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Repressing Deviance: The Discourse of Sexuality in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*

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EN 375 The "Other" Victorians

Professor Barbara Black

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Foreword

No matter what we call it – a person's soul or their personality – the "stuff" that makes up who we are has been a topic of debate going back eons. What philosophers and scientists of every age agree on is that many aspects make up our personalities, not just a single attribute. According to Jungian psychology,[1] these different personality aspects are explained through the study of individuation, the sum of separate, but equal, parts in a single person. Growing up on a diet of heroes and villains like most twenty-first-century children, I learned to distill those parts into two overarching concepts: good and evil. Of course, these are not new concepts by any means, as the basics of good and evil predate almost everything. Since beginning my studies in British literature, I find the nineteenth century depictions of duality particularly fascinating.

On the coattails of the British Romantics, the Victorians took the known ideas of good and evil to new levels. They propelled beliefs of purity and deviance to new highs and even more extreme lows, especially within a single soul. After placing those "pure" parts on pedestals, they then tried to stamp out all that was "evil." In doing so, the Victorians created a new duality within themselves, but that duality was out of balance. By suppressing half their soul, the Victorians created a monstrous "other" within themselves. Fascinated by their repressed desires, many "othered" Victorian writers took up their pens in protest. Their writing showcases what happens to the soul when individuation is not balanced, creating the dark, Victorian Gothic. Robert Louis Stevenson portrayed this intense dichotomy in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) as the struggle between the "light" and "dark" tendencies in men. Four years later, Oscar Wilde found this dualism in his study of aestheticism in *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* (1890): what is "beautiful" versus what is "ugly."

[1] For more on individuation, see Andrew Colman's entry on the subject in the *Oxford Reference Dictionary: A Dictionary of Psychology, 4th ed.,* 2015.

A century later, historian and philosopher Michael Foucault theorized that the "darkness" or "ugliness" the Victorians tried to suppress was sexuality. What these two Gothic authors and Foucault seem to agree on, however, is that darkness and light, ugliness and beauty, sexuality and asceticism, cannot exist without the other. If this is true, then my question about dualism is thus: what happens to that darker nature when it is not allowed the room to grow? More specifically, I wonder what happens to the monsters we create when the power of that repression is disrupted? By paying close attention to the dualism and aestheticism of these Gothic novels, the voices of the silenced monster and the "dark" nature of sexuality are heard.

Sexuality, Repression, and Power: the Discourse of Michael Foucault

If the Victorians were masters at repressing sexuality as a dark impulse, Foucault was a master of freeing it. In 1976, he published a three-book doctrine, *History of Sexuality*, which documented sexuality as a source of power throughout time.

The transformation of sexual desire into discourse began well before there was an ascetic need for it. For example, in the seventeenth century, a discourse on sex was the rule, not the exception (20). This seventeenth-century or older "Christian" pastoral was practiced by the elite ruling classes that could afford to go to confession every Sunday. They made it their prerogative to transform their every desire into discourse, as though it was their fundamental duty (21). At the beginning of the eighteenth century, sexual discourse turned away from spiritual incitement and towards the political, economic, and technical (23). Sex and sexuality went from theoretical discourse to practical discourse, something to analyze and classify, both professionally and casually. Morality, which had often been the focal point of discussion in the 1600s, was left conveniently out of the conversation as sex became a function. Sex was "inserted in all systems of utility, made to function at an optimum," as it was necessary for the rise and fall of the population (24). The more populated an empire, the more powerful. Discourse on sex became a system of necessity and power. As with any system, sex had to be managed and therefore became a system that needed policing. The goal of policing of sex was not a depressive order, but an ordered maximization (24). The policing of sex was not taboo but instead made into public and scientific discourse.

In the nineteenth century, the discursive nature of sex bled into almost every area of discourse, from economics, medicine, pedagogy, justice, and others, from the lower classes up to the high nobility and holy clergy (33). The perpetual discourse of sexuality became the norm at

every level. Foucault believes that there is no single sexual discourse, but a "multiplicity" of them (33). This multiplicity, of course, did not end in the nineteenth century as we would assume, but instead became censored as the language of the discourses changed. According to Foucault, what separates the three centuries is the "wide dispersion of devices that were invented for speaking about it" (34). The incitement to speak of sex was everywhere. However, the Victorians placed oppressive prohibitions on themselves, seemingly silencing the discourse. They lifted these prohibitions only in cases of extreme necessity, such as for economic pressure or political purposes. However, the everyday language of sexual discourse changed into a coded secret language (34). The invented devices to talk around sex became the new discourse, and the openness of sexuality faded into the background of Victorian society.

Sexual Discourse in the Time of Victoria

The repression of homosexuality, as Foucault sees it, begins with the Victorians. He tracks that at least as far back as the beginning of the seventeenth century, there was still a certain openness, a realism concerning sexuality. It was a time of open transgressions when people had a "familiarity with the illicit" (3). When the Victorians came into power two hundred years later, this familiarity with sex was forgotten, and sexuality become something to fear. Sexuality was confined to the intimacy between man and wife, in the sanctity of their marriage bed. Anything outside that sense of normalcy, of secrecy, was deemed intolerable as silence became the rule (3). In this new age of repression, sex and sexuality were reduced and denied, driven out by the very people who practiced it. In a sense, sex did not just cease to exist, but it ceased to have the right to exist (4). Sex was deemed criminal, judged in the societal court, and sentenced to the reality of the invisible man: there, in the places we dare not look, but are never seen. Repression, in essence, is a sentence to disappear (4).

What the Victorians seemingly forgot as they fought against the "evil" of sexuality is that when repressing something, that repression becomes the fundamental link between power, knowledge, and taboo (5). Because sex is an age-old necessity to the continuation of species, it cannot just be blinked out of existence, as hard as the Victorians might have tried. The forced repression inevitably breeds outlets of sexuality, where those who felt the pull of the darkness could go to have their secret desires filled. These outlets of desire where people were allowed to exist in the darkness manifested in brothels and mental hospitals. These were locations where sexuality was not only expected to be limitless but deeply explored. Concessions of repression like the brothel or mental hospital, where sexuality was deemed acceptable, had to exist in order for the repression to hold any power (5). In these few places there was a knowledge of sexuality,

openness, and freedom to the speech of sexuality that was otherwise only present in the sanctity of the parents' bedroom. In these places, repression held no sway. Once outside these footholds, the "reality" of Victorian society set in; the silence, the cold puritanism, propriety without warmth, held no knowledge of what people did in the dark. Without knowledge of the illicit, repression becomes dominant once again.

Foucault postulates that one reason the Victorians were so insistent on silencing their sexuality was in the deliberate attempt to create transgression. With sexuality outlawed to the dark corners of society, being able to speak of sex in a forbidden place becomes adventurous, even dangerous. The thrill of the anticipated freedom of being in a place outside the law is a rush for the otherwise continually repressed Victorian (6). By deliberately transgressing, they can retain a small bit of freedom, have a small taste of power, while still in the bounds of society. The Victorian knows he is wrong, yet finds the adrenaline rush of breaking the rules akin to a thrill ride at an amusement park. In a way, breaking the taboo of sexuality can be more exciting than sex itself, as if to say that one who breaks the bonds of repression has instead mastered the repressed subject.

There is a process to gaining that mastery over a repressed subject. Before one can break the rules, one must create them. Foucault breaks down the rules of repression into two broader categories: the subjugation of sexuality and its subsequent liberation in discourse. The first step in subjugating sexuality is taking control of the language surrounding the topic (17). By controlling the language of sexuality, through censorship, and tightening the rules around when one is allowed to speak of the taboo, it is effectively silenced. The problem that occurs is that, by subjugating a topic, it becomes an increasingly popular discourse. In effect, those who try to silence the topic of sexuality cause the adverse to happen. The discourse begins to become more

and more explicit, as the illicit is more openly discussed (18). The next step is the liberation of speech but in a controlled manner. According to Foucault, this liberation comes in the form of the "Catholic pastoral."

Of the powers that tried to control the discourse of sexuality, the Catholic Church was one of the most successful at this process of liberation in a controlled manner. As sexuality became more of a taboo topic than the act of sex itself, Catholic confession became increasingly interested in what Foucault calls "confessions of the flesh" (19). During the act of confession, it was discouraged to name the deed for what it was, sex, so those seeking forgiveness were instead encouraged to talk around it. Professing the details of their "sins," the confessors became a requirement in the confession booths, as the "new pastoral" came into being. The confession was now about the aspects, correlations, and effects one felt rather than the act of sex itself. This new discourse is what made flesh the root of all evil – the two-fold evolution of the "stirrings of desire" while sex itself became inconsequential to religious discourse (19). With the language of sexual discourse changing, it had to go beneath the surface of sex: "Discourse, therefore, had to trace the meeting line of the body and the soul… beneath the surface of the sins, it would lay bare the unbroken nervure of the flesh" (20).

Part I: Deviants and Duality

In 1885, Victorian lawmakers criminalized homosexuality. At the beginning of the new year in 1886, the first publication of Stevenson's novella, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, was released to readers. When read separately, the Labouchere Amendment and Stevenson's novella seem unrelated. The first makes criminals of men who are "other" in the context of the moralistic sexuality of the period, and the second explores the duality of good and evil within humanity. Dig below the surface, however, and the link becomes apparent: both the law and the novella shed light on repressed darkness. When read in the context of Labouchere, the "strange case" of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is not so strange at all. Instead, it is a voice highlighting the struggle of the repressed soul.

Each of the characters in the novella experience repression in varying degrees. From the introduction of Mr. Utterson to the main plot surrounding the curiosity of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, the seduction of darkness is evident from the very first chapter title of the novella. Beginning with "The Story of the Door," Stevenson promises his readers a mystery of liminality.[2] There is always something transforming within the story. Sometimes it is a character's perception of the case; other times, it is a physical change within a character. This sentiment is all framed within the "blistered and distained" door of Dr. Jekyll's house; it is the beginning of Utterson's journey to revelation in darkness (6).

The story of the door begins with Stevenson's evaluation of Mr. Utterson's character. Most of the time, Utterson is in the top tier of Victorian men. He upholds the social order as a spokesman for the "Father Law," finding great pleasure in the "customary sides of life" (qtd.

[2] To describe something as "liminal" is to describe the object as something with the power of transformation. In cultural anthropology, liminality refers to the transitional or indeterminate state between culturally defined stages of a person's life (OED Online).

from Showalter 109). Utterson's place in Victorian culture is contingent on this identity of the "normal" Victorian. As Elaine Showalter observes in *Sexual Anarchy*, Utterson's dependency on this type of normalcy is a mode of self-mortification, his own "efforts to stay within the boundaries of masculine propriety" (110). Nevertheless, despite being "undemonstrative," Utterson can also be "eminently human" (Stevenson 5). However slight is the lawyer, with this distinction between the cold, yet civilized socialite and the warm, animalistic human, Stevenson points readers to the dual personas in all of us, even in an upstanding Victorian society member like Utterson. His cold and cordial demeanor is balanced by a lighter, warmer side, even if it is present only under the influence of spirits (5). Utterson's humanity is repressed, but it exists nonetheless. With this examination of the evident repression within the story's driving character, we can then begin to understand his fascination with the door, and its owner[s].

Utterson, a curious person by nature, already has a quality within him that desires to follow the temptation of darkness. The precedent Stevenson is laying before us is that, if the desire to cross the unknown boundaries is in the most upstanding figures, it is in all of us. It is this desire for the darkness, a desire for the unknown, that leads Utterson to the liminal space of the distressed door. While he exists on one side of it with Mr. Enfield, he is still pure, still Victorian. However, should Utterson cross the threshold of that boundary, cross the liminal space, he begins his journey in becoming an "other." He will discover the story of the door, but also the darkness of the "strange case" that lies on the other side. Utterson is further tempted by the strange case when he hears Mr. Enfield's story. The door that is scarcely used by the mysterious Mr. Hyde is the center of a recent murder case (9). While there is no apparent connection besides this mysterious figure, the door and its owner become even more intriguing to Utterson as the mystery starts to unfold. With the conclusion of Mr. Enfield's tale and the

confirmation of Mr. Hyde's involvement, Utterson is enthralled. The desire to know Mr. Hyde's secrets has taken root as he crosses the symbolic threshold of the surreptitious door. He transforms from the upstanding Victorian to a partial "other."

In othering himself, Utterson courts disastrous consequences with the Labouchere amendment. The amendment goes as follows:

> Any male person who, in public or private, commits, or is a party to the commission of, or procures, or attempts to procure the commission by any male person of, any act of gross indecency with an other male person, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, and being convicted thereof, shall be liable at the discretion of the Court to be imprisoned for ay term not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour. (Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1885)

The language of the amendment implies that not only the men engaging in "gross indecency," but any that "is party to the commission," are liable. As a witness to the strange case of Mr. Hyde, Utterson places himself in that "party." At this point, any self-respecting person would turn Mr. Hyde over to the authorities. Though it is never overtly said, there is a strangeness to Mr. Hyde that everyone sees. As Mr. Enfield describes him to Utterson, Hyde is an "extraordinary-looking man"; however, "[Enfield] never saw a man [he] so disliked and yet [he] scarce knows why" (9). Enfield's immense dislike of Hyde is a sign of the man's otherness, a sign that he should report Hyde to the authorities on suspicion of "gross indecency." The language of the law does not require hard evidence, only supposed knowledge of the alleged act. Utterson is immediately suspicious of Hyde's relationship to his client, Dr. Jekyll, "I thought it was madness… and now I fear it is disgrace," yet he does not report him, thus othering himself in the eyes of the law (11). By taking on Hyde's case for himself, he allows himself to be taken

in by Hyde's darkness and disgrace. The temptation of knowledge is too strong for Utterson to resist.

In his treatise, Foucault characterizes this fall from grace as a "deliberate transgression" (6). He theorizes that part of what draws people to submit to repression is the thrill of a deliberate act of transgression against the ruling power. Utterson transgresses against the ruling power by willfully ignoring his duty to Labouchere. In a thrilling chase to find the answers to this strange case, as he proclaims, "If he be Mr. Hyde, then I be Mr. Seek" (Stevenson 14). From this moment on, Utterson exists outside the law; he is his own power, othered from society. As Labouchere decrees, he is now a criminal both "in public and in private," yet still free from its restrictions.

Utterson is not the only character to deliberately transgress against Labouchere. His client Jekyll, the story's central figure, is the first transgressor. In his final testament, Jekyll confesses that he felt the pressure of Victorian rule upon the many "irregularities" of his character and resigned to live with a "morbid sense of shame" (52). While reflecting on his shame, Jekyll discovers the duality of man's nature: "man is not truly one, but truly two"; there exists in man both "good and ill" (52). In his experiments, the doctor can house his two sides in separate containers, the good remaining in Jekyll and his newly freed "ill" side in Hyde. In physically dividing himself, Jekyll has othered himself and Hyde in the eyes of Victorian society. Hyde is so othered that it affects his physical appearance. Just as Enfield senses something disgraceful in Hyde, Jekyll does too. He assumes it is because "all human beings are commingled out of good and evil: Edward Hyde… was pure evil" (55). By creating this divide between good and evil, Jekyll tempts the divide between propriety and disgrace.

Though both bodies belong to him, as they were once one person, Jekyll is embodying the "gross indecencies" of Labouchere. Their intimate relationship blossoms as Hyde grows his sense of self. They become physically and emotionally dependent on each other: Hyde needs Jekyll for his serum, and Jekyll needs Hyde for his ability to explore Victorian indecencies. There is a thrill Jekyll seeks in becoming Hyde: "to cast my lot in with Jekyll, was to die to those appetites which [he] had long secretly indulged." However, the consequences of becoming his darker self are incredibly high: "with Hyde, was to die a thousand aspirations and interests, and to become… despised and friendless" (59). The debate over whether to adhere to Labouchere is a serious one for a man so tempted by darkness. His evil, disgraced self would be forever ostracized by society, a criminal to all those around him. Nevertheless, to remain a law-abiding Victorian would be to remain repressed and devoid of pleasure. The text highlights the maddening nature of the deliberate transgression that is Stevenson's response to the absurdity of Labouchere.

Where Jekyll's deliberate transgression against Labouchere is by creating Hyde, Hyde's transgressions are much more violent. In a sense, by separating himself into two beings, Jekyll is also separating his crimes into two spheres: the public and the private. Because Labouchere claims dominion over both, its law criminalizing Victorian others applies to both the public and private transgressions of the Jekyll/Hyde personas. In public, Hyde becomes an othered figure by way of his nature, a creature hellbent on appeasing his many dark appetites. In Hyde's liberation, we see the liberation of Jekyll's repressed darkness. The sins that were once "irregularities" in Jekyll are now Hyde's actions. Mr. Hyde, the animalistic human unafraid of society, is the monster in the darkness.

If Hyde is Jekyll's desires made real, his actions in murdering Carew are Stevenson's opinion on Labouchere made known. From the onslaught, the entire scene implies some criminal activity in the eyes of Labouchere. Two men meet in the light of a full moon in a deserted street (20). The romantic atmosphere of the scene is even noticed by the young maid looking out the window of her apartment above them. Though seemingly normal, there is something off about the way the two men appear. The older gentleman, later identified as Sir Carew, is described by the girl as an "old-world" kind of beautiful, whereas the other, recognized as Mr. Hyde, has the usual description of immediate "dislike" (20). Their meeting starts out innocently, but suddenly in a fit of passion, one man kills the other with his cane, "like a madman" (21). It is, of course, not surprising that Mr. Hyde has such aggressive, animal-traits, but what cannot be condoned is his use of those traits in the public sphere. His uncontrollable, rage-filled, "ape-like" actions are ruled by his desires. In murdering such a public figure, Hyde breaches the boundary that separates the civilized Victorian society from the monstrous secret lives of the novella's characters. Hyde's monstrous action represents the penetration of passion from one man to another, a darkness seeping in from the outskirts of civility to the center of Victorian order. The rape-like scene is a turning point for Hyde's criminality. Until this point the man was a mere representation of monstrous desire. With the murder of Carew, Hyde becomes an actual criminal rather than a suspected one. The penetration of Hyde's darkness into society complete, it is clear that he is the "male party" that has commissioned the "gross indecencies" among the other men in the novella. Hyde is now fully the monster on the other side of the door that Utterson is so fearful of yet fascinated by.

This scene also marks the last time Hyde's character appears as a driving force in the novel (O'Dell 515). After Carew's murder, Hyde's monstrosity is used as an abstract motivator

for Utterson to continue down the path of his deliberate transgression. With Hyde's monstrosity on full display, his darkness provides the characters of the novella with a hegemonic scapegoat for their own crimes. Hyde, in committing his "gross indecencies," is the criminal Labouchere wants. Hence, in his persecution, the crimes of the other characters can be excused. In "Character Negotiations," Benjamin O'Dell argues that as Utterson continues to unravel the "strange case" he is entangled in, Hyde becomes a caricature for "evil" (517). By allowing the abstract nature of "evil" to engulf Hyde's darkness, he is able to act as the ultimate criminal, creating a veil that covers the darkness of the other characters. This veil comes in the form of Hyde's total ex-communication from society via Labouchere and the murder. Utterson, unlike Hyde, can claim that he is following the case for the purpose of the law, which to an extent protects him. In reality, his continued chase of Hyde is a further transgression. Because of the publicity surrounding Carew's murder, Utterson can no longer claim ignorance of Hyde's crime – his very existence. However, Utterson continues to act against Labouchere by still refusing to report Hyde to the proper authorities. Once again, he refuses to involve the authorities in a deliberate and public transgression of the law. No one is safe from the darkness that Hyde introduces into the public sphere.

By reading *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* within the context of the Labouchere Amendment, the duality of human nature as a criminal act becomes apparent. When the murder/suicide of Jekyll and Hyde returns order to chaotic London, the case becomes much less strange. The gross indecencies committed by Jekyll and Hyde are crimes. However, by confusing the boundaries between propriety and obscenity within the characters, from small infractions to the more significant crimes, Stevenson masks the real villain of the novella, the Victorian repression forced upon society.

Part II – The Deviant Pastoral

If the dual personas of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde represent the human need to transgress against power, the aesthetic struggle in *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* represents the human need to describe transgression. When a subject becomes a crime, as homosexuality did with Labouchere, the subsequent discourse of the subject becomes taboo. In the case of Victorian society, sex became that tabooed subject. The right for sexuality to exist was nullified, and the word erased from the Victorian dictionary. Nevertheless, as with all repressed subjects, the consequence of subjugation is liberation. Rather than discussing sex and sexuality, the Victorians engaged in this brand of discourse by shifting their language to describe it by any other means instead. While the Victorians may have been the best at circumventing this type of discourse, Foucault tracks the Catholic church as one of its originators, by way of what he calls the "Catholic pastoral" (19). During their centuries-long fight to repress sexuality, the Catholic church inadvertently created this new form of discourse in the form of confession (19). In confession, the confessor describes every sensation he feels during sex, without actually naming the act. Every feeling, every detail is confessed, though the sinner is barred from saying that these sensations come from sexual acts. The picture created in the confession booth is an idealized, romanticized, and, most importantly, demonized discourse, yet is the core of sexuality as sin. In subjugating the directness of sexual discourse, the Catholic pastoral creates a portrait of sexuality as the beautiful sinner.

As the Catholic confessor is the beautiful sinner, Dorian Gray is a beautiful monster. For every transgression Dorian commits, he becomes more monstrous until his soul can no longer bear the weight of his sins. However, rather than an outright confession of what Dorian's sins are, Wilde instead provides a portrait that takes on his monstrosity, bearing Dorian's hidden darkness. In "The Beautiful Boy as the Destroyer," Camille Paglia describes the aesthetic duality

of Dorian and his portrait as the character's rejection of inner Christian morality for that of the outer pagan world (515). Dorian is a descendant of Narcissus,[3] the "beautiful boy" who throws away his soul in favor of everlasting youth. He is, by definition, emotionally stunted and unable to weigh virtue against sin, which makes him easily corruptible (515). When Dorian makes his pact with Lord Henry, denouncing his inner Christian morality in favor of a life of pleasure and sin, the beautiful Garden[4] portrayed deteriorates, creating a pastoral of sin. The pastoral within the portrait is Dorian's personal pastoral, a pastoral of deviance.

When Wilde first introduces the portrait, it is in Basil Hallward's studio. When Basil shows the painting to Lord Henry, they marvel at Dorian's beauty. His luminous innocence shines through the canvas affecting both men in a manner that is already suggestive of illicit sensations. Dorian's painted presence inexplicably dominates the two men. He is their Adonis; the two men acting as though they were Aphrodite and Persephone[5] (7). As with all Apollonian[6] figures, Dorian's portrait is the picture of innocence and perfection. The figure is one of objectification, materialism, and absolute decadence (Paglia 512). Like the Garden, the portrait of Dorian Gray is beauty made real. His looks shine a light that attracts everyone around him, as seen in Basil's confession for why he painted the portrait: "I had seen perfection face to face, and the world had become wonderful to my eye" (Wilde 95). This idealized version of Dorian, so extraordinarily radiant, is his pastoral. It is Dorian at his most idyllic, his most enchanting. Basil begins by painting Dorian as Paris,[7] the decadent soldier; followed by Adonis, the hunter covered

[3] Narcissus fell in love with his reflection in a pool of water, eventually leading to his own drowning.
[4] The Garden of Eden, the birthplace of man in monotheistic religion, also known as Paradise (OED Online).
[5] In classical mythology, Adonis, the most beautiful among men, was pursed by Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and Persephone, goddess of the Underworld, until he was killed in a hunting accident.
[6] Adj., defined as: pertaining to, resembling, or having the characteristics of Apollo, the sun-god of the Greeks and Roman, the patron of music and poetry (OED Online).
[7] The youngest Prince of Troy, favored by Aphrodite, who started the Trojan war.

in lion skins; and then as Antinous[8] covered in flowers before painting him as the picturesque Victorian lover (95). Each progression of the portrait is more and more idealized from the lovers of antiquity to historical romances to Basil's worship of the imagined "true" Dorian. This version of the portrait is Dorian at his best: Dorian before his fall.

When Dorian sees himself as Basil does, he is just as enamored. Like Narcissus seeing his reflection in the pond, Dorian becomes obsessed with his youth, opening the door for temptation. Just as the snake swayed Adam and Eve, Lord Henry influences Dorian with his whispers, the first being the mere thought that Dorian could be less beautiful than his painting: "You must really not allow yourself to become sunburnt. It would be unbecoming" (qtd from Paglia 513). The mere thought of his actual face being anything less than what Basil has painted is the catalyst for his later sins. He wishes for the portrait to take the brunt of his aging while he stays forever the young boy Basil painted. As Lord Henry says, "if one man were to live out his life fully and completely, were to give form to every feeling, expression to every thought, reality to every dream – I believe that the world would gain such a fresh impulse of joy that we would forget all the maladies of medievalism, and return to the Hellenistic ideal… But the bravest man among us is afraid" (Wilde 19-20). Dorian, enthralled by his love for himself, falls into the trap of paganism. He wishes to be void of medieval morality and live as the hedonist Hellenist. Dorian's false bravery and sinful attraction to himself is the match that lights his bargain with the devil. With this deal, Dorian has "eternal youth, infinite passion, pleasure subtle and secret, wild joys and wilder sins," but it will also be his downfall. "He would have all these things. The portrait would bear the burden of his shame" taking on the ugliness that Dorian would otherwise show to the world (88). His beautiful Garden is destroyed, becoming a deviant pastoral.

[8] Antinous was the male "companions" of the Roman emperor, Hadrian, who drowned in the Nile.

It stands to reason that if Foucault can claim confession to be the birthplace of the Catholic pastoral, then I can claim the demonic portrait Wilde creates in his novel as the birthplace of the deviant pastoral. Just as the Catholic church claims sexuality to be a sin, the Victorian lawmakers claimed homosexuality to be a crime with Labouchere. In Labouchere's version of the discursive pastoral, the law directs its wrath at men who have "commissioned gross indecencies" with other "male persons." Any pastoral of sexuality created after the law was instated would, therefore, be a pastoral of criminal deviance. Dorian's portrait, as a painting that takes on its subject's sins, is a deviant pastoral. It paints Dorian's Garden as a place of deviant crime rather than an idyllic paradise. Instead of an image of eternal youth, passion, pleasure, and joy, the portrait would show age, suffering, and pain.

After he takes the portrait into his possession and makes his pact with the devil, with each transgression, Dorian's portrait transforms from an Adonis-like figure to an aging and withered demon. Rather than the painting becoming more and more romantic, it becomes more and more real, a true reflection of Dorian's soul. Wilde's deviant pastoral is, in effect, an opposite rendering of the Catholic pastoral come to life. The painting, a physical manifestation of Dorian's sexuality, is the beautiful monster the Catholic Church would have its practitioners fear. As the painting takes on his sins, Dorian falls deeper into the underworld of society. When he first notices the painting starting to change, Dorian has broken off his engagement to the actress Sybil Vane. In a fit of passion and confusion, Dorian sees that his fleeting attraction to Sybil was an illusion of lights and magic of the theater. When the girl can no longer act with the same intensity and art that first draws Dorian, he realizes that he was not attracted to her, but to the spectacle that being with her would create. Dorian's disregard for Sybil's love for him is his first sin. The degradation to his soul mars the perfection of the painting, adding "lines of cruelty

round his mouth… as if he had done some dreadful thing" (77). The painting, which Dorian comes to understand represents his conscience, begins to illustrate Dorian's turn from the subject of the normal, accepted discourse of sexuality to the deviant discourse. In turning away from Sybil, Dorian recognizes that he has been tempted towards sin and the darkness of the painting (78). Unfortunately for him and his painting, Dorian is not strong enough to resist such temptation. In Sybil's suicidal love for Dorian, her sacrifice, she opens the doors to the underworld for him. Her death pays for his entrance into a life free of repression, the fee that Lord Henry takes from Dorian to seal his pact with the painting to remain young forever. In being eternally beautiful, Dorian can cast off any chains that would otherwise hold him accountable for his crimes (Paglia 516). As Lord Henry says, "Life has everything in store for you Dorian. There is nothing that you, with your extraordinary good looks, will not able to do" (Wilde 87). In other words, now that Dorian is an immortal Adonis, he is free to follow Lord Henry to the opera, to their shared home in Trouville, and into the hedonistic bed of Hellenistic, pagan sin.

That being said, this deviant pastoral is not one formed overnight. The pastoral Wilde creates in the portrait grows as Dorian continues to live a life of sin. As Dorian falls headfirst into the darkness, his soul withers. His physical appearance, however, stays as vibrant as ever. He becomes a temptation for the rest of London, a source of discourse as the whispers about him become the talk of London. Eventually, a life of sin and darkness becomes too much for Dorian, as the secret he carries has weighed him down since he first discovered the magic of the portrait. In the final chapter of the novel, Dorian remembers a few lines from a letter one of his lovers wrote to him in years past: "the world is changed because you are made of ivory and gold. The curves of your lips rewrite history" (182). Once again, Dorian is a beautiful, Apollonian boy. His

outer, pagan beauty enthralls the world as it once did Basil. But Dorian, after years of watching his portrait change, knows the truth: his beauty is only a mask for the ugliness of his soul. While he contemplates what it would take to purify his soul of the sins he has committed over the years, it is the truth of the pastoral represented in the portrait that decides if Dorian can be redeemed. In the locked room where the portrait hangs, the subject has been even more disfigured, representing the culmination of Dorian's sins. The portrait's withered and wrinkled limbs are covered in blood as if a disease had infected the painting (183). Its canvas no longer shows a simple cruelty in its features as it did after Dorian's betrayal to Sybil. The young man who had once been the pride of Basil's eye is a loathsome creature, a demon trapped in depths of Hell rather than a tempted soul entering the underworld.

The once beautiful painting is now a window into Dorian's ugly and deviant soul. Such a hideous, painful reminder to him of his sins, Dorian decides to destroy the portrait, and in doing so, destroy the discourse of his painting. As he had killed the painter, Dorian would kill what the painter created – a reminder of the Victorian, Christian morality he had long since abandoned (184). The pastoral Wilde creates in the duality of Dorian and his "monster-soul" is that of the deviant transgression. Wilde, in his *Portrait of Dorian Gray*, creates a pastoral of Hell and sin. Dorian's, and therefore Wilde's, deviant pastoral is a voice given to the monster created by Labouchere. The deviant pastoral is the discourse of sexuality as a crime.

The Discourse of the Victorian Gothic

In *Dorian Gray's* preface, Wilde writes, "The nineteenth-century dislike of Realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass. The nineteenth-century dislike of Romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass" (3). In other words, what is real is not beautiful enough, and what is beautiful is not real enough. Dorian, despite being born as the Victorian Adonis, never felt he was attractive enough to outlast the imaginary beauty of his portrait. After taking on the portrait's curse, he discovers his life is not real enough to be truly beautiful. Like Caliban, the war for Dorian's soul begins and ends with his reflection. Because of the eternal youth given to him by the portrait, Dorian is cornered into a life of theatricality. He is forced to hide his dark, inner nature from the world as his outer, beautiful one shines for the world to see. Dorian's life is a life of imbalance: a dark fantasy of realized desire in exchange for a life of despair. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde give a similar narrative of the corrupted soul in Jekyll's experimentation with literal individuation. In separating his "evil" self from his "good" self, Jekyll and the monster he creates, Hyde, embody the pastoral of Wilde's portrait. They are, respectively, the beautiful mask and the ugly soul come to life.

Just as the Catholic Church created a new discourse rooted in the sins of the flesh, the dualistic and aesthetic conventions of Gothic literature creates a space for the discourse of attempted repression. As both Stevenson and Wilde conclude, with one side of that duality or aesthetic struggle out of balance, man cannot exist as a functioning member of society. If a man is too concerned with being beautiful, as Dorian is, then he is intrinsically ugly on the inside. If a man tries to divide himself to get rid of that ugliness (like Jekyll attempts in creating Hyde), then he relinquishes what little control he has over his darkness. To be human is to accept the beautiful and the ugly, good and evil, in our soul, which Dorian and Jekyll cannot do. It takes

pure individuation, when darkness and light are in balance with each other, for real beauty to endure.

Because Dorian and Dr. Jekyll are unable to achieve this balance of power within themselves, they surrender their right to be a part of Victorian society. The monsters created in the novels are the voices of the repressed, Victorian "other" that Labouchere attempted to control. Each of the novels subverts the imposed Victorian repression, therefore existing outside of Victorian power. Their work shows a fatal flaw in Victorian philosophy: man cannot control how the soul is formed. More specifically, man cannot control sexuality and the so-called "darker inclinations" that exist within the soul. To be a sexual being with desires and darkness is a part of nature. To try repressing that darkness is to cut off a part of one's soul. It is inhuman, and thus will inherently create a deformed monster.

Stevenson and Wilde exploit this flaw in creating their discourse within the Victorian Gothic. The conventions of Gothic fiction allow for the creation of monsters as a part of the supernatural genre. Because of this, both authors can deliberately transgress against the ruling power to create deviant pastorals in their work. In their fiction, Stevenson and Wilde, like Foucault, have become masters of illicit. They take their knowledge of a subjugated taboo and create a substance to fill the power void. The publication of novels is an act of deviance against the ruling power, yet still allowed because they are, of course, fiction. The writing creates a discourse that implies a sexual nature without explicitly saying so, a supernatural and deviant pastoral, giving a voice to the silenced monsters that are born in the darkness. Hyde's actions and Dorian's demonic pastoral are the consequences of leaving those monsters to starve. They are too powerful to remain repressed. In the end, the only way to remain in control, for Labouchere

to continue to have power over these creatures, is to kill them. In their deaths – Hyde's and Dorian's – the power of repression is restored.

Afterword

> It is clear that the individual who persecutes a man, his brother, because he is not of the same opinion, is a monster.
>
> – Voltaire

In the aftermath of writing this piece that culminates everything I have learned in the last four years, I am forced to reflect back on what it truly means to be a monster. Voltaire claims that real monsters are those who would punish a man for a difference in opinion. I would take that one step further and say that a man becomes a monster when he punishes another man for not being of the same soul.

Since the Victorian era, humanity has come so far in changing the discourse of difference. I do believe that there is a large portion of that change due to Foucault's *History of Sexualit*y, whose purpose was to alleviate a fear of the unknown. But an unusually optimistic part of me wants to also think this change is because, as a global society, we humans have evolved to a place of acceptance and kindness within ourselves. That is not to say that I believe every person on the planet is inherently good; we all still have our moments of monstrosity. Yet, for the most part, humanity has learned to live in the light as a society of difference, embracing our personal individuation.

In terms of the aftermath of actual work I have produced, the expression that best encapsulates how I feel is that I have been on a journey of enlightenment. For the first time in four years, I finally understand the absolute joy of writing that so many of my colleagues claim comes with creating a work such as this. It's an odd sensation since I have never considered myself to be a writer, but a gratifying one all the same. This capstone paper represents everything that I love about being a scholar of English literature. It brings together two pieces of fiction and

places them, and myself, in conversation with other scholarly work. It is a discourse discussing discourse. Does it get any better than that?

I was very nervous beginning this process of "capstone writing." I have always held a passion for the Romantics and the Medievalists, but the Victorians were a whole new genre for me. If not for that initial meeting with the most fantastic writing coach, Professor Black, prompting me to look at the connections between Foucault, *Dorian Gray*, and *Jekyll and Hyde*, I probably would have tried to write a paper on how I thought Victorians were watered down Romantics. As I look back, this definitely does not seem plausible to me anymore, but it is the honest truth of where my capstone began.

On a separate but not entirely unrelated note, since beginning my career at Skidmore, I've held a particular passion for theory. Call me crazy, I definitely do, but long, exasperated, convoluted texts actually make a bit of sense to me. I remember a friend once asking me why I found Foucault, in particular, to be an easy read when most people find him incredibly confusing. My answer is simple: I think the philosopher and I are just on the same level of insanity. We know where we want to go in our writing: it only takes us a while to get there. The irony of this astounds me because my impatient nature does not allow me to enjoy other authors who are not direct enough in making their point, so much so that I will get annoyed and put the book down. For some reason alien to myself, I am a total hypocrite in that regard.

And with this hypocrisy brought into the light, we've arrived at my finished product. I knew this was not going to be easy. Still, I'm proud of what I've been able to produce despite the disastrous circumstances we find ourselves in this semester. I do believe this is the best work I could have produced. It is undoubtedly the most complicated paper I've written. Yet despite

having taken the scenic route, there's a point to it. It's me, doing what I love, which is merely talking about literature with like-minded scholars. Thank you.

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