to bear children. Ellen's childlessness enables her to rid the plague. Therefore, Ellen's refusal or inability to succumb to some of the assigned gender roles allows her the intellectual and physical capabilities to save the town.

Her quest for knowledge, in reading Hutter's vampire book against his caution, may also help explain the desire for female autonomy. In Stoker's *Dracula*, Mina's exclusion from knowledge backfires on the Crew of Light. However, when Ellen rebels by reading the book anyway she is able to find a cure for her society's problem. Due to her successful rebellion, Murnau is arguing for a shift in gender roles. Ellen is allowed to save the town and her husband, as opposed to the narrative of *Dracula* where the men had to save her. In fact, *Nosferatu* seems to insist that the preservation of gender roles by allowing Hutter to protect Ellen would have actually caused the demise of the entire town.

### ***Bram Stoker's Dracula* – Francis Ford Coppola – 1992**

Claiming the most fidelity of any film version to Stoker's original text is Francis Ford Coppola's. While many of the details, even the most intricate, are the most accurate, Coppola centers his story on the fact that Dracula is Vlad the Impaler. While Vlad may have played a role in Stoker's creation of the vampire character he was not the specific character in the novel. The impetus for Coppola's version is Vlad's loss of his lover and queen, Elisabeta, who killed herself after receiving false news of Vlad's death. Upon finding Elisabeta drowned in the river, he renounces the church and vows he will be resurrected and, upon doing so, finds the resemblance of his lost love in none other than Mina Harker. As a result of great similarities and differences this version is the step-child of Stoker's mother-text. Coppola's adaptation brings new ideas to the *Dracula* family while also adapting some traditional familial ideas.

The correlation between mind/body and old/new are forefront in Coppola's adaptation. Though Mina Harker is not Elisabeta, and the two women are separated by time, their minds seem to be connected as Mina recognizes Vlad in varying degrees throughout the film. These two minds are old (Elisabeta) and new (Mina) but have mutual desires which communicate the equality of old and

new. To compliment the sameness that old and new can inhabit is the sameness of the body: neither Elisabeta or Mina have children, yet both are married.

Although neither couple has children Coppola's representation assures us that most couples, and even characters who are not in a relationship, are having plenty of intercourse. While it has been inferred Mina and Lucy have been lovers Coppola takes it that extra step by having them actually kiss, quite deeply, in the middle of a heavy rain shower while clad in thin white dresses. In fact, almost any scene featuring Lucy is filled with sexuality. Typically, Lucy is passionately mating with a very furry and animalistic version of Dracula, soliciting kisses from various men although engaged to Holmwood, or exposing her breasts for the world to see. With this type of behavior it is no wonder she is deemed an immoral woman, even if it is a bit beyond what Stoker may have intended.

If Lucy is the whore then what about the other half of the dichotomy – the virgin? Does this responsibility fall on Mina? It did not in Stoker's version and it surely does not in Coppola's. In the first scene with Lucy and Mina the latter mentions that she and Harker have only kissed, while Lucy is clearly well versed in her sexuality. However, upon Mina's dropping her copy of *Arabian Nights*, Lucy discovers that her friend was perusing some ideas on eroticism. This assertion shines true when Mina becomes absolutely smitten with Prince Vlad, Dracula, and is pleasantly surprised when she finds he has snuck into her bed chambers although she is married to Harker.

The love story of Coppola's *Dracula* being the impetus for the adaptation communicates something more sensual and emotional about human relations than a mere idea of marriage or procreation as something women are supposed to do. While other versions may imply the love between Mina and Harker, none compare to the apparent passion that draw Vlad and Elisabeta/Mina together in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. While such a mutual infatuation may seem to support a heterosexual superiority by placing this relationship at the center of the narrative, the humanizing and great emotional presence of the Count, as well as Lucy and Mina's flirtations, imply a neglect of gender-specific roles. Set in the same time as Stoker's *Dracula*, Francis Ford Coppola's film flaunts liberties that the director would have lived through and witnessed, influencing his directorial choices regarding less-restrained sexual characters. Lucy is still clearly punished for her sexuality, as Dracula appears in shadow just after she flirts with all three men, but it seems that she is punished not because of her quest for love, but for her shallow and impure desire more closely aligned with lust. Coppola's standards then seem to be applied to the human psyche in general, as opposed to a specific gender.

There is no linear journey to be traced through the various adaptations of *Dracula* and the vampire story. The novel and film versions range from quite similar to completely different in character roles, locations and portrayal of events. With all these differences present there is still something that holds the vampire narrative

together: the creation of the monster as a vehicle for conveying the fears of a society. Rendering the vampire an appealing choice of monster is that it does not kill its victims, at least not literally. Society is left with the decision to preserve or not the embodiment of the "person" that remains after the vampire's attack. In fact, in digesting all of these legends of Dracula, it seems that it is also the society that has the initial task of determining how the mind or soul of the person-in-question will be coded on their body. What these versions of Dracula similarly present is a discourse regarding how a society assigns roles to its citizens and how their role designations affect the individual and the society. The common theme, then, is that the dominant society of men assigns women their roles, roles which may be considered restricting or burdening. As a result the women are tempted with a vampiric view of a life without the sex-specific restrictions; a threat to the survival of patriarchy. According to these many adaptations, with the exception of the rebellious *Nosferatu*, when and if women like Mina and Lucy gain autonomy, they will ruin their society by their lack of reproduction. As a result men like Van Helsing, clinging to atavistic standards of gender roles, return the women to their "feminine" states in order to ensure the domination of and survival of man.

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