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Georgia State University, michaelbesozzi@yahoo.com

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"TO BLAZE FOREVER IN A BLAZING WORLD": QUEER RECONSTRUCTION AND CULTURAL MEMORY IN THE WORKS OF ALAN MOORE

by

MICHAEL BESOZZI

Under the Direction of Dr. Ted Friedman

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a queer analysis of two graphic novels by writer Alan Moore: *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* series (art by Kevin O'Neill, 1999-Present) and *Lost Girls* (art by Melinda Gebbie, 1992-3). These two works re-contextualize familiar characters such as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Mina Murray, and Alice to uncover both the liberating desires and the sexist, homophobic, and imperialistic anxieties underlining historically popular fiction. Focusing on three characters utilized in Moore's work, this thesis argues that the ideological associations with those chosen characters and the reconstructions of queerness in their narratives offer contemporary subjects resistance to limiting cultural tendencies and create an alternative space that call attention to phobic societal constructs. Both *Lost Girls* and the *League* series redefine discursively constituted identities and offer the potential to re-write normative codes of sex and sexuality.

INDEX WORDS: Alan Moore, Comic books, Dracula, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Graphic novels, The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Lost Girls, Queer theory, Sexuality

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MICHAEL BESOZZI

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

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Georgia State University

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by

MICHAEL BESOZZI

Committee Chair: Dr. Ted Friedman

Committee: Dr. Kathy Fuller-Seeley

Dr. Jim Roberts

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Georgia State University

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DEDICATION

To my family and friends, who have supported me constantly throughout this process; and to my poor roommate, who has been on the receiving end of many a stressful rant. I thank and love you all.

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INTRODUCTION

British author Alan Moore has managed to drastically alter the comic book medium as well as offer interesting ways of reconsidering cultural and ideological memory through fiction. His graphic novels, such as *Watchmen* (1986-87) and *From Hell* (1991-96), assisted in providing a growing respectability to a medium considered a field for adolescents. Within the domain of comics, the artist is traditionally given priority as the sole author of the work; yet Moore, primarily a writer, has managed to make a specific voice for himself within the discipline as well as give ample credit to the illustrators of his works. Alan Moore has even bridged the medium of comics to work on prose fiction, music, and performance art. Moore's graphic novels have also transitioned to other mediums; his comics have been adapted to feature films, much to Moore's own chagrin.

Alan Moore has remained pessimistic to the notion of the cinematic adaptation of comics. He has refused to accept profits from films, has requested his name to be removed from these adaptations, and as a practitioner of magic, has jokingly hexed several movie productions. His primary concerns are (1) the specific ways audiences' process and "read" information across mediums, and (2) the ideological practices of contemporary Hollywood filmmaking which he parodies in many of his comic series. Moore is no stranger to the method of adaptation. The bulk of his work utilizes either an allusion to characters still under copyright or explicit incorporation of fictional characters not in the public domain. Two of his works, *The League of Extraordinary Gentleman* series (1999-Present) and *Lost Girls* (1992-93 in separate installments; 2006 in a single-bound hardcopy), specifically employ previous characters from late nineteenth to early

twentieth century fantasy literature to question the continual re-adaptation of Victorian and Edwardian narratives for contemporary audiences. Although stories and scenarios from such public domain works as *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Robert Louis Stevenson, 1886) and *The War of the Worlds* (H.G. Wells, 1898) have become popular within the cultural imagination, Moore's work suggests that many of the problematic cultural aspects of these original narratives, as well as new critical perspectives on the popularity of these stories, have yet to be fully assessed.

Although Alan Moore remains reclusive, the handful of interviews with him have provided an interesting portrait of an opinionated, socially conscious, and entertaining figure who is consistently questioning the history and process of storytelling. Acknowledging the necessity of fiction as a world-making tool, Moore is also concerned with the widening gulf between a conscious awareness of the social and political constructs of historical fiction and popular entertainment. In a 2007 interview for *Mania.com*, Moore suggests his views concerning the interaction between fictional and social constructs, stating, "Almost everything that is in our environment and in our lives is there for some kind of survival purpose, which leads me to suspect that there is something about the interdependence of our material world and the fictional world that is of great importance to us and our lives. There is some kind of feedback in that the architects of the physical world are very often - more often than not - inspired by fiction." Although many of the themes, characters, and narratives Moore uses have become so ingrained in the cultural consciousness as to become accepted as common sense, Moore suggests that these ideological fantasies have structured the world in both fascinating and disquieting ways. In drawing connections from multiple narratives and mediums in an

attempt to incorporate an analytic yet entertaining form of activist storytelling, Moore proposes an opportunity for an almost literal world (re)making by acknowledging the sexist and homophobic impulses and liberating desires underlining historically popular fiction and how contemporary subjects can resist limiting cultural tendencies and create an alternative creative space that can call attention to phobic societal constructs.

Out of Alan Moore's works, *Lost Girls* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* series were specifically chosen for their larger cultural associations. Characters such as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Mina Murray, and Alice, through their continual use through popular media, have become virtual touchstones within cultural memory as to become overtly comforting ideas; yet by utilizing these archetypal assumptions, Moore's work suggests that these narratives still provide strong junctions for social and cultural reevaluations. Therefore, discussions of various popular depictions of these characters throughout other mediums will be acknowledged in order to assess ideological associations with those chosen characters and how Moore's works pose reconstructions of queerness for these familiar narratives.

THE WORKS OF ALAN MOORE

Alan Moore was a pivotal figure in reshaping the field of comic books. In the mid-1980's, his graphic novel, *Watchmen*, started a new trend of dark, self-aware comic books that has since dominated the market. In Moore's own work, he is drawn to reworking pre-established public domain and thinly disguised copyrighted characters, as well as modifying authorized characters from comic companies such as DC Comics in order to explore the associations affixed to these figures. Although not the most well known of his graphic novels, *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* series and *Lost*

Girls dig the most deeply and self-consciously into a wider cultural past then many of his other works. Both of these texts are also more explicit in their use of cultural sources, avoiding veiled references to popular characters by instead utilizing figures available in the public domain. Alan Moore consistently utilizes an exhaustive amount of intertextual references, meta-fictional acknowledgements, and pre-established cultural associations that could provide the basis for an entire dissertation. Even within his and illustrator Kevin O'Neill's *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* series, he has established a universe in which every existing fictional character can interact, providing an overwhelming creation that any one thesis could fully engage. Thus, I've chosen to focus specifically on three characters in these novels: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Mina Murray, and Alice.

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen was conceived as a postmodern joke of superhero comics. Assembling a team of heroes out of previously existing Victorian antiheroes of the public domain, Moore and O'Neill provided an opportunity to parody as well as closely examine elements of popular British fiction while simultaneously providing a thrilling adventure series. The team involves Mina Murray, the heroine from Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897); the Great White hunter/adventurer Allan Quatermain from H. Rider Haggard's Quatermain series (beginning with *King Solomon's Mines*, 1885); Stevenson's Dr. Henry Jekyll and Mr. Edward Hyde; Captain Nemo from Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1870) and its sequel *The Mysterious Island* (1874); and last but not least, *The Invisible Man* (H.G. Wells, 1897). Moore and O'Neill pit their team against a number of threats to the British Empire, from Wells' Martians

(*War of the Worlds*) to Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu, which functions as a more explicit critique on British imperial culture through the exaggeration of Yellow Peril fiction.

The oscillation between what is culturally perceived as heroic and monstrous becomes the predominant theme throughout the series. As one character, Campion Bond, states in an epigraph to *League Volume I*: "The British Empire has always encountered difficulty in distinguishing between its heroes and its monsters" (Moore 6). All of the "protagonists" function as the antithesis of British identity, as representatives of the marginalized "other" : they combat otherness while simultaneously embodying it. Both Mina Murray and Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Edward Hyde exemplify Victorian concerns around deviant sexuality, specifically woman's sexuality and male homosexuality; the *League* series offers these characters more constructive characteristics than have been culturally and historically perceived as admirable.

Lost Girls continues the themes of sexual otherness yet incorporates them into a more explicitly pornographic tradition. Set in an isolated Austrian resort before the outbreak of World War I, the narrative features three popular female protagonists from 19th and the burgeoning 20th century literature: Alice, from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and its sequel, *Through the Looking Glass, and What Alice Found There* (Lewis Carroll, 1865 and 1871 respectively); Dorothy from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (L. Frank Baum, 1900); and Wendy from J.M Barrie's play *Peter Pan; or, the Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up* (1904) and its novelisation *Peter and Wendy* (1911). The three adult protagonists describe their original fantasy adventures as metaphors of their nascent sexuality, while also engaging in explicitly sexual acts with each other. *Lost Girls* also includes intertextual references to other literary figures (Colette), artists (Franz von

Bayros), as well as other fictional characters (Oscar Wilde's Dorian Gray, also a figure in the *League* series).

Kenneth Kidd's article "Down the Rabbit Hole" notes that the characters of Alice, Dorothy, and Wendy have become "poster children for queer theory." Terminology from the original narratives appears in works such as Judith Butler's *The Psychic Power of Life* and breaks from gender specificity occur within each of the original works or series; various adaptations of *Peter Pan* typically casts actors of varying sexes into differently sexed roles (ex: actress in Pan role) while L. Frank Baum's sequel to *Oz* (*The Marvelous Land of Oz*, 1904) climaxes with the boy protagonist magically transforming into a girl.

Alan Moore and Melinda Gebbie utilize the sexually transformative aspects of the former works, tackling a number of controversial subjects with *Lost Girls*: the formulation of sexual identity through class and nationality; children's pleasure and sexuality; obscenity/perversity (pedophilia); and the relationship between trauma and sexuality. The interweaving of popular fiction with explicitly sexual content may not provide the sexual liberation and titillation that the creators may have strived for, yet the composition does acquire an important focus for a discursive reappraisal within pornography. Both *Lost Girls* and the *League* series provide a possibility for alternative relationships and redefinitions of discursively constituted identities as well as another cultural potential to re-write normative codes of sex and sexuality.

COMICS STUDIES

In forging a theoretical framework to engage with *Lost Girls* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* series, specific choices in regards to comic book terminology need to be introduced. This is not an easy task, as even the vocabulary and definition of

what is a graphic narrative is continually debated based at length, content, and even pejorative claims of exclusivity for individuals who utilize the specific term, *graphic novel*. The terms *comics*, *comic books* and *graphic novels* all carry excessive cultural baggage depending on its usage, not assisted by the fact that only recently has academic attention been accredited to the study of graphic narratives, laying the ground for debates on what entails "legitimate" artistic work. Cory K. Creekmur's review, "Superheroes and Science Fiction: Who Watches Comic Books?" sets up the backdrop for these arguments:

> Even given their recent elevation as 'graphic novels' or 'sequential narratives,' comics have not been given the kind of scholarly attention afforded the dime novel, series romance, hard-boiled detective story, or pulp SF (science fiction), much less Hollywood cinema, that other major American mode of genre-based visual-verbal narrative. (283)

Yet Creekmur continues:

> While a fan-based criticism has flourished for decades, even in its most above-ground forum, the work still rests on pre-critical assumptions in which authorship is valorized as personal expression. Fan-critics often dismiss the few scholars who make forays into comics criticism for taking too seriously material that the fans themselves are nevertheless devoted to collecting and annotating. (283)

The goal is to build off of ideas and concepts that have been previously established by fan-critics and scholars alike, bridging shared ideas while interweaving other modes of queer interaction and appreciation of comics/graphic novels with concepts that are already prevalent inside of the individual texts.

Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (written and designed as a graphic novel) provides a smart vocabulary for engaging with the textual analysis of comics. McCloud incorporates earlier ideas from such artist/creators as Will Eisner and Art Spiegelman to examine the history of what he defines as "sequential art." Eisner and Spiegelman were among the first artists to offer a serious enquiry into the field of comics as an art form. McCloud utilizes their ideas to probe further into how readers visually engage with the graphic text. This incorporates how comics visually convey information, as well as the literal act of "reading" the arrangement of transitions (spaces between panels). McCloud defines comic books as "juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or produce an aesthetic response in the viewer" (9). He notes that this incorporates a broad definition. McCloud claims that the term "sequential art" acts as an umbrella term that incorporates a vast field of work (from Egyptian hieroglyphics to five panel newspaper comic strips), yet he does allow for a specific focus on how the human eye processes animation and film separately from images spatially put side by side.

Alan Moore emphasizes the specificity of sequential art in his critiques against cinematic adaptations of his works. In an interview for *Wired* magazine, he states "With a comic, you're having to do quite a lot. Even though you've got pictures there for you, you're having to fill in the gaps between the panels, you're having to imagine the characters voices." Although there have been a few other texts that have attempted to further explicate on McCloud's ideas or further aid him in structuring a dialogue for graphic novels, specifically Thierry Groensteen's semiotic approach in *The System of Comics*, McCloud's text provides a language that is approachable for non-scholars while

avoiding base descriptive terminology. For example, McCloud refers to the space between panels as the *gutter*, a space in which comic readers connect two visual panels together, yet it is a space that is entirely reliant on the spectator's ability to structure an unbroken, integrated verisimilitude with the unfolding of the comic narrative. The language McCloud utilizes assists in discussing the visual structure of Moore's two works, such as the structuring of spectator's participation with pornography in the gutter of *Lost Girls*.

Martin Barker's *Comics: Ideology, Power and the Critics*, Matthew Pustz's *Comic Book Culture: Fanboys and True Believers*, and Bradford W. Wright's *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America* involve historical and cultural approaches in their discussion of comic books. What these series of works offer is a complicated interaction between the historical reception of comic books and ultimately a critical understanding of the varying avenues of discourse within the comic field. Both Wright and Pustz's works are primarily focused on the reception of comics through fan cultures. Whereas the focus of this thesis is not on reception studies, the interaction of the comic medium and the reader should briefly be discussed in understanding the cultural agency Moore's work allows.

Matthew Pustz utilizes Scott McCloud's ideas to engage how particular fan cultures form through the learned practices of reading comic panels and shared understandings of how narrative and continuity unfold. Pustz stresses that "comic books demand a unique set of reading practices that many Americans lack" (122), and details how the ability to shift from images, words, and panels allows for a more complicated process of "reading" than previously allotted to the comic book medium. Bradford W.

Wright bounces off this shared understanding of set cultural practices and documents the history of the American comic book industry as well as the changing cultural landscape from 1933-1980.

Martin Barker introduces the history of comics as a "history of controversies. And every controversy has involved claims about the meanings, messages and potential influence of some comics" (13). Similar to Wright's work, Barker documents specific connections between mass culture and the comic book. Yet, whereas Wright insists on avoiding an aesthetic account for meanings that are apparently easily noticeable and understood by producers and readers alike, Barker insists that a more complex engagement between comics and mass culture exists. Focusing on accusations that comics employ the use of stereotypes, as well as the presumption that comics are negative influences, Barker disposes of the idea of identification, claiming that this term carries with it the baggage of "vulnerability to messages, loss of our own identity, submergence in the identity of a media character, with a residue of influence." (96). He instead suggests that imaginative media may offer more complex constructs and spectator interaction than just *types*.

Moore is working with types in order to invoke specific cultural connotations to re-examine the implications of visual media. Moore utilizes Kevin O'Neill's exaggerated art in the *League* to reexamine visual resonances of familiar characters. Moore avoids a limiting model of dominant identification and understanding of mass texts in favor of a more diverse form of interaction with image, text, and the cultural imagination.

REVISIONIST AND ALTERNATIVE COMICS

Although Alan Moore has been a pivotal figure within the field of superhero comics, *Lost Girls* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* series are not easily positioned within the category of superhero narratives; instead these two works dig deeper into the cultural past than many of the superhero stories for which Moore is more widely recognized. These two works propose an intersection between different plots, genres, and visual strategies, offering an alternative to mainstream comic books. Documented in Charles Hatfield's *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature*, this new form of alternative comic books arose in the mid-1970s and has changed the spectrum, as well as public association, of the comic medium.

Hatfield defines this new re-envisioning of the comic medium as: "the rejection of mainstream formulas; the exploration of (to comics) new genres, as well as the revival, at times ironic recasting, of genres long neglected; a diversification of graphic style; a budding internationalism, as cartoonists learned from other cultures and other traditions; and, especially, the exploration of searchingly personal and at times boldly political themes" (xi). Many of the breaks and changes he discusses link back to earlier connotations in the history of the comic book: comic books as an adolescent terrain for young heterosexual boys primarily fixed within a superhero thematic. Both alternative and underground artists became increasingly interested with breaking away from formal comic art and panel designs and, ultimately, generic expectations for comic narratives and potential readership.

Geoff Klock's *How to Read Superhero Comics and Why* continues Hatfield's discussion with a key shift in the changing understanding of comic books. Though Klock obviously remains focused on superhero comics, he details a new age of comic books

beginning with Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Night Returns* (1988) and Alan Moore's *Watchmen*: the revisionist comic book. These two works pay close homage to the entire history of preceding comics. For example, "*Batman: The Dark Night Returns* is the first work in the history of superhero comics that attempts a synthesis of forty-five years of preceding Batman history in one place" (27). Batman has been in publication since 1939, and since that time, that character has remained entirely modern, has simultaneously never aged, and has changed from pulp vigilante to camp icon to Gothic antihero.

Miller provides a reorganization of this history, even amplifying homoerotic or queer accusations against the Batman series, such as Dr. Frederic Wertham's notorious statements that "only someone ignorant of the fundamentals of psychology and the psychopathology of sex can fail to realize the subtle atmosphere of homoeroticism which pervades the adventures of the mature 'Batman' and his young friend 'Robin'" (191). Alan Moore's *Watchmen* equates the literal act of throwing on spandex and a cape as a sexually fetishistic experience, even having one villain dressing up in costume and performing offenses for the masochistic gratification of being physically beaten by costumed crime-fighters. Frank Miller and Alan Moore were able to turn the superhero genre, and more broadly the comic book, on its head, providing self-aware narratives that were conscious of the social dynamics of the graphic narrative.

Moore has contributed an extensive amount of work within the predominant superhero genre, and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* series playfully adapts the superhero narrative onto its Victorian and Edwardian references. Yet the ways in which Moore, and many other contemporary comic creators, engages with the medium tends to

involve more than just the visual depiction of caped heroes endlessly battling super-powered villains. Douglas Wolk's *Reading Comics: How Graphic Novels Work and What They Mean* and Annalisa Di Liddo's *Alan Moore: Comics as Performance, Fiction as Scalpel* both expand on the range of narratives and artistic voices that are increasingly undermining mainstream cultural comic book expectations and provide a list of graphic novels that are positioned outside of the strict superhero format.

Douglas Wolk provides an entertaining overview of alternative, subversive, and underground comics that offers a brief introduction and review of key artists, writers, and texts. Unlike Geoff Klock, Wolk takes into account the variability of the comic form, ranging his discussion across generic platforms as well as expectations of who actually reads and engages with comics. Although not avoiding superhero comics in the least, he provides detailed reviews on such varying works as the Hernandez siblings, who provide real time visualizations to their characters (such as physical signs of ageing throughout the publication) as well as the work of Alison Bechdel, whose personal stories about lesbian lifestyles veers towards the autobiographical. More importantly, Wolk plays close attention to how sexuality and gender typically remain neglected in conversations and associations with comics. He states that mainstream comics remain predominantly a "boys club," that "women lead characters in superhero comics are outnumbered by men something like ten to one… the stereotype of the top-heavy bombshell being the only body type superhero artists know how to draw is frighteningly close to true" (72). Yet he states that there is hope for the future in art comics, stressing the importance of such creators as Bechdel and Melinda Gebbie who are vastly changing the involvement of female and queer comic readership and production.

Annalisa Di Liddo recognizes the importance of Alan Moore's work in her indoctrination into serious comic reading and focus for her dissertation. She states in *Alan Moore: Comics as Performance, Fiction as Scalpel* that although there is a wide scope of material about Moore (interviews, journal articles), critical scholarship has remained relatively scarce. Avoiding a comprehensive analysis, Di Liddo focuses on only a few of Moore's works, yet it is potentially the most complete critical text that attempts to access Moore's wider body of work. As Di Liddo acknowledges, "Not all of Moore's works are graphic novels… He wrote poetry and prose. He acted in performances and recorded CDs" (22). Even the *League* series avoids easy categorization as comic book; occasionally the narrative switches to prose fiction to tell the story (no illustrated panels). Di Liddo and Wolk acknowledge Moore's intertextual writing style that bridges the sphere of literature, cinema, music, and wider popular culture in order to elaborate on previous pop-culture sources to address contemporary assumptions on artistic and literary form as well as ideological concerns that still arise through the previous cultural works.

Although Annalisa Di Liddo (and to a lesser extent Wolk and Klock) briefly discusses Moore's interests with British identity and the imperial legacy analyzed throughout his work, what remains under-examined is a focus on the queer intersections that arise in his work. Di Liddo documents Moore's radical attacks against Margaret Thatcher through such publications as *AARGH! (Artists Against Rampant Government Homophobia)* and interweaves an intertextual approach about pornographic identity politics located within Moore's *Lost Girls*, yet Di Liddo is too dismissive of *Lost Girls*, underestimating the queer subversion within this work in favor of a formalist critique of narrative flaws or claims of "political naivety" (Liddo 160). Yet Wolk, Di Liddo, and (to

an extent) Klock acknowledge that Moore's work provides a multiplicity of perspectives and critical analysis that has only briefly been taken into account; perspectives that steer away from dominant readings of strict identity politics in order to access queer intersections within Moore's work

QUEER MONSTERS AND ICONS

The word "queer" indicates an acknowledgement of a differentiation from the norm. Queer is an appropriately flexible term that can easily acknowledge that gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual, and straight "identities" have never remained clear or fixed categories and are constantly in a state of flux. This thesis examines these ever shifting sexual assumptions within Alan Moore's texts, attempting to focus on popular characters and narratives that tend to be gendered and sexualized through the codes and associations of normative social structures. These figures and themes offer a multiplicity of relational values that can be utilized as a push for a changing discourse of sex. A queer theoretical framework assists in reexamining the subject position of the sexualized other created within the larger context of mass culture, a discourse that can either systematically categorize or subconsciously stratify individuals through gender and sex.

Alexander Doty's *Flaming Classics: Queering the Film Canon* states that "I find that you have to go the extra mile in terms of conducting really close and exhaustive analysis of 'mainstream' or classic texts to even begin to get most people to consider the validity of queer, or lesbian, or bisexual, or gay readings" (4). Doty is reacting to critiques against queer theory as an attempt to "read-into" a text something (Note: Queer) that is not originally present. In fact, much of Doty's work attempts to clarify the complicated terrain of queer theory, an increasingly inclusive category that attempts to

define itself against heteronormativity through its "wide range of impulses and cultural expressions, including space for describing and expressing bisexual, transsexual, and straight queerness" (*Making Things Perfectly Queer*, 2). Doty avoids limiting processes structured around heterocentrist discourses on gender specificity as well as strict gay/lesbian identification practices within texts: that a character must be socially coded or visibly identified as queer to *be* queer.

Doty's *Making Things Perfectly Queer* avoids the rigid identificatory traditions that have riddled media analysis. Suggesting that there is a conscious site of media resistance and attempting to avoid the clichéd cult worship for direct cinematic spectatorship, Doty implies that whether intentional or not, gender binaries are put in flux in the engagement with cultural texts: "Queer positions, queer readings, and queer pleasures are part of a reception space that stands simultaneously beside and within that created by heterosexual and straight positions" (14). Doty assumes that queerness is an "already" present site within any media text, avoiding wider assumptions that queerness must be "read-into" popular texts.

Media studies and horror movie aficionado Harry M. Benshoff branches off Doty's ideas, focusing on the horror tradition as a sight for queer pleasures. Benshoff's early childhood adulation of Vincent Price assisted Benshoff in resisting heterocentrist viewing expectations through such horror films as *The Abominable Dr. Phibes* (Robert Fuest, 1971) in which a dapper, articulate (though occasionally disfigured) Price eradicates an assortment of monotonous bourgeoisie and ineffectual authority figures through elaborate and diabolical death devices seeking revenge against a society which intends to refute his existence. Benshoff states that "this was my ultimate fantasy of what

my life could and should be: steeped in beauty and sensitivity, but with the power to eradicate the mundane…I came to understand my queerness not so much through ads for men's underwear in the Sears catalog… but through the utterly fabulous, classy, and bigger-than-life villainy represented by Price" (147). The horror genre offers numerous instances in which heteronormativity is attacked, even undermined, with queer spectators finding resonance with the monstrous figure. The monster, an entity physically, sexually, and spiritually set at the margins of a society that fears and hates it, takes on the uncertainties and paranoia of a culture; in Western culture, these reservations typically revolve around sex. Sex, sexuality, and the sexualized body become the driving motive for many Westernized horror scenarios, and it is within these works instances of queer narrative assaults on normative values occur.

Benshoff's text, *Monsters in the Closet: Homosexuality and the Horror Film*, takes into account the long standing involvement of queerness within the horror tradition and promotes the idea of the monstrous queer as a potential strategy for re-working heteronormative expectations and associations within the media. Beginning with the gothic horror novels of the mid-eighteenth century, Benshoff looks at the history of American (and occasionally British) horror to examine predominantly gay male instances of queerness on film. Although *Lost Girls* has yet to be adapted to film, and primacy will be given to the *League* series over its cinematic counterpart, both graphic novels engage with monstrous icons largely established through film as comforting mediators between mainstream and alternative understandings and associations with anti-normative sexuality and larger, repressive cultural ideologies.

Benshoff suggests claims of monstrous stereotypes of queer sexuality can instead offer constructive and even pleasurable insights into characteristics allegedly deemed derogatory, even harmful. Characters in both *League* and *Lost Girls* suggest a potential for counter-hegemonic intentions for social and cultural change through the positioning and interaction of the "representation" of heteronormativity in opposition to queer conventions or space, and the position of the body as destabilizing agent to the reaffirmation of heteronormativity. That is, Moore's texts offer spatial locations in which queer protagonists either openly engage with queer impulses, or are able to draw attention to oppositional queer/heteronormative cultural constructs in order to reexamine these normative paradigms.

José Esteban Muñoz offers a similar instance of a failed "identification" to Harry M. Benshoff's childhood idolization of Price. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* examines a different mode of world-making through failed associations for minoritatian drag performers. Heteronormative and queer discourses have a tendency of marginalizing the visual and cultural existence of transgender and minority publics in their bids of cultural indoctrination, much less the blending of these two "categories." In attempting to eradicate these exclusive tactics by attacking the notion of identity, Muñoz coins the term "disidentification." This term attempts to validate subjects who are increasingly ghettoized or excluded from institutional cataloging efforts to "read oneself and one's own life narrative in a moment, object, or subject that is not culturally coded to 'connect' with the disidentifying subject" (12). Muñoz focuses on "drag terrorist" Vaginal Crème Davis who went through what she referred to was her "snow period": in order to reach the ideal perpetuated by white

patriarchal normativity, Davis believed she could play the part in the discourse by dating predominantly Caucasian men. Yet despite this failed attempt at identification through association, Davis found little assistance through the radical literature of the Black Power movement in formulating an oppositional site of resistance, as much of that literature remained equally rooted in heterocentrist assumptions. Instead, like some cultural mad scientist, she assembled pieces from subcultures such as the punk movement; racist, sexist, and homophobic stereotypes; mainstream pop culture such as 1960s soul music; and her own unsuccessful attempts at assimilation to create a bricolage of counternormative rebellion.

Muñoz recognizes the failure within normative sexual structures, which provides activists such as Davis a chance to parody the fearsome, derogatory and monstrous as a radical tactic to parade abortive heteronormative constructs. Although Muñoz is primarily focused on "performance art" as praxis through the co-option of (sub)cultural media as a form of identity disavowal, the bricolage that he suggests is in keeping with Alan Moore's co-option of both high and low cultural texts. As Vaginal Crème Davis has opened a dialogue into a cultural community (L.A. punk scenes) through a bricolage of high and low cultural texts to address reactionary practices or counter-normative escapes, Moore's work offers a disidentification with larger normative culture. Moore states in an interview for *Wired* magazine about the *League* series, "I suppose we're (Moore and Kevin O'Neill) attempting to come up with a kind of unified field theory of culture that actually links up all these various works, whether they're high culture or low culture or no culture." Whereas Moore notes the importance of mass media in structuring alternative interactions with wider culture, his texts offer an intersection for queer

engagement with popular, historical texts and a disavowal of limiting cultural associations attached with the familiar characters and narratives in the popular media.

METHODOLOGY

The primary texts for analysis will be Alan Moore's *Lost Girls* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* series. Although the methodology will remain primarily focused on close textual analysis, other methodological perspectives are necessary to assist in approaching Moore's works. Moore's graphic novels are steeped in historical literary references, as well as acknowledgements to other media traditions. Therefore an amalgamation of literary, cultural, historical, and film theory will be incorporated in exploring Moore's work. It should also be noted that the terms "comic book" and "graphic novel" will be used interchangeably. As previously stated, the focus of this thesis is not to defend one term against another; within this study, both comic books and graphic novels will refer to book length works incorporating juxtaposed (occasionally) paneled illustrations.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

The first chapter focuses on the character(s) of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Jekyll and Hyde provides an example of the Victorian's fears of the splintering masculine self, between the social, public self, and the sexual, monstrous double. Incorporating ideas from Benshoff's text *Monsters in the Closet*, this section details what designates Stevenson's Hyde as monstrously queer. Hyde is re-contextualized in the *League* series from a horrific double into an admirable, even redeemed character. Popular adaptations of *Jekyll and Hyde* provide context for the subversion Moore accomplishes with Hyde, utilizing his character to attack hetero-colonial culture. Moore's Hyde destabilizes what

designates the queer "other" in heterocentrist works and attacks historical and contemporary ideologies of Western sexuality and masculinity.

Chapter two again focuses on the *League* series, this time with a primary focus on Mina Murray from Stoker's *Dracula*. Typically depicted as a victim to male desires, Moore re-situates Mina as an autonomous character that privileges an intersection for other characters to engage with queer impulses. Moore suggests that what may be seen as more monstrous than the series of fiends he displays is a Victorian fear of the liberated woman. Continuing the framework of the monstrous queer, popular adaptations of the Mina character are discussed in order to provide context for Moore's attempt to reposition the Mina character as a destabilizing agent to imperial and sexist ideologies.

The final chapter revolves around the pornographic novel, *Lost Girls*. *Lost Girls* forces the spectator to engage with alternative forms of sexuality, many deemed socially monstrous. The juxtaposition of children's literature with pornography provides disquieting associations with the monstrous queer, yet the work subverts sexuality formulated within popular media in order to deconstruct normative constructs of gender, sex and sexuality in fantastic literature. The intertextual combination of literature and historical events, and the re-contextualization of Carroll's Alice into a monstrous "queer," offer a subversion of heteronormative constructs in popular narratives.

CHAPTER 1

The first two volumes of Alan Moore's *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* reposition the iconic monster(s) Dr. Henry Jekyll and Mr. Edward Hyde from the original horror trappings of Robert Louis Stevenson's novel into an adventure narrative. Jekyll and Hyde provides an example of the Victorian's fears of the splintering masculine self, between the social, public self and the sexual, monstrous other. Although the concept of a doctor releasing his grotesque "double" has remained a mainstay throughout various adaptations of the Jekyll/Hyde story, a moralistic theme of heteronormativity has replaced the original critique of bourgeois codes of male friendship and the complicity of men in regards to private vice. The re-contextualization of the monstrous double into an admirable, even heroic character, in Moore's *League* poses a reexamination of how the queer "other" of Hyde can critique and attack historical and contemporary ideologies of Western sexuality and masculinity.

There is a difficulty in writing about Jekyll and Hyde as either a singular identity or two separate characters. The Jekyll/Hyde narrative has periodically fluctuated from the plot of a singular entity with two extreme opposing characteristics to the separation of a highly regarded doctor into a more sinister, separate creation. In Stevenson's novel Jekyll is a composition of both negative and positive Western characteristics. Vladimir Nabokov stresses that the original narrative characterizes Dr. Jekyll as a flawed amalgamated being (10). Nabokov states, "Jekyll's morals are poor from the Victorian point of view. He is a hypocritical creature carefully concealing his little sins" (10). Jekyll suppresses a guilt based on the awareness of a doubled nature that is never explicitly named in the narrative. The drug Henry Jekyll imbibes causes the basic elements of the veiled malevolence

within Jekyll to break forth. Therefore, Edward Hyde embodies a form of condensed immorality that was already present inside Jekyll. Yet the wicked Hyde still wants to metamorphose back into Jekyll. The necessity for the identity change suggests that while two separate physicalities are formed with specific characteristics given primacy to each individual (good=Jekyll; bad=Hyde), they are ultimately one shared being in which the subconscious struggle between "polar twins" has more or less been externalized with minute traces of both characteristics in each entity (some bad=Jekyll; some good=Hyde). An interdependent relationship has formed in which both entities thrive off one another. Hyde ultimately functions as Jekyll's shadow that fulfills Jekyll's repressed urges.

STEVENSON'S NOVEL

Whereas various retellings of the Jekyll and Hyde narrative attempt to amplify the physical horror of the "creation," Edward Hyde is never given a strong visual description in Stevenson's text. Supporting character Richard Enfield suggests an air of wickedness about Hyde that is difficult to typify:

> He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. He's an extraordinary looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way. No, sir; I can make no hand of it; I can't describe him. And it's not want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment. (Stevenson 43-44)

The unmentionable aura of "deformity" is reaffirmed by Henry Jekyll's own description of his transformation into Edward Hyde at the novels conclusion. Jekyll mentions that there are specific physical changes with the metamorphosis in regards to height and age, that "Edward Hyde was so much smaller, slighter and younger than Henry Jekyll" (107). An intriguing psychological metaphor for Victorian desires is made from these changes, as the youthful Hyde suggests lusts that Jekyll has yet to carry to full fruition and therefore Hyde is still relatively "fresh" and inexperienced. Yet in regards to specific physical aspects of the Hyde character, Jekyll states, "Even as good shone upon the countenance of the one, evil was written broadly and plainly on the face of the other. Evil besides had left on that body an imprint of deformity and decay" (108). What physically designates Hyde as monstrous is only suggested by the dwarfish height of Hyde; specific physical characteristics such as facial features are curiously absent.

The veiled atrocities that Hyde carries out are also absent from Stevenson's novel. As Ed Cohen states, "having long since collapsed into the story of Jack the Ripper, the 'horror' of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in this century has usually been evoked, on both the large and small screens, by dramatizing Hyde's late night attacks on women wandering through London's streets, attacks that are most notable for their absence in the book" (185). The addition of the Jack the Ripper narrative to latter adaptations of *Jekyll/Hyde* may be an attempt to amplify the horror of Stevenson's novel for increasingly demanding horror spectators and simultaneously play off fears of the age (the belief that Ripper was a doctor). The Whitechapel murders are a continued source of interest to Alan Moore who has chronicled the events extensively in *From Hell* and Moore plays off the Ripper

script with his version of Jekyll and Hyde; however Stevenson's novel provides only a few instances in which Hyde physically and publicly attacks another individual.

At the beginning of Stevenson's text, Edward Hyde tramples a young girl on his way home. Hyde is apprehended, yet instead of sending for the police he is blackmailed into giving the girl's family one hundred pounds. Hyde manages to come up with a check signed by Dr. Henry Jekyll to the shock of the bystanders. The connection between a relatively admired doctor and the sinister Hyde causes virtual amazement and scrutiny from the crowd, yet the case is eventually dropped. Throughout this particular scene, Hyde is unconcerned with the proceeding of events; he treats the merciless trampling of the young girl with an attitude of indifference. He is described as having completely ignored the child, running over her as if she had not existed. Hyde even manages to make an ironic joke of the event, referring to himself as a "gentleman" who wishes to avoid scandal. The linking of the widely admired Jekyll and the menacing Hyde soon becomes the mystery at the center of the novel.

The final disclosed instance of Hyde's atrocities is the beating and death of Sir Danvers Carew. A year after the trampling of the young girl, a maidservant witnesses a altercation between Hyde and Carew that leads to Hyde pummeling Carew to death with a cane. Despite the eyewitness, the conversation between the two men that prompted the attack is never provided. Hyde's cane is eventually traced back to Jekyll's house (the cane was a gift to Jekyll by an acquaintance). Jekyll forges a note from Hyde expressing regret for Hyde's actions and promises to bring to an end his ties to Jekyll. The death of Carew is the last instance in which Hyde's acts are directly mentioned in the text; the rest of the crimes Hyde commits remain invisible. Also notably absent from the text is the

presence of women. Excluding maidservants that serve to further clarify the primary story and the young girl Hyde tramples, the novel remains fixated on a society of privileged bachelors. Elaine Showalter writes "they are celibates whose major emotional contacts are with each other and with Henry Jekyll" (108). The conversations, gossip, and emotional interactions occur primarily within a restrained and mannered homosocial environment.

ADAPTATIONS OF JEKYLL/HYDE

Myriad adaptations of the Jekyll/Hyde narrative suggest that the privatized horrors and indescribable atmosphere of evil are sexual in nature. This may be a part of a contemporary misunderstanding of a prudish nature associated with Victorian culture. Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* suggests that the discussion of sexuality in Victorian England flourished through scientific studies and could be regulated through institutions such as hospitals and prisons. For example, in 1886 *The Journal of Mental Science* published an article on "Louis V." who was known to break into violent "male hysterics" and attempted to "caress" his male doctors (Showalter 105). There was an interest in the topic of sexuality, yet it was a subject that did not enter "everyday" conversation. "There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses" (Foucault 27). Foucault presents a splintering in the social body in which aspects of the self are ruptured to give primacy to an idealized identity and marginalizing a "baser" sexualized other. Despite Milton Millhauser's suggestion that *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* "is about as unlike patient, laborious, systematic Victorian science as it is possible to be" (296), Jekyll can stand in as the quintessential fear of scientific experimentation (science being supplanted in favor

for Gothic horror). Jekyll's experiments, in which private desires and a normative public self are separated, highlight the scientific and class paranoia of the Victorian era.

The idiosyncrasy of male Victorian sexuality has been a focus in Alan Moore's work. In an interview with Dave Sim, Moore states, "To some degree, even if we do not focus on homosexuality as the central issue, the plight of Henry Jekyll is resonant as a metaphor for the whole Victorian society where virtue was never lauded so loudly in public nor vice practiced so excessively in private. You can almost see in that novel the exact point where the mass Victorian mind became uneasily aware of its own shadow…" (316). The interior conflict between public discourse and sexual desire during this turbulent period for the British Empire allows Alan Moore to rewrite the explicit sexual horror raised by various adaptations of the Jekyll/Hyde narrative into an attack on the hypocrisy of Victorian and contemporary society.

Showalter suggests that the "horror" of Stevenson's novel (and the "shadow" Moore raises) is that the monstrous Hyde is understood to be homosexual. She claims that a thriving homosexual subculture existed by the 1880s. "For most middle-class inhabitants of this world, homosexuality represented a double life, in which a respectable daytime world often involving marriage and family, existed alongside a night world of homoeroticism" (Showalter 106). Showalter claims that the true romance of Stevenson's novel is Jekyll's desire for Hyde with additional associations to cruising, blackmail, and male prostitution that suggest "upper-middle eroticization of working-class men as the ideal homosexual objects" (111). The revelation that Jekyll was in fact Hyde is only made at the climax of the story. Until the conclusion, Jekyll's friends and associates seem to assume Jekyll's "strange preference" for the mysterious Hyde veers towards rough

trade. “What they see is that their rich friend Harry Jekyll has willed his very considerable estate to a loutish younger man, who comes and goes as he pleases, has expensive gifts from Jekyll in his Soho apartment, gives orders to the servants, and cashes large checks Jekyll has signed” (Showalter 111). The Jekyll/Hyde relation seems potentially queer in nature, even assuming that Hyde is blackmailing Jekyll for his preferences. The novel’s conclusion, in which Jekyll commits suicide and exposes his “secret”, is characteristic of the martyrdom of homosexuals in Gothic literature:

> While Jekyll tries to convince himself that his desire is merely an addiction, a bad habit that he can overcome whenever he wants, he gradually comes to understand that Hyde is indeed part of him. In a final spasm of homophobic guilt, Jekyll slays his other “hated personality.” Death is the only solution to the “illness” of homosexuality. (Showalter 113)

The atmosphere of shame and gay panic is eventually resolved through the self-destruction of both “guilty parties.”

Charles King claims that the eighty-eight film and television adaptations of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* add women into the narrative, eliminate any homoerotic elements, amplify the physically monstrous characteristics of Hyde, and provide Jekyll with more socially redeeming qualities. “Several film versions of the story show the character forming a long-term abusive relationship with a dance-hall girl, spending his days in socially acceptable activities as Jekyll, and then changing to Hyde for evenings spent terrorizing, beating, and sexually abusing his girlfriend” (King 2). Rouben Mamoulian’s adaptation of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931) typifies the trend of the abused lower class

female victim and is a precursor to the myriad adaptations that alter Stevenson's story. Frederic March plays a righteous version of the doctor who imbibes the drug in the goal to become more pious. Instead he changes into Hyde, which in Mamoulian's version, has the appearance of a de-evolved beast. Hyde is covered in thick hair, with a sharp pointed head, and a severe overbite showcasing a set of fangs. A trend of adding an excessively animalistic physicality to the character of Hyde has continued throughout most adaptations, equating the original sexual urges of the individual to sexual perversions such as bestiality. Therefore, the "normal" appearance of Jekyll reaffirms ennobling traits of the "good" doctor, with the exaggerated freakishness of Hyde promoting themes varying from science as blasphemy to sexual cautionary tales suggested through the Jack the Ripper-esque sexual violence on lower-working class women.

An important comic book character that evokes the splintering of an aggressive, monstrous self with yet another virtuous, tortured scientist is Marvel Comics' Hulk. Created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, the Hulk first appeared in *The Incredible Hulk* #1 (May 1962). Drawing overt comparisons to Jekyll and Hyde, the story of the Hulk revolves around Dr. Bruce Banner who is exposed to his own invention, the gamma bomb. The radiation causes Banner to transform into a green (originally grey), colossal behemoth when angered. The primary conflict throughout the Hulk narrative is Banner's attempt to withhold his rage. Although drawing its source from Stevenson's narrative, the Hulk is not exactly a queer monster; the Hulk narrative is primarily centered on an oedipal triangle between Banner, Banner's love interest (Betty Ross), and her father General Thaddeus "Thunderbolt" Ross who continually attempts to capture and destroy the Hulk (a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde villain does appear in the series, yet this character is

a far cry from any similarity to Stevenson's novel). The popularity of the Hulk may have led to the muddle of the Jekyll/Hyde and Banner/Hulk narratives. Whereas Banner transforms into the Hulk under emotional pressure (specifically rage), Jekyll only changes into Hyde under more mysterious and sexually provocative reasons. The conflation of the themes of the Hulk/Hyde narratives is something Alan Moore, a longtime comic writer, is aware of and visually acknowledges in the *League*; yet the *League* foregrounds the queerer inclinations of Stevenson's original creation.

There is an interesting twist in several film adaptations of Jekyll and Hyde in which a man (Jekyll) transforms into a woman (Hyde). Roy Ward Baker's *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* (1971) has the doctor experiment with female hormones in order to discover eternal life. Whereas versions of the male/female Jekyll and Hyde relationship such as *Dr. Jekyll and Mrs. Hyde* (David Price, 1995) aim "for cheap laughs or the potential for (hetero) sexual titillation inherent in a temporary change in gender" (King 5), *Sister Hyde* remains fixed on the horrific aspects of the narrative and hints at possible queerer impulses of the change in sex and gender. Yet Benshoff stresses that in the film "gender is still figured primarily through heterosexual desire: maleness is desiring women and femaleness is desiring men" (190). The film suggests that it is the evil "femaleness" of the Jekyll/Hyde combo that is monstrous and ultimately needs to be destroyed before claiming a full subjectivity. The female Hyde proves to be more sadistic than Jekyll, yet the narrative stresses an inherent weakness in the "monster" as she plummets to her death from a ledge she is "too frail" to hold on to. Whereas the suggestion of queerness arises in this adaptation, it never fully blossoms out of the heterocentric battle of "maleness" and "femaleness" in the narrative.

MOORE'S JEKYLL AND HYDE

Moore's *League* continues the tradition of amplifying the animalistic side of Edward Hyde yet simultaneously exaggerates the height and physicality of Hyde into the realm of parody. Artist Kevin O'Neill's visual style is distinguished by a "grotesque, hyperbolic trait" (Di Liddo, 104). O'Neill manages to avoid aspects of realism to intensify the satiric qualities each of the Leagues' members promotes. O'Neil invites spectator identification while simultaneously reminding the reader that the work is an extreme distortion (not a representation) of reality. Evoking numerous adaptations, specifically the Hulk, O'Neil's Hyde is a savage, apelike goliath. Hyde towers over other characters and exposed nerves and tendons stretch tightly across his face and muscles.

The violence Hyde metes out on antagonists is equally as excessive as his looks and exceedingly brutal. Upon escaping the lair of Fu Manchu, Mina Murray and Alan Quatermain encounter an enraged Hyde mauling Manchu's flunkies. The panel shows the split body of a man in each of Hyde's arms, a severed hand clasped in Hyde's teeth, and various body parts strewn across the floor and walls. Murray reprimands Hyde, stating, "Dogs, sir, have more self-control!" (Moore and O'Neill, *League I*, 94). The excessive violence and physicality of Hyde mixed with the "matter-of-fact" attitude of Hyde's comrades steers this version of the Jekyll/Hyde story into dark and grotesque humor. O'Neill's parodistic style also distorts the timid figure of Henry Jekyll, accentuating the concept of a physically diminishing doctor. At one point Jekyll states, "I don't think Edward will require a firearm. Th-that is, he's too big to need one. At least, he is these days. Do you know, I was once taller than he was?" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume I*, 134).

Moore and O'Neill here allude to Stevenson's original novel, suggesting that the heights of Hyde and Jekyll have switched. Jekyll is thin to the point of illness, in a constant state of perspiration, and his actions are rigidly controlled. Edward Hyde erupts out of Jekyll at extreme moments of duress until the end of the series, when Hyde eventually takes over as the dominant consciousness; that is, desires repressed for too long may, once unleashed, dominate the individual.

The *League* suggests that what typified the monstrous characteristics of the Jekyll and Hyde narrative are the suggestions of homosexual depravity and a failure to achieve the fantastical standards of Victorian masculinity. Earlier cinematic versions of *Jekyll and Hyde* imply that the violence acted out against women poses the threat of unrestrained male heterosexual desires. Both Mamoulian's 1931 film adaptation and Victor Fleming's 1941 remake stage Hyde as being the aggressive instigator of sexual encounters and assaults. Jekyll switches to Hyde *before* undertaking his attacks. With the *League*, Moore stresses that Jekyll is the primary instigator of the sex crimes.

In *League*, Alan Quatermain and Mina Murray first encounter Hyde in Paris. Involved with the brutal slayings of several prostitutes, the introduction of Jekyll/Hyde in *League* foregrounds Jekyll's culpability with his desires: the women are picked up by *Jekyll* yet murdered (off panel) by *Hyde*, who is potentially released through sexual panic. A deviation from Stevenson's novel, the inclusion of the murdered prostitutes presents intertextual references to previous fictional and true-life sexual horrors. Mina Murray recognizes a parallel of the prostitute murders to the "Whitechapel fiend" (again, an interest of Moore) which suggests the superimposition of the Jack the Ripper script from previous theatrical and cinematic adaptations over the Jekyll/Hyde narrative. The

inclusion of Edgar Alan Poe's Auguste Dupin character and the Rue Morgue (originally published 1841) in which Hyde's current murders take place re-inscribe the animalistic nature of Hyde by linking Poe's tale of a murderous ourang-outang with latter cinematic forms of *Jekyll/Hyde* that amplify themes of bestiality.

The suggestion of homosexual panic is also structured into this sequence, primarily in what is *not* shown. In order to capture Hyde, Mina Murray dresses up as a Parisian prostitute to pick up the killer as a client. She encounters Henry Jekyll who is described by other prostitutes as "a skinny Englishman" who is a "prostitutes' regular" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume I*, 28). The initial metamorphosis of Henry Jekyll into Edward Hyde, and the instigation of the change, is left off panel. The exclusion of this panel suggests the change was instigated by sexual panic. Jekyll cannot carry out heterosexual lovemaking; under pressure he therefore reverts to Hyde. Eventually Dupin and Quatermain rush in to stop the enraged Hyde from killing Mina Murray, who is bruised but relatively in one piece.

As Jekylls' transformation into Hyde occurs under moments of pressure, the visual exclusion of Hyde's change suggests the presence of Mina has provided Jekyll with a "threat" that he attempts to circumnavigate by switching into Hyde. Jekyll knowingly changes into Hyde yet continues to pick up the prostitutes; Jekyll is therefore a knowing accomplice to the murders. The death of the former prostitutes (including Emile Zola's Anna "Nana" Coupeau) insinuates Jekyll's continual inability to satisfy normative sexual desires, instead unleashing sadistic impulses. The *League* eventually suggests that Hyde untrammeled is "healthier" than Jekyll. Jekyll presents only a veneer

of polite propriety and gentlemanly honor, yet the *League* ultimately states that Jekyll's "shadow" is more productive and less duplicitous.

Jekyll's hypocrisy (as the courageous, gentlemanly Victorian doctor) is often played for laughs and eventually critiqued by Hyde himself. Hyde's excessively bestial outbursts are juxtaposed to Jekyll's slight nervous panics that may set off one of his "attacks". Much like his previous assaults on the prostitutes, Jekyll's changes are linked with his sexuality. When asked to change into Hyde to create a diversion, Jekyll responds, "It's just I'm not sure I can… you know. Not just like that" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume 1*, 87). His hesitancy to transform into Hyde continues as he states, "What if I can't get into the mood?" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume 1*, 87). The train of dialogue suggests a humorous interplay between his change into Jekyll and his failure to "perform" sexually.

The *League* hearkens back to Stevenson's earlier portrayal of Jekyll as an individual torn by Victorian codes of masculinity. The mask of Victorian propriety, in which the height of refinement and courage must repress yet retain access to aggression, is used to foreground the hypocrisies of British masculinity. On the original assault of Fu Manchu's headquarters, the malicious Hawley Griffin (the Invisible Man) goads Jekyll into erupting into Edward Hyde, with such comments as, "For God's sake, Jekyll, don't be such a woman!" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume 1*, 87). Eventually what is released from Jekyll is a vicious bloodbath that leaves Griffin shocked and confused. This specific attack highlights Griffin's sexism while also drawing attention to Jekyll's insecurities.

Hyde is Jekyll's repressed "shadow"; in Jungian terms, a non-normative other self that Jekyll simultaneously fears and desires. Jekyll is ultimately a charlatan, making a

futile attempt to contain his desires like a chained bulldog. Yet Hyde does not function as Jekyll's repressed "manhood," released when his masculinity is assaulted. Instead of assisting in carrying out Jekyll's desires or assisting in overcoming Jekyll's insecurities, Hyde increasingly carries out his own inclinations. The *League* continues the arc of Stevenson's story (Jekyll increasingly turning into Hyde until Hyde takes over). By the conclusion of the second volume, Hyde is given primacy and ultimately vindicated.

The *League* series allows for the conception of a monstrous "heroic" queer by giving Hyde full subjectivity. Elaine Showalter claims that despite the myriad points of view provided by Stevenson's original narrative, Hyde's voice is left absent. "We never hear his account of the events, his memories of his strange birth, his pleasure and fear" (Showalter 113). She believes that "Hyde's story would disturb the sexual economy of the text, the sense of panic at having liberated an uncontrollable desire" (113-114). His perspective would potentially upset the fixed constructs of heteronormativity the original text critiques yet must reinstate according to Victorian standards of decency.

The *League* eventually reverses this dynamic: as the series continues Hyde becomes the dominant presence and is given a voice to his desires. In the second volume of *League*, the team engages in a war with H.G. Wells' Martian invaders. Throughout the conflict, Hyde remains the dominant entity. "I note we have not seen the doctor recently," Nemo says (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 120). An argument ensues between Hyde and his comrades in regards to Jekyll's original need to create Hyde. After Hyde admonishes Jekyll's intelligence ("His genius? Jekyll's a flinching little Presbyterian spinster frightened by his own erections" Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 120) he discusses the

original transformation from his perspective, providing an entertaining critique of Victorian purity and the gaps in Stevenson's narrative.

> HYDE: Should I tell you what they were, eh? These evils he was so desperate to get rid of? Well, he'd once stolen a book. More borrowed and never returned, but still… Oh, and he played with himself, sometimes while he thought about other men. That's about it. Anyway, what the silly bastard did, he thought if he quarantined all these bad parts, what was left would be a fucking angel (121)

Hyde unveils this origin towards the end of his narrative in League, much like Jekyll's written account at the conclusion of Stevenson's novel. Whereas Jekyll's confession is one of guilt and self-hatred, Hyde parades his grotesqueness and scoffs at Jekyll's original experiment. "When I started out, good God, I was practically a fucking dwarf. Jekyll, on the other hand, a great big strapping fellow. Since then, though, my growth's been unrestricted, while he's wasted away to nothing. Without me, you see, Jekyll has no drives… and without him, I have no restraints" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 121). Hyde's self-awareness of his monstrousness allows his character to refute codes of societal conduct and call attention to the sympathetic dimensions of the original "voiceless" monstrosity.

Hyde's queerness is still understood to be monstrous, yet it allows for darkly entertaining accounts on unspoken ideological norms and attacks on privileged male heterosexuality. Rhona J. Berenstein states that "queerness is characterized by the breaking of boundaries, by an incision into the ontological justification and valorization of heterosexuality" (239). Hyde refutes expected societal models, such as a compassion

for children. Invoking Lee Edelman's *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004), Hyde's statement, "I know what children look like, Nemo. I've often scraped them off my boots" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 83) punctuates Hyde's utter displacement from normative futurist ideals organized around reproduction. Hyde's disdain for children stresses a refusal to oblige the strict societal regime that the future is only possible through straight-reproductive sex, instead dismissing the child in favor for the death drive. Yet the privileging of Hyde's own voice and desires allows for admirable traits of the monster to come to the forefront, as seen through his relationship with Mina Murray and his assault on the Invisible Man.

HYDE AND THE LEAGUE

The monstrous characteristics of Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde are satirically illustrative of the entire team, in that Jekyll and Hyde personifies the hypocrisies of British culture into a single shared body. Annalisa Di Liddo states that the League's "condition as outsiders allows them to cast an embittered, disenchanted glance on the society and culture that surround them" (108). Whereas the League as a group critiques the idiosyncrasies of deep seated imperialistic and sexist ideologies propagated by the white male aristocracy, Jekyll/Hyde shed light on the doubled consciousness of the outcasts within the group.

Juxtaposed to Hyde's gruesome rampages are Captain Nemo's occasional sadistic outbursts of violence. In Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the* Sea, Nemo's past remains mysterious. He utilizes his submarine to assault naval ships in order to vent his revulsion to the countries of the world, yet his motivations remain unclear. Verne rewrites Nemo as Indian prince Dakkar in the sequel, *The Mysterious Island*. Angered by

the failed Indian Rebellion of 1857, Dakkar takes on the moniker of Nemo to exact revenge on society. Verne remains ambivalent about the potential critique of colonialism in these novels, focusing more on the scientific aspects of underwater travel and survival on unknown islands. Moore takes the subversive aspects of Nemo to tease out a radical representation of Nemo as an anti-colonial anti-hero. Nemo ultimately collaborates with the British in order to attack yet another shadow of Victorian culture, colonialism.

Nemo's need for revenge borders on psychotic bloodlust as he releases his dormant rage in extreme outbursts. In a battle on Arthur Conan Doyle's Professor Moriarty, Nemo uses an automatic harpoon gun to feverishly slaughter a number of enemies, screaming, "Come forward, men of England!" (Moore and O'Neill, *League I*, 140). Nemo's suppressed rage of the British injustice during the Indian Mutiny explodes into barbaric bloodshed. The carnage that Nemo sets loose forces Alan Quatermain and Mina Murray to question their comrades' actions: "QUATERMAIN: Nemo's worse than Hyde. MURRAY: "I agree. Hyde can be persuaded. Nemo can't." (Moore and O'Neill, *League I*, 141). Hyde's monstrous excesses are no less barbaric than Nemo's remorseless vengeance. Whereas the members of the League present a veneer of civilized society, Hyde as Jekyll's concealed "other" blatantly parades the perverse urges underlining the British Empire. Yet Hyde ultimately proves more productive and through his friendship with Mina Murray becomes a pivotal team member.

As will be seen in Chapter 2, Mina is rewritten by Moore to exemplify characteristics of a contemporary, independent woman. Mina fearlessly confronts and reprimands Jekyll's pretenses and Hyde's rampages and eventually a bond between Mina and Hyde is formed. Mina scrutinizes the sexist sensibilities of her all-male teammates,

ironically castigating their hypocrisies. Mina's previous encounter with Dracula, a monster with the "queer" trait of altering the selves of his victims into creatures as sexually monstrous as himself (Benshoff 19), has given her an understanding and sympathy for the character of Hyde. Mina understands that Jekyll's "shame" is the team's strongest attribute; Mina also understands that this shadow has its own voice. Mina and Hyde have become outsiders due to the machinations of others (Jekyll; the male protagonists of *Dracula*) as well as the queerer impulses that separate them from their fellow teammates. As Hyde states, "But in this world, alone, I do not hate you… and you do not hate me" (49). A mounting respect is forged between the two characters that privileges Mina's authority and strength and allows Hyde to redirect his violent outbreaks to the benefit of the League.

Eventually the Invisible Man betrays the team, and in several brutal panels, assaults and humiliates Mina Murray. Annalisa Di Liddo suggests that both Mina Murray and Hawley Griffin exemplify extreme opposing traits. Whereas Mina proves to be understanding towards her comrades and can maintain a strong temperament, Griffin "always appears as a racist and a male chauvinist, thus embodying the meanest aspects of the mindset of the late nineteenth century" (110). In the H.G. Wells novel, Griffin is an albino who is continually made aware of his "difference." The fantastical qualities of his experiments allow him to literally "hide" his differentiation, prove his intelligence in a society defined on self-image through the marginalization of any "other", and place himself above this society through a new and empowering difference: the wiping away of the visible "image." Hyde is placed in between the two polar opposites of Mina and Griffin. Hyde's animalistic rampages and brutal exterior equate him with the "visual"

exterior of monstrosity that Griffin also embodies. Yet Hyde's awareness of his perverse "otherness" that leads to his candid disdain and disavowal of societal codes of conduct makes him a more admirable character, on a close par with Mina.

Hawley Griffin/Invisible Man provides a revealing contrast to Hyde. Whereas both characters are monstrous on a purely superficial level, each character offers a different metaphor of monstrous repression. Hyde ultimately is the explosion of the repressed shadow, physically accentuating Jekyll's reticent desires. Yet Griffin represents the nightmarish consequences of a shadow successfully repressed. Whereas Hyde's monstrous characteristics are ultimately co-opted into assisting the team, Griffin abuses his "privilege" by raping students at an all girls' school, impulsively murdering a police officer, and eventually betraying the team (and the Earth) to the Martian invaders. Griffin's invisibility privileges his excessive and perverse urges that again embody the worst traits of Victorian "maleness."

Yet Hyde is the only character that can literally see Griffin, through a heightened sense of sight. The "privileged" repression allotted to Griffin is therefore recognized and assaulted by the released repression characterized by Hyde. Seeking vengeance for Mina's attack, Hyde ultimately divulges Griffin's whereabouts at their former headquarters. Hyde's brutal beating and eventual rape of Griffin is played for grotesque laughs as O'Neill makes full use of Griffin's invisibility to suggest the excessiveness of Hyde's vengeance. Various panels make it appear that Hyde is grasping onto nothing. As he strangles his unseen victim, Hyde mocks codes of gentlemanly conduct. "I'm cross because your treatment of Miss Murray was… uncivil" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 114). O'Neill exaggerates Hyde's rape of Griffin by continuing what *isn't* shown,

providing a panel with Hyde on his knees, pants slightly down, grappling air. "What more could we ask for, eh? Opulent surroundings, fine wines, romance… Do you know, I can't remember the last time I felt so chipper (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 114). Hyde's rape of Griffin assails privileged Victorian "masculinity" and is satirically invoked towards the conclusion when Mina asks of Griffin's location. Hyde replies, "I attended to his end. Please be reassured that it was…comfortable" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 135). Hyde's assault on Griffin reverses the perverse privileges of the Victorian heterosexual male, eventually eliminating the threat Griffin poses towards the rest of the team and Mina more specifically.

CONCLUSION

Hyde eventually sacrifices his life at the end of the second volume of *League*. Unlike the guilt ridden suicide of Jekyll in Stevenson's novel, Hyde parades both his death and his monstrous impulses. When Mina mentions that Hyde will be killed for attacking the Martian invaders in a final assault, Hyde replies, "And end up looking rather noble, when all I really want is to slaughter something, eh?" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 135). Hyde eventually struts out to the Martian tripods singing "You should see me dance the polka," a song taken from Victor Fleming's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. After destroying several of the attacking vessels, Hyde is eventually obliterated by the invaders.

The eventual death of the monster (Hyde) and the reference to Fleming's film from the classical era of horror filmmaking suggests that the League continues the tropes of the typical horror scenario in which "any queer pleasure spectators might have found in the horror film was mitigated by the very nature of the genre's classical form, wherein

queer forces were routinely quelled by each of the film's narrative resolution" (Benshoff 69). The monstrous queer is deemed too unstable an entity, so the normative narrative constructs must eventually destroy the creature. Moore's own comments support this logic, stating that the character of Hyde is too self-destructive a figure "to survive very long realistically" (Nevins 245). Although Moore continues the logic of classical horror scenarios, Hyde's "self-destruction" thematically lingers throughout the series that provides a modification on the theme of a sacrificial monster.

Mina Murray chooses to end her relationship with Alan Quatermain at the conclusion of *Volume II*. Their conversation takes place in an imaginary park in London called Serpentine in which Mina discusses the memory of her late teammates. Quatermain states, "I hear they're planning to rename Serpentine Park here after Hyde" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume II*, 146). As Moore carries the series across various time periods in subsequent volumes, Hyde Park periodically appears within the narrative. Eventually a commemorative statue of an epic yet physically scarred Hyde modeled after the work of real life sculptor Jacob Epstein is erected in the park. The fictional revision of the real Hyde Park and the remembrance of Hyde as a heroic figure suggest a revision on the monster plot: the narrative does not end with the triumph over the monster. Whereas the threat of the queer "other" is typically neutralized by the end of the horror narrative, the series rewrites the memory of Hyde as a valiant character and simultaneously continues the destabilizing cultural agent of queerness throughout the rest of the League, particularly with Mina Murray.

CHAPTER 2

Less noticeably grotesque than Edward Hyde is Alan Moore's Mina Murray. Originally the victimized fiancée to Jonathan Harker in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), Mina serves the important function of organizing the Dracula narrative through her diaries. Whereas continual adaptations tend to subordinate Mina to victim or completely eradicate her character from the Dracula plot, Alan Moore reforms the Murray character into the heroic leader of the predominantly all-male League. Moore suggests that what is equally as monstrous as the cast of psychopaths and fiends displayed throughout the series is the Victorian fear of the liberated woman and, eventually, a sexual woman. Such apprehensions are highlighted as Mina becomes immortal and faces the anxieties of an ever changing 21st century. Moore's Mina serves as both a freethinking yet tortured figure of dynamic sexuality that attempts to embrace, understand, and embody queerness in the context of an increasingly self-reflexive and indefinite cultural environment.

Moore's complicated (and occasionally conflicted) depiction of Mina is relatively close to the character Stoker created. In the novel, Mina is the key to destroying the vampire. Critics debate whether Mina is a model example of the Victorian woman relegated to the private sphere or an example of the "New Woman" entering fantastic fiction. The New Woman was a model of feminist thought which emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. This movement was associated with the Suffragettes, who attempted to enforce change in an androcentic society. Although Mina provides a rare glimpse of a strong, assertive woman in Stoker's novel, she is also given attributes characteristic of the period: of an obedient housewife and mothering caregiver. Maurice Hindle questions this dichotomy in her "ambiguous sexuality" (xxix). Mina is able to

resist Dracula's hypnosis through her conflicted psyche. As Van Helsing claims, "She has man's brain – a brain that a man should have were he much gifted – and woman's heart" (Stoker 302). Hindle raises the question, "is it not 'that so good combination' in the persona of Mina that enabled Bram Stoker to come to a fictional accommodation with his own sexual tensions, especially in a time when Oscar Wilde's prosecution in 1895 meant open season had been declared upon homosexuals?" (xxix). Scholarship has focused on the relationship between Stoker and actor Sir Henry Irving, in which Stoker was so entranced with the performance of the actor that he became Irving's manager. Whereas the suggestion of homoerotic tension between Stoker and Irving is not the primary focus of this section, the sexual undertones that are brought forth from the Mina character highlight the terrors of the late nineteenth century-concerns that Alan Moore reworks in *League*. Moore emphasizes attributes of the New Woman to re-appropriate Victorian sex and sexuality to critique contemporary imperialistic and phobic ideologies.

STOKER'S NOVEL

Stoker's novel is commonly interpreted as a Victorian warning of the dangers of liberated desires. This reading, that of a "morality tale: the crime and punishment of a voracious female sexuality" (Montalbano 387), is somewhat reductive, as it ignores the psychological complexities provided by the female characters as well as the discordant sexuality of the male leads. Although the novel does revolve around the dominance of masculine power over desire, the narrative suggests that not all desire is singly gendered. Furthermore, *Dracula* offers an instance in which this power struggle can be briefly stymied (if not entirely thwarted) by the ambiguous presence of queer desire embodied in the character of Mina Murray.

The novel revolves around the monstrous count Dracula who feeds on the blood of his victims, eventually changing his quarry into fellow vampires. Yet Harry M. Benshoff stresses that Dracula "preys not only upon the bodies of men and women, but also on the very being of his victims, transforming them into creatures as sexually monstrous as himself" (19). In the text, women are the primary victims to Dracula's feedings, yet an aura of desire lingers for the men as well. Christopher Craft's "'Kiss Me with those Red Lips': Gender and Inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*" suggests there is a delayed and ungratified desire on the part of the men (most notably Jonathan Harker) to be "penetrated" by the Count. At the beginning of the novel, Harker is seduced by three female vampires; yet before they bite him, Dracula appears, threatening, "How dare you touch him, any of you? How dare you cast eyes on him when I had forbidden it? Back, I tell you all! This man belongs to me!" (Stoker 55) This aura of direct male for male desire is diffused once Dracula reaches England. Craft suggests that in Dracula, "all desire, however, mobile, is fixed within a heterosexual mask" (115). He suggests that women serve as mediators between the men who desire and the men who gratify; that through the vamping of Mina Murray and Lucy Westenra, Dracula may eventually possess their male acquaintances.

Craft's argument derives from Eve Sedwick's classic study of Victorian fiction, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Sedgwick states that male for male desire is triangulated in these novels, through the rivalry of two men for a woman. The bond between the two men is as erotically charged as the desire for the woman (Sedgwick 21). Although Craft's explanation of Victorian male-to-male desire does account for an inverted queerness characteristic of other works of the period (most

notably *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*), it fails to fully acknowledge the presence of the women other than as "shared hands" for the male characters displaced sexual appetites. Craft ignores the sexual and psychological complexity of the women in the text, failing to fully differentiate the characters of Lucy and Mina from each other. More worryingly is Craft's presumption that the women in Stoker's novel are only "the stuff of dreams" (117); he suggests that the women of *Dracula* are idealized as yet another "masculine sign system" (118). Although many of his suppositions may correspond to the character of Lucy, his conclusions fail to fully acknowledge the transgressive characteristics (however "slight") of Stoker's Mina, her contribution to the progression of the text, and her eventual disgrace through the male paradigm of "women as sign" despite her contributions to destroy Dracula.

Dracula is an epistolary novel that is organized by various diary entries, newspapers, and journals. Mina's ability to type out and order the entries into the narrative leads to the location of the vampire and uncovers Dracula's plan to create a new race of monsters in Britain. It is Mina's ability to utilize reproducible new media (from the typewriter to cylinder recordings) that structures the narrative and leads to the eventual downfall of Dracula. Although Mina's ability to typewrite can be seen as a key foreshadowing of a new sexist sign system (woman as secretary), the novel was published at a key moment in history when "women were first beginning to surge into the clerical workforce in Britain" (Fleissner 417). In an era in which riding a bicycle could be seen as an expression of burgeoning female independence, the use of a typewriter should be seen as equally empowering; being "new on the market, the typewriter carried no baggage of association with a single gender, and was thus as open to use by women as to

use by men" (424). Mina's comprehension and respect of "new technology" makes her an important member of the team of vampire hunters.

Also important is the difference between the two principle women in Stoker's text: Lucy and Mina. Lucy Westenra, Mina's close friend and eventual victim of Dracula, serves as a counterpoint to Mina. Both characters hold unconventional attitudes towards heterosexual relationships veering on queer desires. Lucy's "wants" veer towards polyamory, her indecision on choosing a suitor providing the novel's entertaining queer proposal, "Why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble?" (Stoker 85) Yet Lucy's desire for "three husbands" is a mirror reflection of the three brides of Dracula and she eventually falls prey to her latent desires, suggesting that out of all the characters, "she is the one who desires most" (Hindle xxvii). This extreme desire is distorted by Dracula and eventually destroyed in the novel's most misogynistic moment, in which Arthur Holmwood (Lucy's fiancé) hammers a stake in Lucy's heart, invoking a sexual penetration that serves as a punishment for her desires. Mina, on the other hand, desires in a more complex fashion. In a sense, Mina also holds "queer" desires. Mina envisions a possible repositioning of marriage, in which women may eventually propose to the men.

> Some of the 'New Women' writers will some day start an idea that men and women should be allowed to see each other asleep before proposing or accepting. But I suppose the New Woman won't condescend in future to accept; she will do the proposing. And a nice job she will make of it, too! (Stoker 119).

Mina's character also presents an uncharacteristic physical self-reliance: she wields a pistol in the novel's conclusion to fend off wolves with Van Helsing. Whereas she is still a character the men fight over, she is also a character of burgeoning autonomy who is eventually obstructed by the men of the novel.

The notion of Mina's involvement with Dracula as a "seduction" of an older, corroded form of patriarchy onto the "sign" of the desired Christian male ideal of womanhood is more complex. Although Mina is supplied with subtle hints of the New Woman, she does reinforce the model Victorian wife. Yet her downfall does not fall upon any underlying wantonness under the "virtue" of womanhood, but of the suppositions of the men surrounding this ideal. In attempting to protect the privileged object of male desire, the male vampire hunters purposefully leave her out of their plans. They choose to hold their meetings in secret and protect Mina's moral character by withholding information from her. Yet the purposeful isolation and ignorance forced upon Mina by her male colleagues eventually allows the Count easier dominion over her. The revelation of Dracula's association with Mina reads as a rape, rather than of a sexual fulfillment of shared desires, as adaptations usually recast it. After crashing into the bedroom of Mina and Jonathon Harker, the male vampire hunters witness her transformation:

> With his (Dracula's) left hand he held both Mrs. Harker's hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension; his right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom. Her white nightdress was smeared with blood, and a thin stream trickled down the man's bare breast, which was shown by his torn-open dress. The attitude of the two had a terrible resemblance to

> a child forcing a kitten's nose into a saucer of milk to compel it to drink (Stoker 363).

The fact that this forced supremacy occurs over the dazed body of Mina's husband serves to externalize the ideological fears of the man (the rape of the Victorian ideal by a foreign "other") as well as condemn the leading male characters for their inability to acknowledge or permit a woman's budding self-reliance. By allocating the potential "weak link" to the woman, the men of Stoker's novel unconsciously lead her into more danger while simultaneously threatening to destabilize the narrative. Mina therefore becomes a tragic victim due to the maneuverings of men and monsters alike.

ADAPTATIONS OF MINA

As with *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Alan Moore is a bricoleur who acknowledges the vast history of the *Dracula* story yet transforms this history into a subversion of Victorian and contemporary sexual politics. Adaptations of *Dracula* tend to re-imagine the Count as a Gothic romantic figure, even an anti-hero. This reworking of Dracula concurrently relegates Mina to the sidelines of the narrative, even banishing her from numerous adaptations. Moore's and Kevin O'Neill's appropriation of Mina highlights how continual variations of the Dracula story privilege conservative phobias and further reify gender and sexuality despite attempts by postmodern adaptations (especially by Francis Ford Coppola) to re-evaluate late Victorian fears and desires.

Predating Alan Moore, F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922) is one of the few adaptations that privilege the "Mina" character. Due to a lawsuit from Stoker's widow, the film had to change the names of characters, locations, and events from Stoker's original text. Ellen (Greta Schröeder, the "Mina" of the film), is positioned as an

Expressionistic sacrificial character who offers herself to Count Orlak (Max Schreck, the films' analogue to Dracula) in order to save her plague ridden village. In order to slay the vampire, she must tempt Orlok to feed on her blood, thereby distracting him until the sun rises and he is destroyed. Ellen is not an easily identifiable heroic figure. Through the Expressionistic trappings of the period, her role invokes that of a somnambulist trapped in a walking nightmare. Her motivations are mediated through a slow, stylized performance that mirrors a dream. Yet she does bring about the death of the vampire without the assistance of the men. Later incarnations of the Dracula/Mina characters have served to subvert Stoker's narrative dilemmas (such as the utilization of Mina to hunt Dracula back to his castle), as well as undermine the pivotal leading role Mina contained in the root narrative.

Tod Browning's 1931 version of *Dracula* (based on a stage play loosely connected with the novel) has become the version that has been imbedded in the public consciousness. Hungarian actor Béla Lugosi, as the self-titled count, has served as the prototype for continual adaptations of Dracula. Whereas the Count is still a character that presents an epitome of "Old World" horrors, Lugosi's presence is both demanding yet visually attractive. The women swoon over his European charm, make winsome remarks about the "ruined abbey" he inhabits, and are eventually seduced by the Count through extreme hazy close-ups of his highlighted eyes.

Browning's film manages to re-contextualize the original insecurities of the source novel by making the foreign invader an individual the victims *want* to be seduced by echoing the American insecurities of the "Latin Lover" craze of the era personified by Rudolph Valentino. Yet the character of Mina is relegated to a supporting romantic role.

Helen Chandler (as Mina Harker) serves less as a dynamic anchor of the narrative then as a flighty socialite who falls prey to the vampire. Like Lucy in Stoker's novel, she is an object in which the male leads fight over. Unlike Moore's eventual transformation of Mina, her character here remains entirely passive. Mina neither assists with the capture of the Count nor attempts to protect herself from Dracula's advances. It is this marginalization of the pivotal female role, as well as the charming graces of the Count, that has been continually emphasized through the twentieth century through popular entertainment.

Francis Ford Coppola's "close" adaptation of *Dracula* (1992), with special attention given to Winona Ryder's depiction of the Mina Murray character, is another important work that serves to anticipate *League* yet complicate, even problematize, the position of the Mina character in the narrative. Bram Stoker's novel was published around the same period of the birth of cinema, something Coppola tenaciously examines. In a scene not originally included in Stoker's original novel, Dracula (Gary Oldman) seduces Mina at a showing of the cinematograph, which is presented as a peep show. The ability to replicate a moving image turns into a shared pornographic experience, as close knit crowds applaud suggestive images of the Lumière brothers train "arriving" as another film presents the image of women in various states of undress. Eventually Dracula literally sweeps Mina off her feet and drags her to a private corner to bite her.

In one sense Coppola remains faithful to the prejudices of the Victorian era, primarily in the "vampiric" qualities of Eastern Europe. Richard Dyer, in his critical assessment of Coppola's work, discusses the thematic of the vampire in specific detail:

> The vampire motif always has something to do with the idea of a being, or a way of being, that literally lives off another. It was born (in the early nineteenth century) of a society increasingly conscious of interdependency, while losing that firm sense of fixed, rightful, social hierarchy that had concealed dependency; in short, it was born of industrial capitalist democracy. The vampire idea deals in the terror of recognizing, challenging or being challenged by dependency, and always registers this through the body: the dependencies of its needs and drives, especially, but not exclusively, sexuality (93).

Dracula, a symbol of Eastern European decadence and decay, can find "life" in the technologically superior and sexually permissible Western frontier. Whereas Coppola addresses these interests (in greater detail then previous cinematic adaptations), the novel was more specific in detailing the Count's downfall due to this leechlike need of modern erotic and industrial dependency. Through the use of gendered "reproductive" technologies, as well as the figure of the Westernized female (Mina Murray/Harker), Dracula was eventually defeated.

Coppola's adaptation positions the Mina character in an even more ideologically problematic position than previous incarnations of the Dracula narrative. The film emphasizes the romantic elements of the Count to the point of making the character a sympathetic, tragic hero. The opening segment, in which Vlad (Gary Oldman) fends off Moslem Turks, leads to the suicide of his bride (Winona Ryder, who also portrays the Mina character), a victim of the Turks' trickery. Soldiers send a forged letter to the princess, detailing the death of Vlad on the battlefield. Distraught, the princess jumps

from a castle ledge and drowns in a river. Anthony Hopkins, in a dual role of Van Helsing and Vlad's priest, states that her self-inflicted demise is an affront to Christendom and therefore her soul is "damned". Heartbroken, Vlad renounces God and is cursed with vampirism. "In this opening segment the hero is turned to villain through the actions of a woman" (Montalbano 388), reversing the traditional "damning" roles of the Dracula plot. Coppola's *Dracula* "posits 'woman' as the metaphysical 'cause' of vampirism," (387-388). The suicide of the woman is rooted in the attempt to undermine the actions and values her husband was fighting for, namely, the ability to be reunited in heaven.

Coppola attempts to modernize the Mina character by centering on the underlying sexual dynamic of her character continued in latter adaptations. Yet in Coppola's version, Mina shows an indifference to technology. While typing out her diary, she becomes distracted by a bawdy, graphically illustrated edition of Richard Burton's *The Arabian Nights*. Later in the film, Mina ridicules the Count for his association between the cinematographic and science. In this instance, it is the European Count who has more reverence for technological growth then the industrialized Westerner. Dracula is able to prey upon Mina's sexual desires through the disorienting visual attractions at the cinematograph convention. Utilizing mirrors, shadow puppets, and the moving image itself, Mina is eventually trapped and seduced by the Count.

Unlike the rape of Stoker's novel, in Coppola's version Mina desires to become complicit in Dracula's "eternal damnation," allowing the Count to feed from her despite awareness that Dracula has killed her close friend, Lucy. What might have been a sexually liberating sequence of "gender confusion", in which Mina's involvement with

feeding from Dracula's breast, raising a rapturous erotic response from him while simultaneously "nurturing" her (Montalbano 393), is tainted by the opening sequence of the film and Dracula's torrid use of Lucy (positioned as an auxiliary object for his control). Dracula's feeding on Lucy implies both a revenge on women for his predicament as well as a release for his unfulfilled desires for Mina.

The film ends on a confused climax. Mina apparently releases Dracula through a "liberating" castration: chopping off his head. Whereas Mina does provide the final stroke that destroys the monster, it is not a heroic accomplishment, as the murder of the Count merely "rights" the curse a woman has brought forth to begin with. The film never succeeds in equalizing its conflicting segments, specifically in terms of female involvement in the destruction of male, heterosexual ethics and virtues. Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill utilize the sympathies towards the character of Mina further than Coppola's confused adaptation. The Mina of *League* functions as a bricolage that both embraces the anxieties that Coppola's film fails to level out.

MOORE'S MINA

Alan Moore, aware of the loaded history of the Dracula narrative, positions the events of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* a year after Stoker's novel. In Moore and O'Neill's adaptation of the familiar vampire story, Mina is viewed as a fallen woman in the eyes of British society. As Campion Bond, the government liaison of the group, teases Mina, "Ravished by a foreigner and all that. Quite against your will, of course, but then people do talk so, don't they?" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume I*, 8) Instead of tackling familiar scenarios from the *Dracula* narrative, Moore refrains from even mentioning the Count's name for the first several volumes. This approach hearkens back to the aesthetic

of Stoker's novel, in which Dracula is arbitrarily "seen" or described through the subjectivity of the lead protagonists. In doing so, Moore pushes Dracula's legacy aside to provide Mina with a privileged and rare foregrounding as a character.

As with Stoker's original, Mina is the pivotal center of Moore's narrative and a key member of the team (continuing her vital position in the original band of vampire hunters). Moore mocks chauvinistic Victorian ideals by linking a woman under the banner of *Gentlemen*, even making her the leader of the team. He extends the celebration of the outsider further by dressing Mina up as the personification of Britain, Britannia. A repeated image in the series is the head of Mina adorned with Britannia's helmet. Two wounds at the neck bleed into the Union Jack.

Here Moore and O'Neil attempt a semiotic subversion that is similar to the punk appropriation of post-war youth styles in Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: the Meaning of Style*. Writing when the punk movement was at its peak, Hebdige focuses on the semiotic warfare at play as punk youth found increasingly resistant ways of refuting the dominant social structures through bricolage. Similar to Victor Muñoz's disidentification, Hebdige suggests that the synthesis of early movements (Mods, Rastafarianism, Glam), the haphazard conglomeration of junk accessories (safety pins, tampons, bin liners) and disparate forms of nationalism (from the Union Jack to swastikas) creates a refutation of dominant norms. Far from a complete rupture from culture, bricolage acknowledges the connections of culture yet "it signals a Refusal" (Hebdige 3). It allows a secondary class (working class, queer, black, etc.) to "rise above a subordinate position which was never of their choosing" (139). Sub-cultural style serves to critique normative cultural

structures by reworking the assumptions behind popular signs and codes into a form of self-chosen denial.

Britannia is associated with the traits of strength, prosperity, and colonial power; yet Moore and O'Neill associate the visual potency of this image of Britain with that of Mina, a fallen woman who is the leader of a band of nonconformists the country abhors. Through this superimposition of Mina onto the image of Britannia, the association of what entails "Britishness," (and therefore, its history of imperialism, class anxieties, and phobias) is attacked. As with the punks of Hebdige's study, the appropriation of Britannia and Mina allows for a refutation as much as an embodiment of Britishness. The warlike and beautiful goddess of affluence is associated with queerness that manages to transform normative associations and therefore privilege the outsider as hero. Mina carries the traits Britannia embodies, yet she also exemplifies antinormative characteristics that reject dominant culture.

Whereas Moore's Mina is somewhat removed from Bram Stoker's original characterization in regards to "gendered" traits, Mina does epitomize both the ultimate Victorian fear of the destabilization of the male patriarchy through the "threat" of the New Woman as well as a more complex character who honors Stoker's original depiction. The original ending of Stoker's book, in which Mina and Jonathon Harker remain happily married with a child, is reworked for the *League*. Mina has divorced Jonathon, creating further notoriety by taking up her maiden name. Moore's Mina is masculine by Victorian standards: smoking in front of her male teammates, publicly cursing, physically assaulting a man (slapping Jekyll repeatedly until he transforms into the monstrous Hyde).

Whereas Mina is an assertive character, she still remains fairly elusive and rigid in early volumes set in the Victorian era. As well as the tight fitting wardrobe associated with Victorian woman, Mina also wears a long, red scarf around her neck. During moments of duress, her character continually touches this garment. On a superficial level, the implication is that she is hiding the scars left behind by the Count. Yet this action further suggests that she is concealing the root of her disgrace as a fallen woman, and reaches towards this mark as a reminder of the machinations of men. At one point in their adventures, Nemo and Quatermain rush into the Nautilus in a panic. Mina asks, "What's going on? Who are you talking about? I won't have you two keeping me in the dark about everything" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume I*, 118)! Mina's flustered response provides a pun on her original "ruin" in Stoker's novel, in which Mina is dominated by Dracula due to her male cohorts intentionally leaving Mina out of their plans. Moore's Mina aggressively remains informed so the same mistake will not be repeated.

Mina proves a strong team leader, overcoming the derision of her all-male teammates (Quatermain to Mina: "I pray God that all Englishwomen are not now of your manly ilk…" Nemo: "She's no more distressing than most western women. They all disobey their men and dress like whores."). Joshua Cozines' "Mina: The Magical Female," states that "though the men may initially treat her with contempt, she demonstrates superiority through her actions and their remarks are seen to be without merit" (44). Mina, both a strong leader as well as a negotiator between a dangerous and misfit league of "heroes" bordering on "monsters" (drug addict, psychopath, terrorist, fiend), overcomes expectations of the stereotyped "bossy" woman. The knowledge of the events of *Dracula* provides her character with a sense of dignity; the motivations of her

actions, especially when she makes mistakes, take on an added emotional and logical weight.

MINA, QUATERMAIN, AND ORLANDO

Mina's self-possession under the weight of leading the Victorian band of outsiders and her common sense in the face of extreme situations mock the phobic constructs of the literary canon Moore culls from. Mina ultimately exposes "the insubstantiality of the Victorian ideals of strength and respectability, of imperial rule, and especially of male authority" (Di Liddo 109). Yet her character also serves to liberate desires lurking under the veneer of hetero fiction by authors such as Stoker and H. Rider Haggard. Mina eventually becomes immortal, and later volumes of the *League* portray Mina involved in a polyamorous relationship with Haggard's Allan Quatermain and Virginia Woolf's Orlando. Mina continues to be the center of the League, yet she also becomes the focal point for the consistent mutability of sexual bodies that puts greater emphasis on the indeterminate backdrop of 20th century sexual identificatory practices.

In the second volume of the *League* series, Mina engages in a relationship with an aged Allan Quatermain. As with Mina, Alan Moore reworks Haggard's colonial big game hunter to critique British imperialism in adventure literature. Unlike Moore's adoption of the Mina character, Moore increases many of the odd and undesirable traits of the Quatermain character to throw into greater relief the contradictions of Victorian heroism. Moore and O'Neill highlight Haggard's descriptions of Quatermain; he is portrayed as a thin, short octogenarian with a predilection for opium. Mina stumbles upon his character at an opium den in Egypt, forcing him to snap out of his drug induced stupor. O'Neill exaggerates the leanness of Quatermain's figure and his drug abuse, inflating the

unattractive attributes of his character by detailing the scars on his body from previous hunts and a gaunt facial structure that is simultaneously pitiable and comical. Moore also emphasis the skittish qualities of the British hunter; Quatermain was typically portrayed as the least predominantly heroic figure in Haggard's novels. In *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) it is Quatermain's partner, Sir Henry Curtis, who is the more heroic; Curtis is attractive, aristocratic, strong, and typically the first to go into a conflict.

Mina derides Quatermain's masculine theatrics. On a stealth attack on the headquarters of Fu Manchu, Quatermain illogically brings along an elephant gun. Upon witnessing Fu Manchu, an alarmed Quatermain un-wraps the cords around his gun as if it were a phallic object of protection. Mina stops him, whispering: "Don't be ridiculous! The stupid thing has one shot and that's it, from what I understand of elephant guns. His hordes would be on us before you could possibly reload" (His reply, "I don't care. I'll just feel much happier with it beneath my arm," Moore and O'Neill, *Volume 1*, 82). Eventually Mina finds an alternative use for the bulky object by using it as a blunt weapon. In this instance, the characteristics usually associated with masculine heroics (big gun and charging in like a "bull elephant) are mocked and proven utterly useless. Mina is able to calmly grasp dire situations, take charge, and guide characters and events in a courageous direction.

Mina switches the assumed sexual dynamic of the two heroic leads, in which the younger and willful Mina instigates a sexual relationship with the much older and hesitant Quatermain. Quatermain is at first unnerved by his attraction to Mina, yet Mina claims their outsider status (fallen woman; aged man) makes them perfect partners. Murray responds to Quatermain's hesitancy with, "Allan, you are dead, while I am

divorced, disgraced, and disregarded by the world. Could anything make us more wrong, do you suppose?"(Moore and O'Neill, *Volume 2*, 94). While still engaged in a heterosexual relationship, their coupling is anything but normative. Their sexual dynamic disavows age and privileges non-normative sexual desires. Eventually one of the physical bonds that both characters carry with them throughout the series is the various scars left on them by their former aggressors, suggesting that both characters carry a burdensome emotional history. Quatermain values Mina's scarred neck, undoing her scarf to caress and lick the wounds left behind from Dracula (Moore goes beyond the tidy bites of popular vampire myth and has Mina's entire neck terribly scarred).

Eventually Mina and Quatermain's relationship evolves to include the gender shifting character Orlando, which introduces an interesting queer superimposition onto the archetype of Quatermain's character. Moore revises the history of Woolf's character to create an immortal polyamorous being who dates back to 1260 BC and consistently changes physical sex. Moore interweaves Woolf's narrative with numerous fictions that include any character by the name of Orlando/Roland, from Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* (1516) to Kathleen Hale's childrens book series *Orlando (The Marmalade Cat)* (1938-72).

Orlando acts out many of the associations that embody masculine and feminine performance to such an excessive extent that the character becomes an ongoing parody of gender, functioning as a caricature of unfixed identity. During a group meeting, Orlando drifts away from the discussion to admire his reflection in a mirror, stating, "You know, shaving every day… I absolutely hate it. It's much more tiresome than having a period every few weeks" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume III*, 12). The pastiche creation of Orland

becomes a mask of stereotypes and serves as a "monster" in his/her own right. Emotionally impotent, sexually charged, and psychotically violent, Orlando is yet another character against who Murray is thrust to counteract phobic constructs of gender, sex, and orientation.

CONCLUSION

The latest installment of League finds the group pitted against an analogue of Aleister Crowley, Oliver Haddo (*The Magician*, W. Somerset Maugham, 1908), in 1960s London. Although the setting of a sexually permissible London appears to be an appropriate time period for the sexually audacious trio, the series finds the League in the dilemma of carving new identities. Mina attempts to live in the moment, claiming: "the alternative is being fossilized as a Victorian freak. Forever. Endless life is starting to get to me, okay?" (Moore and O'Neill, Volume III, 32). Adopting a swinging mod chic demeanor, Mina casually sleeps with women, wears short mini-skirts, and takes hallucinogens all in an attempt to be increasingly "modern."

Mina eventually drops acid at a festival in Hyde Park. Her attempt to "live for the moment" supersedes her obligations to the team. Yet as she discorporates from her body, she encounters Oliver Haddo on the astral plane and attempts to thwart his plans. Occurring simultaneously to the battle is a Hyde Park speech given by a Mick Jagger analogue, Terner Purple (a purposefully misspelled Turner from Donald Cammell and Nicolas Roeg's *Performance*, 1970). The speech parallels the free Rolling Stones concert on July 5th 1969, in which Jagger gave a commemoratory speech for Brian Jones followed by the release of hundreds of white butterflies. Moore reworks the historical event into a failed satanic ritual. Terner attempts to invoke the "demon" of Haddo into his

body and finishes his recital by releasing hundreds of bats into Hyde Park. Mina, returning to her body, awakes to encounter the bats flocking towards her.

Here Moore and O'Neill give the first glimpse of what Dracula potentially looks like in the world of *League*. The hundreds of bats (seen through the strained mental state of Mina) are adorned with white mustaches and scream "Remember me, Mina?" (Moore and O'Neill, *Volume III*, 68) The bats prove to be too much for Mina's exhausted psychological state and she is carted away by paramedics. A prose story that concludes the book suggests that Mina is now locked in an institution; the events of the second story are given through her fractured memory. Her colleagues, engaged with events across town, enter too late to discover what has occurred and are clueless as to Mina's disappearance.

Mina's absence disrupts all relations and causes a halt to the progression of the plot. Her ability to offset normative sexual pairings and attack performative gender associations is essential for the continuation of the *League*. The epilogue to *Century: 1969* finds Quatermain and Orlando in a punk dive club in 1977, resorting to drugs and bar fights to bide the time. Eventually the two split, the final panel showing a dejected Quatermain seated in his own urine. Although the third volume of *League* has yet to reach its conclusion (part 3, *Century: 2009*, is due to be released in the near future), the series has provided an interesting shift from its origins in which the team itself has been completely de-centered from its own series. It remains to be seen how Mina will reappear in the concluding volume.

CHAPTER 3

Lost Girls is an intertextual porno-graphic novel by Alan Moore and artist Melinda Gebbie. Although not as specific in its horror allusions as *League*, the comic does offer characteristics of monstrous and obscene sexuality in order to destabilize normative constructs in popular culture. The graphic novel is structured around three popular heroines from the nineteenth to burgeoning twentieth century literature: Dorothy (L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz*), Wendy (J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*), and Alice (Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*). *Lost Girls* presents a bricolage of pornography, children's literature, and historical events in order to destabilize the heteronormative surfaces and reveal queer undercurrents of the original narratives. *Girls* heightens the sexual charge of the narrative by discovering the erotic undercurrents at the roots of the fantasy novels.

The three adult protagonists meet at an isolated Austrian resort and discuss their original adventures. Dorothy is cast as a lower class, Midwestern farm girl escaping to Europe. Wendy is portrayed as a repressed middle class housewife in a loveless marriage. Alice is altered into an aristocratic libertine who suggests the monstrous characteristics of a sexual predator. Yet she retains a sense of innocence familiar with the original figure. The three women become sexual partners and retell their stories, each of which is portrayed through elaborate visual designs that parallel the individual characters' sexual anxieties. Unlike the original and familiar stories, each adventure is re-written as an account of the characters' developmental sexual experiences. The escape into fantasy functions as a release from each characters constrained environment and a mediator for their confused desires.

The overarching narrative of *Lost Girls* incorporates a pastiche of other artistic and literary styles onto the three women's story. The work includes references to real life literary figures, artists, and events alongside the narratives of Barrie, Carroll, and Baum. Set on the eve of World War I, the three characters' sexual narratives are thrust against such historical events as the riot during Igor Stravinsky's *Le sacred du printemps* and the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The bricolage of children's fantasy, pornography, and references to historical events serves to challenge heteronormative constructs of the "self" interposed onto the individual.

FANTASY AND REVERSIBILITY

The original plot of *Alice* details a young girl escaping her reality into a fantasy realm. In *Wonderland* and *Looking Glass*, Alice enters into a fantasy space in which the norms of reality are subverted. At the end of the narrative, the fantasy space proves to be a dream from which Alice awakens. The narrative device of a flight from reality into a dream has become increasingly popular in the past century as opposed to the fairy tale, in which fantasy and reality coexist within the same physical space. The *Wonderland* narrative, in which a character escapes from reality into a dream, has come to dominate the other model, in which fantasy and reality share the same world.

The plots of *Pan* and *Oz* detail a child who escapes into a fantasy land that the characters can physically travel to. This grounds Berrie's and Baum's plots with classic literary forms such as the fairy tale. Erik Christian Haugaard writes that the fairy tale takes place "in the real world, no matter how exotic and strange their backgrounds may be" (xv). Fantastic elements are therefore externalized and can be reached in the "real world" of the character. Haugaard suggests there is a safety in escaping from reality

through daydreams popularized by late nineteenth century fantasy, "because (those worlds) never have existed and never will" (xv). *Pan* and *Oz* do not offer the reader the reassurance that the dream world of *Wonderland* provides.

Literature professor Amy Billone introduces the concept of reversibility in her introduction to *Peter Pan*. Reversibility is when characters' roles and responsibilities are switched in the transition from reality into fantasy: "childhood and adulthood, birth and death, boys and girls, dreams and waking life all persistently change places in the story" (Billone xxii). Although this theme of switching identities could assist in attacking normativity, reversibility can serve to "reinforce rather than dismantle the oppositions that confuse and distress us. Children do become adults; birth leads to death; boys and girls cannot effortlessly change roles; dreams remain distinct from waking life" (xxii). By the end of the fantasy narrative, all roles revert back to their original placement. The characters eventually return to their reality, either through an actual journey (*Pan* and *Oz*) or by simply waking up (*Wonderland* and *Looking Glass*), and therefore accept the roles and expectations of reality. Reversibility works differently in each of the three original children's novels.

Wonderland and *Looking Glass* tend to be scholarly favorites, because Alice's adventures primarily exist within the realm of a mind-trip or daydream that satirizes Victorian social constructs. Her trip through the rabbit hole is a "passage into the unconsciousness; the result is a serially distorted view of a world she is not all that anxious to get back to as well as a mockery of ordered thought and behavior with no self-enunciating moral or logical center" (Barbarese xv). There is a continual shift in literary style from childlike curiosity to total moral disdain for social customs that suggests an

anarchic critique of adult society. The lessons and patterns of behavior Alice has learned in reality prove useless in *Wonderland*. Instead of responding to her adventures with fear or confusion, she casually accepts the alterations of normative physics, "common sense," and tradition provided by this fantasy world. Yet order is eventually restored through reversibility, in which Alice wakes from her daydreams. *Wonderland* and *Looking Glass* offer a conservative example of reversibility in that the anarchic assaults on culture and dark critiques of society are safely contained through the dream narrative.

Peter Pan, on the other hand, fluctuates between satirical reminiscence of childhood and unsettling tensions of nostalgia. Unlike *Wonderland*, *Pan* provides a fantasy world the characters can physically travel to and return from. The Darling children fly to Neverland where social positions are switched (Wendy changes from sister to mother), the eventual progression of time is halted, and gender is inverted (for the stage adaptation, Barrie insisted that the actress who played Mrs. Darling would also play Captain Hook [Billone xxi]). Yet the fantasy role play is still fixed squarely in a Victorian setting in which the children must accept the roles of middle class life. Pan is portrayed as an emotionally stunted, tragic individual who Wendy dissociates from in order to "grow up" and resolve her severed emotions. The uneven tension of accepting the roles of an adult woman is highlighted at the novel's conclusion, in which Wendy relives her desires to return to the innocence of youth (Neverland) through her daughter. The narrative suggests that socially expected roles have been adopted, and there is an aura of melancholy surrounding this submission to cultural expectations of middle class familial structures.

The Wizard of Oz is the most socially optimistic of the three children's novels and the most challenging example of reversibility. *Oz* also provides a "place you can get to from here." Yet unlike *Pan*, the desire to attain the social switch provided by the fantastic reversal still remains at the conclusion of the narrative. Oz serves as democratic state in which characters can re-determine their social positioning. All the characters in Oz suggest upward mobility: a socially maligned witch can reinvent herself as good and a carnival huckster can become a ruling wizard. Characters can enter Oz "without worrying that your choices are front-loaded by a particular set of values" (Barbarese, xxix). Dorothy, a working class girl with a gray future, discovers there is opportunity in Oz to reverse her social standing and become a hero.

Eventually Dorothy chooses to return to Kansas, yet the all-American prospect of changing one's social position is still open by the conclusion of the narrative. In subsequent sequels of Baum's novel, Dorothy travels back to Oz. The character can physically enter and return to the fantasy realm. But the future potential of achieving the goals hinted through the fantastic reversal is supplanted with the more popular 1939 MGM musical *The Wizard Oz*. Here Oz becomes an internalized *Wonderland* instead of a physical realm the hero can enter and reenter. Dorothy is knocked unconscious by flying debris. Salman Rushdie claims "this device - the knocking-out of Dorothy - is the most radical and in some ways the worst of all the changes wrought in Frank Baum's original conception" (439). Dorothy becomes a trauma victim after the events of the tornado and her experiences in Oz serve as a subconscious expression of her latent desires. Oz therefore serves as a dream of social mobility instead of a potential reality.

The ways in which the three original narratives interact is of particular importance in *Lost Girls*, as it critiques the socio-political immobility of reversibility inherent in the class, gender, and sexual positions of the original stories. The "fantasy" space of *Lost Girls* is interconnected with pornography in order to make overt the disavowal of identity constructs emphasized by the original narratives and latter adaptations. *Lost Girls* attempts to attack the heterocomformativity of the original novels through the amalgamation of the separate narratives into an explicitly queer refutation of the "self".

SELF

Lost Girls incorporates a multitude of sexual acts that integrate normative as well as explicitly queer sex and sexuality. Moore states that he and Gebbie were striving for a "polymorphous" sexuality, "for something that was not gender specific or even sexuality specific." *Lost Girls* continues the fantastic elements of reversibility, incorporating a multitude of gender, sex, and orientation reversals. *Lost Girls* also depicts socially extreme sexual acts in order to disrupt the comfiture associated with the escapism of fantasy reversal. The composition and reformation of identities provided by the original fantasy narratives is situated firmly within a pornographic tradition in order to brazenly revalue the composition of a historically sexualized "self."

This breakage from a singular sexualized "self" through the intermingling of pornography and fantastical fiction is rooted in the influence of Michel Foucault. Foucault proposed the idea that "sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check… it is the name that can be given to a historical construct" (105). Foucault found the notion of a naturalized, universal "self" problematic;

"self" was a creation of power relations within a discursive formation that did not allow room for agency or "identity discovery". Yet Jana Sawicki suggests "Foucault brings to our attention historical transformations in practices of self-formation… the aim of Foucault's self-interrogations was not self-discovery, but rather self-refusal – 'to become someone else you were not at the beginning'" (288). This notion of self-refusal is similar to Muñoz's disidentification and Hebdige's bricolage. The self acknowledges its social placement and refutes this socially determined identity by re-working the codes and signs of the dominant culture.

The combination of real historical events with the queer sexual exploits of the three imaginary women allows for the foregrounding of socially indeterminate, sexualized identities. That said, the adoption of lesbian preferences does not necessarily propose a form of liberation for the three women in *Lost Girls*. As John Champagne sates, "homosexuality represents one of the 'patterns' 'proposed, suggested and imposed' on subjects by culture," (184). Yet this forced identity offers new categories for identity refusal. Champagne claims:

> "In addition to suggesting the historical contingency of certain forms of social relations… (queer sexuality) suggests the possibility of a number of 'alternative' relations - monogamous sexual relationships outside the institution of marriage, same-sex friendships that include sexual activity, sexual encounters with strangers, sex with multiple partners simultaneously, 'serial' monogamy, and other as yet unimagined relations" (185).

The queer sexual experimentation instigated by the character of Alice becomes the site in which social relations can be reversed and attacked. As the sexual acts become increasingly counter-normative and more extreme, the three women are able to call attention to their social identities. *Lost Girls* rigorously suggests that sex, gender, and sexuality is historically determined, yet queer sex proposes a slippage within the socially prescribed construct of the "self."

Lost Girls indulges in what is classified as obscene sexuality. *Girls* is typically located in the adults-only section at comic stores for its explicit sexual illustrations. Clearly the most inflammatory aspect of the novel is the sexual encounters between the three children and adults. Each story portrays the characters at the age of sexual awakening engaged in sexual activity with adult men. The three women have suffered traumatic experiences of sexual assault, yet these instances of sexual trauma are not used for titillation, nor do they suggest all counternormative sex is primarily obscene. Moore and Gebbie recognize how trauma has shaped the three women's desires.

The original experiences of the women are deemed so traumatic and confusing that the characters become reliant on a fantasy space to escape into. This fantasy space is equally distorted, depicting the women having sex with familiar fantasy figures. Judith Butler insists that obscenity "doesn't mean that all minority practices are to be condoned or celebrated, but it does mean that we ought to be able to think about them before we come to any conclusions about them" (viii). The "obscenities" prevalent in *Lost Girls* attempt to disassociate the viewer from the inherent safety of the fantastic reversal. *Lost Girls* portrays distorted desires released through trauma in order to find a mediator between queer fantasies and realities.

Alice's identity as a libertine provides the introduction of the reversal for the other protagonists. Yet Alice's identity is socially determined; the privileges allotted to her elite class allow for her sexual experimentation to go unnoticed through the classifying factor of the patriarchal gaze. Therefore, Alice's narrative requires alternative relations of self-refusal that the characters of Wendy and Dorothy can provide. Her involvement with Dorothy and Alice in the climactic day long orgy involves literally donning and casting off sexual, social, as well as gendered positioning. Through the interweaving of the other characters narratives, Alice is able to refute her socially prescribed identity as a lesbian and question the notion of "choosing" one's sexual identity.

DOROTHY AND WENDY IN *LOST GIRLS*

The fantastic narratives of Wendy and Dorothy in *Lost Girls* offer breaks from normative sexuality. Yet the social position of the two characters suggests that their fantasies are primarily determined by heterosexual desires. Alice's narrative focuses primarily on lesbian desires, yet her desires are structured around a privileged, heterosexual social sphere. The fantasies of Dorothy and Wendy call attention to the privileges allotted onto Alice's sexual "liberties" in order to attack the notion of sexual freedom determined by class.

Dorothy's narrative occurs within widened horizontal panels that provide a nod to the popular cinematic incarnation of *Oz* as well as the flat geography of Kansas. In Frank L. Baum's original book, he wrote: "The sun had baked the plowed land into a gray mass, with little cracks running through it. Even the grass was not green, for the sun had burned the tops of the long blades until they were the same gray color to be seen everywhere"

(ch. 1, pg. 14). In an inspired cinematic gesture King Vidor (one of the uncredited directors for the 1939 movie) films the Kansas sequences in sepia tones, which accentuates the fantastic entry into the three-strip Technicolor Oz. Melinda Gebbie continues the tradition of a monotonous, visually stunted landscape; she illustrates Kansas through drab browns and grays to emphasize the futile chances of escape. Gebbie mutes the intensity of her colors of Dorothy's experiences in Kansas in opposition to the vividness of Dorothy's trip to Europe.

Dorothy's experience in the tornado functions as a sexual roller coaster ride in which she first experiences orgasm. The excitement provided by this harrowing adventure shapes Dorothy into a thrill and pleasure seeking woman. The tornado in *Lost Girls* functions as an entry into sexual awareness instead of an escape into fantasy. Dorothy becomes painfully aware of her surroundings and social positioning. Kansas proves to be an environment with few sexual partners that fulfill Dorothy's desires. Continuing Baum's flat-affected style and simplified literary approach, Moore accentuates Dorothy's working class drawl to highlight Dorothy's social insecurities. Yet the subtle ideals hidden behind Baum's stylistically flat narrative are punctuated by Dorothy's wit and adventurousness that undercut the deprecating associations with working class identities.

Dorothy is relegated to encounters with hired farmhands; her interactions with them are aligned with the requisite allusions to the Oz counterparts in her fantasy. She considers all of her partners dim witted, heartless, and cowardly lovers. Eventually she gains an attraction to a man she imagines to be free of these failings: her father, who she idealized. When Dorothy eventually has sex with her father, he is shown invariably from

behind the curtain. The affair concludes when her step-mother witnesses the two together in the barn. Dorothy treats this splash of cold reality with cynical humor; "He weren't no Wizard. He was some farmer bangin' his daughter, worried over bills, worried his wife was gonna know" (Ch. 28 pg. 7). The equivalence between Dorothy's father and the Wizard suggests a critique of patriarchal authority. The Wizard in *Oz* functioned as a father figure who is proven to be a "humbug" who cannot fulfill Dorothy's desires. *Lost Girls* literalizes this parallel by making the Wizard her actual father. Dorothy utilizes her trip to Europe as an escape from her past. She disidentifies from her rural identity by adopting a false cover of a socially mobile, sexually headstrong American.

Wendy's narrative is more visually constricted. Relegated to the confines of her household and a gated park, Wendy's fantasies highlight the concept of displaced Victorian desires. Gebbie frames Wendy's narrative in sharp vertical panels with rigid lines and stark color contrasts, mimicking Victorian architecture and window patterns. Gebbie places Wendy's sexual fantasies "in the shadows"; her pleasures and distorted sexual escapes are projected in shadowed silhouettes and behind closed doors, struggling to be contained within the closed comic panel. Her narrative revolves around an encounter with a young street prostitute (Peter) in Kensington Gardens. Wendy and her brothers begin to engage with sexual role playing with Peter and his group of street urchins. *Lost Girls* re-sexualizes the childhood camaraderie between the Lost Boys and the Darling children. Erotic role playing is added to the original asexual novel. These sexual acts begin to warp Wendy's notions of the domestic sphere. Her involvement with Peter has led to sexual involvement with her brothers and rape fantasies involving her

parents and The Captain. As with the Lost Boys, *Girls* highlights the sexual power and menace of Captain Hook.

Unlike the familiar Mr. Darling/Captain Hook overlap, the Hook character is epitomized as a physically and emotionally stunted man. A colleague of Wendy's father at the stock exchange, the Captain pays street hustlers for sex and brutally attacks Peter's sister, Annabel (Tinker Bell). Wendy's fantasies begin overwhelming the reality of her situation. Her rape fantasies for The Captain almost lead to Wendy's actual rape. After Annabel's assault, Wendy decides to confront the Captain to face her fantasies. Escaping to the park during a violent rainstorm, Wendy is attacked by the Captain, forcing her to reexamine her relations to her fantasies. Splaying open her vagina, she screams at him "Children won't realize you're inadequate. You can pretend you're still young, like them, that the clock isn't ticking. That's why you fuck children, why you dye your hair. You're afraid of women. And you're afraid of getting old" (Ch. 27 pg. 5). The Captain crumbles to the ground, humiliated at Wendy's remarks. Wendy reverts into herself, severing any bond with the homeless orphans. She eventually marries an older man with whom she is sexually incompatible with and has a son who she fiercely protects, claiming, "I didn't want him taken away by sex, by the wilderness, by the working class. By shadows" (Ch. 27 pg. 7). Wendy's experiences of "slumming" have filtered her world with class biases and purposefully repressed desires.

Wendy and Dorothy are hesitant about discussing their past and sexual insecurities; it is Alice who suggests all three characters openly discuss and engage in their fantasies. Alice's narrative suggests a more explicit critique on social privileges and the framing of sexuality through the closed male eye. The "freedoms" experienced by

Alice are undercut by the former character's narratives, and the eventual synthesis of their stories by the novel's conclusion serve to rectify the prescribed privileges given to Alice's character.

ALICE AND *LOST GIRLS*

Alice's story arc revolves around drug orgies, sadomasochistic practices, and closeted lesbian sexual hierarchies. The women to women sexual practices within her section are delimited by a privileged yet rigid social order structured around the closed male gaze. Alice is constructed as an emotionally unstable libertine who is at once childlike yet portrays an adult cynicism. The emotional jumps within her character reflect Carroll's complex writing style, in which the intermingling of interior and exterior monologues and dark Victorian satirical nuances creates the schizophrenic moral universe of *Wonderland*. Alice reflects Victorian ideas of a predatory pervert cast onto her despite her continual desires to refute this identity.

The opening images of the novel take place in front of a mirror. Alice continually weaves in and out of the frame; her daily routine of talking to herself, commanding the servants, and masturbation occur through the reflection in the glass in a clear reference to *Through the Looking Glass*. Gebbie visualizes the style of the original *Alice* adventures through ovaled panels that reflect the shape of a looking glass. The events of Alice's "trip through the mirror" are portrayed as a denial of the "self" through her encounter with the white rabbit.

Moore constructs the white rabbit as an elderly, skittish friend of Alice's father. This associate drugs Alice and takes advantage of her in a scene that unites the trip down the rabbit hole in *Wonderland* with the passage through the *Looking Glass* in the sequel.

Kenneth Kidd acknowledges that "television and film versions of *Alice* eschew the pedophilia thesis" but that *Lost Girls* "aggressively courts it." Alice is drugged and raped in front of her living room mirror: "The wine that made sweet vinegar of my saliva now began to make the room revolve, negating gravity. I fell or floated down a hole inside myself, and at its far end all that I could see was Mother's mirror, there across the room"(ch. 9, p. 5). As the paneled fantasy continues, Alice makes contact with the mirror image, climaxing with an almost open paneled image of a naked Alice and her mirrored reflection sexually entangled, inhabiting a space both within and outside the reflection.

After the encounter, Alice returns from consciousness to find that the pedophile has vanished. Alice stumbles towards the glass: "I no longer felt like me. The house no longer felt like mine. I had no substance. I was the reflection. From beyond the mirror-pane the real me gazed out." (ch. 9, pg. 7). Alice chooses to dissociate from her surroundings, adopting the identity of a lesbian in order to reject men as well as social customs. In an all-girl boarding school, Alice is given the opportunity to act out her preferences for women, eventually catching the eye of her headmistress.

Alice's headmistress (given parallels to the Queen of Hearts) leads Alice into a decadent world of sexual debauchery. She indoctrinates Alice into this world by pointing out the class privileges associated with the closed male gaze. The instructor leads Alice into her husband's study, where they find him asleep. Alice's teacher proceeds to lube Alice's orifices, simultaneously forcing Alice to stare at his sleeping figure. The headmistress states, "He pays for everything we do without the least idea of what it is. If he should ever wake, then all of this would disappear" (ch. 17 p. 7). The sexual and amoral world of decadence Alice enters is therefore allowed through the closed male

gaze. Alice becomes involved in drug orgies, prostitution, and rape instigated by an elite group of housewives. Their private lifestyles and rituals are funded through their naïve husbands. For Alice's class, lesbianism is equated with moral degeneracy and a "privilege" structured around the male sphere. Gay and lesbian sex may continue as long as it does not intrude with the heteronormative order. Alice begins loosing a sense of her identity, finding the world she has entered dangerously appealing yet increasingly revolting.

Frustrated with the secrecy and debauchery of this constricted world, Alice eventually calls attention to the deceit of the housewives. At a dinner party, a drugged Alice screams about this private world in front of the husbands and is immediately thrust into an insane asylum. Alice is punished for calling attention to the normative constructs that "allow" for lesbianism to exist in a separate, shadowed sphere. Alice is raped by her female wardens and plagued by hallucinations; her experience of lesbianism funded by men and premeditated by the male gaze reaches a nightmarish fever pitch. A full page panel portrays Alice running away from a giant penis, portrayed as a "jabberwocky." At the end of her story she rhetorically questions, "I've assumed I pursued women, but perhaps I was just running away from men? Certainly, women weren't always kinder or more gentle" (Ch. 29 pg. 7). Alice leaves the asylum with a mocking and distorted view of sex, sexuality and gender. Yet Alice discovers through Dorothy and Wendy that a synthesis of their fantasies and the extremities of erotic role play can assist in healing their traumas and reformulating their desires.

HEALING

As the three narratives progress, the graphic nature of the scenarios become more explicit and obscene. The relational standards of gender and sexuality also become more complicated through the overlay of historical events and intertextual artistic references. The sexual apprehensions structured in the social identities of the three women are thrust against the backdrop of larger historical proceedings. *Lost Girls* represents the conflict between cultural trauma and sexual relief through the pastiche of artistic traditions juxtaposed to the characters narratives. A synthesis eventually occurs in which the women can mobilize their fantasies with reality to readopt normative social structures, instead of the use of "escape" as a crutch of resistance from reality.

The riot during Igor Stravinsky's *Le sacred du printemps* at the Paris premiere in 1913 allows for the three women to engage in public sex unnoticed. The colors and images of the ballet are blurred and frantic, mimicking the audio in visual terms through the smearing of lines into color. This synthesis of sight and sound is assisted by a word panel in which Alice, writing in her diary, claims: "The strange luminous planet of the music rolled now further from alignment with reality, phantasmagoric shifts of hue and sound and motion blurring in the mind until I can no longer say how much occurred that night not on the stage nor with we three in the audience" (Chap. 10 Page 6). Alice, Wendy, and Dorothy's reaction to the visual, and audio made visual, is to become aroused, whereas the rest of the theater's attendance violently falls apart. The reaction to the ballet recalls Alice's introduction to sex and the mirror: "I scarcely knew which one of us I was" (Chap. 10 Page 6). Whereas Alice's first sexual encounter served as a disassociation from herself, the sexual outbreak in the theater strengthened sexual modes of expression between the characters. Moore and Gebbie rework the scenario in which

the performance invoked an amalgamation of identities in opposition to the unrest of pre-war Europe.

In another episode, Alan Moore manages to lift the narrative of *Dorian Gray* from its horror trappings to reposition the queer and heteronormative social positioning of the maligned monster. Within the format of the gothic horror novel, Gray is a monster that must be destroyed to re-stabilize heterosexuality. Melinda Gebbie pastiches the style of Austrian painter Egon Schiele, an Expressionist known for his explicit, Gothic depictions of sexuality. In this sequence, Lord Henry Wotton invites Dorian Gray to a private salon to indulge in queer sex. *Gray* is juxtaposed next to a sexual encounter between Wendy's husband and a soldier. Echoing the "secretiveness" of Lord Henry's and Gray's escapades, both the husband and soldier meet in private and engage in oral and anal sex. In a panel opposite to the soldier and husband, Gray remarks at recognizing other men at the salon as members of "respectable" society during daylight hours.

After the sexual encounter with the soldier, Wendy's husband uncomfortably falls in bed with his wife. The side-narrative of *Gray* crosses into their bedroom scenes: "Gliding along the glistening West End streets, Dorian wondered if the faceless strollers that their carriage passed concealed exotic secrets of their own, and marveled at the discreet interplay of artfully constructed masks we call society. Oil paintings, Gray concluded, were by far preferable to people, aging far more gracefully, and hiding less" (Ch. 13, pg. 8). Instead of utilizing the monstrous queer to condemn the characters, the overlap of *Gray* revalues the perspective of the "other." While the imitation of Egon Schiele's artwork, with its focus on death and sexuality, can haunt the graphic narrative

with horrific overtones, the union of explicit queer sexuality and gothic horror ridicules heteronormative "masks."

CONCLUSION

By the end of *Lost Girls*, the onset of war threatens the characters stay at the villa. The three women decide to make their leave, and in the process of packing, Alice chooses to leave her mirror behind. The detailing of the three women's fantasies, the intersection between impeding historical conflict, and the intertextual references have allowed Alice to disidentify with the mirror. Long after the women have left, the book concludes with German soldiers breaking into Alice's former room and smashing the mirror.

The final image of the book is of a young soldier on the battle field; a gaping injury at his crotch suggesting a vaginal wound. The final panel continues the juxtaposition of the red from the wound and the grey of the battlefield into the blossoming of a flower. Here Moore and Gebbie claim that time inevitably marches on despite changes within the individual with the image of the flower providing a sense of hope for sexual liberation that can blossom despite historical trauma. Yet the juxtaposition of the color schemes between the sexualized wound of the soldier and the flower suggest that trauma and desire are interlinked. Although there is no liberation from suffering, there is the potential for healing trauma through the reformulation of desire.

Lost Girls stresses the importance of the sexual imagination, an imagination that can never be destroyed nor fixed. The alternative relationships explored by Moore and Gebbie function less as a revolutionary call to arms for sexual liberation, and more on the question of what necessitates a "queer" space and what outlets do the combination of the

text, image, and dramatic narrative provide for an analysis of the “obscene” and the destabilization of gendered sexual acts and relational values.

CONCLUSION

On an interview with BBC2's *Culture Show*, Moore stated his works "were written to be impossible to be reproduced in terms of cinema… if you are going to make them into films, please try to make them into better ones." His anger can be traced to the 2003 adaptation of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (Stephen Norrington). Whereas the original narrative of *League* examines the function of cultural imagination and questions the ideological underpinnings of American and British fictional characters, the film reproduces many of the assumptions the original *League* attempted to challenge. The Mina of the film no longer serves as the emotional core of the *League*; she is forced into a supporting role as a vampire seductress. Mina becomes a weapon the male protagonists can choose from in their "arsenal".

In the film, Allan Quatermain supersedes Mina as the leader. Quatermain's opium addiction as well as timidity when faced with danger is replaced by the suave confidence of Sean Connery (in James Bond mode). The rest of the team serves as auxiliary support for Quatermain's character. As Marc Oxoby states in his review of the film, "the personalities created by Haggard, Stevenson, Stoker… become less important than the powers and skills employed by these characters" (77). The Mina of the film (Pita Wilson) is, foremost, a vampire. Whereas Moore subtly alluded to the Dracula, the filmed version makes deliberate pains to remind the spectator of *Dracula*'s legacy. After an attack by a group of henchman, one of the villains puts a knife to her throat. Her eyes turn red, and she bites into her victim. Mina becomes accepted as part of the League, "primarily because she is not *just* a woman" as Joshua Cozine states (45). Instead, she functions as a killer whose supernatural skills were passed on by Dracula. Therefore "her achievements

are not her own, but a man's" (46) That Mina needed to be a strong female character through "vampirism" leads to what Cozine, in reworking Stuart Hall's idea of "inferential racism," claims is "inferential sexism" (47). The filmmakers, in attempting to make Mina a "powerful" woman, instead continue to reproduce the ideology of Mina as an object of seduction or male dominance.

Moore's *League* examines the ideological reproducibility of popular entertainment. Moore attempts to "examine it, confront it, subvert it and cast a cold eye on contemporary imperialism, manifested in the deeds and actions of George W. Bush and his yapping dancing papillon Tony Blair" (Moorcock 54). Yet the filmed *League* utilizes worn archetypes and problematic assumptions that undermine the cultural disavowals the original series provides. The push for a revised understanding of the power of entertainment Moore called for instead becomes an example of what Moore wanted to rectify. Moore's *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* continues to be a powerful work due to its ability to subvert expectations of what is heroic and monstrous. The series continually reworks familiar narratives to destabilize cultural norms that the filmic adaptation ultimately maintains.

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