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A Comparison Between Monsters in Victorian Gothicism and Modern Dystopian Fiction: The Fear of Godlessness in Dracula, Frankenstein, and Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and the Fear of Loss of Humanity in 1984, The Host, and Divergent

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Abstract

Monsters have remained a common attribute within literature since their origins in local folklore. These monsters shift and develop based on a society's needs and fears, as well as the individuals who either write them into being or spread their existence vocally. This thesis seeks to explore the relationship between a society's fears and the monsters present in their literature. This will be done through an analysis of three books from Victorian Gothicism and three classified as modern dystopian literature, as well as through research on both societies and their mentalities, whether religious or secular. Additionally, a comparative analysis on paired novels will be performed in order to discover the similarities between the cultures and literary traditions. Specifically, *Dracula* and *1984* will be compared, with a focus on the act of sucking a people dry, whether physically or through mental brainwashing; the section regarding *Frankenstein* and *The Host* will explore the consequences of an individual who is programmed – whether genetically or scientifically – in a specific way, and the effects this programming has on free will; and the section analyzing *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Divergent* will bring attention to various aspects of personality and the effects that having warring character traits has on one's mental capacity.

Introduction

Monsters are most often defined as anything that is not human and that is consequently frightening. However, that definition is oddly vague and does nothing to explain the many human “monsters” within history and literature, such as people who kill for money or do terrible things for horrible reasons. Thus, this paper explores monstrosity as a form of “otherness”; whether the individual is technically human or not does not matter as much as their actions and motivations for said actions. This is most apparent in *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* for, although human, Mr. Hyde does numerous terrible things and would be considered a monster for doing so. In this paper, monstrosity is also connected with godlessness, or a distinct amoral nature, doing things directly against what would be considered the good, “godly” thing to do, and instead acting in favor of violence or complete lack of moral fiber. It is also possible, as in *Dracula*, that the creature is by nature unable to make a moral connection of a religious nature and is therefore labeled both godless and monstrous as a consequence of that nature. In Victorian literature, monstrosity was often equivalent to sexuality, particularly in women, thus dehumanizing anything that possessed strong primal instincts (Gilbert 17). Vampires in particular are often seen as sexual beings, alienating them from both humanity and God and providing a violent lesson on the consequences of lack of control. In this manner, godlessness is eerily similar to a loss of humanity, a topic this paper also continuously explores, as a way of analyzing an emotional response to violence and evil-doing, along with a sensitivity to right and wrong and a desire for knowledge and understanding. The potential for these characteristics is often considered purely human, but this paper looks at examples of alien understanding and emotional responses that

equate to or even surpass that of a typical human, such as in *The Host*. Loss of humanity is also often equated to loss of self, for that which makes one human is often relatable to that which makes one a particular individual, separate and unique from any other. This loss of humanity can also be related to the idea of monstrosity reflecting a lack of control, for an ability to curb primal instincts in favor of civilized behavior is considered distinctly human; anything less is animalistic (Gilbert 101).

The concepts of godlessness and loss of humanity function cohesively, as in many ways they are contingent on one another. Often, embodying the compassion attributed to humanity is also enabling that individual to act with a sense of godliness, and religion is – theoretically and ideally – related to compassion and empathy, characteristics that are notably considered necessary to be human. Thus, loss of humanity may be equivalent to godlessness. In this thesis, these two terms are considered separate phenomena, yet they may occasionally operate together upon the same individual, creating an even more powerful literary effect of monstrosity, thus distancing the reader from the character under discussion. For example, Dracula is related to godlessness, yet he is also cruel and predatory, traits attributed to that which is inhuman, thus rendering him both godless and with an utter lack of humanity.

In Victorian Gothicism, the novels that use the supernatural or the uncanny “other” to create senses of dread, fear, apprehension, and unease, also use the monstrosities contained within the pages to decide the form the story will then take and, consequently, the reader’s reaction to the novel itself. Various societies and cultures in various time periods fear different things, for priorities and social expectations develop and change throughout the centuries, ensuring that people’s tastes change as well.

Gothicism specifically focuses on supernatural aspects of terror through beings like vampires, ghosts, ghouls, and other entities pulled straight from folk and fairytales. These creatures, despite being utterly unrealistic, inspire a visceral reaction of fear and terror, perhaps because many of them may take a human shape and therefore pass themselves off as normal, something that can cause a massive amount of consternation when the creature is, in fact, far from human. The sublime effect of a being appearing to be as close to human as it is possible to be, while there is still something dangerously off about it, is what makes vampires so terrifying. Throughout the development of the literary vampire, they have become more and more human, partaking in human activities and hobbies, looking as an attractive, well-dressed human being would, yet being fundamentally different and indeed stalking humanity as a beast would stalk its prey. Vampires in particular are also intrinsically anti-religion, a phenomenon disturbing in Victorian culture, for society tended to equate religion with art and beauty, thus pushing toward fear and hatred of anything incapable of appreciating religion as such (Fraser 383).

Additionally, Victorian Gothicism in particular relies a great deal upon the religious nature of Western society and the consequent popular reaction to such stories as those regarding vampires and products of scientific experiments. The sensational nature of vampires was most commonly contained in novels titled “penny dreadfuls” throughout much of the 19th century, and only began to move past that reputation with the dawning of Literary Romanticism. However, the religion of the countries in Western Europe, namely Catholicism, Protestantism, and the followers of the Church of England, still very much affected both the contents of Gothic novels and the subsequent reactions to such novels. For example, much of vampire fiction became connected with Roman Catholic

methods of dispelling vampires and protecting humanity from them. This lent an air of holy mystery to novels containing such proceedings and made them almost appear as a form of worship to read them, even in more secularized societies, thus encouraging wider acceptance of vampiric sensationalism.

The counterpart to the religious aspect of Victorian nature was the popularity of scientific knowledge that increased around this point in history. Novels such as *Frankenstein* managed to combine literary Gothicism and sensational plot points with the logic and wide acceptance of empirical knowledge through scientific pursuits. This also encouraged a sense of realism throughout such novels, increasing its believability and therefore its popularity. Secularized societies enjoyed the religious sensationalism in a different manner from those who were familiar with the Catholic symbols being represented, yet its foreign nature further dramatizes the novels themselves, and thus the monsters contained within those pages. (Fraser 279).

Modern societies are far less concerned with religion and the presence or lack thereof of God in any particular text, and are more concerned with science and its potential consequences. Modern dystopias, novels that use an idealistic society with a fundamental flaw to illustrate the weaknesses of human nature, often operate off of the fear of losing one's humanity to scientific advances that spin out of control or go too far, pushed by curious scientists pursuing more knowledge than the natural world allows for. Other dystopias explore what happens when corrupt governments gain power and then utilize it, spreading panic and brainwashing across many cultures and wiping out the existence of humanity through seemingly natural means (Baccolini 48). Both dystopian blueprints have roots in the fear of losing one's humanity, a fear that has developed as

computers have progressed in complexity and intelligence, potentially threatening what makes humanity human in the name of efficiency and progress. *1984* specifically focuses on a government that takes over its people and gradually takes away their ability to think clearly and imaginatively by taking away the functions of language that make such thought processes possible. This is an utterly subtle form of losing one's humanity, yet it is all the more potent due to its subtlety. Language is a fundamental aspect of humanity, every culture possesses it and its loss would change the functions of the human race completely and potentially irrevocably. In contrast, novels such as *The Host* look at literal alien invasions as the best form of analysis on our own human state, using the function of contrast to further our understanding of our own nature. Both approaches further the necessity of analyzing human nature to discover the source of the fear of loss. Dystopian novels often examine the self in order to discover a particular strength or weakness that will make or break the narrative. This destruction of the coherent self is necessarily broken down in dystopian societies in order to garner absolute obedience and a lack of questions. However, this breaking down of coherence also strips the subjects of their humanity (Cartwright 32).

In the spirit of exploring godlessness and loss of humanity, along with the self and the other, *Dracula* and *1984* are paired in order to create a discussion about brainwashing and the act of sucking people dry, whether physically or mentally through a governmental system. This explores historical characters and their effects on fear throughout the ages in which the novels were written, looking at how history functions as an amplifier of fear and enables literature to ring true for the reader. *Frankenstein* and *The Host* are comparable in the struggle of free will within the main characters. This allows them to

illustrate more aspects of the problems within their respective texts, questioning both godlessness and humanity in unique ways, while exploring free will and its effects. Humanity – or the lack thereof – is questioned in the face of experimentation and alien presences. *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Divergent* look at the effects that warring characteristics have on personality and the ways in which an individual functions in society, thus affecting their morality and ability to remain empathetic to those who surround them. These novels all possess common characteristics of Gothicism and dystopias, including the grotesque nature of the “monsters” in the Gothic novels and the corrupt nature of the governments in the dystopian works. These works are chosen in order to illustrate how fears of society manifest themselves in works of literature; specifically, in godless monsters and corrupt governments, respectively. Bringing them together illustrates the fragility of humanity and religion, along with the various perceptions of monstrosity within society, fictional or otherwise.

Section One: *Dracula* and *1984*

In Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, the monstrosity of a humanoid creature is used to illustrate the importance of morality and integrity in one’s dealings with others, as well as emphasizing the vampire’s otherness and complete godlessness. The perspective of the novel remains against this creature, ensuring the fact that it is seen as purely evil and in no way a simplistic, mindless predator struggling to survive in the only way it can: stalking and feeding on its prey. This differentiation between the godly, upright, moral characters of Mina and her fellow Englishmen and a being of blood and destruction places a moral binary directly into the heart of the narrative, emphasizing the importance

of godly character in order to eventually be triumphant against the powers of darkness. Comparatively, George Orwell's *1984*, although way ahead of its time, embodies the fear of the monstrosity within oneself as opposed to the fear of the "other" that has developed throughout the 21st century as society trusts those outside themselves less and the world becomes a more frightening place. This loss of humanity is continually reinforced throughout the novel, for fear resonates within every member of this horrific society due to the fact that they truly believe their own thoughts are their enemies. The concepts of "thoughtcrime" and "crimethink" reinforce the belief that mere thought constitutes treason and is therefore punishable by execution or, worse, complete mental reprogramming. This makes one an enemy of one's own intimate thoughts and desires, stripping one of everything that makes a being human and instead replacing emotion with a void. This constitutes an utter loss of humanity, a loss that cannot be reversed or circumvented for it is absolute. Both of these novels exhibit traits of monstrosity and horror, albeit in completely different ways, in an attempt to reflect humanity as a whole and get to the root of deep, and even primal, fear. These novels illustrate the consequences of one individual becoming so powerful that humanity must band together to fight him – or it – and the subsequent effects on the human psyche, and even on the entire culture as a whole, for Lucy's death and Mina's struggles under the strain of her responsibilities combine to showcase the reach that a creature such as Dracula has on the psychology of human beings.

Stoker's *Dracula* contains detailed examinations of the behaviors and habits of one of the most iconic monsters in literature. The vampire is an ancient monster, one who terrified small children hundreds of years before Stoker's novel, although the folkloric

vampire looked quite a bit different from the literary one. Even so, the development of the literary vampire, an elegant and nearly-human creature, occurred far before Stoker as well, who borrowed most of Dracula's characteristics from former authors, such as Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and Polidori's *The Vampyre*. However, this novel is considered the most iconic of its kind by popular culture, for its reputation is undeniable among both literary experts and "normal" people. This is perhaps assisted by the myth of Vlad the Impaler's influence on Dracula's character, for, despite not being true, he has greatly influenced the perception of the vampire as a historical being and not only a fantastical one, thus bringing the threat closer to home and terrifying many in their beds in the middle of the night, images of a brutal ruler murdering thousands of people with wooden stakes dancing in their heads. The effect of terror is also influenced by the theory of the uncanny, a being that appears human but is fundamentally other, thus making one question what it is that makes a being distinctly human and not merely humanoid.

From the very beginning, it is clear that Count Dracula is a being of mystery and a quiet power, for the circumstances under which Jonathon Harker arrives at the count's residence are sinister and suspicious. It is Dracula's presence which grants him his power and marries him to the demonic realm, thus greatly affecting the reader's perception of him and his spirituality. The association between vampires and wolves is also well established in vampiric literature before this novel, and the darkness and geographical placement within Transylvania all evoke a sense of evil and danger. Additionally, Count Dracula himself evokes distrust, despite being – by all appearances – a perfectly mannered host:

As the Count leaned over me and his hands touched me, I could not repress a shudder. It may have been that his breath was rank, but a horrible feeling of nausea came over me, which, do what I would, I could not conceal. The Count, evidently noticing it, drew back; and with a grim sort of smile, which showed more than he had yet done his protuberant teeth, sat himself down again on his own side of the fireplace. (Stoker 29)

This passage begins the long and painful deterioration of Jonathon's sanity, as well as emphasizing the subtlety with which Dracula performs his distasteful act of sucking a person dry, both literally and psychologically. In this particular novel, both aspects of vampirism are eventually acted out, for as the physical strength of the characters deteriorates, so too does their mental health, morality, and confidence in their own abilities. Thus, Dracula's ability to morally attack his victims is nearly as important as the literal act of sucking a human's blood. This is made apparent upon Jonathon's discovery of the Count's nightly excursions and the manner in which he scurries down the wall of his castle: "What manner of man is this, or what manner of creature is it in the semblance of man? I feel the dread of this horrible place overwhelming me; I am in fear – in awful fear – and there is no escape for me; I am encompassed about with terrors that I dare not think of..." (Stoker 55) This paralysis of fear is what gives Dracula his initial power, for a human who is paralyzed by terror cannot act to save himself. Thus, this is Dracula's main weapon, in addition to those his nature has already given him.

In Victorian Gothicism, the trope of godlessness manifested in the genre's examples of monstrosity is a near constant. Due to the religious nature of Victorian society, religion – or the lack thereof – inherently decided whether an individual was a

good person or not (Fraser 352). In *Dracula*, this is most obvious, for the only way the Count may be fought is through religious – specifically Catholic – symbols. Rosaries keep him at bay, as does making the sign of the cross and intoning the holy names of the Trinity. This repeated flourishing of blatant religion is particularly fascinating in the light of Britain’s religious affiliations, for it had been centuries since Henry VIII seceded from Catholicism and denounced the Pope. The Church of Britain did not take nearly as much stock in religious symbolism as the Catholic Church, making the rosaries, crucifixes, Eucharistic Wafer, and holy water things of mystery, equivalent – but opposite – in power to Dracula himself:

With a wrench, which threw his victim back upon the bed as though hurled from a height, he turned and sprang at us. But by this time the Professor had gained his feet, and was holding towards him the envelope which contained the Sacred Wafer. The Count suddenly stopped, just as poor Lucy had done outside the tomb, and cowered back. Further and further back he cowered, as we, lifting our crucifixes, advanced. (Stoker 458)

This passage illustrates the use of two sacred objects to rectify a situation of spiritual and physical malevolence. The fact that Dracula can be stopped by the mere brandishing of a piece of bread and a cross shows his true spiritually evil nature, for if he had no spiritual alliance, these objects would not phase him in the least. Instead, they inspire terror in him, leading the reader to associate vampirism – a being of ultimate terror and predation – with anti-Catholicism, along with being directly against everything that is pure and good.

Indeed, even the various geographical locations within the novel showcase two deliberately opposing sets of religious ideals: Transylvania is associated with paganism and superstition, while Britain is seen as the pinnacle of science and logic, which are in turn associated with good and victory over evil and ignorance. The mentality and belief in Western progress and knowledge, while simultaneously belittling Eastern science and philosophy as inferior or blatantly wrong, is rampant throughout Western literature, setting up a binary with the West including everything good and righteous and the non-West requiring salvation, religious indoctrination, and the basics of education. Interestingly, the use of Catholicism is often seen as a way of avoiding a loss of sexual purity just as much as an anti-vampiric talisman. The connection between vampirism and sexuality – particularly female – is quite popular throughout vampire narratives, including *Dracula*, as it mentions his vampiric wives. This fear of female sexuality would be just as thwarted by Catholicism as the vampire would be, theoretically (O'Malley 198). Sexuality functions as another medium for godlessness within Victorian literature, encouraging godlessness and monstrosity to be seen as something to be feared and avoided at all costs. The allure of the uncanny and the blatantly sexualized is tempered by the fear of the brutal and the godless.

In contrast, Orwell's *1984* does not possess a binary between West and non-West, or even between religion and superstition, instead focusing on the distinction between self and other, a distinction that becomes quite befuddled throughout the course of the novel. The conceptual reality within the world of *1984* is that people sin against themselves by merely thinking something that is considered unorthodox – another word for treasonous. This mentality ensures political stability, because a police force is not

nearly as necessary if people are trained to police their very thoughts as they think them. This conceptualization of mental crime came after a world of Hitler, a world in which people did not consider themselves safe in their own homes with their own families. The omniscient nature of Big Brother is eerily reminiscent of the perceived power of Hitler, thanks to the omnipresent Luftwaffe, which is one major aspect of the terrors of this novel so soon after the eventual culmination of WWII. This novel is perhaps an imagining of a world in which Hitler was successful.

Language is intrinsically related to perception, for it allows us to not only communicate with others of our species, but also to communicate within our own mind, thinking out our problems and daily struggles. Thus, language decides whether or not we consider any particular being a monster or a perfectly normal creature, for it places connotations before us and allows our minds to take those connotations and run with them, instinct and linguistic knowledge filling in all of the holes in perception and understanding. Whether or not a character in a book is considered evil is entirely dependent upon the way he is represented within the novelistic diction. In *1984*, the novel possesses a unique emphasis on the existence of language and its subsequent abilities. Language is considered a political and social tool of perception and thought, a weapon that can be wielded against an entire people (Berkes 4). Indeed, the political aspect of Newspeak is considered a model for modern-day lawyers, emphasizing concise language (Fischer 134). The novel examines the consequences of having a language diminish in subtlety and nuance, as well as the concept of thought being purely based off of the variations within a language:

“In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed by exactly *one* word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten... Even now, of course, there’s no reason or excuse for committing thoughtcrime. It’s merely a question of self-discipline, reality-control. But in the end there won’t be any need even for that.

The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect.” (Orwell 52)

This passage easily sums up the terror that permeates this novel. The thought that language could dissolve so quickly and easily that thoughts also disappear is ironic and contradictory and still horrifying. This passage also contains an important point on one’s self being one’s own enemy and thus the inspiration for one’s deepest fears: thoughtcrime and the fact that whether or not one commits it is a matter of mere self-control. The very word in and of itself is concerning in its construction, for at its very essence it condemns thought. Indeed, this conversation goes on to say that thinking, in and of itself, should not be necessary in this society. There is nothing more personal, more individual, than thought, thus making an attack on the very essence of thought itself an attack on everything an individual is and everything humanity has always been. Destroying thought would be equivalent to destroying humanity, instead replacing it with thoughtless, spineless zombies.

Within this novel, there is a presumption that thought is equivalent to crime, for thought allows alternate perceptions of reality than the one Big Brother requires his citizens to have. Therefore, the entirety of the novel is a struggle within Winston, for the mere occurrences contained within the novel and his subsequent reactions would all be

considered unorthodox, treasonous, and outright illegal. Of course, he is fully aware of this as he develops hope that others are as he is, but it only serves to devastate him even more when his ultimate brainwashing begins and leaves him as an emotionless lump of flesh, barely able to think at all, let alone make intelligent decisions for himself. His story is one of loss of humanity, for he goes from an empathetic human being to a creature who is devoid of all emotion, even fear, and wants nothing to do with any other human ever again. What is unusual, perhaps even unique, about Winston is that he perceives and understands that he is at war with himself, even after the fact:

He gazed up at the enormous face. Forty years it had taken him to learn what kind of smile was hidden beneath the dark mustache. O cruel, needless misunderstanding! O stubborn, self-willed exile from the loving breast! Two gin-scented tears trickled down the sides of his nose. But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother. (Orwell 298)

This passage perfectly showcases the amount of brainwashing and mental rewiring Winston went through when he was tortured. To love someone who has done numerous unspeakable things to you all for the sake of their own ridiculous political ideals is true brainwashing and a true mental victory. However, this passage is also reminiscent of the first, in which Winston and a colleague discuss the existence of thoughtcrime being merely a matter of self control. Yet, in this passage, it does not appear that Winston actually has any control, but that he has completely lost any bit of it he ever possessed in the first place, for he is utterly unable to control his emotional state and has little to no thought processes with which to struggle.

Schäfer compares these two genres – Gothicism and dystopian fiction – to each other, stating that dystopias stem from Gothic novels, in which the romantic nature of terror abounds (27). Dystopias adopt that sweet terror and adapt it, formulating their own form of fear, but one that is still romanticized because it is still literary and imaginative. This is quite apparent in *1984*, for the thorough nature of Big Brother's knowledge is both romanticized and horrifically dystopian, thus combining the two genres.

These two novels exquisitely embody the fears of two different literary eras and their subsequent cultural terrors. In a world dominated by religion, faith, and belief – be it Christian or pagan – it is quite logical for a vampire, a creature who quite clearly is terrified of anything related to the Christian faith in general and Catholicism in particular, to embody that fear of godlessness. *Dracula* uses the fears of Victorian society to manifest themselves in a monster who is afraid of the opposite and who embodies everything they fear to an extreme. This allows the element of terror to reach a height and maximize the effects the novel has on the reader, and thus maximizes their subsequent enjoyment. The addictive quality of terror lies in its ability to pinpoint the exact fears of the individual and build upon them, thus manifesting themselves even further within the brain and perhaps becoming greater than they were originally. *Dracula* is easily capable of providing this reaction, as she embodies so many common fears and phobias (Barker and Petley 162). In comparison, George Orwell takes a post-WWII society and looks at a world that, thankfully, did not exist: one in which Germany had won the war and Great Britain had adopted Hitler's ideals about politics and social strata. This was, of course, a huge source of terror for Western Europe throughout the 1940s, ensuring that this fear of political oppression and lack of personal freedom would make the power of his novel

easily felt and appreciated. The fear of Hitler and wordless horror at his actions in the name of elitism caused many to dehumanize him completely and thus the fear of loss of humanity spread throughout the world. This fear of loss of humanity is brilliantly displayed in *1984*, as it is depicted upon a national, perhaps even global, scale in addition to a personal one. Winston's story may be told by him, but it is the story of every member of his society, although it would be slightly less traumatic for those who never rebelled, although the thought of no one rebelling against such a government is a fear in and of itself. Indeed, Orwell's story contains a terror so fierce and universal that everyone living in a modern world would be terrified by it to the point of re-living it in their nightmares. The manifestation of a society's deepest fears within a novel is perhaps the most powerful way of ensuring those fears are never realized in actuality.

Section Two: *Frankenstein* and *The Host*

In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the creation of a monster is used as an example of the effects of creation on the manifestation of free will. Due to the circumstances of creation – namely, a laboratory experiment – the creature is capable of limited amounts of morality, ethics, and emotion, thus making his judgment and subsequent actions prone to what could be considered evil or godless. The creation of a sentient being without the proper education that a normal developmental process would give has extreme consequences, for the knowledge of how to properly deal with such a creature is as yet unknown, a reality Dr. Frankenstein quickly establishes. This novel debates the difference between a creature being born evil or being perceived as such through its lack of ability to properly process emotion and decisions. In Stephanie Meyer's *The Host*, the juxtaposition between that which is alien and that which is human is challenged through

the presence of both beings existing simultaneously in the same space. The idea of an alien being inserted into a human host, and then existing with the brain of the human still intact, is one that defies typical scientific logic and human emotion. However, this unusual circumstance allows Meyer to examine the depths of what defines humanity and the extremes to which it will go in order to survive. The exploration of an entirely new creature of alien-human hybrid allows the reader to experience humanity from a foreign yet intimate perspective, emphasizing how precious that humanity is and how terrifying its loss would be. It also explores the consequences to free will and the struggle between two sentient beings who occasionally want different things, as well as giving an alien creature a semblance of humanity in and of itself, consequently challenging the very definitions of what makes a being human or inhuman. These two texts rely upon something “other” in order to analyze the fears of humanity, along with their tendencies toward godlessness and loss of humanity. In both cases, the “other” often exhibits more human characteristics than the other characters within the works, thus challenging the reader’s perceptions and expectations regarding what is considered human and what disturbs the title of “monster”.

Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is a classic horror novel, celebrated by some as the first science fiction novel ever written. The idea of a being having been created in a laboratory environment is frightening to the Victorian reader as it is unheard of and considered playing God. Creation is supposed to remain the privilege of an all-powerful Being, not a mere fiddling with chemicals and materials. The idea of a mad scientist mentality is frightening in its simplicity and relatability, for curiosity is a universal human emotion, and the consequences of such are often not as horrible as in this particular instance. In

Victorian society, doubting religion in the favor of science was considered commonplace and yet strictly cerebral. In practice, it was frowned upon and even demonized, thus ensuring a negative reaction to this particular novel (O'Malley 178), for disgust and concern were considered common emotions in relation to the creation of the entity within *Frankenstein*, inciting pity and fear simultaneously and complicating the perception of all characters within the novel. Indeed, the typical Victorian reader would be likely to hold the same opinion as the novel itself in regards to experimentation with such creation: "How dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge and how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world, than he who aspires to be greater than his nature will allow" (Shelley 37). This statement in regards to the experiments of the doctor and the subsequent consequences is most poignant, for it looks backward instead of forward within the confines of the novel itself, although it does warn others who may desire to tinker with creation. This warning also improves the reliability of the narrator since hindsight is better informed than anyone within the situation itself, and his experiences throughout his life definitively point to his regret at his scientific experimentation and its consequences.

Additionally, the personality of the created itself varies throughout the novel, thus calling into question the very definition of what makes a being monstrous or human. It is considered a monster by both its creator and the average reader, yet there is quite a bit of ambivalence surrounding whether or not that is due to nature or nurture, for it appears that it is the rejection by Dr. Frankenstein that inspires such violence and terror-inducing actions, instead of a blatantly primal desire to inspire fear and loathing. Indeed, this novel is a testament to the effects of reacting negatively to an individual's appearance, for over

time it wears down the ability to perceive oneself as anything but a monster. Indeed, the creature itself appears to be fully aware of this fact: “I do know that for the sympathy of one living being, I would make peace with all. I have love in me the likes of which you can scarcely imagine and rage the likes of which you would not believe. If I cannot satisfy the one, I will indulge the other” (Shelley 101). This statement of emotion illustrates this creature’s desire for love and affection, just as any other being desires the same. It is also incredibly important to witness the self-awareness and sentience of this created being, an awareness so strong that it could be considered far better than that of its creator, who knew little enough of himself to cause him to create a creature he was unable to love and protect after the fact.

This novel has perhaps the most complicated approach to godlessness of the texts under consideration, for it does include a monstrous creature who wreaks havoc and does many horrible things, yet the true godlessness lies not in the created, but in the creator. It is through playing God that humanity loses its morality and descends into godlessness, thus plunging Dr. Frankenstein into that state. Through playing God and attempting to create a creature in his own image, Dr. Frankenstein does the exact opposite:

‘Hateful day when I received life!’ I exclaimed in agony. ‘Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even you turned from me in disgust? God, in pity, made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid even from the very resemblance. Satan had his companions, fellow-devils, to admire and encourage him; but I am solitary and abhorred.’ (Shelley 88)

It is an entirely new type of madness to create that which does not wish to be created, for it is clear that the monster wishes he had never been born, as his life has been one rejection after another, spiraling into violence and seclusion. To create merely from a scientific curiosity is utterly inadequate and ultimately harmful to everyone and everything involved. The doctor destroys his life and the life of many others – including the life of his created – by mere curiosity and the hunger for power and knowledge. This is what true godlessness is: dabbling in that which man was never intended to.

The idea of the creature as a monster due to perception instead of complete accuracy is furthered by his ability to appreciate the world into which he came. Indeed, he is far more capable than most of humanity, becoming easily fascinated by the surrounding nature. This is perhaps because the creature considers himself damned and unredeemable, yet perhaps he is merely misunderstood and not given a chance by anyone who encounters him. Its appreciation of the simple joys of life is certainly not matched by the doctor, instead far surpassing him:

Even broken in spirit as he is, no one can feel more deeply than he does the beauties of nature. The starry sky, the sea, and every sight afforded by these wonderful regions, seems still to have the power of elevating his soul from earth. Such a man has a double existence: he may suffer misery, and be overwhelmed by disappointments; yet, when he has retired into himself, he will be like a celestial spirit that has a halo around him, within whose circle no grief or folly ventures.

(Shelley 192)

This passage in and of itself may be enough to redeem him in a reader's eye, drawing on pity as opposed to disgust and fear. This detailed account of the thoughts and desires of

this creature touches a chord, for its humanity is apparent and its appreciation of its surroundings obvious. In this manner, it is in conjunction with the finer feelings of humanity and religion, challenging the novel to provide a valid argument for this creature being a monster. Thus, the most terrifying thing within this novel becomes the thought of creating a living thing from that which was merely chemicals or, worse, that which was dead and never intended to live again. The morbidity of the scientific experiments is thrilling, yet utterly godless and therefore unforgiveable, especially due to the consequences, unforeseen or otherwise. Scientific experimentation, although fascinating and encouraged from a medical point of view, would never have been considered a gateway to creation, but instead to prolonging life already given. Dr. Frankenstein's cursed attempts at creating something other would be shunned in civilized society, thus agreeing with his own fears and attempts at concealment (O'Malley 79). It is therefore Frankenstein himself who ensures that his creature is a monster merely by creating it; he furthers this impression as he himself considers it damned due to its unnatural appearance.

Meyer's *The Host* deals with a detailed alien species much calmer and more induced to peaceful society than our own, thus bringing the very ethics of the existence of our own species into question and enabling exploration of the depths of human emotion. The fear of loss of humanity is incredibly complex within this novel, for humanity is irrevocably entwined with an alien entity, making the two nearly one and the same. This allows exploration of two different types of psyche, as well as looking at the consequences of complete loss of humanity in such unusual circumstances.

This novel is unique in that it possesses two heroines residing in the same body: an alien dubbed Wanda and the physical host body of Melanie. These two characters have completely different personalities, making characterization complex and complicating the reactions other characters have toward them. Additionally, as Wanda is an alien species attempting to take over and inhabit the planet, there is a great deal of animosity toward her. This anger and fear is indicative of what loss of humanity truly means, and this unfolds throughout the novel. There are times when Wanda, being alien, acts in a far gentler, more humane way than any other character present or aware of the situation. For example, in desperation to understand the ways in which the aliens inhabit the physical bodies of humans, the group with which Wanda and Melanie live often experiments on the bodies of captured alien-infested humans in an attempt to understand the connection. Through their ignorance about the connection between the two species, they wreak havoc instead of acquiring helpful knowledge:

Brighter than these were other silver things. Shimmering segments of silver stretched in twisted, tortured pieces across the table...tiny silver strands plucked and naked and scattered...splatters of silver liquid smeared on the table, the blankets, the walls... The quiet in the room was shattered by my scream. The whole *room* was shattered. It spun and shook to the sound, whirled around me so that I couldn't find the way out. The walls, the silver-stained walls, rose up to block my escape no matter which way I turned. (Meyer 547)

This passage is the clearest and rawest instance of Wanda's humanity, or her sense of morality and her gentle nature that both tend to far exceed those of the humans within the novel. On the following page, two human characters discuss the fact that such devastation

is completely alien to her, it goes against her very nature, and therefore the mere sight of so many dismembered beings of her own kind would be unimaginable. Humanity is used to violence, even if just from the media, but this alien species is not. Wanda proceeds to mourn the loss of these members of her kind for days without speaking or eating, an extreme form of grief and mourning. This connection and sense of camaraderie and love for fellow men is the ultimate sense of humanity, even if it is being showcased by that which is not human, but alien. Thus, the fear of loss of humanity within this novel is unfounded, for Wanda gives many back their humanity, and even goes far above and beyond it by loving people who hate her for who she is and what she cannot change. She saves the life of a man who attempted to kill her (113), and continually protests his innocence even after the fact, thus providing a valuable testament to her character, alien or not.

In regards to characters outside of the joint character of Melanie-Wanda, there is a great deal of struggle for holding onto humanity. For a people living in fear of being found out, in a war zone, with the belief they are the last of humankind, morality is easily forsaken in favor of expediency and caution. However, there are multiple instances of characters deliberately choosing to make the human decision as opposed to the safer one, instead preferring to leave it up to emotion and sentiment, feelings that are most commonly attributed to human weakness but can also be indicative of immense strength. These actions in and of themselves eventually justify the entire existence of humans on this apocalyptic Earth, despite their tendencies toward violence. It does take the majority of the novel to come to this conclusion; the rest of the time, the reader is given a foreign, alien perspective on humanity at its worst:

I forced her to see it from my perspective: to see the threatening shapes inside the dirty jeans and light cotton shirts, brown with dust. They might have been human – as she thought of the word – once, but at this moment they were something else. They were barbarians, monsters. They hung over us, slaving for blood. There was a death sentence in every pair of eyes. Melanie saw all this and, though grudgingly, she had to admit that I was right. At this moment, her beloved humans were at their worst – like the newspaper stories we’d seen in the abandoned shack. We were looking at killers. (Meyer 159)

This passage makes the distinction between “human” and “barbarian” incredibly clear. Interestingly, one can be both, just not in the same moment. Scholars tend to consider the difference to lie in the inspiration for action and whether or not an individual is intelligently aware of its reasons for performing an act, as well as the vulgarity of said act (Arendt 233). This novel does a fantastic job of analyzing humanity at its best and worst from an outside perspective, attempting to take away the prejudiced perspective and replace it with something fresh and new, looking at humanity as it is dying out, in its most fearful and courageous moments.

In conclusion, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* provides a fascinating look at a monster who is made that way due to the mistake of his creation, not due to his own incapability to act in a morally upstanding manner. The idea of the doctor playing God is exceedingly uncomfortable from a Victorian perspective, and becomes worse as the novel progresses and Dr. Frankenstein’s abhorrence for his creation intensifies and becomes clearer. Creating an abomination that was never meant to have been created leads to a complicated character, not even given a name, who is more capable of appreciating

nature than any human being within the novel. Its range of emotion also far exceeds that of a normal human, thus rendering him the next step in evolution in a strangely twisted way. Stephenie Meyer's *The Host* also has a complex view on humanity, looking at it from an outside perspective, yet a perspective that remains intimately within the personal sphere of humanity itself. The complexity of a dual character and the nature of the plight which puts humanity into its best and worst light enables Meyer to analyze loss and gain of humanity in a crisis setting, where emotions are inevitably heightened. Thus, the fear of loss of humanity is eventually discarded, but not before thoroughly analyzing what makes one human and what makes one alien. These two novels use the essence of morality to drive their narratives, although they have completely warring ways of doing so. Dr. Frankenstein has his own morality, a moral code that drives him first to create and then to shun his creation, a morality that appears to be all of his own making and attributed to no one else. However, Wanda and Melanie adhere to societal norms regarding morality, despite being far more adept at the practice of forgiveness than the majority of humankind within the novel. Morality provides the background of the narratives, thus enabling the actions of the characters to be more starkly illuminated. Additionally, free will drives the narrative and the subsequent action of the novel pivots upon it, thus ensuring that each decision has vast consequences, mimicking real life.

Section Three: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Divergent*

In Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, warring personality traits manifest themselves in the creation of an entirely separate persona, with an utterly different character, conflicting passions and desires, and, consequently, different effects upon the outside world. This mode of "doubling" is fairly

common in literature, most blatantly in Dostoevsky's *The Double*, for the act of projecting one's less-than-satisfactory urges and character traits onto another person is considered far more comfortable than merely dealing with it on one's own, despite the fact that this often leads to disastrous consequences. This novel is somewhat unique in the fact that it manages to embody both godlessness and a loss of humanity simultaneously for, through the near-creation of another human, despite it being irrevocably connected to himself, Dr. Jekyll does technically create another human being, just as Frankenstein does, thus embodying godlessness. However, through doing so, considering the created is he himself in a different form, he also loses multiple aspects of his humanity through the process. It may also be argued that he is still completely human, having merely evolved to personify only negative human characteristics.

In Veronica Roth's *Divergent*, Tris continually struggles with warring characteristics, the mere existence of which make her both dangerous and threatened by the dystopian government within the novel. This society functions upon the assumption that each individual possesses one main characteristic that would then manifest itself into everything within that person's lifestyle. Thus, this society creates factions, groups of people who believe in a specific strength and model themselves after it: Abnegation teaches selflessness, Amity focuses on peace, Candor prides themselves on honesty, Erudite insists on the pursuit of knowledge, and Dauntless reveres bravery. Any individual who shows the ability to belong to more than one faction is labeled "divergent" and considered a threat to society. The fact that the fear of warring personality traits is quite literally built into the fabric of the society of this novel illustrates how complex and convoluted such differences within an individual can be. It

makes sense that one would want to focus on one specific, ideally positive, character trait in order to achieve stability. However, this is not always possible and the process of fighting within oneself often leads to destruction. These two texts analyze the effects warring characteristics have on an individual's persona and the ways in which different people process those characteristics and incorporate them into their identity. In some cases, the personality of the individual is split completely, creating two different and separate people who are only dimly aware of the other persona's existence; whereas some people rely on these warring characteristics to allow them to do things when in danger or when necessary instead of relying only on one aspect of their consciousness. Thus, these novels provide a reflection of humanity, both good and bad, thus simultaneously showcasing the fears of society and the ways in which they manifest in the personalities of these characters.

Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde*, as it has been popularly dubbed, is a novel which explores numerous aspects of the human psyche, for it can be explored from the perspective of both repression and projection, assuming that Mr. Hyde is the physical manifestation of all of the negative thoughts, emotions, and desires of Dr. Jekyll. The fact that this process is fairly scientific lends to its strangeness, for such a process is typically considered emotion-based and devoid of logic. However, throwing this into the world of science legitimizes it and forces a very logical Victorian public to view it in fear and dismay, thus ensuring actions will be taken to avoid such a calamity. The introduction of Darwinism into a formerly Conservative and religious public threw the fine arts for a bit of a loop, as God took a sideline and yet still remained a staple within British households (Fraser 5). The combination of scientific skepticism and traditional religious beliefs

ended up combining within literature to formulate phenomena which neither science nor religion can fully satisfy, instead requiring knowledge and belief in both in order to fully enjoy, understand, or even allow the unfolding events. This is most apparent in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, although it is also seen in *Frankenstein*.

The most fascinating aspect of this novel is the question on whether or not Dr. Jekyll is indeed fully unaware, at least consciously, of what happens to him. It is unclear whether such a double even exists, and the struggle over the mind of the doctor is the main conflict within the novel. The two personas appear completely mentally separated from one another, even to the point of being two separate human beings, yet that is not the only explanation. However, the confusion with which Dr. Jekyll approaches his situation does give him at least a little bit of sympathy, for he says: “With every day, and from both sides of my intelligence, the moral and the intellectual, I thus drew steadily nearer to the truth, by whose partial discovery I have been doomed to such a dreadful shipwreck: that man is not truly one, but truly two” (Stevenson 58). This admittance appears both painful and shocking, emphasizing the fact that Dr. Jekyll was exploring such an occurrence from a purely scientific perspective and not a personal one, and that he is horrified by his discoveries.

However, an alternative explanation is also possible, for Dr. Jekyll’s is the only perspective ever heard from. According to Steven Padnick, Mr. Hyde does not exist and there is no fight between good and evil occurring within Dr. Jekyll’s body. Instead of the scientific experiments changing Dr. Jekyll’s mind, it changes his body into one that is unrecognizable, which in turn allows him to give free reign to numerous pursuits and horrifying desires that he would otherwise not be able to partake in as a well-known

member of civilized, high-class society (1). This opinion is supported by the narrator himself, who does indeed say that he saw Hyde in the mirror, as opposed to calling himself by name or referring to himself in first person, as a normal person would do. The following admittance also appears to shed light on the matter: “Strange as my circumstances were, the terms of this debate are as old and commonplace as man; much the same inducements and alarms cast the die for any tempted and trembling sinner; and it fell out with me, as it falls with so vast a majority of my fellows, that I chose the better part and was found wanting in the strength to keep to it” (Stevenson 98). This passage indicates the Dr. Jekyll is fully aware of his active role in the atrocities he has committed, thus hinting that he has committed them intentionally and in cold blood. However, it is equally possible he is aware of the situation and the consequences of his actions despite being unable to remember what he has done or devise the reasons for the ferocity of his alter-ego. Despite this passage, this is merely one explanation, and not considered a particularly common or popular one. The novel appears to protect Dr. Jekyll from this opinion, continually insisting on his innocence and ignorance, while still condemning him for experimenting with scientific drugs and instruments that should not have been used for such things. The true answer must be more complicated than simply a man who desired debauchery and found an extreme way to achieve it. This novel depicts the struggle between that which is good and that which is not within our own psyches, and it is too simplistic to reconcile the two halves so simply and gently. It is he himself who insists upon the existence of the war between the moral and the intellectual, thus struggling between the scientific desires of experimentation and the knowledge of the horror that will consume him (Shelley 58).

Roth's *Divergent*, a debut novel for a young author, depicts the struggle between the desire to conform and the personal necessity of self-knowledge and self-respect. The question of whether or not to adhere to rules for the sake of rules plagues the young heroine, as she desires to belong. This desire is fairly universal, particularly for sixteen-year-old girls. The complicated nature of a society that discourages free-thinking, independent action, and any semblance of a lack of normality appears both unusual and concerning, yet it is something we are altogether too used to, for our own society – or at least government – also adheres to this pattern of thinking, as a sense of uniformity tends to be considered the most proper form of action and the one conducive to survival (Elferen 107). Thus, this novel manages to be both a psychological and a political analysis on our very own culture, through the eyes of a world that has never existed.

It becomes very quickly apparent that Tris is different from the majority of those who reside within her society, as she is highly self-aware and many people appear to be otherwise, or at least far more content with the way things are traditionally done, refusing to question the order of the society in which they live, preferring to live peacefully. However, Tris is unusual from the very beginning, as things do not go according to plan around her and even something as supposedly simple as an aptitude test that, according to the book's mythology, is supposed to be incredibly simple and straightforward. Not only is Tris's result neither, but it is also dangerous. These aspects of her nature – namely, that she is intrinsically “other” and thus separated from the majority of her society, emphasizes the warring aspects of her personality and puts them under a microscope, as they are considered a threatening anomaly as opposed to merely unique personality traits:

“So you have no idea what my aptitude is?” “Yes and no. My conclusion,” she

explains, “is that you display equal aptitude for Abnegation, Dauntless, and Erudite. People who get this kind of result are...” She looks over her shoulder like she expects someone to appear behind her. “...are called... *Divergent*.” She says the last word so quietly I almost don’t hear it, and her tense, worried look returns. (Roth 22)

This terrified and complicated response is easily identified as unusual, for aptitude tests are considered normal within this society, as evinced by casually administering them in a school, having students line up to wait their turn. It is their version of standardized testing, their version of deciding how the next generation will fit into the already existing fabric of society. However, Tris does not fit in and therefore she is immediately labeled as dangerous, although she gets lucky and isn’t immediately turned in.

This lack of ability to blend into society is what, ironically, makes Tris so relatable, or even normal, in the eyes of modern society, for modern society continually complains about the inability to blend in to the crowd, a desire that seems to increase while simultaneously becoming more pitiful (Owen 94). The existence of hidden desires and personality traits society considers inappropriate are undesirable is a nearly universal reality, particularly lately with the increase in coverage on feminism, homosexual rights, etc. The fact that Tris embodies this forbidden and taboo existence makes her instantly powerful, an icon of normality, and also simultaneously makes her both less and more than human as a character. The characterization of Tris revolves around both insecurities and her uncanny ability to improve in a state of pressure and competition. These two characteristics are not typically present in the same individual, at least not in these quantities or at this potency, for insecurity cripples an individual’s ability to learn and

improve. The fact that Tris possesses both sets of characteristics makes her capable of addressing the fears of society instead of merely exciting them.

Furthermore, the entire genetic makeup of this society's government is intrinsically flawed, as its attempts to avoid the next apocalypse backfire and instead water humanity down to a single personality trait, one for each faction, separating it from any latent rebellious emotions, and surrounding it with likeminded people. The very definition of humanity requires variety and room to breathe, not confinement and tedious days of monotony and this human tendency naturally fights back against categorization and control (Owen 163). Thus, despite Tris's nearly superhuman nature, she is far more human than the rest of the faction system, which would never work in reality due to its lack of ability to accept humanity for what it really is: alive. The rules and regulations within this society allow none of those things, stifling its people and turning them into robotized automatons who do what they are told and nothing else. This is clearly demonstrated by the simulation serums injected into the bloodstream, which turn Dauntless members into exactly what was just described: mindless killing machines who take orders from a computer. This is clearly demonstrated by Will, a secondary character throughout the entire novel, and his ugly transformation into what an anti-cowardice believer would hate most: "Will. Dull-eyed and mindless, but still Will. He stops running and mirrors me, his feet planted and his gun up" (Roth 446). This passage provides the literal manifestation of what this society has provided all along as a form of escape from fear, for these people are truly mindless, doing what they are told simply because they are told to do it, a mentality that continues on in present society. Erika Gottlieb insists that dystopias are glimpses into a future that should not be allowed to ever develop and come

to pass; they are a warning of what could happen if society remains careless and devoid of compassion (173). This sense of warning permeates *Divergent*, leading to a sense of foreboding that continues throughout the rest of the trilogy as well.

In conclusion, Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* provides a glimpse into the mind of either a deranged scientist and sociopath or a human desiring an escape from the evils of his tortured mind. Either way, his tampering with life illustrates disregard for a higher power and a sense of self-idolatry, thus making him a figure of godlessness within Victorian literature. The debate on his motives for transformation and whether or not he was aware of the consequences illustrate how important it truly is to humanity to be in complete possession of our faculties, for when we are not, we remain vulnerable to the world. In this way, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* remains a pivotal point within this thesis, for it illustrates both godlessness and loss of humanity simultaneously for, as Dr. Jekyll slips into his alternate persona, he loses that which makes him both godly and human, which happen to be the same thing in his case. Additionally, Veronica Roth's *Divergent* illustrates present society through a dystopian lens, emphasizing the consequences of weakness through mindless obedience. This mindlessness and adherence to social expectations mirrors our own, making Tris's humanity and lack thereof a form of mirror into society and the modern culture of the age. The refusal to conform within both Tris and Hyde works in the favor of the respective characters. Within Tris, it is powerful and she uses it in order to better herself and fight for what she believes, but Hyde uses his lack of adherence to societal norms to break the conventions protecting people, thus endangering innocent people and not caring

about it whatsoever. Thus, the lack of conformation is a tool that, wielded properly, yields excellent results, but that does not mean it is not dangerous.

Conclusion

Throughout the analysis of various texts, the fears of godlessness and loss of humanity have become apparent in varying degrees of purity. The fear of godlessness varies in intensity and form, and yet it is fairly constant in the face of Victorian sensibilities and scientific mania, along with their religious purity, for both are integral aspects of Victorian culture. Whether vampire or experimenter, the very existence of the uncanny within an individual begs the question of demonic influence, thus ensuring godlessness in that individual (O'Malley 52). The fear of loss of humanity is often intertwined, for society typically equates morality and religion with an intrinsic sense of human empathy, thus entwining the two definitions and making it difficult to tell whether humanity is innately religious or merely possessing some sort of unusual quality for sympathizing with one's kind. In some instances, the two fears are mixed together, as in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, for this novel explores godlessness through the loss of humanity, or at least through the loss of self. This novel appears as a cross between Victorian Gothicism and Modern Dystopias, for it takes elements from both and melds them together to play upon humanity's fears and issue a warning to both those who would dabble in scientific experiments to achieve power or to do away with one's own humanity and conscience. Indeed, most dystopias have some reminiscent air of the Gothic about them, romanticizing fear and playing off of the sensationalistic nature of the texts (Schäfer 8).

The fear of godlessness in *Dracula* is evinced through the obvious relationship between vampire and Christian relics and symbols. The existence of holy water, the blessed sacrament, and a crucifix in regards to the vanquishing of anything vampiric in nature sets up a binary between vampire and Catholic, one which exists purely to distinguish the importance of holding on to one's faith and godly nature in order to do away with that which is evil. The fear of godlessness continues throughout the other two Victorian Gothic novels, emphasizing the importance of religion in Victorian society.

The fear of loss of humanity is continually illustrated through the use of governmental power abuse and infiltration of alien races. Both methods provide commentary on what it means to be truly human and to lose aspects of personality and character that intrinsically alter humanity, making it less or more than human. This is illustrated in the degeneration of language in *1984*, the separation of individuals into categories in *Divergent*, and the use of a human as a host species instead of the dominant species in *The Host*. All three novels revolve around human attributes and what must be done in order to lose that which makes us uniquely human. This loss – of godliness or humanity – is in some ways more horrific than the actual events within the novels, for it is what they import that matters. A peek into society allows the reader to look at the fears of the Victorians, who so abhorred sexuality and any lack of morality, and the fears of modern society in a post-Hitler world, terrified to wake up and find their most basic rights taken away. These nightmarish literary sensations allow the fears of society to continue living through words, reminding us of the possibilities.

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