"SIN IS THE ONLY REAL COLOR-ELEMENT IN THE MODERN LIFE": AESTHETIC CRIMES AND ESCAPISM IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE

By Catherine Lewis

Perhaps one of the most interesting examples of the evolving and expanding types of literary "criminals" in the Victorian period was the gentleman villain. Middle- and upper-class men sought respite from the daily pressures and expectations of repression and geniality and hid their criminal and debauched behaviors by living double lives. According to the article "The Victorian Era and the Development of the Stoic-Christian Code of Honor," many middle-class Victorians felt that the upper classes and aristocrats had become decadent, flamboyant, materialistic, and immoral. Middle-class Victorians created a gentlemanly movement intended to counteract the immoral cultural influences from the elite and focused on encouraging temperance, rectitude, virtue, morality, and honor. This honorable code of conduct for gentlemen demanded that Victorians show extreme sexual restraint while remaining highly moral, ethical, polite, and respectable. A man striving for the gentlemanly ideal had to cultivate an honorable reputation for himself while maintaining a respectable persona. The constant demands of the gentlemanly ideal and honor code, however good in theory, imposed rules that were restrictive, stiflingly moral, and realistically unachievable. Temptation, desire, personal interests, and boredom were the obstacles to all men striving to achieve a gentlemanly status. However, as long as one could *appear* to be gentlemanly, respectable, and proper, then one could uphold a gentlemanly reputation while secretly indulging in unconventional or immoral desires. Gentlemen needed to separate their public and private existence, which allowed them the means of enjoying numerous pleasures and temptations without tarnishing their reputation or putting their eccentric actions under the gaze of the public eye. In this thesis, I argue that murder, grotesque violence, sexual deviance, and rampant drug abuse were used as a method of escape from the suffocating social standards and expectations of gentlemen in Victorian culture. I will focus on Victorian gentlemen (literary characters and historical figures) who experimented with drugs, violence, and unconventional sexuality and, in doing so, reinvented the role of crime by bestowing it with aesthetic properties and making the criminal act a mode of art. The sophisticated criminal acts conducted by the middle and upper class deviated from the typical Victorian crimes (vagrancy, prostitution, drunken disorderly conduct, theft, solicitation, and other petty misdemeanors) because they were performed as a way to elude themselves from the mundane, stiflingly moral Victorian society instead of the common crime for profit or personal gain.

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by

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Introduction

Nineteenth-century England experienced a revival of moral consciousness with the advent of the middle class. The middle class disapproved strongly of the Victorian aristocracy and believed that the upper classes were plagued with immorality, dandyism, and idleness. The middle class saw that Victorian culture was becoming increasingly debauched and sybaritic from aristocratic influences, and began a social reformation in which the key virtues were piety, purity, morality, temperance, and sobriety (McKay). This new gentlemanly ideal was the epitome of honor and was feverishly sought after by middle-class (and some working-class) men. Unlike the rigid class system of the nineteenth century, which was based on one's parentage/lineage, becoming a gentleman was an earned social status and "a code based on ethics and virtues that would come to supplant the one based on birth" (McKay). John Ruskin wrote that "The essence of a gentleman is what the word says, that he comes from a pure gens, or is perfectly bred. After that, gentleness and sympathy, or kind disposition and fine imagination" (Gilmour 86). Ruskin is not insinuating that a man achieves the gentleman status because of his birth status from the nobility or gentry, but rather that a gentleman must come from good stock which has been purified by moral habit and not a certain privileged class. During the mid and late nineteenth century social classes became more strictly divided, repression and control of one's desires was expected, and citizens were forced to live in conformity with Victorian societal expectations and to hold a respectable reputation. It is not surprising that if one strayed from the highly moralized culture they would soon

become marginalized, criminalized, or exiled from their social sphere. Middle-class Victorians held their civilization to a high standard and expected all those in society, regardless of their caste but with a particular emphasis on the middle and upper classes, to live morally and with genial respectability. The stifling moral climate of nineteenth-century England forced Victorian men to meet societal and cultural expectations by pursuing an involuntary ideal of gentlemanly perfection.

The individuals striving for the gentleman ideal, however, were faced with great difficulties and personal turmoil. Ruskin argues that men *of all classes* must have convictions as strong as the temptations they fought against in order to remain untainted, pure, and gentlemanly: "When the make of the creature is fine, its temptations are strong as well as its perceptions; it is liable therefore to be abused and hurt by all kinds of rough things which would do a coarser creature little harm, and thus to fall into frightful wrong if its fate will have it so" (Gilmour 87). Ruskin is not insinuating that the gentleman is invincible against the various temptations and immoral conduct that was rampant in the Victorian era. In fact, Ruskin argues that a gentleman, unlike a "coarser creature," is actually more exposed and in greater danger than those who are of rougher sorts. However, Ruskin claims that with proper control a gentleman can control his desires, resist temptation, and remain unscathed. Ruskin claims that an ideal gentleman is one who stresses morality in all thought and action and displays characteristics of kindness, politeness, charm, attentiveness, sympathy, and self-restraint. A Victorian man was expected to show characteristics of chivalry, courage, grace, and elegance at all times in public and home life. In addition to acting like a gentleman there was also emphasis on

one's appearance and dress as well. Not only must a man behave genially, but they also had to physically look the part. There was considerable emphasis on composure and the ability to be in control of one's mannerisms and temper at all times. This notion of perfection, however, was not only stressful for the men attempting to attain the faultless gentlemanliness but the ideality was unrealistic and oftentimes unattainable.

The desire to conform to social expectations and gentlemanly perfection often clashed starkly with individual's personal desires, which led to a phenomenon that resulted in the creation of the gentleman villain. This villainous individual wore a mask of genial respectability publically but privately experienced a vast array of unconventional longings. The need for a double life arose so that a gentleman could maintain his respected reputation in public while still giving way privately to various temptations and fiendish appetites. Michael Brander, author of *The Victorian Gentleman*, explains that the hypocritical result of pursuing the gentleman ideal often was "an almost schizophrenic division between the actions of an individual in his private life when following his repressed instincts and desires and his behavior in public dictated by the rules of society" (20). The hypocritical existence of the gentleman was one filled with internal turmoil and confusion. Men striving for the gentlemanly ideal rarely could meet the high standards of Victorian culture and morality while simultaneously pursuing their own interests and desires. This personal conundrum left them with three choices: pursue the gentlemanly ideal at all costs by relinquishing personal happiness and freedom, fail in the pursuit of the gentlemanly ideal and accept social exile while enjoying

unconventional desires, or live a double life and appear to be a gentleman while living a private life in secrecy.

Men who publically strove to be honorable, intelligent, and moral while secretly gratifying urges for crime, violence, inebriation, malice, and unconventional sexuality created a character who was a "brilliant but eccentric villain with gentlemanly pretensions" (Allingham). For the gentleman villain, crime and sin were the logical antidote to the highly ethical Victorian society because they were the splashes of color in a black and white moral code. Gentlemen sought an escape from the suffocating social standards and turned to living double lives that allowed them to indulge in villainous and criminal behaviors. Middle- and upper-class men presented themselves as gentlemen publicly while simultaneously leading a debauched or criminal life privately, which allowed them to protect their genial respectability and status while satisfying their previously repressed desires.

The gentleman villain possessed two things that lesser criminals would never obtain: reputation and an amiable appearance. According to Clive Emsley, the Victorians "tended to equate the criminal offender with individuals in the lower reaches of the working class who they considered were reluctant to do an honest day's work for an honest day's wage, and who preferred idleness, drink, 'luxury' and an easy life." In this instance the problem associated with crime was a lack of morality. Victorians thought that criminals would rather steal money than work hard to earn it and thieves were thought of as predatory creatures. Emsley explains that "the dangerous classes" were thought to be those who would lurk in the slums and wait for an opportunity to cause

chaos and plunder the unsuspecting. Sharrona Pearl, author of *About Faces: Physiognomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, supports Emsley's claim and explains that hiding or lurking in the shadows "was associated with criminal motives and questionable activities" (32). The stereotype of the Victorian criminal consisted of a person who hid out of sight and only came out to cause disorder and engage in petty crimes, such as theft.

Victorians created their idealized gentleman, those who had a strict sense of morality and honor, simultaneously as they created their stereotypical criminal class--as one was defined, so was the other by contrast. A gentleman appeared wealthy, sociable, pure, kind, well groomed, pleasant, proper, moral, and virtuous. The gentleman belonged in respectable society and was not only an image of respect and success, but a person that the lower classes would idealize and admire because of his moral integrity and responsibility to uphold the gentlemanly code of conduct. Although the majority of men who achieved the "gentleman" status were from the wealthy middle-class, men in the lower classes could embody the gentlemanly qualities by remaining honorable, moral, and hardworking. While in contrast, the criminal was constructed as untrustworthy, outlandish, mean, fiendish, immoral, unkempt, and generally undesirable. As Pearl and Emsley argued above, the Victorian criminal was stereotyped as one who was a dishonest member of the lower class who often lurked in the shadows for an opportune moment to strike.

There are numerous literary and historical figures from the Victorian Age that embody the character of the gentleman villain, the most prominent of whom shall be analyzed critically in this thesis. The primary Victorian novels of interest to my thesis are

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and *Peter and Wendy*. A chapter is dedicated to each novel, all of which discuss the construction of villainy and the mode of escapism that crime presents to each gentleman within each work. The first chapter focuses on the role and presence of the Victorian doctor, which examines the double lives of Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde, Jack the Ripper, Dr. Thomas Neil Cream, and their crimes. I expose how each character or historical figure worked as a gentleman villain who manipulated their superior education and social status to conduct the most heinous of crimes and murders while remaining unsuspected due to their geniality. In the second chapter I argue that sexual deviance, homosexuality and the criminalization of same-sex relationships occurred during the Victorian Era because of the threat unconventional sexuality posed to the rising middle class and their heteronormative, highly moral values. This second chapter examines Oscar Wilde's personal life as well as his character Dorian Gray and the fall from innocence into drug abuse and sexual (homo and hetero) promiscuity. Unconventional sexuality and sexual deviance threatened the Victorian desire to preserve purity and morality; for those reasons homosexuality was dubbed unnatural and perverted, and anyone caught engaging in same-sex relations were often socially exiled and vilified. My final chapter drifts toward a late Victorian/early Edwardian work to examine the pirates and Lost Boys of *Peter Pan and Wendy* and the evolutionary and interchangeable role of hero and villain. I place particular emphasis on the portrayal of villainy and heroism while questioning the clear distinctions constructed to guide the audience on how to view good and evil. I argue that heroes and villains are indistinguishable, except for their physical appearance. The

pirates and Lost Boys all engage in the same violent, mutinous behaviors but the audience is swayed primarily by how they physically appear. The heavy dependence on physical appearance influencing the audience's opinion strengthens my theory of the gentleman villain and his ability to avoid suspicion if he maintains an outward genial reputation and *appears* to be innocent and upright. This chapter will work as a critique against the Victorian pseudosciences of physiognomy and phrenology by exposing that characters are judged on their appearances rather than their actions or merits. I argue that the Lost Boys and the pirates are all gentleman villains but it is because the pirates appear more stereotypically "villainous" that they are bestowed with evilness.

This thesis aims to understand the creation and role of the Victorian gentleman villain, a flawed character that is almost predestined to fail by design. The point of this thesis is to draw out often the contradictory nature of gentleman villains, not to draw definite conclusions on the role and construction of gentleman villains. My goal is explicate the ways in which gentleman villains were created and viewed in the nineteenth century, and how they varied from each other. Variations in each character, much like their duality, allowed the gentleman villain to remain interesting and captivating. By combining both gentlemanly and criminal features, the gentleman villain escapes the typical and uninteresting role of the criminal while also diverging away from the moral and restricted gentile position. Gentlemanly and villainous qualities combined work in harmony to create a figure who is truly unique and dual in his characteristics. Along with the duality of their creation, gentlemen villains rely on duality while leading a double life and their survival depends on balancing their immorality/morality, goodness/evil, and

civilized/barbaric characteristics. However, the equal duality and perfect balance required is often as unachievable as the gentlemanly standards most moral Victorian men were aiming to obtain. Criminals in the nineteenth century, as I discuss in detail later on, were stereotyped heavily in Victorian England and gentlemen villains used the public's misguided interpretation of crime and the physical attributes of criminals in order to get away with murder (literally). If villains did not appear or noticeably act criminal, then the police would have no reason to suspect them of crimes. If men acted like gentile members of the middle class and presented a reputation of high morality, then the public respected and trusted them as such. Gentleman villains took advantage of the public's naivety and publically paraded around as moral members of the middle class in order to manipulate their peers' opinions so they would not be suspected of their various crimes. This study first analyzes several nineteenth-century texts to expose Victorian stereotypes on crime and how the criminal class was constructed by typecasts based solely on physical appearance. I then discuss the murders of Jack the Ripper, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and the importance of a gentleman villain being able to balance his public and private selves and the duality required for a double life. Next, I use *The Picture of Dorian Gray* to expose the suffering that results when gentleman villains do not pursue a double life but blatantly flaunt their crimes, sins, and debauchery. Finally, I use *Peter Pan and Wendy* to prove that labeling characters based solely on their physical appearance alone fails at adequately and correctly identifying villains.

"Beautiful sins, like beautiful things, are the privilege of the rich:"
Dissipation, Hypocrisy, and the Making of the Victorian Criminal

Drug use (from narcotics to tobacco or alcohol) during the nineteenth century offers an excellent example of the double standards applied to the gentleman (middle- and upper-class) and the lower-class criminal. Drugs were, as they still are to some degree today, the topic of some of the most hypocritical debates during the nineteenth century. The use of drugs was not illegal (or even well understood at this time), and so people of all classes were able to experiment with a variety of narcotic remedies for numerous ailments. As this chapter will show, however, even though it was legal for persons from all classes to use drugs, society set hypocritical standards for the use of drugs and one's productivity. Wealthy men and women did not depend on physical labor to earn their incomes, so because their income would not be impaired by addiction or the use of narcotics, the drug use was considered to be recreational and harmless. If a member of the lower class, however, divulged in drug use and became unproductive, then the drug use was considered dangerous, and the drugs (and drug users) themselves were vilified. The drug user's class and portrayal illustrate the strict divide and different levels of expectation that the elite were held to contrasted to those of the lower class. Ladies and gentleman went unnoticed while indulging in various narcotics and addictive behaviors simply because they were wealthy, powerful, and free from financial worry. The poor, however, who are almost always associated with criminals and degenerates, were warned against the temptation of alcohol and other substances that could lead to addiction, a

barren life and other unsavory practices (such as immoral sexual behavior) that could result from intoxication.

Drug use was a privilege that the working classes could not engage with if they hoped to remain productive, respected members of society. How a drug user was depicted factored heavily as to what class they belonged to, but also the drugs themselves were presented with often conflicting descriptions. Opiates were simultaneously presented as a panacea for virtually all ailments while also being portrayed as a hideous and maddening substance. French writer Jean Cocteau wrote that "[i]t is difficult to live without opium after having known it because it is difficult, after knowing opium, to take earth seriously. And unless one is a saint, it is difficult to live without taking earth seriously" (Lee 76). For Cocteau, the use of opium made his existence on the earth more enjoyable. Opium provided Cocteau with a different view on the world that he was unable to attain while sober. Similar to Cocteau's position, Thomas de Quincey writes about the benefits of opium in *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater:*

> Oh! just, subtle, and mighty opium! that to the hearts of poor and rich alike, for the wounds that will never heal, and for 'the pangs that tempt the spirit to rebel,' bringest an assuaging balm; eloquent opium! that with thy potent rhetoric stealest away the purposes of wrath; to the guilty man, for one night gives back the hopes of his youth, and hands washed pure from blood . . . thou hast the keys of Paradise, oh, just, subtle, and mighty opium" (63)!

Quincey suggests that opium is a cure for nearly any physical or mental ailment. More than just a remedy, opium holds "the keys of Paradise," which suggests that the drug possesses a form of salvation for those who use it. Cocteau and Quincey provide an image of the drug user who seeks relief and finds salvation in opium. Even though these two writers extol the virtues of opium, people vehemently disagreed over the costs and benefits of drugs in nineteenth-century England. Victorians and nineteenth-century Americans did not see drugs (narcotics, tobacco, and alcohol) as inherently bad. It was only when alcoholics or drug addicts secluded themselves, distanced themselves from their social expectations, and became unproductive members of society that the general public viewed their drug use as a vice that needed to be expunged. The vilification of drug use specifically targeted the working class who needed to remain productive laborers in order to contribute to society.

Racism, social stratification, and class divisions heavily influenced how the Victorians viewed drug users. By examining several primary texts and Victorian novels such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Dracula*, and *The Sign of the Four*, we can see that the Victorian view on drugs was clearly not a simple question of morality or immorality, but an evaluated judgment based on biased social and cultural standards and stereotypes. Influencing factors such as race, class, and one's contribution to society shaped how the Victorians decided whether drug use was an acceptable or unacceptable practice for an individual. Drugs (morphine, heroin, opium, cocaine, etc.) were not viewed as something inherently damaging or dangerous, unless the drugs tampered with the user's role in society.

Along with the working-class, immigrants were extremely susceptible to stereotyping, prejudices, and fabricated associations with the narcotic epidemic. Understanding the historical events surrounding the use of drugs during the nineteenth century is extremely important to comprehend the attitudes Victorians had towards drugs and drug users. The British fought "opium wars" since the beginning of the nineteenth century, including those of 1839-42 and 1856-58, during which the "British and Indian governments demanded free trade in opium within China" (Foxcroft 65). According to historian Mary Roth, "the Chinese government tried to enforce its prohibition against opium smuggling," and tensions exploded between Britain, India, and China, creating several battles that led to the Opium Wars (90). Roth argues that the "Opium Wars were supposedly fought to repudiate the Chinese assumption of cultural superiority" (91). Although England colonized around the world for centuries and spread the British culture on every continent, the thought of colonial influences spreading back into England was scarcely thought of. However, according to Roth, imperial anxiety grew at an alarming rate. These fears were specifically targeted at the Chinese, who influenced a variety of trends in Britain including fashion, décor, and even luxury outdoor gardens. Also, in the early nineteenth century tea from China was introduced to England and quickly became the most popular beverage of choice in Britain. The Chinese were dominating trade with England and exporting their goods into Britain without importing any Western goods from the English. England was becoming increasingly dependent on Chinese goods and the sudden and dramatic Oriental influence frightened many English citizens who saw the Chinese as an invasive presence and who would soon overtake British culture.

The decline in global British influence and culture soon created anxiety towards all foreignness and non-English "Others" that could be insidious. One need only look to *Dracula* (1897) to observe the British faith in their cultural superiority and their view of themselves as the pinnacle of a civilized hierarchy. Count Dracula is more than just a monster; he is a foreign invader who threatens not only British lives but British civilization as a whole. Dracula purchases land in England and becomes obsessed with mastering the English language and British customs. Although Dracula tries to mask his accent and tries to blend in with British citizens, he still remains an outsider and his foreignness is blatantly obvious throughout the entire novel. The English language "proves too mobile a force to be absorbed by the vampire," and no matter how much Jonathan Harker tries to correct his speech and grammar, Dracula simply cannot master English (Ferguson 243). So Dracula is then not only a vampire, but his entire existence and inability to speak English marks him as a foreign threat that must be exterminated.

The attitudes of the British towards the Chinese and other Eastern people are best explained by literary theoretician Edward Said in *Orientalism.* According to Said, Orientalism creates beliefs and ideas that are created "through with doctrines of European superiority, various kinds of racism, imperialism, and the like, dogmatic views of "the Oriental" as a kind of ideal and unchanging abstraction" (8). Said argues that people are classified under the term "Oriental," such as the Chinese and Arabs, because the Europeans held an eccentric view of the world in which the Easterners were inferior and broadly categorized as less intelligent, morally deficient, and untrustworthy. Said claims that Europeans were narcissistic and during their own periods of colonization and

imperialism would view Eastern groups as "Other" cultures. Although the Chinese fascinated parts of British society and set trends across English fashion and style, they were still considered an inferior race with a culture subordinate to that of Great Britain. Said further explains the European fascination with the Orient and how it acts as a defining contrast for Europe and Western civilization during the nineteenth century:

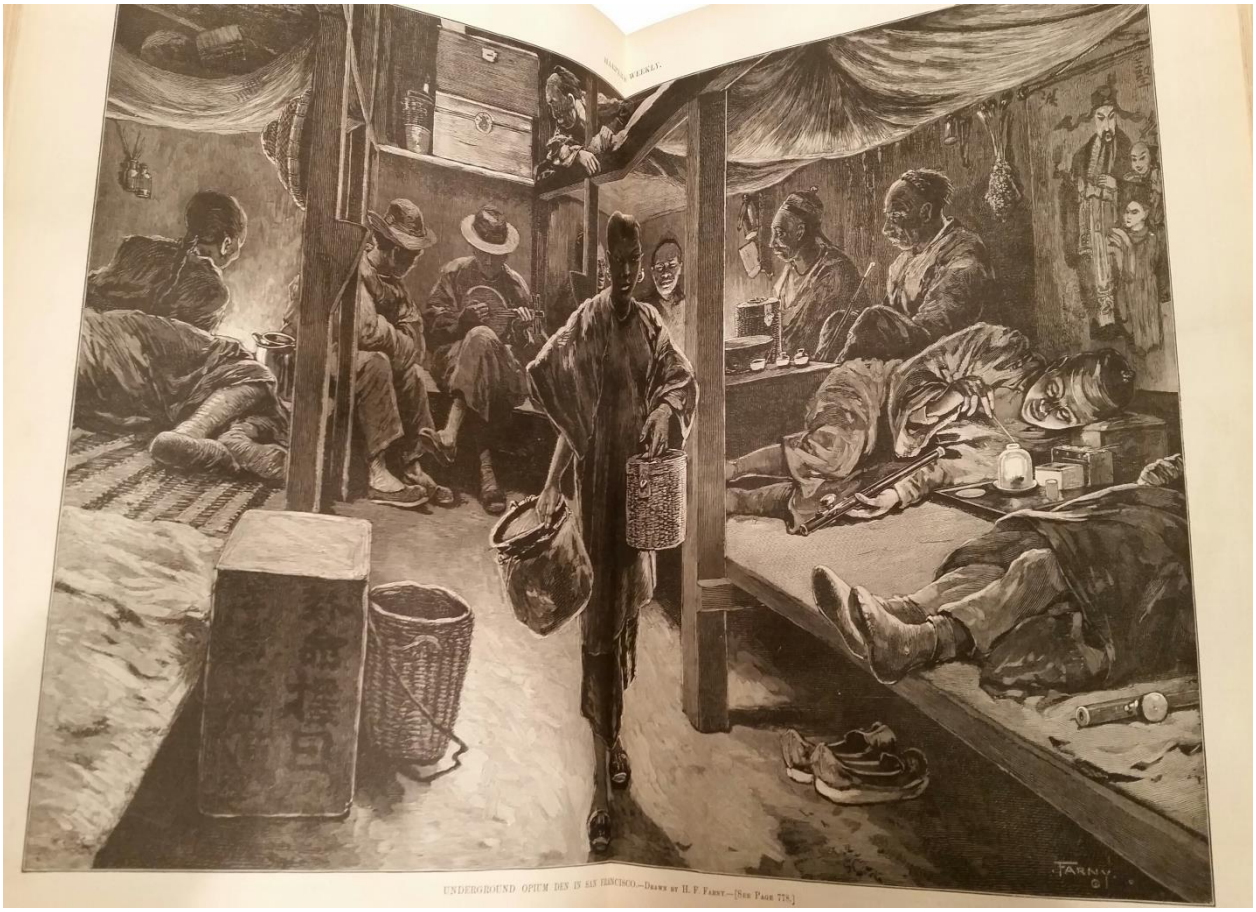
> The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences. … The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, and experience" (1).

The European obsession with the Orient is due to the stark contrast the East had to the West in their cultural values and inherent definitions created by Europeans. European civilizations were moral, restrictive, dull, structured, boring and oppressive while the Orient was exciting colorful, sensual, immoral, free, and alluring, as much as Europeans enjoyed the aspects of escapism that the Eastern cultures provided, any sense of an Eastern invasion into European culture was simply not allowed. Although the Orient was extremely captivating to nineteenth-century Europeans, the West still classified the East as Others. In England, for example, identifying the Chinese as Others allowed Victorians to remove aspects of individualism and humanity from the Orient and viewed the entire

Chinese race as an ideological scapegoat. The European use of "Otherness" cast the Chinese as vague, threatening "Others" and outsiders who simply did not belong.

This blatant racism against non-English citizens is clear in all aspects of Victorian fiction and puts enormous pressure on drug-using English gentry. Mary Roth argues that Victorians viewed drugs and the Orient as intimately connected, as was the threat of invasive colonial influences (91). This was a complex issue for gentleman who wished to escape the repression of their elite society through drug use because they would be inherently connected with the negative view and stereotypes of the insidious Chinese. The British fear of Chinese cultural invasion influenced the Victorians so much that the racist portrayal of Chinese drug suppliers became a common occurrence in Victorian fiction. Roth explains the unfair racism and criminality forced upon the Chinese in England because of opium:

> Images of immigrant Chinese and opium dens in Victorian and Edwardian fiction should have been at least double-edged, since a vocal temperance opposition in England made it clear that the English were contaminating the Chinese, not the other way around. Nevertheless, in a new genre of popular fiction, China invaded England through the East End opium den and proceeded to turn its citizens into addicts. The imperial adventure was inverted, and the Anglo-Chinese opium wars were written in reverse in a corner of London (92).



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However, the opium that went to China from England is hardly ever mentioned. British-produced opium that was illicitly sold to China is quickly associated with the Chinese, and any associations with England are erased. The British-produced opium then becomes foreign and possesses the "demonic" qualities of the invasive Chinese. This hypocritical stance on opium represents not only the racism that the Chinese were facing, but the racist stereotypes that also plagued drug users and addicts as the Chinese relationship with England became less politically stable. Historian William White elaborates on this

Fig. 1. "Underground Opium Den in San Fransisco." Drawn by H.F. Farny, published in *Harper's Weekly*.

phenomenon and argues the way that a culture views drug use and the drug user depends on cultural, social, and economic agendas of a group of people applied to people of different ages, races, genders, social classes and even sexual orientations. All of these factors can bias how society views a drug user and even the drug itself. Specifically, White observes that "eating and injecting opiates – the pattern most prevalent among affluent whites – was referred to as a disease, while the smoking of opium – a pattern associated with the Chinese – was consistently labeled a vice" (47). Racism heavily influenced the negative public perception of drug users—either a victim of the drug, as in the case of white opium-users, or immoral and even criminal, in the case of non-white users and vendors.

The racism against the Chinese and the fabricated association between the Orient and opium were scapegoats used by the Victorians in order to protect medical professionals, who, through overprescribing narcotics, created various new and worsening forms of addiction. One important piece of legislature points to the growing concerns that surrounded doctors and drugs during the Victorian era. According to Debbie Harrison, author of "Doctors, Drugs, and Addiction: Professional Integrity in Peril at the *Fin de Siècle*," the 1868 Poison and Pharmacy Act "regulated sales of generic poisons and ignored proprietary preparations" leading to "the move towards a monopoly of distribution conferred a formidable power on the medical profession, which treated but also created new forms of addiction" (55). Harrison explains that this ultimately shifted the fear of drugs away from the Chinese towards "fear of the potential addiction and degeneration increasingly associated with the figure of the doctor" (61). Harrison writes

that iatrogenic addiction is “an addiction triggered by a doctor’s prescriptions,” which had become a serious issue for the medical profession as the role and respect of doctors had changed drastically due to self-experimentation with drugs (53). However, as members of the elite and highly educated sphere, doctors were able to use their status and reputation to recover from the public’s brief mistrust. The Chinese were much easier to censure the issues of addiction on because they were foreigners and not hard-working English doctors. The racism previously created by the “opium wars” combined with horrific images of opium dens that circulated London newspapers were far more influential in forming the public opinion of rampant drug use than the reported medical cases of iatrogenic addiction.

In order to see the full hypocrisy that surrounded the issue of narcotics and whether or not the Chinese were truly to blame for the rise in addiction, one only needs to look at Freud’s relationship with cocaine. According to Harrison, Freud self-experimented with cocaine quite regularly and would often serve some of it to his wife because he enjoyed the strong sexual appetite it procured for her (54). Freud’s personal use of cocaine can be seen as both recreational use and self-experimentation for a greater understanding of the drug. Harrison examines Freud’s essay “Uber Coca,” in which Freud declares that cocaine was “a non-addictive cure for morphine addiction and was, besides, a universal panacea for a very wide range of medical conditions, including depression and psychosis. . . . Cocaine induced a sense of euphoria and endowed its users with mental dexterity, extraordinary physical strength and enhanced sexual appetite” (55). Freud continues his praise for cocaine and argues that it can replace food, allow a

coward to find their bravery, make the silent eloquent, and cure alcoholics and addicts to opium. He even recommended cocaine to his physician friend, Fleischl-Marxow, who was addicted to morphine. Freud was under the impression that cocaine would rid Fleischl-Marxow of his addiction to morphine. However, instead of curing the addiction, Fleischl-Marxow only developed a secondary addiction to cocaine and began using it along with morphine, which resulted in an overdose and his death. Freud was directly responsible for an iatrogenic addiction and at his recommendation Fleischl-Marxow began his fatal experimentation with cocaine. Freud's history with cocaine shows that even one of the most reputable men in medicine could not see the dangers of narcotic drugs, and yet Freud is never portrayed as a typical drug addict or attached to any criminal behavior. Freud serves as an excellent example of how the members of the medical community (and likewise other middle- or upper-class men) were shielded from public scrutiny simply because of their social rank.

Along with foreignness, drugs were also associated with another unconventional and sinister practice: homosexuality. In *Inventing the Addict,* Susan Zieger argues that there is a strong connection between homophobia and the social intolerance of drug use, addiction, and alcoholism. According to Zieger, homosexuality and addiction were classified by the general public as "varieties of compulsive, unnatural behavior (157). She further argues that gay history is "entangled with the history of addiction: they run parallel to it, but they also significantly cross it" (157). The Victorians viewed addiction and various forms of non-heteronormative sexualities as unnatural vices, those who either engaged in homosexual relationships or used drugs were seen as debauched individuals

who were intentionally straying from the social norm. The Victorians found a way to combat what they saw as cultural threats and sought to not only ban homosexual and addicted activities publically, but to pass legislature that made the "diseased" behavior illegal in private or home settings as well. Unlike other social issues that could be seen as threatening to the British culture, homosexuality and intoxicants were targeted as those that possessed the most potentially destructive influences on what was considered "proper" or moral society. The resentment and intolerance towards drug users and homosexuals were due to the fact that Victorians linked "drug addiction with 'unnatural sexual vice' and addicts' cross-recruitment of 'perverts" and that "psychoanalysis often articulated homosexuality as the secret lurking behind addiction" (Zieger 158). Homosexual relationships and drug use were activities seen as unnatural vices chosen by those who led debauched lifestyles and strived to break societal conventions. Victorians believed that homosexuality and addiction were directly linked because both were considered a sign of moral weakness in the early nineteenth century and, as Clive Emsley argues, to Victorians the problem with crime was "a moral one" and immorality was an issue specifically for the lower class.

The legislative history combined with the social context in the nineteenth century created atmospheres of conflicting, controversial, and contrasting views of drug addiction and drug use that is accurately portrayed in the literature in the Victorian Era. Nineteenth-century views on drug addiction can be seen primarily in Victorian fiction such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of the Four* (1890) and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890). In these three examples of Victorian

literature, drugs are portrayed in radically different ways, and the rhetoric through which their users are depicted greatly affects how the audience perceives drug addiction within the classes. A person's motive for drug use was also a deciding factor in Victorian rhetoric and determined whether or not the drug use was considered an immoral action or socially acceptable recreation.

Dr. Jack Seward uses narcotics as a cure-all solution and crutch for the distresses of numerous characters in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Seward prescribes and uses drugs himself for numerous reasons throughout the novel: bravery, sleeplessness, anxiety, sedative purposes, and to help calm those who engaged with Dracula. For instance, Dr. Seward first prescribes his patient Renfield "a strong opiate tonight, enough to make even him sleep, and took away his pocket-book to look at it" (87). Dr. Seward only gives Renfield the opiate to render him unconscious so he can view his private pocket-book and try to decode Renfield's mind. Drugging Renfield is not part of any therapy to make the patient better, Dr. Seward only wants to understand Renfield's hierarchy of collecting lives for his "master" in order to publish a study and make himself well renowned in the medical field of psychology. Renfield is extremely vulnerable as a patient and has no control or say whether or not he wants to be drugged or not. Seward abuses his elite status and medical profession in order to sedate Renfield and exploit his thoughts for personal gain. Seward is corrupt and acts as a gentleman villain because he is able to keep up his amiable appearance and reputation as a doctor while simultaneously preying on his defenseless patient, Renfield, and further abuses his position as a doctor to feed his morphine addiction.

There are other instances of Seward overprescribing drugs, which reflects the fear of doctor-created addictions in the nineteenth century. Mina takes a small amount of opium to help her sleep and Lucy requires opium periodically throughout the novel to sleep after being attacked by Dracula. However, this is problematic because all of the women in the novel either turn to laudanum or opium as a crutch to help them sleep while under stress. Drugs seem to be the immediate antidote for almost every illness, affliction, or emotional hardship in *Dracula*, and Seward's willingness to prescribe them to his friends could suggest that he relies too heavily on opium and lacks proper medical consultation. Seward has no real need to cure any patients when he can simply sedate them with drugs. However, his predisposition to drugs could also be due to the fact that he is a drug user himself. The second prominent instance where drugs are used and abused in *Dracula* is when Dr. Seward himself is longing for chloral hydrate. He declares: "If I don't sleep at once, chloral, the modern Morpheus – C2HCl3O.H2O! I should be careful not to let it grow into a habit. No I shall take none tonight! I have thought of Lucy, and I shall not dishonor her by mixing the two. If need be, tonight will be sleepless" (125). Where Dr. Seward willingly provides opium to his friends and patients, he reserves the chloral for himself. Again, Seward relies on drugs to provide much-needed sleep but resists because he does not want to disgrace the thought of Lucy with drugs. If he is uncomfortable with thinking of Lucy while intoxicated on the chloral then he must acknowledge that his self-prescription is not the ideal route for his sleeplessness. He admits that he must not let his reliance on chloral to grow into a habit, but it is already quite clear that he relies on the drug already. Seward even goes so far to

say that he cannot sleep without the drug, but refuses to dishonor the thought of Lucy with chloral, so he concedes that he will go sleepless. *Dracula* uses the stereotypical character of the drug-related doctor to show the full extent of power and abuse of position of medical men. Doctors had the ability to prescribe all manner of drugs for a variety of reasons and also had the resources to self-experiment with them, like Freud had done, and keep their personal drug supplies full at all times. Although a general mistrust of doctors was ruminating throughout Victorian society, doctors were still part of the elite, educated sphere and were more associated with saving lives with taking them. Although the over prescription of narcotics and the addictions that soon followed because of a doctor's carelessness definitely tarnished the medical profession, doctors were still protected from suspicion of crimes because of their elite status.

In *The Sign of the Four* (1890) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes' drug use is made blatantly clear, as is Watson's constant disapproval of it. Watson acts as a direct foil to Seward and recognizes the dangers of addiction and that Holmes does not need the drugs he uses. Seward, however, would have gladly prescribed Holmes the drugs he sought for escape and most likely would have used alongside him. Beginning earlier in *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), Watson first remarks that upon observing Holmes he notices "such a dreamy, vacant expression in his eyes, that I might have suspected him of being addicted to the use of some narcotic, had not the temperance and cleanliness of his whole life forbidden such a notion" (19). Here, Watson eliminates the possibility that Holmes could be a narcotic addict because he possesses temperance and cleanliness, which forbids him from a life of inebriation. This statement is problematic for several

reasons. First, Watson stereotypes drug users as people who do not possess temperance (self-restraint) or cleanliness and that Holmes merely doesn't fit the Victorian typecast of a drug user. However, Holmes is most certainty an avid narcotic user. *The Sign of the Four* opens with Watson describing Holmes' routine of injecting himself with his various intravenous narcotics:

> Sherlock Holmes took his bottle from the corner of the mantelpiece and his hypodermic syringe from its neat morocco case. With his long, white, nervous fingers he adjusted the delicate needle, and rolled back his left shirt-cuff. For some little time his eyes rested thoughtfully upon the sinewy forearm and wrist all dotted and scarred with innumerable puncture-marks. Finally, he thrust the sharp point home, pressed down the tiny piston, and sank back into the velvet-lined arm-chair with a long sigh of satisfaction. Three times a day for many months I had witnessed his performance, but custom had not reconciled my mind to it. On the contrary, from day to day I had become more irritable at the sight, and my conscience swelled nightly within me at the thought that I lacked the courage to protest (2).

Although Sherlock's drug use is clearly excessive and bothers Watson deeply, Holmes is not portrayed as a drug addict or someone whom the drug is mastering. Sherlock Holmes avoids being portrayed as a stereotypical or Orientalized drug user because of his high level of intelligence and what presumably is his English will to not be conquered by something as minuscule as a drug. Watson soon reveals that Holmes' drugs of choice are

either morphine or cocaine. However, this is purely recreational and in no way does Holmes appear to be actually addicted to either opiate. Holmes only uses these drugs when he does not have a case to engage his mind. In other words, Holmes turns to drugs to stimulate his mind and to save him from boredom. Holmes is portrayed in such a way, however, that his drug use is acceptable because he is able to control his addiction and use it purely for leisure while his mind is not engaged on more pressing matters or interesting cases.

Contrary to Holmes, the missing persons he looks for are usually completely ruled by their addictions and reside in opium dens, unable to break free from their addiction. Holmes is not criminalized for using drugs but readers automatically place the opium den-dwelling individuals into a separate classification of criminal or at the least delinquent, even though both are consuming the same opiate drugs. The reason that Holmes is not portrayed as a typical drug addict is due to the fact that Holmes does not allow the drugs to control his life or take over his decision-making skills. However, those who dwell constantly in opium dens are controlled by the drugs and bend to the will of their addiction. It is easy to see, according to nineteenth-century fiction, why Victorians believed that addiction was simply "a disease of will," because the heroes of fiction are strong men who stay completely in control of their addiction, even though they use more narcotics than the lower-class men they pursue. Racism also comes into play, as Roth points out in "Victorian High Detection, Drugs, and Empire," because many of the "English opium-smokers were even Orientalized by narcotic use" (87). For instance, Roth references an opium-addicted patient that Dr. Watson had been working with. The

patient had “a yellow pasty face, drooping lids and pin-point pupils.” Roth also states that this racism and Asian stereotyping seen in “detective fiction, then, begins high on drugs and fully informed by imperial anxiety,” as was discussed earlier due to tensions and political instability between China and Britain (88).

Opium, however, is portrayed a bit more controversially in Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* than in *Dracula* or *The Sign of the Four.* Dorian uses opium specifically for aesthetic and sensual purposes, which creates a dependency on opium for recreational and experimental purposes. Even though Dorian is not an addict, he is addicted to aesthetic experiences and searches feverously for new ways to fend off his boredom. Opium is used regularly throughout *The Picture of Dorian Gray* but Dorian is the character who reinforces the Oriental stereotype that is associated with opium in England. As mentioned earlier, the opium in Britain was not in fact from the Chinese. The Chinese were actually acquiring their opium from the English, as it was British-grown and dispensed. However, the racist stereotyping that the British public imposed on the Chinese formed a concrete bond between the Orient and opium. This stereotyping and Oriental association is seen in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* while Dorian contemplates using opium that he keeps in a small chest:

> It was a small Chinese box of black and gold-dust lacquer, elaborately wrought, the sides patterned with curved waves, and the silken cords hung with round crystals and tasseled in plaited metal threads. He opened it. Inside was a green paste, waxy in luster, the odor curiously heavy and

> persistent. He hesitated for some moments, with a strangely immobile smile upon his face (174).

The "green paste, waxy in luster" is undoubtedly opium. The Chinese decorations on the box create the impression that the opium itself is also from China. What is more interesting, however, is the immediate pleasure that Dorian receives upon just feeling, smelling, and looking at the opium and not actually using it. Dorian is an aesthetic who strives to derive pleasure from all of his senses, not just experiencing the opium intravenously, but the sight of the opium in its oriental box brings Dorian almost as much pleasure as the actual act of using it. Along with pleasure for recreational use, opium dens were "where one could buy oblivion, dens of horror where the memory of old sins could be destroyed by the madness of sins that were new" (Wilde 176). In the span of less than two pages opium is portrayed as a recreational drug of pleasure and then immediately described as something maddening, horrific, and obliterating. These conflicting views on opium, again, are dependent on the rhetoric in which they are portrayed and change depending on those who use the drug and the location that they are in. Although in both quoted instances above the drug of choice does not change, it would seem that the location in which opium is taken depends greatly on how the opium and act of using the drug is perceived. For instance, in Dorian's estate the opium is described as ornate and beautiful, instantly bringing pleasure to Dorian without even having to use it. In contrast, the opium den is seen as something terrifying where the drug does not produce any pleasure, but rather destroys a man's past and eliminates his old memories with new sins.

The opium den is further described in more detail when Dorian searches one out. In this scene it is immediately clear that Dorian does not belong and the stark differences between the rich and poor is made extremely clear. Dorian becomes fearful and his experiences in the slums fulfill the description above as the opium den of horror:

> As Dorian hurried up its three rickety steps, the heavy odor opium met him. He heaved a deep breath, and his nostrils quivered with pleasure. When he entered, a young man with smooth yellow hair, who was bending over a lamp lighting a long thin pip, looked up at him and nodded in a hesitating manner. . . . . Dorian winced and looked around at the grotesque things that lay in such fantastic postures on the ragged mattresses. The twisted limbs, the gaping mouths, the staring lusterless eyes, fascinated him. He knew in what strange heavens they were suffering, and what dull hells were teaching them the secret of new joy (179).

In contrast to Dorian, who enjoys the pleasure of opium, the users in the den are dehumanized and presented as "grotesque things" that are under the influence of opium. Yet again, it is not the drug itself that is scaring Dorian or creating the atmosphere of the "den of horror." This is not the first time that Dorian has observed other people using opium while he himself was sober. Lord Henry, a close friend and mentor of Dorian's, is continually smoking opium-laced cigarettes throughout the book and yet he is not portrayed in such ways as the opium den dwellers are. There is a remarkable difference between the portrayal of the upper-class opium user and the lower-class opium smoker. Lord Henry smokes fine opium cigarettes while the lower class smoke out of a thin pipe

like the Chinese and lay with their limbs twisted, eyes staring, and mouths open. The inconsistent rhetoric of opium throughout this novel suggests that opium itself is not necessarily bad or immoral. Dorian and Lord Henry keep their composure while using opium but the lower class are Orientalized and cast in a criminal, dehumanized light that morphs them from regular human beings into dangerous, twisted lumps of flesh.

No matter what the reason for choosing opium, cocaine, alcohol, or other drugs throughout the nineteenth century, the rhetoric of drug use would change greatly depending on the reasons for an individual using it, where they were using the drug, and the position of the drug user in society. The conflict of addiction seen as a medical condition or evidence of immoral weakness was dependent on how the drug use affected one's ability to remain socially active and maintain a good reputation. If a drug user was able to remain productive while intoxicated on their drug of choice, then the drug use was not seen as a vice. However, once the drug interfered with their day to day lives or negatively impacted their station in society, the drug was portrayed as a dangerous impairment and the addict was then seen a victim of either society or having been seduced by the opium-providing, culturally-invasive Chinese. The various forms of drug rhetoric seen in nineteenth-century British fiction, such as *Dracula, The Sign of the Four* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* are evidence that the Victorians were divided on how to classify addiction and how to properly handle and evaluate the pandemic of drug use in England.

The portrayal of addicts and drug users mirrors the Victorian double standard for how they viewed the elite compared to the lower class. The rich were rarely criminalized

where the poor were constantly scrutinized and held with varying degrees of contempt. As the following chapters in my thesis show, this lack of responsibility, guilt, and suspicion toward the middle and upper classes created a vacuum of accountability and the perfect environment for the gentleman villain to emerge. Dr. Henry Jekyll realizes the importance of his elite status and the omnipresent innocence his reputation and wealth had secured for him:

> I was the first that could plod in the public eye with a load of genial respectability, and in a moment, like a schoolboy, strip off these lendings and spring headlong into the sea of liberty. But for me, in my impenetrable mantle, the safety was complete. Think of it—I did not even exist! Let me but escape into my laboratory door … and swallow the draught that I had always standing ready; and whatever he had done, Edward Hyde would pass away like the stain of breath upon a mirror; and there in his stead, quietly at home, trimming the midnight lamp in his study, a man who could afford to laugh at suspicion, would be Henry Jekyll (Stevenson 66-7).

Jekyll, like most gentleman villains, wants to fulfill his unconventional desires and unleash his violent subconscious without damaging his reputation or being held responsible for any of his actions. His solution is Edward Hyde, a man who physically looks and acts like a criminal and because of those two factors he can never be lead back to the respectable, upper-class Jekyll.

The Strange Case of Jack the Ripper and Edward Hyde:
Human Duality and the Victorian Gentleman Villain

The gentleman villain was a byproduct of the stringent moral climate of nineteenth century Britain and existed both in the world of literature and in Victorian society. Two men who embody all of the characteristics of the gentleman villain are Dr. Jekyll and Jack the Ripper, one the most infamous characters in British literature and the other who is arguably the most infamous murderer in modern history. These two gentlemen share more in common than one may initially think. Dr. Jekyll is a self-experimenting doctor who unleashes his violent, sexually-charged subconscious free on London, and Jack the Ripper was a vicious murderer who brutalized and mutilated his victims and "was believed by many to be a doctor" (McLaren 86). If this theory of Jack the Ripper is accepted, then he and Dr. Jekyll were respectable men of medicine and members of the upper middle class by day and murderous criminals by night. In this chapter, I use nineteenth-century fiction to read Victorian society and understand the cultural creation of the historical gentleman villain (Jack the Ripper, Dr. Thomas Neil Cream, etc.). Looking at culture and literature in conversation as they mythologize nineteenth-century murderers explicates the reasons why Jack the Ripper was fictionalized (romanticized) during and after the Whitechapel murders. Nineteenth-century readers were introduced to the gentleman villain of Henry Jekyll/Edward Hyde, a literary representation which helped influence how Victorians fictionalized the real life gentleman villain, Jack the Ripper. Analyzing historical and literary killers expose the

connection and reflection between art and life, and how the Victorian public was able to transcend a serial killer and mythologize him to a prominent cultural character rather than a man who preyed on vulnerable women. I argue that Jack the Ripper, like Henry Jekyll, would be forced to live a double life: a respectable doctor in the eyes of the public and a terrifying, gruesome murderer that preyed on helpless women by night. Jack the Ripper and Dr. Jekyll are both men of science with surgical training, holding the skills necessary either to save lives or brutally end them. Dr. Jekyll willingly self-experiments and transforms into his deadly counterpart, Edward Hyde. Like Jack the Ripper, Jekyll keeps his murderous self in the shadows while living a double life and appearing to be a respectable middle-class citizen. The duality of human nature, as seen by the actions and double lives of Dr. Jekyll and Jack the Ripper, reinforce the Victorian construction of the gentleman villain; the success (and survival) of Jack the Ripper and Dr. Jekyll is determined by their ability to continue to live their double lives and balance their duality.

Robert Louis Stevenson wrote *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* in 1886 and it "creatively intervenes in late-Victorian debates about dual personality and its alleged cause, bilateral brain hemisphere imbalance" (Stiles 881). It is extremely important to remember that while discussing Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde, one is really discussing Jekyll-Hyde as a single character and not two separate entities. Jekyll is equally parts Hyde as Hyde is equally parts Jekyll; they are the same person, simply governed by different morals and codes of life. Jekyll references this coexistence as the "primitive duality of man" and that man's halves are separated by his morals, or the civilized and uncivilized selves (62). Jekyll explains his discovery of self in detail in his

chapter, “Henry Jekyll’s Full Statement of the Case” at the end of the novella: “Man is not truly one, but truly two. . . I saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly said to be either, it was only because I was radically both” (62). Here, Jekyll admits not only that he and Hyde are the same man but that he is not more Jekyll than Hyde, just as Hyde is not more Hyde than Jekyll. Also, “according to Jekyll’s narration, both he and Hyde existed before the discovery of the salt that enabled them to lead separate lives” (Stiles 85). This split personality is not the result of his self-experimentation or any form of injury. Jekyll and Hyde have always existed in the same person, only Jekyll found the way to separate his selves so they did not have to coexist any longer. Following the structure of the gentleman villain, one could say that Dr. Jekyll is nearly perfect. He fully embodies good and evil, social elite and societal outcast, hero and villain, innocent and guilty, upstanding citizen and criminal.

Although Jekyll and Hyde are the same man, they are obviously very distinguishable from each other. Even on the surface one can immediately distinguish between the physical build of Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde. Dr. Jekyll’s physical description is as follows: “A large, well-made, smooth-faced man of fifty, with something of a stylish cast perhaps, but every mark of capacity and kindness” (21). The novella makes it well known that Jekyll was a respected, cherished man in London and his colleagues, friends, and peers would long to be invited to the doctor’s house for dinner or a visit. Jekyll looks physically healthy and has an appearance of kindness, sincerity, and a warm genuine affection towards others. The physical description of Edward Hyde, however, is quite different. In the beginning of the novella, Hyde is seen

trampling over a little girl, who he does not seem the least bit concerned about. Hyde coldly offers money to the family of the little girl he has injured and his inhuman lack of pity or sympathy for the girl ignites a crowd into anger and hatred towards him. Mr. Enfield, a friend of Henry Jekyll who saw the incident, describes Hyde:

> It wasn't like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut. . . . He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance, something displeasing, something down-right 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 (11).

Hyde is so morally deformed, so connected with the uncivilized nature of man that it physically mutilates his existence. Hyde is even described as being "ape-like," and there are significant physical traits that link Hyde to animals, specifically other non-human primates. Hyde is described as being dark-skinned and extremely hairy, while Jekyll is described as being white and clean-shaven. There is a clear distinction, even at the mere physical level between Jekyll and Hyde, that one represents the good/moral/civilized (Jekyll) and the other (Hyde) represents the barbaric/animalistic/evil.

Hyde's connection to the uncivilized goes far beyond his physical appearance and further reflects the duality and almost split personality of Jekyll-Hyde. In *Medicine, Mind and the Double Brain: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Thought*, Anne Harrington states that Jekyll's "personality is in the civilized, rational left hemisphere, while Hyde would give vent to his criminal instincts from somewhere in the recesses of the uneducated,

evolutionarily backward right hemisphere" (Stiles 882). Following the dual brain theory, it would be fair to deduce that Jekyll inhabited the left side of the brain and Hyde controlled the right side. Jekyll is controlled by morals, logic, and reason, where Hyde is controlled by impulses, powerful emotions, and natural instincts. According to "Robert Louis Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde* and the Double Brain," author Anne Stiles explains that "initially, the left-brain Jekyll over masters his animalistic right brain urges" and that is the reason why, up until his experiments, Jekyll is the primary self and Hyde is never exposed. However, Jekyll is unable to keep Hyde subdued for long and ultimately "relies too heavily on his left hemisphere, and then shifts the balance too sharply toward the right. In each instance, he inadvertently creates the brain asymmetry that leads to his mental illness and criminality" (Stiles 887). This right-brain mental illness and criminality is personified and embodied by Jekyll's other self, Edward Hyde.

It is important to remember that although Hyde and Jekyll embody different sides of the brain, they still share the same brain because they are ultimately the same person. Irving Saposnik explains this in his essay "The Anatomy of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*," where he states that modern audiences have the flaw of seeing "Jekyll or Hyde where one should see Jekyll-Hyde" (715). Saposnik admits that they are separate personalities, but that their relationship is impossible to sever. Jekyll and Hyde are inseperable not only because they are physically connected, as seen when Hyde commits suicide and in doing so also kills Jekyll, but because they are binary opposites that work together and balance each other to form Jekyll-Hyde—one is not complete without the other. Saposnik creates a metaphor which is a paradox that examines the interior and exterior of a Victorian

home. The interior is private, extravagant, civilized, and under constant scrutiny from guests with high societal expectations. The exterior, by contrast, is public, unkempt, open to all manners of peoples, and the common setting for crime and debauchery. However different the interior and exterior may be, the attracting opposition is what distinguishes one from the other and defines what is interior and exterior. Jekyll's house has a hidden, decayed entrance at the rear of the house (exterior) that is reserved especially for Hyde, while the front of the house (interior) provides a look that insinuates great wealth and comfort. Similarly, the "result is a social bond no less indivisible than the moral bond which Jekyll attempts unsuccessfully to sever. . . . the two faces of Jekyll contained in one inseparable dwelling" (Saposnik 726). Jekyll and Hyde, as this paradox reveals, must not be thought of as two completely separate men, but two codependent personalities of the same man that, ideally, would form a balance to stabilize the man and create a moral harmony.

However, given the ending of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, it is quite clear that Jekyll and Hyde's coexistence became unbalanced rather quickly. The two halves of Jekyll's personality were not allowed to exist at the same time, which ultimately created a lethal imbalance. Instead of working together as binary opposites that contrast and complement each other, Jekyll and Hyde began competing once Hyde and the emotional right-brain gained power. Jekyll writes that the evil Hyde was "less robust and less developed than the good which I had just deposed. Again, in the course of my life, which had been, after all, nine tenths a life of effort, virtue and control, it had been much less exercised and much less exhausted" (64). This passage brings to light the

connection between physical dominance and the dominant personality. Jekyll, who is older, wiser, and more rational, is described physically as an older man who is well built and looks like a groomed gentleman. Hyde, in contrast, is described as a hunching animal with all of the stereotypical traits of a lower-class criminal. Jekyll deduces that Hyde is his undeveloped left-brain and rationalizes that this is the reason why "Edward Hyde was so much smaller, slighter and younger than Henry Jekyll" (65). The experiment allows Jekyll to realize that Hyde has been present long before his attempt to split their personalities into two separate beings. Jekyll's dominant right-brain was not seriously contested by Hyde until Jekyll began forcing his selves to separate. Irving Saposnik argues that the attempt to separate his binary opposite personalities is ultimately Jekyll's downfall.

> [Jekyll] remains convinced that the incompatible parts of his being can be separated. . . . He is so enmeshed in his self-woven net of duplicity that he cannot identify the two entities whose separation he hopes to achieve. By seeing Hyde as another being rather than as part of himself, he is forced to deny the most significant result of his experiment and indeed of his entire story, the inescapable conclusion that man must dwell in uncomfortable but necessary harmony with his multiple selves (724).

Jekyll's experiment is only successful in the sense that it allowed him to fully recognize the duality of his being and acknowledge the existence of his other personality. Jekyll fails, however, because his dominant left-brain attempts to extinguish the existence of his underdeveloped right-brain. Jekyll and Hyde lived in perfect coexistence before the

experiment, both unaware of the other's existence. However, once Jekyll took the salt to transform him completely into either Hyde or Jekyll, instead of Jekyll-Hyde as he had been, the conscious and subconscious of his mind turned on each other. The inevitable outcome, to which the only remedy is the death of both Jekyll and Hyde, is because the left-brain and right-brain selves depend on each other for existence and without one there cannot be the other. Jekyll's failure, then, is not the result of Hyde's apparent evilness, but the consequence of his experiment and wish to separate his dependent identities.

Jekyll and Hyde are not the only characters in Victorian Literature where the distinct separation of the right- and left-brain is noticeable. Take for instance Captain James Hook. He too is a gentleman villain like Jekyll-Hyde. While considering the duality of a gentleman villain it is important to note that while Jekyll is physically distinguishable from Hyde, Captain Hook embodies both villain and gentleman at the same time. He is dressed like royalty with long, curly hair and a very handsome demeanor. He is polite, well spoken, and always concerned with good form. Hook could almost visually pass for a gentleman, like Jekyll, except for his distinguishing villainous factor: the hook that is on his right hand, which is the "grimmest part of him" (Barrie 81). When applying the dual brain theory to Hook, it is interesting to note that his left-brain, the logical/masculine/reasonable part of his brain, controls his right hand, which has been cut off and replaced by something artificial. Hook acts through his left hand, which is controlled by his right-brain, the animalistic/feminine/emotional/criminal area of his brain. The hand that is controlled by the logic-orientated and sophisticated left-brain is mutilated and removed, leaving Hook with a hand that is impulsively controlled by the

animalistic, uncivilized right brain. His right-brain, then, is in more control of his body, and ergo more of his actions, than his left-brain because the hand that the left-brain would control no longer exists. It is fair to say then that although Hook may physically look like both a gentleman and a villain, he is more right-brain dominated, though his left-brain still struggles for dominance.

Hook is ultimately defeated by Peter Pan and falls to the jaws of the crocodile, much like Jekyll and Hyde are each other's undoing. The gentleman villain in Victorian Literature, it would seem, is not a character who is designed to survive. The flaw in the gentleman villain's character is imbalance between the left and right spheres of the brain. Hook is constantly being torn between his criminal right-brain instructing him to kill Peter at his first opportunity and his tormenting left-brain that continuously harasses him about good form and proper conduct in battle. The battle for brain dominance leaves Hook stumped and more frustrated than anything, halting his progress and ultimately causing his death. Jekyll and Hyde similarly live a successful existence only until the dual parts of the brain are separated and one claims dominance over the other. Although Hyde is the weaker half at first, Jekyll grows ill and his health deteriorates as Hyde becomes stronger. However, Jekyll did not anticipate his dual brain dueling while he was sketching his experiment. He states his purpose for separating his two selves in the chapter "Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case:"

> If each, I told myself, could be housed in separate identities, life would be relieved of all that was unbearable; the unjust might go his way, delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright twin; and the just

> could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path, doing the good things in which he found his pleasure, and no longer exposed to the disgrace and penitence by the hands of this extraneous evil (62).

As their fates prove, completely separating the left and right brains is an impossible endeavor both for Jekyll-Hyde and Captain Hook. Instead of working together to form a single, coexisting self, the left-brain and right-brain fight each other until the gentleman villain's death.

There is, however, one Victorian gentleman villain that was able to balance his dual personalities and remain unbiased toward his left or right side of the brain. Although not grounded in literature, this villain is a historical figure who is infamous for his gruesome, unsolved murders in Whitechapel, England: Jack the Ripper. As Jekyll stated above, the balance that he hoped to achieve with his experiment would allow his repressed half to seek pleasures, thrills, and even a life of criminality without burdening his moral other half. Likewise, the upright half could continue his life without the trouble of feeling guilt or remorse over what the debauched other self had done. In attempting to separate, rather than embrace his dual selves, Jekyll ultimately signed his fate. He did not recognize that he and Hyde needed to work together, as equal partners in their shared body, and the separation he tried to established created a rift in himself that drove Hyde to both suicide and murder. Jack the Ripper is the ideal gentleman villain because he found a way to balance his dual brains and give equal power to the right and left spheres of his brain. By using Hook and Jekyll-Hyde as an example, it is clear to see that when the two spheres of the brain are conflicting with each other or that the power dynamic is

biased to one side or the other, the character dies. In the case of Jack the Ripper, if he did not carefully balance his two selves, then he ultimately would have been caught and eventually executed for the murders he committed.

I argue that Jack the Ripper must have had dual personalities, or at least two very distinct selves inhibiting the same body. Much like Jekyll-Hyde before the experiments, Ripper's selves work in perfect unity. One is a gentleman by day and the other is a gruesome killer and the dissector of vulnerable women by night. Although they are the same man, it is clear, like Jekyll and Hyde, that they are two distinct personalities. Jack the Ripper was a man who lived two separate lives and needed two separate identities to satisfy all of his needs and desires. I argue that he was a gentleman due to the sophistication of his murders. He undoubtedly had extensive anatomical and surgical knowledge, which is indicated by the preciseness of his cuts, the removal of particular organs without disturbing others in the body cavity, and the speed, yet accuracy, in which he conducted his work at night with little or no light. It would be extremely difficult for a man who did not hold either a background in medicine or butchery to conduct these crimes with the swiftness and exactness that Jack the Ripper had.

I argue that Jack the Ripper must have been a doctor or surgical figure, and according to Angus McLaren "murder and medicine were easily linked" in the Whitechapel killings (86). McLaren suggests that Jack the Ripper helped solidify the public's fear of "the doctor as killer" because the murders were performed by a culprit with experience using knives and sufficient anatomical knowledge, particularly of the female body (101). However, not all theorists agreed that Jack the Ripper had a medical

background. According to Robert Kaplan, author of "Searching the Silver Trail: Charles Van Onselen, Joe Silver and Jack the Ripper," there "was intense suspicion that [Jack the Ripper] was a butcher, barber or tailor, common occupations for men in the area" (217). Either of those professions would have placed Jack the Ripper in either the middle-class or elite status and Kaplan suggests that he must have been a man who either lived in the Whitechapel area or a surrounding area of London. This is due to the fact that:

> Serial murderers are the unique product of a combination of biological, psychological and social processes, the manner in which they interact with the environment is influenced by generic spatial processes. The psychological importance of the home, familiar surroundings and individual mental maps influence the decision making of the killer (Kaplan 221).

Kaplan's theory that Jack the Ripper must have lived in or around the area of Whitechapel, and by association must have worked in or near the area is supported by the evidence that the Ripper murders all "occurred in a three-month period, between 7 August 1888 and 9 November 1888. The murders were located within a one-mile square area. Each successive murder . . . was less than a mile from the previous murder site" with two murders that were "less than half a mile apart" (Keppel, Weis, Brown, & Welch 15). In addition to the chosen square mile radius where the murders took place, Jack the Ripper also knew specific alleyways that he could murder and mutilate the women without being interrupted. Jack the Ripper was extremely methodical and the locations purposefully and carefully chosen, ensuring that he would not be disturbed: "his planning

was also evidenced in his choice of public murder sites that allowed him to conduct his crimes largely undetected and to slip away unnoticed in high traffic areas" (Keppel, Weis, Brown, & Welch 17). This is important to note because the Whitechapel murders were not crimes of passion or impulsive. Jack the Ripper was meticulous and extremely organized. He left no evidence behind and knew where he could kill and mutilate these women and used the darkness of the early morning to hide him from onlookers. The Ripper wanted to finish his work in private and not be disturbed during his postmortem mutilations. However, after he was finished with the bodies he displayed them very obviously for a specific purpose—he wanted them to be discovered.

These unsolved murders would not have generated so much interest if the culprit had simply killed the women by strangulation or slitting their throats and then left them. Perhaps the murders would be less infamous still if the killer had even killed the women in a separate location and then dumped their bodies in a public place. However, Jack the Ripper proved his indomitability by not only killing the women in the same easily-discovered places where they were found, but took the time afterwards to mutilate and degrade their bodies. "The Jack the Ripper Murders: A *Modus Operandi* and Signature Analysis of the 1881-1891 Whitechapel Murders," states that the "flaunting of the bodies in public places suggests that [Jack the Ripper] believed himself invincible, in control, and beyond the reach of the police and public who were beneath him" (16). Jack methodically planned his murders and the locations where he killed and left the bodies for two reasons: in the early hours of the morning when he killed the women there were no witnesses to interrupt him and by leaving the bodies outdoors they were easily seen

for all of Whitechapel to see. Each of the victim's bodies were cut and mutilated, which involved removal of organs, whether for trophies or cannibalistic reasons, and posing entrails outside of the body cavity. The postmortem mutilation and posing was "another element in destroying the humanity of his victim and attempting to shock and horrify those who found the bodies" (Keppel, Weis, Brown, & Welch 1717). Although it may be easy to classify Jack the Ripper as a psychopathic madman who killed vulnerable women, it is hard to ignore the facts. His murders demonstrated pre-planning and a high level of organization and care, which suggest he possessed a higher education and intelligence.

It is essential to have a general understanding and some background on the Whitechapel murders because this is where the duality of Jack the Ripper's existence—he is a man who is defined by binary opposites. Jack the Ripper was at the very least a middle-class man with an esteemed profession and respected reputation. If he would have been a common criminal he would have most likely been caught. His education and careful preparations, however, shielded him from the suspicion of the police and the eyes of the public. For these reasons he was never caught and the murders are to this day unsolved. He embodies the characteristics of gentleman and villain, businessman and murderer. Jack the Ripper, unlike Jekyll, is able to balance his cultured (left-brain) and animalistic personalities and uses the two spheres of his brain to his advantage. The Ripper's control of his entire brain and balance of both spheres is evident in the way he killed his victims. For instance, Jack was very particular in the way he chose his victims. Jack the Ripper targeted relatively young female prostitutes and "women who were poor. The evidence shows that when the women hiked their skirts in preparation for sex, the

killer grabbed their throats and strangled them. The victims were then lowered to the ground . . . This is supported by the lack of bruising on their heads" (Keppel, Weis, Brown, & Welch 14). It is important to note with what caution the killer handled the bodies. Although he is about to murder them, he is careful that they do not sustain injury and he carefully lowers them to the ground instead of allowing their bodies to fall to the ground. In this instance he is both vicious and gentle. Jack the Ripper used a long sharpened knife to slit the victim's throats, however, "the victims were already dead or unconscious from manual strangulation before their throats were cut" (Keppel, Weis, Brown, & Welch 15). Jack the Ripper mutilated the female sex organs and genitalia and often defaced his victims and stabbed their breasts; however, all of these disfigurements were done postmortem.

Although Jack the Ripper could have viciously killed the women and shown them more brutality, he takes care to ensure that his victims do not suffer. By knocking them unconscious or strangling them and then slitting their throats, he kills them fairly quickly and they experience minimal pain. He murders them but shows mercy at the same time and spares his victims from suffering mutilation and disfigurement while they are still living. This could suggest that his left-brain and right-brain were working together at the time of his murders. Although he is killing these women, he makes efforts to ensure that they have relatively swift and painless deaths. If the theory that Jack the Ripper was a medical man is accepted, he is drastically different than other doctors who killed during the Victorian period. Many killer doctors chose to murder by poison, either by providing incorrect prescriptions or creating pills that contained lethal doses of medication.

According to *A Prescription for Murder: The Victorian Serial Killings of Dr. Thomas Neill Cream*, Dr. Cream was a notorious poisoner and used strychnine as his lethal weapon of choice. In the case of two of Cream's victims, a coroner found "six and three-quarter grains of strychnine in Alice Marsh's viscera and over three grains in Emma Shrivell's. One-twelfth of a grain was the maximum medically allowable dosage; one grain was considered fatal" (MacLaren 23). Besides killing his victims, an overdose of strychnine causes a variety of excruciating symptoms, including painful muscle spasms, uncontrollable arching of the neck and back, rigid arms and legs, jaw tightness, muscle pain and soreness, and difficulty breathing. The typical Victorian doctor who used poisoning was unconcerned whether the victims suffered and by using a poison such as strychnine Dr. Cream ensured that his victims would have an extremely agonizing death.

Jack the Ripper's method of killing, however, is radically different than the other murderous Victorian doctors. During the time of the murder, Jack the Ripper exposed "the doctor's power to do evil as well as good" (McLaren 104). True, he was preying on unsuspecting women, but he did take their suffering into consideration and showed mercy. In contrast to the usual *modus operandi* of a killer doctor, not until the late 1880s "would a medical man be suspected of using his manual dexterity, rather than his acquaintance with lethal chemicals, for fell purposes . . . The extravagant, intricate, and intimate nature of the mutilations sustained by Jack the Ripper's victims nourished the theory that the Ripper, if not actually a surgeon, had had surgical training" (Altick 152). Jack the Ripper not only exists in the realm of good and evil, merciful and murderer, but he also breaks free of the typical poisoner doctor and uses physical force to dominate his

victims and brutalizes their bodies. Unlike the poisoner who kills from a distance, Jack the Ripper shared an extremely intimate proximity with his victims and witnessed their deaths as he prescribed them, with a knife instead of seemingly innocent pills. Jack the Ripper recreated the public's conception of the killer doctor, which undoubtedly shook the way that the Victorians not only viewed murderers but their physicians as well. Jack the Ripper eliminated the gap between the seemingly innocent and crime-free middle class and proved that the educated, rich, and powerful could be possible of violent atrocities. In *The Unknown Murderer*, Theodore Reik further explains the criminalization of the middle class and states that: "Middle-class society likes to represent the gulf between itself and the law breakers as unbridgeable, and it is frightened to find that even mass-murderer are made of the same stuff and behave in all walks of life like the rest of us—your very neighbor might be a murderer" (44). Jack the Ripper closes the gap that the Victorian middle class and elite tried to create between themselves and criminals. Because the Ripper is both doctor and murderer, good and evil, civilized and animalistic, he presents a larger societal threat than just a mere prostitute killer. Jack the Ripper transforms the middle-class understanding of criminality and how they misinterpreted a clear distinction between the socialized left-brain (which they presumed to be dominant) and the criminal (presumably underdeveloped) right-brain. Jack the Ripper is neither left-brain nor right-brain dominant, but an equal balance of both. He is the Jekyll-Hyde personification of human duality and balances his civility and barbarism so his dual selves can exist productively together.

Presenting Jack the Ripper as anything but an animalistic killer, however, is not something that the Victorian media or middle-class would accept. Much like the misconceptions made about Edward Hyde, Jack the Ripper is classified as the personification of pure evil and typically stereotyped with some form of mental illness or derangements. After reviewing some brief case facts, however, it is clear that Jack the Ripper was a well-educated man with exceptional organizational skills and devoted a large amount of preplanning to his murders. It is easier, however, to portray him as something viciously barbaric, instead of the ingenious gentleman villain that he truly is. While it is hard to imagine that a madman would dismember and mutilate innocent women, it is even more difficult to accept that an educated middle- or upper-class man and respected doctor could be responsible for the women's deaths and what was done to them post-mortem. By acknowledging that Jack the Ripper was in fact not a deranged, mentally-ill psychopath, but a presumably wealthy and prominent figure in English society, perhaps one with the occupation of surgeon or doctor, it closes the comfortable gap that Victorians created to separate their ideal gentlemanly figure from the loathed criminal who broke the societal and moral norms.

The Victorians could not accept Jack the Ripper as both gentleman and villain, so they opted for what was the easiest option for their society and portrayed him as a horrific, gruesome killer. The following is from 31 August 1888 printing of *The St. James's Gazette* and its article, "Horrible Murder in Whitechapel," reports on the first victim of Jack the Ripper. It states that a constable discovered:

> A woman between thirty-five and forty years of age lying at the side of the street with her throat cut and bleeding profusely. She was immediately conveyed to the Whitechapel mortuary, where it was found that besides the wound in the throat the body had been ripped open, evidently with a large knife. The hands are bruised, and bear evidence of there having been a severe struggle. Some of the front teeth have also been knocked out, and the face is bruised on both cheeks, and very much discoloured. The clothes are torn and cut up in several places, bearing evidence of the ferocity with which the murder was committed (8).

This article depicts the killer as someone who used brute force to overcome his victims and then used excessive violence while beating the woman to death. This portrayal of the murder is extremely animalistic and makes Jack the Ripper sound like an uncontrollable beast that unleashed its fury. We also see that the Victorian media emphasizes the fact that the victim's identity and humanness is also threatened by the killer. Not only does he destroy her teeth, but he bruises her face and makes it "much discoloured." As was seen with Jekyll-Hyde, whiteness is associated with the sophisticated, civilized left-brain while darkness is linked with the criminal, animalistic right-brain. So not only did Jack the Ripper kill prostitutes, but he threatened their very humanity. The *St. James's Gazette* article suggests that to be killed by such an animal and mutilated by such a horrific beast takes the humanness away from his victims and they are tainted with his barbarism. It is easy to dehumanize the acts of Jack the Ripper and associate them with animalistic

barbarism than to acknowledge that a man, and most likely an upper-class and well-educated man, could be capable of such viciousness and grotesquery.

The same barbaric and animalistic qualities were bestowed on with Edward Hyde when he commits his major criminal act, the Carew murder case. Hyde's murder is witnessed by a maid who retells the tale:

> Mr. Hyde broke out of all bounds and clubbed him to the earth. And next moment, with ape-like fury, he was trampling his victim under foot and hailing down a storm of blows, under which the bones were audibly shattered and the body jumped upon the roadway. At the horror of these sights and sounds, the maid fainted (25).

Unlike Jack the Ripper who uses a knife and his hands during the struggle with the victim mentioned above, Mr. Hyde simply beats the old gentleman to death with his body and a heavy walking cane. Hyde is represented as a brute killer who uses extremely primitive means as a way of inflicting injury and death. Instead of using anything constructed from the modern world, such as a knife, gun, or other weapon, Hyde uses his feet and a club. Along with his "ape-like fury," everything that Hyde does while killing the older gentleman is like that of an animal. He lashes out with an unreasonable fury and kills the man in public for all to see. His actions are irrational and he does not think anything though. The Carew murder was impulsive and full of wrath and emotion, lacking in any sort of pre-planning or premeditation.

There are clear distinctions between the murder that Hyde commits and the murders done at the hands of Jack the Ripper. Even though in the case of the Ripper, "the

police noted that the murders were linked by clear signs of the ‘frenzy’ in which the attacker had wielded his knife,” there is still a magnitude of evidence that proves that Jack the Ripper was in control of his actions and that the killings were highly organized (McLaren 63). Unlike Hyde, Jack the Ripper was able to control his emotions while still satisfying his desire to kill and apply his characteristic postmortem disfigurements. The Ripper murders went unsolved and no suspect was ever persecuted, the killer was able to remain undetected by the public and stayed in the shadows to avoid witnesses. Hyde, however, kills in a very visible area and is seen by a maid who retells his actions. Even Henry Jekyll is unable to have his peculiar habits go unnoticed after the Carew murder. Jekyll’s friends grow suspicious of his sudden reclusive behavior and investigate his affairs until they uncover the truth behind Edward Hyde and Jekyll’s true identity. Jack the Ripper goes unnoticed by the public and prevents suspicion by balancing the left and right spheres of his brain, the criminal and civilized parts of his identity. The Ripper is able to be a gentleman by day while keeping an established reputation with society and indulge in his murderous tendencies by night. Jack the Ripper and Jekyll-Hyde personify the ideals of a Victorian gentleman villain, but only the Ripper is successful because where Jekyll and Hyde’s unbalanced relationship ends in the struggle between the identities and eventually death, the Ripper went unpunished for his crimes.

"It was the living death of his own soul that troubled him": Mor(t)ality, Decadence, and the Importance of the Soul in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Dorian Gray is a character extremely similar to Dr. Jekyll. Like Henry Jekyll, Dorian Gray divides himself into two beings for the pursuit of satisfying unconventional desires and allowing his immortality to run rampant. Dorian Gray separates his soul from his body and later realizes that his soul physically resides within a painted portrait of himself. Similar to Jekyll, Dorian keeps his "other self" hidden away from the public gaze and only he knows of the existence of the portrait. However, Dorian is also very unlike Henry Jekyll. Although the circumstance of their duality may appear similar, Henry Jekyll unleashes Edward Hyde so that he may live a double life and enjoy his unconventional appetites without tarnishing his reputation or conscience. Dorian Gray, however, has no other face to hide behind. Although Dorian's soul resides secretly on a painting he keeps locked away, it might as well never have been separated from him in the first place. Dorian keeps the portrait hidden away so others may not see how corrupt his soul has become. However, this is a futile attempt because Dorian does nothing to hide his criminal activities or unconventional sexual practices, which ultimately exile him from respected society. Dorian believes that the only reason he is welcome in polite society is because of his beauty and youth. He exchanges his soul for immortal beauty, but in so doing he loses his conscience and ability to restrict his unending desire for sensual pleasures. Dorian's reputation becomes tarnished beyond repair and he is no longer welcome in the society he so desperately wanted to remain a part of. Henry Jekyll

and Dorian Gray are similar because they both separate themselves (Jekyll creates Hyde and Dorian exists also on the painting), which ultimately is the reason for their fall from society and eventual suicide. Dorian is a unique gentleman villain because instead of living a double life, Dorian acts as gentleman and villain simultaneously. Dorian is an affluent youth who looks and plays the part of a gentleman, while also blatantly corrupt, immoral, and murderous. Dorian's downfall is partly due to the separation of soul and body, but more so because of overconfidence that his good looks would outweigh the damage he willfully inflects on his reputation. Without a gentlemanly reputation, however, Dorian's social sphere no longer welcomes him and he is marked as an immoral degenerate who eventually kills himself in order to destroy his menacingly evil soul.

Oscar Wilde once said that "The only horrible thing in the world is *ennui*. … That is the one sin for which there is no forgiveness" (Keyes 118). *Ennui* is boredom with life and a mode of existence without any stimulatory factors that Wilde considers unforgivable and immoral. In order to fight off the unforgivable "sin" of *ennui* one must be willing to break societal conventions and live a life that is devoted to sins of the flesh and behaviors that are not culturally acceptable. The sensual and aesthetic lifestyle, according to Decadent theory, is the only way to prevent oneself from falling into the threatening boredom and complacency of a dull existence. Wilde not only encourages sinful experimentation, but argues that it is an essential experience from which knowledge and ethics are obtained: "By its curiosity Sin increases the experience of the race. … in its rejection of the current notions about morality it is one with the higher ethics" (Keyes 115). More importantly, Wilde sees sin and the exploitation for new

pleasures as a mode of cultural development and argues that "Sin is an essential element of progress. Without it the world would stagnate or grow old, or become colorless" (Keyes 115). With such statements on sin and morality, it is not surprising that Wilde's only novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, involves a beautiful young man who is at the peak of his innocence at the beginning of the book but his life ends in a horrible ruin due to corrupting influences and excessive pleasurable experiments.

Dorian Gray leads the life that Wilde and other Decadents adamantly pursued, but by the end of the novel he is miserable, horrified by his actions, and completely unsatisfied with life. After Dorian exchanges his soul for immortal beauty he can no longer be captivated by any of his old interests or contented by any form of art and must constantly seek out new, more intense pleasures in an attempt to abate his *ennui*. Wilde uses *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as a moral tale and indicates that the loss of one's soul is detrimental. Dorian initially enjoys the immortal beauty he has been granted for the exchange of his soul but soon realizes that his life is filled with more *ennui* and incurable maladies. Wilde writes on the soul and states that "Behind the perfection of a man's style, must lie the passion of a man's soul" (Keyes 120). If one does not have a soul, one does not have any passions or motivations and thus lacks the ability to live a satisfying life. Without a soul one cannot feel the emotions that are necessary for a zealous life or the essential attitude necessary to fully appreciate, comprehend, and express art. An individual without a soul would merely exist and be unable to live life completely; a soulless life is one without art or basic human expressions. In his attempt to stay youthful and beautiful forever, Dorian exchanges his soul, the one essential thing necessary in

order to fully enjoy his youth and beauty; this loss of soul creates a moral depravity in his life and removes his basic emotions, leaving him unable to appreciate art or any of the preoccupations that used to interest him. Dorian is left in a perpetual and vain attempt to uncover new pleasures, experiences, and sins in a futile attempt to be able to have a passionate existence and rekindle his interest in life.

In order to understand the morality and actions of the characters in *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* one must first gain a base understanding of Wilde's aesthetic movement and the Decadent beliefs that his characters were embodying. The Decadents deliberately went against the social norms in an attempt to shock the bourgeois and become as eccentric as possible. Decadents were marginalized because of their attitude towards social normatively and their "expressed desire to experiment with new sensations, their interest in what was bizarre and exotic, and the fact that they seemed to be encouraging the individual to enrich his sensual experience through art, drugs, absinthe and unconventional behavior" (Rudorff 62). Aesthetics and Decadents were fascinated with the artificial, the flamboyant, excess, and the avant-garde. Decadents embraced immoral contact as a rebellion against the bourgeois standards and expectations of what was considered proper.

According to *Art in the Modern Era*, during the Decadent Movement "both literature and art expressed the malaise and ennui associated with *fin-de-siècle* thought, and are typified by romantic visions of evil, the grotesque, sensationalism and of life seen as drama" (Dempsey 30). Decadents were not interested in the tranquil or perfections of the world and society branded them as pessimists because they were constantly looking at

the deranged and abnormal sides of life—more interested in the gritty and morbid than the conventional sense of beauty. However, Wilde later came to the realization that living a life revolving solely around pleasure and new experiences produced unpleasantness and lead to total suffering. Although elite and more intellectual or inebriating, his pleasure-seeking endeavors would lead to Wilde's undoing and early death. After his infamous romantic affair with Lord Alfred Douglas (Bosie) was made public, Wilde was put on trial for "gross indecency" and convicted under the British Criminal law Amendment Act of 1885 where he served two years of hard labor at Reading Gaol.

Wilde wrote *De Profundis,* a letter to Bosie, in which he reflects on his life and actions leading up to his imprisonment. In his letter Wilde discusses the idea of suffering, his views on pleasure, and his personal experiences of suffering since his trial. Although Wilde once stated that "Pleasure is the only thing one should live for," his opinions on pleasure change drastically after his trial and incarceration (Keyes 109). In *De Profundis,* Wilde writes that "Desire, at the end, was a malady, or a madness, or both" (23). Wilde uses almost the same terminology to describe his affliction with desire as the contenders of the Decadent Movement had described it while trying to connect desire to addiction and debauchery. Wilde calls desire a sickness or disease and during this reflection on his life he realizes how much pleasure has negatively impacted his life, stating that: "I allowed pleasure to dominate me. I ended in horrible disgrace. There is only one thing for me now, absolute humility" (24). Wilde further admits that he "used to live entirely for pleasure. I shunned suffering and sorrow of every kind. I hated both. I resolved to ignore them as far as possible: to treat them, that is to say, as modes of imperfection" (50). The

pursuit of pleasure became Wilde's main focus and he willfully ignored feelings that were not pleasurable, such as suffering, and attempted to ignore any unpleasant emotions. After his incarceration, however, Wilde reevaluates his approach to pain and suffering: "I now see that sorrow, being the supreme emotion of which man is capable, is at once the type and test of all great art. . . . Behind joy and laughter there may be a temperament, coarse, hard and callous. But behind sorrow there is always sorrow. Pain, unlike pleasure, wears no mask" (54). Sorrow and suffering follow the same Decadent philosophy as "art for art's sake." Unlike laughter or joy, which can be used as forms of manipulation or can be faked, pain and suffering are raw emotions and cannot be hidden behind a façade of forced facial expressions.

Even though Wilde found a new appreciation for raw emotion and suffering, Dorian Gray remains determined to sever his emotions and conscience (soul) from his youthful beauty. Dorian only wishes to experience the entertaining, fun, pleasurable things in life and wishes to distance himself from any hardships, such as regret, guilt, or aging. Wilde states that "Those who see any difference between the soul and body have neither," arguing that the two are inseparable; Dorian Gray, however, seeks to completely sever his soul from his body and puts a far greater value on his physical body than his spiritual soul (Keyes 120). Dorian believes that physical beauty and youth are the most valuable things in life and is pleased when he discovers that his soul will be marred on the portrait while his body shows no trace of his sins. However, Dorian's attempt to separate his body from his soul is his ultimate downfall. Without a soul he is unable to enjoy the arts as he used to or even the company of friends. This void and lack of

emotion fills him with an inconsolable malady that no pleasurable experience or new interest in art can satisfy. However, Dorian did not always value his physical beauty over his immortal soul. Lord Henry Wotton was the main source of corruption that started Dorian's moral depravity and ultimate downfall. Henry insists that Dorian possesses "the most marvelous youth, and youth is the one thing worth having" (Wilde 201). Dorian immediately retorts that he does not agree with Lord Henry's views. From this first interaction it would seem that Dorian does not know his true beauty, or that he does not put much importance on his physical apperance. Seeing that Dorian places little or no value on his beauty, Henry turns the conversation merely from beauty and aim's at Dorian's youth. Henry declares that: "We degenerate into hideous puppets, haunted y the memory of the passions of which we were too much afraid, and the exquisite temptations that we did not dare to yield to. Youth! Youth! There is absolutely nothing in the world but youth" (203)! This exclamation by Lord Henry strikes a chord deep inside Dorian and his notions about his own beauty and youth are suddenly altered. Within a matter of moments Dorian seems to understand not only the impermanence of his beauty, but also the full weight of his mortality.

Dorian's fear of mortality and his desire to protect his youth and beauty is first seen when Basil Hallward reveals Dorian's painting. When Dorian first sees his portrait, a "look of joy came into [Dorian's] eyes, as if he had recognized himself for the first time. … The sense of his own beauty came on him like a revelation. He had never felt it before" (205). Although he had been told by Basil many times how beautiful he was, Dorian only thought that the painter was being polite and complimenting him because he

was sitting to have his portrait done or because they had become cordial friends. It was not until Dorian saw his portrait and listened to Henry's revolutionary speech that his mind changed toward his beauty and youth. When Dorian first looks upon the portrait, he is filled with joy and pleasure upon admiring his own good looks. However, after he reflects on Henry's words, Dorian realizes that he will not remain as youthful or beautiful as he looks in the portrait. He will grow old, his body will become frail, and the grace and color of youth will leave him. Dorian realizes the extreme power of his beauty and its transience at almost the exact moment, the overwhelming emotion of which is almost too much for Dorian to bear:

> "How sad it is! I shall grow old, and horrid, and dreadful. Yet this picture will remain always young. It will never be older than this particular day of June. … If only it was the other way! If it was I who were to be always young, and the picture that were to grow old! For this—for this—I would give everything! Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give" (205).

It is in this critical moment when Dorian exchanges his soul for his immortal beauty. His desperation to preserve his youth and beauty, and his sudden overpowering hatred of the portrait encourage him to offer anything for the situation to be reverse. The portrait will age and bear every affliction that Dorian encounters, while Dorian stays young and beautiful. Although Dorian does not explicitly state that he is willing to trade his soul in this 1890 publication, in the 1891 version Dorian exclaims that "Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give! I would give my soul for that!" (25). Although more explicitly stated in the revised edition of the book, it is clear in both the 1890 and 1891

publications that Dorian is desperate enough during this moment of impulse and intense emotion to trade his soul to prevent the loss of his beauty and youth. From this moment on in the text the portrait acts as a mirror to Dorian's soul and impartially displays each and every sin Dorian commits, making the portrait even more heinous than a mere reflection of Dorian's aging.

Dorian's insistence upon keeping his beauty and youth goes beyond his vain desire to remain attractive and aesthetically pleasing. He wants to preserve his social status and the admiration of all of his peers. Dorian strongly questions Basil and asks "How long will you like me? Till I have my first wrinkle, I suppose. I know, now, that when one loses one's good looks, whatever they may be, one loses everything. Your picture has taught me that. Lord Henry is perfectly right. Youth is the only thing worth having" (205). Although just a few moments prior Dorian disagreed with Henry's stance that youth was the only thing worth having, his new value on youth and beauty seem resolute. It is not merely aging that Dorian fears, but he believes that without his beauty and youth, Basil and other artists or aristocrats will have no interest in him. After all, it was Dorian's beauty and innocence that drew Henry toward him— that and the earnest desire of Basil Hallward for Dorian to be kept uncorrupted and unspoiled by the dangerously corrupting influence of Lord Henry.

According to the article "Aestheticism versus Realism? Narcissistic Mania of the Unheeded Soul in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*" Dorian's "peculiar qualities put him in the spotlight, and the society makes ruthless and relentless assessments to him. Accordingly, his future is set by the monolithic forces of the society,

while he is drowned into the devouring slough of narcissism" (1147). The article further argues that Dorian is susceptible to Lord Henry's egotistic teachings because of the social pressures placed on the upper class and elite by Victorian culture. Furthermore, the article claims that Dorian is "unduly self-involved beyond the point of reach; he pictures a world with him acting as the center of it. And if he feels menaced from the side of something, he cannot relieve himself of the thought of it by any means (1447). The thing that menaces Dorian, ironically enough, is his portrait. Where Henry and Basil had previously been praising Dorian for his good looks, their sole focus is now on his portrait, a representation of him instead of his actual self.

Lord Henry's views on beauty and youth are not the only influential ideas that he corrupts Dorian with. Henry speaks of the soul and the best way for men to live freely. While speaking to Dorian, Henry philosophizes and insists that humans are only really punished for the sins that they do not commit. It is in the repression of desires and refrain from sin that ultimately leads to suffering, not the sin themselves. Henry argues that "The body sins once, and has done with its sin, for action is a mode of purification. … The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. Resist it, and your soul grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself" (199). Henry insists that acting sinful or being immoral is not the thing that poisons the mind and the soul. Rather, it is the act of prohibiting one's self from fulfilling their desires and not engaging in sinful behaviors that grievously affect a person's mind. Henry argues that if one were to engage in sinful behavior and not resist temptation then the sin would only last a few brief moments with nothing but a memory would be left of it. However, when one resists

sinning they prolong their temptation and force themselves to struggle with a terrible yearning.

Dorian adopts Henry's philosophic approach to life rather quickly and does not remain the amiable, innocent young man for long. After Dorian breaks off his engagement with a "third-rate actress with a pretty face," as he cruelly names her in a moment of rage, the girl commits suicide and Dorian notices a change in his portrait. After Dorian is told about the death of Sibyl Vane he notices that the face on the canvas changes and bears a look of extreme cruelty. This change in the portrait reflects the cruelty in the way that Dorian mistreated Sibyl, which led to her suicide. Dorian's reaction to the change in the portrait is not remotely conventional. Instead of realizing the wrong he had done and that his soul had been tarnished with cruelty and indifference, Dorian has an epiphany:

> Eternal youth, infinite passion, pleasures subtle and secret, wild joys and wilder sins,—he was to have all these things. The portrait was to bear the burden of his shame. … If the picture was to alter, it was to alter. That was all. Why inquire too closely into it? For there would be a real pleasure in watching it. He would be able to follow his mind into its secret places. This portrait would be to him the most magical of mirrors. As it had revealed to him his own body, so it would reveal to him his own soul. What did it matter what happened to the colored image on the canvas? He would be safe. That was everything (243-4).

This is the pivotal point in the novel where there is no return back to goodness or grace for Dorian Gray. He decides to live life for pleasures and sins, as Henry had once instructed him, but Dorian's outlook on life is pessimistic and full of malice. He realizes that the portrait will keep him safe from harm and that his body will remain unspoiled, no matter what he does or sins he enjoys. Dorian's pivotal realization of his immortality is the moment when the "bonds of morality are cut one by one, and [Dorian] pursues his narcissistic ends without respite" (Taghizadeh and Jeihouni 1448). Dorian feels an overwhelming sense of indifference towards the portrait because he knows that his youth and beauty will go unaltered through the years and that his immortality is sealed. What he doesn't realize is that immortality is quite useless without a soul to keep him in the bounds of morality and social acceptability.

The lack of soul ultimately leads Dorian to live an unfulfilling life filled with a constant search for superficial interests to distract him from the thought of his portrait. Peter Harness argues that Dorian's devoted studies of tapestry, jewelry, costume, music, are fleeting hobbies and a "'means of procuring sensations,' a 'means of escape' from the moral reminder that the hideous picture provides. When art can no longer give him the new distractions that he so desperately craves, Dorian experiments with less intellectual pleasures: sex, drugs, theft, and violence" (285). Dorian becomes increasingly desperate to truly feel things again. His emotions are insincere at best and at times he feels great emotions and anxieties, but those quickly fade when something more interesting comes along. Harness argues that Dorian is "a blank canvas: any trouble or passion that affects him passes quickly onto the changing portrait, and leaves him just as he was" (286).

Dorian experiences feelings and emotions rather briefly, but they do not change him. Once the experience or feeling has affected Dorian it leaves him almost as quickly as it came to him. The portrait is the only thing permanently changed by Dorian's actions and feelings, which leave Dorian constantly searching for more emotions to experience. Harness supports this argument by claiming that "in his quest for sensations, [Dorian] is like a drug addict: desperately trying to regain the 'high' that he once felt, but only adding to his misery along the way" (285). Dorian's fleeting feelings and his failure to fully engage in the studies of the arts and his inability to truly appreciate the impact of his feelings is due to the fact that he has lost his soul.

The loss of a soul poses numerous obstacles and creates many unforeseeable problems that Dorian had not considered in his rash desire to preserve his beauty. In addition to his inability to appreciate art or high intellectual stimulation, Harness argues that the portrait gave him "the key to an environment that was free of the constraints of conventional morality. However, in a cruel stroke of irony, it took away the soul that he needed in order to appreciate his beautiful new world" (285). Dorian thought that the portrait would set him free and allow him to experience life to the fullest by experiencing new pleasurable sensations. In reality the magic of the portrait, although it does preserve his beauty, unleashes Dorian's insatiable appetite for sin and as a result causes Dorian to suffer from extreme loneliness. Once Dorian embraces his debauched lifestyle he is despised by polite society and no longer awarded sympathies or love from his friends. Dorian is a poison to himself and destroys almost everything that he touches. Men who

were once inseparable to Dorian have their reputations tarnished and, if they do not commit suicide, they cannot bear being in the same room with him.

Without a soul Dorian soon loses the ability to limit his pleasures and remain reasonably within the bounds of social convention. Even Lord Henry, the powerful influence that Basil Hallward feared would corrupt Dorian, is still able to keep his air of respectability and social status while still enjoying his public and private pleasures. The audience first gets an idea of Henry's true character though the words of Basil who criticizes Henry's character: "You never say a moral thing and you never do a wrong thing" (188). Lord Henry is the epitome of a hypocrite. He speaks of immorality and preaches debauchery and the gloriousness a life of sin can procure, but according to Basil he does not lead by example. Especially in the case of Dorian Gray, Henry seems to live vicariously through Dorian's actions and enjoys the mere thought of transforming Dorian from the innocent schoolboy to a debauched and pleasure-seeking man. According to the article "Père-version and Im-mère-sion: Idealized Corruption in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*," author Vicki Mahaffey claims that "it is [Lord Henry], with his musical voice and magical words, who kindles in Dorian a wild curiosity, who plays the role of the devil in this modern morality tale. He ... inspires Dorian to yearn for immortality, for eternal youth" (254). Henry is interested in how his philosophy will affect Dorian, who seems to be nothing but a mere spectacle. After he initially speaks with Dorian, Henry immediately realizes that he is making an impact on the youth and "felt intensely interested. He was amazed at the sudden impression that his words had produced" (Wilde 200). Mahaffey notes this exchange between the two as a

pivotal moment of irresponsibility on Henry's part, claiming that he is intentionally toying "with [Dorian] and views him with the fascinated detachment of a scientist towards a specimen" (255). Henry takes an interest in Dorian not out of sincere friendship, but because Dorian is an object of innocence and an impressionable youth that Henry can easily manipulate into leading a corrupt, pleasure-driven lifestyle.

Basil Hallward, on the other hand, takes an earnest interest in Dorian's well being and tries to prevent Henry's corruption of the young man from the beginning. It is surprising that Dorian would choose to murder Basil instead of lashing out against Henry, the man who filled him with poisonous ideas. Dorian's misguided sense of blame does not find himself or Henry at fault, but he believes that the man responsible for ruining his life is the man who created the portrait, Basil Hallward. Basil is only an artist and the mere creator of Dorian's portrait. It was Henry who planted the ideas of immortal youth and beauty in Dorian's mind, and then Dorian who then sought to exchange his soul for the portrait to carry his sins and not let them mar his earthly body. However, if Basil never would have painted the portrait, the corrupting words of Henry would have had little or no meaning on Dorian and the magic of the painting would never have been done. Dorian attempts to express his feelings towards Basil to Alan Campbell, an estranged friend who Dorian blackmails in order to get him to help dispose of Basil's body. Dorian explains: "You don't know what he had made me suffer. Whatever my life is, he had more to do with the making or the marring of it than poor Harry has had. He may not have intended it, the result was the same" (290). Dorian holsters his resentment for Basil since presumably the creation of the portrait. However, Dorian is not propelled

to murder Basil until the painter sees the hideous soul on the canvas and asks Dorian to beg for forgiveness and repent. Dorian attempts to explain that "Each of us has Heaven and Hell in him," insisting that Basil was blinded by Dorian's beauty and could not see his true nature underneath his mask of genial respectability and youthful attractiveness (282). Basil now has the rare ability to physically gaze upon Dorian's soul; however, he is still unable to mediate that such a beautiful young man could harness the evil reflected in the canvas. Mahaffey claims that even though Basil can see both the beautiful (heaven) and evil (hell) sides of Dorian Gray before him, "Basil does not get it; all he sees is that once Dorian was good, and now he is bad—he begs Dorian to repent. It is for this that Dorian kills him" (225). Instead of understanding that all men have a balance of good and evil, which makes up one's morality, Basil cannot accept that the young man he once worshiped and believed to be perfect could have such a tarnished soul. Instead of accepting both sides of Dorian and realizing that a beautiful youth could have immoral or amoral tendencies, Basil tries to insist that Dorian repent in order to remain completely pure and purge himself of any evil.

Dorian's only explicitly violent crime is the murder of Basil Hallward, even though his unconventional practices and immoral behaviors are innumerable. His sexual deviance, experimentation with opium, and other sensual-oriented pleasures ruin his respectable reputation and he is infamous for causing the downfall of others. He ushers the suicide of both Sibyl Vane and Alan Campbell along with the reputations of numerous other young men and women. Dorian continues his immoral lifestyle and carelessly corrupts others, and with each new sin the portrait changes but leaves Dorian

ageless and physically unaffected. Dorian is astonished at his lack of worry or nervousness after the murder of Basil and wonders "how it was that he could discuss the matter so calmly" with Henry (Wilde 297). However immoral his actions are and how unaffected by his crimes Dorian seems to be, he is in fact an extremely moral character. Not moral in the sense that he acts morally, but due to the fact that he is plagued by his conscience and that his guilt for the sins he commits constantly troubles him. If Dorian were truly an immoral character or have a complete lack of morals, the portrait would not serve as such an evocative reminder of his past misdeeds. Dorian is "haunted all through his life by an exaggerated sense of conscience. … In his final attempt to get rid of the conscience that has dogged his steps from year to year he destroys the picture; and thus in his attempt to kill conscience Dorian Gray kills himself" (Taghizadeh and Jeihoundi 1448). In his effort to lead a life where soul and body are separated where the corruptions of the soul will not affect his physical appearance, Dorian creates a malady and paranoia of his conscience.

Dorian's hedonistic lifestyle and determination to lead a completely pleasure-driven existence ultimately creates more suffering and pain for himself. The loss of his soul allows him to live outside of moral conventions without any bodily consequences but at the same time excludes him from the polite society that he is so desperately trying to remain a part of. While he voluntarily lives outside of conventional norms and the general morality of the Victorian public, he involuntarily creates a tarnished reputation that forces other elite members of his society to shun him for his indecent behavior. Dorian is unable to live a successful double life because his infamous sins and debauched

behaviors stain his gentlemanly reputation and he does nothing to keep his unconventional actions secret. He is involved in numerous public scandals and soon tarnishes his own good name. Although his beauty and youth remain, his respectable peers no longer desire his company and he is omitted from events, dinners, and parties that he would have been warmly welcomed to in his more innocent and naïve days. His persistence on living solely for pleasure ultimately leads to rather unpleasant results. Wilde always insisted that life was an imitation of art, however, in the case of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which was written years before his incarceration, it would appear that his art reflects his life. Dorian Gray and Oscar Wilde seem to have learned the same life lesson: that the unrestrained pursuit of pleasure left them in disgrace and that fulfilling every desire made them more dissatisfied with life. An extreme dedication to sensual and sexual pleasures, while in the moment are gratifying, ultimately create social consequences that lead to misery and suffering. Dorian loses his soul and the persistence of his guilty conscience leads him to the realization that pleasure is not the only thing worth living for, while Wilde's transformation occurs after his punishment in prison. Through similar experiences of pleasure and prolonged pain both Oscar Wilde and Dorian Gray came to the same conclusion and realized that a life solely devoted to pleasure only leads to unhappiness, mistakes, and regret.

Redefining Good and Evil:

Delinquent Heroes versus Gentleman Villains in *Peter Pan and Wendy*

Dorian Gray and Dr. Jekyll are two gentleman villains who physically separate themselves in order to escape from the mundane, restrictive Victorian society. Similarly, Captain James Hook is a gentleman villain with arguably two identities. Although not apparent in the actual novel itself, "in the stage version, following a tradition that goes right back to the original production under Barrie's own direction in 1904, the part of Hook is always played by the actor cast as Mr. Darling. He is thus literally Wendy's father in elaborate disguise" (Egan 51). If Hook and Mr. Darling are accepted as the same character, then Mr. Darling escapes his middle class Victorian existence to travel to Neverland to kill Lost Boys and hunt his own children. Mr. Darling is a middle-class Victorian man who is constantly worried about his financial security and his social status. Mr. Darling feels immense pressure to provide for his family, make his wife proud, impress his neighbors, and climb the social ladder through hard work and respectability. Mr. Darling is the ideal Victorian gentleman—he is hardworking, stern, moral, and reputable. In his contrast, his villainous other-self, Captain Hook, is an ideal gentleman villain. With an untraditional villain like Mr. Darling/Captain Hook, it is not surprising that Peter Pan works not as a hero but more so a foil to Captain Hook who destroys the boundary between hero and villain.

For all the things that comprise Peter's character, one general misconception is his (mis)identification as a hero. Although the protagonist and eponymous character of

Barrie's works, Peter is far from a traditional hero. His aberrant, violent, and cruel behavior removes him from the heroic ideal and also displaces him from the pure and innocent child he physically appears to be. If we accept the theory that Peter Pan is not a hero, then his arch nemesis, Captain James Hook, is not a true villain. Heroes are nominally defined by their opposites, the villains, and these heroes and villains often represent and define the boundary between good and evil through their actions. However, the supposed heroes in *Peter Pan and Wendy* engage in behaviors that are typically designated for the villain, such as an eagerness to fight, a willingness to murder, and a general disregard for human life, while the villains uphold codes of "good form", etiquette, and education. The Lost Boys' fight against the crew of the *Jolly Roger* is not a battle between good versus evil, as the Lost Boys are not strictly "good," nor are the pirates entirely "evil." The war for Neverland is between gentlemanly villains who are proper and obsessed with propriety and societal standards (Hook and his pirate crew), against delinquent heroes who are more violent and criminal than their enemies. Barrie blurs the lines between what is traditionally defined as good and what is traditionally defined as evil and he eliminates the boundaries between heroes and villains in Neverland. However, the pirate's physical appearance and mutilations create a criminal presence, while the Lost Boys exhibit the innocence of youth. Good and evil, then, are separated in *Peter Pan and Wendy* only by physical appearance and superficial miens, regardless of each character's actions.

Peter is the protagonist of the novel, a role traditionally reserved for the "good guy" who conquers over evil at the end of the story. The ideal Victorian hero should

possess “certain characteristics such as honor, loyalty, intelligence, [and] moral uprightness” (Hesse). Peter, however, does not fit into these Victorian ideals. Although he does display good form in several areas of the novel, he is extremely disloyal, forgetful, and heavily dependent on others to solve his problems. Upon meeting Wendy, Peter loses his shadow and cannot figure how to get it to stick back on. Defeated, Peter sits down and begins to cry. Wendy finds a solution and sews the shadow back on for Peter, to which he immediately shouts, “How clever I am!” and “oh, the cleverness of me” (39)! Wendy, not impressed with Peter’s lack of manners and cockiness, calls him a conceit and grows rather upset with his easy dismissal of her actions and his ability to take the credit for her work. Even the narrator remarks about his arrogance and states that it “is humiliating to have to confess that this conceit of Peter was one of his more fascinating qualities. To put it with brutal frankness, there was never a cockier boy” (40). Peter’s pride and vanity are clearly a character flaw that is not designated for the hero, and Hook’s hatred for the boy’s cockiness is well observed throughout the novel.

Wendy and Hook both have a strong distain for Peter’s cockiness and his smugness is the true reason for Hook’s desire to kill him. Peter’s attitude can be solely attributed to the war between the pirates and the Lost Boys, and it is the one thing about Peter that Hook cannot ignore:

> Peter was such a small boy that one tends to wonder at the man’s hatred of him. True he had flung Hook’s arm to the crocodile, but even this and the increased insecurity to life to which it led, owing to the crocodile’s pertinacity, hardly account for a vindictiveness so relentless and

> malignant. The truth is that there was something about Peter which goaded the pirate captain to frenzy. . . . It was Peter's cockiness (198).

Above all of Peter's other flaws, Hook is unable to forgive or accept Peter's haughtiness; it is the true reason why they positioned themselves as archenemies. The narrator easily forgives Peter for cutting off Hook's hand and creating an "increased insecurity to life," in which Hook is continuously hunted by a crocodile and living in constant fear of being eaten. The narrator could forgive Peter for dismembering Hook's hand because it was in battle and Hook was simply the loser. The narrator seems to share Hook's mentality and accepts that the loss of the hand is not the true reason for his hate of Pan. It is Peter's cockiness that proves too unbearable for both Hook and the narrator. Not only does this shed light onto Peter's unfavorable personality, but it also provides an insight into Hook's values.

Captain Hook is a non-traditional antagonist who displays more gentlemanly qualities than criminal behaviors. A "villain" is "an unprincipled or depraved scoundrel; a man naturally disposed to base or criminal actions, or deeply involved in the commission of disgraceful crimes, but Hook does not match the dictionary definition of a villain (OED). In actuality, Hook only engages in occasional bouts with the Lost Boys, some battles with the Indians, and run-ins with the island beasts. True, he is a pirate, a profession which is highly criminal, but Hook fits the mold for Victorian noble anti-heroes and is a "brilliant but eccentric villain with gentlemanly pretensions" (Allingham). Although he is not a loyal subject to king or country, Hook still displays many of the characterizations that an English gentleman would embody. The most obvious and most

important quality is his obsession with good form and evidence of a quality education. A feared, world-renowned pirate who has come so far from his childhood days, he still upholds many of his schoolboy values: “above all he retained the passion for good form. Good form! However much he may have degenerated, he still knew that this is all that really matters” (203). Hook is haunted by the notion of good form and obsesses relentlessly about the conduct of his actions. The narrator delves into Hook's subconscious and explains that he is pestered incessantly by numerous voices of his old school masters asking, or demanding, rather, to know whether or not he had demonstrated good form.

Hook’s fixation with good form is a blatant reminder that he is from the socially-constructed adult world, and thereby creates a polar opposite against Peter, who is ignorant and uneducated. Hook was shaped rigorously by society to constantly reflect on his actions and is extremely self-conscious about his behavior, appearance, and thoughts. Peter, however, possesses none of those concerns and remains blissful and carefree because he has not been influenced by society and does not worry himself with societal pressures or expectations. Hook realizes that he is obsessing over good form and comes to the conclusion that it is actually “bad form to think about good form” (204). Hook is constantly tormented by this conundrum and his inability to neither stop obsessing nor achieve good form because he is constantly thinking about it. Peter’s unselfconsciousness is the “pinnacle of good form,” because he does not even know what the socially-constructed idea of good form is (228). In the article “The Riddle of Peter Pan’s Existence: An Unselfconscious Stage Child,” Amanda Phillips Chapman explains this

phenomenon: “Hook obsesses, like many a public schoolboy, about good form, or in other words unselfconsciousness, and thus Hook obsesses about Peter” (148). Peter, however, is not as invested in the rivalry as Hook, and simply views fighting Hook as another adventure and a different avenue of how to have fun and enjoy dangerous exploits in Neverland. Peter is childish in this way because he is simply using Hook to keep himself entertained and uses their fights to prove his bravery and cleverness.

From a glance Peter and Hook not only physically look different but they represent opposing forces. Victorians viewed the child as “a figure of creativity, self-sufficiency, pure potentiality, wholeness, and consummate authenticity. . . . ‘children are regularly depicted as the indigenes of nature’” (Chapman 138). Peter’s strong connection to nature is not only intrinsic because he is a child, but it is worked into his physical appearance as well: “He was a lovely boy, clad in skeleton leaves and the juices that ooze out of trees, but the most entrancing thing about him was that he had all his first teeth” (16). Peter’s association with nature goes beyond the Victorian preconception of childhood and the link to Nature by physically being covered by natural elements, such as leaves and tree sap. Peter is not alone in his naturalistic description, the other Lost Boys are also covered in items retrieved by nature: “they wear the skins of bears slain by themselves, in which they are so round and furry that when they fall they roll” (76). Peter and the Lost Boys are characterized as a primal group of hunters and gatherers— Peter covered in leaves and plants and the Lost Boys wearing the skins of animals.

The Lost Boys further plant themselves in nature by living in a home under the ground. Not only do they appear animalistic and naturalistic but they actually live in the

earth as well. The little home under the ground requires a special entrance for each boy and this is where Peter displays his extensive knowledge of nature. Each boy must slide down a tree to get into the home and each tree fits its boy precisely, which eliminates the possibility of pirates or Indians entering the home. The pirates do not understand Peter's use of nature and Hook sneers "at the boys for thinking they needed a tree apiece, but this was ignorance, for unless your tree fitted you it was difficult to go up and down, and no two of the boys were quite the same size" (110). Hook's socially constructed and educated upbringing separates him from the world of nature and he is unable to realize the simplistic knowledge of the world of Neverland as Peter is able to. The pirate's lack of experience and knowledge of nature actually helps protect the boys and their underground home remains impenetrable for most of the novel. The narrator explains that to enter the house, "Peter measures you for your tree as carefully as for a suit of clothes: the only difference being that the clothes are made to fit you, while you have to be made to fit the tree" (111). Instead of being fashioned out of nature to accommodate the boys' needs, the boys must either grow or shrink to accommodate the size of their tree, which usually can be done by removing or adding pieces of clothing. If that doesn't work and the boys are still either too big or too small to travel in the trunk, "Peter does some things to you, and after that you fit" (111). Without Peter's knowledge and primal connection to nature, the Lost Boys would not have a refuge or hiding place from the pirates.

Just as the Lost Boys' connection to nature is emphasized by their physical appearance and dwelling place within the earth, the pirates, by contrast, live an ornate

ship the *Jolly Roger*, which reinforces their connection to the civilized and industrialized world. The pirate ship is thus described:

> A rakish-looking craft foul to the hull, every beam in her detestable like ground strewn with mangled feathers. She was the cannibal of the seas, and scarce needed that watchful eye, for she floated immune in the horror of her name. She was wrapped in the blanket of night, through which no sound from her could have reached the shore (175).

The *Jolly Roger* is not only an evil ship, it is also a "cannibal" that will devour its enemies or its own kind. The ship is completely isolated from the rest of the island and completely detaches itself from Neverland. The Lost Boys are strongly connected to nature and literally live underground; their bond to nature is very strong, thus reinforcing their innocence and connection to the pure, natural world. The *Jolly Roger*, however, is so separated from Neverland that no noise from the mainland can reach the ship, or vice versa. The description of the ship creates an image of isolation and a nocturnal predatory monster that makes the pirates appear more villainous than their actions suggest they are.

Physical appearances and description of dwelling places factor heavily in the construction of the Lost Boys and pirates. The home underground is described as being "rough and simple, not unlike what baby bears would have made of an underground house in the same circumstances," which creates the impression that the boys are more animalistic than human (112). The pirates, however, could not be described in a way that would further remove them from nature. Unlike the boys who are covered in materials found in nature, the pirates are covered in artificiality and synthetic materials from an

industrialized world. The pirates are described as a "villainous-looking lot," and their physical appearance is the one thing that makes them seem more evil than the Lost Boys (79). How they look physically is the greatest characterization and trait that situates them as the villains of Neverland. For instance, Cecco is the Italian pirate who has "pieces of eight in his ears as ornaments" (79). Along with Cecco's unnatural accessories, there is "Bill Jukes, every inch of him tattooed," the "gigantic black" and "Noodler, whose hands were fixed on backwards" (79). Each pirate looks either physically odd or their bodies have been artificially mutated in some way. Whether it is an abnormally large size, as the unnamed black pirate, or extensive body tattooing or hands that are somehow attached the reverse way, the pirates, unlike the Lost Boys who all dress in similar-looking bear skins, are easily distinguished by their menacing physical disfigurements.

The most famous and identifiable injury is the iron hook in place of Captain James Hook's right hand, which not only vilifies his appearance but also establishes itself as a part of him. Besides the hook, however, Hook is described as appearing similar to former kings of England and rather handsome. The narrator states that "his hair was dressed in long curls . . . his eyes were of the blue of the forget-me-not . . . In dress he somewhat aped the attire associated with the name of Charles II, having heard it said in some earlier period of his career that he bore a strange resemblance to the ill-fated Stuarts" (81). Hook has long curly hair, stunning blue eyes, and keeps a wardrobe that likens him to English royalty. However, the narrator quickly establishes the "grimmest part of him," which is the iron claw (81). Peter explains Hook's mutilation while describing the captain to John and Michael. After the Darling children are told Hook does

not have a right hand, John assumes that the pirate captain can no longer fight or must use his left hand. Peter quickly explains that Hook "has an iron hook instead of a right hand, and he claws with it" (69). Hook's violent nature is not separated from him, like Peter, who is able to put down his weapon at any time, but is attached at the stub of his right wrist in place of the hand that Peter removed. Hook's evil and violent nature is physically part of him, thus creating a permanently sinister and inauspicious appearance.

The pirates' mutilations represent aging and the experiences in life that affect a person (physically and emotionally) as they grow into adulthood. German Romantic Friedrich Schiller "contrasts the 'unmutilated' naturalness of childhood to the artificiality of 'civilized humanity,' suggesting that the various demands of civilized society inevitably disfigure the adult self, and that the authenticity of the child rests on its isolation from the social" (Chapman 138). The adult is seen as a product of civilization, a creation made by years of molding and shaping into societal expectations and standards. The child, however, is free from any societal stress and remains unrestrained and blissfully ignorant from cultural forces. The pirates act as a direct contrast to the Lost Boys because the "adult is radically determined, warped, and solidified into an unnatural, externally imposed social role, and looks up longingly to the 'limitless indeterminable nature of the child and to his pure innocence" (Chapman 138). Hook obsesses over Peter because the boy possesses the freedom and happiness that the pirate captain severely lacks. The Lost Boys represent the ideal foil to the adult life because they epitomize a life full of endless possibilities and potential, whereas the pirates are fully grown and their roles have already been fulfilled. Peter and the Lost Boys refuse to grow up and stay in

Neverland in order to stay boys longer, as time has little effect on the island and their growing process is slowed or indefinitely prolonged. Peter and the boys do not wish to grow up because "to grow up is to experience a narrowing of possibilities, a hardening of what was formerly malleable into a shape much diminished form the expansive, amorphous self of the child. To grow up is to fall from boundlessness into boundedness" (Chapman 138). Peter and the boys do not wish to grow up and become adults because of the graceless existence that the pirates lead after childhood. To be an adult is to be a person who has been hardened and molded by society into a form that is acceptable by social standards. The Lost Boys rebel against the idea of social conformity and choose to stay young, free, and close to nature.

Even though they physically look opposite to each other, the pirate's actions and behavior are remarkably similar to that of Peter and the other Lost Boys. Both the Lost Boys and the pirates participate in numerous murders, sometimes unfairly ganging up and acting in groups to kill a single person. They also share a common disregard for human life and, more disturbingly, both Hook and Peter commit amicicide (the murder of a friend or comrade). Hook thoughtlessly kills and also willingly sacrifices his men coldly and casually: "Let us now kill a pirate, to show Hook's method. Skylights will do. As they pass, Skylights lurches clumsily against him, ruffling his lace collar; the hook shoots forth, there is a tearing sound and one screech, then the body is kicked aside, and the pirates pass on. He has not even taken the cigars from his mouth" (81). Hook kills one of his own men simply because Skylights bumped into him and ruffled his clothes. Hook kills him without even pausing to take his cigars out of his mouth and it would appear

that murder is second nature to the pirate captain. Likewise, throughout the novel it is mentioned that Peter kills the Lost Boys either when they begin to grow up or anger him. The narrator states that, "The boys on the island vary, of course, in numbers, according as they get killed and so on; and when they seem to be growing up, which is against the rules, Peter thins them out" (76). Like Hook, Peter routinely kills off the Lost Boys without much thought— if they break the rules and grow up, they must be killed. To Peter, growing up is an offense punishable by death and he would rather kill them than allow the boys to live into adulthood. If a Lost Boy began to grow up and get older, Peter Pan would be inclined to kill them for no other reason other than they are losing their child-like qualities.

However, Peter Pan also kills his Lost Boys when they act in a way that he does not approve of. Amicicide is seen again when Tootles shoots Wendy and her "death" upsets Peter. Tootles accepts his death and bravely bares his breast for Peter to strike at him: "Twice did Peter raise the arrow, and twice did his hand fall. 'I cannot strike,' he said with awe, 'there is something stays my hand'" (97). Here, Peter is trying to kill Tootles and would have succeeded in stabbing the boy, but Wendy's hand stops him. Only her intervention saves Tootles life, and if not for her then Peter would have slain the boy for upsetting him. The Lost Boys do not rush to Tootles' defense and they accept his death at Peter's hand without hesitation or protest. They are conditioned to accept Peter's tyranny and have become accustomed to the idea of their friends dying, whether in battle against the pirates or Indians, or at the hands of Peter. Death on the island is treated as a common, daily occurrence and is not given much gravitas.

The pirates are as equally responsible for the high death rate on the island as the wild beasts, the Indians, or the Lost Boys. The pirates and the Lost Boys share so many strikingly similar villainous behaviors that their actions alone make it difficult to differentiate the heroes from the villains. Michael Lewis states that separating "good" characters from "evil" characters can be challenging because "the actions of these characters are often quite similar" (163). Peter and Hook both engage in amicicide, as well as other extremely violent behavior. This could confuse some readers who are trying to distinguish the "good" characters from the "bad." Typically, the "good" characters are those who act heroically, morally, bravely, and selflessly, while the "bad" characters are selfish, greedy, immoral, and cowardly. In *Peter Pan and Wendy*, this simply is not the case and there is no easy distinction between good and evil based off any of the character's actions.

The readers and audience of Peter Pan immediately assign Peter the role of hero and Hook the role of villain before they truly know the story or either of the characters, based off of their physical description. Daniel Forbes, author of "The Aesthetic of Evil," writes that "the distinction between good and evil is not as clear-cut as we sometimes think. We may take for granted that it is a simple matter to identify who is good and who is evil" (16). Peter looks like an innocent boy who is out looking for an adventure, and the audience either does not notice or ignores his murderous tendencies. Hook has a physical mutilation, a "claw" instead of a hand, which creates a villainous ambiance. However, if it were not for Hook's mutilation and the other pirate's physical disfigurements, as in Noodler's backwards hands and Bill Juke's full-body tattooing, it

would be hard to distinguish who we were supposed to designate as good or evil in Neverland. This unclear separation invites "us to question whether either side can easily be classified as good or evil" (Forbes 17). Because the Lost Boys and the pirates embody much of the same immoral behavior, it is hard to assign either of them as "good" or "evil," due to the fact that they possess a mixture of both qualities. Forbes continues to explain this phenomenon by writing:

> When we examine the actions of heroes and villains closely, we find that both resort to similar methods of achieving their goals. This suggests that perhaps they are simply at odds with one another because their goals are different and incompatible. Sometimes we characterize acts of force, violence, and deception as evil, but frequently both good and evil characters will resort to these methods. Indeed, the use of force often seems necessary in order to defeat the forces of evil, and characters who attempt to negotiate peacefully with villains are frequently depicted as woefully naïve. And we find the hero almost invariably confronts the villain with the same sorts of deception and violence that the villain wields (17).

The actions and methods of the hero and villain are extremely similar and both resort to violence or force to achieve their goals. Peter and Hook are neither strictly good nor evil; they are simply opposing forces whose goals clash against each other. Hook cannot abide Peter's cockiness and must put an end to his self-important behavior, while Peter looks for an adventure and killing pirates greatly entertains him. However, the audience strives

to define who is good and who is evil on the island, and more times than not will determine that Peter and the Lost Boys are beacons of good and innocent children who simply don't know any better, while the pirates are corrupt and evil characters who are hunting and killing off the young, pure children in Neverland. Readers have set expectations of protagonists and antagonists and must have these distinctions in order to create empathy for the Lost Boys. Forbes states that creating this distinction between good and evil, ultimately, is rather simple due to the fact that "heroes and villains usually *look* different, and this indicates the importance of being able to identify characters as good or evil" (18). It is not so much how the characters act that identifies them as villain or hero, but how they physically look ultimately determines the audience's feelings and interpretation of the characters.

Barrie makes it easy for his readers to distinguish the good characters from the evil ones by making the pirates physically appear villainous, while the Lost Boys look more natural, and thus more pure. To put it plainly, the pirates are aged and ugly, while the Lost Boys are young and beautiful. Ugliness is traditionally linked to evil and immorality, while beauty is associated with good and moral behavior. Rarely are heroes portrayed as ugly while the villains are beautiful, especially in Victorian literature. In Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 novel, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Mr. Edward Hyde the deformed and disfigured version of Dr. Henry Jekyll. The first physical description of Edward Hyde is in the opening chapter of the novel, by Mr. Enfield, who states that: "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" (12). Jekyll later describes Hyde as "pure evil," and Hyde's despicable personality and actions match his exterior appearance (112). Hyde's ugly appearance and his evil behavior are irrefutably linked because, as Jekyll explains, "Evil besides (which I must still believe to be the lethal side of man) had left on that body an imprint of deformity and decay" (111). Victorian authors, such as Barrie and Stevenson, seem to suggest that evil creates an external appearance of ugliness and immoral actions lead to a sinister exterior. This can account for why Barrie depicts Hook as more villainous than Peter, even though their actions are the same. It is the physical mutilation, Hook's iron claw and the pirate's other disfigurements, which create the final distinction between the "good" from the "evil" in Neverland. If Peter had been physically deformed somehow, then there would be no clear way to differentiate between the pirates and Lost Boys, based on action and appearance alone, except their ages. Ugliness is the only firm separating factor that places the pirates in the role of the evil villains and, by somewhat of a default, then places the Lost Boys and Peter in the role of the beautiful, innocent-looking heroes.

The connection between ugliness and evilness, and beauty and goodness shares a connection that outdates the Victorian period. The book *On Ugliness* reiterates the teachings of Thomas Aquinas to create the distinction between what is considered beautiful and what is marked as ugly: "beauty is the result not only of due proportion, brightness or clarify but also of integrity—hence an object must have all the characteristics that its form has imposed upon the material. In this sense, not only was the

term ugly applied to anything that was out of proportion" but included "those who lacked a limb" or other missing or disfigured body parts (15). The Lost Boys are physically pure and do not possess any bodily disfigurements, while each pirate has something "ugly" about them. Hook has a missing hand, the giant black pirate is abnormally large, Noodler's hands are supernaturally attached backwards, Cecco has unnatural piercings, and Bill Jukes has excessive tattooing all over his body. During the Victorian period, the connection between morality and physical appearance was made by Karl Rosenkrantz in 1853, which drew a clear and distinct "analogy between ugliness and moral evil. Just as evil and sin are the opposites of good, whose hell they represent, so is ugliness the 'hell of beauty'" (Eco 16). Beauty holds some intrinsic value of goodness, while ugliness possesses some inherent evilness. With the philosophy of good/beautiful and evil/ugly it is easy to see why readers and audiences of *Peter Pan and Wendy* would automatically assign the pirates the roles of villains and the Lost Boys the role of the heroes. The heroes fight for the "good" side, the morally upright and socially acceptable characters, while the villains fight for the "evil" side, the immoral, corrupt, and societal outcasts. However, it is important to weigh the character's actions into account while attempting to classify which characters are good and which are evil.

Peter and Hook, although they both share the same preference towards violence and engage in countless murders on the island, have near opposite personalities. Their polar behaviors can especially be noted when they each have the opportunity to meet Wendy. As mentioned earlier, when Peter first meets Wendy he is looking for his shadow where she rushes to help him and reattaches his shadow for him. Peter's cockiness,

however, offends Wendy and she retreats into bed. In an angered state, Wendy "sprang in the most dignified way into bed and covered her face with the blankets" (40). It is only after that he realizes that Wendy is upset that Peter begins to act nicely towards her and coaxes her out of bed with empty compliments: "To induce her to look up he pretended to be going away, and when this failed he sat on the end of the bed and tapped gently with his foot. . . . 'Wendy,' he continued, in a voice that no woman has ever yet been able to resist, 'Wendy, one girl is more use than twenty boys' (40). Wendy, of course, eventually continues talking with Peter, but only after he first insulted her and then manipulatively sweet-talked her out of bed. Hook, on the other hand, is a complete gentleman when he first meets Wendy. While attacking the Lost Boys' house underground and capturing the children, Hook and the pirates pluck the boys "from their trees in this ruthless manner; and several of them were in the air at a time, like bales of goods flung from hand to hand" (185). The boys are treated quite roughly; Wendy, however, is shown special treatment by Hook: "With ironical politeness Hook raised his hat to her, and, offering her his arm, escorted her to the spot where the others were being gagged. He did it with such an air, he was so frightfully *distingue*, that she was too fascinated to cry out" (186). Very unlike Wendy's first impression of Peter, Hook shows her every courtesy and acts very politely. He acts like such a gentleman that Wendy is physically unable to speak, whether from surprise or admiration for the gentlemanly villain she was observing. In addition to his gentlemanly behavior, Hook also displays good form at the time of capturing the Lost Boys and meeting Wendy: "The pirates kicked [Slightly] in their rage, just as you kick the parcel . . . and strange to say it was Hook who told them to belay their violence. His

lip was curled with malicious triumph" (187). Hook knows, at this point, he has won. The Indians have been defeated, the Lost Boys are his captives, and Peter Pan is left alone in the home underground. Due to his obsession with good form, Hook does not approve of further beating Slightly. It would be bad form to continue to beat a foe who has been captured, so Hook preserves the good form of not only himself, but of his crew, and halts any further violence against the defeated boys.

Both Hook and Peter engage in the same violent behavior, yet Hook is civilized and courtly, while Peter is wild and selfish. Hook is an honorable, "a man of indomitable courage," while Peter is a "proud and insolent youth" yet Peter Pan is always depicted as the hero and Hook a "dark and sinister" villain" (81, 226). It could be argued that Hook is always portrayed as the villain because of his profession: pirate and "the only man that Sea-Cook feared" (80). Hook is undoubtedly a world-renowned pirate and he even declares this about himself: "I am the only man whom Barbecue feared . . . and Flint himself feared Barbecue" (204). To be a pirate is to be a criminal, and by extension if he is both an antagonist and a criminal, surely he must be the villain. However, the Lost Boys are no less criminal than the pirates. They are runaways and delinquents who spend their time killing Indians and pirates, and at times even each other, yet they are portrayed as the heroes.

In the chapter, "The Return Home," Hook and his pirates are dead and the Lost Boys have taken over the *Jolly Roger*. Peter, as leader of the Lost Boys, is also now their captain and in complete control of the ship, where he is called Captain Pan. There is an instant change in the Lost Boys' attitude once on board and they are no longer so closely

tied to nature, but rather quickly adopt the seafaring lifestyle and appear to leave their home underground behind:

> Some of them wanted it to be an honest ship and others were in favor of keeping it a pirate; but the captain treated them as dogs, and they dared not express their wishes to him even in a round robin. Instant obedience was the only safe thing. Slightly got a dozen for looking perplexed when told to take soundings. The general feeling was that Peter was honest just now to lull Wendy's suspicions, but there might be a chance when the new suit was ready, which, against her will, she was making him out of some of Hook's wickedest garments. It was afterwards whispered among them that on the first night he wore this suit he sat long in the cabin with Hook's cigar-holder in his mouth and one hand clenched, all but the forefinger, which he bent and held threateningly aloft like a hook (234).

Earlier in the novel Peter imitates Hook's voice and commands the pirates to let Tiger Lily go, to which they obediently listen. At the end of the novel, however, Peter has transcended imitation and seems to be replacing, if not actually becoming Hook. Not only does Peter try to mimic Hook's appearance by wearing the captain's old clothes and smoke cigars the same way, but Peter now has a crew that he treats "as dogs," similar to Hook's tyrannous rule. Peter's gradual transformation into Hook proves that being a pirate in Neverland does not automatically assign one to the role villain, nor were the Lost Boys fighting the pirates because they were criminals. Nor was the station of pirate an age-specific category which forced the Lost Boys to fight the pirates because it

represented childhood versus adulthood. Although pirates embody an immoral and debauched lifestyle, the Lost Boys take to being pirates and living on the pirate ship very quickly. The thing that separates Hook's pirates from Peter's pirate crew is this: Peter's crew is physically pure and untainted, while each member of Hook's crew had some physical mutilation or disfigurement that made his men appear ugly, and thus appear evil. The interchangeable role of being a pirate and how the Lost Boy pirates and Hook's pirates are represented forces the reader to "confront a representation of evil that refuses easy explanations" (Heit 176). To be a pirate in Neverland does not make one inherently evil just because it is classified as a criminal group outside of Neverland. Even after the Lost Boys assume their new roles as pirates, they still maintain the "good" characters in the novel because "good," in *Peter Pan and Wendy,* is not defined by one's actions, station, behavior, or conduct, but by one's physical appearance.

The fight between the pirates and the Lost Boys on Neverland is not a battle between good versus evil. After examining the pirates and Lost Boys in *Peter Pan and Wendy*, it is clear that neither can be assigned the role of hero or villain, though both exhibit heroic and villainous qualities. The Lost Boys and pirates are simply opposing forces in Neverland whose goals are at odds. Hook and Peter are neither exclusively "good" nor "evil," as they are a combination of admirable and sinister behaviors. However, the pirates are viewed as being "evil" because of their unusual physical appearance and ugly disfigurements. Even though they do not act any more "evil" than the boys, they are seen as villains because they possess ugly mutilations, which possess evil implications.

Conclusion

In the late nineteenth century, middle- and upper-class men sought respite from their daily expectations and hid their criminal and debauched behaviors by living double lives. Separating their public and private lives allowed them the means of satisfying their desire for sin without tarnishing their reputation or putting their unconventional actions under the gaze of the public eye. These men used criminality, with an emphasis on murder, grotesque violence, sexual deviance, and drug abuse, was used as a method of escape from the suffocating social standards and expectations of gentlemen in Victorian culture. Nineteenth-century gentlemen (literary characters and historical figures) experimented with drug use, violence, and sexual deviance and, in doing so, reinvented the role of crime by bestowing it with aesthetic properties and making the criminal act a mode of art. The sophisticated criminal acts conducted by the middle and upper class deviated from the typical Victorian crimes (vagrancy, prostitution, drunken disorderly conduct, theft, solicitation, and other petty misdemeanors) because they were performed as a way to elude themselves from the mundane, stiflingly moral Victorian society instead of the common crime for profit or personal gain.

Victorian men constantly struggled with the ongoing internal quarrel of meeting societal expectations versus fulfilling their own desires. It was impossible for men to pursue their interests and passions if they conflicted with cultural values or norms. The existence of the Victorian gentleman is perhaps best summarized by Max Nordau in

Degeneration in which he illustrates the struggle that men faced while trying to conform to societal conventions and pursue personal desires at the same time:

> The common feature in all these male specimens is that they do not express their real idiosyncrasies, but try to present something they are not. … Thus we get heads set on shoulders not belonged to them, costumes the elements of which are as disconnected as though they belonged to a dream, colours that seem to have been matched in the dark. The impression is that of a masked festival, where all are in disguises (9).

Nordau argues that the men did not display their natural thoughts or behaviors, but tried to artificially force themselves to present the values of their society and culture. This deception muddled their sense of identity and individualism and instead the gentlemanly disguise they wore was laced with what their peers wanted to see. As shown in the circumstance of Dr. Jekyll and Jack the Ripper, this mask of genial respectability allowed them to commit heinous crimes while remaining innocent in the public eye. Gentleman did not engage in criminal conduct and so villains used their gentlemanly disguises to avoid suspicion and continue their crimes unnoticed. Dorian Gray, however, is a gentleman who then falls from grace and loses his gentlemanly innocence. Without the air of a gentleman, society would view Dorian as nothing but a scoundrel and under constant scrutiny and criticism from his peers. Peter Pan and Captain Hook challenge the traditional sense of what comprises a gentleman by redefining good and evil and the characteristics of a hero and villain. The Lost Boys and crew of the *Jolly Roger* challenge

the notion that one's traits can be determined based solely off of physical appearances, thus contradicting the Victorian methods of determining one's gentlemanliness.

Elite men in the Victorian era used criminal conduct, drug use, sexual experimentation, and other unconventional practices as a way to escape from their everyday lives and common practices. Some of the characters analyzed in this thesis were looking for a thrill while others attempted to shrug off boredom and keep themselves entertained with new experiences. Some, however, simply turned to criminality and other debauched behaviors because they enjoyed living life outside of conventional norms and what was socially acceptable. Oscar Wilde writes that "crime belongs exclusively to the lower orders. … I should fancy that crime was to them what art is to us, simply a method of procuring extraordinary sensations" (Keyes 59). What Wilde fails to acknowledge, however, is that crime is also a method of procuring extraordinary sensations and that art and crime can be combined to create aesthetic crimes, such as the Whitechapel killings. Criminality is not as black and white as Wilde's quote portrays and there is no definitive line that separates or prohibits the elite class from being criminal or the lower class from being more moral. Crime does not reserve itself for a particular group of men or disassociates itself from the upper class. It is, perhaps, the one activity that is open to men of all backgrounds and educations without any discrimination.

Even detectives and men who are obliged to uphold the law are tempted by a life of crime. Sherlock Holmes resorts to burglary in "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton" in order to protect the interests of a client who has hired him to recover documents being used for blackmail. Holmes realizes that unless he can successfully steal

back the documents, the life of his client will be ruined by scandal. He entices Watson to enjoy in his criminal adventure and says to him, "We have shared the same room for some years, and it would be amusing if we ended by sharing the same cell. … I have always had an idea that I would have made a highly efficient criminal" (969). Sherlock's keen intellect allows him to out think any criminal and deduce the simplest solutions to the most clouded cases. He proves himself an invaluable help to the police and has been directly responsible for the capture of each criminal in Watson's narratives. However, his decision to remain on the side of the law may not be as altruistic as it may seem. If Sherlock would have picked a life of crime instead of a consulting detective, there is no doubt that he would make the ideal gentleman villain. He is constantly bored with life and looking for distractions but his intelligence separates him from petty criminals. Sherlock Holmes could conduct the most outrageous crimes and use his powers of deduction and knowledge of the inadequate police department to frame others for his crimes and easily get away with whatever crimes he wished. However, his brain needs work and only operates fully when he is solving problems. Acting as a consulting detective in crime-ridden Victorian London presents Sherlock with an endless supply of cases to solve and he chooses the law in order to unravel complicated cases instead of using his creative powers for crime.

Even though Sherlock works on the side of the law, there is no doubt that he and Watson enjoy playing the role of the criminal occasionally. During their burglary attempt in "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton," Watson confesses to the reader that his "first feeling of fear had passed away, and I thrilled now with a keener zest than I had

ever enjoyed when we were the defenders of the law instead of its defiers. … Far from feeling guilty, I rejoiced and exulted in our dangers" (971). Watson enjoys the rush of excitement and thrill by living the criminal life while Holmes is a flawed character with many qualities of the antihero. Holmes is an avid drug user who lacks basic social skills and often has a murky sense of morality. In several adventures he actually pardons murderers and believes that their killings are justified. Holmes acts as detective, judge, and jury in several cases instead of reporting all of his findings to the police and letting the justice system run its course. For instance, Holmes witnesses the murder of a sinister blackmailer whom he despises. Instead of helping the police and informing them of who the murderer is, Holmes states: "I think there are certain crimes which the law cannot touch, and which therefore, to some extent, justify private revenge. No, it's no use arguing. I have made up my mind. My sympathies are with the criminals rather than with the victim, and I will not handle this case" (976). Holmes is fully aware that without his testimony Lestrade will not be able to capture the murderer responsible and the case will go unsolved. Instead of a gentleman villain who thinks himself above the law, Sherlock Holmes believes that he is the law and allows several murderers, thieves, and other criminals to go free. However, if Sherlock would have conducted criminal acts instead of just enabling some he believed to be morally justified then he could have been a more efficient criminal than Jack the Ripper.

The gentleman villain needed to live a respectable life as camouflage from suspicion if they wished to continue their deviant behavior and remain unnoticed. More importantly, the villains needed to live behind the strict social stereotypes and prejudices

of their society in order to carry out their crimes. Society's opinion on crime and who were stereotyped as the criminal classes was an important tool for each gentleman villain. Sharrona Pearl, author of *About Faces: Physiognomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain,* argues that the villain's ability to camouflage with polite society is evident especially in nineteenth-century literature. She states that "the roots of the Victorian detective story lay in the criminal's ability to avoid capture by blending into the urban masses (Pearl 34). One simply had to *look* innocent in order to avoid suspicion. The Chinese were strongly linked to opium dens so if one wanted to indulge in opiates and not be discovered by the public, one would simply have to distance themselves from all associations with the Orient. The poor were commonly associated with petty theft so a robber may want to appear affluent in order to look inconspicuous. Gentleman villains were exceptionally talented at blending in with crowds and avoiding unwanted suspicion by separating themselves from criminal or unconventional stereotypes. Villains avoided drawing the public's attention by trying to appear as unremarkable as possible.

As discussed previously, Victorians placed tremendous limits on behavior, expression, emotions, and decorum. In order to appear gentlemanly, one had to look and act the part of a gentleman; whether one was truly a gentleman or simply acting required extreme restraint, concentration, and ultimately the ability to mask one's true feelings. Extreme and constant repression, however, made physiognomy extremely difficult and the interpretation of facial expressions often confusing and unproductive. Physiognomy soon turned into a subjective practice and became less reliable as a good mode of judging one's character based simply off of their facial expressions. For example, thin lips "could

be a sign of criminal cunning or sophisticated calculation skills. Physiognomic inferences all depended on who was looking, who was being looked at, when, and why" (Pearl 6). This same kind of subjectivity and misguided physiognomic inference is what categorizes hero and villain in *Peter Pan and Wendy*. The audience determines that the pirates are the villains simply because their physical mutilations are tied to the social stereotype of criminal behavior and debauchery. One hardly looks at Captain Hook as a pitiable amputee; instead his hook is personified and made to be as much of a villain as any member of the *Jolly Roger* crew.

Just as criminals needed to blend in with the innocent, Victorians felt the need to distance themselves from the criminal's physiognomy. Pearl explains that the impressions done by caricature artists and wax modelers "of criminal and deviant others were attractive in part because of their power to reassure observers how very different from these representations they themselves were" (34). Not only were these representations reinforcing the physiognomic views of the vulgar and even ugly, but they were often exaggerated and distorted to help further separate the masses from the truly "criminal" looking. However, Victorians comforting themselves that they did not mimic the physiognomy of criminals was not enough. Although they may reassure themselves that they look innocent and gentile, Victorians felt a greater need to show their picturesque physiognomic features to family, friends, acquaintances, and even strangers encountered on the street. Pearl explains that "in order to avoid the suspect implications from hiding from the physiognomic gaze, city dwellers hid in plain sight, those who did lurk in the darkness were marked as deviant and criminal, as were those who were visibly

different in the light of day" (Pearl 28). Here, we can take into account Peter and the Lost Boys. Although the pirates in Neverland are dammed for their physical appearance, Peter and the Lost Boys one redeeming characteristic is how they look. Although they commit crimes identical to those of the pirates and are perhaps even more violent and wanton, they have two things that the pirates sorely lack: beauty and youth. Lord Henry Wotton reaffirms the Victorian's esteem for youth in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* where he exclaims: "Youth! Youth! There is absolutely nothing in the world but youth" (203)! Those brief words are enough for Henry to corrupt Dorian Gray to his teachings and instantly turn him vain. The Lost Boys know the value of their youth and for those reasons they are able to commit gruesome murders and acts of violence without trying to hide their behaviors. Pearl argues that hiding "was associated with criminal motives and questionable activities" and so the Lost Boys flaunt their crimes and violent behaviors knowing that their youthful innocence outweighs any evil deeds they commit (32).

Preserving one's innocence and camouflaging with the untouchable middle and upper class was essential for the survival of the gentleman villain. Peter parades his villainy and yet the audience refuses to accept him as a source of evil because of how pure he physically appears. Peter is not viewed as a cruel character, however, because of his age. His childlike appearance forces the audience to accept that he and the Lost Boys are only "playing" at war with the pirates and they are fighting for fun. It is ultimately their childishness that preserves their innocence in the eyes of the audience and because they are children their immoral actions can easily be forgiven. The physiognomy of the adult pirates and their mutilated bodies, however, are their downfall. No matter how

properly or gentlemanly Hook might conduct himself the audience will not forgive him for his loathsome mien and so he is dubbed the villain. In contrast, Dorian Gray was considered an extremely youthful and beautiful man but the corruption of his soul and the irreversible, willful destruction of his reputation make it impossible for redemption. Dorian is beyond the point of reconciliation or forgiveness and the only thing he can do to settle his own conscience is to kill himself and be free of it. In contrast to Dorian Gray, who has no interest in the preservation of his reputation, Dr. Jekyll attempts to satisfy his desires while remaining inconspicuous. Jekyll unleashes Hyde and is then simultaneously able to keep his gentlemanly appearance and elite status as Dr. Henry Jekyll and fulfill his animalistic and barbaric desires while exploring London as Edward Hyde. Similar to Henry Jekyll, Jack the Ripper is a historic figure who was able to survive the dangerous double life of a gentleman villain. Not only was he able to survive, but he actually thrived while conducting his crimes and remaining inconspicuous from the police and public's gaze. Based on the evidence and the precision of his gruesome crimes, it is clear that Jack the Ripper was extremely well-educated and a man of superior intelligence. However, with a brief glimpse at his murdered victims it is also clear that he was cold, calculated, and a man capable of great evil.

In nineteenth-century England, the construction of criminality and the criminal classes was based heavily on physiognomy, phrenology, and one's social status. Victorians viewed crime as a class issue rather than a behavior problem. This skewed and biased view of crime bestowed the presumably respectable middle and upper class with qualities of innocence while damming those in the lower classes. Members of the lower

class were thought to be untrustworthy and seen as opportunistic predatory criminals who lacked the morality and decency to restrain themselves from theft, crimes of passion, drunkenness, addiction, violence, and other misdemeanors. In contrast, men from the middle class were publically pursuing the honorable, respectable, chivalrous gentlemanly ideal and disassociated from tendencies that would predispose them towards crime. Gentlemen were the ideal figures of strength and British integrity and foiled invasive, imperial foreigners whom they believed were threatening the English culture and moral revival. As I discussed in my opening chapter, racism factored heavily in the rhetoric of drug addiction of the nineteenth century but also helped shape the wider Victorian stereotypes of criminality in general. Criminals were portrayed with racist stereotypes as being darker skinned, brutish, unintelligent, and animalistic. This unrealistic criminal portrayal is displayed in the literature of the time as Hyde, who is actually Dr. Jekyll and extremely intelligent, is portrayed as more of a "thing" or an "ape" than an actual person. This Otherness, along with class stratification, enforces a polar duality between the lower class and elites while creating an inherent void of suspicion toward any criminal activity performed by the middle or upper classes.

The characters discussed in this thesis all represent variations of the gentleman villain and how the Victorian society was trained to read, interpret, and analyze their actions and behaviors. Because the Victorians were so obsessed with physical appearances they misinterpreted the true nature of the gentleman villain and were blinded by noble appearances and gentile manners. Though physical appearances were crucial to the construction and identities of the gentleman villain there is still one more aspect that

is vital to their character: motive. There is one motive that links each character discussed in this thesis that would have eluded the Victorian police. Instead of conducting crimes for personal gain, which motivated most lower-class criminals in the nineteenth century, gentleman villains were simply pursuing criminal activity and debauched behaviors because they enjoyed the aestheticism of crime. For the gentleman villain, crime and sin were the logical antidote to the highly ethical Victorian society because they were the splashes of color in a black and white moral code. Gentlemen sought an escape from the suffocating social standards and turned to living double lives that allowed them to indulge in villainous and criminal behaviors. Presenting themselves as a gentleman publicly while simultaneously leading a debauched or criminal life privately allowed them to protect their genial respectability and status while satisfying their previously repressed desires.

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