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Adapting Animals: Nineteenth-Century British Literature, Science, and Media

Kristen Layne Figgins
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Adapting Animals: Nineteenth-Century British Literature, Science, and Media

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by

Kristen Layne Figgins
University of Texas-Permian Basin
Bachelor of Arts in English, 2010
University of Louisiana
Master of Arts in English, 2012

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University of Arkansas

This dissertation is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

Lissette Lopez Szwydky, Ph.D.
Dissertation Director

Robin Roberts, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Sean A. Dempsey, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Abstract

In the nineteenth century, Charles Darwin and other proponents of evolutionary theory provided a theoretical framework for discussing the question of humanity's place in the world. These nascent theories emphasized the shared animal nature of humans and the nonhuman creatures who had once occupied a distinctly lower place on the chain of being. My dissertation addresses the question of how nineteenth-century scientific attitudes about animals were reflected in the literature of the period. By examining culture-texts from the nineteenth century, it is clear that literature was an active participant in extending scientific knowledge, often by playing with the blending categorical distinctions of human and nonhuman animals.

I argue that highly-adapted texts (culture-texts) reveal a transhistorical development (or evolution) of nineteenth-century natural science that reverberates into contemporary attitudes about animal and human nature. I extend the theories of Linda Hutcheon (a postmodern theorist and adaptation scholar) and Gary Bortolotti (an evolutionary biologist) that propose that adaptation of literature is itself an evolutionary act. I do so by tracking the development of individual narratives from their roots in scientific and philosophical writings about natural science to their current forms in a variety of mediums including comic books, film, television, video games, pornography, illustration, fanfiction, and more. In doing so, I have discovered that, transhistorically, narratives tend to exhibit traits or patterns that reveal increasingly complex attitudes about hybridity, or the slippage that occurs when the categorical distinctions of human animal and nonhuman creature are blurred.

In each of these narratives and their adaptations, animals are identified as a possible Other who, through the workings of scientific experimentation, moral questioning, artistic interpretation, or language become more human and thus emphasize the possible good of human

animality. Animals are also often identified *with* traditionally Othered humans, emphasizing the concomitant trajectories of the oppression of women, colonized peoples of British holdings, and other minoritized groups with the oppression of nonhuman creatures. As categorical boundaries are challenged through the slippage of the narrative animal's body, the hierarchical categorization that occurs amongst human animals is similarly challenged, especially within the potentially remediative framework of adaptation.

Keywords: Animal Studies, Adaptation, Gender, Ecocriticism, Nineteenth Century

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Epigraph

"[F]or about two centuries, intensely and by means of an alarming rate of acceleration, for we no longer even have a clock or a chronological measure of it, we, we who call ourselves men or humans, we who recognize ourselves in that name, have been involved in an unprecedented transformation."

—Jacques Derrida, "The Animal That Therefore I Am (And More to Follow)"

I wish our brains were not so good,
I wish our skulls were thicker,
I wish that Evolution could
Have stopped a little quicker;
For oh, it was a happy plight,
Of liberty and ease,
To be a simple Trilobite
In the Silurian seas!

— May Kendall, "The Lay of the Trilobite"

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List of Published Papers

Large portions of Chapter Three, "Exotic Animals, Sympathetic Women, and Animal Experimentation in Adaptations of H.G. Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau*" appear as "Are We Not Men?": Science, Sympathy, and Women in Adaptations of H.G. Wells's The Island of Dr. Moreau." *Literature/Film Quarterly* 47, no. 4, Spring 2019.

Introduction: Towards an Evolutionary Approach to Adaptation

In an 1860 review of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859), Asa Gray, a prominent nineteenth-century botanist, dryly remarked that "It is only the backward glance, the gaze up the long vista of the past, that reveals anything alarming [about Darwin's theories]. Here the lines converge as they recede into the geological ages, and point to conclusions which, upon the theory, are inevitable, but by no means welcome."[1] Gray was gesturing towards the paradigm-shifting nature of the theory of evolution: specifically, that *homo sapiens* was related to animals, something which Gray was unwilling to accept without proof of the so-called "missing link," without evidence of which "the four-handed races will not serve for our forerunner."[2] This shuddering glance into the past is rooted in the idea that humans, ostensibly "higher" forms of life, cannot possibly share ancestry with "lower" animals. Darwin and subsequent evolutionary biologists have proven not only that humans indeed have common ancestry with animals, but also that this knowledge need not shatter humanity's place in the natural world. Rather than thinking of humans as higher animals, it is more useful to think of all animals as simply differently evolved. By eschewing circular and unproductive discussions of "higher" and "lower" forms, evolutionary biologists are able to focus on different, more rewarding paths of inquiry.

The study of literature is haunted by its own discussions of "higher" and "lower" forms and a corresponding apprehension about the sanctity of the written word. This apprehension is especially pronounced in conversations about adaptation. The study of adaptation was largely

1 As a prominent and well-respected nineteenth-century biologist, Gray would write many essays and articles in defense of Charles Darwin's evolutionary theories, explaining that natural selection is not inconsistent with religion. Asa Gray, "Darwin on the Origin of Species: A Review," *The Atlantic*, July 1860, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1860/07/darwin-on-the-origin-of-species/304152/.

2 Gray

borne out of university literature departments in the 1970s and 1980s, when literature scholars turned their eye towards film adaptations of their literary research. As with many nascent disciplines, there was understandably a great deal of anxiety and territoriality associated within early adaptation studies, as literature scholars struggled to pioneer methods of studying adaptation, often without any formal training in film or other media studies to root that research. As a result, the foundations of adaptation studies are plagued by gatekeeping from literature departments that find adaptations derivative and unoriginal in comparison to their predecessors ("the book is better than the movie") and early iterations of film departments, helmed by literature scholars who, according to Thomas Leitch, "had been absorbed in the pedagogical habits of close reading and the aesthetic value of literature."[3] Both types of scholarship offer relatively unproductive conversations about what many modern adaptation scholars call "the fidelity problem" or value-based judgments on whether and how an adaptation faithfully recreates the "original" text.[4] Unlike discussions of other types of literature, for which it is de rigueur to consider intertextuality, historical pressures, materialistic production, and thematic preoccupations, the study of an individual adaptation (the lower form) is always haunted by the shadow of the text that came before (the higher form) and the many evolutionary links that connect them.

I. Higher and Lower Forms: A Darwinian Approach to Narrative

Literary studies, then, would benefit from taking a "Darwinian approach," to turning its

3 Thomas Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to Passion of the Christ*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007): 3.

4 Early Adaptation Studies was limited to side-by-side comparisons, which Semenza calls case studies: "Case studies often rely on comparison as they primary mode of analysis, a practice which feeds tendencies to privilege a so-called original text, and thus lends itself to considerations of the hypertext's degree of fidelity to that original. At best, even when case studies avoid the fidelity trap, they too often fail to move beyond simple comparisons." Semenza, "Towards a Historical Turn," 30.

"gaze up the long vista of the past" by embracing a model of adaptation studies which approaches narratives not as individual organisms to be compared to one another, but instead as points of punctuated equilibrium along the messy path of the evolution of a narrative. Such an approach was proposed in 2007, by Linda Hutcheon, a postmodern theorist and adaptation scholar, and Gary Bortolotti, an evolutionary biologist, in their influential article "On the Origin of Adaptation: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and 'Success': Biologically," and while this article has been widely taught and cited by scholars of adaptation, there has not been an extended engagement with or expansion of this theory to date. Yet the theories outlined in this article ameliorate many of the scholarly blind spots that characterize the study of adaptations alongside their source texts. By proposing a homology between biological adaptation and narrative adaptation, Hutcheon and Bortolotti effectively argue for a transhistorical, contextually-situated study of adaptation.

In Hutcheon and Bortolotti's biological homology, the scientific use of the word "adaptation," meaning evolutionarily beneficial changes to an organism, is considered culturally. In nature, adaptations are rarely regarded as important in a singular individual. Only when adaptations occur consistently over time are they revealed as beneficial to the proliferation of the species overall. Similarly, Hutcheon and Bortolotti argue that narrative adaptations should not be considered individually. Instead, only by reviewing adaptations transhistorically will patterns emerge for analysis. They argue that "By revealing lineages of descent, not similarities of form alone, we can understand how a specific narrative changes over time."[5] Instead of studying individual narratives (or, we might say, individual organisms), we should consider the way adaptations progress across the species overall, and how each adaptation reveals environmental

5 Gary Bortolotti and Linda Hutcheon, "On the Origin of Adaptations: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and 'Success': Biologically," *New Literary History* 38, no. 3, *Biocultures* (2007): 445.

pressures that shape the organism's proliferation (or extinction). My dissertation will test Hutcheon and Bortolotti's theories on an extended scale, demonstrating that tracing the genealogy of texts in adaptation does indeed allow for patterns to emerge. Both literary and adaptation studies are enriched by enlarging the scope of a narrative's impact and historicizing not only a single moment in literary history, but a phylogenetic tree of moments that ultimately define the narrative's past and present.[6]

II. Cultural Fossil Records: Excavating Literature and Culture

Culture has a fossil record. As researchers, the study of stories can often feel like an excavation: the careful exhumation of narratives whose histories and biology we must reconstruct, decode, and contextualize. Yet often singular narratives are treated as representative of their age: *Hard Times* (1854) as a metonym for the entire nineteenth century or *The Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) as a singular voice for women's rights. While it is useful to closely examine single narratives, contextualizing narratives— putting works by Dickens or Wollstonecraft into conversation with their contemporaries, for example— gives us a fuller view of not only the narratives themselves but also their importance within literary history. As new historicists have long noted, contextualization both complements and expands upon close reading practices.[7] Adaptation studies, in comparison to new historicism, however, provides us with the ability to study select narratives diachronically, thus highlighting the ways in which a singular narrative evolves over time.[8] As Gregory Semenza notes in support of

6 A phylogenetic tree is a diagram that visualizes the lines of descent between organisms sharing a common ancestor.

7Matt Hickling, "New Historicism," *Brock Education* 27, no. 2 (2018): 53.

8 Adaptation studies is just starting to move toward the model of transhistorical contextualization that has defined new historicism for decades. Just a few of the scholars working towards this historically-situated adaptation studies are Lissette Lopez Szwydky, Glenn Jellenik, Katja Krebs, Gregory Semenza, Linda Hutcheon, and Kamilla Elliott.

Hutcheon and Bortolotti's evolutionary model, "diachronic histories of adaptation are crucial to illustrating how contingent on specific historical and cultural factors— and therefore how very fragile and mutable— even our most basic assumptions happen to be. Even the most cherished cliches of the field will experience extreme tension when analyzed against the larger currents of history."[9] If we think about this within the metaphor of the fossil record, then we recognize the importance of thinking about the specimens that we excavate as simply one part of the literary sediment.

The nineteenth century is a layer of the adaptational sediment that is particularly well-suited for excavation. As adaptation scholars like Kamilla Elliott have noted, the nineteenth century is one of the most highly-adapted periods of literature: "It is not to my mind coincidental that British Victorian novels and novellas have been more frequently adapted to film than any other body of literature, including Shakespearean plays (and Shakespeare is the only author from his period to be so frequently adapted."[10] The nineteenth century is also, as Lissette Lopez Szwydky argues, a period of literature intimately engaged with the art of adaptation in many forms of artistic output, including the stage, illustration, textual forms, and (late in the century) photography and cinema. My dissertation will engage with four of the many "culture-texts" that were borne out of the nineteenth century, analyzing both their engagement with adaptation practices in the nineteenth century as well as their adaptational descendants in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

As these four narratives have been so vastly reproduced, making them excellent subjects for analysis, they become culture-texts. Culture-text is a term Lissette Lopez Szwydky, Kate

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9Gregory Semenza, "Towards a Historical Turn: Adaptation Studies and the Challenges of History," *The Routledge Companion to Adaptation*, Ed. Dennis Cutchins, Katja Krebs, and Eckart Voigts, (London: Routledge Press, 2018): 64

10 Kamilla Elliott, *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.

Newell, Paul Davis, and Brian Rose each use to describe the process by which a text replicates so profusely that its features are known even to those audiences who have never read the original text.[11] For example, someone who has never read *Dracula* by Bram Stoker (1897) is likely to be familiar with the Count's defining features through its diffusion in mediums as diverse as cereal box advertisements (Count Chocula) to children's television (Count von Count). Each of the texts I have chosen to analyze through the evolutionary approach would qualify as a culture-text with nineteenth-century origins: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871) by Lewis Carroll, *Goblin Market* (1872) by Christina Rossetti, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896) by H.G. Wells, and *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker. Each of these examples has penetrated popular culture in a variety of adaptational forms starting shortly after their initial publications in the nineteenth century. The following study examines these culture-texts as they've appeared in a range of staged plays, illustrations, texts, films, graphic novels, and video games, examining how each culture-text demonstrates the value of Hutcheon and Bortolotti's evolutionary approach to adaptation. Each examination demonstrates this value not only because I explain how these texts became culture-texts, but also because all four examples accomplish their proliferation in part through their extended engagements with representations of animals, thus underscoring a major point of convergence between adaptation studies, evolutionary biology, and literary/reception history.

In the study of each of these texts, I employ a longue durée or diachronic approach, which means that I will examine a large number of adaptations over time, looking for what Kate Newell calls "hinge points," traits or scenes so commonly reproduced that they transform into

11 Lissette Lopez Szwydky, *Transmedia Adaptation in the Nineteenth Century*, (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2020), 12; Paul Davis, *The Lives and Times of Ebenezer Scrooge*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990); Brian Rose. *Jekyll and Hyde Adapted: Dramatizations of Cultural Anxiety*, (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Publishing, 1996).

what we consider one of the most important aspects of the work, regardless of their prominence in the source text. According to Newell, "the practice of selecting the same features over and over, by adapter after adapter across media, is less about necessary condensing than about a practiced inscription of what counts in a work."[12] When these changes coalesce collectively as hinge points, they often reveal a deeper pattern of cultural acknowledgement, or "a general recognition that this is the text."[13] Newell uses the example of Dorothy's ruby slippers in adaptations of *The Wizard of Oz*, a detail that originated with the 1939 film, not L. Frank Baum's 1900 book.[14] Other examples might include the character of Igor in adaptations of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), who originated in Richard Brinsley Peake's 1823 stage adaptations of the book or Dracula's oft-quoted "I never drink… wine," which was first uttered by the Count in the 1931 Universal film, not Bram Stoker's 1897 novel.[15] In the following study, I collect hinge points in adaptations across forms, media, and time in order to uncover patterns in each book's hinge points that help us better understand the evolutionary relationship between adaptations.

In Darwinian terms, we might consider hinge points to be phenotypic adaptations, or those visible adaptations that present evolutionary advantages to the proliferation of the narrative. Animal bodies feature prominently in adaptations of nineteenth-century literature, making them a particularly useful focal point in the culture-texts I explore throughout the following chapters. For example, one other frequently quoted hinge point of Stoker's *Dracula* is

12 Kate Newell, *Expanding Adaptation Networks*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 10

13 Newell, 8

14 Newell 10

15 Tod Browning, dir.. *Dracula*, Perf. Bela Lugosi, 1931; Amazon Prime Video. 20 March 2021. Video, 1:15:03, https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B002MFX238/ref=atv_dp_share_cu_r

the phrase "Listen to them— the children of the night. What music they make!"[16] Although it is a brief, potentially forgettable moment in Stoker's novel, this dialogue, in addition to frequently-adapted special effects like the Count's fangs and bat-like cape, is designed to highlight the Count's kinship with animals, and that kinship is accentuated consistently across adaptations in various mediums. Though animals behave differently in each version of the culture-text over time— the Count's animality does not have the same resonances across all of his adaptations, for example— the consistency of the pattern is remarkable. I explore those differing resonances and find that evolutions in representations of animality are connected to evolutions in our scientific and cultural understanding of animality— and what, or who, counts as animal at any given historical moment.

Each of the chapters of this project will look to a source text for cues about nineteenth-century animality— for example, what scientific or philosophical discussions might have contributed to representations of animals in *Dracula*?— then, it will track the emergence of that pattern across time, effectively creating a genealogy for each text's representation of animals. Often, this transhistorical analysis suggests that nineteenth-century natural science, as it is adapted into the source text, is an invisible hinge point that is then inherited in subsequent forms. While all of the culture-texts I study prominently feature animals and frequently reproduce those animals in their adaptations, scholarship rarely fully addresses that this pattern of replication is important to our understanding of the narrative. For example, while scholarship about *Dracula* sometimes mentions the Count's animality–especially in terms of degeneration or atavism— few critics recognize the significance of the connection between the Count's animal state(s) and that

16 Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, Ed. Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal. New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1997): 24

replication across adaptations.[17]

This blind spot in literary criticism of the novel and its adaptations is notable given the prominence of natural science and animal rights philosophy throughout the nineteenth century, which certainly pervaded nineteenth-century fiction and, by extension, their adaptations.[18] Not only is the nineteenth century central to the phenomenon of literary adaptation, but it is also a uniquely important period of time for the study of animals. Animals, both real and imagined, were particularly important in the Victorian era as humans immersed themselves, both scientifically and in the popular imagination, in animals. As Deborah Morse and Martin Danahay note:

> [H]uman control over animals in the present and in the Victorian period includes imaginative possession in the realm of fictional representations in writing, performance, and visual art as well as the rule of physical force manifested in hunting, killing, vivisection, and even zoo-keeping. All these examples are 'dreams' of animals; that is, they represent attempts to imaginatively appropriate the realm of the 'animal' for widely divergent aesthetic and political ends.[19]

Sometimes these imaginative dreams of animals are close to life, but often nineteenth-century interpretations of animals were statements that, like dreams or fossils, must be interpreted. Animals within nineteenth-century fiction, whether they were talking to Alice or cajoling sisters Laura and Lizzie to eat goblin fruit, spliced to humans with science or transforming fluidly into human-seeming predatory forms, *are not just animals.* They are collections of attitudes, prejudices, fears, and dreams that take on animal forms as a way of better understanding the natural world and, more importantly, humanity's place in it exactly at the historical moment

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17 For more on the critical discussion of atavism/degeneration in Stoker's Dracula, see Daniel Pick, "'Terrors of the Night': Dracula and 'Degeneration' in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Critical Quarterly* 30, no. 4, (1988): 71-87, among others.

18 For example, discussion of animals in more realist texts like Charlotte Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), the novels of Charles Dickens, or the poetry of John Keats have become more commonplace in the last ten years.

19 Deborah Morse and Martin Danahay, *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, (Indiana University Press, Routledge, 2017): 5.

when scientific thought troubled the boundaries between humans and animals.

III. Chapter Overviews

In this dissertation, I test Hutcheon and Bortolotti's evolutionary theories of adaptation and literary studies on a large scale, through four separate case studies, in order to trace the animal hinge point in these culture-texts as they evolve from the nineteenth century to the present. One of the primary maxims I test is that the success of a narrative is not determined by a single adaptation but rather can be best understood through patterns over time. These patterns, in evolutionary terms, are essential to understanding not only the text but the literary and cultural environments that created each adaptation: "What biologists call 'systematists' study the patterns of variation with regard to the geography and environment that a 'species' occupies and, beyond that, investigate the evolutionary processes that cause the variation; it is in this spirit that we seek to study narrative variation." Therefore, I take a broad approach to forms of adaptation, studying a wide variety of adaptations over a period of time and prioritizing cultural influence over aesthetic quality. Alongside works of classic literature and acclaimed adaptations, works of fanfiction, video games, critically panned films, and pornographic illustration are also considered for their cultural reach and relevance in the culture-text's evolution. In Chapter Two, "Picturing Animal Appetites in *Goblin Market*," I even consider criticism itself as part of the adaptational network that reinforces and proliferates what we consider to be the narrative. By taking a broad approach, I am able to more accurately track what Hutcheon and Bortolotti call cultural selection in their evolutionary homology, which "involves differential survival through a process of replicating into future generations."[20] In other words, the derivations that occur from one

20 Hutcheon and Bortolotti, 449

adaptation to the next, might be the difference between whether an adaptation survives or not. Even when an adaptation is only experienced by a niche audience (such as in the case of critically panned films *and* literary criticism of a narrative), when studied in context with one another, patterns of differentiation and similarity reveal how animals have been represented over time within the narrative.

Overall, this approach yields a persistent focus on the animal as a metonym for embodied existence. In each chapter, focusing on the hinge point of animal representation reveals that not only are narratives adapted themselves, but nineteenth-century science is also adapted, evolving alongside the narratives as scientific attitudes towards animals change. As scientific attitudes change, cultural attitudes towards animals also adapt, creating a symbiotic, cyclical relationship between science and culture. Particularly, this preoccupation with embodied existence shows cultural parallels between animal bodies and other bodies that are marginalized or considered as animal. Various adaptations over time reveal how animal bodies in these culture-texts are consistently manipulated, threatened, consumed, and commodified—particularly when they are paired with bodies gendered female— creating hybrid, connective relationships between animal bodies and women's bodies.

Even in children's stories like Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), adaptations draw parallels between women and animals. In Chapter One, "Bodies and Consumption in (Wonder)Land Ecologies," I establish the language of hinge points in more detail, delving deep into the particularly odd hinge point of the oysters in the nonsense poem "The Walrus and the Carpenter." In adaptations of this poem, the oysters are consistently represented as women or children (and sometimes both), making their consumption at the hands of the walrus and carpenter particularly menacing. Visually and thematically, this hinge point

suggests an ecofeminist association between women and these vulnerable, invertebrate animals, especially in examples such as American McGee's video game *Alice: Madness Returns* (2011) and Christina Henry's novel *Alice* (2015).[21] Both of these adaptations represent the oysters not only as women, but as victims of horrific crime at the hands of the walrus. They conflate sexualized women as prey, and they also suggest that predation is a particularly masculine act, which explains why and how Alice herself occupies a sympathetic position towards the oysters in most adaptations, a point rarely emphasized in Carroll's text.

Notably, Alice is surrounded by animals in all versions of the story, an alarming predicament for a young girl who is constantly growing and shrinking in relation to the animals. Her status as prey or predator is further highlighted in visual adaptations by John Tenniel, whose illustrations were incredibly influential on subsequent Alice adaptations. Tenniel was committed to representing the animals of Wonderland naturalistically, a cue which many later adapters followed. Since Tenniel and adapters urge us to view the animals of Wonderland *as animals,* they highlight Alice's mutable status as predator and prey. In one exchange in Carroll's book, after a Pigeon accuses Alice of being a serpent, she responds "I—I'm a little girl," said Alice, rather doubtfully, as she remembered the number of changes she had gone through that day."[22] Like Alice, adapters are constantly redirecting our attention towards her bodily instability in the natural order of Wonderland's animal kingdom. This bodily instability points to an evolutionary shift in thinking about kinship with animals, which seems positive and joyous in the source text, but takes on sinister overtones in adaptation as our understanding of nature changes. The idea that Alice must "eat or be eaten" is explored more fully in adaptations that are attentive to the

21 Ecofeminism is a subset of ecocriticism that argues that there is a coterminous relationship between women and nature based on patriarchal systems of exploitation and oppression. Major theorists in this field include Greta Gaard, Josephine Donovan, and Douglas Vakoch.

22 Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Ed. Donald J. Gray, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd Edition, (New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992): 43.

connotations of a young girl moving her way alone through an unfamiliar, perhaps predatory, world.

While adapters are highly influential in our perception of the Alice narrative, critics also exert a great deal of control over how we perceive a narrative and what hinge points receive recognition. In Chapter Two: "Picturing Animal Appetites in *Goblin Market*," I explore the ways in which the related acts of adaptation and literary criticism are both means of selecting for traits, or hinge points, that become essential ways of interpreting the text. Josh Sabey and Keith Lawrence argue that scholars should consider criticism as a creative, generative exercise:

> Viewing adaptation criticism as itself a form of adaptation— and thus of art— may profitably encourage the critic-as-adapter [CAA] to consider his potential roles as he critically adapts a given text— written, filmed, or performed. In recognizing that he is, among other things, a collaborator, creator, and experimenter alongside the artist-adapter whose work he critiques, the CAA may employ such tools as spontaneity, doubt, and humility to create new, intriguing critical forms.[23]

Sabey and Lawrence focus primarily on the idea that criticism is itself a form of artistic production, but I extend that argument to suggest that the reverse is also true. Adapters also help us to understand what elements of a work merit further exploration. Cultural and literary critics might take their cues from adapters when deciding how to explore narratives. In Chapter Two, I use Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (1872) as an exemplar of the power of critics to shape a narrative's perceived traits and the power of adapters to select for traits that deserve further exploration.

In *Goblin Market,* critics and adapters diverge strikingly on the theme of animality, which recurs with remarkable consistency in adaptation but is almost never addressed in criticism. Instead, critical scholarship of Rossetti's poem tends to focus on other types of

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23 Josh Sabey and Keith Lawrence, *The Critic as Adapter," The Routledge Companion to Adaptation*, Ed. Dennis Cutchins, Katja Krebs, and Eckart Voigts, (London: Routledge Press, 2018): 171

consumption as related to the fruits that the goblins offer Laura and Lizzie in the poem. This consumption is variously interpreted as religious, sexual, and even commercial, but I argue that a fruitful avenue for discussing eating within the text is to view it as predatory, taking my cue from adapters themselves who consistently position the goblins as animalistic creatures. From *Goblin Market*'s first illustrator, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1865), to its most prominent illustrators, such as Lawrence Housman (1893) and Arthur Rackham (1933), to niche illustrators of children's books and collector editions of the poem, adapters consistently reproduce the goblins with animal features, particularly in editions where the sexual themes of the poem are retained or emphasized. The repeated replication of human-animal bodies in adaptations of *Goblin Market* indicates the discursive tension and rejection of the goblin men as purely destructive forces. Rather, the fusion of human and animal characteristics offers generative possibilities for understanding human desire as both all-consuming and regenerative. As adapters continuously create animal goblins, they suggest that animality itself is important to the predatory acts that are performed upon Laura and Lizzie. In fact, the animality of the goblins in various visual adaptations might shed light on other interpretive readings of *Goblin Market* as it seems to point to a progression of the science of sexual selection. Sexual selection is a type of natural selection that was popularized by Darwin in the late nineteenth century and was foundational to the field of sexology. I examine a range of illustrated adaptations, as well as critical writings about Goblin Market to support this viewpoint. Considering these adaptations transhistorically shows that adaptation can function not just artistically and culturally, but also critically to shed light on how (and why) representations of animality have shifted over the same time.

H.G. Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896), is perhaps one of the most well-known examples of nineteenth-century literature featuring animals. Transhistorical adaptations of this

culture-text continue the trend established in the prior two chapters of associating women with animals and of adapting nineteenth-century animal science into more modern texts. In Chapter Three: "Exotic Animals, Sympathetic Women, and Animal Experimentation in Adaptations of H.G. Wells's The Island of Dr. Moreau," I explain that this trend is unsurprising given the long coterminous associations between women and animals starting at least in the nineteenth century. Wells's novel illustrates these connections particularly well as it tackles the issues of vivisection, or the practice of experimenting (usually surgically) upon live animals. In the nineteenth century, anti-vivisectionists were often derided as effeminate, emotional, and thus unscientific. In Wells's novel, animals are vivisected by the hypermasculine figure of Dr. Moreau so that they physically become more human, in a scathing commentary about the abuses of the experimental practice. Additionally, Moreau performs social experiments upon the animals to solidify their human socialization. While this social commentary is perhaps even more biting, I am particularly interested in the physical bodies that occupy *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, particularly the character of the puma, whose cries of pain torture the novel's protagonist into a crisis of sympathy.

This puma character, who is almost never seen by the novel's protagonist, becomes the focus of what Jeremy Rosen calls "minor character elaboration" in almost every major subsequent adaptation of the novel, starting in 1932 with Erle Kenton's film *The Island of Lost Souls*.[24] In this film and others, like John Frankenheimer's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1996), the character of the puma, the only prominent female character even alluded to on the island, is expanded and literally fleshed out to become a fully transformed human-animal hybrid. Her role in these adaptations becomes that of an unwitting *femme fatale* who seduces the narrative's

24 Minor character elaboration is when relatively minor and unexplored characters provide the central focus for an adaptation: "Even literary works of epic magnitude (perhaps especially these) point to excesses that they can not or choose not to contain— backstories, possible sequels or continued adventures, characters that readers barely glimpse." Jeremy Rosen, *Minor Characters Have Their Day: Genre and the Contemporary Literary Marketplace*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016): 9.

protagonist. These puma women also become synecdochally representative of the human-animal hybrids on the island as sympathetic beings, rather than simple antagonists. In this chapter, I will explore why a female character is inserted into these films and later Young Adult (YA) novel adaptations and what this practice seems to suggest about the relationship between women and animals, particularly in regard to animal experimentation and the idea of sympathy.

In my final chapter, I identify and explore what I consider an "invisible" hinge point, animality in the *Dracula* culture-text. Overwhelmingly, most scholarship has focused on the prominent phenotypic (or visible) hinge point of Dracula's sexuality. Yet while Dracula is highly sexual in the source text and all of its adaptations, I argue that an equally prominent, yet relatively ignored hinge point, is Dracula's animality. The Count's ability to shape-shift into and control animals is a pronounced trait in almost every adaptation of *Dracula* from its very first stage adaptations to the most recent film adaptations. Yet scholarship has largely ignored this hinge point in favor of his sexuality. I argue that the two hinge points are actually deeply interconnected. Hutcheon and Bortolotti contend that the expansive proliferation of a narrative is homologous to the evolutionary concept of adaptive radiation: "When species find themselves in a novel environment—and if it is one where there are few competitors and many opportunities—they may further diversify and adapt to novel ecological roles."[25] Like Darwin's finches, Dracula's sexuality has proliferated and adapted over time in coordination with evolving ideas about sexuality: in visual mediums, particularly, Dracula has been represented as overtly seductive and even romantic. Yet it is the contrast of his animality that highlight Dracula's humanity (or lack thereof) in each adaptation. Therefore, any discussions of Dracula's sexuality

25 Hutcheon and Bortolotti, 451

must also discuss his animality as a key feature of his vampirism and thus a determining factor in his biological fit as a romantic partner or sexual predator.

Equally important in this conversation is the way that animality is *not* a key feature of vampirism for any of Dracula's female vampires. While catalogues of Dracula's vampiric powers include a host of abilities related to his animality, the female vampires do not share in this empowerment. Indeed, in contrast to Dracula himself, the only way that they are associated with animals in adaptation is through their animalistic sexuality and their dehumanization. Both the vampire Lucy Westenra and Dracula's three Brides are largely used in adaptations as creatures who are divested of any kind of physical power— they are rather easily defeated by the human characters— other than their sexuality. Yet in some of the most recent adaptations of *Dracula*— the 2020 BBC mini-series *Dracula* and the graphic novel by Alex de Campi and Erica Henderson, *Dracula, Motherf**ker!* (2021)— the female vampires are empowered with agency, both as they are given consideration beyond their sexuality and as they are literally empowered to take animal form like the Count. By being recognized as individuals rather than homogeneous descendants of the Count, these female vampires stand as exemplars of the remediative power of adaptation for reclaiming female sexuality as something beyond the usual monstrous representations.

In each of these chapters, I did not deliberately embark upon a project to connect women's and animal bodies in adaptations of these culture-texts. At its inception, my dissertation was driven by three questions, which are thoroughly answered here: How can adaptation help us to better understand the evolution of narratives over time? Why do discussions of animals in adaptations of nineteenth-century culture-texts reveal patterns of preoccupation with embodied existence? How can untangling these preoccupations with animals by contextualizing them

within the historical conversations of the nineteenth century help us to understand the way our views of animality have also evolved alongside narratives? This is the primary advantage of an evolutionary approach to narrative analysis through adaptations: by focusing on the hinge points of animals across a wide range of adaptational material, patterns naturally emerged, suggesting a cultural connection in our understandings of women and animals that deserves deeper engagement.

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Chapter One: Bodies and Consumption in (Wonder)Land Ecologies

An early review for *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871) generally describes the book in favorable terms, explaining that its target audience will be puzzled ("children like to be puzzled"), delighted, and even terrified ("children dearly love to be frightened") over Lewis Carroll's much-anticipated sequel to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865).[26] These first two affective responses seem predictable and certainly acknowledged by the author in the opening pages of the text where Carroll provides a wink at his background in mathematics and logistics by providing a chessboard in the frontispiece to *Through the Looking-Glass*, indicating his intent to puzzle his readers. Carroll also includes a leaflet in the first edition of *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (Christmas 1871) imagining the delight of his young readers whose "happy faces have smiled [Alice] a welcome."[27] Yet the third note, of terror, is an affective response rarely discussed in scholarly criticism of Carroll's texts yet nearly omnipresent in adaptations. What could be frightening about looking-glass insects or Tweedledee and Tweedledum? Who could be frightened by a Wonderland of white rabbits and talking caterpillars and bread-and-butterflies? This chapter will consider the many illustrative, film, and stage adaptations of the *Alice* texts as evolutions of a narrative that is increasingly centered around the imaginative terror inherent in a young girl navigating her way through an unfamiliar landscape. Particularly, adaptations recognize the inherent precarity of coexisting alongside the animal, as Alice does.

Adaptations of the *Alice* culture-text amplify this 1871 reviewer's note about the frightful undercurrent of Carroll's books by building upon one another palimpsestically or evolutionarily.

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26 *The Aetheneum*, 2303, (1871): 787-788, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858029267923&view=1up&seq=802

27 Lewis Carroll, "To All Child-Readers of 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,'" Leaflet insert, *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, 1871.

The first stage adapters and illustrators of the *Alice* culture-text establish an early focus on the depiction of animals *as animals,* which heightens the imaginative delight of the books; as the *Athenaeum* reviewer notes "many a heart both old and young will be stirred with wholesome laughter" at Alice's many encounters.[28] Yet the same fright that Tenniel's illustration of the Jabberwock later inspires in this reviewer is evident throughout this culture-text that constantly asks us to consider denizens of the natural world as sentient, thinking, and often fearful creatures. Alice is not just encountering these creatures; she is doing so *on their own terms,* often shrunk down to their size. Adaptations take this nineteenth-century paradigm-shifting revelation—that humans are also animals—and amplify it. Over time, that evolution has resulted in remarkably dark adaptations, such as American McGee's video game series *Alice* (2000) and *Alice: Madness Returns* (2011) and Christina Henry's books *Alice* (2015) and *Red Queen* (2016), which both position the terror of the Alice culture-text around predation.

Considering textual adaptation as an evolutionary process is useful for understanding *how* auteurs and authors like McGee and Henry connect with the long adaptation history of the texts they adapt. The language and theories of evolutionary biology are homologous structures to what happens to cultural texts as they are adapted over time. Adaptation is the "proliferation of forms," or what Linda Hutcheon and Gary Bortolotti call the primary measure of the success of a narrative. [29] As works are adapted across media into a "dazzling array of forms," [30] we can see the narrative's "persistence, abundance, and diversity" [31] as a signal of its continued survival and success. When we trace the evolutionary history of adaptations, patterns emerge. One such

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28 *The Aetheneum*, 787

29Linda Hutcheon and Gary Bortolotti, "On the Origin of Adaptations: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and 'Success': Biologically," *New Literary History* 38, no. 3, *Biocultures* (2007): 450.

30 Hutcheon and Bortolotti, 446

31 Hutcheon and Bortolotti, 452

pattern is the repeated insertion, what Kate Newell calls a hinge point, of "The Walrus and the Carpenter," a scene no more remarkable than any other in *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871) into adaptations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.* "The Walrus and the Carpenter" is notable not only because of its repeated insertion (over other, equally interesting material) into what we think of as the Alice culture-text, but also because of the particular, consistent way it correlates women's bodies to animal bodies, subsequently connecting the creatures of Wonderland to questions of predation and consent.

That hinge points proliferate through adaptation, even when they are not particularly faithful to the original text, is an evolutionary progression that rejects the very idea of fidelity. Rather than being viewed as abnormal, mutations like the gendering of the oysters can be viewed as traits associated with successful reproduction of a dominant narrative. Culture-texts like the *Alice* books are proof of Hutcheon and Bortolotti's theory that narratives can proliferate based not on their fidelity to the original text but instead on their ability to adapt to their changing environments. Focusing not only on *what* texts evolve and survive over time but *how* they do so sheds light on the adapted text and on the importance of their reproduced content to our culture. Those mutations may be intentionally or unintentionally reproduced by adapters, but, especially when they appear in force, they signal an important evolutionary stage.

While Carroll and Tenniel imagine Alice's encounters with animals as delightful, adapters have viewed Carroll and Tenniel's naturalistic tendencies as potentially frightening. The "wonder" of Wonderland cannot be completely untied from feelings of shock, confusion, incredulity, and bewilderment. If animals are represented as animals, then adapters show us the horrific possibilities of becoming physically like an animal who is open to predation and consumption. When Alice grows (and shrinks) over the course of her adventures, her relationship

to animals shifts. Sometimes these relational shifts include upheaval in animal-human relationships that she previously understood as normalized. “The Walrus and the Carpenter” is a particular exemplar of this challenge: in hearing it recited by Tweedledum and Tweedledee, Alice is forced to reckon with the brutal realities of what eating means to sentient creatures. In hearing it recited over and over by adapters who consistently gender the oysters, modern audiences are forced to reckon with the brutal reality of how this food chain replicates the predation of young women.

By pushing animals to more prominent positions in the text, adaptations of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* reflect nineteenth-century reactionary concerns about the human as animal. As Alice is thrust into interspecies friendships and conflicts, she literally begins to see the world from the perspective of animals as she becomes more open to predation herself; this upsets the natural ecological order. Adapters amplify these “eat or be eaten” resonances of Wonderland, which are rooted in the theories of Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* (1859), a text that popularized the understanding that humans are themselves animals. Darwin’s text inspired a cultural paradigm shift that began a host of social and scientific revolutions, including a rise in the popularity of natural history, anti-vivisection movements, and anthropomorphic taxidermy. Carroll’s novel reflects this radical shift in the scientific and social understanding of animals. In other words, adapters not only adapt the *Alice* culture-text but also the theories of evolution and natural history that influenced Carroll and Tenniel’s text. In doing so, the adaptations highlight the terror, especially for young women, in becoming more like an animal. Some adaptations, like Christina Henry’s novel, *Alice* (2015), and American McGee’s video game, *Alice: Madness Returns* (2010) consider the horror of being female/animal as being rooted in trauma and abuse, making explicit the idea that women’s bodies are subject to

predation. They do so by building upon a long stage and illustrative history that sought to make clear that animals within the text should be considered *as animals.* And they are informed by a stage and film history that has made clear that Alice's body is a commodity meant to be consumed in the adaptation marketplace. All of these texts manipulate animals and Alice's developing hybridity to reflect an equivalency between women's bodies and their availability for predation or consumption, an equivalency that undergirds both *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass.*

I. "They'd Eaten Every One": Predation and Consumption in "The Walrus and the Carpenter"

At the heart of the idea of predation and consumption in the natural world is the idea of eating and the question of what—or who—is eaten. Eating is a prominent theme in the *Alice* texts.[32] While cookies, cakes, and tea abound, eating in Wonderland is also a necessarily animal concern that calls to mind food webs and predator-prey interaction. The talking animals around Alice are always aware of their unstable status as potential nourishment for predatory characters. Through these interactions with the talking animals, the *Alice* texts complicate Alice's understanding of her own humanity, especially in the way she navigates eating. Sometimes she shrinks and grows to match the size of the animals she meets.[33] Sometimes, however, discussions of eating are more pointed toward the dynamic between omnivorous humans and the animals they might eat. For example, many of the animals in the *Alice* texts express anxiety about being eaten (like the mouse who panics at the mention of Alice's cat), some are parodic versions of

32 Michael Parrish Lee, "Eating Things: Food, Animals, and Other Life Forms in Lewis Carroll's Alice Books," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 68, no. 4, (2014): 484-512.

33 Wilma Cruise, "Revisiting Alice," *Journal of Literary Studies* 30, no. 4, (2014): 71-90.

animals meant to be consumed (such as the Mock Turtle), and others make Alice aware of her potential status as prey (such as the dog, who Alice worries might mistake her for food).

The idea of eating and being eaten, however, is particularly fraught in the *Alice* stories as it skirts issues of consent and precarity. When animals are given what Ivan Kreilkamp calls "protagonicity," the ethical question of whether they should be eaten becomes murky, to say the least.[34] The animals of the *Alice* stories, as well as Alice herself, are constantly asserting their own agency and thus their right to avoid execution and predation. As she becomes more intimately associated with the animals as she grows and shrinks, Alice also begins to navigate these issues of consent. Since many of the adaptations of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* also cast Alice as an adult woman, sometimes with romantic interests, these issues of consent, predation, and precarity take on heightened nuances in adaptation. This manipulation of Alice in adaptation shows an underlying cultural parallel between young women and animals within the Alice texts.

Though eating is a pervasive theme in Carroll's *Alice* books, perhaps no episode is so representative of the potential terror of eating as "The Walrus and the Carpenter," a nonsense poem about sentient, talking oysters being lured to their deaths by a hungry walrus and carpenter. The foreboding silence of the eldest oyster who "did not choose/To leave the oyster bed" and the vulnerability of the oysters as they beg for their lives lend a sinister edge to a tale that becomes yet more ominous when we consider the fact that nearly all of the jolly, playful adaptations of this scene cast the oysters as women, children, or both.[35] In fact, this oddly consistent hinge point in adaptations of "The Walrus and the Carpenter" suggests that both the *Alice* culture-text and its

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34 Ivan Kreilkamp, *Minor Creatures: Persons, Animals, and the Victorian Novel,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 3.

35 Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass*, Ed. Donald J. Gray, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd Edition, (New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), 41-42.

adaptations are preoccupied with the philosophical consequences of eating, consumption, and consent. This hinge point, moreover, does not typically occur in adaptations of *Through the Looking-Glass,* where it originally appeared. Instead, it is inserted into the more frequently-adapted *Alice in Wonderland* suggesting that this predatory interlude mirrors the broader issues of predation, consumption, and consent present in the *Alice* culture-text.

"The Walrus and the Carpenter," then, is the exemplar for how bodies coded as female and animal bodies are equivocated within these texts. The consumed oysters are, with few exceptions I have been able to locate in my research, adapted as being female or young children (usually both), despite being ungendered in the adapted text. Tenniel avoids any markers of gender in his illustrations. In Carroll's poem, only one oyster, the eldest, is given gender at all and he is male, (he "winked *his* eye and shook *his* heavy head"). The consistency here is important. In one or two adaptations, this choice would be hardly unusual; however, transhistorically, the evidence reveals a culturally significant pattern, especially given that the gendering of animals is not a usual linguistic practice.[36]

From the first authorized stage adaptation of *Alice,* adaptations both gendered and infantilized the oysters (see Fig. 1.1), especially in visual mediums. Even just a small sampling shows how pervasive this practice is. In Disney's animated feature *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), the oysters are represented as wearing dresses and bonnets. The eldest, male oyster is rewritten as "Mother Oyster." Probably the most common visual touch-point for subsequent adaptations, besides the Tenniel illustrations, this film solidifies the oysters as children and women through their dress, a motif that is captured also in the video game *Alice: Madness Returns*. In the

36Many scholars in Animal Studies, for example, have fought to normalize the use of "they" instead of "it" in reference to animals. Typically, the gendering of animals is reserved only for situations in which the biological sex is relevant (e.g. procreation or physical characteristics) or when a parallel between human gender (e.g. stereotypically feminine traits) and the animal is desired. For more on the gendering of animals, see Carol J. Adams's *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).

television miniseries *Alice in Wonderland* (1985), the oysters might be viewed androgynously if not for their female singing voices. The roles of the oysters are credited to Kristi Lynes, Desiree Szabo, Barbi Alison, and Janie Walton. In the television movie adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* (1999), the oysters are uncredited, but have youthful, pre-adolescent voices. Through dress or vocal cues, the similarities between the oysters and women and/or children are clear.

Figure 1.1. *Alice in Wonderland*, Dir. Geronimi, Clyde, Wilfred Jaxon, and Hamilton Luske, Perf. Kathryn Beaumont, Heather Angel, and Ed Wynn, Disney, 1951.

In Hutcheon and Bortolotti's evolutionary homology, the mutation that seems to keep reproducing in "The Walrus and the Carpenter" is the consistent adaptation of the oysters as feminized or infantilized (often both) which is a key statement on the culture-text overall and the environment(s) that have produced it. "The Walrus and the Carpenter" is a particularly relevant example of the dual layers of predation and consumption that are at work in the *Alice* texts: predation and consumption of animals, on the one hand, and Alice's possible precarity on the

other. If we take this work seriously as representative and condemnatory of excessive consumption and recognize Alice's path to becoming an animal through the texts, then the question of why the biologically natural act of eating is so problematized in these texts is what remains. I will focus first on two recent adaptations of *Alice in Wonderland:* EA's *Alice: Madness Returns* (2011) and Christina Henry's novel *Alice* (2015) and the way these two adaptations use "The Walrus and the Carpenter" as a representative episode that highlights Alice's kinship with the female oysters.[37]

Both *Alice: Madness Returns* (2011) and *Alice* (2015) retell Alice's story through a lens of trauma and abuse; this lens particularly highlights the monstrosity evident in the tale of "The Walrus and the Carpenter." Rather than removing Alice from the tale through the filter of Tweedledum and Tweedledee, both adapters choose to have Alice experience the unpleasantness of these characters first-hand in their adaptations. Alice is not only a victim of predatory characters herself, but she also identifies herself with the oysters. In this way, these adaptations are the culmination of a preoccupation with the hybridity between women's bodies and animal bodies, the question of animal vs. human abnormal behaviors, and the connecting tissue of the concept of predation. While these preoccupations are not unique to these two adaptations, they are more explicit.

The "unpleasantness" of the walrus and the carpenter in adaptation stretch all the way back to early stage adaptations of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass.* The first and only stage adaptation of the *Alice* texts authorized by Lewis Carroll in his lifetime was produced by Henry Savile Clarke first in the 1886-1887 theatrical season, revived in 1888, and revived again in 1898-1899, just before Carroll's death. Since Victorian theater was accessible to

37 I use the term "victim" here instead of the generally preferable term "survivors," because not all of the female/oyster characters within these texts do survive. I also use this term to indicate that the animal bodies of the human (and inhuman) oysters can be viewed as agents who are acted upon, not mere foodstuff.

audiences of all socioeconomic backgrounds, authors who were adapted tended to enjoy social capital, which could in turn drive sales of the adapted text. Lissette Lopez Szwdky argues that celebrity authors deliberately used the commercial power of the theatrical stage (and other means of commercial adaptation) to increase the cultural capital of their own texts: "Adaptations increased the visibility of stories, introduced them to new audiences, and drove sales of both theater tickets and printed books."[38] Carroll, who had sought an adaptation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* since at least 1867, was incredibly active in the process of preparing the Savile Clarke adaptation, including adding new lyrics to several of the songs from his books, inventing others from whole cloth, and making frequent requests for revisions to Savile Clarke throughout both of its theatrical runs.

In the Savile Clark adaptation, the monstrosity of the walrus and carpenter are emphasized by giving "The Walrus and the Carpenter" an entirely new ending. In the source text, the oysters are eaten and that is the conclusion of the poem. In Savile Clarke's adaptation, Carroll wrote a new ending that he felt added more theatrical finality to the play: the oysters, who were eaten, return as spirits to crush the chests of the walrus and the carpenter in their sleep.[39] Lionel Tollemache, a contemporary of Carroll's, wrote that he often discussed this episode, discovering after his first viewing of the play that "the tranquil massacre of the oysters was a catastrophe too tame for dramatic effect. Thereupon he conceived the happy thought of making the ghosts of the victims jump on the sleeping forms of their assassins and give them bad dreams."[40] The Savile Clarke play is the first of many adaptations to make perfectly explicit that

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38 Lissette Lopez Szwydky, *Transmedia Adaptations in the Nineteenth Century*, (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2020), 9.

39Henry Savile Clarke, *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children*, (London: Ascherberg, Hopwood, & Crew, 1906), 70-71.

40Lionel Arthur Tollemache, *Old and Odd Memories*, (London: Edward Arnold, 1908), 313.

the eating of oysters is cruel. The walrus and carpenter are not merely tricksters; they deserve to be haunted and punished for their actions. This tone of censure towards the walrus and carpenter are key to understanding the way adaptations since this Victorian play have developed these characters. Most adaptations have presented the walrus and carpenter as not just abusers but also as representative of the potential terror of being an animal in Wonderland, where sentience is not a guarantee of safety. They have also coded the vulnerability of the oysters as being particularly feminine.

EA's video game *Alice: Madness Returns* (2011) reflects the stage adaptation in many ways. Not only does the walrus perform his abuse of the oysters upon a stage in Dreary Lane theater, the medium itself makes the exploitation of oyster-women's bodies a performance within a larger landscape of trauma and abuse. Alice Liddell, in this game as well as its 2000 precursor, *Alice,* is a young woman struggling to cope with her family's demise in a fire. She is institutionalized in the first game and the player helps to guide her through the fantasy world of Wonderland, where she works through her trauma. In *Alice: Madness Returns,* Alice lives in an orphanage under the care of a psychiatrist who she ultimately learns is responsible for grooming the young orphans she lives with for a life of prostitution. While she confronts him in the real world, she imagines the doctor as the Toymaker, someone who takes children and removes their memories in order to make them into dolls, playthings who are bought by pedophiles. In this way, *Alice: Madness Returns* is implicitly concerned with the sexual predation of children and girls.

In this video game, the story of "The Walrus and the Carpenter" expands on the sexual predation that plagues Alice in London. To escape from her trauma, Alice retreats to Wonderland, where Alice meets (among other characters) the walrus and the carpenter at the

Dreary Lane Theater, where she finds the mutilated bodies of fish. On stage, the oysters appear as part of a burlesque show, where they dance briefly before being crushed by the massive body of the walrus. The walrus then recites his own nonsense poem, a diatribe about the senselessness of death; as he does so, the bodies of the dancing oysters, topless but their legs dressed in stockings and garters, are sliced to pieces. The oyster girls are also shown burning, consumed by other monstrous fish, and, finally, falling into the walrus's waiting mouth (see Fig. 1.2). At the conclusion of the rhyme, the carpenter shepherds the audience towards the walrus, who, having finished with the oysters, is consuming everything in sight.

Figure 1.2: *Alice: Madness Returns,* Dir. American McGee Redwood City, CA: EA, 2010.

The player has unknowingly spent time just prior to this cut-scene doing missions designed to facilitate the performance. This mirrors Alice's discovery in the real world that she has been working with the psychiatrist, unknowingly aiding him in grooming the other young orphans to become prostitutes. The Wonderland oysters are imagined with sexualized women's

bodies and also equated with a prostitution ring in Alice's London. The walrus, represented as a walrus, is imagined as a predatory poet. The interaction between these feminized oysters and the walrus is also performative in the sense of the scripted gameplay itself: the inevitability that the oysters, like the women in Alice's London, will be consumed, and actually need to be exploited for the story to commence, emphasizing the idea that "women and animals are different and lesser beings [than men], beings whose suffering and death are justifiable sacrifices in the name of 'progress.'"[41] Indeed, Gruen and other ecofeminists assert that anyone who is not a cis-gendered male is at risk of death and suffering, which is then unlikely to be viciously protested by the larger mechanisms of society, only by those like Alice who identify sympathetically with the victims. Indeed, the game itself is precipitated on the idea that the very real dangers of sex trafficking, pedophilia, and exploitation can be reduced down to a plot device; an inevitable mechanism at the intersection of code and creativity that is deemed ultimately necessary for the entertainment of the player.

Drawing on the Darwinian precept that humans are animals, Christina Henry in her novel *Alice* (2015), introduces characters who emphasize that monstrosity is not the unique province of nonhuman animals, like walruses. Henry amplifies the mechanisms of society that replicate predation, consumption, and exploitation by placing Alice in a unique Wonderland where humans have far more destructive power than animals. The Walrus in Christina Henry's *Alice* is not an animal but a mob boss and ex-wrestler. Alice navigates a city that is divided up into territories much like a chessboard; each of those territories is alternately protected and terrorized by competing crime syndicates. Walrus is known to be one of the worst mob bosses, someone who not only extorts the people in his territories but has a reputation for cannibalizing young

41 Lori Gruen, "Dismantling Oppression: An Analysis of the Connection Between Women and Animals," *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Ed. Greta Gaard, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 169.

women (which Alice later discovers to be a well-deserved reputation). Alice's encounter with the Walrus is one of real moral reckoning for her, just as it was in Carroll's source text.

Though the young women and Walrus are physically human in this adaptation, Henry draws parallels between the violence towards women and the Walrus's brutality towards animals. Just as in Carroll's poem, Alice's moral judgment comes not only after Walrus's victimization and cannibalization of young women, but also after his mistreatment of talking animals, who he forces to fight each other for sport. Alice equates these acts of cruelty, when she says: "'You think you're quite a man, don't you?' [Alice] said. 'Torturing creatures weaker than you because you're afraid of a fair fight.'"[42] Here Alice is referring not only to his ruthless treatment of a talking rabbit and other animals, but also his treatment of the girls, both of whom become creaturely and implicitly vulnerable in this moment. In both the video game *Alice: Madness Returns* and *Alice*, the walrus is imagined as a character who brutalizes and murders young women. In this way, Henry suggests that Alice's kinship with the oyster-women is rooted not in their shared humanity but in their shared precarity as women. Animals and women, then, share a kinship because of their shared peril; Walrus is condemned for both types of brutalization.

Both *Alice: Madness Returns* and Henry's *Alice* downplay the role of the carpenter within their systems of trauma and abuse, choosing instead to focus the bulk of the monstrosity on the walrus character. In both adaptations, it is the predatory quality of the walrus that resonates most clearly, even though in the original Alice story, the carpenter is just as ravenous as the walrus. While the walrus ate more oysters than the carpenter in the original text, as Tweedledum points out, the carpenter "ate as many as he could get," making him just as ethically

42 Christina Henry, *Alice*, (New York: Ace, 2015), 233.

culpable as the walrus or, as Alice puts it, "They were *both* very unpleasant characters."[43] Yet in both adaptations, the carpenter's role in the consumption of the women is downplayed. In the video game, the carpenter acts as broker-barker of the performance, while in Henry's *Alice,* Mr. Carpenter is a rival mob boss to the walrus and is only alluded to in the text.

By downplaying the carpenter, both adapters emphasize the monstrosity and animality of the walrus in relation to the oysters. For example, in Henry's adaptation, though the Walrus has an animal name, he is a human whose appetites are animal and monstrous, and who Alice grows to see more as an animal as she confronts him. As she prepares to unleash one of the Walrus's own abused animals on him, a rabbit who the Walrus had called "a dumb beast" moments before, Alice notices that the Walrus "was cornered now and cornered animals will behave unpredictably." [44] Yet again, even though Henry uses human characters to stand in for the Walrus and the oysters, their animality (and associated vulnerability) is highlighted. The carpenter, in his absence, remains relatively human and humane by comparison, an important choice by Henry that implies that the connection between animals and women's bodies is one of vulnerability, of susceptibility to predation. As Alice feels more powerful through her confrontation with Walrus, she begins to see him become more animalistic and thus more like prey. Alice flips the script by embracing her human(e)ity. In doing so, she also flips the script on the nineteenth-century hierarchical impulse that places women alongside prey animals; as Alice becomes the predator, Walrus loses his power over her body.

While Henry chooses to focus on the monstrosity inherent in the masculine, human-animal body, *Alice: Madness Returns*, preserves the animalistic physical bodies of the walrus and the oysters, which draws attention to the predator-prey relations between them. In the video

43 Carroll, 144

44 Henry, 237

game, the walrus's body is huge and monstrous, emphasized by his carved tusks and his mask, which is an out-sized human skull. For the performance, the walrus carries the scythe of Death, contrasted with comic details, like a ruff and what appears to be a nod to the boyish caps of Tweedledee and Tweedledum in the Tenniel drawings (see Fig. 1.3). The full effect of this costuming is an animal dressed as a man but monstrous because of his animal appetites, a caricature of the walrus in Carroll's text. Carroll's walrus is dressed as a human but acting precisely as a walrus acts, and monstrous because of its trickery and gluttony, traits shared equally by his human counterpart. Yet in *Alice: Madness Returns,* the walrus's performance of humanity is belied by his animal appetites, which the carpenter only enables, as he does not participate in the feast. In this adaptation, the oysters shrink into the background, becoming literal props for his performance of predation. The carpenter is culpable in as much as Alice is culpable for what happens to the oysters.

Figure 1.3: *Alice: Madness Returns,* Dir. American McGee Redwood City, CA: EA, 2010.

These adaptations suggest that the culpability for predation is tied to the ways in which humans negotiate the predation of female bodies. Both of these adaptations showcase how women's agency over their bodies are robbed from them, through trickery and through force. There is a long history of associations between women and animals, and ecofeminists suggest

that both are under the direct influence of men and especially white men.[45] As Josephine Donovan notes, "From a cultural feminist viewpoint, the domination of nature, rooted in postmedieval, Western, male psychology, is the underlying cause of the mistreatment of animals as well as the exploitation of women and the environment."[46] By this logic, the binary, hierarchical thinking that privileges white, male perspectives, if upended, would be emancipatory for women and animals. Animal studies scholars like Donovan also tell us that troubling the divides between human and animal also troubles every other categorization we make along the way; by studying texts like the walrus and the carpenter that create deliberate slippage between the categories of human and animal, we find ways to disturb, as well, the categorical distances imposed by patriarchal structures between men and women. Things that might seem, under certain cultural assumptions, connatural— whether that is a presumed biological constant, such as "walruses consume oysters" or a social assumption like "men consume women"— are troubled as well.

These concerns are really perfectly encapsulated in the oysters because our instinct is not to sympathize with bivalves, on the whole.[47] Carroll asks us to do so regardless and asks us to consider how eating works in a world where animals talk, communicate, feel, and do not want to be eaten. The two adapters discussed here interpret the vulnerability of real animals by coding the oysters feminine. Christina Henry does a good job pointing us at a possible answer as to why this happens. Alice is an inspiring character because she's trying to make sense of a world that

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45 Foundational voices in ecofeminist animal studies include Greta Gaard, Carol J. Adams, Lori Gruen, and Josephine Donovan.

46 Josephine Donovan, "Animal Rights and Feminist Theory," *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Ed. Greta Gaard, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 174.

47 Oysters are, of course, likable enough. However, the global body of literature about oysters seems to suggest that they are food first and objects of sympathy second, except, of course, to vegetarians/vegans and, perhaps, bivalve enthusiasts.

resists sense-making. For Henry's Alice, the things that don't make sense are the same things that don't make sense to us, outside of Wonderland: why do people hurt each other? Why is the world so difficult to navigate, especially as a woman?

The oyster-eating scene, however, is not the only part of Wonderland that is plagued by these questions. While it is an exemplar of the intersection between animals, women, and predation, this scene represents the thematic importance of predation to the text overall. Animal bodies are thrust into the spotlight in these texts in order and, in doing so, promote an interspecies ethos. By pushing Alice into interspecies relationships, Carroll highlights the implicit connection between animal bodies and female bodies and the social precarity that they both signify. The illustrative histories of *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871) reproduce consistently Carroll and Tenniel's insistent focus on animals *as animals;* however, in doing so, they also represent the affective terror of becoming as vulnerable as an animal. Stage and film productions, which focus primarily on the consumption of Alice's body, further highlight the terror of becoming like an animal and of being consumed.

II. "To Talk of Many Things": Conversations with and about Animals in Wonderland

Part of the delight of Carroll's imaginative world is the possibility for imagining interspecies communication. The proliferation of animals within *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871) is self-evident: both texts are more populated with animal characters than humans. Even Alice's entrance into Wonderland is precipitated by her chase of the White Rabbit. Carroll thought of this menagerie as something that children would *want* to encounter in strange and fantastic

stories, as we see in the opening poem to *Alice in Wonderland*:

> Anon, to sudden silence won,
> In fancy they pursue
> The dream-child moving through a land
> Of wonders wild and new,
> In friendly chat with bird or beast—
> And half believe it true.

In this stanza, Carroll identifies the presence of animals in this text as a fantasy of positive interspecies communion. Identifying with animals, even creatures who are not traditionally sympathetic, such as caterpillars or wasps, whether through their conversations or from being physically on their level, is a key part of Alice's journey (see Fig. 1.4).

Figure 1.4: Illus. John Tenniel (engraving), "Advice from a Caterpillar," *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Ed. Donald J. Gray, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd Edition, (New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992): 35.

Understanding that Carroll and Tenniel meant to represent animals as animals is an important precursor to understanding how predation and consent operate in the Wonderland

ecology. To actual animals, predation represents a real, not metaphorical, threat to physical safety. Invoking actual science makes Wonderland implicitly terrifying and adapters draw on this terror in their adaptations. As adapters in various mediums have proven, all of the Alice texts can be astoundingly dark depending on the tone of the reading. One oft-forgotten interlude at the end of *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871) has Alice take a slice out of a pudding only to have it reply to her "I wonder how you'd like it, if I were to cut a slice out of you, you creature!"[48] In this way, Carroll's world of possible imaginative delight takes on more menacing tones that emerge even more strongly in the adaptation history of the *Alice* texts and its insistent focus on predation.

The delight of Wonderland's animals, in both the source text and in adaptations, is tempered by the biological realities of animal bodies. That biological reality is often ignored in criticism. There is a tendency in both science and literary criticism to invalidate works that anthropomorphize animals on the grounds that the very act of anthropomorphization disqualifies them as vehicles for considering the place of animals in society. In other words, talking animals aren't *real* animals. As Steve Baker notes: "The notion that talking-animal narratives are not really about animals— that the worthwhile ones, at least, must surely be about something more important than mere animals— is quite consistent with the far wider cultural trivialization and marginalization of the animal."[49] Anthropomorphization is valuable as an exercise in considering human perception of animals, at the very least. At best, anthropomorphization is an exercise in imagining the unknowable proximate emotional and intellectual lives of other species, hardly a worthless exercise. Finally, from the perspective of the *Alice* culture-text,

48 Carroll, *Looking-Glass*, 201

49 Steve Baker, *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity, and Representation*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993): 138.

considering the animal gives us a new and productive path to travel if we take this poem at face value instead of insisting on allegorical readings. What if "The Walrus and the Carpenter" really is a poem about bivalves being eaten? What do we gain if we consider this poem and other aspects of the text on those terms? And how does it shed light on these adaptations if we consider the animals of these texts as animals? There is a great wealth of evidence that both Lewis Carroll and his illustrator, John Tenniel, sought to represent animals naturalistically rather than allegorically, suggesting that it was important to view Wonderland as a naturally operating ecological system, with all the implications that suggestion entails.

Film and stage adaptations of *Alice in Wonderland* reinforce the viewpoint that Tenniel and Carroll were anthropomorphizing their animal characters by conflating human and animal actors. Just as today, early theatrical and live-action adaptations necessitated the use of animal costumes that often do little to disguise the human body. Indeed, some prestige adaptations that cast prominent celebrities in animal roles seem eager to highlight their actors' famous faces, such as the television movie adaptation that cast Sammy Davis Jr. as the Caterpillar (see Fig. 1.5) or the television mini-series adaptation that cast Whoopi Goldberg as the Cheshire Cat (see Fig. 1.6), among other prominent actors.[50] With 2D and CGI animation, animals approach the more naturalistic role they occupied in the illustrative history of the text; however, the majority of film adaptations of *Alice* are live-action. Nevertheless, even in adaptations that highlight their famous actors, the illustration history of the *Alice* texts indicates that adapters were generally interested in following the precedent set in Tenniel illustrations of representing animals naturalistically.

It is precisely this interest in real animal bodies that informs the ideas of predation that

50 Thomas Leitch calls this practice celebrity "superimposition." Often the celebrities featured in such plays/films are so important to the production of the work that they become un/acknowledged co-authors, alongside, in this case, Lewis Carroll. For more, see Thomas Leitch's *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007): 100-102.

pervade the text. If we consider the dominance of natural science in the nineteenth century, these texts become less about attempting to translate humans into fantastical roles or anthropomorphize animals and more about an attempt to write something interesting, relatable, and (at least somewhat) scientifically accurate onto the blank page that is animal alterity.

Figure 1.5: *Alice in Wonderland*, Dir. Harry Harris, Perf. Sammy Davis Jr. (pictured as the Caterpillar), Natalie Gregory, Red Buttons, Scott Baio, Jayne Meadows, Carol Channing, Sony Pictures Television, 1985.

Figure 1.6: *Alice in Wonderland*, Dir. Nick Willing, Perf. Tina Majorino, Martin Short, Whoopi Goldberg (pictured as the Cheshire Cat), Christopher Lloyd, Ben Kingsley, Hallmark Entertainment, 1999.

Another challenge in considering the animal as meaningful on its own terms is the nonsensical nature of the *Alice* texts. In *Children's Literature and the Posthuman,* Zoe Jaques acknowledges the long-standing belief that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) is a nonsense tale meant entirely to amuse; unlike many books featuring animals from the nineteenth century, Carroll seems to avoid overt didacticism.[51] Yet Jaques counters that the anthropomorphization in these tales or "the merging of human and animal does not remain morally neutral."[52] Indeed, any kind of hybridization of the human and the animal is a profound challenge to all social structures built upon the premise of human superiority over the natural world. As Jaques points out, Carroll establishes patterns that explain how Alice's exposure to non-human creatures is essential to understanding the moral concealed behind the nonsense.

While Jaques concerns herself with the slippage between the categorical concept of the

51 A common feature of children's books in the nineteenth century was to teach children the moral good of being kind to animals.

52 Zoe Jaques, *Children's Literature and the Posthuman: Animal, Environment, Cyborg*, (New York: Routledge, 2015), 43.

"human" and the "animal," the social and cultural structures of the nineteenth century were what made that slippage interesting to Carroll and his readers.[53] The publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) popularized the idea that humans and animals were related biologically (that we are, in fact, animals ourselves). While Darwin took great pains to limit his discussion of evolution to the non-human animal, showing how different species of animals, such as finches, had similar biological origins, the question of the human's place within this spectrum was implicit. Darwin's singular reference to humans is his assertion that "Light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history" toward the end of the text.[54] Nevertheless, many readers filled in the gaps, speculating that man, too, had common origins with other animals. This speculation would lead to literary preoccupations with evolution, degeneration, and other concerns. However, it also cemented that humans were not, as had previously been thought, a higher or more advanced order of animal, but instead just a *differently evolved* animal species; with Darwin, human supremacy was challenged and human-animal kinship was affirmed. For Alice, the progression is similar. Her supremacy, as a human, in the texts is not assured and her communion with animal creatures allows her to understand herself as just another type of animal.

The production and illustrative histories of the *Alice* texts are rooted in the prominent nineteenth-century discourses about natural science and animal rights. These conversations implicitly argued the fellow-feeling between humans and animals, often in defense of the abuse of animal bodies. Jed Mayer in "The Vivisection of the Snark" points out Carroll's animal activism, including his vocal opposition to vivisection or the practice of performing brutal surgical experiments on living, conscious animals. In *The Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll,* by

53 Though Jaques does give some attention to Lewis Carroll's position in the anti-vivisection movement.

54Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of the Species*, Ed. Philip Appleman, (Norton Critical Edition, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1970), 576.

Stuart Dodgson Collingwood (Carroll's nephew), Carroll is remembered as having written multiple articles to publications protesting vivisection: "Mr. Dodgson had a particular horror of vivisection," Collingwood notes, adding that his uncle once gravely remarked "I am afraid that man vivisects."[55] Perhaps the most well-known of Carroll's publications on this subject is "Vivisection as a Sign of the Times," in which Carroll concludes his condemnation of animal experimentation with "This, then, is the glorious future to which the advocate of secular education may look forward: the dawn that gilds the horizon of his hopes! An age [...]when the man of science, looking forth over a world which will then own no other sway than his, shall exult in the thought that he has made of this fair green earth, if not a heaven for man, at least a hell for animals."[56] This vocal activism is evidence that Carroll's continual interest in animals is not accidental or value-free. Indeed, it is part of his artistic vision for Alice's world.

Both before and after *On the Origin of Species,* natural history was incredibly popular, leading to many nineteenth-century zoological and public exhibitions that Carroll and Tenniel could have drawn upon in their work. Lin Young points out that Carroll and Tenniel were both exposed to the popularity of anthropomorphic taxidermy, a practice in which museums would display taxidermized animals in human situations, like having tea parties. In those taxidermized scenes, like in the *Alice* texts, Young says animals occupy multiple roles: they're objects (like the flamingos who Alice uses to play croquet), they're anthropomorphized (like the White Rabbit), and they're also naturalistically represented (like the dodo and many of the other animals):

> When placed in the larger context of the Victorian preoccupation with natural history and the rise of anthropomorphic taxidermy as a popular entertainment, Carroll's representation of a tangled hierarchy of consciousness can be understood as a subversion

55 Stuart Dodgson Collingwood, *The Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll*, (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898), 166.

56 Collingwood, 170-171.

> of the nineteenth century's appetite for a categorical and governable natural world that must, in some way, address the ever-shifting role of the human within that world.[57]

Young, therefore, argues that the breaking down of categorical distinctions between the human and the non-human animal through anthropomorphization are not necessarily fantastical or allegorical but a reflection of the dramatic restructuring of the natural world occurring in the popular scientific and aesthetic realm. It seems to be no accident that the domestic, aesthetic quality of taxidermy also recalls the performance of domestic womanhood in the nineteenth century.

The illustrative history of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* offers some insight into how the issue of animals, represented naturalistically, evolves and conflates with the issue of female precarity in contemporary adaptations. Illustrators are, in their own right, adapters, though the text of the story may not change in new illustrated editions. Kate Newell and Kamilla Elliott argue that illustration is an important part of the adaptive process, with Elliott going so far as to call the illustration and literature in the nineteenth century "hybrid arts" in comparison to the typical view of art and literature as "sister arts":

> Later nineteenth-century discussions of novel illustration shift from analogies based in organic imaginative unity to those favoring Darwinian dynamics, where shared traits intensify competition, sister arts become sibling rivals, and closely related species battle for the same territory.[58]

Illustrators are not merely faithfully translating the text into images but are themselves interpreting and adapting the text into a visual art form, and this practice has been central to visual artists since the nineteenth century. As illustrators interpret Tenniel and Carroll, they do so

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57 Lin Young, "'To Talk of Many Things': Chaotic Empathy and Anxieties of Victorian Taxidermy in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," *Victorian Review* 43, no. 1, (2017): 47.

58 Kamilla Elliott, *Rethinking the Novel/Film Debate*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 32.

as the narrative is refracted in its modern environment. Szwydky says "[P]ainting and illustration work alongside textual adaptations and dramatic forms to update stories to meet the needs of modern audiences."[59] For Alice, many of these refractions share the hinge point of naturalistic representations of the animal characters, an aesthetic choice that highlights Alice's interspecies relationships. By placing Alice naturalistically amongst animals, the texts emphasize that she is herself in their same, precarious position.

While John Tenniel, Carroll's original illustrator, worked collaboratively with Carroll on the *Alice* illustrations, he also adds a distinctive style to the *Alice* illustrations that were part of the marketability of early illustrated editions. An early review of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* announces "Forty-two illustrations by John Tenniel! Why there needs nothing else to sell this book, one would think."[60] While Carroll does anthropomorphize his characters through their actions, Tenniel, a *Punch* cartoonist with a near-photographic memory, largely avoids anthropomorphization. For example, in the original poem, the oysters are anthropomorphized illogically, as wearing shoes (though "they hadn't any feet"), with their coats washed and faces brushed. This nonsense underscores, perhaps, the playfulness of the poem, but it also lends a sense of humanity to the oysters. Tenniel chose not to anthropomorphize the oysters at all, beyond the faithful inclusion of shoes. Most of his insertions of anthropomorphic characteristics are a nod to the illogical action of the text. Other than the occasional addition of clothing, most of Tenniel's animal characters, including the walrus, are accurately drawn.[61]

59Szwydky, 78

60 Quoted in: Michael Hancher, *The Tenniel Illustrations*, 2nd Edition, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2019).

61 This is not to suggest that Carroll was uninterested in naturalistic representation of the animals. In addition to actively soliciting Tenniel, who was known for his naturalistic style in illustrating animals, Michael Hancher notes that "Carroll is known to have borrowed an illustrated book of natural history from the deanery at Christ Church, to improve the accuracy of his drawings" (29).

Though he was a cartoonist, Tenniel had a reputation for drawing animals. Michael Hancher notes that "From early in his career, when he illustrated *Aesop's Fables* (1848), Tenniel gained a reputation for the skillful illustration of animals; he later acknowledged spending much time at the Zoological Gardens in London, making mental notes (not sketches) of how various animals actually looked."[62] Tenniel made several requests for Carroll to alter the text so that his illustrations could conform to the biology of the animals involved. In *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* (1865), for example, Alice plays croquet with an ostrich, which Tenniel altered to the more manageable-sized flamingo. Tenniel also chose to draw the caterpillar from behind, rather than from straight-on, as Carroll did in *Alice's Adventures Under Ground.* The effect of drawing the caterpillar from behind meant that "The implied mouth, nose and brow arise from actual caterpillar feet seen in silhouette. The result is a mood of personification without the unconvincing explicitness of Carroll's version."[63] Tenniel even influenced "The Walrus and the Carpenter," requesting that Carroll have the pair walk "close at hand" rather than the original "hand-in-hand." Hancher puts this request down to the fact that Tenniel wanted, whenever possible, to avoid anthropomorphization; the walrus was drawn with flippers.

Whenever possible, Tenniel chooses to draw his animals naturalistically, in imitation of natural science illustrations of the nineteenth century. Rose Lovell-Smith argues that Tenniel makes a deliberate attempt to mimic naturalistic styles in his drawings of the animals in the *Alice* books: "Tenniel offers a visual angle on the text of Alice in Wonderland that evokes the life sciences, natural history, and Darwinian ideas about evolution."[64] As Lovell-Smith establishes compellingly with side-by-side engravings and illustrations by natural history artists like J.G.

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62 Hancher, 28. Tenniel did not sketch, because he never used models.

63 Hancher, 31

64 Rose Lovell-Smith, "The Animals of Wonderland: Tenniel as Carroll's Reader," *Criticism* 45, no. 4, (2003): 385.

Wood (for a similar example, see Fig. 1.7), natural studies of animals are given prominent space in the *Alice* texts.[65] This attention to natural history as the standard for imagining the animals of *Alice* also invokes the studies of anatomy, ecology, and reproductive habits of the same animal.[66] Indeed, in J.G. Wood's popular series titled *Animate Creation,* five pages of description accompany the illustration of the walrus; the chronicle of the walrus's physical characteristics would have been of great interest to artists like Tenniel.[67] Given Tenniel's access to such natural history and his artistic proficiency, his choice to represent animals naturalistically serves to highlight the interspecies relationships in the text.

65 Hancher speculates that Tenniel and Carroll might have used Thomas Bewick's *A Natural History of Quadrupeds* (1790), on the basis that this text was often reprinted.

66 As Jessica W.H. Lim notes, the Darwinian invocations of the illustrations also might inspire connections between food chain consumption and economic consumerism, adding another wrinkle to the topic of predation.

67 J.G. Wood, *Animate Creation*, (New York: S. Hess, 1885): 214.

Figure 1.7. (Left): Illus. John Tenniel (engraving), "Tweedledum and Tweedledee," *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Ed. Donald J. Gray, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd Edition, (New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992): 142.
(Right): Illus. J.G. Wood (wood engraving), "Walrus," Animate Creation. (New York: S. Hess, 1885), 214.

While restrained by nineteenth-century technology, the Savile Clarke theatrical adaptation also emphasizes the animality of Wonderland's non-human characters in their costuming. Unlike later film adaptations, which were unwilling to hide their celebrity capital under animal masks, these early stage adaptations used remarkably life-like practical effects to convey a sense of naturalistic animality.[68] These efforts of design not only emphasized the animality of the characters Alice encountered, but also her relative size to them, such as when Isa

68 According to letters from Carroll to Savile Clarke, Carroll actually preferred that masks in Savile Clarke's theatrical adaptation "(of heads of animal &c) should always partly show the human face." While some do so, photographic evidence shows that many of the animal costumes obscure, at least partially, the presence of the human actor. For more, see Charles Lovett's *Alice on Stage: A History of the Early Theatrical Productions of Alice in Wonderland*, (Westport: Meckler, 1990), 82.

Bowman (as Alice) appears next to characters like the Dormouse (Emsie Bowman), played by even younger children, or the Mock Turtle and Gryphon (see Fig. 1.8 for Alice and the Dormouse). Carroll wrote to Savile Clarke to note that "there is no reason why all the characters should be the same size as 'Alice'— Many of them were much larger— at least, so far as my ideas went: Tenniel has rather reduced some more than I meant."[69] This note influenced the use of adult actors in the early theatrical productions of *Alice,* which served to highlight the discrepancy between Alice's size amongst the animals. Indeed, the visual conflation of Alice amongst the animals was no accident; they were part of Carroll's own vision for Alice as an animal herself. In an article praising the stage production, Carroll wrote of Alice in animalistic terms:

> How wert thou, dream-Alice, in they foster father's eyes? How shall he picture thee? Loving, first, loving and gentle: loving as a dog (forgive the prosaic simile, but I know of no earthly love so pure and perfect), and gentle as a fawn: then courteous, courteous to *all,* high or low, grand or grotesque, King or Caterpillar.[70]

Carroll's self-aware insistence on referring to Alice as a dog and a fawn makes her an excellent candidate for adventure in Wonderland, where she will meet all manner of "high or low" animals, as Carroll suggests here. The naturalistic costumes emphasize Alice's position amongst the animals, even as *one of* the animals.

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69 Lovett, 38

70 Quoted in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland: A Documentary Volume*, Ed. Carolyn Sigler, (Stamford, CT: Cengage Gale, 2014).

ALICE AND THE DORMOUSE.
(*From a photograph by Elliott & Fry.*)

Figure 1.8: The Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll. (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898): 400.

Early illustrations of the *Alice* texts also follow this pattern of depicting the animals naturalistically. For example, the illustration of "The Caucus Race" by Arthur Rackham (1907) display even less cartoonish qualities than Tenniel's illustrations (see the image on the right in Fig. 1.9). In this illustration, Alice is surrounded by small animals (mostly birds and rodents) who are represented naturalistically in the rendering of their musculature, fur, and feathers, while also recreating the singular anthropomorphic solecism of the dodo's human-like hand, a nod to Tenniel's original illustration (see the left image in Fig. 1.9). Unlike Tenniel's illustration, in which the animals recede into the background, Rackham further highlights Alice's connection to the animals by placing her claustrophobically amongst them. Though Darwin's evolutionary

theories suggest that animals and humans share common origins, the widely-held belief that women were closer to animals on the Great Chain of Being persisted even after the publication of *On the Origin of Species*. Rackham's illustration makes Alice's kinship with animals explicit.

Figure 1.9: (Left): Illus. John Tenniel (engraving), "The Caucus Race," *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Ed. Donald J. Gray, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd Edition, (New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992): 24.
(Right): Illus. Arthur Rackham (watercolor), "The Caucus Race," *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* (London: William Heinemann, 1907).

While Maria Kirk's illustration of *Alice in Wonderland* (1904) is not so well-remembered as Arthur Rackham's, her illustration of "The Caucus Race" represents animals naturalistically as well, perhaps even more so than Tenniel or Rackham. Other than the seemingly friendly expressions on the animals' faces, Kirk's animals show no other signs of anthropomorphization: even the capture of their movement emphasizes their diverse and animate biology (see Fig. 1.10). For example, the animals are all of different sizes in relation to one another. This diversity in size is a departure from Tenniel's depiction of "The Caucus Race," which puts all of the animals at

roughly the same size as each other and Alice. Kirk attempts to represent the animals in a way that is palatable to children while still emphasizing the enjoyment of interspecies communication. Peter Newell, while possessing the most dreamlike or cartoonish style of the early *Alice* illustrators (1901), also pays particular attention to realism in his shading and detail, especially in illustrations of animal characters like the walrus (see Fig. 1.11). Like Kirk, Newell seeks to make his illustrations particularly accessible to children and collectors alike. Yet while Peter Newell adds clothing to his walrus and a face to his oyster, he also pays particular attention to the naturalistic representation of their animal characteristics, like the walrus's tusk and whiskers and the oyster's shell ridges. His attention to detail and realistic aesthetic values give his animals an edge of naturalism that call back to the Tenniel illustrations.

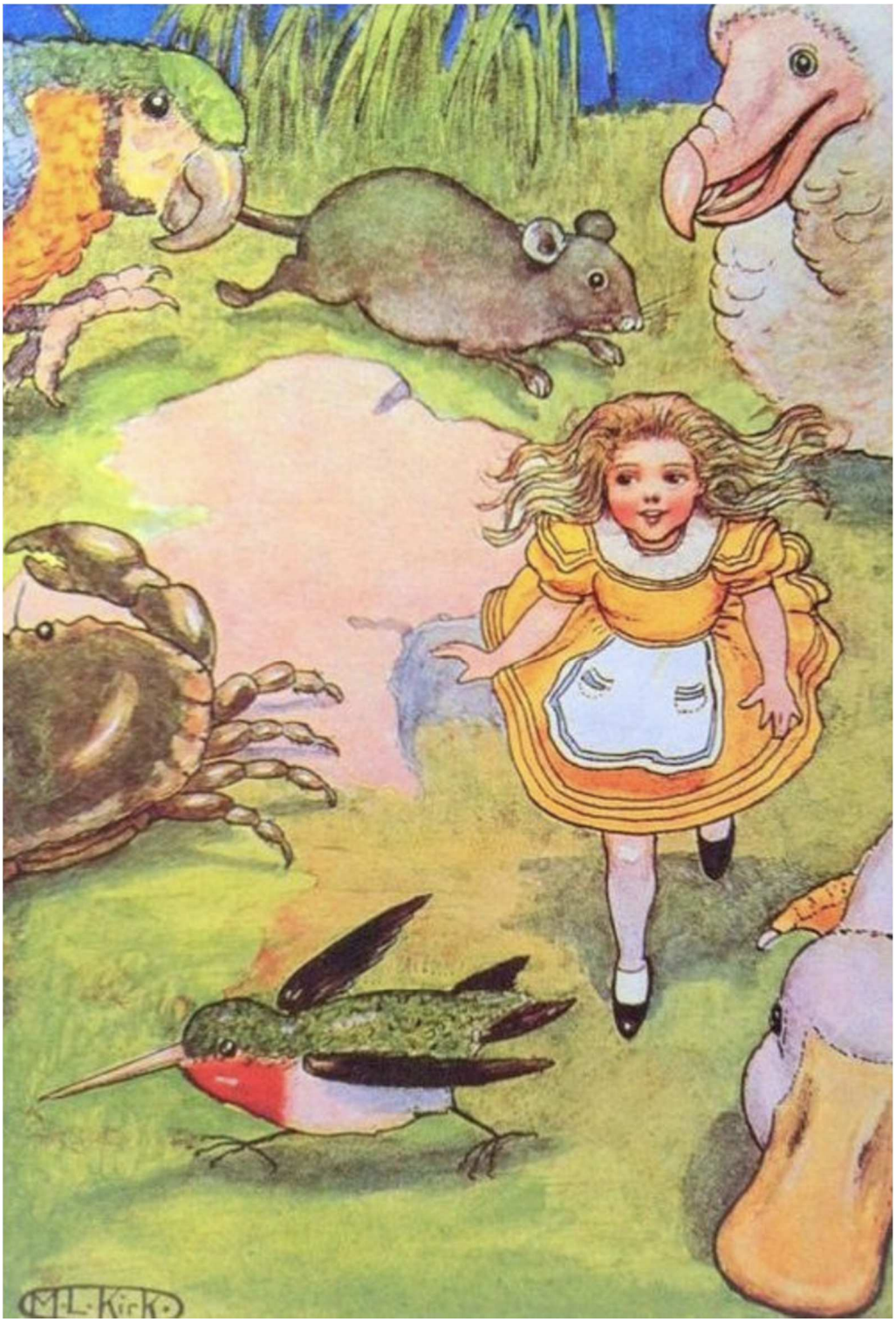

Figure 1.10: Illus. Maria Kirk (watercolor), “They began running when they liked,” *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland,* (New York: Stokes, 1904): 51.

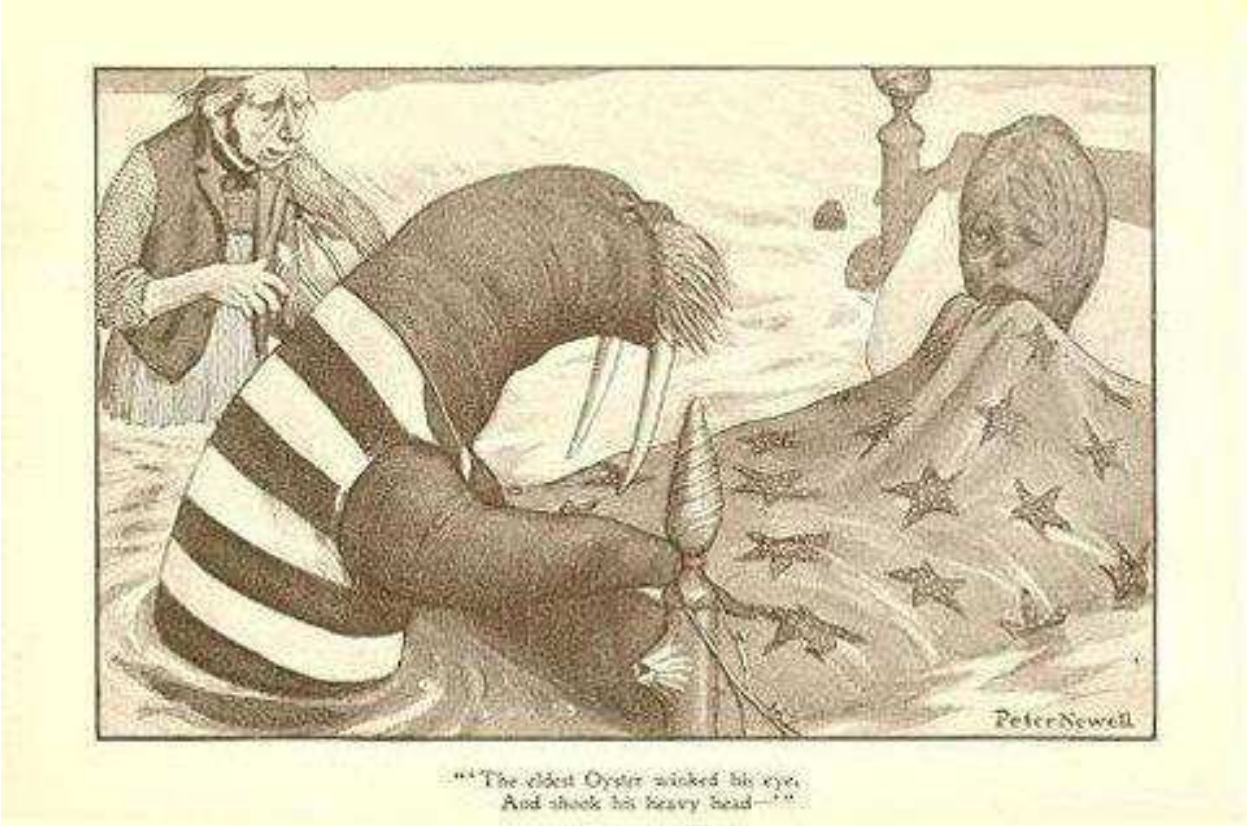

Figure 1.11: Illus. Peter Newell, "The eldest oyster winked his eye/ And shook his heavy head—", *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* (London: Harper and Brothers, 1901).

Because the early versions of these works depict animals naturalistically, the consideration of them *as animals* also means we must consider their potential status as prey. The naturalization of these animals in early adaptations of the *Alice* texts is no accident. Its consistent inclusion drives home the fact that the anthropomorphization of the animals in these texts is underscored by a tendency for all of the animals— oysters, walrus, and carpenter included— to act exactly as we would expect animals to act. As Wilma Cruise says "One of the remarkable things about Carroll's text is that the animals in the tales seem to have a consciousness. They are not used symbolically to stand for something else, nor are they animal representations of human traits."[71] The role of the animals must be considered biologically, naturalistically.

71 Cruise, 80

Considering animals like the walrus and the carpenter biologically opens up avenues for questioning the very nature of predation within these texts. Oysters are one of many marine organisms that comprise the walrus's natural diet. In the nineteenth century, oysters were commonly harvested and eaten from riverbeds in Britain, enjoyed by the working class and the upper class alike (though they were particularly savored by the laboring classes, because they were so plentiful and easy to harvest). It is safe to assume, then, that carpenters would also be expected to eat oysters. If eating oysters, therefore, is perfectly natural, one must ask what prompts Alice to regard their actions with such contempt that she ultimately declares "they were *both* very unpleasant characters."[72] Altogether there is plentiful evidence to assume that both Tenniel and Carroll were interested in animals, and especially interested in adapting them or representing them naturalistically, if not always logically, in keeping with popular interest of the nineteenth century. The naturalistic representation of the animals in the original texts, then, serves precisely to highlight Alice's interspecies interactions with them. She exists at the level of the animal, concomitant with the animal's concerns about predation.

The illustrative history of the *Alice* texts emphasize the interspecies relationships that Alice develops with the animal denizens of Wonderland. As she meets different animal characters in Wonderland, Alice is constantly challenged by viewpoints she had never considered; she finds herself looking at animals from figurative and literal perspectives that put her on their level, such as Barry Moser's engravings of a to-scale caterpillar, which appears in the margins of Pennyroyal Press's prestige letterpress *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1982) as exactly three inches tall, showcasing for the reader exactly how small Alice has become (see Fig. 1.12). While many times, the animal's inability to respond in predictable ways is frustrating

72 Carroll, 144

for Alice, it is also the primary method of her development as a character.[73]

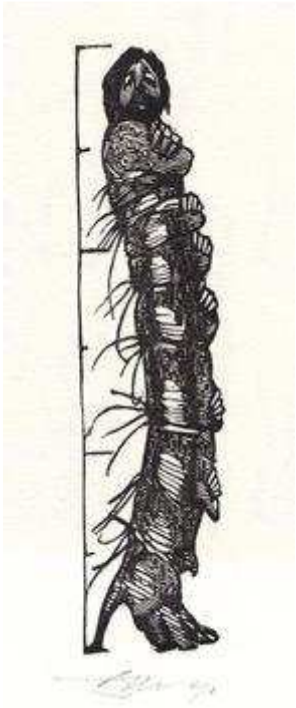

Figure 1.12: Illus. Barry Moser (wood engraving), "Exactly three inches tall," *Lewis Carroll's Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland: The Pennyroyal Editio*n, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982): 68.

The very next illustration of the caterpillar, drawn from an imposing angle, further demonstrates the way Alice's size also shifts the power dynamic between her and creatures that would have once been considered beneath her consideration. The caterpillar, his face in shadow and his many arms crossed disapprovingly, looms at the reader, placing them also on the level of Alice (see Fig. 1.13). Furthermore, Moser's medium of wood engraving is a study in contrasts, the dark, intricately-placed lines highlighting the high strangeness of Wonderland and Alice's uncertain journey. Though Alice is exactly the same size as the caterpillar, his stance in Moser's illustration highlights that their natural roles have been nonetheless reversed by her shrinking.

73 For more on the animal's ability to respond, see Jacques Derrida's "The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)," a seminal work in Critical Animal Studies that draws extensively on Alice in Wonderland.

Figure 1.13: Illus. Barry Moser (wood engraving), "Advice from a Caterpillar," *Lewis Carroll's Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland: The Pennyroyal Edition*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982): 65.

Many of the prestige illustrated adaptations of the *Alice* texts seem to emphasize the terrifying dimension of being in Wonderland or Looking-Glass Land; one of the most unsettling illustrators is Ralph Steadman, who uses familiar animals to demonstrate how precarious Alice's position in Wonderland is. In one scene of *Alice in Wonderland,* Alice confronts a dog; the inability of the animal to respond and Alice's concern with eating shifts to one that she might be on the menu herself: "[S]he tried hard to whistle to it; but she was terribly frightened all the time at the thought that it might be hungry, in which case it would be very likely to eat her up in spite

of all her coaxing."[74] Steadman's illustration of *Alice in Wonderland* (1973) casts the enormous puppy as a meticulously-coiffed poodle who, from this vantage point, is monstrous (see Fig. 1.14). The addition of enormous, black, vacant eyes as it stares at a tiny Alice who is smaller than a blade of grass, emphasizes her status as prey and the affective sensibilities this entails.

Figure 1.14: Illus. Ralph Steadman (lithograph on paper), "The enormous puppy," *Lewis Carroll's Alice: Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There,* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1973): 65.

Because illustration is an act of adaptation and interpretation, consistencies in the adaptive history of *Alice* reveal that naturalistic aesthetics and predation are not unrelated issues. Both Moser and Steadman are adapting the *Alice* texts over one hundred years after the original

74 Carroll, 32

publication; both, also, highlight the uncanny nature of Alice's position in these worlds. The achievement of both illustrators in balancing the somewhat surreal, affective representation of precarity and the implied naturalism of the animals themselves serves as a useful reminder that, while interspecies relationships can be powerful sources of enjoyment for young readers, they are also paradigm-shifting. As Alice identifies with the animal, her status becomes more precarious, more susceptible to predation. In film adaptations, this precarity is further compounded by the fact that she is not always portrayed as a child. While illustration histories tend to highlight Alice's kinship with animals *as animals,* film and stage adaptations build upon this further by suggesting that being sexually consumed, just as animals are physically consumed, is a marketplace concern, as well.

III. "Half Believe it True": Predatory and Marketplace Consumption of Alice and Carroll

These two viewpoints on the role of eating in the *Alice* texts— one which places emphasis on the interspecies food chain and another which places emphasis on the control of a young woman's body— are not unrelated. Women and animals are intimately related in literature and culture. Many ecofeminist scholars, like Lori Gruen, see this interrelatedness as being rooted in the fact that both women and animals tend to experience oppression in the same ways: "The role of women and animals in postindustrial society is to serve/be served up; women and animals are the used."[75] Whether or not Lewis Carroll, who had a much-debated history of friendships with young girls and a vocal interest in women's and animal's rights, intended to exert control over Alice's eating habits is uncertain. However, many adapters in the visual medium seem to

75 Gruen, 161.

have put Alice, like the oysters, in the precarious position of being "served up" to predatory forces.

Here, then, is a convergence of the three types of consumption at work in *Alice:* a predatory consumption that Alice must grapple with as she grows and shrinks throughout her travels; the sexual consumption of Alice by viewers who are hungry for a more mature Alice; and, bringing them together, the consumer marketplace that recognizes the darkness inherent in each of these types of consumption and packages them accordingly for audiences. If women and animals are connected, then predatory consumption must be read not only into Alice's affective kinship with animals, but also into the other ways she is consumed. In what follows, I will show that the emphasis on depicting animals as animals has one important effect: it aligns Alice with those animals, especially in adaptations that depict her as sexually mature.

Marketplace consumption of Alice necessitates a reconsideration of Alice's age. Many adapters cast Alice as an adolescent or young adult at the threshold of physical sexual maturity, in contrast with the Alice of the source text, who is only seven years old in *Alice in Wonderland* and "seven-and-a-half *exactly*" in *Through the Looking-Glass*.[76] In my examination of a small sampling of twelve film and graphic novel adaptations of the *Alice* texts, the average age for an actor cast in the title role was 18.6 (see Fig. 1.15). All three of the graphic novelizations I sampled sexualize *Alice.* Even adaptations that do not overtly sexualize *Alice* often make the choice to cast an older actress for the role. For example, in a 1998 adaptation, Kate Beckinsale was twenty-four years old at the time of filming the role of Alice; yet this is not an instance of a film studio casting a youthful-looking actress. Beckinsale's version of Alice was already a parent herself in this adaptation.

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76 Carroll, 153

Alice's Age and Represented Sexuality in a Selection of Adaptations				
Adaptation Title (and Medium)	**Year**	**Actress Age**	**Alice's Age**	**Alice Sexualized?**
Alice in Wonderland (Film)	1933	19	Teen	No
Alice in Wonderland (Animated Film)	1951	n/a	Young	No
Alice in Wonderland: A Musical Porno (Film)	1976	22	Adult	Yes
Malice in Wonderland (Animated Short Film)	1982	n/a	Unclear	Yes
Alice in Wonderland (TV mini-series)	1985	10	Young	No
Alice (Film)	1988	Unknown	Child	No
Lost Girls (Graphic novel series)	1991 - 2006	n/a	Teen	Yes
Alice in Wonderland (TV movie)	1999	14	Teen	No
Heart no Kuni no Alice (trans: Alice in the Country of Hearts) (Manga series)	2007 - 2009	n/a	Teen	Yes
Alice in Murderland (Film)	2010	22	Adult	Yes
Alice in Wonderland (Film)	2010	21	Teen	Yes
Once Upon a Time in Wonderland (TV series)	2013 - 2014	23	Adult	Yes

Figure 1.15: Table created by Kristen Figgins, "Alice's Age and Represented Sexuality in a Selection of Adaptations," 2021.

The choice to cast contemporary *Alice* adaptations with older actresses is another hinge point made all the stranger because of the adaptation's early theatrical history, in which the ingenuity and innocence of Alice on stage was one of the drawing features. Indeed, the three young actresses who played Alice in the Savile Clark adaptation during Carroll's lifetime—

Phoebe Carlo (1886-1887), Isa Bowman (1888), and Rose Hersee (1898-1899)— were all under the age of fourteen. Carlo, born in 1874, was twelve at the time of the debut production (see Fig. 1.16). Bowman was the same age as Carlo, making both girls 14 in 1888, but Bowman's smaller stature and more youthful appearance won out for the second run two years later (see Fig. 1.8). Rose Hersee was twelve during the revival of the Savile Clark production a decade later. Augustus Doubourg, a friend of Carroll's, wrote that "I always think that any little girl of ten or twelve was potentially an 'Alice' in his eyes."[77] This early emphasis on Alice's youth and innocence contrasts with later adaptations, which often cast Alice as older.

77Quoted in Sigler.

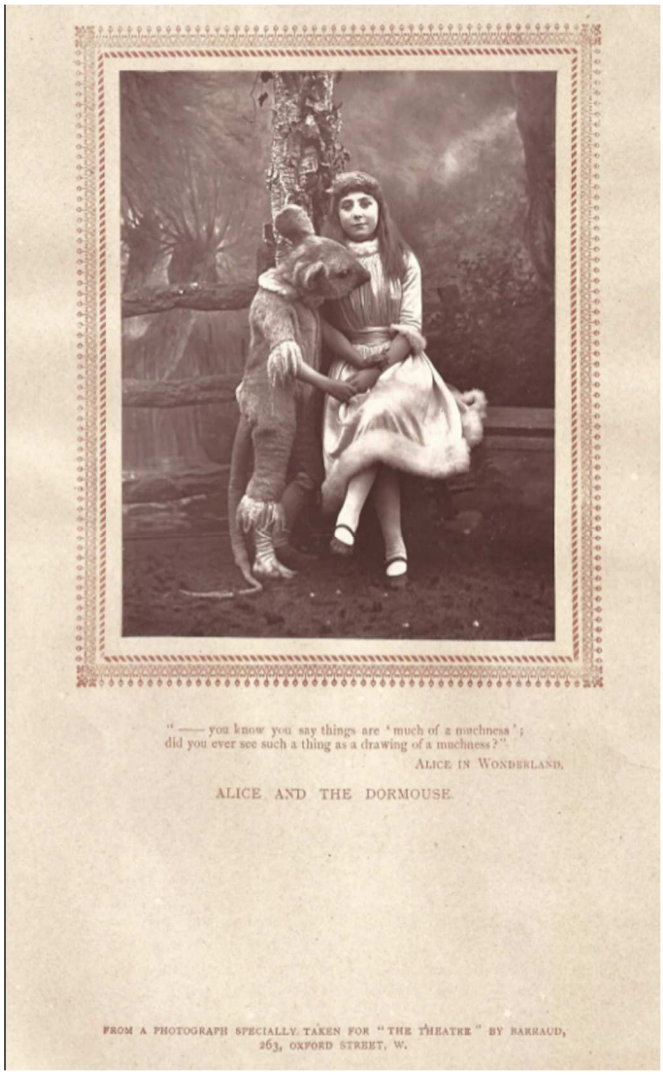

Figure 1.16: Phoebe Carlo as Alice. Photograph by Herbert Rose Barraud, "Alice and the Dormouse," Published in *The Theatre*, 1 April 1887.

Quite common are adaptations of *Alice in Wonderland* that not only age but also sexualize the character: both are evident in comic books, cosplay, video games, fan art, fanfiction, and pornography adaptations. Wonderland and Looking-Glass Land in the visual medium often have the added layer of being tales of growing up or letting go of childhood, most explicitly in Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* (2010). In this extension of the *Alice* texts, Alice has an (unwanted) love interest and is on the cusp of accepting a proposal of marriage. The spectacle of this unwanted proposal is interrupted by animals in multiple ways. A caterpillar

distracts her potential suitor, Hamish, during his proposal and the chase of a white rabbit leads Alice out of Victorian Britain to Wonderland, where her interactions with its animal denizens give her the autonomy to remove herself from what she sees as domestic predation.

Unauthorized adaptations often work alongside official adaptations to create a network of interests and commercialization; Henry Jenkins calls these intersecting interests "convergence culture."[78] In contrast to modes of conceptualizing popular media as low art forms to be consumed by an unthinking audience, convergence culture recognizes the dual-directionality of media between corporate structures that seek to profit off of storytelling and the fans who drive and demand that same storytelling: "To achieve their goals, these storytellers are developing a more collaborative model of authorship, co-creating content with artists with different visions and experiences at a time when few artists are equally at home in all media."[79] (98). The audience actively *and* passively participates in the production of media. For example, fanfiction adaptations of Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* (2010) bolster the artistic choice to make romance part of Alice's character design. A search for Alice Kingsleigh/Tarrant Hightopp (the names of Alice and the Mad Hatter in this production) reveal hundreds of hits, most of which imagine a romantic relationship between Alice and the Mad Hatter. Half of these results are rated Teen or higher. These fanfictions suggest that fans, as adapters, both guide and proliferate the sexualization of Alice in and outside of official networks of adaptation.

While Burton's adaptation avoids explicit sexualization, other adaptations go beyond the mere implication of romance. Sexualization of Alice further supports the connection that animals and women can both "serve/be served up."[80] Sometimes this connection goes beyond the

78Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, (Manhattan: New York University Press, 2006), 27.

79 Jenkins 98

80 Gruen 161

metaphor, as in the Tom Petty music video for "Don't Come Around Here No More" (1985). At the culmination of this homage to the Alice texts, Petty looms over Alice and cuts a slice out of her while she lies paralyzed on the table. At the end of the video, Alice's status as prey is driven home when, in shrunken form, she is swallowed wholly by Petty's open mouth. In this instance, she is literally on the menu, and although the visual imagery used is that of cake, the cannibalistic imagery suggests instead a predatory intent in Petty's eating. In homage to Petty's video, David Nakayama's *Tales from Wonderland* (2009) variant cover shows Alice splayed on a table while the Mad Hatter cuts a slice from her body (see Fig. 1.17). Nakayama's illustration, like all of those within this series, sexualizes the adult Alice. The comic series, which is described as a "psychological horror series" equates Alice's sexualization with the precarity and terror of both serving and serving up. While this illustration shows Alice "served up" as consumable prey, another in the series shows the flipped role with a sexualized Alice serving the Mad Hatter. In this instance, the food on display are teacups of blood; the rotting corpse of a naturalistically drawn white rabbit looks on.

Figure 1.17: (Left): Still from "Don't Come Around Here No More." Dir. Jeff Stein, Perf. Tom Petty, New York: MCA, 1985.
(Right): Illus. David Nakayama, *Grimm Fairy Tales: Tales from Wonderland: The Mad Hatter, Wizarding World Philly Variant Cover*, Written by Ralph Tedesco, Zenoscope Entertainment, Horsham, PA: 2008.

The reasons for aging the character (never mind romanticizing or sexualizing her) are seldom addressed directly in the adaptations, but they are most likely part of the larger pattern of rejecting the idyllic Wonderland of the nineteenth century. According to Laura Marks in *Alice in Pornoland: Hardcore Encounters with the Victorian Gothic,*

> Pornography repeatedly stages and violates private, secret, and forbidden sexualities as a way of generating erotic excitement. Thanks to our perception of the Victorians as simultaneously repressed and perverse, they are the ideal canvas upon which to stage this process. In our cultural mind, the Victorian period connotes the repressed, the backward, and the elite, steeped in sexism, colonial racism, and a (white, male) stiff upper lip."[81]

By Marks's supposition, pornographic representations of *Alice* sexualize the character of Alice in a kind of playful exploration or reversal of a prudish cultural stereotype. Certainly, on the surface, this explains many pornographic and openly eroticized adaptations, including costuming, fan art, and fan fiction. Yet it doesn't necessarily explain the impulse to sexualize a

81 Laura Marks, *Alice in Pornoland: Hardcore Encounters with the Victorian Gothic*, (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2018): 2.

character who is a mere seven years old in the adapted text.[82]

A possible explanation lies in Alice Liddell, Carroll/Dodgson's child friend on whom the fictional Alice was based; for decades, scholars have speculated that Carroll's friendships with young girls like Liddell might have had pedophilic undertones, and while no one has been able to definitively prove that Carroll had any inappropriate interest in these children, his preoccupation with children has become part of his personal mythos. In the nineteenth century, Carroll's celebrity as the author of the Alice texts, allowed him unprecedented access to children.[83] Carroll's photography of scantily dressed, female children has further bolstered this image of him as a possible predator of young girls, such as in his photograph of Alice Liddell as "The Beggar Maid" (1858) (see Fig. 1.18). This photograph has been much discussed in criticism, as her tattered clothing were arranged to display her chest and limbs; her expression, also, seems more self-aware, even challenging, than is comfortable for a girl of only seven. Over time, Carroll himself, along with the rumors of possible sexualization and predation, was adapted into stories about Alice.

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82 Perhaps no adaptation in my research problematizes Alice's sexualization so clearly as Melinda Gebbie and Alan Moore's *Lost Girls*, which depicts the underage Alice's rape as pornography. In interviews, Moore advocates for these texts as "benign pornography": "We've tried to say, yes, good pornography can exist, and I think that possibly the fact that we called it pornography wrong-footed a lot of the people who, if we'd have come out and said, 'well, this is a work of art,' they would have probably all said, 'no it's not, it's pornography.' So because we're saying, 'this is pornography,' they're saying, 'no it's not, it's art,' and people don't realise quite what they've said." Moore's defense of these comics ignores the fact that they are, in fact, child pornography; though obviously no children were harmed in their making, they eroticize the rape of underage girls. Some scholars, like Anna Kérchy, see Moore's adaptation as a net improvement on the quality of pornography, as they suggest an artistic revisioning of the genre with complicated, nuanced characters; yet this seems to disregard Moore's insistence that the graphic novels are not intended to be art.

83 Some scholars theorize that Carroll's attention to these children was just an entry point into their families; in other words, associations with those children gave Carroll more social mobility than he could have achieved otherwise.

Figure 1.18: "The Beggar Maid." Perf. Alice Pleasance Liddell. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1858. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/283092

Anna Kérchy argues that our reading of Alice Liddell in "The Beggar Maid" is influenced by the fact that so many of his family and friends tried to posthumously represent him as innocently as possible: "Pardoxically, posterity's project to avoid pedophiliac perversion is largely paranoid in so far that it builds on the assumption of an erotic charge (of children) that might not have been there in the first place."[84] The protestations of his friends, along with speculation about missing diary pages that presumably explain a rift between the Liddells and Carroll, all combine to cement a mystery that still permeates adaptations: did Carroll himself eroticize his heroine? Freudian readings by scholarly critics, such as of Alice's growing and

84 Anna Kérchy, *Alice in Transmedia Wonderland*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014): 131.

shrinking, further contribute to the idea of Carroll as predator.

In addition to numerous biographies that paint conflicted portraits of Lewis Carroll as a possible pedophile, many adaptations of the *Alice* texts feature Carroll as an active and predatory participant in the texts. Aside from frequent winks to Carroll's possible pedophilic desires, biografictions like Katie Roiphe's *Still She Haunts Me* (2001) explicitly intertwine the verifiable biographies of Carroll and Liddell with speculation on their possible sexual encounters. David O'Kane adapted photographs of Carroll and Liddell to create "Lewis Carroll and Alice" (2005) (Fig. 1.19), a digital collage that many people continue to mistake as authentic, perhaps because Carroll's reputation has become so widely repeated that they are eager to confuse artistic adaptation for authenticity. O'Kane's adaptation was never intended to be a hoax but rather, as Anna Kérchy says "to make a comment on perception, the retrospective subjectivities and meanings applied to past pictures and persons by the contemporary gaze, as well as the nature of images in the internet age that allows them to be redeployed at will for any number of motive."[85] Nonetheless, the photos continue to circulate as evidence that Carroll had inappropriate relationships with his child friends. As with narrative adaptation, these critical-historical hinge points can be repeated frequently enough that they become the recognized, authoritative text. This hinge point has been inserted into Carroll's biography, but also subsequent understandings of his *Alice* texts, as well.

85 Kérchy, 147

Figure 1.19: David O'Kane (digital collage), "Lewis Carroll and Alice," 2005.

Like the child Alice, the literary Alice rarely has the opportunity to consent to what happens to her in Wonderland. Imagining the animals of Wonderland as animals, on their own terms, means that Alice's ability to affectively ally herself with the nonhuman creatures of Wonderland is not just allegorical. Illustrative and production histories of *Alice* adaptations show that Alice becomes one of the animals herself, and that this animalization is not always a situation that inspires unmitigated delight. Adaptations of these texts recognize that Alice's association with animals also associate her with animal precarity, with their potentiality to become prey. It is simple to imagine the ways in which Alice's precarity within the Wonderland ecology might be transformed to speak to her precarity as a woman in the real world, as well. While a source of potential pleasure that opens new pathways for understanding her own

humanity, hybridity with animals also emphasizes the fact that most animals experience the interspecies world as one of potential terror and predation.

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Chapter Two: Picturing Animal Appetites in *Goblin Market*

The adaptation history of *Goblin Market* represents a confluence of a number of types of consumption. In Chapter One, I explained how consumption can be sexual, as when the adult Alice becomes aware of her status as prey in adaptation. Consumption can also be an economic undertaking. Adaptation, particularly, is often seen as a mercenary act or an attempt to capitalize financially upon the success of a literary work. Rather than being viewed as artists in their own right, adapters are often viewed as unoriginal, shamelessly hawking their wares as the goblins do in Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (1862): "Come buy, come buy!" Yet adapters are part of a complex network of interpreters of literary texts. Their hermeneutic translation of text can be an essential part of determining what a text essentially *is*. To fuse the economic model of adapters with an evolutionary one, the adapter might capitalize upon a text, but in doing so, they ensure its proliferation or the survival of the narrative.

Goblin Market speaks to these three types of consuming: predatory, sexual, and commercial. The phantom hinge point, so absent in existing scholarship yet nearly omnipresent in adaptations, connecting these three ways of consuming, is the body of the animal. Kate Newell argues that illustration, as an adaptive process, has the power to "illuminate tensions and nuances of a work not evident in a prose reading alone and, more importantly to my thinking, indicate the reiterative process by which the cultural knowledge and memory of a particular work is constructed."[86] This reiterative process in adaptations of *Goblin Market* shows that the erotically-charged bodies of animals are a central characteristic of understanding how sex operates within the text, and also why the poem inspires such indeterminate readings. Adaptations show us that the erotic urges of the animal are human urges, most safely explored through human-animal

86 Kate Newell, *Expanding Adaptation Networks*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017): 94

constructs like poetry and illustration that allow us to embrace the regenerative possibilities of our kinship with animals. While readings of *Goblin Market* as erotic date back to its publication in 1862, reviewers and critics have been hesitant to connect its animal, creaturely characters with its sexual undertones. Illustrators, by contrast, have built the animals into their adaptations palimpsestically, so that ghosts of previous animal-goblins are necessarily built into later adaptations. Indeed, the most recent adaptations tend to embrace, rather than subvert, the implied transgression of bestiality that such depictions of the goblin men present.

This chapter will focus on the representational evolution of erotic animality in adaptations of Rossetti's *Goblin Market.* Despite a long history of scholarship focusing on the sexual undertones of this narrative poem, there has been little discussion about the depictions of the goblin men as bestial, in both its long illustrative history and in long-form textual adaptations. All of these adaptations tend to highlight animals and animality as one of (if not the most) salient characteristics of Rossetti's poem. Adaptations of *Goblin Market* feature characters that transform into horses, owls, swans, and bears, wear animal costumes or masks, and are, in fact, creaturely, especially in states of arousal. In other words, these adaptations highlight the ways in which Rossetti's poem has often been associated with animalistic sexuality. Moreover, they do so in ways that have been largely ignored by scholarly critics.

Scholarly criticism has power, especially in consensus, to shape the way a creative text is viewed, through both what scholars choose to repetitively focus on and through what they collectively omit, such as the animalistic nature of the goblin men. In Chapter One, I discussed how adaptations of creative works can create what Kate Newell calls"hinge points" that become what we recognize as essential aspects of the text; so, too, do critical works begin to craft "hinge

points" as scholars cite and re-cite one another's assumptions about a text.[87] Josh Sabey and Keith Lawrence argue that "Both the adapter and the traditional critic effect original translations of source texts. And in creating their translations, both selectively use source materials; both employ the tools of their respective disciplines to manipulate, excise, enhance, or reconfigure source and original elements as they develop coherent 'narratives' conveying desired themes, feelings, perspectives, or ideals."[88] Scholarly arguments, especially as they revolve around culture-texts that are discussed frequently by adapters, become hinge points of the text itself as marketers, adapters, and illustrators consume and reinterpret these scholarly views.

One of the hinge points for *Goblin Market,* in current scholarship, is its very ambiguity. By "ambiguity," I mean specifically that the very fact that *Goblin Market* is so highly debatable is itself a focus of criticism. While many of the current scholarly arguments about *Goblin Market*—focusing largely on its social, sexual, and religious undertones— are persuasive, they are all plagued by baffled references to Rossetti's own insistence that she "did not mean anything profound in this fairytale," a claim that is called "disingenuous" by Dinah Roe and other critics.[89] Disingenuous or not, many arguments about this poem are couched in similar terms. Ashley Miller acknowledges that *Goblin Marke*t is "invested— ambiguously, for most critics— in the relationship between humans and material things."[90] Kathleen Anderson and Hannah Thulberry recognize the "intense curiosity" that the poem generates for critics to "have generated diverse interpretations of this highly evocative" poem.[91] Clayton Carlyle Tarr describes this phenomenon

87 Kate Newell, *Expanding Adaptation Networks*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 10.

88 Josh Sabey and Keith Lawrence, "The Critic as Adapter," *The Routledge Companion to Adaptation*, Ed. Dennis Cutchins, Katja Krebs, and Eckart Voigts (London: Routledge Press, 2018): 171.

89 Dinah Roe, *Christina Rossetti's Faithful Imagination*, (New York: Palgrave, 2006)

90 Ashley Miller, "Christina Rossetti's Radical Objectivity," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 46, (2018): 143.

91 Kathleen Anderson and Hannah Thullbery, "Ecofeminism in Christina Rossetti's 'Goblin Market,'" *Victorians: A Journal of Culture and Literature* 126, (Fall 2014): 63.

as "richly diverse critical debates."[92] These critics and others foreground their discussions of *Goblin Market* in its uncertainty in order to highlight an area that they feel has *not* thus far been addressed in its countless readings.

If we view critics as adapters, or people who are, in the act of interpretation, transforming the audience's experience of the adapted text, the sense that *Goblin Market* is ambiguous and difficult to interpret becomes a single unifying hinge point of the poem's scholarly critical reception. Alison Chapman notes that this insistence on hermeneutic uncertainty in *Goblin Market* is a fundamental function of the text: "The author's reported denial of profundity and the implicit assertion that 'she did not mean anything' *at all* by the tale has thrown the gauntlet of interpretation, so that the poem in critique partly functions as an empty vessel to fill with stable meanings, a blank page on which to transfer critical desires."[93] If critics are producing a stable "hinge point" in their adaptations/translations/interpretations of *Goblin Market,* that hinge point is the very ambiguity for which *Goblin Market* is so well known.

Scholarly interpretations of *Goblin Market* are united by another hinge point, however: their conspicuous, collective avoidance of the animal bodies of its goblin characters. Topics of scholarly criticism have been varied, ranging from Freudian readings of repressed desire to critiques of commodification to ecological parable. New historicist critics have attempted to tie the poem to moments from Rossetti's personal history. All of these arguments are largely marked by their unwillingness to engage fully with the implications of the goblin men's animal bodies. Ashley Miller raises the goblins as animals only to immediately dismiss them: "[*Goblin Market*'s] natural world is peculiarly devoid of animals and insects. There are goblins, of course, but they are explicitly quasihuman; the poem is concerned with them as peddlers, not

92 Clayton Carlyle Tarr, "Covent Goblin Market." *Victorian Poetry* 40, no. 3, (Fall 2012): 298.

93 Alison Chapman, *The Afterlife of Christina Rossetti* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000): 140.

consumers."[94] Not only are the goblins represented as more animalistic than human by its earliest illustrators, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, but the goblins are *implicitly* interested in consumption.

One of the few scholars to engage with the goblins as animals, Heidi Scott notes that "Associated with [the goblins'] gross anatomy are all the correlatives of wild animals: they grunt, snarl, claw, bark, hiss, and soil in their displeasure. They hunt by a system of instinctual cooperation."[95] The thing they hunt or, in Miller's words, consume is Laura and Lizzie. Their consumption of the girls is not literal but sexual. This lack of engagement with animal bodies in current research is a huge gap. What would it mean to a Marxist reading to consider the goblin men as beasts, themselves commodified in the marketplace? What would it mean to a Freudian reading to consider the hidden valences of sex that seems to be largely bestial? What would it mean to consider Rossetti's animal characters as expressions of her documented interest in animals and humane causes? These are precisely the kind of questions that adapters seem to engage with most insistently.

If we view *adapters* as critics, we can see a *consistent* focus on representing the goblins as animals, an interpretive move largely ignored in scholarly criticism. Adaptations show us that three traits are replicated consistently: (1) the goblins are almost always depicted as animals, (2) those depictions almost always interpret the text as erotic, and (3) almost all adaptations seem to deliberately recognize the indeterminacy or the amorphous nature of the source text, especially in regards to whether we are meant to view the erotic animals as arousing or terrifying (or both). Since the ambiguity of Goblin Market *is* the primary feature that is adapted in literary criticism— the absence of signification itself adapted over and over again— any concrete

94 Miller, 148.

95 Heidi Scott, "Subversive Ecology in Rossetti's 'Goblin Market.'" *The Explicator* 65, no. 4, (2007): 220.

adapted traits that we can trace in illustrative or narrative adaptations offer the outline of an interpretive framework. In this case, the repeated reproduction of human-animal bodies in adaptations of *Goblin Market* indicate the discursive tension and rejection of the goblin men as purely destructive forces. Rather, the fusion of human and animal characteristics offers generative possibilities for understanding human desire as both all-consuming *and* regenerative.

This chapter will consider adaptation as interpretive criticism, offering new ways of considering texts that resist traditional hermeneutic analysis. In other words, adaptation opens a back door into understanding texts. For "Goblin Market," that back door opens into a conversation about animal appetites: the ways in which the consistent adaptation of erotic human-animal bodies points like flashing lights towards the thematic underpinnings of the text. First, I will consider how *Goblin Market* has been materially consumed in the marketplace: what have reviewer and publisher understandings of the original text done to shape our understanding of its animal characters. I will then consider illustrated adaptations of *Goblin Market* which represent the goblins animalistically, which I will demonstrate is a way of visualizing the evolution of the concept of sexual selection. Finally, I will move away from the visual and back toward the textual, looking at two long-form textual adaptations of *Goblin Market*: fanfiction writer ViciouslyWitty's *Labyrinth* (1986) and *Goblin Market* mash-up, *The Goblin Market* (2008-2013), and Rena Rossner's *The Sisters of the Winter Wood* (2018). Of particular interest to me is the genre-crossing nature of the poem in adaptation: among the adaptations I will be discussing, I will consider how each is inspired by or adapts to the genres of children's literature, pornography/erotica, fan fiction, and young adult (YA) literature and why sexuality and the animal body lend themselves to the crossing of those boundaries.[96]

96 Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, "Goblin Market as a Cross-Audienced Poem: Children's Fairy Tale, Adult Erotic Fantasy," *Children's Literature* 25, (1997): 181-204.

I. "Come Buy, Come Buy": Market Consumption and its Influence on *Goblin Market's* Indeterminate Animals

If we understand that the indeterminate nature of *Goblin Market* is centered on its eroticism, then we can begin to bridge the gap between critical interpretations of *Goblin Market* (which tend to ignore the animals within the text) and adaptational interpretations of *Goblin Market* (which do the opposite). Yet the eroticism of *Goblin Market's* animal characters needn't be interpreted as unilateral veiled attempts to represent bestiality; instead, we can see in early reviews an easy recognition of the poem's indeterminacy as a feature, not a bug. Early reviewers recognized an allegory at work in *Goblin Market,* which they understood to be erotic in nature, though they didn't necessarily consider such an allegory as taboo or transgressional. An April 1862 review in *The Athenaeum* acknowledges that the poem has multiple layers of meaning, depending on how deeply the reader might wish to delve into the poem, adding that it "has true dramatic character, life and picture for those who read it simply as a legend, while it has an inner meaning for all who can discern it."[97] While the reviewer does not state outright that one of the inner meanings of the poem is its erotic message, it is heavily implied that "those who can discern it" are those readers whose understanding of "animal appetites" are sophisticated enough to read beneath the poem's allegorical surface.

While this review sees the indeterminacy of *Goblin Market* as a selling point, other reviewers saw it as an unpleasant effect of sloppy writing; they find that the pleasurable experience of reading Rossetti's "very graceful and musical" poem ultimately sours due to its illusory moral.[98] In May 1862, *The Saturday Review* published a review stating that *Goblin*

97 "Review of Goblin Market and Other Poems," *The Athenaeum* 1800 (26 April 1862): 557.

98 "Review of Goblin Market and Other Poems," *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art* 13, no. 343 (24 May 1862): 595

Market is a story of too flimsy and insubstantial a character to justify or to bear the elaborate detail with which it is worked out. As it deduces a moral at the close in favour of sisterly affection, it may be presumed to be in some sense or other an allegory. But what the allegory is, or how far it runs upon all-fours with that of which it is the shadow, we cannot undertake to say."[99] In contrast to modern critics, this reviewer identifies the "inner meaning" of the poem as the shadow to the fleshy goblins and maids that form the real "meat" of the poem. Both are consumed and while the reviewers enjoyed Laura and Lizzie, as well as the proffered moral to the poem, the review takes issue with the fantastical goblins:

> A picture of which half is a photographically accurate representation of nature, and the other half a purely symbolical imagination worked with equal distinctness and detail, can never really be harmonious or satisfactory; and the same may be said of a story. The eye and ear equally like to know to what extent they are bound to believe what they see and hear, and what is the result of it all. The reader of *Goblin Market* may be carried on by the pleasant flow of sound and stream of imagery; but the real thought of the poem is a mere rope of sand, carrying no deeper consistency of meaning than the revelations from the unseen world interpreted now-a-days by a professional spirit medium.[100]

The reviewer here conflates the visual and the textual of the poem, referring to the poem as reflecting "a picture" of nature, which is both "photographically accurate" and surreal. This insistence here on the visual, on the marriage of "the eye and ear" is notable in that it sets a precedence for a deeply-imbedded connection between the visual imagery of the poem (including descriptions of the goblin men as animalistic) and the text of the poem itself. The reviewer here takes issue with the idea that *Goblin Market* asks its audience to believe in a world in which animalistic, presumably supernatural creatures take money from young women who seem to exist in a decidedly real world. This reviewer is stymied by the presence of the animalistic goblin men and its effect upon the moral of the poem. One assumes that if the men of

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99 "Review of Goblin Market," 595

100 "Review of Goblin Market," 595

the poem were human fruit sellers, most of the reviewer's concerns would be assuaged. The animals, it seems, are the problem.

The reason the animals are a problem may have something to do with the implied sexual nature of the poem itself. Early reviewers not only openly discussed the ambiguous nature of *Goblin Market,* they seemed distinctly aware that this ambiguity was centered around the erotic nature of the fruit and Laura and Lizzie's seduction and rejection of it. Caroline Norton, in an 1863 review, wrote

> Is it a fable— or a mere fairy story— or an allegory against the pleasures of sinful love— or what is it? Let us not too rigorously inquire, but accept it in all its quaint and pleasant mystery, and quick and musical rhythm— a ballad which children will con with delight. And which riper minds may ponder over, as we do with poems written in a foreign language which we only half understand.[101]

Norton, writing only one year after *Goblin Market's* original publication, proposes outright that the "inner meaning" of *Goblin Market,* what the allegory *is,* what the "real thought of the poem" is, might be an allegory condemning erotic love. Like the reviewers who came before her and the critics who came after, she avoids the complicated question of the animals, instead repeating the oft-echoed puzzle: "what is it?" Unspoken in all of these reviews, yet pertinent, is the question: if this allegory is about the rejection of sexual vice, then why are the men described as animalistic goblins? How are we to read the Laura's erotic enjoyment of their fruits? How are we to understand their physical violation of Lizzie? What are we to make of the exchange between Laura and Lizzie as one sister sucks and kisses the flesh of the other? To wit, the real tension in the poem is *why must the men be goblins and why must the goblins be animals*?

Yet the goblins *are* depicted as animals, not only in Christina Rossetti's poem and in Dante Gabriel Rossetti's original illustrations, but over and over again in adaptations, as an

101 Quoted in Victor Roman Mendoza, "'Come Buy': The Crossing of Sexual and Consumer Desire in Christina Rossetti's 'Goblin Market.'" *ELH* 73, no. 4, (Winter 2006): 915.

artistic and aesthetic choice but also as a consumer-driven one. The history of *Goblin Market* is one of consumer-driven considerations. In 1861, Alexander Macmillan, the publisher of *Goblin Market and Other Poems* wrote to Christina Rossetti with what Anthony Harrison calls "early market research": "I took the liberty of reading the *Goblin Market* aloud to a number of people belonging to a small working-man's society here. They seemed at first to wonder whether I was making fun of them; by degrees they got as still as death, and when I finished there was a tremendous burst of applause."[102] Chapman identifies this reception as an important moment in the work's history: "This performance is integral to the poem's position in criticism, for it performs its discursive indeterminacy upon the reader who is forced to partake in the poem's own act of interpretation, in the fruits of the poem's own reading."[103] Yet particularly in illustrated adaptations, there is another layer to this act of reading that cannot be captured in Macmillan's performance.

As animals are erotically reproduced in adaptations of *Goblin Market,* however, the reader's act of interpretation changes necessarily. Even as adaptations inform one another palimpsestically, they also are informed by their different environments. The process of adapting *Goblin Market,* then, involves continuous, dramatic reconstructions of sexuality through a modern lens. Modern adapters make the undertones of sexuality, which early reviewers could only hint at, a marketable feature of the text. Adapters even amplify sexuality when otherwise leaving the text and its early illustrations intact, as did Stonehill Publishing, when they produced a collector's edition of *Goblin Market* (1975) with illustrations by late-Victorian artist, Lawrence Housman.[104] This edition was prefaced with an introduction by Germaine Greer which Dolores

102 Quoted in Chapman, 137.

103 Chapman, 139.

104 Housman's illustrations were unchanged, except for the fact that they were printed in magenta ink.

Rosenblum identifies as an essay that laid the groundwork for popular critical interpretations of Christina Rossetti's poem as "the pathological progress of the Victorian spinster's unconscious through hysteria and masochism to this singular instance of sublimation."[105] The slipcase for the Stonehill collector's edition of *Goblin Market* mixes innocuous reviews ("A delight" according to the *Los Angeles Times*) with excerpts from the 1973 *Playboy* introduction to *Goblin Market* ("Born out of a storm of guilt and emotion... It is a lewd goblin that rises dripping out of the dark depths of the Victorian psyche.")[106] The tagline for the book, published prominently above these excerpts calls it "Christina Rossetti's haunting classic of repressed Victorian eroticism."[107] This description is in keeping with Greer's lengthy introduction, where she describes *Goblin Market* as "a deeply perverse poem, which will like Christina Rossetti herself keep its secret forever. It stirs in each reader the depths of half-remembered infantile experience only to baffle him by withholding the means of verbalizing and externalizing the memories that are printed on his flesh."[108] The entire Stonehill edition of *Goblin Market* is designed to lure readers with promises of lurid poetry. In the Stonehill edition of *Goblin Market,* we have yet another layer to the labyrinth of consumption of this text: marketing as adaptation (and, by association with Greer, critics as advertisers).

While Greer's introduction was read as a bold predecessor to subsequent discussions of *Goblin Market,* Greer joins other scholarly critics in her tentative unwillingness to identify within *Goblin Market* a *deliberate* invocation of the bestial erotic, instead referring to its erotic

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105 Dolores Rosenblum, *Christina Rossetti: The Poetry of Endurance*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986): 67

106 Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market*, Illustrated by Laurence Housman, Introduction by Germaine Greer (New York: Stonehill Publishing, 1975).

107 Rossetti, Stonehill Edition.

108 Germaine Greer in "Introduction," Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market*, Illustrated by Laurence Housman, Introduction by Germaine Greer (New York: Stonehill Publishing, 1975): xxxvi

undertones as unknowable "secrets" that "baffle" its readers; yet other illustrators and adapters are willing to make the eroticism explicit in the work, to show (not hint) at the interspecies sexuality in the text. The changing interpretations of sexuality and, particularly, *animal* sexuality, emphasized an embrace of animal appetites, rather than a rejection of it. In their playful treatment of the goblin animals *and* in their promotion of their transgressional sexuality, modern illustrators and adapters drew on post-Darwinian sexual selection to show that erotic desire could be naturalized in the text, rather than obscured. As social scientist W.I. Thomas asserted in 1907, "There is an element in sensibility not accounted for on the exploit or food side, and this element is, I believe, generally connected with sexual life…. On this account the means of attracting and interesting others are definitely and bountifully developed among all the higher species of animals."[109] The view of nature as "red in tooth and claw" cannot fully or even primarily account for human evolution, while our species drive to attract and retain mates *does* seem to be an enormous factor in the success of the human species. Or, as Kimberly A. Hamlin interprets this quote, "rather than a baneful animal remnant, sexual desire and attraction was actually what made us human."[110]

Greer's adaptation is interesting not only in its open eroticization of Rossetti's text but also in the way it follows a tradition of positioning *Goblin Market* as an art object with its "hungry, thirsty roots" firmly planted in its Victorian past. Adapters largely resolve the conflict between the animalistic goblins and the erotic nature of the text by doubling down on both the animalistic nature of the goblins and the erotic undertones of the poem, yet they also do so with an eye towards the commercial market. Especially in its illustrative history, *Goblin Market*'s

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109 Quoted in Kimberly A. Hamlin, "The Birds and the Bees: Darwin's Evolutionary Approach to Sexuality," *Darwin in Atlantic Cultures: Evolutionary Visions of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*, (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2009): 57.

110 Hamlin, 57

adapters self-consciously build on one another's attempts to provide visual representations of what "the eye and ear [...] are bound to believe," palimpsestically molding the hybrid goblin men and capitalizing on the poem's indeterminacy. Adapters use what Linda Hutcheon, based on the theories of French theorist Gérard Genette, calls the "palimpsestic" nature of adaptation in order to create interpretations of *Goblin Market* that provide hermeneutic closure in the discursive debate about the poem's erotic undertones.[111]

II. "You Should Not Peep at Goblin Men": Visualizing Sexual Selection in Adaptations of *Goblin Market*

George Gershinowitz's *Goblin Market* (1981) is an exemplar in understanding the hybrid nature of *Goblin Market* across its illustrative history. Like many of his predecessors, Gershinowitz draws on Pre-Raphaelite motifs and artistic techniques in his illustration, but most notably, he emphasizes the animalistic and erotic nature of the hybrid goblin men. His goblin men have the heads of animals, illustrated in a naturalistic style, with the bodies of nude, muscular men, often lounging seductively or animalistically stalking their prey (see Fig. 2.1). Gershinowitz's illustrations, produced as a collector's edition of the poem, following its commercial success and critical revival in the 1970s, is exceptional in its commonality with adaptations that had come before it: with few exceptions, illustrated editions of *Goblin Market* that acknowledge the poem's erotic undertones present the goblin men as animalistic.

111 Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd Edition, (London: Routledge Press, 2006): 139. For more on the inspiration behind Hutcheon's "palimpsestuous" theory, see Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

Figure 2.1: Illus. George Gershinowitz, *Goblin Market*, (Boston: David R. Godine, 1981): 30-31.

It is important to consider these erotic animal-men through a post-Darwinian sexological lens; that is, the erotic nature of sex, both in the source text and adaptations, cannot be divorced from the fact that one of Darwin's most groundbreaking theories: sexual selection. *Goblin Market* was originally written in 1859, the same year that Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was published; while Darwin would not fully explicate his theory of sexual selection until 1871 with his publication of *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex, Origin's* insistence that all animals had common ancestry was enough for many to speculate that reproduction, the driving force of evolution, was a base (animal) instinct. Christina Rossetti, like many other Victorian authors, would have had access to Darwin's ideas through vast networks of middle-

class publications, all of which were deeply engaged with Darwin's ideas, as well as through her association with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.[112] Through this lens, much of the ambiguity that surrounds the pleasure Laura finds in her encounters with the goblins can be understood as an extra-marital (and thus, uncivilized/bestial) desire to mate. By contrast, the pleasure found between Laura and Lizzie is elevated not only because of its relative social purity, but primarily because it sanitizes sexual desire through a sororal, homosocial, *human* relationship.

Yet post-Darwinian understandings of sex show us that Laura and Lizzie's sanitized sexual desire is also animal, because humans *are* animals. As Kimberly A. Hamlin notes, the history of sex owes a great debt to Darwinian evolution, which popularized the idea that human sexuality could be better understood through the observation of animal mating.[113] According to Hamlin, "the cornerstone of the Darwinian approach to sexuality was the suggestion that human romance was an evolved form of animal mating."[114] In *Goblin Market,* the goblins are driven by their unevolved sexual impulses, which Lizzie resists and to which Laura succumbs. Representing the goblins as animals is not only necessary for the sex to hold ghoulish undertones; it locates Laura and Lizzie on a Darwinian continuum of sexuality. For Christina Rossetti's characters, erotic love is wrong precisely *because* it is bestial, especially when understood as a mindless impulse to mate and spread genetic material.

Rossetti's poem, written by a deeply religious woman and before Darwin fully explicated his theories of sexual selection, provides a largely moralistic framework for understanding sex. Subsequent adapters are influenced by their own understandings of sex, which evolved rapidly

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112 Not only were the Pre-Raphaelites well-versed in the science of the day, Thomas Woolner brought the curve of the human ear, shared with other primates, to Darwin's attention. Darwin referred to it as the "Woolnerian tip" in *The Descent of Man* (1871).

113 Hamlin, 54.

114 Hamlin, 55.

after Darwin's publication of *The Descent of Man* in 1871. As the field of sexology developed, sexuality became a topic for both popular and scientific audiences to consume outside of religious or social dictums. After Darwin, "reproductive sex was natural and proceeded according to rational, knowable, scientific principles; it was not spiritual, sacred, or ordained by God."[115] Post-Darwinian adaptations of *Goblin Market* can no longer be solely driven by the presumption that animal urges are unsavory and unnatural. In fact, consumer-driven adaptations of *Goblin Market* are often built upon the opposite premise: that sex, far from being an animal urge to warn against or repress, sells.

Illustrated adaptations of *Goblin Market* tend to build upon Dante Gabriel Rossetti's original illustrations of the goblin-animal men, with an added complication: eroticism was viewed as naturalized and even, from a commercial standpoint, encouraged. Hamlin identifies this acceptance of animal urges as part of modern sexuality: "modern understandings of human sexuality are in many ways grounded in the acceptance of human-animal kinship."[116] Therefore, the taboo in the poem for modern adapters might reside more in the transgressive nature of human-animal sexual congress than it does in the idea that sexuality *itself* is transgressive. Similarly, human-human sex can be deeply regenerative in contrast to the terror of bestiality.

Early illustrators build not only an understanding of the goblin men as animalistic but also as erotic. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina's brother, was the first illustrator for *Goblin Market.* He engraved only two plates for the title poem, both of which appear as frontispieces for the work (see Fig. 2.2). The first illustration, "Buy from us with a golden curl," depicts the moment of Laura's fall to the seduction of the goblin men, who appear to be depicted as large (for their respective species), bipedal animals wearing clothes. In the illustration, Laura gazes

115 Hamlin, 56.

116 Hamlin, 53.

longingly at the cat-faced goblin (not, seemingly, his fruit) while his closed-eyed face is ecstatically turned toward hers. Dante Gabriel's illustrations draw upon Christina's description of the goblin men as animals:

> One had a cat's face,
> One whisk'd a tail,
> One tramp'd at a rat's pace,
> One crawl'd like a snail,
> One like a wombat prowl'd obtuse and furry,
> One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.[117]

Though these descriptions could easily be allegorical (after all, Laura is described in the next stanza as being 'like a swan,' among other things, yet is drawn as a human), Dante Gabriel draws them naturalistically. Like all of Dante Gabriel's art, the illustrations for Goblin Market are intended to be read symbolically. The cat of the frontispiece offers up forbidden fruit, his tail mimicking the serpent of Eden, but it was also— "for Dante Gabriel was fond of mixing the sexual and the spiritual— a visual pun on *penis,* the Latin root for both the tail and the phallus."[118] Kooistra's reading of Dante Gabriel's symbolism shows that even the original illustration understood the animals to be erotic in nature, a feature that would be highlighted in its subsequent adaptations, as well.

117Christina Rossetti, "Goblin Market," *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 7th Edition, Ed. M.H. Abrams and Stephen Greenblatt, Volume B, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001): 2140.

118 Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, *Christina Rossetti and Illustration: A Publishing History,* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2002): 72

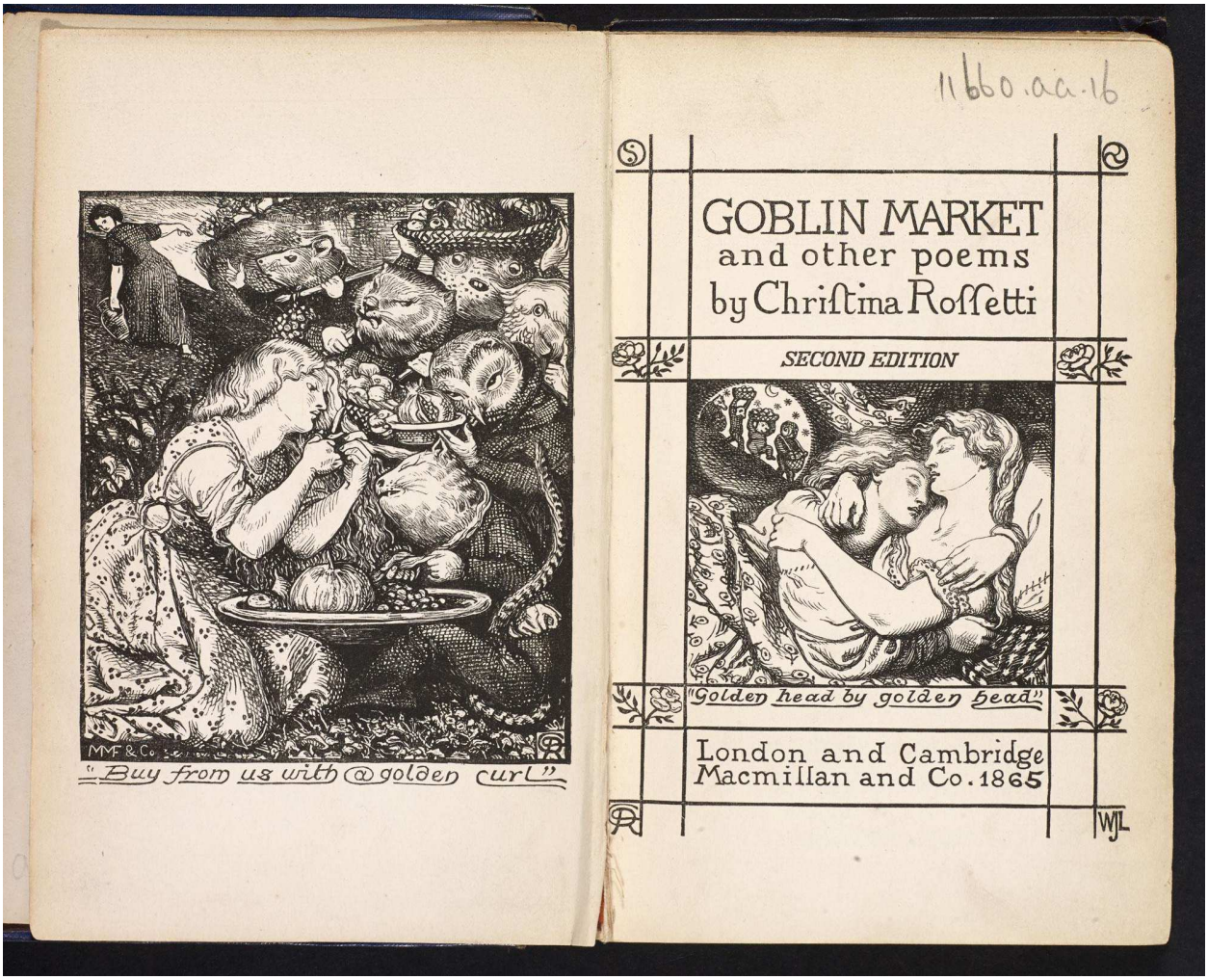

Figure 2.2: Illus. Dante Gabriel Rossetti,Frontispiece to *Goblin Market and Other Poems,* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1865).

Dante Gabriel's illustrations of the goblin men as animals were incredibly influential on subsequent adaptations, even when adapters were not consciously mimicking his art. Linda Hutcheon describes adaptation as a palimpsestuous process:

> adaptation *as adaptation* involves, for its knowing audience, an interpretive doubling, a conceptual flipping back and forth between the work we know and the work we are experiencing. As if this were not complex enough, the context in which we experience the adaptation— cultural, social, historical— is another important factor in the meaning and significance we grant to this ubiquitous palimpsestic form.[119]

119Hutcheon, 139

This description of adaptation as palimpsestic is useful for understanding the illustration history of *Goblin Market,* because adaptations were not only flipping back and forth between "the work we know and the work we are experiencing," but many of the works in between, which themselves found influence from multiple nodes on this adaptive network. Artists like Gershinowitz were no doubt influenced by Dante Gabriel's art, but they were also influenced by Pre-Raphaelite imitators like Laurence Housman and Arthur Rackham and erotic reimaginers like Kinuko Craft.

The poem's most-reproduced illustrator, Laurence Housman, initially attempted to alter the animalistic subtext of Dante Gabriel's illustrations, removing the question of the animal entirely from the poem's erotic subtext. In 1893, when Lawrence Housman requested permission to reproduce *Goblin Market* with new illustrations, Christina Rossetti initially refused to grant her approval to him, because he had drawn his goblins as humans wearing animal masks. According to Housman:

> I have imagined the goblins wearing animal masks in order to hide the wickedness that their own faces would reveal; this will give me the opportunity of a dramatic climax when in the poem they are finally defeated by Lizzie. I propose then to show them throwing aside their masks as they make their escape. I hope Miss Rossetti will not think this idea is in any disagreement with the spirit of her poem.[120]

Housman, like many later critics and adapters, saw an opportunity to make the sexual seduction and subsequent assault of the goblins less bestial and, consequently, less allegorical. Yet Rossetti disagreed with this choice, instead directing Housman to refer to her brother's original illustrations of the goblins as explicitly animal. George Macmillan was obliged to write to Housman with Christina's objections:

> She cannot bring herself to sanction the "masks" which you introduce in your treatment of the goblins. "They might," Miss Rossetti writes, "illustrate some better poem, but mine

120 Quoted in Kooistra, *Christina Rosseti and Illustration*, 85.

> they falsify. Would not a study of my goblins as they stand supply an adequate variety and versatility of expressions, a roguishness easily transformable into atrocity?" She then refers to her brother's original frontispiece.[121]

Eager to please Christina Rossetti, Housman agreed. If successful, it is possible that Housman's phantom adaptation might have influenced all subsequent adaptations to provide a more literal and less transgressive interpretation of the animalistic goblin men.[122] Instead, adapters like Arthur Rackham continued to palimpsestically reproduce Dante Gabriel and Housman's animal goblins.

Even explicitly pornographic illustrations, like those of Kinuko Craft for the September 1973 *Playboy,* built palimpsestically upon previous art. *Goblin Market* is a fruitful venue for straddling the line between high and low culture, between children's literature and erotic parable, which creates endless possibilities for erotic/pornographic adapters. Craft chose to base her illustrative style for *Playboy* on Arthur Rackham's illustrations (1933). Rackham is known as one of the most prominent illustrators of children's literature of the twentieth century.[123] In her illustration for "White and gold Lizzie stood," Craft exposes Lizzie's body by having the goblins rip away her dress. The fruits that spill abundantly from the corners of the page and are pressed against Lizzie's body take the shape of penises and vaginas. Yet the composition in the illustrations is markedly similar to Rackham's (see Fig. 2.3). Rackham's association with children's literature meant that his successful illustration of *Goblin Market* was "a publishing landmark that has perhaps had more influence on the poem's assessment as children's literature

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121 Quoted in Kooistra, *Christina Rosseti and Illustration*, 85.

122 "Phantom adaptation" is a phrase developed by Simone Murray and later used by Kyle Meikle to describe adaptations that entered some stage of creative development but were later scrapped or otherwise not brought to public attention.

123 Though Rackham primarily adapted children's literature, his books were prestige items, largely bought by adult collectors. However, in reprints, Rackham and Housman stand above all other illustrators as the most frequently reproduced adapters.

than any other single work."[124] Though the poem had been anthologized as children's literature for years, its association with Rackham, who was known for his deliberately old-fashioned Pre-Raphaelite style, retroactively associated it with the Victorians, as well. Thus, Craft's choice to model her illustrations on Rackham's meant that she also chose to associate with its juvenile, Victorian audience. Craft had other obvious options— Housman was more popularly reproduced and Rossetti was the original illustrator— but she chose to associate with an artist who invoked a juvenile, old-fashioned (ostensibly repressed, according to the *Playboy* introduction) audience. Craft's illustration is markedly darker than Rackham's, in both color scheme and in its depictions of the goblins, who are more plentiful and even more animalistic than Rackham's. Her goblin-men are as hybrid as *Playboy* itself, straddling as they do the playful invocation of children's literature alongside the transgressive bestiality they illustrate.

Figure 2.3: (Left): Illus. Arthur Rackham, *Goblin Market,* (London: George G. Harrap and Co., 1933): 36.
(Right): Illus. Kinuko Craft, *Goblin Market: Ribald Classic,* Playboy 20, no. 9 (1973): 116.

124 Kooistra, *Christina Rossetti and Illustration*, 207.

Craft builds upon Rackham's animal goblins, but her illustrations and the introduction for *Goblin Market* in *Playboy* also rely upon a retroactive inscription of repressed Victorian sexuality upon the poem, sensationalizing the supposed long history of taboo around the poem. Craft's large, elaborate pictorial initial and idyllic illustrations seem very reminiscent of nineteenth-century illustrated books. A closer look, however, reveals that the goblin-animals who make up the initial are slavering over two maids in the garden, literally drooling in their desire to (sexually) consume Laura and Lizzie (see Fig. 2.4). The introduction describes the poem as the "all-time hard-core pornographic classic for tiny tots" and invites readers to "take a couple of tranquilizers and have a look at what the kids have been reading for the past 114 years."[125] Though the illustrations for this spread, with their animalistic goblins who poke and prod at Laura and Lizzie with a smorgasbord of penis- and vagina-shaped fruit, may seem like a perverse re-imagining of the tale, Craft's illustration are just one in a long line of interpretations that picture *Goblin Market* as a site of dynamic sexual encounters. This salacious interpretation of sexual selection as erotic (for the reader, not just Laura) rather than simply horrific is one that could *only* occur for the average reader in a post-Darwinian framework. Yet the inscription of eroticism that Craft imagines with her illustrations also retroactively changes the audience's understandings of Rackham's work, as well.

125 Kinuko Craft, "Goblin Market," *Playboy Magazine* (Sept. 1973): 115.

Figure 2.4: Illus. Kinuko Craft, *Goblin Market: Ribald Classic,* Playboy 20, no. 9 (1973): 115.

While *Playboy's* raison d'etre is presumably the commercialization of sexual desire, the introduction for Craft's Ribald Classics poem follows the critical tradition of struggling with the ambiguity of the piece and what it might have to say about sex. They attempt, on one hand, to pin the themes of sex on Rossetti's "guilt" over a possible, unsubstantiated sexual encounter with Walter Bell Scott, an artist and intimate friend of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's. "The lurid sexual fantasies that raged in Miss Rossetti's unconscious," as the introduction claims, found their expression in *Goblin Market*. Yet this fetishization of the poem's inception, which "will always remain veiled by Victorian reticence" benefits from the ambiguity of the poem and from misconceptions about Victorian sensibilities about sex and sexuality.[126] Indeed, the most outrageous claim in the introduction may not be the suggestion that children have been reading the poem for the pleasure of its sexual undertones, but instead the proposal that "how really sinister and scary it is, given just a Freudian glance, has never been openly discussed."[127] The most frightening thing in the poem—its animals, which Craft carefully reproduces slavering,

126 "Introduction to Goblin Market," Illus. Kinuko Craft, *Playboy Magazine* (Sept. 1973): 115.

127 "Introduction to Goblin Market," Illus. Kinuko Craft, *Playboy Magazine* (Sept. 1973): 115.

drooling, poking, prodding, and generally *assaulting* the human women— are given almost no critical attention in the introduction. Indeed, the *Playboy* introduction suggests that it is the idea that Victorians thought about sex at all, rather than that they thought about sex with animals, that is most scandalous.

Playboy reproduces *Goblin Market* as "a poem for children," but actual adaptations of *Goblin Market* for children have necessarily been forced with a tough decision that again highlights the centrality of the goblins' animal bodies: either remove any hint of sex or remove any representation of the goblins as animals. The majority of *Goblin Market*'s readership since its publication in 1862 has been adult, a measure far more in keeping with its erotic undertones. Illustration and children's literature did not go hand in hand in the Victorian period. Christina Rossetti was not even adapted for an explicitly juvenile audience until the twentieth century: "Recast in a new bibliographic context, sometimes truncated, translated into prose, or retitled, almost always accompanied by pictures, Rossetti's poetry was reformulated for successive generations of children."[128] Far from disappearing in subsequent adaptations, our evolving understanding of sexuality deeply influenced future adaptations and their treatment of the animal men, especially as it was repackaged for children. Early anthologized appearances of *Goblin Market* for children tended to water down the bestial nature of the erotic undertones by shortening the poem and depicting the goblins as small human men.

Many children's anthologies preserved the moralistic message about sex while removing the bestial undertones; however, Ellen Raskin's *Goblin Market* (1970) preserves Dante Gabriel's animal creatures even as it sanitizes any allusions to death or sexuality (see Fig. 2.5). According to Raskin, the original poem was "too long for the contemporary reader and contained too many

128 Kooistra, *Christina Rossetti and Illustration*, 193

outdated Victorian proprieties" and was thus shortened.[129] Raskin avoids mention of sexuality in the poem, even from a moralizing standpoint. Yet Raskin's "greatest enjoyment was drawing the goblins. They had always been drawn as frightening creatures. I tried to make them appealing (rendering Laura's temptation more plausible) while still complying to Christina's descriptions."[130] The censorship of erotic undertones here go hand-in-hand with Raskin's stated desire to be faithful to the Pre-Raphaelite vision of the goblins as animals, for it reveals the underlying tension in the poem: if the goblins appear as animals, the poem retains terrifying undertones of bestiality. If the goblins appear as humans, as they do in textbook anthologies for children, any sexual undertones may remain in the poem as a straightforward moral tale for pubescent young adults. Raskin, desiring fidelity to the adapted text, must have animals and must also eschew bestiality, so she is left with the task of sanitizing the text, removing its allusions to erotic love and death. [131]

129 Ironically, Raskin's omissions of sex and death reveal a far more repressed sensibility.

130 Ellen Raskin, "Afterword," *Goblin Market*, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1970): 32.

131 Poor Jeanie who "for joy brides hope to have/fell sick and died" after her encounter with the Goblin Men is excised entirely; Raskin identifies this plot as a "minor theme," though many critics feel that it is crucial to solidifying our understanding of the goblin's pleasurable encounters as ultimately fatal. Raskin is not the only artist to completely disregard Jeanie's plot. Almost every adaptation of Goblin Market removes Jeanie from consideration as a focal point for illustration. It could be argued that Raskin's disregard for Jeanie is simply another hinge point in the adaptation network.

Figure 2.5: Illus. Ellen Raskin, Goblin Market, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1970): 23.

Raskin's avoidance of sexuality in *Goblin Market* is the exception that proves the rule: most modern illustrated adaptations of *Goblin Marke*t focus— even celebrate— the animal appetites of the poem. For example, Craft's art for *Playboy* stands in stark opposition to Raskin's edition, published just three years earlier. Yet both Raskin and Craft's illustrations play with the cross-genre nature of the poem, the way in which the hybrid form mirrors its hybrid-goblin subjects, straddling the line between children's literature and Pre-Raphaelite art project, for Raskin and between pornography and children's literature for Craft. As Emily Bernhard-Jackson has noted, "[*Goblin Market*'s] form enacts what the narrative extolls."[132] Just as the goblins are hybridic in nature, so are many adaptations. Craft's illustrations and their appearance in *Playboy,*

132 Emily Bernhard-Jackson,"'Like Two Pigeons in One Nest, Like Two Seedlings in One Capsule': Reading Goblin Market in Conjunction with Victorian Twin Discourse," *Victorian Poetry* 55, no. 4, (Winter 2017): 467

acknowledge the hybrid nature of the magazine itself. Sold as a gentleman's magazine that defined its "target audience as male, worldly, sophisticated, liberal, and enlightened," *Playboy* was an experiment in the juxtaposition of high and low culture: centerfolds on one hand and publications by high-profile literary and journalistic figures on the other.[133] In this way, the Ribald Classics series, which published and illustrated (supposedly) lewd fiction by classic Western authors like Mark Twain and Boccaccio, was a synecdoche for the publication as a whole, which sought to present itself as a magazine exhibiting high culture to an upper class audience. *Goblin Market*, then, with its associations with both "high" art and children's literature, was an appropriate choice for the publication to adapt.

It is important to note, however, that erotic adapters like Kinuko Craft and John Bolton (1973) do not adapt eroticism as a solely interspecies act, but also as a human, homoerotic one. Part of the confusion with the moral that *Goblin Market* seems to support —that erotic love is dangerous—is undermined by Laura and Lizzie's erotic encounter at the culmination of the poem. As Marylu Hill states, "The amazing quality of Goblin Market is that it allows the seemingly contradictory forces of sexuality and spirituality to co-exist in a mutually beneficial manner."[134] The most idyllic erotic encounter in both adaptations is between Laura and Lizzie. Bolton's *Goblin Market* (1984), published by Pacific Comics, particularly represents Lizzie's assault as sexual in nature. As in Craft's illustration of *Goblin Market,* Bolton's animalistic goblins tear at Lizzie's dress, so that her return home is semi-nude. Bolton reproduces the scene of Laura's salvation as an erotic encounter (see Fig. 2.6). Laura hovers over Lizzie in response to her invitation to "hug me, kiss me, suck my juices." With her tongue exposed and Lizzie's face

133 Amber Batura, "The Playboy Way," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 22, no. 3 (September 2015): 224.

134 Marylu Hill, "'Eat Me, Drink Me, Love Me': Eucharist and the Erotic Body in Christina Rossetti's Goblin Market," *Victorian Poetry* 43, no. 4, (Winter 2005): 470.

turned up towards Laura's, they embrace. In Bolton's adaptation, Laura becomes animalistic as she consumes Laura. Hill interprets this scene in the adapted poem as a religious allegory—"since Laura fell through the agency of eating, she can only be saved by another act of eating"—but the act of eating has not only religious parallels, but animalistic ones, as well.[135] Conspicuously absent in these scenes, especially compared to other panels, are the animalistic bodies of the goblin men. Though human, by embracing their animal urges, Laura and Lizzie no longer have need for the animals.

Figure 2.6: Illus. John Bolton, *Goblin Market, Pathways to Fantasy* 1.1, (1January 1984).

Like Bolton, Craft also illustrates this encounter between Laura and Lizzie as homoerotic (see Fig. 2.7). Many scholars have written about this exchange between Laura and Lizzie as a revelation of Christina Rossetti's repressed queer desires and/or as a moment of triumphant feminism. However, few scholars have viewed this scene in direct contrast with the goblin men as animals. According to Kathleen Anderson and Hannah Thulberry, "The only time nature is poisonous against womankind is when the men make it so. Otherwise, it acts as a refreshing

135 Hill, 462-463.

force that mysteriously aids Laura, thus pinpointing the idea that nature supports women rather than men."[136] Though this interpretation reads the goblins as primarily men, they are at least equally animals, and the text invites us to view them as such. Therefore, we can read nature as being poisonous not against women, particularly, but against humans and it is the animals of the text who make it so. What about Laura and Lizzie's encounter makes it particularly acceptable in relation to the pleasurable sexual encounter Laura had with the goblin men? Why are homoerotic desires between women seen as redemptive and erotic, when they were primarily viewed as taboo during the 1970s and 1980s? How do illustrators contribute to this interpretation? Craft and Bolton both imply that Laura and Lizzie's sexual encounter is idyllic not just because of its homosocial undertones, but also because of its embrace of human erotic love.

Figure 2.7: (Left): Illus. Kinuko Craft, *Goblin Market: Ribald Classic,* Playboy 20, no. 9 (1973): 118.
(Right): Illus. John Bolton, *Goblin Market, Pathways to Fantasy* 1.1, (1January 1984).

Though much of the eroticism of this encounter can be attributed to the fetishization of lesbian relationships for the male gaze, the illustrators of these texts are also presenting Laura and Lizzie's sexual encounter in direct opposition to Laura and Lizzie's encounters with the goblin men. The visual contrast between bestial, polyamorous orgies contrasts to the idyllic,

136 Anderson and Thulberry, 73.

almost pastoral love between Laura and Lizzie (Fig. 2.7). Therefore, sexual desire is not only acceptable between women, but it is particularly acceptable because it is between *human* women in contrast to *animal* men. According to Sharon Marcus, homosocial love between women, even erotic love, was not necessarily taboo during the nineteenth century. Lizzie's invitation to "eat me, drink me, love me" were less homoerotic to Victorian readers than to modern readers: "The fact that the speaker of these lines is a woman addressing her sister did not faze Victorian readers…. In British [sapphic literature], a woman's emotional and sensual connection to another woman helped unite her to a beloved husband."[137] The sexual undertones of Laura and Lizzie's relationship, then, are presented as an appropriate erotic outlet in contrast to the *bestial, animal* love of the goblins, which is pleasurable for Laura but also deeply transgressive. Adapters, understanding perhaps not necessarily Marcus's theories about the acceptability of homosocial love in Victorian culture, but understanding that this moment is the most openly erotic encounter in the text, emphasize Laura and Lizzie's sex as a regenerative alternative to the bestial love of the goblins.

III. "Like Two Pigeons in One Nest": Hybridity in Textual Adaptations

In Jim Henson's *Labyrinth* (1986), a young woman eats a cursed peach and enters into an adolescent romantic fantasy about a goblin king. In her dream, she dances with the goblin king while people in animal and goblin masks crowd them on all sides. Claustrophobically breaking free from the press of grasping bodies, Sarah rejects the fantasy, allowing her to continue her navigation of the eponymous labyrinth. Though Henson has never stated that he was inspired by Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (1862), the fruit, goblins, and confused, ambiguous eroticism

137 Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007): 15

between Sarah (Jennifer Connelly) and Jareth (David Bowie) were sufficient to inspire ViciouslyWitty, a fanfiction adapter. Between October 2008 and March 2013, ViciouslyWitty published *The Goblin Market,* a mash-up of *Labyrinth* and Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market,* in thirty-eight installments, which ViciouslyWitty describes as "the most reviewed and most faved story in its fandom on FF [Fanfiction.net]."[138] The fan fiction takes place eight years after the events of Henson's *Labyrinth* and invokes the conflicted eroticism of both *Labyrinth* and Rossetti's poem as Sarah navigates Jareth's seduction as an adult.

Yet I am most interested in how ViciouslyWitty imagines the idea of the goblin king's eroticism as being animalistic. While animals have often been associated with children's literature, they have also long been associated with "base" sexual emotion. The word *carnal* with its Latin roots in ideas of the flesh also lends its root to words that invoke animal or consumptive imagery, like *carnivore* and *carnage.* As Carol J. Adams notes in *The Pornography of Meat*: "For many centuries negative attitudes toward sexuality have been expressed by viewing sex as something that resulted from one's base instincts, that is, as something that reduced a human being to an animal."[139] This attitude, not always viewed negatively, has become a common trope of erotic literature. For example, characters overcome with sexual emotion in ViciouslyWitty's fan fiction, *Goblin Market,* are identified in the following animalistic ways: "instinctual," "growling," "wild," "feral," "minx," "mane" instead of hair, "hissed," "snarling," "beast," "prey," "claws" instead of nails, "feral," and "purring," among other descriptions[140] .

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138 ViciouslyWitty, "Viciously Witty," FanFiction, 30 April 2019, https://www.fanfiction.net/u/324305/Viciously-Witty

139 Carol J. Adams, *The Pornography of Meat* (New York: Lantern Books, 2015): 44

140 This is an interesting opportunity for potential publication, because while these examples are actually common tropes of erotic literature, I have yet to find any articles on the intersection of contemporary erotica and animal studies, except for a brief mention in Aidan J. Byrne and Samantha Fleming, "Sex Sells (Out): Neoliberalism and Erotic Fan Fiction," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 51 (2014): 693-715. However, there are some interesting articles about the erotic use of animals in literature and culture, including Rishika Mehrishi, "Sinner Scorpions and

ViciouslyWitty's adult Sarah consumes fruit and flesh just as she is sexually consumed by Jareth, exploring the erotic nature of playing both predator and prey. Throughout her fanfiction, ViciouslyWitty draws upon the imagery and plot of Rossetti's *Goblin Market* to make explicit the connections between animalistic desire and human sexuality. Though she does so in the genre of fanfiction, she joins a long history of adapters who have also made these connections explicit.[141]

While a fan fiction adaptation, published on FanFiction.net, might seem to be at the extreme low end of the spectrum between "high" and "low" art, it performs a similar kind of interpretive work as scholarly discussions of Rossetti's *Goblin Market.* Adaptation (especially fanfiction), like criticism, engages deeply with hermeneutic interpretation as it revisits the adapted text. In "Adaptation, Extension, Transmedia," Henry Jenkins argues that fan fiction *necessarily* grounds itself in analysis of the adapted work in order to justify extensions or alterations to the "original": "In that sense, we can understand fan fiction as a kind of critical argument through creative storytelling, one that cites a variety of textual evidence in order to explain and justify its extension of the original."[142] Indeed, all adaptation, not just fan fiction, works to interpret and explain (through creative means) the work it adapts. When ViciouslyWitty chooses, for example, to eroticize or animalize Rossetti's *Goblin Market,* she follows in the

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Erotic Women: Interspecies Imaginaries in Indian Song-and-Dance Sequences," *Theatre Journal* 71, no. 3 (2019): 289-306. doi:10.1353/tj.2019.0082 and Patricia Lurati, "'To Dust the Pelisse': The Erotic Side of Fur in Italian Renaissance Art," *Renaissance Studies* 31 (2017): 240-260.

141 According to Francesca Coppa, among many others in the burgeoning field of fan fiction studies, fan fiction very much follows the rules of other folk traditions, eschewing capitalist gains in favor of the opportunity to belong to a long adaptational creative tradition: "[E]ngagement with the community is crucial; fanfiction is not just any continuation or interpretation of a story, but one that happens within, because of, and for a particular community" (9). For more, see: *The Fanfiction Reader*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017).

142 Henry Jenkins, "Adaptation, Extension, Transmedia." *Literature/Film Quarterly* 45, no. 2, (2017), https://lfq.salisbury.edu/_issues/first/adaptation_extension_transmedia.html.

footsteps of not only other adapters, but also numerous scholarly authors who propose erotic interpretations of Rossetti's poem.

While the vast majority of *Goblin Market* adaptations have been visual—illustrated editions, stained glass, and stage productions dominate the long list of adaptations— there are long-form textual adaptations that attempt to expand the story of Rossetti's *Goblin Market.* Rena Rossner's *The Sisters of the Winter Wood* (2018) is one such novel adaptation that sets *Goblin Market* in the *shtetl* of Dubossary, on the border between modern-day Ukraine and Moldova. Like ViciouslyWitty's mash-up of *Labyrinth* and *Goblin Market,* Rossner's novel is a hybrid itself: part true story, part Eastern European folktale, and part, of course, *Goblin Market.* Yet the dominant narrative is Rossetti's, which was the impetus for Rossner's novel:

> I originally set out to write a fairy tale retelling of Goblin Market, and because the two novels I'd written previously hadn't found a publishing home, I was determined to write in a different genre this time—fantasy—and to write a book that wasn't overtly Jewish. But when I finished writing the first draft, I realized that my book didn't have a soul. It felt flat, uninspired. I had originally set it in an imaginary town called Blest, in France, but I realized that I needed to find a new setting, something that felt more real—authentic to who I was.[143]

In Rossner's retelling, two sisters, Liba and Laya learn that they are the descendants of shape-shifters. Liba will one day be able to turn into a bear and Laya will transform into a swan. The cover for the book amplifies the importance of their animal natures, depicting the two girls in their animal forms, surrounded by vines bearing various fruits. This heritage has added complications, however: they are both expected to carry on their special abilities by marrying people with their respective powers to shape-shift. When the sisters' parents are called away to care for an ailing parent, Liba and Laya both struggle with their attraction. Liba falls in love with the butcher boy, who arouses erotic desires alongside her hunger for his kosher meats. Laya,

143Ilana C Myer, "The Goblin Market Reimagined: Rena Rossner Discusses Her Magical Debut The Sisters of the Winter Wood," Barnes and Noble, 26 September 2018, https://www.barnesandnoble.com/blog/sci-fi-fantasy/the-goblin-market-reimagined-rena-rossner-discusses-her-magical-debut-the-sisters-of-the-winter-wood/

however, is dangerously, obsessively attracted to Fedir, part of a band of non-Jewish fruit-selling merchants. In *The Sisters of the Winter Wood,* sexual agency for humans is most empowering when the characters embrace their animality fully.

The Sisters of the Winter Wood differs from most illustrated adaptations by presenting the goblin men largely in human form; like Raskin's goblins, they are made visually "appealing" to the sisters. Laya's fall to Fedir is always precipitated, however, by references to his animality as a sexual characteristic, rather than a physical one, such as when Laya is seduced by Fedir: "*Good girl,* he purrs/ and something about/the sound of it/spreads warmth/from my stomach/down to my toes."[144] While other goblins are described as rat- or weasel-like, Fedir is always described in terms of a cat: "*He's like a cat/watching a mouse,/* I think. But then/ his lips touch mine/and everything around us/disappears."[145] For Laya, the erotic animality that Fedir displays when he is aroused is appealing in turn. Rather than recognizing his animality as a negative, predatory characteristic, it is part of his charm. Laya confuses his strong predatory instincts with the strong animalistic desire associated with arousal in adaptations of *Goblin Market*.

Since both Laya and Liba are shape-shifting hybrids themselves, the goblin men are not only associated with animal nature, but with *supernatural* nature. Mami, Laya and Liba's mother, warns the girls at the beginning of the novel that there are unnatural animals in the forest, a warning so cryptic that it proves relatively useless: "There are creatures stalking the woods just waiting for a chance to strike at the hearts of men. I hear rumors when I walk in the forest, echoes in the woods, from birds and other creatures." [146] The insistent use of the word "creatures" to describe the goblin men puts them in a separate category from the hybrid animal

144 Rena Rossner, *The Sisters of the Winter Wood*, (New York: Redhook Books, 2018): 132.

145 Rossner, 174

146 Rossner, 42.

girls, though other adaptations of *Goblin Market* would suggest that they are relatively similar. In a conversation with Laya, Liba suggests that the goblin men don't deserve to be categorized as human, despite their ostensibly human appearance, something that Laya identifies as religious prejudice:

> "Honestly I don't know why you have such a problem with me talking to the fruit sellers—are you convinced they'll cheat me because they're not Jewish? They're human beings too, just like we—"
> "Don't be so sure," I cut her off."[147]

Most of Liba's early fears about the goblin men are centered around her desire to protect her fifteen-year old sister from a premarital relationship that she believes her strict Jewish father would not approve of. However, as the goblin men begin killing non-Jewish people in their *shtetl,* the prejudice is reversed: the goyishe residents of Dubossary begin to suspect their Jewish neighbors of the murders and a *pogrom,* or ethnic cleansing, is organized at the conclusion of the book. When Liba's love interest, Dovid, comes to warn her of the *pogrom,* he sees her as a bear and tries to shoot her, leading Liba to wonder whether all men are animals at their core. Another bear-man says to her: "He is a hunter, *yingele,* or did you not know that? All men are beasts inside. Some just show it differently than others." [148] In this retelling, then, all of the characters are animals, to some extent or another, not just the goblin men. This reinforces the dominant theme of *Goblin Market:* that it is our urges, or feelings, that are animalistic.

Yet to be animalistic is not necessarily negative; it is only by embracing their animal selves fully, after all, that Laya and Liba are most empowered. For both girls, the process of embracing their transformed animal selves is precipitated by their erotic, animalistic urges. For Liba, this process is not a metaphor. In the early days of her attraction to Dovid, she struggles to

147 Rossner, 137.

148 Rossner, 373.

tell whether her feelings for him are sexual or predatory: "I open my mouth because I want to tell him how beautiful his cheeks look when they're flushed like that, so beautiful I want to lick them, but I realize what I'm thinking and I shut my mouth in horror and close my eyes so as not to look at him anymore. *Am I attracted to him? Or do I just want to eat him?"*[149] Liba, who will transform into a bear, learns that her confused feelings might actually be precipitating her first change. Ruven, another bear person tells her that the first change usually coincides with strong sexual feelings: "Well, sometimes it's with your first kiss. Other times it doesn't happen until… your first, erm… *shtup*?"[150] Liba, who is deeply religious, feels ashamed of her erotic feelings for Dovid. At one point, Laya even wonders if Liba, who warns her so strictly about the handsome goblin men is a "different species entirely."[151] Yet Liba is not as pure and chaste as Lizzie. Like Lizzie, she warns her sisters about the goblin men; unlike Lizzie, she explores her own socially inappropriate feelings with Dovid while trying to suppress her more literal animal urges.

Ultimately, however, Liba is only able to save her sister from the goblin men when she embraces her own animality, both within her relationship with Dovid and outside of it. The culminating scenes of the book require both Laya and Liba to transform into animals. While this saves Laya from her fate, it also complicates their romantic lives. Liba feels an obligation to carry out her father's lineage by marrying another bear hybrid. Laya, meanwhile, realizes that she is betrothed to a swan hybrid. Yet when Liba reveals herself to Dovid, he embraces her animality fully. For him, as for Liba, the animal urges of sex are fully intertwined with the human social norm of marriage; when he says she makes him feel wild, Liba laughs "Because I

149 Rossner, 119

150 Rossner, 174

151 Rossner, 105

am wild. I am a beast. And maybe, just maybe, Dovid could be okay with that."[152] Indeed, Dovid does embrace Liba's bear-hybrid self. Like other adaptations of *Goblin Market, The Sisters of the Winter Wood* suggests that embracing one's animal urges is a fundamentally human act.

Though both the fan fiction *The Goblin Market* and novel *The Sisters of the Winter Wood* are long-form textual adaptations, they are both influenced by a long tradition of illustrative adaptations that conflate the ideas of animality, hybridity, and sexuality. Hutcheon's theory of the palimpsest is demonstrated here in the mingling of critical and adaptational understandings of the animal and sexual nature of the text. Not only does taking our scholarly cues from adaptation reflect a keen awareness of what matters within a culture at a given time (or across a given time, as is the case here), consistent enough adaptational changes within a text are indeed necessary to our understanding of a text. In this chapter, I examine how one consistent replication amongst adaptations can highlight important blind spots in scholarly criticism. In the next chapter, I will examine how one single *addition* to a culture-text can fundamentally alter the trajectory of a narrative.

152 Rossner, 280

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Chapter Three: Exotic Animals, Sympathetic Women, and Animal Experimentation in Adaptations of H.G. Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau*

In 1896, P. Chalmers Mitchell wrote a review of H.G. Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau,* disparaging the body horror of the novel: "It is the blood that Mr. Wells insists upon forcing on us [...] physically disgusting details inevitable in the most conservative surgery; but still more unworthy of restrained art."[153] Mitchell's repulsion identifies *The Island of Dr. Moreau*'s explicit focus on biology, physicality, and the limits of minds and bodies. Deeply fascinated with science, H.G. Wells developed a narrative which accurately reflected the ethical concerns that science and society would grapple with over the coming century into the present day. Twentieth-century film adaptations and twenty-first century Young Adult (YA) literary adaptations of Wells's 1896 tale offer salient evolutions of these concerns about the ethics of the body in science. While Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* has been adapted into other genres (most notably in the graphic novel format), these two mediums track a clear evolution from the page to the stage and back to the page with the repeated insertion of a singular character. These adaptations engage with these issues of embodied existence primarily by inserting the physical bodies of women into an overwhelmingly masculine narrative.

Both film adaptations and YA adaptations of *The Island of Dr. Moreau* demonstrate a marked focus on female bodies and who deserves control over them, echoing Wells's concerns about animal bodies within the purview of scientific experimentation. Effectively, adaptations of the *Moreau* culture-text make explicit the connection between animals and women. Whereas Chapters One and Two center around the ways women's bodies are the focus of consumption

153 P. Chalmers Mitchell, "Mr. Wells's Dr. Moreau," *The Saturday Review*, British Library Special Collections, 11 April 1896. https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/review-of-h-g-wellss-the-island-of-dr-moreau-from-the-saturday-review369

and predation, the concept of domesticity frames this chapter; yet these three concepts remain interrelated. Indeed, domesticity within adaptation is a way of exerting control over (consuming, preying upon) the female and animal body. In the animal sciences, domestication "refers to the initial stage of human mastery of wild animals and plants," while our more common use of domesticity is entirely a matter of the traditionally female role of homemaking.[154] Domesticity is a twinned problem: it requires the systematic taming of women *and* animals. The adaptations I discuss complicate our understanding of the animal-called-woman and her place within the social wilderness of the nineteenth century.

I. "This is the law": H.G. Wells's Unsympathetic Moreau and Nineteenth-Century Science

Bodies are explicitly tied into the question of humanity and who deserves humane treatment within the ethical boundaries of science. The physical reality of the experiments performed on the animals in *The Island of Dr. Moreau* is particularly shocking given that they involved vivisection, defined at that time as the dissection and operation upon live (often conscious) animals. Although the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1876 was passed to abolish vivisection except in cases of absolute necessity, continuing publications about the debate, in addition to Wells's novel, suggest that vivisections continued well after their supposed abolishment. For example, in an anti-vivisectionist book from 1880, Albert Leffingwell recounts an experiment performed in a medical school: "An incision in the abdomen of a dog was made; its stomach was cut out; a pig's bladder containing a colored water was inserted into its place, an emetic was injected into the veins,— and vomiting ensued. Long before the conclusion of the

154 "Domestication." *Britannica Academic*, Encyclopædia Britannica, 18 Jan. 2016. 0-academic-ebcom.library.uark.edu/levels/collegiate/article/domestication/30865. Accessed 14 Mar. 2019.

experiment the animal became conscious, and its cries of suffering were exceeding painful to hear."[155] These experiments, Leffingwell asserts, might be instructive to medical students, but were often conducted for the sake of demonstrating already-accepted biological fact, thereby presumably not meeting the exemptive criteria to continue vivisections expressed in the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1876. Nevertheless, such experimentation persisted.

Wells responded directly to these practices by imagining the farthest limits of vivisection and its potential cruelties in *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896). The plot follows shipwrecked castaway Edward Prendrick, who washes aboard the island of Dr. Moreau, where he bears witness to the extreme and ongoing torture of animals, in what he eventually realizes are experiments to convert the animals into human-animal hybrids. The novel is an important and still-relevant commentary on the ethical limits of science and the dangers of transgressing those ethical boundaries. It was also, by Wells's account, a plausible inevitability given the experimentation made in the field of science at the time. Wells was a prodigy of science who studied with Thomas Huxley, himself a devout student of Charles Darwin.[156] In his essay, "The Limits of Individual Plasticity," (1895) Wells said: "Now the suggestion this little article would advance is this: that there is in science, and perhaps even more so in history, some sanction for the belief that a living thing might be taken in hand and so moulded and modified that at best it would retain scarcely anything of its inherent form and disposition."[157] Wells is saying here that what happens to the animals on Moreau's island, their transformation from animal to hybrid, was within what he believed to be the plausible bounds of science. The salient difference between Dr.

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155 Albert Leffingwell, *Vivisection*, (John W. Lovell Company, Project Gutenberg, 2010): 24.

156 Elana Gomel. "From Dr. Moreau to Dr. Mengele: The Biological Sublime." *Poetics Today* 21, no. 2, (2000): 409.

157 H.G. Wells, "The Limits of Individual Plasticity," *H. G. Wells: Early Writings in Science and Science Fiction*, Ed. Robert Philmus and David Hughes, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975): 89

Moreau and other creators of literary abominations, like Dr. Jekyll or Victor Frankenstein, is the way in which he disengages scientific concerns from emotional, ethical, or moral concerns, which was a common Victorian scientific attitude. In the late nineteenth century, anti-vivisectionist proto-feminists bemoaned the "'coldly rational materialism'" of science, which they saw as threatening to "'freeze human emotion and sensibility.'"[158] Yet male anti-vivisectionists quickly adopted the language of cold rationality in order to meet the scientists on their own terms, because any other rhetorical choice of expression was tainted with the pervasive negative association of emotionality. The stigma of emotionality as being weak, illogical, feminine, and inferior, particularly in the field of science, continues to this day, especially in the natural sciences.[159]

Dr. Moreau is exceptional in the landscape of literary mad scientists for his extreme cruelty. The typical literary mad scientist tends to be (or become) slightly more in tune with their emotions than Dr. Moreau. For example, Mary Shelley's Victor Frankenstein is prideful, arrogant, and narcissistic; he also loves his family and Elizabeth and Henry Clerval.[160] All of these emotions influence his work; for example, while caught up in the Romantic fervor of his genius, Victor states that "I could not tear my thoughts from my employment, loathsome in itself, but which had taken an irresistible hold of my imagination. I wished, as it were, to procrastinate all that related to my feelings of affection until the great object, which swallowed up every habit of my nature, should be completed."[161] In contrast to Dr. Moreau, who prefers to be physically

158 Quoted in Josephine Donovan, "Animal Rights and Feminist Theory," Eco*feminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Ed. Greta Gaard, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993): 168.

159 Greta Gaard, "Living Interconnections with Animals and Nature," *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Ed. Greta Gaard, (Philadelphia Temple University Press, 1993): 5.

160 Early drafts of The Island of Dr. Moreau show an indebtedness to the character of Victor Frankenstein, as is discussed in Frank McConnell's *The Science Fiction of H.G. Wells* from Oxford University Press.

161 Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*. Ed. J. Paul Hunter, Norton Critical Edition, Second Edition, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012): 34.

and emotionally isolated from others, Victor's isolation is a brief aberration in the novel. Indeed, Victor is haunted by his "feelings of affection" for his large family, his fiance Elizabeth, and his friend Henry Clerval.

Notable about Victor and other literary mad scientists is that they tend to propose, if only superficially, a purpose for their experiments, unlike Moreau. For Victor Frankenstein, his scientific curiosity leads him to the discovery of "the cause of generation and life," which inspires him to immediately begin experiments to bestow that life upon a corpse.[162] In his reflections to Walton, Victor lists many justifications for his pursuits to "pour a torrent of light into our dark world": [163]

> A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve their's. Pursuing these reflections, I thought, that if I could bestow animation upon lifeless matter, I might in process of time (although I now found it impossible) renew life where death had apparently devoted the body to corruption.[164]

Reading between the lines of Victor's narcissistic fantasies, his justifications for his experiment are similar to modern pretexts for research into the singularity, such as artificial intelligence.[165] His aims, in contradiction to his methods, are largely benevolent.

Victor Frankenstein, though, is a Romantic mad scientist whose aims are at odds with the Victorian values of Dr. Moreau. The evolution of the mad scientist, according to Anne Stiles in

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162 Shelley, 32.

163 Shelley, 33

164 Shelley, 33

165 Thomas Georges, for example, suggests that we will "replace our organic parts" with mechanical organs or design virtual, biological, or mechanical bodies "from scratch." Eventually, he argues that these two routes will "merge, as nanotechnology matures, permitting us to manipulate and supplant our organic parts on cellular and molecular levels." Unlike Victor, who felt immediate and persistent remorse for his actions, Georges echoes the delusions of glory and progress of science, despite growing concerns about the unpredictability of advancements in artificial intelligence and related fields. For more, see *Digital Soul: Intelligent Machines and Human Values* (New York: Basic Books, 2003): Ch. 19.

"Literature in 'Mind': H.G. Wells and the Evolution of the Mad Scientist," may have its roots in post-Enlightenment exaltations of normality, supposing that genius was synonymous with deviant pathology. According to Stiles, "Whereas Enlightenment authors described the genius as directly inspired by God, Romantics developed a secularized version of this view that emphasized the artist or poet himself as a godlike figure [...] Rather than glorifying creative powers, Victorians pathologized genius and upheld the mediocre man as an evolutionary ideal."[166] As a result of this glorification of the normal man and the pathologization of genius, scientists of the nineteenth century used the concept of deviant pathology as a way of explaining deficiencies of character that would (or could) excuse ethically questionable behavior. Jacques Moreau, a famous nineteenth-century scientist, "suggested that geniuses create due to instinct or compulsion rather than divine inspiration" and that genius was an "unfortunate, if occasionally useful, biological anomaly."[167] Though this would seem to stigmatize Moreau's own profession, this theory suggests that genius— and the wild, sometimes irresponsible experimentation that scientific genius entails— is an inevitable biological expression, not something that can be nurtured or controlled.

Dr. Moreau, Wells's version of the mad scientist, is willing to bend the boundaries of morality for no other reason than to see if it can be done, and he most closely embodies the unemotional scientific attitudes of the late nineteenth century. Moreau admits to Edward that he has no real end goals in mind for the hybrid-animal creatures. Moreau says, "You cannot imagine the strange colorless delight of these intellectual desires. The thing before you is no longer an animal, a fellow-creature, but a problem [...] I wanted— it was the only thing I

166 Anne Stiles, "Literature in 'Mind': H.G. Wells and the Evolution of the Mad Scientist," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 70, no. 2, University of Pennsylvania Press, (2009): 321-22

167 Stiles, 325. Stiles asserts that Jacques Moreau almost certainly was the inspiration for H.G. Wells's character of the same name.

wanted— to find out the extreme limit of plasticity in a living shape."[168] Thus, Moreau becomes totally divorced from reality by his own admission. Wells distances Moreau from his own humanity in a number of ways, including by *literally* distancing him from humanity in a remote island, with only one other human for company. However, Moreau's experimentation on animals can be traced back to his days in London, revealing that his detachment from his own humanity predates his island lifestyle. Moreau's unfeeling revelations are particularly shocking considering the level of pain the animals are subjected to, both during and after their creation, but they echo claims by influential physiologist Claude Bernard in 1865: "A physiologist is not a man of fashion, he is a man of science ... he no longer hears the cry of animals he ... perceives only organisms concealing problems which he intends to solve."[169] Bernard and Moreau are united in their assertion that emotions like sympathy or pity have no place in the laboratory, or in science generally. In this way, vivisections, along with other ethically questionable experimentation on live humans and animals continued well into the twentieth century.

Much of the cautionary dimension to Wells's novel is filtered through Dr. Moreau himself. The unsavory lingering on the potentially sadistic underpinnings of Science for Science's Sake is what makes Moreau uniquely unsympathetic, far more so than Dr. Jekyll or Victor Frankenstein. As Edward says:

> Now [the beasts] stumbled in the shackles of humanity, lived in a fear that never died, fretted by a law they could not understand; their mock-human existence began in an agony, was one long internal struggle, one long dread of Moreau— and for what? It was the wantonness that stirred me. Had Moreau had any intelligible object I could have sympathized at least a little with him.[170]

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168 H.G Wells, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1988. (1896)): 115.

169 Quoted in Kimberly Benston, "Experimenting at the Threshold: Sacrifice, Anthropomorphism, and the Aims of (Critical) Animal Studies," *PMLA* 124, no. 2, (2009): 103.

170 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau,* 149-50.

What Edward refers to here is not just the vivisection that leads to the physical reality of the hybrid-animals, but also the social-behavioral conditioning used to train the hybrids to act human after their physical transformations. In some ways, this social indoctrination, which mimics the religious and political structures of British society, is just as harmful and cruel to the hybrids as their physical creations; at the least, it is a lasting and final indignity to their lives.[171]

Indoctrination is a dehumanizing project in the *Moreau* culture-text. The Sayer of the Law acts as the head of Moreau's dogmatic church, whipping the hybrids into frenzies of religious ecstasy, as the animals list edicts like "Not to go on all Fours; *that* is the Law. Are we not men? Not to suck up Drink; *that* is the law. Are we not men?"[172] As a witness to these events, Edward realizes that what Moreau has done, with little regard to how it would affect them, is a lifelong manipulation: "A horrible fancy came into my head that Moreau, after animalizing these men, had infected their dwarfed brains with a kind of deification of himself."[173] However, what is most salient in this litany is the way it privileges *men* as a default or aspirational state of being. In the process of attempting to humanize his Beast Folk, Moreau's methods of socialization have the inverse effect of devaluing them on an individual level, asking them to depersonalize and dehumanize themselves in the process. The irony of "Are we not men?" is that no human (especially no human male) in London would be conditioned (enforced with whips and a constant threat of a return to the House of Pain, where they were experimented

171 This social indoctrination is also implicitly racist within the colonial context of the Victorian period. The postcolonial implications of Moreau's invasion and "taming" of the island through both brutal physical means and rigidly imposed social structures is a clear reflection of colonizing practices. While this is outside of the purview of my argument here, this subject has been covered well by many scholars. For more, see: Timothy Christensen, "The "Bestial Mark" of Race in The Island of Dr. Moreau," *Criticism* 46, no. 4 (2005): 575-595; Payal Taneja, "The Tropical Empire: Exotic Animals and Beastly Men in the Island of Doctor Moreau," *English Studies* in Canada 39, no. 2 (2013): 139-159.

172 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*, 91.

173 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*, 92.

upon) in such a manner.[174] Animals, however, are another matter. If that unfortunate human was considered less than human: not white, not British, or not male, then such treatment might be socially accepted.[175] Adaptations of *The Island of Dr. Moreau* are interested in representing Beast Folk who are not white, not British, not male, and yet (unlike Wells's Beast Folk) still indistinguishable from humanity, and thus (by being able to pass as human) deserving of sympathy.

Edward's anxieties about the physical torture, enslavement, and indoctrination of the Beast Folk echo many of the most important aims of ecocriticism as it attempts to relate the imperialist, racist, and colonialist ideologies of humanity to the underlying assumptions and attitudes that humans make about the natural world and about ourselves in relation to that natural world. In other words, "in assuming a natural prioritisation of humans and human interests over those of other species on earth, we are both generating and repeating the racist ideologies of imperialism on a planetary scale."[176] In turn, those prioritisations cycle through to our treatment of one another, as is evident in the many narrow-minded and incorrect justifications of racism and slavery made, over the years upon the premises of Darwinian evolutionary biology.

Race and gender are deeply entangled in adaptations of the *Moreau* culture-text, which take one minor character, a puma who Moreau tortures throughout the book, and expand her into a metonym for the experience of all the Beast Folk. Film adaptations, like Erle Kenton's *The Island of Lost Souls* (1932) and John Frankenheimer's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1996) go out of their way to Orientalize the puma woman, expanding on themes of race and empire that Wells

174 I speak in legal terms only, of course.

175 Emelie Jonsson, "The Human Species and the Good, Gripping Dream of H.G. Wells." *Style* 47, no. 3, (2013): 307.

176 Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin, "'Introduction' to Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, and the Environment," *Ecocriticism: The Essential Reader,* Ed. Ken Hiltner, (Abingdon: Routledge Press, 2015): 181.

introduces in his source text. That these adaptations focus particularly on inserting a female character, despite the source material's abundance of male Beast Folk (and lack of female characters) is particularly notable as it suggests a connection between gender and race that twists Moreau's project from a sadistic one to a paternalistic one.

In Wells's book, Edward is obsessed with the idea of race as an explanation for the physical differences he notices in the Beast Folk, but he pays relatively little attention to the female Beast Folk. Early descriptions of the hybrids focus on their appearance, like M'Ling's "particularly coarse thick black hair,""black face," and "something dimly suggestive of a muzzle," all of which combine to a stereotypically racialized appearance that Edward becomes fixated upon. Although Edward also notes distinctly animal aspects to these animals, like M'Ling's tapetum lucidum (the surface behind the retina of certain animals that allow them to see in the dark) and his pointed, furred ears, it takes Edward a very long time to make the connections. Instead, Edward jumps to the conclusion that the hybrids are a different race, accepting Montgomery's assertion that M'Ling was discovered in San Francisco and that he "can't remember where he came from." Later in the same conversation, Edward asks about the similarly odd hybrids he earlier spotted on the beach: "What race are they?" These preoccupations with race become Edward's constant refrain in the early part of the novel, as he struggles to make sense of the creatures' strange appearances.

Though Prendick is presumably the protagonist of Wells's novel, his value judgments about the racialized Beast Folk make him almost as unsympathetic to a modern reader as Moreau. Even before he learns that the hybrids were developed from animals, Edward consistently refers to them as "brutes" and "savages," racially charged terms that reflect his certainty that the hybrids are more than just physically aberrant: "There's something about

[M'Ling]... Don't think me fanciful, but it gives me a nasty little sensation, a tightening of my muscles, when he comes near me. It's a touch… of the diabolical, in fact."[177] Edward's distaste for the creatures is only overcome when he realizes that their physical appearance does not mean much. After all, Moreau, who appears to be an intelligent gentleman of science, is the most monstrous individual on the island, as Edward learns. Yet this association of race with nature sets up an important parallel between Moreau's colonization of the island and British colonization.[178] Edward's racist judgment of the Beast Folk is noticeably absent from subsequent adaptations; if anything, in film, Edward is enraptured with the puma character partly because of the ways in which she is racialized as a desirable, "exotic" animal Other.

The elaboration of the puma in adaptation is notable, because the puma in Wells's text is more symbol than character. In the source text, the puma is a symbol of pain and torture characterized mostly by her constant cries of pain throughout the novel. At one point, Edward describes these cries "as if all the pain in the world had found a voice."[179] In Moreau's brief description of the puma, he says "I have some hope of that puma; I have worked hard at her head and brain….", indicating that he hoped soon to defeat a consistent problem in his experimentation: as he works to create his hybrid-humans, they always, eventually, begin to degrade, becoming more and more like their originary species.[180] For Moreau, the puma becomes the twin symbol of success and defeat. Even as he envisions that this creature will be the realization of his goal to create a truly lasting and convincing hybrid, the puma defeats him, not

177 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*, 57.

178 Timothy Christensen speaks to the torture of the hybrids and their indoctrination into the Law of the island in relation to fin de siecle British writings about racial hierarchy: "we witness in increasingly stark and simplistic form a foundational disjunction between the performative basis of the modern problematic of subjectivity and history and the imaginary transmutation and resolution of this problematic into an evolutionary narrative." In "The 'Bestial Mark' of Race in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*." *Criticism* 46, no. 4, (2004): 590.

179 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*, 59.

180 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*, 222.

only by surviving and escaping her torture, but by putting a definitive end to Moreau's experiments by killing him. In Wells's text, the puma represents nature's retribution against Moreau. She is the wild animal that resists domestication and both her pain and triumph are focal points for all of the Beast Folk as they shift from the pain of Moreau's dominion to a return to a more natural state.

I. Exotic Animals and Exotic Women: The Puma Character and Empire in the Moreau Culture-Text

Two adaptations of the twentieth century exemplify the ways in which repeated insertion of a female character into the *Moreau* culture-text twists and repositions our sympathy for its characters. In Erle Kenton's *The Island of Lost Souls* (1932) and John Frankenheimer's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1996), these female characters are introduced in ways that exoticize them, but also position our sympathy differently in relation to Moreau, to the Beast Folk, and to Edward himself. By modern sensibilities, these puma women— almost an invisible character in the source text— become essential hinge points. In Erle Kenton's *The Island of Lost Souls* (1932), Lota, the puma/panther character, enraptures Edward almost immediately after his arrival on the island. Moreau throws the two together in an attempt to find out if his hybrid can become more human by falling in love with and "mating" with a human man. In their first meeting, Dr. Moreau suggestively introduces Lota as the "only woman on the island" and quickly absconds from the room to listen at the door as Lota and Edward become acquainted.[181] After an eventful night, Moreau again observes his subjects carefully from the shadows, remarking to his assistant "Did you see that Montgomery? She was tender, like a woman. How that little scene spurs the

181 Erle Kenton, dir, *The Island of Lost Souls*, Perf. Charles Laughton, Richard Arlen, Kathleen Burke (1932, Los Angeles: Paramount Pictures/Criterion Collection, 2011), DVD.

scientific imagination onward."[182] While Wells's Moreau was interested in perfecting that evasive "something I cannot touch, somewhere—", Kenton's Moreau has crafted such perfection in Lota's physical appearance that only her interiority can be further improved.[183] Moreau in this film perceives Lota as his greatest achievement, and unlike in the Wells text, she is already fully transformed and notably far more docile. Lota, as triumph, is represented not in the pain and torture that contributed to her current state, but in the off-screen buffing away of these signs of her previous animal existence, both physical and emotional. Nothing is left of the puma and her convincing mask of humanity becomes a tool to be used by Moreau as he uses Edward to further his experiment.

Lota's exploitation by Moreau represents a human/animal power dynamic, certainly, but it also represents the related binary of male/female that these adaptations visually exploit. Kenton's adaptation plays upon this male/human to female/animal dynamic particularly within his cinematography, highlighting the stark differences in agency that the male characters are able to express in comparison with the female characters. When Lota expresses her interest in Edward, he infantilizes her, calling her a "strange child" moments before kissing her violently, bending her head back to a painful angle while wrapping his arm around her neck. His arms embrace her so totally that they almost erase her from frame (see Fig. 3.1). When Lota tries to hold the abruptly ashamed Edward closer, he notices her claws and looms over her in the frame before heading off to confront Dr. Moreau.[184]

182 Kenton, *Lost Souls*.

183 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*, 120.

184 Kenton, *Lost Souls*

Figure 3.1: Erle Kenton, dir, *The Island of Lost Souls*, Perf. Charles Laughton, Richard Arlen, Kathleen Burke. 1932; Los Angeles: Paramount Pictures/Criterion Collection, 2011, DVD.

In a common visual juxtaposition in the film, Lota, catlike, hunches through her scenes, constantly shrinking into corners as the male characters tower over her. As Lota weeps about her regression, Moreau, seated next to her, grabs her by the hair and twists her face upward towards his, so that he looks down upon her face in his lap from a position of domination (see Fig. 3.2). He triumphantly proclaims that since she is "the first of them to shed tears. She is human!", although not human enough to invoke sympathy or courtesy in Kenton's Moreau, though she *is* human enough to awaken desire in both Edward and, presumably, the viewer. The only means of agency that Lota has is her sexuality, which Edward quickly rejects and Moreau attempts to rob from her as part of his experiment. Lota is allowed subjectivity and agency when she sacrifices herself to save Edward and a small group of survivors from an attack by Ouran, part of a hybrid-mob who revolts against the humans at the end of the film. In one last, violent struggle between male/animal and female/animal, Lota triumphs over Ouran as she is unable to do in her conflicts with any of the male/humans on the island, at the cost of her own life.

Figure 3.2: Erle Kenton, dir, *The Island of Lost Souls*, Perf. Charles Laughton, Richard Arlen, Kathleen Burke. 1932; Los Angeles: Paramount Pictures/Criterion Collection, 2011, DVD.

Lota, as puma and Moreau's success story, becomes a representative of all the Beast Folk, but as a tame, docile woman, the only woman of note on the island. In some ways, she is also the *most* oppressed and *most* subordinated of all the hybrids on the island because her body is so closely controlled by Moreau. Her female/hybrid body becomes a site of horror, not in its existence, but in the exciting effect it has on the male/human protagonist. The terror for the viewer who sexualizes and humanizes Lota rests in the fact that women/animals are acceptable only so long as they remain fully, totally, and immaculately tame, which Lota cannot be, regardless of her desires. Lota's wildness is very evident in her contrast with Ruth, Edward's fiance, who is the physical opposite of Lota; blonde, modest, and tidy in comparison to Lota's exoticism, Ruth seems to highlight the fact that Lota, even as she may pass physically for human, will never pass socially for human by gendered standards.[185]

185 This exoticism is worth exploring by future research; in both of the film adaptations I discuss here, these hybrid women are highly exoticized for a Western audience, both in the script and through visual motif.

Lota's exoticization is an evolution of the imperial exploitation that pervades Wells's source text. In the *Moreau* culture-text, the colonization of the island itself and its animals spills into Moreau's treatment of virtually every living creature on the island in his role as scientist and "master" of the hybrid-animals. Moreau's behavior is especially disturbing in that it raises important questions about the ethics of the treatment of animals and people who have been designated as "less than human." As Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin note in their introduction to *Postcolonial Ecocriticism:* "[T]raditional western constitutions of the human as the 'not animal' (and by implication, the 'not-savage') have had major, and often catastrophic, repercussions not just for animals themselves but for all of those the West now considers human but were formerly designated, represented and treated as animal."[186] The *Moreau* culture-text asks us how we, as readers, should negotiate our own sympathy toward and uncertainty about the Beast Folk in relation to Dr. Moreau's cruelty? Lota— and the puma character broadly— is one answer to this question. Because she is gendered as female, because she exemplifies so many animalistic (and traditionally female) traits that we consider desirable (loyalty, innocence, tenacity), she represents a safe way for (male, straight, white) viewers to interact with the Beast Folk. This is especially true since Lota does *not* represent a threat to the status quo; Edward still leaves the island with his fiance, while Lota perishes on the island.

Sixty years later, this dynamic is evident also in John Frankenheimer's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1996). While this adaptation attracted huge stars of the day, like Marlon Brando (Dr. Moreau), Val Kilmer (Montgomery), and Fairuza Balk (Aissa), it was a box office bomb.[187] This failure of the film has been blamed alternatively on conflicts between the actors, the failure of

186 Huggan and Tiffin, "Introduction," 190.

187 Margaret Stetz, "The Island of Dr. Frankenheimer: Castaway in the Marketplace," *Studies in Popular Culture* 25, no. 3, (2003): 77-90.

director, John Frankenheimer, to lead the film with a clear vision, and the writing of the script. Yet the script itself is notable as a faithful homage to Erle Kenton's *The Island of Lost Souls*. All of the most notable changes from Wells's text that first appeared in Kenton's adaptation are present, from Dr. Moreau's costuming in head-to-toe white to the riot of the animals at the end of the film which destroys Moreau and his legacy.[188] The most notable insertion by Kenton into the Wells text is that of Lota, the puma creature, and she is carried over into the Frankenheimer film, as well.

Richard Stanley, the film's original director and writer, has often expressed his fidelity to Kenton's adaptation, which makes the re-insertion of the puma character a clear and direct evolution from the 1932 film. Where Wells felt that the 1932 film adaptation was a failure, Stanley believed that Kenton's adaptation was "probably the most effective."[189] As Stanley goes on to acknowledge, the Kenton adaptation's plot was copied faithfully by a number of subsequent adaptors, including in Don Taylor's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1977), which Stanley was extremely influenced by when writing his script: "Among many other things, I was confused that there was a woman turning into a panther on the poster of the movie which never happened in the film. And I guess from that moment onwards, the germ of the idea began to gestate in my mind, and I was determined to try and do it justice, to try and adapt the story in a way that could actually work for the screen."[190] So, the female puma character influenced early drafts of the script (by Stanley's description, we might even see her as the impetus for the adaptational project

188 As I have said, in the Wells text, Moreau dies in an off-page fight with the puma— although the Beast Folk do revert to a mob mentality after Moreau's death in the original text, they never attempt to kill Moreau en masse.

189 Quoted in Gregory, David, Dir, *Lost Soul: The Doomed Journey of Richard Stanley's Island of Dr. Moreau*, (Los Angeles: Severin Films, 2014), Prime Video.

190Gregory, *Lost Soul*

as a whole). It is also worth noting that Stanley's original intention was to craft a character whose body was more animalistic.

As part of his plan for doing justice to both Wells and the subsequent adaptations that had influenced perception of his text so much, Stanley originally planned to create a horror film that would more fully highlight Aissa's female/animal body. This "phantom adaptation"[191] would have dramatically subverted the male/human, female/hybrid dynamic at work between Edward and Lota in the 1932 film. As Stanley states:

> [The producers] tried to get me to humanize the cat-lady. When Prendrick initially seduces her, she's got six nipples and her pubes kind of grow all over her thighs and up her chest and stuff and there's this celebrated moment where he's working his way down one nipple to the next and realizes along the way that she's not human, which really upset [the producers…] [Ruth Vitale, one of the producers,] said it would upset menopausal women all over America.[192]

Within the context of the Frankenheimer adaptation, many of these early elements were abandoned before filming began; still other elements of the script were rewritten after direction of the film shifted from Richard Stanley's control to John Frankenheimer's and as Marlon Brando improvised most of his work on the film. However, the changes made to the character Aissa reflect a clear desire to, as Stanley says, "draw the line" and present a puma character far more in line with social/visual expectations of a desirable female lead. Included in this project of creating a desirable female lead was Stanley and Frankenheimer's attempts to exoticize Fairuza Balk, a young white American actress playing the role of the puma character.

It is significant that belly dancing is the way we are introduced to Aissa (Balk) in Frankenheimer's film. Moreau's hybrid/daughter Aissa, his most perfect creation, immediately

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191Simone Murray describes phantom adaptations as films that have "progressed as close to production as is possible without any actual footage having been shot and archived" in "Phantom Adaptations: Eucalyptus, the Adaptation Industry and the Film that Never Was," *Adaptation* 1, no. 1, (2008):6.

192 Gregory, *Lost Soul*

attracts Edward in an erotically-charged intrusion upon what seems to be her regular outdoor belly-dancing practice (see Fig. 3.3). While Edward watches surreptitiously, Aissa dances, wearing a crop top, fringed scarf, and long skirt reminiscent of modern belly dancing costumes. Perhaps no other style of dance is so associated with Orientalism (or, more accurately in this instance—where a white-presenting actress is involved—self-Orientalism) as belly dancing, which has become in the last several decades associated with "sexuality [through] frequent associations with striptease dance by the general public and many scholars."[193] This scene is, indeed, erotic; Edward stares at Aissa until she startles and begins to run from Edward, as though she had been caught in the act of doing something scandalous. Following the performance, Edward mentions his admiration for Aissa's beauty and Montgomery sardonically replies "Yeah. She's a pussycat."[194] This introductory scene establishes not only the importance of Aissa to the plot— like Lota, she will fill the role of romantic interest— but also to the broader theme of exoticization of the puma character. Like Lota, Aissa is deliberately and explicitly associated with her exotic locale.

193 Shay, Anthony, and Barbara Sellers-Young. "Belly Dance: Orientalism: Exoticism: Self-Exoticism." *Dance Research Journal* 35, no. 1 (2003): 13–37. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1478477.

194 John Frankenheimer, dir, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, Perf. Marlon Brando, Val Kilmer, David Thewlis, Fairuza Balk, (1996; Los Angeles, Warner Bros, 2017), DVD.

Figure 3.3: John Frankenheimer, dir, *The Island of Dr. Moreau,* Perf. Marlon Brando, Val Kilmer, David Thewlis, Fairuza Balk, 1996; Los Angeles, Warner Bros, 2017, DVD.

It is important to note the insistence of both the source text (1896) and these film adaptations on associating the puma character with her exotic locale, because the Beast Folk are all, of course, exotic animals. Exotic animals enjoy a complicated relationship with humanity, especially as part of the colonialist project. Like animals who were experimented upon in vivisections, exotic animals were taken from their home and shipped long distances (trips which were often fatal), only to be experimented upon, displayed (either in zoological gardens or, more commonly, as taxidermy), and otherwise exploited for their use value. The animals shipped to Moreau's island are, by and large, not native to the island. Like minoritized people, their exploitation is part of their embodied existence within a colonial environment:

> Exotic animals are often studied purely in an abstract sense, as living metaphors for colonial power or human dominance over other species. Without doubt, they often did fulfil this symbolic role, and were deliberately cast in it by zoo directors, showmen, and journalists. As real living beasts, however, exotic animals also exerted some agency over their interactions with the public, connecting with spectators on a more visceral level as huge, ferocious, noisy or hungry beings who could be fed, ridden or touched.[195]

195 Helen Cowie, *Exhibiting Animals in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Empathy, Education, and Entertainment*, (London, Palgrave, 2014): 6.

The puma character exemplifies this doubled relationship; in these film adaptations, she is racialized and exoticized in a way that seems symbolic of the ways in which Moreau exploits both animals and the lands he colonizes.[196] Yet, as women and hybrids, they also have an embodied existence through which they exert agency on the men in their spheres of influence.

Nothing about Aissa— not even the revelation that she is inhuman— dissuades Edward from his romantic interest in her. Unlike in *The Island of Lost Souls* (1932), where Edward is repulsed when he realizes Lota is not human, this version of Edward doubles down on his devotion to Aissa after realizing that she is not human. In their one-on-one interactions, Edward's attraction to Aissa does little to develop her character, but it does drive the plot forward. The latter third of the film becomes a quest to halt Aissa's regression to her animal state, because— as Edward mentions to her while fondling her face (see Fig. 3.4)— "If it were not for you, I would think that your father had failed terribly. You are not like them. Nor are you like me. You are something far, far finer."[197] This version of Edward does not mind that Aissa is an animal given human form. Edward retains his attraction to her even after learning the truth and even after seeing her fangs as she begins her regression. In this way, Edward embodies the role not only of human suitor, but also of "white savior." Edward's main motivation for the remainder of the film is to save Aissa from her regression, replicating a filmic trope "guided by a logic that racializes and separates people into those who are redeemers (whites) and those who are redeemed or in need of redemption (nonwhites)."[198] This role is a stark contrast to that of

196 It is worth noting, also, that the puma is native to North and South America, not any island locales. In fact, when Edward Prendick is saved by Montgomery in the beginning of Wells's novel, the puma is being transported to Moreau on that very ship. Therefore, the decision to racialize Lota and Aissa as particularly "Eastern" (or Middle Eastern) does not find its origins in the puma biologically, except inasmuch as any large, predatory animal is exoticized.

197 Frankenheimer, *The Island of Moreau*

198 Matthew W. Hughey, *The White Savior Film: Content, Critics, and Consumption*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2014): 2.

colonizer that Edward Prendick occupies in Wells's novel, but it is also limited in that Aissa is primarily granted the viewer's sympathy because of Edward's resolution to desire her. None of the other Beast Folk are offered the same sympathy.

Figure 3.4: John Frankenheimer, dir, *The Island of Dr. Moreau,* Perf. Marlon Brando, Val Kilmer, David Thewlis, Fairuza Balk, 1996; Los Angeles, Warner Bros, 2017, DVD.

Just as in Kenton's adaptation, the full realization of Aissa's physical potential at the outset of the film erases the pain and horror of how Aissa came into existence. Because Edward has never been forced to confront Aissa's origins, he is able to retain his uncomplicated feelings toward her. Edward never has to confront *any* of the Beast Folk's origins; they are not brought into being by vivisection in this adaptation; instead of witnessing the puma's cries of horror and brutal, bloody mutilation, Edward witnesses a fairly normal (albeit graphic) vaginal birth scene. The cruelty done to these bodies in the name of science is normalized, and because of that normalization, the horror shifts to the social aspect of what has been done to them.[199] The horror

199 Presumably these pregnant Beast Folk were, as many animals are in the process of scientific experimentation, forced to become pregnant and bear children. In this way, the description of these birth scenes as "normalized" is only in contrast to the process of vivisection.

for Edward specifically shifts to preventing Aissa's regression, as her full regression removes her as an acceptable romantic possibility (her only value to him in this adaptation).

Moreau is humanized in this adaptation, because Aissa identifies herself as Moreau's daughter, not his experiment. Marlon Brando's portrayal of Moreau, although wildly eccentric, seems to, at least on the surface, genuinely care for his creatures. In some ways, he typifies the mad scientist, such as when he asks Aissa to dump ice into a bucket on his head. His mad experiment is depicted as universally benign, however. Moreau asserts that the purpose of his experimentation is in service of erasing the darker psychological aspects of humanity: "The devil is that element in human nature that impels us to destroy and debase [...] I have seen the devil in my microscope, and I have chained him." Moreau goes on to refer to Aissa specifically: "I have almost achieved perfection, you see, of a divine creature that is pure, harmonious, absolutely incapable of malice. And if I have occasionally fallen short by the odd claw, snout, or hoof, then it really is of no great import."[200] In this way, Aissa is a triumph not only because of her physical/biological appearance, but also because of her gentleness and kindness. By all accounts, this version of Moreau is a humanitarian, attempting (more like Victor Frankenstein or Dr. Jekyll) to do something arguably productive with his experimentation. So, if Aissa's existence isn't a nightmare, but even a pseudo-utopia, where does the horror assert itself?

As both Lota and Aissa begin to revert to their animal states, the films shift from the romantic subplot toward Wells's origins, pointing more directly toward the horror of the animal experiments. The expression of their animal side in moments of violence (for Aissa) or sexuality (for Lota) corresponds with a physical expression of their animal biology in the form of claws or fangs. So, the post-Enlightenment's valuation of the suppression of emotion finds outlet not in

200 Frankenheimer, *The Island of Moreau*

Moreau but in his pumas, whose emotional expression represents their devolution. The ideal for these women, then, is the repression of common emotions like violence and sexuality, which sounds very much like what society has traditionally said is the ideal for women: "The way in which women and nature have been conceptualized historically in the Western intellectual tradition has resulted in devaluing whatever is associated with women, emotion, animals, nature, and the body, while simultaneously elevating in value those things associated with men, reason, humans, culture, and the mind."[201] Not only are non-Western women's bodies controlled in these narratives, but when their interiority cannot be regulated to a constant equilibrium, they lose what little value their bodies afforded them. They revert to their animal states, making them incompatible sexual partners for Edward and failures of science for Moreau.

These film adaptations, helmed by male directors, lay important groundwork for recent Young Adult adaptations of *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. Nearly all major motion picture film adaptations of the *Moreau* culture-text are helmed by men and introduce female characters into their adaptations. By contrast, a recent spate of YA adaptations written by female authors and featuring female protagonists suggest an interest in complicating the visions put forth by male directors in the late twentieth century. As the adaptations shift from male auteurs to female authors and from the visual medium to a textual one, women— both within these novels and as authors— gain a great deal of agency in shaping the *Moreau* culture-text.

YA novel adaptations, which ubiquitously focus on the hybrid-daughter character and her nascent sexuality, complicate the character of Moreau even further by suggesting that the dualism between body/animal and mind/human and male/female are not such clear distinctions. They also empower Moreau's daughters, exemplifying the ways in which adaptation can allow

201 Gaard, "Living Interconnections," 5

for the remediation of texts that exclude women and minoritized people. If ecofeminism argues that the oppression and domination of women and nature are, in many ways, twins, then these new adaptations tell us that nature and women can do more than embody man's success or failure.[202] They can challenge man to stand or fail on his own merits and they can reflect back at him his own inhumanity.

II. Young Adult (YA) Literature Adaptations and Minor Character Elaboration

While YA adaptations tend to avoid the exoticization of the film adaptations, they go much further into extending the characters that Lota and Aissa introduce into the *Moreau* culture-text. By positioning the narrative from the point of view of these hybrid daughters, our sympathy shifts solidly and finally to the Beast Folk *as a group*: Moreau and Edward are no longer the eyes through which we see this island or women or animality. The YA genre is particularly well-situated for this discussion as it is explicitly interested in the period of adolescence, a time when biological bodily changes are a source of great interest and excitement (and even terror) for many young people. While other genres have tackled the *Moreau* culture-text (almost always continuing the tradition of inserting the female puma character), the YA genre has perhaps most fully evolved the puma character, imagining the ways in which young women, while grappling with their own embodied existence, can break free from the expectations of domesticity. In The Madman's Daughter (2013), Megan Shepherd associates her protagonist Juliet Moreau with the "Beast Folk." Shepherd relates the question of what it means to be female in the nineteenth century with what it means to be "other," which has ecofeminist implications that "challenge dualistic constructions and, in so doing, attempt to establish a

202 A.E. Kings, "Intersectionality and the Changing Face of Ecofeminism," *Ethics & the Environment* 22, no. 1 (2017): 71.

different system of values in which the normative category of 'other' (animals, people of color, 'Third World' people, the lower classes, etc.) is reevaluated."[203] Though Juliet is not exoticized as Lota or Aissa are, she is their imaginative sister, who remediates the *Moreau* culture-text in such a way that is liberating for all minoritized people.

While most film adaptations of Moreau have tried to place the doctor's experiments in a modern context, Shepherd resituates her heroine within the nineteenth century, a century notorious for the restrictive social expectations placed upon women.[204] In doing so, Shepherd highlights the social reality of Dr. Moreau's actions within the situatedness of the nineteenth century. For example, the novel begins with Juliet Moreau struggling to make her way in the world following her father's disgrace from society. In Wells's text, Dr. Moreau "had to leave England. A journalist obtained access to his laboratory in the capacity of laboratory assistant, with the deliberate intention of making sensational exposures,"[205] but he is also "unmarried and had indeed nothing but his own interests to consider."[206] Shepherd's text, then, begins with the simple question: What if Dr. Moreau *did* have other interests to consider, but simply chose not to consider them? Juliet answers this question within her position in the opening pages of *The Madman's Daughter:* shunned from polite society, she works as a maid at King's College of Medical Research, where she is subjected to sexual and classist harassment. Juliet's preoccupation with her fallen station asserts itself in the realities of her body: "When a girl fell from privilege, men were less interested in her ratty skirts than in what lay underneath, and Dr.

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203 Lori Gruen, "Dismantling Oppression: An Analysis of the Connection Between Women and Animals," *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Ed. Greta Gaard, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993): 180.

204 For more on the social expectations toward women, particularly women of higher social classes, see especially Mary Wollstonecraft's "A Vindication of the Rights of Women," originally published in 1792 but broadly relevant through much of the 19th century.

205 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*, 52

206 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*, 53

Hastings was no different."[207] Much of Juliet's narrative arc is about exploring the way men react to her body and the way her body reacts (or doesn't react) to those men in turn, often underscored by concerns about social class. By placing the novel within the nineteenth century, the relationships between bodies and propriety, bodies and savagery, are highlighted even before Juliet reaches the island.

Juliet's body is the locus of her burgeoning and socially-unacceptable feelings for Montgomery (in this version of the story, Montgomery is a former servant of the Moreau family) and the castaway Edward Prince. For Juliet, like her father, emotions are a great mystery, and one tied up in her biology: "My corset felt even more constricting than normal. I wanted to rip the stays apart and fill my burning lungs with air [...] Emotions were a puzzle, something to be studied and fitted together carefully. But the edges of this puzzle didn't fit within the lines I knew."[208] Like Dr. Moreau, Juliet struggles with emotions and their place within what society tells her should be a socially transactional world of logic and science. She struggles with lustful feelings that are "totally improper" yet cause her to "forg[et] about decorum."[209] For Juliet, awareness of her body and the bodies of others is implicitly tied up in turbulent emotions. Yet, unlike Dr. Moreau, her connection to her physicality (particularly as it relates to nineteenth-century gender norms) forces her to confront her emotional reality.

Juliet is more in tune with her body than her father partly because of what has been done to it. Throughout the novel, Juliet feels as though her body is out of her control due to either illness or sexual attraction. She is told by Moreau that a birth defect forces her to take injections, developed by her father, every day. That same defect also highlights her indebtedness to him,

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207 Megan Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, (New York: Balzer+Bray, 2013): 3.

208 Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, 75

209 Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, 274

something she's particularly concerned about: "I hesitated. Speaking of my illness made me feel exposed. It was just one more thing linking me to my mad father."[210] Yet as the novel progresses, the reality of her birth defect is exposed as part of Dr. Moreau's experiments, giving her an unusual relationship to the Beast Folk. The moment she realizes her role in his experiments, Juliet feels another disconnect between her mind and her body: "My hand pulled out the file, but it was like someone else's hand laying the file on the cold ground [...] And then time seemed to fracture again and I was back in my own body."[211] This out-of-body experience further emphasizes the unstable and confrontational relationship Juliet has with her own body. At once, her body is a social construct for use by men of higher social caste, a hormone and emotion-generating puzzle, a deteriorating mechanism, and the product of her father's experiments. And it's no wonder that Juliet feels this way: just as with Lota and Aissa, her body is not her own:

> Feeling melted out of my fingers and I let the pages flutter to the ground. I touched my face, my hair, but sensation was gone— it was like touching flesh that wasn't mine. And maybe it wasn't. Maybe it belonged to some animal, a dear. This body— my eyelashes, my toes, the curve of my waist— was a lie. Such a convincing lie that I'd even fooled myself.[212]

Eventually, Juliet learns that the experimentation performed upon her was relatively benign compared to the experiments performed on most of the Beast Folk; Dr. Moreau removed several of her organs during a life-saving surgery and replaced them with deer organs. Her human existence remains mostly intact, yet for a moment Juliet truly and completely understands the horror of the Beast Folk's existence, because she is also a hybrid. For Juliet, because the narrative perspective of *The Madman's Daughter* situates the narrative on her experiences and her body, she does have more agency than her film counterparts did.

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210 Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, 45

211 Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, 337

212 Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, 338

Juliet is Dr. Moreau's animal daughter who confronts him; she flees from society to the island, where she can navigate her body on her own terms; she challenges her father and forces him to speak to the pervasive misogyny of his work. At the beginning of the novel, a medical student tells Juliet that "Girls don't study science," which she acknowledges echoes her father's feelings on the subject: "When I was a child, Father would give physiology lessons to our servant boy, Montgomery, to spite those who claimed the lower classes were incapable of learning. He considered women naturally deficient, however, so I would hide in the laboratory closet during lessons, and Montgomery would slip me books to study."[213] Juliet, in this moment, exposes the mirror that Moreau holds to society. He is not a mustache-twirling villain, as in the Kenton adaptation, nor an outlandish oddity**,** as in Frankenheimer's adaptation, but exactly as eager to lay claim to women's minds and bodies as the rest of society. Juliet, unlike Lota or Aissa, survives to confront and expose her creator, allowing her closure and agency.

This exposure of Dr. Moreau's unsympathetic nature is essential for Juliet to be able to take power back from him. In the Kenton and Frankenheimer adaptations, the female characters were unable to gain agency, because their bodies were always only points of expansion for Moreau's experiments. The puma characters in the films were designed for the male gaze, but Juliet's textual reality allows her to gaze back upon her creator. Juliet is a creature that begins to transcend the duality imposed upon her by society. Her construction of consciousness allows for her to turn her gaze upon Moreau, exposing and confronting him for what he is.

By exposing Dr. Moreau's prejudices, Juliet gives him no place to escape. At one such point of confrontation, Juliet explains that Montgomery has gone missing and her father erupts: "You bewitched him! Everything was fine before you came. I never wanted a girl. Montgomery

213 Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, 10

was lowborn, but at least he was male; at least he could reason, not like some hysterical female. I'd just as soon you'd died with your consumptive mother and left me in peace!"[214] This tirade is noticeably lacking in perhaps any other version of Dr. Moreau's character. The insertion of this loss of control, when the character is either sympathetic (as the father of hybrids) or clinically remorseless (as the manipulative scientist). Here, however, Dr. Moreau is explicitly revealed as manipulative, as sadistic, and also as a misogynist. Significantly, in this moment of confronting her father, Juliet is given purpose. Juliet makes three important realizations in this scene: first, her father allowed her mother to die rather than be distracted from his experimentation ("I had work to do. Typical flawed reasoning of a woman, to place mortal needs above timeless research.") Second, her father believes her to be inherently inferior to her male counterparts, something she knows is not true. Third, her father believes her to be less deserving of compassion or love than her male counterparts, which gives her the strength to destroy her father's experiments.[215] Juliet is the first of the Beast Folk to revolt against her father; in many ways, she leads the revolution. In prior adaptations of the *Moreau* culture-text, this was an action denied to the puma character. Her sympathies were always with Edward, the human protagonist. The male Beast Folk were the only characters allowed to be wild, violent, and rebellious against their fate.

Theodora Goss's *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter* (2017) similarly adapts a daughter for Moreau. Her narrative is much more condensed (as she is one of five daughters of nineteenth-century mad scientists who share space within the novel who all resist their fathers) but still very telling of the ways in which hybrid human-animal women can be empowered within their own text. Like Juliet, Catherine Moreau struggles with her place in nineteenth-

214 Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, 364

215 Shepherd, *The Madman's Daughter*, 365

century society and the way her body is allowed to navigate that place: "'Am I human?' she said. 'I don't know. I have a name, Catherine, given to me by Montgomery. As a joke: Catherine, Cat in here. There is a cat in here.' She pulled up the sleeves of her dress: on her arms, too, they could see a regular pattern of scars, faint but visible in the lamplight."[216] As the events of Goss's story take place after the events of *The Island of Dr. Moreau,* allowing her the narrative loophole of survival from her encounter with Moreau, Catherine must deal not with the control Moreau currently exerts over her body, but the control he exerts over her understanding of herself through her body.

Catherine is remarkable as a character, because of the way she reclaims her traumatic experiences. She is almost preternaturally well-adjusted, able to narrate her transformation without becoming overwhelmed with emotion. Like Moreau, she is able to compartmentalize her emotions and recounts her story as a difficult, but manageable experience: "Catherine took a sip of her tea. 'I was the puma, yes. After we disembarked, Moreau began the process that would turn me into a woman. Surgery, but also after a certain point, after my mind was receptive to it, hypnosis and education. Indoctrination.'"[217] As she tells her story, only one element forces her to lose her composure and that is mention of the continued survival of Edward Prendrick, whom she had assumed dead. She later tells her friends that she had "relations"[218] with Prendrick and that "Once Moreau was dead, Edward and James [Montgomery] fought over me. I was the only woman on the island, the only one who didn't look like a beast, and James thought I should be his as Moreau's successor."[219] Catherine's casual discussion of the way she was relegated to an

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216 Theodora Goss, *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*, (New York: Saga Press, 2017): 210.

217 Goss, *Strange Case*, 210

218 Goss, *Strange Case*, 217

219 Goss, *Strange Case*, 219

object and the fact that Edward and Montgomery fought over the opportunity for one, if not both, men to take literal and sexual control over her body belies her conflicted feelings towards the men.[220]

Catherine reveals that this exception to her composure is because she made a choice to share her body with Edward out of emotion, and that his emotions remain a mystery to her: "I still don't know… whether he ever loved me. Or whether I was simply convenient."[221] Yet of all the puma girls, of all of Moreau's daughters, Catherine has come to peace with her body and what it represents. She admits to killing Moreau, she admits to her animal instincts, and she is unashamed that she does not fit into society. By her father's accounts, she is a failure, but her total acceptance of herself gives lie to the error in this assumption: she is not a failure, but a heroine.

III. "Lost Souls": Transhumanism as the Next Point of Departure for *Moreau*

The adaptations I have discussed so far have inserted female characters into Wells's texts, pivoting the horror away from animal torture and enslavement toward the dichotomies that exist between female/animal/body and male/human/mind; however there are adaptations of the *Moreau* culture-text that harmonize these two perspectives. In particular, Ann Halam's YA novel *Dr. Franklin's Island* (2002) is an important work that uses the Moreau narrative to highlight the autonomy of female bodies in relation to the concept of animal torture and experimentation. Halam's text speaks most plainly to the ethical concerns of science by placing her female *human* character, Semi, into a survival/adventure narrative that ignores the subtleties of society's control

220 It's possible that Catherine's relationship with Edward will be further explored in sequels, but she is tight-lipped when discussing her feelings for Edward and Montgomery, only subtly indicating that she might have had feelings for Edward. It is clear that the fight over her was unwanted.

221 Goss, Strange Case, 218

over female bodies and instead directly confronts the question of human-animal rights within the terms of experimentation.

Instead of trying to create humans out of animals, Dr. Franklin is attempting to use gene therapy to create animals out of humans. Transgenics, as he defends it, is necessary for future interplanetary travel to environments potentially inhospitable to humans. However, another character, Arnie, later discovers the truth: "I reckon if they iron out the problems, they'll be selling their formula to an exotic holiday company… They talk in front of me, you see… Imagine it. You take a pill, or a couple of injections… You wake up in a five-star underwater hotel, on your ocean safari."[222] Yet for Semi, who does become a fish in the novel, the transformation between human and animal is not entirely unpleasant.[223] Though her rights are discarded in the experimentation, she manages to situate that the rights and experiences of her animal-self are equal to the rights and experiences of her human self.

Semi truthfully represents the more positive aspects of Moreau's experiments; she experiences transhumanism and because of her experiences understands that the horror situated in animal experimentation lies within the animal's right to freedom. Throughout her experiences as a fish, Semi feels not just acceptance for her fate, like Catherine, but happiness: "The honest truth is, the fish-Semi part of me would be completely happy swimming, and measuring things, and thinking long, deep, dreamy sunlit thoughts… if it wasn't that I was stuck in this rotten little tiny pool."[224] Semi's preoccupation with her pool resituates her earlier experiences with Dr.

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222 Ann Halam, *Dr. Franklin's Island*, (New York: Laurel Leaf, 2002): 116.

223 Semi's transformation as a manta ray is totally complete; however, despite her total physical transformation, Semi (like her other female YA and film counterparts) retains something stubbornly insistent of her original species that is not eradicated by her biological transformation.

224 Halam, *Dr. Franklin's Island*, 93

Franklin, where she tried to convince him to free her, within animal rights advocacy.[225] Even as a fish, Semi's new mind asserts its autonomy and its desire to escape its confines, suggesting that human intelligence is not a necessary determining factor for the desiring of basic rights, like freedom.

Semi grows to accept and even appreciate her experiences as a fish which, while radically different from her human experiences, she sees as equal to her human experiences. Yet, like Lota and Aissa, when Semi regresses, even though the process is voluntary, she finds herself fearful of the enterprise:

> My thoughts weren't dreamy and slow. They were tangled up and frightened and confused. I tried to remember how happy I had been, cruising around in the water, full of strength and grace, eating plankton as easily as breathing. It was gone…. Semi-the-fish was heading off into the distance, and this other Semi was racing back, faster and faster— the girl who had been put through too many horrors and couldn't take much more.[226]

By taking Moreau's animal experimentation to the level of human experimentation, Halam further affirms the horror of losing one's fundamental rights. By framing Semi's experiences through the lens of animal experimentation, she suggests that those who experiment on animals become responsible for the animals' experiences as transhumans.

The fundamental core of transhumanism is that it does not privilege humanity as a categorical good over whatever we might become next. Halam's Semi is stuck in-between, her very nickname, a shortened form of Semirah, is a suggestion of her situation at the cusp. She is also on the cusp of two cultures: Jamaican and British at once. Unlike Juliet Moreau or Catherine Moreau, Semi is positioned in a place where she can be totally objective about Moreau's

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225 In this scene, Semi's requests for freedom are denied, because Franklin tells her that she is presumed dead. As with many justifications for animal experimentation, her rights are predicated upon her legal and intellectual capabilities, not her capacity for pain or fear.

226 Halam, *Dr. Franklin's Island*, 133

experimentation: she is not conflicted by her feelings for strange visitors to the island (she is the strange visitor), she isn't horrified by the Beast Folk (she is the hybrid creature), and she doesn't even see animality as an aberration (she has witnessed the beauty in it). Semi is an exemplary model for not only transhuman possibilities, but a truly accepting humanity in the present moment.

In *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*, Goss adapts Catherine Moreau alongside an ensemble cast of imagined nineteenth century characters: Mary Jekyll, Diana Hyde, Beatrice Rappaccini, and Justine Frankenstein round out the rest of the YA group. Some characters, like the daughters of Jekyll and Hyde, are invented whole cloth, filling likely gaps in the text. Justine, a reimagining of the doomed Justine Moritz, takes Frankenstein's last name when she is resurrected as the bride of Frankenstein's monster. All of the young women are given careful, critical voices in the text, inserting dialogic commentary into their own narrative. Catherine, for example, wonders "which of them would win, in a contest for the worst father? Frankenstein, Rappaccini, Jekyll, or Moreau?"[227] Not only are they given stories, but also these characters are given the opportunity to criticize the patriarchal implications of their source material.

Goss describes her decision to highlight these female characters as an attempt to answer the question "Why did so many of the mad scientists in nineteenth-century narratives create, or start creating but then destroy, female monsters?"[228] In an interview with *Washington Independent Review of Books*, Goss elaborates:

> I mean, in late-19th-century fiction, monsters in general die, but there's a sense that female monsters are even more deadly than their male counterparts. And some of them, like Frankenstein's female monster and the Puma Woman, get no speaking lines. Unlike

227 Goss, *Strange Case*, 340

228 Goss, *Strange Case*, 401

> Frankenstein's monster, whose narrative takes up a significant portion of the novel, they never get to tell their own stories. I wanted to hear those stories, but no one had written them…so I figured I would.[229]

Megan Shepherd, in a note to her readers at the end of *The Madman's Daughter,* remarks upon a similar desire to highlight the absence of women in Wells's text through Juliet: "Since there are no female characters in *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (not human ones, at least), I became curious to know how a young woman in that era would fit—well, or not fit—within the story world, and that is how Juliet's story was born."[230] Like Goss, Shepherd underscores the importance of seeing through or beyond Wells's text to the female bodies and minds that did not make it onto the pages of Wells's adventure novel but were an integral part of nineteenth-century society.

Both Goss's and Shepherd's approaches represent what Jeremy Rosen calls "minor-character elaboration," a practice that he explains is often viewed for its potentially progressive dimensions: "Authors and critics who describe minor-character elaborations as 'giving voice to the silenced' understand the redistribution of narrative attention as a kind of justice."[231] Yet Rosen himself remains skeptical of the political remediation of minor character elaboration, arguing that there is a tendency to assume that such practices increase the "mistakes of replacing the silence of the subaltern with speaking on her behalf and the overly sanguine notion that 'giving her a voice' remedies either historical or present-day wrongs."[232] Indeed, it would be difficult to argue that any of these projects (with the exception of, arguably, Goss's) are overtly feminist in nature. However, it's not an accident, nor does it lack remediative power, that women

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229 Craig Laurance Gidney, "An Interview with Theodora Goss," Washington Independent Review of Books, 24 October 2017, www.washingtonindependentreviewofbooks.com/index.php/features/an-interview-with-theodora-goss. Accessed 14 March 2019.

230 Theodora Goss, "Extras," *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*, (New York: Saga Press, 2017): 2.

231 Jeremy Rosen, *Minor Characters Have Their Day: Genre and the Contemporary Literary Marketplace*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016): 88.

232 Rosen, *Minor Characters*, 114

were inserted into Wells's text. Despite the differences between the films' puma characters and the protagonists of the YA texts discussed here, Lota, Aissa, Juliet, Catherine, and Semi are all representative of women who have been exploited in the name of science. Closer examination of such characters would go far in drawing attention to the ways women's bodies have been domesticated and the ways in which they might resist such domestication.

In one scene of Frankenheimer's film *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1996), Moreau stops Aissa as she attempts to give him a neck massage, trying only to ease his discomfort. At this moment, Moreau speaks a few lines that resonate deeply with the crisis that nature and women find themselves in: "Oh no. Oh, my god. Not so strong. You have no idea how strong you can be." As these Moreau adaptations show, women can and must find ways to assert that they know and appreciate and utilize exactly how strong they can be and will allow no men to tame them.

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Chapter Four: Animate Pleasure and Animal Power in Adaptations of *Dracula*

> The monster is difference made flesh, come to dwell among us. In its function as dialectical Other or third-term supplement, the monster is an incorporation of the Outside, the Beyond— of all those loci that are rhetorically placed as distinct but originate Within. Any kind of alterity can be inscribed across (constructed through) the monstrous body, but for the most part monstrous difference tends to be cultural, political, racial, economic, sexual.
> — Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, Monster Culture: 7 Theses

As far as vampires go, Count Dracula appears monolithic. Dubbed by scholars and popular culture consumers alike as the "King Vampire,"[233] "The Vampire,"[234] and the "Ur-Vampire,"[235] Dracula is a testament to the power of adaptation; he indelibly marks all the vampires who have come after him. In "Buffy vs. Dracula" (2000), Buffy Summers gushes about her meeting with the famous Count as if describing an encounter with a celebrity, telling her friends "I told you he'd heard of me, right? I mean, can you believe that? Count Famous heard of me."[236] When her friend Willow asks if Dracula was sexy, Buffy replies "Kinda. He of the dark penetrating eyes and lilty accent."[237] Such is the power of Dracula that even a vampire slayer (and its franchise, which continued to adapt Count Famous in their comic books) must fall under his spell. Yet what is most dangerous about Dracula in this television show and across most adaptations is not *what* he is, but how he makes the characters—and by extension, readers and viewers—feel. Dracula's threat to Buffy is through his forbidden sexual allure, which is not only nearly irresistible, but located at least partially in his mystique. Or, as Buffy puts it when Dracula

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233Judith Halberstam, "Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's Dracula," *Victorian Studies* 36, no. 3 (1993): 345.

234Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995): 131.

235Christina Morin, "The Cambridge Companion to Dracula," *Irish Gothic Journal* no. 18 (Autumn, 2020): 192-195.

236 *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Season 5, episode 1, "Buffy vs. Dracula," dir. David Soloman, written by Marti Noxon, performed by Sarah Michelle Gellar, Rudolf Martin, and Alyson Hannigan, aired 26 September 2000, The WB Television Network,

237 "Buffy vs. Dracula"

asks why she thinks she can't resist him: "Cause you're famous?"[238] Like the goblins of Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (see Chapter Two), Dracula's sexuality awakens animal appetites that threaten what it means to be human.

However monolithic Dracula might be today, he's an important figure in adaptation not only because of his celebrity, but because he was *not* monolithic in the nineteenth century. Instead, he was just one in a long line of vampires, who began their "significant literary life in 1816, with the self-creations of Byron."[239] Before that, as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari put it, "From 1730 to 1735, all we hear about are vampires."[240] Before that, tales about vampires in folklore were plentiful, with the legend alive and well in Eastern Europe at least as late as 2006 with the attempted staking of the deceased Serbian president, Slobodan Milošević.[241] This is the tradition that Dracula is built from: not monolithic at all but pieced together from legends and popular literary influences as varied as Samuel Taylor Coleridge's eponymous *Christabel* (1800), John Polidori's Lord Ruthven in *The Vampyre* (1819), John Keats's seductive hybrid in *Lamia* (1820), James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney the Vampire* (1845-1847), Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Good Lady Ducayne* (1869), and Sheridan LeFanu's Carmilla Karnstein in *Carmilla* (1872), among others. Dracula is himself a figure of adaptation, borrowing his effusive sexuality, his solitude, and his inhumanness from the vampires who came before him. Yet it is also Dracula, far more than his predecessors, who enjoys an afterlife in innumerable adaptations. It is he, who, as Nina Auerbach notes, we picture when we think of vampires: "He is always male,

238 "Buffy vs. Dracula"

239 Auerbach, 1

240Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987): 201

241 Nick Groom, *The Vampire: A New History*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018): 204

always Dracula, and always emanating from untouchable dark places in our minds."[242] So what makes Dracula so enduring?

I argue that animality and adaptation are what make him so enduring. For many scholars, his longevity is due to his sexuality, which is certainly a branch on this culture-text's evolutionary tree. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that any arguments about Dracula's sexuality are also necessarily rooted in his animality. As "Buffy vs. Dracula" illustrates so well, Dracula's irresistible sexuality is a major hinge point across all adaptations and most scholarly criticism. His sexuality is an adaptational hinge point that finds its source in nineteenth-century scientific theories about animality. This depiction makes sense, given that another, often overshadowed, hinge point across adaptations of *Dracula* is his shape-shifting ability. Dracula's affinity with animals is not only a huge feature of Stoker's text, but is almost universally reproduced across adaptations. He has the power to control "all the meaner things: the rat, and the owl, and the bat—the moth, and the fox, and the wolf," and he can literally transform into a bat, a wolf, a dog, an owl, a praying mantis, and more in his adaptations.[243] Indeed, Auerbach pointed out this unique aspect of Dracula in 1995's *Our Vampires, Ourselves,* going so far as to note that "Without his furtive animalism, Dracula would never have survived to metamorphose on film."[244] Despite Auerbach's insistence on the importance of Dracula's animality, this aspect of his character has gone relatively unexplored in criticism. Certainly that animality has become overshadowed by discussions of his excessive sexuality, with many scholars opening their sex-based arguments with such *apologia* as Kathleen Spencer's note that "interpreting Dracula's

242 Auerbach, 131

243 Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, Ed. Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1997): 209

244 Auerbach, 94

sexual substrata has become something of a cottage industry of late."[245] I assert that these two excesses of Dracula's personality, which are two of the narrative's most consistently reproduced hinge points, are intimately intertwined. Bram Stoker's novel was influenced by nineteenth-century fears of degeneration and devolution, which later evolved through adaptation into more complex explorations of what it means to be human in the first place.

Dracula's hybrid nature makes his excessive sexuality particularly monstrous. The Count, like all good monsters, speaks to a highly contentious debate about humanity's place in the natural world which began in the nineteenth century and continues today. Dracula's hybrid body, not quite human and not quite animal, is a battleground for deciding what humans are: is it their physiognomy? Their respect for human cultural customs, such as marriage? Their ability to feel sorrow at their monstrous circumstances? Certainly, Dracula has, at one time or another, violated all of these strictures. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen points out that monsters refuse to be classified: "they are disturbing hybrids whose externally incoherent bodies resist attempts to include them in any systematic structuration. And so the monster is dangerous, a form suspended between forms that threatens to smash distinctions."[246] When every version of Dracula appears to us in this hybrid form— with blood dripping from fangs or hairy-palmed or transformed into the shape of a wolf or bat—why do we (as readers, viewers, artists, and consumers) continue to be seduced by him? This chapter will largely be concerned with the thrall of the vampire as explored in adaptations of Bram Stoker's *Dracula.* I will explore Dracula himself and the way his animality and sexuality are rooted in nineteenth-century fears of degeneration and devolution. As

245 Kathleen L. Spencer, "Purity and Danger: Dracula, the Urban Gothic, and the Late Victorian Degeneracy Crisis," *ELH* 59, no. 1, (1992): 197

246Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, Ed, *Monster Theory*, (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 1996): 6

adaptations push to humanize Dracula as a sympathetic figure, they also take great pains to represent him animalistically, even when doing so poses technical or financial difficulties.

While Dracula's threat is tied to his animality, three female vampires, also highly sexualized, appear in the culture-text. Though many adaptations make much of Dracula's solitude, he is accompanied by three vampire Brides and at least one woman who makes the full transformation from human to vampire, represented in Stoker's text as Lucy Westenra. In the second part of this chapter, I will trace the genealogy of the vampire women in adaptations, marking not only their remarkable lasciviousness, but also their representative homogeneity. In adaptation, making the Brides or Lucy too animalistic tends to coincide with a sense that this will also make them less desirable, and thus less of a threat to their intended victims. Their power seems to lie in their hypersexuality, unlike Dracula's, which equally lies in his vastly expanded powers of transformation. In this section, I will argue that when the Brides and Lucy are given the ability to be fully animal in adaptation, they become far more empowered, both in a literal sense and as individuals whose animalistic qualities give them unprecedented agency.

Like many of the most frightening monsters, Dracula is highly contagious: sexually, animalistically, and culturally. Jeffrey Weinstock says, in "A Genealogy of Monsters" that "narrative elicits curiosity—how will the monster be dealt with? Will the heroes win? If our curiosity is stronger than our repulsion, we keep turning the pages, or our eyes stay glued to the screen."[247] Yet this is not always the case with adaptation, especially for audiences who are familiar with various versions of the same story. Linda Hutcheon says that for audiences who are familiar with the culture-text, the repetitive nature of adaptation is like a ritual that "brings comfort, a fuller understanding, and the confidence that comes with the sense of knowing what is

247 Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, "A Genealogy of Monster Theory," *The Monster Theory Reader*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020): 19

about to happen next."[248] Adaptation is also about the thrill of finding out *how* the narrative will happen in its next iteration: How will the adapter justify Dracula's sexuality? How will the adaptation represent his monstrosity? How will they situate Dracula on the continuum from devolved monster to posthuman hybrid? These questions are particularly relevant for culture-texts like *Dracula,* where few audiences come to the narrative without expectations. In tracing the genealogy of the *Dracula* narrative, important attitudes about humanity's place on the monstrous continuum are revealed.

I. Classifying the Vampire Body: Dracula as Degenerate Sexual Partner/Predator

Dracula's body receives the most attention in scholarship because of its eroticism, but what is remarkable about the Count's body is its hybridity. The nineteenth century was defined by systems of classification and categorization; nascent scientists like Carl Linnaeus, Erasmus Darwin, and Charles Lyell had pioneered a craze of natural science that had prompted everyone from Prince Albert to working-class amateurs to build amateur collections of fossils, insects, and other organisms.[249] Every part of the natural world, even the parts that were currently being explored by Europeans, could be neatly organized according to the principles of classification. In an age when classification was more important than ever, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) resisted categorization on the most fundamental levels. Not quite human and not quite animal, Stoker's *Dracula* was one of the first examples of a vampire novel in which the horror of the monster is that it can invisibly blend into both the human world and the non-human animal world: "Dracula's animal-human hybridism makes him more dramatically compelling, more interesting,

248 Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd Edition, (London: Routledge Press, 2006): 114

249 Lynn Barber, *The Heyday of Natural History*, (London: Jonathan Cape Limited, 1980): 14.

than a leopard-or a human-sized vampire bat-could ever be."[250] As Nina Auerbach notes, one of the first illustrations for Stoker's *Dracula* captures a scene in which the Count is climbing head-first down a window of his castle, "just as a lizard moves along a wall."[251] While our associations of the Count might today involve the penetration of fangs or the drama of capes, for the Victorian audience, the terror of Dracula was that he fully resisted categorization, or as Noël Carroll puts it "the opposition of such cultural categories in the biology of the horrific creatures portend further oppositions."[252] For a Victorian audience, Dracula's fusion of animality— in his ability to communicate with animals and in his ability to become one— with humanity presented a number of terrifying social oppositions. Chief amongst these was Dracula's place (or lack thereof) in the natural world.

Though vampires are decidedly unnatural, Stoker uses natural science to justify Dracula's place in the evolutionary tree of life. Dracula's close affiliation with animals alone might be enough to argue that Stoker's *Dracula* is associated with natural science, but the introduction of Professor Abraham Van Helsing makes those connections far more explicit. Throughout Stoker's *Dracula,* natural science is used to explain and justify the hunting of Count Dracula. Van Helsing uses comparative anatomy to prepare John Seward for the biological possibility of vampires, relating the vampire's long life to the longevity of tortoises, elephants, parrots, and toads who, he says, have been discovered in rocks after thousands of years, "because science has vouched for the fact."[253] Later, Van Helsing and Seward visit a doctor treating Lucy's child

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250 Mathias Clasen, "Attention, Predation, Counterintuition: Why Dracula Won't Die," *Style* 46, no. 3, (2012): 388

251 Stoker, 39. Note that earlier vampire texts, like *Christabel* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and *Carmilla* by Sheridan Le Fanu also featured vampires who could transform into animals. Dracula's animality, then, has earlier roots, though it extends those branches of animality much further than its predecessors.

252 Noël Carroll, "Fantastic Biologies and the Structures of Horrific Imagery," *The Monster Theory Reader*, Ed. Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020): 141

253 Stories of entombed animals were common in scientific writings of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries; however in the 1820s, William Buckland performed a series experiments that proved toads could not

victims who suggests that the bite marks might be from "some animal, perhaps a rat; but for his own part, he was inclined to think that it was one of the bats that are so numerous on the northern heights of London," going so far as to suggest that perhaps a vampire bat might have escaped the Zoological Gardens and mated with one of these native bats.[254] Stoker consistently points to the natural world as a source of unknowable natural phenomenon and the existence of the vampire is bolstered by its association with the mundane and pragmatic field of science. As Aspasia Stephanou notes, "the spectre of science perversely lends gravitas and reason to superstition."[255]

As many scholars have pointed out, Stoker's novel created a checklist of qualities that subsequent vampires are often expected to possess, including: blood-drinking from the neck, lack of reflection, shape-shifting, hypnosis, and more. As Auerbach points out, the classificatory approach that Van Helsing takes to Dracula adapts the scattered and ambiguous folkloric traits of vampirism into a unified whole, creating in essence a new species.[256] Indeed, the tactics that the human characters take in hunting down Dracula rely not so much on strength or wit, but in ascertaining Dracula's behavioral characteristics through Van Helsing's expert advice.

Following *On the Origin of Species* (1859), the perceived lack of categorical stability between humans and animals was distressing to Victorians because it, like Count Dracula, suggested that there was a dangerously thin boundary between animals and humans. For some, *Origin* proposed the cosmically horrifying concept that humans were not the exalted center of a religious schema. For others, *Origin* advanced the equally disconcerting notion that the humans, like other animals, could not only degenerate back into their animalistic origins, but might even

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survive entombment. Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, Ed. Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1997): 172

254 Stoker, 174

255 Aspasia Stephanou, "A 'Ghastly' Operation: Transfusing Blood, Science, and the Supernatural in Vampire Texts," *Gothic Studies* 15, no. 2, (2013): 60.

256 Auerbach, 65

become extinct. Stoker's *Dracula* encapsulates this horror perfectly when Jonathan Harker at last realizes that the Count is not human:

> this was the being I was helping to transfer to London, where, perhaps, for centuries to come he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless.[257]

At this point in the novel, Jonathan has been given very few concrete reasons to be horrified by Dracula. He knows that he is being held captive in Transylvania and suspects that Dracula means to dispose of him rather than ever letting him return to London. He also suspects that Dracula might have odd eating habits (Dracula has behaved suspiciously when Jonathan cut himself and, in a dreamlike state, Jonathan witnessed Dracula throw a child-sized bag to his Brides). Most of the disturbing things he has seen are either animalistic in nature, such as Dracula's lizard-crawling and affinity with wolves or sexual in nature, such as his seduction by the Brides and Dracula's oft-adapted homoerotic declaration "This man belongs to me!"[258] What Jonathan does *not* know is how Dracula procreates or if he is even capable of the act of reproduction. So it is notable that the culmination of Jonathan's horror is in the unfounded fear that Dracula might "create a new and ever-widening circle" of vampires, in other words, propagation of the species.[259]

Jonathan's fear of vampiric proliferation is less unfounded if Dracula is considered within the realm of Victorian natural science, which is intimately concerned with both sexuality and animality. As nineteenth-century evolutionary scientists struggled to understand how theories of natural and sexual selection affected humanity's place in the natural world, social structures like love and marriage were held up as proof of white, European supremacy over animals: "To

257 Stoker, 53

258 Stoker, 43

259 Stoker, 53

scientists and scientific popularizers, studying love from the perspective of biology made human romance even more provocative and, at the same time, offered compelling evidence for Darwinian evolution."[260] The acts of love, marriage, and procreation, then, became deeply intertwined with one another as evidence of a distinctly human approach to heredity. While later Draculas, such as John Badham's Frank Langella (1979) and Francis Ford Coppola's Gary Oldman (1992) would associate the act of penetration with love for their victims, most versions of Dracula, including Stoker's, decouple love (or marriage) from eroticism. Dracula is erotic for eroticism's sake and procreative for procreation's sake, both deeply unsettling to Victorian sensibilities because Dracula approaches sex like an animal.

Another reason that Dracula's approach to sex is animalistic is that it is indiscriminate and dangerously excessive in regards to procreation. As many postcolonial critiques of *Dracula* (1897) note, Dracula is a non-British male who invariably reproduces with every woman he comes into (erotic, animal) contact with.[261] Dracula presents a threat to heredity or literal bloodlines.[262] As such, his animal affinities are also associated with his degeneracy or evidence that he is unfit to reproduce with humans, that he will inevitably push them backwards on the evolutionary tree, a common theory in nineteenth-century Europe. This kind of devolutionary theory of degeneration was incredibly popular:

> It is true that it was sufficiently irrational, obsessive, and persecutory to explain every kind of evil, from individual illness to national economic decline to the decay of an

260 Kimberly A. Hamlin, "The Birds and the Bees: Darwin's Evolutionary Approach to Sexuality," *Darwin in Atlantic Cultures : Evolutionary Visions of Race, Gender, and Sexuality*, Ed. Jeanette Eileen Jones and Patrick B. Sharp, (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2009): 57-58

261 Iain Robert Smith and Constantine Verevis, eds, *Transnational Film Remakes*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017).

262 It should be noted that Count Dracula does not seem to come into indiscriminate contact with his victims. While his methods of choice are obscured by Stoker, he does seem to be selective in his feeding and breeding habits, though Jonathan nevertheless is convinced that Dracula will not be so careful in his habits once safely ensconced in Britain.

> empire, and to demonize any group or individual perceived as threatening or merely different. But degeneration theory also swept across Europe.[263]

As a result, Eastern European figures like Dracula might have been considered as a threat to British pedigree even if he had not also presented animalistic attributes. While natural philosophers had always been concerned with heredity, evolution made Victorians paradoxically paranoid that any choice in breeding might be irreversible. As Cynthia Eagle Russett notes, "Scientists were increasingly prone to stress the centrality of heredity in the making of personality and intelligence, and to emphasize their permanence rather than their amenability to change and development."[264] Therefore, Dracula is not only animalistic and therefore monstrous, his murderous impulses are an inevitable result of his degenerate biology. By extension, any of his offspring, including (presumably) the Brides, Lucy, and Mina, cannot help but become murderous and animalistic in turn.

The source for the *Dracula* culture-text, Bram Stoker's novel, establishes these early associations between Dracula, animality, and degenerate biology, and they continue to gain prominence in adaptation. The earliest adaptation of Stoker's *Dracula* associates Count Dracula with degenerate animality and solidifies it as the predominant way of thinking about the Count's hybridity. *Mörkrets makter* (1900) and *Makt Myrkranna* (1901) are the earliest known textual adaptations of Bram Stoker's *Dracula. Makt Myrkranna* was originally published in Icelandic and acknowledged by many as the first authorized translation of *Dracula,* as it contains substantial alterations from Stoker's source text. The text's English-language translator, Hans de Roos, brought the adaptation to light in 2016, with the publication of his translation, *Powers of*

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263 Jonathan Dollimore, "Perversion, Degeneration, and the Death Drive," *Sexualities in Victorian Britain*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996): 97

264 Cynthia Eagle Russett, *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991):160

Darkness. De Roos noted that many changes were made to *Makt Myrkranna*; this was not a simple translation from English to Icelandic. De Roos originally attributed the adaptations to Stoker's unpublished notes, noting that some of the elements of *Makt Myrkranna* are similar to Stoker's outlines and plans for *Dracula's Guest* (1914), which was deleted from *Dracula* (1897) by Stoker's editors prior to publication. A preface to the Icelandic adaptation was signed with the initials "B.M.," lending further credibility to the idea that Stoker had authorized the translation's changes. Later, though, de Roos realized that the changes made in *Makt Myrkranna* could actually be traced to a slightly older, seemingly-unauthorized, heavily plagiarized, Swedish translation of *Dracula* (1897) called *Mörkrets makter* (1900), which also roughly translates to *Powers of Darkness*.[265] There are currently no English translations of *Mörkrets makter,* but an English language translation of *Makt Myrkranna* by de Roos has been widely available since 2016; nevertheless, other than the preface, the Icelandic adaptation has remained largely disregarded in contemporary criticism, perhaps because until de Roos's translation, the text was largely only available for analysis by scholars fluent in Icelandic. For similar reasons, there is very little current scholarship about *Mörkrets makter*, though de Roos hopes to translate the Swedish version; due to a lack of available translation, I will also focus here on the Iceland adaptation.

Makt Myrkranna establishes patterns about sexuality, heredity, and degeneracy, xenophobia and racism that later adapters often reproduce. One of the most "original" changes to the text is the addition of a host of ape men who worship Dracula with human sacrifice. Jonathan

265 Hans Corneel De Roos, "The origin of the first Dracula adaptation," *Philology and Cultural Studies* 10 (59), no. 1, (2017): 131-146.

describes these 150 people as acolytes of Dracula: "Never have I seen faces with such distinct animalistic features."[266] The ape men are

> all bare to the waist, and it was horrendous to see their yellowish-brown frames, with muscular structures more like that of apes than humans. When in full harmony, the human body is the noblest work of nature, but here, the combination of their primitive look, build and posture created something more beastly than human.[267]

As the ape men attack a young woman, Jonathan repeatedly emphasizes their animal features. In a scene that could have been taken out of H.G. Wells's Beast Folk from *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896), these animalistic creatures pose a sharp contrast to Dracula's beautiful vampire Bride, who successfully seduces Jonathan throughout the Icelandic translation. Yet they emphasize the same fear of degenerate and excessive procreation that Jonathan fears in Stoker's *Dracula.*

The association of Dracula's acolytes with animals is explicitly steeped in social Darwinian fears that the British might be usurped evolutionarily by racialized Others. According to de Roos, "In its description of the primitive, dark-skinned adepts of the Count, *Mörkrets makter* specifically mentions Bushmen, Papuas, Fuegians and 'Tschutscher' (Chuckchi people)."[268] Dracula's acolytes, then, and by contrast Dracula himself are racist caricatures who represent African, Oceanic, South American, and indigenous peoples as being devolved, cannibalistic, and animalistic humans. Though Jonathan has no single moment of revelation that he is helping his Eastern European captor to overtake Britain, Dracula makes it clear that he intends to profusely reproduce once he is in Britain by making repeated references to Darwinian evolution. When Jonathan catches a glimpse of an ape man while wandering the castle, Dracula

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266 Vladimir Ásmundsson, *Makt Myrkranna (Powers of Darkness): The Lost Version of Dracula*, Trans. from Icelandic Hans Corneel de Roos, (New York: Overlook Duckworth, 2016): 183.

267 Ásmundsson, 184

268 De Roos, 143

explains it away as a cat, but adds "it is their instinct to hunt rats and mice; natural laws are the same everywhere: the stronger and smarter creatures live off the weak and dumb."[269] This scene echoes a Darwinian theory of "survival of the fittest" that is suggestive of the Nietzschean theory of the ubermensch and the social Darwinian philosophy oft-cited by colonizers and genocidal groups: "might makes right."

In *Makt Myrkranna,* Dracula also expresses his obsession with heredity and family lineage in conversations with Jonathan. The vampire speaks of his familial lineage in similar terms to the imagined cat: "the strongest must prevail and conquer the world. Those who are weak are only created to satisfy the needs of others more powerful."[270] Dracula does not see his eating habits as anything other than natural selection, and this is made explicit in the adaptation when Jonathan remarks "As far as I could follow, it was Darwin's law fluttering vaguely through the Count's mind, but he had adapted it in its own way."[271] Van Helsing and friends are obligated to stop the spread of vampires in Britain by killing Lucy, Dracula, and the three Brides because they can and therefore must. Similarly, *Makt Myrkranna*'s Dracula sees himself as doing something entirely natural. He preys on humans not because he is morally deficient (at least, not by his own standards), but because it is a matter of survival of the fittest. The terror here is not simply that Dracula is a monster but instead that he is representative of a next step in evolution—and that the next step is murderous, animalistic, and dangerously sexual.

Yet however much Dracula might insist that his breeding is natural and evolutionarily progressive, adaptations of Stoker's *Dracula* continue *Makt Myrkranna'*s assertion that Dracula's sexuality and animality are ultimately degenerative. In F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu*

269 Ásmundsson, 113

270 Ásmundsson, 125

271 Ásmundsson, 125

(1922), for example, Count Orlok is closely associated with animals, from his costuming and prosthetics to the parasitic plague that the Count embodies. Due to copyright battles, Murnau's production makes many superficial changes to the plot and characters. Notably, Murnau associates Dracula's arrival from Transylvania to Wisborg, Germany with a plague and, specifically, plague rats. In this way, *Nosferatu* sets the tone for a great deal of contemporary literary criticism which sees associations between Dracula and any number of diseases, including rabies, malaria, and venereal diseases like syphilis and HIV. If the primary question in regard to degeneration is "At what point in a downward slide did a human being cross over the line into animality?" then Count Orlok is the answer.[272] With an animal's face, Murnau's vampire is incapable of erotic seduction; indeed, he can only be defeated by the willing submission of a woman to his physical desires. He is degeneracy incarnate: physically animalistic, disease-bearing, and unattractive, he is a far cry from Stoker's erotic Count.

In his repulsiveness, Murnau's Orlok is an outlier amongst Draculas; for most, their contagious sexuality and animality are welcomed by their victims as a small price to pay for his erotic visitations. For example, in Terence Fisher's *Horror of Dracula* (1958), Christopher Lee's snarling, befanged Dracula manages to entice his victims to welcome his embrace. As Auerbach notes, "he is an emanation of the anger, pride, and sexuality that lie dormant in the women themselves. Stoker's nightmare of violation becomes a dream of female self-possession."[273] The Lucy character, for example, willingly walks outside of her house to wait for Dracula's embrace, even exposing her neck for better access. When Dracula encounters Mina in her home, she locks eyes with him and backs him into her bedroom, ending the journey sprawled out on her bed. Notably, Lee's animalistic fangs and makeup do not make his female victims more frightened of

272 Spencer, 204

273 Auerbach, 124

him; the sight of his fangs actually makes Mina tremble in what appears to be anticipation before he lunges towards her, only to gently grab her face.

Even when adaptations try to deemphasize Dracula's supernatural powers, his association with animals is clear. Though the Hammer Productions film is the first visual adaptation to give Dracula fangs, Fisher takes pains to avoid any shape-shifting. According to Hammer screenplay writer Jimmy Sangster, "I thought that the idea of being able to change into a bat or a wolf or anything like that made the film seem more like a fairy tale than it needed to be. I tried to ground the script to some extent to reality."[274] Despite this desire, Fisher used real animals to create a soundtrack for Dracula's exploits. Any time wolves or dogs are howling, Dracula is sure to be close at hand, which is echoed in Stoker's novel and other film adaptations, like John Badham's *Dracula* (1979), which begins and ends with the howl of a wolf. Additionally, as Hammer Productions trotted out Lee to step into Dracula's cape over and over again, the films both emphasized Dracula's excessive, contagious sexuality and his increasing animality, making his degeneration something that could be tracked filmically as well as hereditarily: "Increasingly inarticulate, he became more animal and less chic."[275] Max Schreck and Christopher Lee's Counts were representative of the ways in which degeneration could destroy. However, many film Draculas were frightening *because* of how they seemed to inspire devotion or even love.

274 Ian Berriman, "*Dracula*: FROM THE SFX ARCHIVES," SFX, 26 May 2013, https://www.gamesradar.com/dracula-from-the-sfx-archives/

275 Auerbach, 129

II. Loving the Humanized Body: Dracula as a Romantic Hero

The romantic vampire of cinema has its roots in the theatrical history of *Dracula*.[276] Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee are arguably the two most influential Draculas in cinema as both "were not only influential and significant within their domestic spheres but they were also exported widely and became models for other industries to emulate."[277] However, these two early cinematic productions were both a response to the earliest stage productions of *Dracula.* Though *Dracula* was only performed once in an authorized stage production during Bram Stoker's lifetime—his own, "dreadful" reading in order to establish stage copyright— the theater still has an indelible stamp upon *Dracula's* physicality and its association with animals and sexuality.[278] In 1924, Hamilton Deane, an actor and admirer of Stoker's, produced a successful stage adaptation of *Dracula,* which he later revised for the American stage with John Balderston. This theatrical adaptation starred Lugosi, whose later film portrayal would be one of Dracula's most recognizable, in Universal's *Dracula* (1931) and *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948).[279] Therefore, it is particularly significant that the Deane-Balderston play puts an emphasis on animality, even when doing so presented technological difficulties in capturing the wild (or complex, manufactured) animals on film.

The Deane-Balderston stage directions might be primarily responsible for the close association of Dracula with animals, especially bats. In contemporary reviews, Dracula was

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276 The romantic vampire of literature, meanwhile, may find its roots in the Byronic vampire of George Gordon Byron's "Fragment of a Novel" (1819) or John Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819), which also features a vampire patterned off of Lord Byron.

277 Iain Robert Smith and Constantine Verevis, eds, *Transnational Film Remakes*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017): 73

278 Catherine Wynne, "Dracula on Stage," *The Cambridge Companion to Dracula*, Ed. Roger Lockhurst, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017): 168.

279 Nor was this the last time the Deane-Balderston play would have such influence. In 1977, Frank Langella reprised the stage role of Dracula and went on to star as his own recognizable film Dracula (1979). Both Lugosi and Langella's performances would be adapted, mimicked, and parodied in dozens of subsequent adaptations

almost universally referred to as a Werewolf, even though he appears as a bat at least as often in the source text. Yet Deane-Balderston has many stage directions requesting the use of props and costuming to evoke the bat's presence in the play. Even Dracula's famous cape has its origins in its association with bats: "Deane instructs that the 'Inverness' cape 'must be heavily wired, so that when face downwards it assumes the shape of a Bat's Wings.'"[280] Over time, this costuming choice would become a staple of Dracula's wardrobe, popularized by most Draculas (and Dracula lookalikes) from Bela Lugosi to *Sesame Street's* Count Von Count. Yet it is important to note that originally this costuming choice was not merely borne from a desire to make Dracula fashionable, but rather to indicate his association with animals, especially when it might have been difficult to communicate more subtle details, like fangs or claws, from the stage.

By the time that Lugosi moved from stage to screen, his version of Dracula had become notably sophisticated and sensual, even as the media change to film continued to emphasize his association with animals, including bats, wolves, rats, spiders, and even armadillos. At the same time, Dracula is notably human in appearance: "Bela Lugosi's Dracula is the first who bears no monstrous marks: he is fangless, solid, and elegantly human."[281] Even as Lugosi's Dracula "demands our love," he seems to suggest that doing so is dangerous.[282] Elegantly sensual but still operating, like his stage counterpart, outside of the bounds of love or marriage, Dracula seemingly human exterior masks the danger of submitting to his animal embrace. Just as Katherine Spencer notes about Stoker's Dracula, Lugosi is "in sexual terms, more seducer than rapist. For a modern reader, this might lessen the crime, but for Victorians seduction would have been infinitely worse. In Victorian theory, it is sexual desire rather than sexual activity that is the

280 Wynne, 167

281 Auerbach, 113

282 Auerbach, 115

true source of danger; and as Mina herself makes clear, she experiences desire under Dracula's attentions." [283] Similarly, Mina finds herself seduced by Dracula in Browning's 1931 film. The Count shares none of the exterior signs of degeneration that haunt Schreck's Count Orlok or even Christopher Lee's snarling Dracula, but Lugosi nonetheless is the "sexy personification of death."[284] While it is true that Lugosi appears to be human in appearance, the fact that director Tod Browning chooses to surround his vampire with live animals suggests that the most dangerous thing about this Dracula is his ability to appear entirely human or entirely animal, while never fully abandoning either form.

While in the Victorian era, degeneration was assumed to be visible to the naked eye, Deane-Balderston and Lugosi are the first in a long line of twentieth-century adapters to suggest that devolution might be invisible. As Noël Carroll notes, this is a classic trait of monsters:

> Often the horror of horrific creatures is not something that can be perceived by the naked eye or that comes through a description of the look of the monster. Frequently, in such cases, the horrific being is surrounded by objects that we antecedently take to be objects of disgust and/or phobia.[285]

Surrounding Dracula with animals becomes a metonym for their monstrosity, a way in which their degeneration cannot help but infect their surroundings with dangerous animality. Deane-Balderston and Browning solidify Dracula's association not only with predatory animals (the wolf, the vampire bat), but also with vermin: rats and spiders, primarily. That the magnificent set pieces of the Browning production are draped in spider webs becomes a staple of subsequent productions.

By contrast, Werner Herzog's 1979 recreation of F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922) associates Dracula with not only animality but excessive, uncontrollable animality, just as he

283 Spencer, 217

284 Auerbach, 115

285 Carroll, 144

emphasizes Dracula's excessive, uncontrollable sexuality. As physically repellent as Max Schreck's Count Orlok, Herzog's Count Dracula (played by Klaus Klinski) shares the same clawed fingers, batlike ears, and snakelike fangs as his German predecessor. Like Schreck's Orlok, Klinski's Dracula moves inhumanly whenever he is on camera, always slinking or hovering over other characters. Klinski also adds an audio element to this animalistic association, panting heavily through his mouth in most of his scenes, a feature that would have been impossible in Murnau's silent production. Yet the entire project's most notable retention from the 1922 *Nosferatu* is the plague rat narrative, which Herzog takes to an extreme. Its most notable deviation is the sexuality and emotional depth that Klinski brings to his character. I assert that these two hinge points are related in their effect upon the viewer.

Throughout Herzog's *Nosferatu the Vampyre*, live animals are used to set up a dichotomy between the tame, domesticated animals of the home and the wild animals associated with Count Dracula. During the full duration of the film's opening credits, a kitten plays while a caged bird quietly sings in the house of Jonathan and Lucy Harker.[286] By contrast, Herzog surrounds Dracula with a multitude of live animals, including bats, who —apart from their periodic sinister appearances— also drive Dracula's carriage. Rats also signal Dracula's presence. As the town's residents begin to die under mysterious circumstances, their cause of death is attributed to the plague. Herzog used over 10,000 real rats for the production, many of which he attempted to dye grey. However, the logistics of using these rats outside of a sound stage quickly slipped into questionably ethical territory. Not only was Herzog compelled to engage in duplicitousness with the city of Delft, where much of the film was shot and which did not desire for thousands of live rats to be released into its streets, but the process of dyeing and storing the rats meant that

286 Herzog's film, like many others, dating back to the Deane-Balderston stage production, merges the Lucy Westenra and Mina Murray characters, creating the amalgam of Lucy Harker.

thousands of them perished before production. In one of the film's most striking scenes, hundreds of rats swarm the town's main street as residents have their "last supper" before the plague and death. In this scene, some live rats can be seen crawling over deceased rats to access the feast. The scene and its animal cruelty is evidence of Herzog's consistent desire to associate Dracula with not only with animals, but also with a kind of an invasive, overwhelming animality. The film seems to suggest that humans, as well as vampires, can be associated with animals and that there are inherently "good" animals, which are domesticated—horses, kittens, birds, and farm animals— and are under threat by "bad," wild animals— bats, rats, and wolves. The vampire, then, is an invasive species, a kind of animal that cannot be tamed or controlled and instead, by nature of its very presence, harms its environment.

Taming Count Dracula (sexually) is what Lucy Harker must do in *Nosferatu the Vampyre* in order to escape his excessive, destructive presence. Just as in the Murnau production, the only cure to Dracula's threat is the willing physical submission of a woman to his desires. Herzog, however, emphasizes the sexual undertones of the scene, with Klinski's Dracula grabbing Lucy's breast while he sucks her blood and pants over her prone form (see Fig. 4.1). This development is one of the first departures in adaptations of the *Dracula* culture-text from the idea that outward degeneration must equal inner degeneration. While Klinski's Dracula is morally and physically repellent, he is also sympathetic. In this way, Herzog heralds a new kind of Dracula, one that is still a threat, but nonetheless is "an attempt to push the 'genre' in a new direction. My vampire comes across as so profoundly human, so parched for love, so miserable in his solitude, and so incurably sad that two minutes into watching the audience no longer sees the ugliness in his long nails, his pointed ears, and his snake-like teeth."[287] Yet, of course, the audience *does* see these

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things. That is precisely why the image of Dracula sucking from Lucy's neck while holding her breast is so disturbing, because it is an image of profound animality that feels, in its groping sexuality, profoundly human. Lucy, like the viewer, is "split between attraction and repulsion, between horror and love. You see this very clearly in one of the final sequences, when the vampire goes to find her in her room. She then gives herself to him with horror but also with revelry and sensual delight."[288] Murnau's animalistic vampire cannot break free from the genre, because ultimately he is still a threat, not to heredity or the purity of the female body, but to what monstrosities can be considered fully human or fully animal.

Figure 4.1: Werner Herzog, dir, *Nosferatu the Vampyre*, Perf. Klaus Klinski, 1979; Amazon Prime Video, 20 March 2021.

Herzog's film was not the only one to push the boundaries of the vampire genre in the 1970s. As Auerbach notes of vampires from this decade, they hover "between animal and angel, they are paragons of emotional complexity and discernment, stealing from Van Helsing the role of knower but adding a tenderness and ineffable sorrow human beings have become too

288 Mizrahi

monstrous to comprehend."[289] In other words, vampires of the 1970s and beyond follow the same trend that Herzog's sympathetic Count Dracula does, though with more human features and with more success. These are the first vampires who buck the Victorian idea that the animal appetites of the vampire are antithetical to love or even marriage. These vampires can do it all, and they do it partially as a response to the stereotype of the repressed Victorian. John Badham's *Dracula* (1979), Dan Curtis's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1973), and Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) are all set in the Victorian era, and each features vampires who not only win love and adoration, but also suggest that the bonds of marriage can transcend even death. As Lawrence Birken notes, "Following Darwin, sexologists in the last quarter of the nineteenth century conceived of the modification of lust by love, of egotism by altruism, as a slow 'evolutionary' process extending over eons."[290] Marriage became the standard by which Victorians measured their humanity in relation to animals, and the Draculas of these films were not only capable of love (unlike Stoker's Dracula, who was accused "You yourself never loved; you never love!"), but amenable to the human commitment of marriage.[291] These versions of Dracula were sexually "human" in almost every way.

These Draculas whose associations with animality seem almost accidental, if not innocuous, establish the predominant trend of vampire cinema in the twentieth century: a slow movement towards the humanization of their most monstrous characters. Francis Ford Coppola *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) is perhaps the most notable example of this slow progression towards humanization, especially as it is an adaptation of Dan Curtis's 1973 film. The 1992 film establishes Mina Murray as a reincarnation of Dracula's (played by Gary Oldman) human wife,

289 Auerbach, 131

290 Lawrence Birken, *Consuming Desire*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988): 61

291 Stoker, 43

Katarina (played by Winona Ryder), and gives Dracula a rich, specifically human, origin story. Coppola asserts the tagline "love never dies," fully transitioning the film from the realm of Gothic horror to Gothic romance. Coppola's film is perhaps one of the most prominent examples of how the hinge point of sexuality has become so important to Dracula's character over time. However, even as the film suggests that perhaps degeneration of the human form might be romanticized and humanized, it also doubles down on its representation of animals.

Dracula's many costume changes in Coppola's film emphasize his humanity and animality in turn. As a prestige adaptation that advertises its fidelity to Bram Stoker in its title, Coppola takes great pains in reinserting elements of Dracula's physicality that tend to be ignored in other cinematic productions, including his transformation from old man to young, from traditionally Eastern European in dress to fashionably neo-Victorian, and from man to animal: "Oldman's many costume changes from Old to Young Count, wolfman to giant bat, not only illustrate his monstrosity but also the malleability of the film Dracula."[292] In the moments of the film when Dracula's most negative emotions are at their height, the film leans more heavily on animal costuming. When in a rage, he becomes a giant, monstrous bat creature. When in a frenzy of lust, such as when he is having sex with Lucy, he becomes a wolf (see Fig. 4.2). Yet Oldman's Dracula is still presented as romantic; Mina seems fully seduced by him in the film, even before the exchange of any fluids. Like the Mina of Dan Curtis and John Badham's films, Mina even takes pains to *convince* Dracula that she consents to their unusual relationship, telling him "I've wanted this to happen. I know that now. I want to be with you always."[293] At the end of the film, after Dracula has perished, Mina says in voiceover that "There, in the presence of God, I

292 Stacey Abbott,"The Film is the Life, Mr. Renfield," *Offscreen* 1, no. 1, (1997). For more on prestige adaptations, see Thomas Leitch's work on heritage adaptations or celebration in "Between Adaptation and Allusion," *Film Adaptation and its Discontents*, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006): 96-98.

293 *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola (1992; Prime Video; 2021), Streaming Video.

understood at last how my love could release us all from the powers of darkness. Our love is stronger than death." [294] Their relationship, Coppola suggests, is not merely a sexual one, not merely a taboo transgression; Dracula can only be saved from his excessive animality and excessive sexuality by the transcendence of the human conventions of love and marriage.

Figure 4.2: Francis Ford Coppola, dir, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, Perf. Gary Oldman (above), Wynona Rider, Keanu Reeves, Sadie Frost (above), 1992; Prime Video; 2021, Streaming Video.

While Mina plays a Victorian woman in Coppola's film, she doesn't have Victorian sensibilities; specifically, she does not judge Dracula for his occasionally animalistic appearance. For her, shape-shifting into a giant wolf or bat is not a sign of degeneration, but an unfortunate physical flaw. In the early twentieth century, the visible animality of Dracula, an interruption of his normally human state, is grounds for fearing him and his erotic embrace. In "Invisible Monsters: Vision, Horror, and Contemporary Culture," Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock argues that in the late twentieth century, physical abnormalities can no longer justify treating a character as

294 *Bram Stoker's Dracula*

monstrous: "one significant trend in representing the monster has been to decouple physical abnormality from assumptions about intelligence, character, or morals."[295] This shift to decouple the physical from the moral is a dramatic departure from nineteenth-century attitudes towards degeneration, in which moral character would almost certainly express itself in physical deformities. In this decoupling, the monster is subsequently humanized and made available as a truly viable romantic partner: "looking different is no longer sufficient to categorize a creature as monstrous. Instead, such narratives shift the emphasis onto oppressive cultural forces that unjustly ostracize or victimize those who are physically divergent."[296] In Coppola's *Dracula,* these trends also coincide with a deeper understanding of human sexuality and heredity, based on more than Darwinian evolution. Most of humanity's recent advances in evolution deal with the interior, what cannot be seen. As Cynthia Russett notes in regard to late Victorian sexology, early understandings of both evolution and human sexuality were wildly theoretical, drawing what evidence they could but lacking the technology necessary to understand the nuances of either field of study:

> The nature of the evidence is an interesting issue in itself because of the absence at the time of most—indeed, virtually all—of the data we would today deem relevant to a discussion of sex differences: data from genetics and endocrinology, from neuroanatomy and neurophysiology, from Freudian psychology and measurements of intelligence and personality.[297]

So, scientific understandings of interiority expanded rapidly in the twentieth-century, largely debunking popular theories of degeneration. Over time, popular understandings of science embraced facts such as that genetic defects and mutations were typically responsible for physical abnormalities, that nurture was at least equivalent to nature in the development of personality,

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295 Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, "Invisible Monsters: Vision, Horror, and Contemporary Culture," *The Monster Theory Reader*, Ed. Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020):, 359

296 Weinstock, *Invisible Monsters*, 359

297 Russett, 11

and that sex (inside or outside of the bounds of love and marriage) was natural. Concurrent to our evolving understandings of humanity, animality, and sexuality, Dracula himself also evolved.

This evolution does not mean that Dracula is no longer capable of monstrosity, only that monstrosity is no longer necessarily tied to his exterior, or animal, appearance. This decoupling is perhaps most evident in the critically declaimed *Dracula 3D* (2013), directed by Dario Argento. In this film, Argento used CGI animation to film Dracula's transformation into a wide variety of animals. Argento had a long history as a well-respected director of such horror films as *Suspiria* (1977). However, as Xavier Aldana Reyes notes, after Argento's fame and success, he began to direct adaptations of classic horror novels, like Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and Gaston Leroux's *The Phantom of the Opera* (1910). Unfortunately, Argento's gory style was not well-received; Reyes notes that this might be a reason for Argento's lack of critical or commercial success in recent decades, stating that Argento's gothic adaptations "unsuccessfully, if we are to follow their critical reception, attempt to *humanize* and romanticize its monsters without compromising the director's more general bloody, histrionic style. The result is, inevitably, a confused product that reveals wider shifts in the critical appreciation of the gothic as a reputable horror subgenre."[298] However, the romantic adaptations of *Dracula* from the 1970s through 1990s prove that it is possible to humanize and romanticize the Count without sacrificing directorial style or commercial appeal. Instead, it seems to be the use of animals themselves that make Argento's production unique.

Argento's animals are presented as evidence of Dracula's inhumanity in contrast to recent trends to humanize and romanticize the Count. Agento's *Dracula 3D* not only uses CGI animation to capture Dracula's transformation into animals like wolves and bats; it also

298 Emphasis mine, Xavier Aldana Reyes, "The cultural capital of the gothic horror adaptation: The case of Dario Argento's The Phantom of the Opera and Dracula 3D," *Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies* 5, no. 2, (2017): 232.

incorporates predatory creatures like owls and praying mantises, which are rarely seen in adaptations of *Dracula* (see Fig. 4.3). The overall result is a Dracula that is more intimately tied to animals than ever. However, the quality of CGI technology in the film was not always capable of the targeted naturalistic transformation scenes, which caused what would have otherwise been a bold production choice to strike audiences as uncanny and even humorous. The transformation sequence of Dracula from wolf to man is overwrought but more importantly, unbelievable (see Fig. 4.3). Meanwhile, the praying mantis, one of Argento's most unique contributions to Dracula's canon of abilities, was so unrealistic that Argento was forced to defend his creative choice based on fidelity to Stoker's novel: "he has defended the 'praying mantis' transformation, which is reported to have caused laughter in some audience members, on the basis that it is '[true to] the story', since 'Dracula traditionally becomes a bat or a wolf', and it is thus 'possible for him to become any creature – a cockroach or a spider or a bug'" (see Fig. 4.3).[299] Though Argento's choices are entirely in keeping with previous adaptations' association of Dracula with animals, the horror falls flat not because the idea was poorly thought out, but because it assumes that association with animals alone is enough to incite the feeling of terror. In other words, Argento assumes that a giant praying mantis is inherently terrifying; however, it is what the transformation implies about Dracula's *humanity* that is most disturbing.

299 J. Malooley, "Dario Argento on Dracula 3D, Halloween and Daughter Asia's Onscreen Nudity," *Time Out* Chicago, 13 July 2013, https://bit.ly/38ZpsjF, Accessed 1 September 2013.

Figure 4.3: Dario Argento, dir, *Dracula 3D.* Perf. Thomas Kretschmann, 2013; Amazon Prime Video, 20 March 2021. Video, 1:50:04.

The use of animals to signify monstrosity in horror cinema is a subject which remains understudied in scholarly criticism. Argento's monstrous animals are assembled almost according to Noel Carroll's instructions in "Fantastic Biologies and the Structures of Horrific Imagery," an article that he jokes could be subtitled "how to make a monster."[300] Carroll argues that all monsters are assembled through processes that he terms fusion, fission, magnification, or massification. Fusion is "a composite that unites attributes held to be categorically distinct and/or at odds in the cultural scheme of things in unambiguously one, spatiotemporally discrete entity."[301] Argento's Dracula embodies this type of monstrosity through gore, such as when, in human form, Krestchmann rips a strip of skin and sinew from the body of his victim. Fission, on the other hand, is when "the animal and the human inhabit the same body (understood as spatially locatable protoplasm); however, they do so at different times."[302] Carroll argues that this is the essence of the shape-shifter, especially the werewolf. However, Carroll's

300 Carroll, 136

301 Carroll, 137

302 Carroll, 139

understanding of fission depends on the two entities being ultimately distinct; not so, with Dracula, who follows the same motivations in whatever form he appears. Argento takes great pains to reproduce the act of transformation, to show Dracula carrying out his murderous intent seamlessly as he transitions from animal to human form.

Argento's Dracula, therefore, only suggests physical harm in his animal state, unlike prior adaptations which linked the Count's animality with his degeneration. More like a mustache-twirling villain than perhaps any Dracula before him, Dracula's threat to Mina is almost explicitly a date rape. Argento follows Dan Curtis and Francis Ford Coppola in making Mina the spitting image of Dracula's human wife, Dolingen de Gratz. Argento's Dracula even follows in John Badham's example of trying to convince Mina that he is a monster to be feared. Yet instead of ultimately falling in love with Dracula, Mina reveals that she has been hypnotized by him, swiftly vacillating between horror and passion. When Mina asks Van Helsing why Dracula would have made her tell him that she loved him and wanted to be with him forever, knowing that it was a lie, Van Helsing responds that Dracula's "passion is as savage as fire. It consumes what he wants most."[303] In so many ways, Argento's Dracula is deeply palimpsestuous, making nods to prior Draculas. I assert that the primary misstep of Argento's Dracula is that the level of his threat—sexually, animalistically, evolutionarily— is so ambiguous as to be misunderstood even by the narrative's characters.

Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat use the same CGI technology as Argento in the 2020 *Dracula* television series, with the same motivation (to both humanize Dracula and make him

303 *Dracula 3D*, directed by Dario Argento, performed by Thomas Kretschmann, (2013; Amazon Prime Video. 20 March 2021): Video

horrifying) with much different results.[304] Rotten Tomatoes gives the television show a 74% freshness rating, compared to Argento's 14%, One critic calls the adaptation "A sinewy, self-aware deconstruction of power, control and consent."[305] The difference between the two, despite their similar cultural environments and reliances on CGI technology is that Gatiss and Moffat's vampire, played by Claes Bang, genuinely balances being frightening and sympathetic. Rather than focusing on the gore of Dracula's murders as Argento does, this Dracula has much more viscerally horrifying transformation scenes. At the culmination of the first episode of the mini-series, Dracula appears outside of a convent in wolf form; when baited by Sister Agatha Van Helsing, Dracula transforms into his bipedal form by ripping his way out of the wolf's body (see Fig. 4.4). Just as in Argento's *Dracula 3D,* the adaptation produces a visceral response in the viewer through violent gore and heightened sound effects. As Dracula emerges from the body of the wolf, the animal whimpers in pain, indicating that every time Dracula transforms back into a human body, the animal body suffers and dies. There is also violence in the transformation as each of Dracula's human bones snap into place and he sheds the wolf's pelt.[306] In the end, it is not the use of CGI that was laughable in Argento's *Dracula 3D,* but the execution of it. It is the invasion of the animal body by the human one and the implication of contamination of one by the other that evokes horror.

304 Though CGI technology has improved in the seven years between Argento and Gatiss/Moffat's productions, relatively realistic CGI was available (though perhaps not affordable) in 2013 when Argento was filming; see: *Man of Steel* (2013), *Thor: The Dark World* (2013), and *Pacific Rim* (2013).

305 "*Dracula*: Season 1," Rotten Tomatoes, 2021 May 1, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/tv/dracula_2019/s01

306 In this moment, Dracula (Claes Bang) emerges from his wolf form and playfully remarks to the nuns "I don't know about you girls, but I do love a bit of fur."

Figure 4.4: Jonny, Campbell dir, "The Rules of the Beast," *Dracula*, Perf. Claes Bang, Written by Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat, 2020; Netflix, 20 March 2021, Video, 1:29:34.

III. Empowering the Sexual Body: Female Vampires and Contagious Hypersexuality

Ultimately it is the quest for companionship that both monstrosizes and humanizes Bang's Dracula. In the 2020 mini-series, Dracula's Brides are considered animals sacrificed to the experiment of vampirism.[307] Dracula's attempts to feed often result in creatures that are transformed but only somewhat like him, who he refers to as "beasts": immortal but mindless zombie-like people who he generally attempts to hide away by locking them into boxes, cages, and even mini-fridges. The more high-functioning of his progeny are referred to as his Brides (regardless of gender). When Jonathan is bitten, Dracula is delighted to realize that he has retained some of his humanity and offers to make him one of his Brides. As Dracula tells Jonathan: "The others just became beasts, but you've kept your spirit."[308] Yet Dracula is the primary character who is associated with the beast. The zombie-like vampires seem to retain

307 Brides will be capitalized in my discussion of them, since they are not given names of their own; in absence of other labels, I consider this their collective proper name.

308 "The Rules of the Beast," directed by Jonny Campbell, *Dracula*, Perf. Claes Bang, Written by Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat (2020; Netflix, 2021), Video, 1:29:34. https://bit.ly/3cVw9nI

enough of their humanity to request that they be euthanized. It is only Dracula who does not seem aware of what a monster he has become.

The treatment of the Brides in the 2020 BBC mini-series is unique, especially in its treatment of gender; at no point are any of the Brides described as unusually sexual, as is common in Stoker's text and in adaptation.[309] Nor are the Brides depicted as non-threatening in relation to Dracula. Though different from Dracula, they invoke their own terror. Yet, Bang's Dracula does not totally eschew the sexuality of his predecessors. Using his eroticism as a lure to his prey, Dracula seduces men and women alike aboard the Demeter as he journeys to England. In one scene, Lady Ruthven asks Dracula "Should newly-married ladies really be conversing on… intimate matters with handsome strangers?" to which Dracula replies "I see no harm in it. Unless it happens to be a dangerous, handsome stranger."[310] In other scenes, Dracula seduces the same newly-married woman's husband, Lord Ruthven.[311]

It is Lucy who truly fascinates Dracula, a twenty-first century woman who is both sexually liberated and "in love with death."[312] Their relationship is marked by the level of control Lucy seems to have over Dracula. At one meeting, Dracula explains the blood on his mouth by saying "I have to feed on someone. You don't always give your consent," indicating that Lucy is in charge of their physical relationship. Her consent is something Dracula desires, stating that "it's delicious. I'm a gourmet, not a glutton." Lucy and Dracula's relationship is unusual because they seem to have a genuine connection, not based necessarily on centuries-spanning love or supernatural eroticism, but in what looks something like friendship. Dracula has conversations

309 Lucy is perhaps the sole exception to this, though her sexuality is expressed mainly when she is human.

310 "Blood Vessel" directed by Damon Thomas, *Dracula*, Perf. Claes Bang, Written by Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat (2020; Netflix, 2021), Video, 1:29:34. https://bit.ly/3cVw9nI

311 Both Lord and Lady Ruthven are nods to John Polidori's Lord Ruthven from *The Vampyre* (1819).

312 "The Dark Compass," directed by Paul McGuinan, *Dracula*, Perf. Claes Bang, Written by Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat (2020; Netflix, 2021), Video, 1:29:34. https://bit.ly/3cVw9nI

with Lucy that have nothing to do with love or violence. He takes the time to explain his world without demanding anything in return. Lucy, by contrast, seems to enjoy the casual relationship they have. When she asks him if he'll ever love her, Dracula responds in the negative. "Well," Lucy replies, "that's one less thing to worry about."[313] For Lucy, who feels constantly objectified by her beauty, her relationship with Dracula, while still somewhat erotic, is truly reciprocal.

Lucy's empowerment in the 2020 mini-series has its roots in her "New Woman" character in Bram Stoker's novel. Her character in the book has long been discussed by scholars as a foil to Mina, especially in regards to her sexuality. While Mina is characterized by her devotion to her fiance—even her technological proficiency is introduced in terms of how it might advance Jonathan's career— Lucy is characterized by her powers of attraction. Before her death, Lucy inspires the devotion of three suitors, leading to the scandalous question Lucy poses to Mina "Why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble?"[314] In some ways, Lucy is an inversion of Dracula, just as excessively sexual and accompanied by her potential three Husbands to his three Brides. Yet Lucy does not (or does not have the opportunity to) express her excessive sexuality fully until she becomes a vampire. At this point, Lucy's powers of attraction mark her as an object of fear rather than desire. As Keridiana Chez notes, "Femininity (in the form of docility and affection) [...] triggers men's strong attachment and, at the same time, represents irresistible danger. Even as the ultimate source of evil is located in Count Dracula, white bourgeois women are marked as desirable—and

313 "The Dark Compass"

314 Stoker, 60

hence treacherous."[315] As a vampire, Lucy's primary power, the thing that makes her most monstrous, is simply her sexuality.

Though Lucy does not share Dracula's shape-shifting abilities, she is still dehumanized in Bram Stoker's text and objectified in many adaptations. Lucy and the Brides are dehumanized in Stoker's novel by dropping gendered pronouns. In a scene when Lucy attempts to seduce Arthur Holmswood, Swartz-Levine notes that "With each successive assertive move she makes, she becomes less and less humanized as 'her lips' become 'the lips.'"[316] This dehumanization also happens with the Brides when they are killed by Van Helsing: "As with Lucy, the creatures do not get to be female until after Van Helsing destroys them. They are a collective 'it' until after 'the soul had been won' at which point they become 'them' and 'her.'"[317] This dehumanization is interesting precisely because while it *should* point towards an animalization of the Brides and Lucy, it does not.[318] If Lucy and the Brides are meant to appear as less than human, Stoker has many ways of doing so that are more explicit and more fitting within his own established mythology; for example, they could be given the power to transform as Dracula does or communicate with animals. Indeed, the dehumanization seems to establish Lucy and the brides further as Things, a term that is also used in all of their death scenes.

In Victorian Britain, Lucy's dehumanization corresponds neatly with theories about women that assert their relative inhumanity in relation to men. According to Jill Conway, women were seen as categorically inferior to men during the nineteenth century. A popular scientific theory by Patrick Geddes supposed that women's potential energy was entirely passive (so as to

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315 Keridiana Chez, "'You Can't Trust Wolves No More Nor Women': Canines, Women, and Deceptive Docility in Bram Stoker's 'Dracula,'" *Victorian Review* 38, no. 1, (2012): 84

316 Jennifer A. Swartz-Levine, "Staking Salvation: The Reclamation of the Monstrous Female in Dracula," *The Midwest Quarterly* 57, no. 4, (2016): 347.

317 Swartz-Levine, 357

318 See Chapter One for more on the depersonalization of pronouns in relation to animals and women.

preserve energy for the act of childbirth), while men's was active. Therefore, the position of women in society was a function entirely of biology; women simply weren't capable of doing anything more strenuous than childrearing: "There was no human guilt to be felt over the inferior position of women. It was a function of natural laws which operated well beyond the boundaries of human society."[319] Following this logic, Stoker's Dracula is able to function actively as a monster within the text: he is able to shape-shift, scheme, and terrify. While Stoker's Lucy is more active than she was able to be in life—heightening her sexuality, for instance— she lacks most of his more active powers, and especially his animality.

In adaptation, Lucy's power is also largely limited to her hypersexuality. This hypersexuality is perhaps best satirized by Mel Brooks's *Dracula: Dead and Loving It* (1995), which draws on the many film adaptations of Lucy to lampoon her excessive sexuality. Encountering Jonathan in a cemetery, Lucy says to him "Let me kiss you. Let me show you the deep, raw passion of unbridled sexual frenzy."[320] Though today this might be viewed as a dramatic departure from Lucy's relatively demure request that Arthur should kiss her in Stoker's novel, Lucy's hypersexuality is consistently adapted in this manner.[321] Mina, while often depicted as falling under Dracula's sexual spell in film and sometimes even falling in love with him, does not seem marked by the same hypersexuality as Lucy. As a human, she is able to restrict her desire for Dracula or Jonathan to situations that are marked by love or marriage. Lucy, who lusts wantonly and outside of the conventions of love or marriage, is monstrous because of her sexuality: "Sexuality, then, is not associated with real women but rather with

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319 Jill Conway, "Stereotypes of Femininity in a Theory of Sexual Evolution," *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*, Ed. Martha Vicinus, Routledge Revivals, (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2013): 147

320 *Dracula: Dead and Loving It*, directed by Mel Brooks, performed by Steven Weber and Lysette Anthony, (2020, Prime Video, 2021), Streaming Video.

321 Moreover, Victorians would have almost certainly seen Lucy's requests for kisses as hypersexualized, setting a precedent for subsequent adaptations, which amplify her sexuality as modern standards evolve.

debased aberrations of the category of woman."[322] Lucy's sexuality is her power, but she is not empowered by her sexuality. In almost every adaptation, the men in her life are ultimately able to resist her monstrous hypersexuality and kill her.

Like Lucy, Dracula's Brides are dehumanized and objectified even more than Lucy in adaptation, characterized primarily through excessive sexuality and recessive animality. Without names, without histories, and without agency, they "are interchangeable," like pack animals, in most adaptations of *Dracula*.[323] Even in their costuming, the Brides are given very little differentiation (see Fig. 4.5). The effect of this homogenization is to suggest that the Brides, while vampiric, are largely notable only because of the temptation they pose to Jonathan in Dracula's castle. In Stoker's novel, the Brides and Lucy are given remarkably similar treatment. First, Stoker's objectification of Lucy also applies to the Brides who "do not get to be female until after Van Helsing destroys them" at which point their pronouns revert from "it" to "her."[324] Additionally, as Tanya Pikula notes, Stoker's source material focuses obsessively on the aesthetic appearance of the female vampires; for example, Stoker uses the word voluptuous repeatedly to describe the Brides and Lucy after her transformation: ""'voluptuous' is also the quintessential word by which the Vic-torian texts could be commonly identified as pornographic."[325] Pikula's research into the language of nineteenth-century erotic literature shows that the passages with Lucy and the Brides are what ultimately establish *Dracula* as an erotic novel, which is a theme that has been oft-revisited in adaptations.[326]

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322 Swartz-Levine, 347

323 Carol A. Senf, "The Women of Dracula Films: Brides, Daughters, and Fierce Opponents," *Dracula's Daughters : The Female Vampire on Film*, Ed. Douglas Brode and Leah Deyneka, (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013).

324 Swartz-Levine, 357

325 Tanya Pikula, "Bram Stoker's Dracula and Late-Victorian Advertising Tactics: Earnest Men, Virtuous Ladies, and Porn," *ELT* 55, no. 3, (2012): 292

326 Dracula is, of course, not the first novel to associate vampires with excessive sexuality.

Figure 4.5: Clockwise from upper left: The three vampire brides in *Dracula* (1931), *The Brides of Dracula* (1960), *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), *Dracula 2000* (2000), and *Van Helsing* (2004).

The hypersexuality of the Brides is perhaps best exemplified by Hammer Films' series of *Dracula* films, almost all of which feature at least one Bride. While Universal Pictures literally trademarked the image of Dracula with Bela Lugosi's portrayal, Hammer Films has the most consistent continuity of *Dracula* films, with over seven Dracula films produced between 1958 and 1973, all starring Christopher Lee as the Count. The Hammer depictions of Dracula are also famous for their portrayals of women, as Dracula's contagious sexuality slowly spread to all of the women associated with the productions. While Browning's Helen Chandler (Mina) might have felt that she was "one of those bewildered little girls who go around pale, hollow-eyed and anguished, wondering about things," the Hammer women were "voluptuous, bosomy creatures

with false eyelashes and ample cleavage."[327] As Auerbach notes, over time "Hammer women grew more swollen and soporific: tiny crucifixes swung enticingly in the crevasse between their mountainous breasts, but their faces had little energy."[328] As more films built palimpsestuously upon the Hammer films, the Brides were treated consistently: as enticing more than terrifying, and perhaps only terrifying because enticing.

The female vampires exist primarily as femmes fatales. These lethal women are synonymous with "vamp" and are dangerous because they attract. The femme fatale, of course, also has a history in the study of animals: from praying mantises to chimpanzees, the natural world is full of female creatures that attract their mates only to consume them. The threat of these female creatures is "horrible because heterosexual, dreadful because they feast on men."[329] Yet Julie Grossman argues that the femme fatale (especially as it is classically explored in noir) is misunderstood because it "yok[es] together [...] sexuality, evil, and powerful women."[330] These lethal women, she argues, are usually not explicitly out to murder, but rather threatening because they are sexual and powerful. In an ideal world, the femme fatale offers a potentially liberating vision of sexuality, one in which a powerful woman seeks out her desires and manifests them, just as Lucy and the Brides attempt to manifest their desires. Characters like Lucy in the 2020 BBC *Dracula* mini-series, then, offer a way of finding "grounds for empathy in

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327Senf and Victoria Amador, "Dracula's Postfeminist Daughters in the Twenty-First Century," *Dracula's Daughters: The Female Vampire on Film*, Ed. Douglas Brode and Leah Deyneka, (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013).

328 Auerbach, 126

329 Auerbach, 41

330Julie Grossman, "Film Noir's 'Femme Fatales' Hard-Boiled Women: Moving Beyond Gender Fantasies," *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 24, no. 1, (2007): 21

understanding the femme fatale."[331] Lucy is shown as desiring and, more importantly *fulfilling* her desires, something that most Brides and Lucy are rarely offered in adaptation.

The key to empowered female vampires in adaptations of *Dracula* is in challenging the idea of sexuality as an aberration. In the 2020 mini-series, Lucy is not punished for her carnal nature; rather, her ruination comes down to an accidental cremation that disfigures her. In realizing that she is no longer the "Bloofer Lady" (beautiful lady), Lucy's empowerment— her beauty and desirability— is taken away from her. Her sexuality is never something that detracts from her power; it is not an aberration that necessarily leads to her ruination. Rather, it's her primary means of navigating the world on her own terms. Adaptations which refuse to punish Lucy and the Brides for their sexuality represent them as posthuman possibilities rather than abnormalities: "the posthuman emphasizes that we are all, and must be, monsters because none are template humans. The human is an ideal that exists only as a referent to define what deviates from it."[332] If Dracula can be humanized in adaptation in spite of (or perhaps because of) his monstrous, contagious sexuality, then Lucy and the Brides can, too. Just as adaptations of Dracula have followed a trend that recognizes that his humanity is not necessarily expressed in his physical features, recent adaptations of *Dracula* present the female vampires as individuals whose downfall (if there is a downfall at all) comes down to rotten luck. Dracula is not monstrosized solely because of his sexuality, and female vampires can receive the same treatment in adaptation.

Just as modern adaptations like *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) have sought to understand Dracula's humanity by expanding and exploring his origins, *Dracula Motherf**ker* (2020), a

331 Grossman, 21

332 Patricia MacCormack, "Posthuman Teratology," *The Monster Theory Reader*, Ed. Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020): 523

graphic novel by Alex de Campi, seeks to understand the Brides' humanity. Through minor character elaboration, this adaptation answers one of the most interesting questions about Dracula and the Brides: why would they align themselves with someone who is both inwardly and outwardly an animal?[333] In her afterword to *Dracula, Motherf**ker* (2020), Alex de Campi says that "the petty hill I will die on is that Dracula should never be handsome."[334] Indeed, in her graphic novel, illustrated by Erica Henderson, Dracula is far more than an animalized monster. He does not appear in human form at all in the book, appearing instead as a red, many-eyed wolf (see Fig. 4.6). Representing Dracula as an animal like no creature that exists in nature, de Campi explores why any woman would allow Dracula to seduce them if he physically expresses as a monstrous animal, at least intermittently. Explicitly comparing the Brides to Melania Trump or Georgina Chapman Weinstein, de Campi asks "What if Dracula wasn't a handsome Romanian prince, but a nameless, faceless ancient terror? What would you trade for a life of enormous wealth, released from the cruel rigors of ageing into a state of eternal beauty? How much would you be willing to fake, and for how long?"[335] *Dracula, Motherf**ker* is an extension and minor character elaboration of Stoker's *Dracula* that imagines the future of the three Brides if they had not died at Van Helsing's hands in the source text.

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333 This is one of the only adaptations of the Dracula culture-text that features the Brides as protagonists; while some adaptations, like the Universal film *Dracula's Daughter* (1936) and the Hammer film *The Brides of Dracula* (1960), do feature female vampires, this is the only adaptation that positions the Brides explicitly as protagonists; moreover, this is one of the only such adaptations I have been able to locate in any medium which is helmed entirely by female creators.

334 Alex de Campi, *Dracula, motherf**ker*! Illus. Erica Henderson. (Portland: Image Comics, 2020).

335 De Campi

Figure 4.6:Alex de Campi, *Dracula, motherf**ker!* Illus. Erica Henderson, (Portland: Image Comics, 2020).

In *Dracula, Motherf**ker,* the vampire Brides are finally given distinction rather than being grouped together as a single, nameless entity. Quincy Harker, a reporter in 1970s Los Angeles, is seduced by the vampire women so that he can help them destroy Dracula, who is depicted as an abusive ex-husband.[336] While the women are often represented in human form and as sexual, *Dracula, Motherf**ker* individualizes the Brides. De Campi gives them names and motivations, and illustrator Erica Henderson draws them distinctively. Rather than appearing in nearly identical costumes, the Brides have discrete ethnicities, backgrounds, and appearances. They also have more emotional nuance than the Brides are given in the source material. Rather than waiting for Dracula to feed them, the three Brides rally together to break free of Dracula. In

336 Quincy Harker is a nod to the son of Mina and Jonathan Harker, who is also named Quincy. De Campi says of her character, "I won't say [he's] directly from Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. He's more of a riff on it [...] I remember re-reading Dracula and snorting with laughter when I got to him because it's the most accidentally black name in white literature since Percy Jackson. That's another part of the modernization: wanting to seamlessly blend the world I see in my friends group into this overwhelmingly white tradition without it feeling like a statement. It just is."

one scene, a Bride, Alteera, asks one of Dracula's new Brides "Ever ask yourself why a creature so old takes brides so young? And it's not because you have an 'old soul,' sweetie. He urges you to feed. Says it will make you powerful. Then he plays all you Brides against each other. Makes it a competition. A race. Who can be strongest through her tears. But you know who always has to stay the strongest? *Him.*"[337] In this discussion that is reminiscent of "the survival of the fittest," it is never established that the Brides are victims; de Campi and Henderson make it clear that they are monsters, as well. However, by giving the Brides a voice, this adaptation suggests that the characteristics of an animalized monster and personhood are not mutually exclusive, and they are particularly not exclusive to Dracula himself. The Brides are just as powerful and as capable as Dracula, even appearing in the same animal form when they fight him during the book's climax (see Fig. 4.7). Alteera transforms into a many-eyed wolf who very closely resembles Dracula's form. The other brides, Marishka and Verona, soon join her in the fight, also in wolf form.

337 De Campi

Figure 4.7: Alex de Campi, *Dracula, motherf**ker!* Illus. Erica Henderson, (Portland: Image Comics, 2020).

In *Dracula, Motherf**ker,* de Campi and Henderson succeed in not only giving the Brides the same animal physicality of Dracula, but also in giving them a history and future that

they were not permitted in the source text. As I discussed in Chapter Three, this kind of minor character elaboration is one of the most powerful remediative techniques available to adaptation. In this case, it suggests that sexuality is not, as depicted in other adaptations, a tool that animalizes women, like fangs or claws, but instead another aspect of their human lives, one that perhaps made them vulnerable to Dracula in the first place. Yet it is their animality that allows them to be recognized as equals to Dracula, predators in their own right, rather than simply rabid pets who can, at best, hope simply to be euthanized by sympathetic former lovers.

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Conclusion: Phenotypic vs. Genotypic Traits in Adaptation

I turn in conclusion to one last adaptation: Kim Newman's *Anno Dracula* (1992), which imagines a nineteenth century in which Dracula did not die but rather lived, as he does in his adaptations, to proliferate. As any good naturalist in this alternate nineteenth century must be, many of Newman's characters are preoccupied with what, scientifically, vampires *are.* In one mash-up scene, Dr. Jekyll and Dr. Moreau debate exactly that, arguing that, while some vampires "need not be retrograde steps on the evolutionary ladder," those of Dracula's descent, "the shape-shifters" are "evolution run backwards, an atavism."[338] Yet the vampire Genevieve Dieudonne disagrees with Moreau, arguing "we are natural beings, like any others"[339] and "surely general scientific opinion is that vampires do not constitute a separate species of humanity but rather are a paristical outgrowth of our family tree, existing only by virtue of sustenance stolen from our warm cousins?"[340] Indeed, this seems to be the thought experiment behind *Anno Dracula*, not simply "what if Dracula had won?" but "what if humans were forced to acknowledge the vampire as both animal and human simultaneously?" In Newman's alternate-history sequel to *Dracula*, vampires are more disturbing than the villainous Jekyll or Moreau precisely because of their species-specific ability to proliferate.

That Newman chooses to have Moreau provoke the conversation about the vampires and where they fall in relation to humanity is noteworthy. In H.G. Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau,* the scientist believes there is little difference between humans and animals that cannot be eradicated through surgery and social conditioning. According to Kathryn Bird, this is not an accident:

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338 Kim Newman, *Anno Dracula*, (London: Titan Books, 2011): 219.

339 Newman, 214

340 Newman, 220

> [Geneviève's] critique [of Moreau] invokes the same human/animal and civilised/savage binaries that underpin Moreau's own views. Moreover, Newman depicts Geneviève's greatest advantage as her distance from the atavistic, shape-shifting, animal-vampire hybrids of Dracula's line. While they grow fur and wings and die in the attempt to shape-shift, Geneviève only occasionally wears 'a beast-like mask,' which, of course, she can remove at will, because unlike her degenerate counterparts, she is 'of the pure bloodline of Chandagnac.'[341]

What Bird captures so well here is that too often it is our impulse to assume that shape-shifting reflects a dichotomy or a binary that can be flipped between at will, just as humans can "wear masks" of decency when they wish. Instead, Dracula and his vampire progeny, like many of the characters from the culture-texts I discuss, embody a full (and thus, disturbing) hybridity. They are not just human and Other; they are both, at once, always. More importantly, though, especially in Geneviève's comments to Moreau: the characteristics of the hybrid vampire are species characteristics. Everything they exhibit from their eating habits to their breeding is, according to her, natural, part of the ordinary compulsions of vampire life. Because in all of these versions of Dracula, the vampires operate according to their biological mandates, not merely supernatural ones.

Understanding Dracula's animality is important to understanding narrative adaptation as a process. In a 2011 article, Thomas Leitch compellingly argues that the adaptation— parasitic, performative, and communicative as it is— might be described as vampiric.[342] Yet the connection between the reanimated corpse of the mythological vampire and adaptations breaks at one important point: adaptations demonstrate not the death or corruption of a narrative, but rather its continued survival. Linda Hutcheon resists the vampiric metaphor entirely, noting "An adaptation is not vampiric: it does not draw the life-blood from its source and leave it dying or

341 Kathryn Bird, "'Civilised society doesn't just happen': The Animal, the Law and 'Victorian Values' in Kim Newman's Anno Dracula," *Neo-Victorian Studies* 7, no. 1 (2014): 19.

342 Thomas Leitch, "Vampire Adaptation," *Journal of Adaptation in Film and Performance* 4, no. 1 (2011): 5-16.

dead, nor is it paler than the adapted work. It may, on the contrary, keep that prior work alive, giving it an afterlife it would never have had otherwise."[343] However, Hutcheon's assertion that adaptations are not vampiric relies upon the perception of vampires as corpse-like, a perception that does not hold up to scrutiny of vampiric texts in their many media forms. I suggest a middle ground between Leitch's vampiric and Hutcheon's anti-vampiric argument: both are limited in that they start from a foundation of the vampire body. As Lissette Lopez Szwydky notes, "Adaptations don't 'raise texts from the dead'– they keep texts alive."[344] This reframing of the very nature of adaptation as a process, rather than a singular body, is essential to understanding adaptation transhistorically. Far from resurrecting texts unnaturally, adaptation is a natural, evolutionary process that allows texts to survive. In this way, it is vampiric.

Dracula is not dead. He is insistently, disturbingly, chaotically alive. Dracula resists categorization, upends the food chain that we understand, and embodies the most disturbing potentialities of human-animal relationships. He is not just a shape-shifter; he is an exemplary metaphor for adaptation. Adaptation is not a corpse, is not dead, does not siphon off from living, canonical literature. Instead, it proliferates, it resists categorization, and it delights in hybridity. In short, like Dracula himself, adaptation is very much alive. It is my assertion that scholars of canonical literature and adaptation alike must disabuse themselves of the notion that adaptation is the after-life of classic literature. It is not. It is likewise not the degeneration of literature or the devolution of it. Instead, like Dracula's many progeny, narratives will proliferate as entirely new, sometimes disturbing, sometimes beautiful creatures. It is not necessary to view adaptation as

343 Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd Edition, (London: Routledge Press, 2006): 176

344 Lissette Lopez Szwydky, *Transmedia Adaptations in the Nineteenth Century*, (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2020): 25.

monstrous if we recognize instead the possibility that each adaptation is its own organism, adapting as well as it can to its own environment.

Trends and Conclusions

In all of this research, two trends regarding evolutionary adaptation emerged. First, it is clear to me that there are both phenotypic (visible) and genotypic (genetic, but not necessarily visible) traits being replicated in each of the adaptations of these culture-texts. When I started my research, I expected to find that all of these adaptations prominently replicated the trait of animality; indeed, each source text was chosen because of its central focus on what Ivan Kreilkamp calls animal protagonicity. Kreilkamp argues that in realist novels, animals "tend to exist away from the center, at the margins: in forms, embodiments, and characterizations that are minor, ephemeral, precarious, short-lived, and disadvantaged. We might say they are in various ways thin rather than fully developed."[345] Yet, as Kreilkamp points out, it is a different story in fantasy or children's literature, where non-human protagonicity can be fully explored. While Kreilkamp's "minor creatures" are unlikely to be reproduced as hinge points in adaptation, animal protagonicity almost ensures that this is a trait that is reproduced time and time again (whether or not scholarship recognizes the significance of that replication).

What I did not expect to find was a correlating phenotypic trait reproduced across every culture-text that I studied: a relationship between animals and sexuality, particularly female sexuality. Each text drew clear lines between animal bodies and sexuality, and this line almost always becomes more pronounced over time. Ecofeminist criticism, like that of Lori Gruen, suggests that this replication is far from accidental, that "The categories of 'woman' and 'animal' serve the same symbolic function in patriarchal society. Their construction as dominated,

345 Ivan Kreilkamp, *Minor Creatures: Persons, Animals, and the Victorian Novel*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018): 2.

submissive 'other' in theoretical discourse, whether explicitly so stated or implied) has sustained human male dominance. The role of women and animals in postindustrial society is to serve/be served up; women and animals are the used."[346] I found that this dynamic was particularly underscored in adaptations helmed by male authors/auteurs. Yet the symbolic relationship between women and animals is not purely one of dominance; in many instances it seems to be a way of imagining fruitful, sympathetic relationships between humans and animals and between women and men.

The key to this amorphous relationship between women and animals, I found, was rooted in nineteenth century natural science, something that was not immediately observable by only a surface examination of the culture-texts or their adaptations. What I found was that as attitudes towards animals changed, in response to evolving attitudes about natural science— including sexual selection or evolving ideas about hybridity or monstrosity or even animal experimentation— the role of women in the adaptations morphed and changed as well. The environment, then, was exerting pressures not only on the phenotypic trait of animality, but on a hinge point that lay below the surface, informing our understanding of animality in ways that necessarily changed over time.

Adapters, then, both consciously and unconsciously, are replicating natural science in their adaptations. This phenomenon of genotypic adaptation is key to contextualizing adaptation studies interdisciplinarily. As Hutcheon and Bortolotti argue, it is not enough to merely catalogue adaptation as a phenomenon or move beyond simplistic arguments of fidelity, the benefit of a biological model of adaptation studies is that it "gives us a way to think anew about

346 Lori Gruen, "Dismantling Oppression: An Analysis of the Connection Between Women and Animals," *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*, Ed. Greta Gaard, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 61.

the broader questions of *why* and *how* certain stories are told and retold in our culture."[347] My dissertation is an attempt to do so, to think not only about the ways in which patterns obviously emerge in adaptations over time, but how and why they do so.

In addition to contextualizing adaptation's cultural importance, my dissertation also underscores the fundamental gravity of considering the way our attitudes about animals change over time. The study of animals in culture should not fall solely under the purview of ecocritics and scholars of children's literature as it currently does. As my research demonstrates, when we track animals across time in evolving narratives, we necessarily also track attitudes towards *humans* who have been historically considered *as animals*, including women and other minoritized groups. Natural science, the genotype that fuels this phenotype, reveals what Josephine Donovan describes as a particularly human social problem: "The dominance over nature, women, and animals inherent in scientific epistemology, which requires that the anomalous other be forced into ordered forms, may be rooted in the Western male maturation process that requires men to establish their autonomous identity against the material/feminine."[348] And Donovan's points about the roots of natural science and its relation to dominance over women and animals certainly plays out in a great number of these adaptations. If we desire that humanity's relationship to nature might one day change, evolve, and become more fruitful, then, it might be necessary for scholars to turn to adaptation as one way of tracking pathways to remediating that relationship.

347Linda Hutcheon and Gary Bortolotti, "On the Origin of Adaptations: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and 'Success': Biologically," *New Literary History* 38, no. 3, *Biocultures* (2007): 445.

348 Donovan, 179

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