ENGLISH ASSIMILATION AND INVASION FROM OUTSIDE THE EMPIRE:
PROBLEMS OF THE OUTSIDER IN ENGLAND IN BRAM STOKER’S *DRACULA*

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ABSTRACT

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Bram Stoker’s novel Dracula introduces a number of issues related to immigration, immigrants, and contact between native born Britons and the non-English. Stoker uses a number of familiar genres and characters to give readers a sense of what is acceptably English, and challenges the perceptions of what makes someone English through Count Dracula, who assimilates Englishness in order to infiltrate and undermine English society. In doing so, Stoker points out xenophobic attitudes among the English by bringing someone from outside the British Empire into England and showing them to be capable of being more English than the English.
Dedicated to Kathryn and Henry
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INTRODUCTION

Since its publication in 1897, Bram Stoker’s vampire novel, *Dracula*, has fascinated and frightened people. The story of a mysterious and powerful vampire who comes to London, England, and preys on unsuspecting women has inspired more adaptations and revisions than Stoker likely could have imagined. Part of the continued popularity of *Dracula* would seem to be the ease with which the story can be adapted and used to reflect the fears and concerns of contemporary society. Depending on the time and place, Count Dracula can be seen as a reflection of rampant sexuality, the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, the dangers of class conflict, or any number of other interpretations. No matter how relevant the novel may seem to current readers, it would be foolish to ignore the ways in which *Dracula* excited emotions in its earliest readers.

Late Victorian English citizens would have viewed the novel through a number of different lenses that 21st century readers may be unable to appreciate. Of particular interest are the racial overtones present in Stoker’s text, which ground the story in the fears and concerns of a country that, at the time, prided itself on being the social jewel of the Imperial crown. By the time Stoker’s novel went to print, England had territories ranging from India to the Caribbean to Africa under its control. The notion of an empire depends on the concept that some group of people is superior—culturally, intellectually, militarily, etc.—to someone else in order to be politically viable. The system of control that held the British Empire together was based on the principles of “military conquest,
racial subjection, economic exploitation and territorial expansion” in such a way that the English were seen as a civilized saving grace for people and territories that were looked upon as barbaric and socially unevolved (Armitage 3). Anything that threatened the notion of English superiority inspired fear; anything that threatened to alter or take away the sense of national identity established by the ruling class within the empire inspired panic. As a vampire that drinks the blood of his victims to survive, Count Dracula is frightening enough. What allows Count Dracula to transcend the trappings of the stock vampire character is that he comes to England from a land outside the empire, and thus outside the civilizing force of English society, and is able to siphon the cultural essence of his victims, causing them to lose a part of their English identity without directly assaulting the military structures or racial prejudices Imperial control is based upon.

Count Dracula embodies a dangerous sense of otherness, someone from outside England and their Imperial territories capable of absorbing the essence of Englishness, while using his new-found Englishness to devious ends. Someone capable of robbing a respectable English man of his national essence can, as Count Dracula does, infiltrate England and infect English women, replacing their purity and Englishness with a kind of hybrid otherness that is as offensive to the English as the original outsider. My intention is to examine what about the text would have stood out as familiar or particularly English to readers in the months and years just after the publication of Dracula, a group of people I will hereafter refer to as Stoker’s contemporary audience. In addition, I will point out what about the text would have contributed to a sense of otherness or non-Englishness, or what would have helped establish a sense of any characters or situation as being recognizably non-English within the minds of Stoker’s contemporary audience. Stoker
goes to great lengths at certain points in *Dracula* to establish a sense of order and predictability, only to dismantle this sense of predictability a short time later. It therefore stands to reason that the reader is intended to pick up on these moments and take away from the text a sense of conflict between the recognizably English and the recognizably non-English, and carry this sense of conflict with them throughout the reading experience. By looking at the conflict the between the English and the non-English, a social contrast emerges that adds as much tension to the text as the fearful title vampire himself.

**ACCEPTABLE ENGLISHNESS**

Within Stoker’s text there are clearly identifiable markers that point the reader to a sense of acceptable Englishness. The term “Englishness,” as I will use it herein, is a blanket term to describe a set of characteristics or traits that would be familiar to Stoker’s contemporary readers. This includes seemingly obvious things like fluency in the English language and familiarity with the structure of the English government, as well as more intangible qualities like social manners and customs and cultural references common to English citizens. This is not to say that everything that could be described as English appears in some manifestation in *Dracula*, but rather that Stoker makes a deliberate effort to portray certain characters in a way that would be familiar to his initial readers. Because the novel is written to resemble a collection of letters and diary entries from a number of different people, and because the narrative voice often shifts from one character to another within the same chapter, it can be difficult to keep track of who is saying what in the text. Even if the reader is able to correctly identify the speaker of any
given section of the book, many of the characters “sound” alike. The English characters within the novel all seem to share a basic writing or speaking style, a certain sense of what is appropriate behavior in both business and personal settings, and occasional references to English culture or literature. Those characters that possess Englishness are instantly likable because something in those characters resonated with Stoker’s contemporary audience. Even if the reader cannot remember which character is speaking at a given moment, this sense of Englishness alerts the reader that a character is likeable because they share something in common with the reader.

Englishness in *Dracula* is initially established through the journal of Jonathan Harker, a solicitor traveling through Eastern Europe to close a real estate transaction with Count Dracula. Harker’s journal begins as a kind of running commentary that takes the reader into Harker’s mind during his travels. Harker’s comments about the conditions in which he stays—“I did not sleep well, though my bed was comfortable enough” (Stoker 2)—or the style of dress preferred by the local girls—“something fluttering… like the dresses in a ballet” (2)—are based more on personal preferences or leisurely observation, and are not consistent with the types of records a strictly business-minded man would keep. Such records do, however, give a glimpse into the kinds of things an English traveler would think are out of the ordinary. There would be no reason for Harker to point out these details in the opening passages of the text unless their inclusion is meant to highlight some difference between what he sees and what an English citizen would be accustomed to. The reader can glean information about what is normal or familiar to the English business traveler by seeing what Harker finds noteworthy and comparing it to things they are familiar with. From Harker’s journal, it can be inferred that a typical
Englishman would find differences in dress and culture amusing, and would try to record them for the amusement of their friends. Harker’s comments about the food fed to him by the people he encounters are especially telling, as he remarks on how they differ from what he is used to in England. In the first chapter, Harker specifically mentions “a chicken done up some way with red pepper” (1), “a sort of porridge of maize flour… and egg-plant stuffed with forcemeat” (2), and a beef and bacon shish kabob “roasted over the fire, in the simple style of the London cat’s meat” (4-5). Harker attempts to compare the food he eats to dishes a typical English man or woman would encounter, and when presented with something exotic he notes how he must get the recipe for his fiancée at home (1). Harker’s reaction to the food of the people of the Carpathian Mountains has an almost condescending tone to it, for while he indicates he finds the people serving him and their food quaint, he makes no serious attempt to collect recipes or talk to the people in an attempt to understand the significance of the dishes to their culture. They are worthy of mention only because they are different from anything Harker has encountered in England. This reaction gives the sense that other English travelers would have similar reactions to new foods or cultures, and Stoker’s contemporary readers would be able to judge how closely Harker’s thoughts on these topics match their own.

Harker’s words are based on deliberate choices by Stoker, but they read as though they are the unfiltered, initial impressions of an English traveler. Harker’s journal entries have an almost free-flowing nature to them in the way they forgo strictly business affairs and attempt to tell a story about the Carpathian Mountain region from a typical English point of view. Harker’s narrative and his attempts to create a sense of familiarity help make him recognizably English to Stoker’s contemporary audience. The parallels Harker
draws between local dress and ballet costumes and the foods he encounters to things Londoners eat are of the sort that any late Victorian traveler might make when confronted with something unfamiliar. In attempting to explain his surroundings, Harker frames the people of the Carpathian Mountains in English terms. Stoker’s contemporary readers would have a framework in which to contextualize these concepts, even if they were not familiar with the specific foods or articles of clothing. Harker’s Englishness comes from the sense of familiarity he establishes within his portion of the narrative. This signals to the reader that Harker is like the reader, or at least has some recognizable traits that can be trusted by the reader.

Compared to the rest of Dracula, Harker’s travel narrative is somewhat unique. Unlike the letters, telegrams, and diary entries that dominate most of the novel, Harker’s initial writings, with their focus on exotic locations and foods, are similar to the travel literature that had been popular in England for decades. Narratives by English travelers and explorers, filled with tales of strange peoples and their customs, were a major form of entertainment. Although the popularity of the novel had begun to surpass that of the travel log by the time of Dracula’s publication, the travel log would have been a literary type that was still familiar to many readers. The following passage, taken from Charles Dickens’ travel narrative Pictures From Italy, is a well known example of travel literature:

The rooms are on the first floor, except the nursery for the night, which is a great rambling chamber, with four or five beds in it…. The other sleeping apartments are large and lofty; windows, with red and white drapery. The sitting room is famous. Dinner is already laid in it for three;
and the napkins are folded in cocked-hat fashion. The floors are red tile. There are no carpets, and not much furniture to speak of…. Dinner is announced…. There is not much in the dishes; but they are very good, and always ready instantly. (267)

Dickens’ passage demonstrates the concentration on small details such as furnishings, the details of meals, and the times of day at which certain events take place. Rather than give his opinion of the beauty of the surroundings, Dickens focuses on what could be seen as trivial or mundane facts. The overall impression is that the English traveler, as represented by Dickens, cares more about the day-to-day details of life than the grandeur or the adventure of traveling. Similar characteristics can be seen in the opening passages of Dracula. The details given by Harker could very easily have been lifted from any of the myriad travel logs published in England:

3 May, Bisritz.—Left Munich at 8:35 P.M., on 1st May, arriving at Vienna early next morning; should have arrived at 6:46, but train was an hour late. Buda-Pesth seems a wonderful place, from the glimpse which I got of it from the train and the little I could walk through the streets. I feared to go very far from the station, as we arrived late and would start as near the correct time as possible. The impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East; the most western of splendid bridges over the Danube… took us among the traditions of Turkish rule. (1)

Most of the details recounted by Harker, from the listing of dates and locations to his frustrations at the lack of punctuality displayed by the local trains, relate to travel. If we as readers take Dickens’ example as representative of the travel narrative genre, and if the
popularity of this type of literature signals a kind of cultural familiarity, rooting Harker in the travel narrative makes him instantly recognizable. No matter what else may be said or happen to Harker, his grounding in a literary form that was familiar to Stoker’s contemporary readers gives him immediate English credibility. This is not to say the travel narrative is unique to England per se, but its popularity with and familiarity to English readers gives anyone who invokes this style a sense of acceptance to English readers.

After the first four chapters of the text, in which both Harker’s Englishness and Count Dracula’s otherness are established, Stoker again returns to the travel narrative motif in the persona of Mina Murray, née Harker. Mina, her friend Lucy Westenra, and Lucy’s mother, have traveled to Whitby, in Yorkshire, to take in the sights while her fiancé is away. Mina’s diary entries about her trip closely mirror Harker’s in the way they describe the scenery and the general feeling these sights inspire in Mina:

This is a lovely place. The little river, the Esk, runs through a deep valley, which broadens out as it comes near the harbor. A great viaduct runs across, with high piers, through which the view seems somehow further away than it really is. The valley is beautifully green…. The houses of the old town… are all red-roofed, and seem piled up one over the other anyhow, like the pictures we see of Nuremberg. Right over the town is the ruin of Whitby Abbey… which is the scene of part of “Marmion”…. It is a most noble ruin, of immense size, and full of beautiful and romantic bits…. This is to my mind the nicest spot…. (54)
Harker’s narrative, like the example from Dickens, focuses more on the day-to-day aspects of travel, such as dates and times, while Mina’s narrative focuses more clearly on places and sensations. But the key to both passages is their display of hallmarks of the travel narrative. Both selections have less to do with moving the narrative of Count Dracula’s move to England forward, and more to do with connecting to something familiar to the initial reading audience. Even if the reader had never been to Whitby or Transylvania, Stoker’s contemporary audience could latch on to the travel narrative as something familiar, and by noticing the ways in which Harker or Mina focus on certain aspects of their travels come to see something of themselves within these characters.

The purpose of having sections of *Dracula* that imitate travel narratives is twofold. Harker’s narrative helps to establish him as a type of character that would be familiar to readers in 1890’s England: young, successful, hard-working, educated, with a young lady waiting for him at home and seemingly a bright future ahead of him. This roots Harker in the social customs and traditions recognizable to Stoker’s contemporary audience, traditions that “in the eyes of many… constituted the core” of Englishness and provided “the strongest cement” for identification between the reader’s Englishness and that of Stoker’s characters (Thompson 191). Mina’s narrative reestablishes the travel narrative motif and returns the reader to an acceptable level of Englishness after the shock of meeting Count Dracula. Both Harker and Mina represent an expected and perhaps comforting sense of regularity and accessibility. Similarly, after surviving the horrific experience at Castle Dracula with Harker, something as mundane as a young lady enjoying a tour of a port town with her friends might seem like a welcome change of
pace, providing the reader with time to collect themselves and reflect on what they have just experienced.

Through the use of the travel narrative style, Harker and Mina set benchmarks by which the reader can measure the degree to which the characters can be related to, and thus the Englishness of the characters and their future actions. Further, if other characters in the text are similar in some way to Harker or Mina, or their actions are consistent with the way Harker and/or Mina might behave, those characters will be considered suitably English by the reader. It is only when presented with someone or something that does not fit favorably compare to these benchmarks that the reader is given cause for alarm. In the opening chapter, and much of the second chapter, Harker does nothing that could be termed bold, irrational, or flashy. Until her later run-in with Count Dracula, the same is true of Mina. Both characters are unassuming middle class citizens, and initially come off as almost stock characters. The decision to start the novel in the manner of the travel narrative rather than jump directly to Harker’s first meeting with Count Dracula, and the return to this motif with Mina shows that Stoker wants to draw attention to the role of the travel narrative. Instead of beginning with what are among the most frightening parts of Dracula—Harker’s discovery that Count Dracula is a vampire, the encounter with the three vampire women, and Harker’s attempt to escape the castle—Stoker starts out by invoking a tried and true literary style. After shocking his audience with supernatural elements, Stoker returns to the reliable travel narrative to reestablish calm with his readers. Stoker’s use of the travel narrative as a familiar, calming literary force demonstrates what effects the power of recognition in this style of writing can have. Whether this attempt to reinstate calm is successful is left up to the reader, but the
implied point is that after the terror Count Dracula inflicts upon Harker, Stoker attempts to return to a state of literary calm by invoking something familiar.

THE VAMPIRE AND ENGLISH ASSIMILATION

The sense of familiarity Stoker tries to create early in the book begins to fade when Harker finally encounters Count Dracula. Stoker introduces character elements about Count Dracula that make him repulsive and virtually unlikeable from the beginning. Count Dracula lives in “the extreme east” of Transylvania, “one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe” (Stoker 1). The general area where Count Dracula lives was renowned in Victorian England as a European no-man’s-land, full of brutes and gypsies that waged constant wars of dominance with each other. As Stephen D. Arata explains, Transylvania was known primarily to Stoker’s contemporary audience as part of the “‘Eastern Question’ that so obsessed British foreign policy in the 1880’s and 90’s. The region was first and foremost the site… of political turbulence and racial strife. Victorian readers knew the Carpathians largely for its endemic cultural upheaval and its fostering of a dizzying succession of empires” (122-123). To demonstrate the unfamiliarity of the region, Stoker lists the main nationalities in Transylvania, many of which were likely foreign to Stoker’s contemporary audience: “Saxons in the South, and mixed with them the Wallachs, who are the descendants of the Dacians; Magyars in the West, and Szekelys in the East and North” (Stoker 2). Aside from the fact that some of these races may be unknown to Victorian readers, the potential for this much intermingling of races would likely make English readers uncomfortable. Compared to the relatively simple Anglo-Saxon racial mix often associated with the English, the racial
diversity of the people Harker meets on his trip through Transylvania stands out. This leaves an impression with the reader that the various people that live in the Carpathian Mountain region lack purity or refinement due to generations of racial mixing and inbreeding. The only possible exception would be the Saxons due to their cultural and political role in forming the English race and identity. The fact that such a race could mix with so many other undesirables and become as unrefined as the rest shows the dangerous influence the Transylvania region has on groups of people. As such, anyone who hails from this region would be deemed boorish, slavish, and uncouth at best, and Count Dracula is no exception. Despite the fact that Count Dracula appears to command a great deal of wealth and influence, and a level of respect—as evidenced by the fact that, to Harker’s “great delight,” Count Dracula secures the most comfortable lodgings and “the best place[s] on the coach[es]” along Harker’s travel route (3)—the implications of impurity left behind by the people of Transylvania nullifies any respect the reader may initially be inclined to feel for him simply because Count Dracula is a Transylvania native.

Stoker continues to build upon these ill feelings when the locals Harker encounters during his trip become increasingly fearful upon learning where the Englishman is traveling. Just before leaving for Castle Dracula, Harker has an encounter with the innkeeper’s fearful wife:

Just before I was leaving, the old lady came up to my room and said in a very hysterical way: “Must you go? Oh! young Herr, must you go?... Do you know what day it is?... Do you not know that to-night, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway? Do
you know where you are going, and what you are going to?”… Finally she went down on her knees and implored me not to go; at least to wait a day or two before starting. (4)

When Harker dismisses the woman’s concerns as “ridiculous,” she finally puts a rosary around his neck, “for your mother’s sake” (4). This act at last forces Harker to acknowledge his impending meeting with Count Dracula made him feel “not… nearly as easy in my mind as usual” (4). Although Harker never articulates what exactly makes him feel uneasy, but since the text points out that Harker is not made to feel physically threatened his discomfort must come from an emotional or psychological issue. As previously discussed, racial mixing present in the people of Transylvania could be said to have an impact on Harker; the Englishman’s unease could simply stem from being around people who are not of English racial stock. Another possibility stems from the rosary the old woman gives Harker. As a symbolic emblem of prayer used by the Roman Catholic Church, rosaries have no symbolic or religious purpose in the Anglican Church, of which it is reasonable to assume Harker would be a member. Harker’s reaction could simply be an aversion to something his religion teaches him to be without merit.

Another, seemingly more plausible answer, is that Harker is reacting to a combination of uneasy feelings from the place and the place he is going. Whether he expresses these feelings or not, there are some reasons why Harker would be uncomfortable to an old Transylvanian woman giving him a Rosary. The old woman’s point in singling out Harker is to prevent him from going to Count Dracula because he does not know “where [he is] going, and what [he is] going to.” The message the innkeeper’s wife sends is that if Harker finds anything about his present surroundings the least bit uncomfortable, these
sensations of unease will only be multiplied when he gets to his final destination. The impact of this message on the reader is to tell them that if they have found the racial diversity present in Transylvania displeasing, or if the idea of Saxon blood intermingling with races other than the English is disturbing to them, even more disturbing or frightening things lie ahead.

Up to this point, Count Dracula has been an unseen benefactor, paying for Harker’s travel expenses. Since the revelation of Count Dracula’s nature as a vampire has not yet been revealed, the reader has no direct evidence to base their perception of the character upon, except that he hails from a region outside the empire where a great deal of racial integration of non-English people has taken place. As the encounter with the innkeeper’s wife suggests, even Count Dracula’s own countrymen seem to be afraid of him, so much so they feel a need to warn others about the danger of going to his castle. Harker’s feeling of unease stems from the fact that there are things in his encounter with the innkeeper’s wife he recognizes as non-English, and if her warning is to be believed the place he is traveling to will have an even greater concentration of non-English people or situations. Since the place Harker is traveling to is the home of his client, Count Dracula would appear to be the most non-English character to be found in the text. If all the characters are pointing to Count Dracula as inspiring a feeling of uneasiness due to his non-English nature, an English audience like Stoker’s contemporary readers cannot help but feel some level of fear or animosity towards him. The result is that, from the very beginning, Count Dracula is portrayed as the other, something outside the acceptable level of Englishness needed to inspire a sense of comfort or familiarity in the reader.
Even before the character first appears on the page, the reader is made aware of Count Dracula’s status as the other.

As if his home base were not enough to make him suspect, Count Dracula’s outsider image is established immediately upon his first appearance in the novel. Even before he can say or do anything, his physical appearance sets him apart from any expectation. Details about Harker’s appearance are scarce, but there is nothing in Stoker’s text to indicate he has any physical abnormalities, or that he is something other than the typical Caucasian Englishman. At the very least, the lack of a description gives the reader the opportunity to decide what Harker should look like, and in the hands of an English audience that would likely mean picturing Harker as looking something like they do. This is not the case for Count Dracula, whose description is given in great detail, and is described by Harker as having an almost rat-like appearance. Count Dracula is initially described as being a tall man with a long moustache and a mangy shock of hair (13), with no sign of color in his appearance save the lips of his “rather cruel-looking” mouth, whose “remarkable ruddiness” hides “peculiarly sharp white teeth” (15). On top of this, Harker comments on Count Dracula’s peculiarly-shaped nose and the hair growing in the palms of his hands (15). The picture Stoker paints of Count Dracula has more than a passing resemblance to stereotypical images of Jews seen throughout Europe for centuries (Zanger 33-34). Count Dracula’s grotesque physical features compare to the depictions of Jews as “dirty, swarming, and overwhelmingly alien” compared to white, neatly-groomed Englishmen (Zanger 34). The conception of Jews as cultural aliens can be traced through the literature of William Shakespeare, Sir Walter Scott, James Joyce, Charles Dickens, and countless others, and was so common that it would be easy for
Stoker’s contemporary audience to see Count Dracula as Jewish. The most telling evidence for this is the connection between Count Dracula’s thirst for blood and the notorious Jewish blood libel, in which Jews were accused of murdering Christians to use their blood for religious rituals and sacrifices, as evidenced when he kidnaps a child from the village and gives it to the vampire women living in his castle to feed upon (33), and then uses his control over animals to kill the child’s mother and remove all evidence of the act (38).

Count Dracula is clearly not Christian, as he shrinks from the cross the old woman at the inn put around Harker’s neck (21), which adds more weight to the idea of Count Dracula as a Jew, or as being identifiable with Jews. Count Dracula is literally a parasite; he needs to drink the blood of human being in order to sustain his life. There are moments in the text where it is implied that Count Dracula drinks blood, but the clearest example of him doing so comes when Mina recounts a memory of Count Dracula feeding upon her. Before taking his fill of Mina’s blood, Count Dracula bids her to “be quiet,” admitting that “it is not the first time, or the second, that your veins have appeased my thirst” (246). As Jules Zanger argues, stereotypical Jews, who like Count Dracula often flee from Christian symbols, can also be read as parasites because they were often accused of “draining the blood of the Christian host” by having been “fed with the blood of widows and children” (Zanger 38). Whether Count Dracula is Jewish or not is irrelevant, as his “marked physiognomy,” his disdain for Christian symbols, and the parallels between his need for blood and the stories of Jewish blood libel would signal him out as Jewish (Stoker 15). Additionally, there is the matter of state recognition given to Christianity in England. The Church of England was, and still is, a major force in
British society. If Count Dracula is perceived to be outside or against the Anglican Church, it is the same as saying he lacks a vital element of Englishness, and as such he is not and cannot be considered fully British. Any hope of likeability or familiarity would be lost to Count Dracula because of his appearance and perceived affinity to Jews would make him suspect to an audience familiar with stories of “non-Christians… intruding so visibly and threateningly” into the lives of Christians (Zanger 39).

Count Dracula’s home and appearance make him unlikeable from the start, but once he is fully integrated into Stoker’s text, he adds insult to injury by being more English than the English. Despite having never visited England, Count Dracula can “speak English thoroughly” (Stoker 17). Count Dracula shows off an impressive list of English books and periodicals “all relating to England and English life and customs” which he refers to as his “companions” and “friends,” through which he has come to know and love England (16-17). Harker even catches Count Dracula reading “of all things in the world, an English Bradshaw’s Guide,” a book of English train schedules. In spite of his apparent familiarity with England, Count Dracula insists that Harker stay in Transylvania after the real estate transaction is finished to instruct Count Dracula in English grammar and social customs. In his home country, Count Dracula is the master, and he insists that upon his arrival in England “that I would be master still—or at least that none other should be master over me” by holding knowledge of his foreign ancestry over his head (17). Count Dracula equates racial knowledge as a kind of power, and because of this recognizes that if he is recognized as non-English, or even as someone from without the British Empire, the English will have a measure of control over him. On one hand, Count Dracula must be able to blend into the crowd in order to avoid
drawing suspicion to himself and revealing his true motives as a vampire. On the other hand, his own studies and the tutelage he assumes Harker will provide suggest Count Dracula is not simply content to be a nameless, faceless member of the English populace. As directly stated to Harker, Count Dracula’s purpose in studying English culture is so that once he in England “no man [will] stop if he sees me, or pause in his speaking if he hear my words” because of the recognition of Count Dracula as non-English (17). He is determined to incorporate every conceivable aspect of Englishness into his own being, even those things that might seem irrelevant or go unnoticed to a native Briton, so that he can pass among the English without suspicion of being anything but English.

Count Dracula’s desire to keep Harker as a private tutor may ostensibly be to distract Harker from any other nefarious goings-on, but Count Dracula’s implied motive is to sap the essence of Harker’s Englishness from him and use it against the very country Count Dracula looks to make his own. The vampire may literally feed on human blood, but in Stoker’s text Count Dracula seems more interested in sapping Harker’s Englishness and what Englishness can provide to Count Dracula. When Harker catches Count Dracula sneaking out of the castle at night wearing “the suit of clothes which I had worn whilst traveling” to Transylvania (37), Harker realizes Count Dracula’s assimilation of Harker’s Englishness is nearly complete. Harker has “no doubt” that Count Dracula plans to sneak into the local village and cause “wickedness” (37). Harker’s assumption is the local peasantry will come to see Harker as a threat, thus preventing him from easily passing through the surrounding villages in his attempts to escape Castle Dracula. Count Dracula’s assumption of Harker’s identity while still in Transylvania provides Count Dracula with a way to try on his acquired Englishness while still within his geographic
comfort zone. Count Dracula can only learn so much about English culture from his books; in order to complete the process of becoming English, he must literally step into the persona of an English person and be able to function. The experiment works, as Count Dracula is able to steal a baby, and when the mother comes to the castle looking for her child she blames Harker, calling him a “monster” (38). Even within his own homeland, surrounded by people with a similar racial makeup to his own and who would be most likely to recognize him as Transylvanian, Count Dracula shows he is able to pass as an English gentleman while still doing the work of a vampire. By this point he has absorbed all the information about England he can from books. With the internal transformation finished, all that remains for Count Dracula is to assume the outward appearance of an Englishman. With this step seemingly accomplished, he is ready to transplant himself to England. This is perhaps the most important step in establishing Count Dracula as a threat to Englishness because he proves that he can transcend the racial mixing of his homeland to emulate the English. The racial make-up of the Transylvanian people might be vastly different from the English, but through study, tutelage, and exposure to Harker’s familiarity with Englishness, Count Dracula breaks down the racial boundaries that separate the English from the Transylvanian. If Count Dracula can do this, so can any non-English person, whether they live within the control of the empire or not, and if this is the case the implication is that there is nothing to prevent the non-English from overrunning the British Empire.

This transformation is symbolically represented when Count Dracula’s appearance changes and becomes “half renewed” and youthful, while Harker’s hair becomes prematurely gray (43). With youth comes the implication of power, prestige,
vitality, and control. The more English Count Dracula becomes, the younger he becomes, and thus the stronger he becomes. Conversely, the more powerful and English Count Dracula becomes, the weaker Harker becomes. Harker becomes so weakened by his encounter with Count Dracula that by the time he returns to England he is “thin and pale and weak-looking. All the resolution has gone out of his dear eyes…” and “he is a wreck of himself” (90). Where Count Dracula flourishes, Harker withers; he loses his youthful pallor, his hair goes grey and he finds himself confined to Mina’s care. The youthful and invigorated Count Dracula represents English fears that their “imperial ideology” has been perverted and “mirrored back as a kind of monstrosity” (Arata 129). Rather than allowing himself to become subservient or subjugated to the English due to the imposition of British culture, Count Dracula welcomes the onset of Englishness and makes it his own. One of the key ideas to the notion of an empire is to make those within the empire accept the superiority of the ruling country, thus giving their rule a sense of legitimacy. To some extent Count Dracula confirms this notion by accepting the English model as one worthy of assimilating. But instead of becoming English for the sake of strengthening the empire, Count Dracula does so for the purpose of weakening the empire, as in the case of Harker, and to feed on the people of the empire as he later does with Lucy and Mina. The monstrosity here comes from the fact that rather than creating a loyal subject or admirer, in Count Dracula the British Empire created someone capable of taking their own culture and using it to infiltrate and wreck havoc among them.

Count Dracula proves that it is possible to become English in appearance and intellect, and his desire to be as English as one can possibly be echoes a real-world fear of many in the British Empire. Count Dracula’s ability to pass as English is amazing
because “in Victorian texts [non-English characters] are seldom… permitted to ‘pass’
successfully” for natural-born English citizens (Arata 134). The idea of building and
maintaining an empire is based upon a contradiction. The British Empire was “justified
as a benevolent liberating mission to millions of Asians, Africans, and other non-
Europeans,” but “it depended at the same time upon the subordination of these millions to
the authority of the small ruling British elite” (Wiener 1). In order for an empire to
function the conquered people must come to believe that the conquering force can and
will make social and political changes to the benefit of the conquered people. In reality,
the conquering force is only interested in taking resources from the conquered people for
their own good. Imperial subjects were English in name only. The English saw it as
their responsibility to establish their legal system in the various territories they controlled.
A subject at any point in the empire could claim the same rights and protections as the
native born English, but in practice the legal system was often controlled by judges and
bureaucrats who had no real understanding of or connection to native cultures (Wiener 1-
3). As a result, non-English subjects of the empire became second class citizens. Count
Dracula openly defies the notion of the second class citizen, and proves to be quite
successful at faking his way into legitimate citizenship. It may take more work and time
than a normal human being can devote, but Count Dracula proves it is possible to remake
one’s self in the English image. Harker’s initially positive reaction to Count Dracula’s
hospitality, despite Count Dracula’s unsightly appearance and homeland, can be seen as
proof that a native-born Englishman can be fooled by someone who has absorbed a
certain amount of Englishness from study and practice. If Count Dracula can transform
into a pseudo-Englishman, there is nothing to stop a non-English subject of the Empire,
or someone from outside the empire, from doing likewise and threatening the social and political position of the native born English. This reimagining speaks to the xenophobic fears of many in the late years of the British Empire. The more non-English people who can fake their way into Englishness and assimilate into society, the more the true essence of Englishness will be diluted and devalued in future generations.

If an outsider from a wild and untamed country can do it, there is little standing in the way of a determined Imperial subject from becoming remade and living in the English model. What’s more, if an Imperial subject has access to British social conventions—education, language skills, etc.—it should theoretically be easier for such a person to remake themselves in the British image than it was for Count Dracula. Such a person would be able to come and go in the Empire with some degree of ease. This person could take an English spouse and begin producing a generation of half-British children who would go on to further assimilate and propagate, leading to the aforementioned dilution of Englishness. This watering-down of Englishness reflects a real fear among the English in the late British Empire. It was perfectly acceptable for British citizens to go from England to India, South Africa, or another part of the Empire, but it was much more difficult for an Imperial subject to come from their native land to England. The fear Count Dracula inspires in the early part of Stoker’s novel has less to do with his vampire nature and more to do with the fears of the initial reading audience.

Count Dracula represents a worst case scenario of xenophobic Englishmen who feel their culture and way of life may be threatened by non-English subjects. These fears are played out later in the novel when Count Dracula preys on Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker. Count Dracula’s attacks on the women have sexual overtone. Mina claims to
she falls into a “half swoon” when Count Dracula touches her, Count Dracula’s insistence that Mina is “flesh of [his] flesh” and “blood of [his] blood” is reminiscent of marriage vows, which hints at the sexual consummation that would typically follow the wedding (Stoker 246-247). Moreover, Mina’s description of the way in which Count Dracula holds open his clothes and holds Mina’s mouth to an open wound, forcing her to “suffocate or swallow” his blood against her will is reminiscent of a violent and unwilling instance of oral sex (247). A reader who was skillful in their interpretation and fearful of non-English outsiders would see Count Dracula’s pseudo-sexual attacks as confirmation of the idea that foreigners in England would want to take English women as wives and procreate. When Count Dracula transforms Lucy, and nearly transforms Mina, into vampires, the newly- or nearly-created vampire women can be read as the stand-ins for the offspring of non-English outsiders and English women. Lucy presents possibly the most troublesome example for Stoker’s contemporary audience because unlike Mina, who puts up some resistance to Count Dracula’s advances, Lucy gives in fully to her vampire nature and later tries to turn others into vampires. In the mind of a reader who sees non-English people as potential threats, the surrender of Count Dracula’s first English victim, Lucy, to the vampire shows that it is possible for an English woman to completely shed her own Englishness and accept the culture of the foreigner, even while living in her native London. To make matters worse, Lucy, now known to newspaper reporters and readers as the “bloofer lady,” a cockney mispronunciation of “beautiful lady,” makes young children her victims (152). If Count Dracula feeding on and turning English women into vampires represents a dilution of the English race by the non-English, the ease with which Lucy preys on children implies that future generations of
Britons will willingly shed their Englishness in favor of becoming more like the non-English. The vampire may sustain itself on blood, but in this context it is easy to see how the initial reading audience of *Dracula* could fear the vampire as a creature that sucks away the essence of British culture and uniqueness. Count Dracula creates a potentially never-ending cycle of formerly British creatures feeding on their fellow countrymen, taking away their Englishness in the process. Mina, on the other hand, proves to be a shining hope; unlike Lucy, Mina appears to put up a significant struggle against the influence of Count Dracula, and is able to retain enough of her Englishness to help defeat the vampire at the novel’s conclusion.

**ACCEPTABLE OUTSIDERS**

As previously mentioned, the idea of building an empire creates a unique problem. In order to have an empire a desire to overpower and rule others must exist. The downside to this is the fear that conquered people may over time subvert the conquering nation or culture and lead to cultural ruin. History has proven this fear to be largely unfounded, but this did nothing to relieve the fears of Stoker’s readers as the British Empire began to fall apart. As the Victorian period drew to a close, the British Empire began to lose its luster as global markets for British products decreased in favor of goods made in and traded with America and Germany (Arata 120). But since the British Empire was still the official political unit, it stands to reason that Stoker would not explicitly do anything to undermine the idea of an empire. Considering the potential damage the Count Dracula character could do to the psyche of xenophobic readers in Stoker’s England, it is also reasonable to assume Stoker would create one or more
characters within the text whose purpose would be to affirm the positive role of foreigners. These examples come in the form of Dr. Abraham Van Helsing and Mr. Quincy Morris. As I will discuss shortly in greater detail, the purpose of these characters is to demonstrate that foreigners are not completely to be feared. As an empire, it is necessary that the English embrace foreigners to some degree in order for their empire to survive. Even if these foreigners are fellow Europeans and not, say, Indians or Africans, they demonstrate that good can be found in non-English peoples. But Stoker’s use of these particular foreigners belies this image by forcing Morris and Dr. Van Helsing to be subservient to the English. In order to find acceptance, these characters must embrace Englishness; it is only after their allegiance to Englishness has been confirmed that these characters are considered wholly trustworthy.

Before examining the role of Morris and Dr. Van Helsing, it is worth revisiting the concepts of the outsider and the English insider. In the first part of the novel, the outsider/insider dynamic is dominated by Harker and Count Dracula. As previously stated, Harker represents the archetypal middle-class Englishman of the late Victorian period; he is well employed and upwardly mobile, and is beginning a family at the start of the novel. Beginning in chapter five, Stoker introduces the rest of his crew of vampire hunters, the band of people who eventually hunt down and destroy Count Dracula. In addition to Harker, the characters of Dr. John Seward and Hon. Arthur Holmwood, later Lord Godalming, represent different aspects of British society that would have been recognizable to Stoker’s original reading audience. Dr. Seward is the dedicated professional and the man of science who, in an era in which science was becoming more influential in the lives of the English, would have assumed a greater level of prominence
and importance. Dr. Seward is no mere physician, but the proprietor of a lunatic asylum. Because this is also a time of emerging psychological understanding, with Freudian theory beginning to draw attention, Dr. Seward covers many of the breakthrough frontiers of late 19th century science. Holmwood, particularly with his ascension to the title of Lord Godalming, represents the nobility, the traditional powerbase of English wealth and politics. Holmwood’s ability to use his power and title to influence locksmiths, port and shipyard workers proves to be invaluable to the Crew of Light. Holmwood is also the first character to explicitly state he would be wary of engaging in any activities that might besmirch his “honour as a gentleman or [his] faith as a Christian” (175). It is no coincidence that Holmwood puts his gentlemanly honor first, since his role as a member of the nobility gives historical and political grounding to his Englishness. These two men, combined with the previously established image of Englishness represented by Harker, solidify a complete spectrum of stereotypical Englishness. Between these three, there is no aspect of upper-class, respectable, civilized British society that is not represented within the novel.

With Count Dracula firmly established as the ultimate outsider, and a cast of characters who have sufficient credibility to be called English, Stoker introduces two characters that, while outside the established parameters of Englishness, represent the kind of acceptable outsiders Count Dracula can never be. The first acceptable foreigner introduced in Quincy Morris. Unlike the calm, refined Englishmen, Morris is presented as a brash and bold Texan with a taste for big-game safari who sees nothing wrong with using slang, even though he is “really well educated and has exquisite manners” (49). Among the vampire hunters, Morris is also the character the reader is told the least about.
The reasons for his being in England are never clarified, nor is the exact nature of his relationship to Dr. Seward and Holmwood explained, though Morris makes references to “trying a landing at the Marquesas” and drinking “healths on the shore of Titicaca” with Holmwood (52). Because he is a wild west American, Morris embodies many of the harshest American stereotypes, some of which were as common in the late 19th century as they are in the 21st century. Despite the apparent pleasure she derives from his use of language, Lucy is certain he “has to invent it all” since it makes no rational sense (49), and Lucy finds his marriage proposal easy to refuse because he looks “good-humoured and so jolly” and not somber or serious like Dr. Seward and Holmwood (50).

Morris’ first step towards acceptability comes in the form of a short exchange by telegram with Holmwood regarding a dinner date. After their respective attempts to secure an engagement with Lucy, Morris invites Holmwood to dinner to congratulate his friend on winning Lucy’s hand. But Holmwood’s reply, in which he states he “bear[s] messages which will make both your ears tingle” indicates Holmwood means to brag about succeeding where Morris has failed (53). It would seem reasonable that a man who repeatedly professes love for a woman he describes as “worth being late for a chance of winning… than being in time for any other girl in the world,” would be angry at the man who stole his would-be wife, particularly when the man signals he intends to rub his victory in the loser’s face (50). Morris tells Lucy that he will “have a pretty lonely walk” in life without her, if her betrothed should treat her poorly “he’ll have to deal with me” (51). Both statements indicate Morris is not completely satisfied with the outcome of his attempted courtship, and will seize an opportunity to reclaim Lucy in the future should Holmwood fail to treat her the way Morris feels she should be treated. There is,
however, no other indication in the text that Morris holds a grudge against Holmwood, or that he later complains to Holmwood or anyone else about his failure. By all appearances, Morris accepts his fate and calls Holmwood “the happiest man in all the wide world” for having secured the love of “the noblest heart that God has made and the best worth winning” (52). While it could be said that Morris is simply being gentlemanly in defeat, Morris’ comments to Lucy hint at an unresolved animosity towards Holmwood that never again resurfaces. The implication of Morris’ unwillingness to act upon this animosity is that when an Englishman and an American face off for the same prize, the acceptable outcome is for the Englishman to be victorious and for the American to joyfully acquiesce. He may be a slang-talking cowboy, but Morris seems to understand and accept his role as Holmwood’s inferior, and as a result signals his willingness to be seen as inferior to the English as a whole. It should also be noted that Morris’ affections are for an acceptable English woman of a well-regarded family, and his fawning over Lucy further shows his willingness to subjugate himself to the English. The overall impression from Morris’ early appearances is that while he might have some rough edges, Morris knows his role and is of no real harm to the English.

Morris’ position as an acceptable outsider comes into question when he agrees to participate in a blood transfusion for Lucy. Morris’ donation is given last, after Holmwood, Dr. Seward, and Dr. Van Helsing. Even Dr. Van Helsing, himself an outsider, views Morris’ arrival with anger, reluctantly declaring that Quincy is “a man and make no mistake” (128). Unlike the transfusions between Lucy and Holmwood or Dr. Seward, Lucy’s reaction to Morris’ blood is described as a “struggle” and her return to a life-like state as “something frightful to see and hear” (128). After the successful
transfusions of the other men, the reader would expect Lucy to return to a state of robust vigor, not to continue to languish. The fact that Morris is allowed to donate at all would seem to signal his acceptance, but the order of donations and Lucy’s less than thrilling reaction to his blood shows that while Morris is allowed to contribute to saving Lucy he is seen as a last resort. Only after the strong young Englishmen and the aged non-English European have attempted to save Lucy is the roughened American allowed to lend a hand. Lucy’s reaction to Morris’ transfusion demonstrates that while his blood may save her life it has no long-term benefit: Lucy dies shortly after the transfusion with Morris, only to rise again as a vampire. Morris’ outsider status not only failed to save her, but he has the closest connection of any of the vampire killers to Lucy’s transformation from upright British woman to unholy vampire due to his position as the final donor. The reader would not hold Holmwood and Dr. Seward responsible for Lucy’s death because they are respectable, prosperous Englishmen and did all they could to help. Dr. Van Helsing is not English, but he is at least European, and Dr. Seward’s deference to Dr. Van Helsing on Lucy’s case gives him an implicit approval that Morris lacks. Morris was the last best hope to stand up and defend Lucy from Count Dracula’s advances and he failed, so to Stoker’s contemporary audience the blame would fall squarely on his shoulders.

The moment that would seem to bring about his penance for Lucy’s death comes when the group of vampire killers is first formed and Count Dracula, in the form of a large bat, is seen spying on them. Morris leaves to investigate while Dr. Van Helsing and the others discuss the events. Without warning, Morris fires a gun into the room where the men are meeting. While the shot is ostensibly to kill the bat, the shot puts the other Crew members in immediate danger and none of the other men make mention of seeing
the bat (209). Morris admits firing into the room is “an idiotic thing of me to do (209), but this does not stop him from endangering the other men in the room. This lack of concern for the safety of others, as well as Morris’ previously mentioned flaws, paint Morris as a wild man who is incapable or unwilling of following rules, whether legal or social, and is not to be trusted. This action implicitly links Morris to the danger posed by Count Dracula because both men pose a physical threat to the rest of the vampire hunters (Arata 137). Morris’ acceptance into the group acts to heighten tension for the Stoker’s contemporary audience because he personifies the dangers they saw in outsiders. Morris cannot be trusted, yet he is allowed to assist the others in their quest to destroy Count Dracula. This position gives him ample opportunities to turn against the distinguished Holmwood and Dr. Seward.

Because he looks more like the English characters than Count Dracula does, and because he is American, Morris poses a unique threat to Victorian English readers, one born from their own shores. Morris exists outside typical English society and his very presence flies in the face of perceived British superiority. Even if Morris himself seems to accept that the English are superior to him he represents a “gratuitous...threat to British power” by showing that the former English colonies in America are capable of exerting their own worldly power (Arata 136). Morris is living proof that the British are not infallible, which, by extension, means the British Empire is not safe from any and all dangers. More than any other character, Morris represents defeat and the loss of land and resources. This is perhaps why Morris plays a relatively small role in the novel compared to the other vampire hunters. His presence is so threatening that even the action of the text seems to reject it, relegating him to the background. Morris is partially redeemed in
the eye of the reader because he dies trying to kill Count Dracula. Morris is mortally wounded in a fight with a gypsy servant who is loyal to Count Dracula, and expires shortly after using his Bowie knife to stab Count Dracula through the heart (Stoker 324-325). Significantly, Morris is wounded in a fight with someone who would be seen as racially more aligned with Count Dracula, and therefore even more of a threat than a white, English-influenced American. But Morris’ redemption is not fully his own, as he shares the final victory over Count Dracula with Harker, who simultaneously slits the vampire’s throat while Morris impales the vampire’s heart. Morris’ death at last makes him an acceptable outside because he dies trying to protect vulnerable Englishmen and Englishwomen, and because he kills an established non-English enemy with the help of an acceptably English character. Morris reinforces the aforementioned idea that he is happy to be seen as an inferior to the English, declaring that he is “only too happy to have been of any service” to the English while thanking God that “all has not been in vain” (325). Morris’s actions would seem to make him a kind of martyr to the cause of Count Dracula’s destruction, but this status is undermined by the fact that he needed the help of an Englishman to complete his final heroic act. Since either Morris’ or Harker’s actions alone would have been sufficient to kill Count Dracula, and since both men struck their blow at the same moment, it cannot truly be said that Morris was the vampire killer. His status as an acceptable outsider is confirmed when Harker and Mina name their child after him (326). The lesson Morris’ death sends to Stoker’s contemporary audience is that outsiders can be acceptable, but it takes nothing short of total submission and sacrifice to the cause of Englishness to achieve this goal.
Compared to Morris, Dr. Van Helsing does not have nearly as many hurdles to overcome on the way to reader acceptance. Like Morris, Dr. Van Helsing is not an Englishman. But unlike Morris, Dr. Van Helsing is a highly educated, a professional—“a lawyer as well as a doctor” (140)—European that has the respect and admiration of Dr. Seward, who by the time of Dr. Van Helsing’s introduction has been established as a respectable English character. As with the earlier example of Harker, once Dr. Seward is accepted as a reliably English character, anyone else within the text Dr. Seward trusts is considered trustworthy by association. All of these factors work in Dr. Van Helsing’s favor, giving him a subliminal element of acceptance even before he is formally introduced into the text. His acceptance, however slight, explains why he is permitted to give Lucy a blood transfusion before Morris but after Holmwood and Dr. Seward, even though Morris is a much younger and stronger man than Dr. Van Helsing. Though he is given little to do in the text, Morris is still present during most of the major action in the novel. Dr. Van Helsing, however, repeatedly travels back to Amsterdam when his work is momentarily completed. The easy explanation, and the one offered by Stoker, is that Dr. Van Helsing is leaving in order to keep up with his normal business in his home country. The underlying meaning of his frequent departures undoubtedly resonated with Victorian readers. Dr. Van Helsing would come at Dr. Seward’s command, perform the duties requested of him, seemingly saving Lucy from death, and disappear without waiting to be thanked. Dr. Van Helsing shows himself to be an acceptable outside because he comes when called, performs his duties to the best of his abilities, and leaves without any further involvement; it is not until the full extent of Count Dracula’s plans
are revealed that Dr. Van Helsing sets up shop in England, and then only by staying in a hotel. Dr. Van Helsing’s comings and goings

The one trait Quincy and Dr. Van Helsing have in common is their apparent love for English women. Quincy shows his love for Lucy by proposing marriage to her, an act that shows his adoration for English women and further alienates him through his use of language. Consider Quincy’s proposal, and his use of what Lucy terms slang:

Miss Lucy, I know I ain’t good enough to regulate the fixin’s of your little shoes…. Won’t you just hitch up alongside of me and let us go down the long road together, driving in double harness…? I should not be here speaking to you as I am now if I did not believe you clean grit, right through to the very depths of your soul. Tell me [if you love me] like one good fellow to another…. (50)

Quincy’s speech is grounded in reality, with judgment statements made about Lucy’s moral character and the prospect of marriage with her. Compare Quincy’s language to Dr. Van Helsing’s description of Mina:

Oh, you so clever woman…! I knew long that Mr. Jonathan was a man of much thankfulness; but see, his wife have all the good things…. You are so good…. Oh, Madam Mina…. I am daze, I am dazzle, with so much light…. Oh, but I am grateful to you, you so clever woman…. It will be pleasure and delight if I may serve you… all I have ever learned, all I can ever do, shall be for you…. There are darknesses in life, and there are lights; you are one of the lights. (156-157)
Dr. Van Helsing’s speech is littered with allusions to light, which connects Mina to a kind of divine purity and goodness that transcends the earthly goodness of Lucy described by Quincy. There is no implication of sexual attraction or affection in Dr. Van Helsing’s compliments as in Quiney’s speech; Dr. Van Helsing’s compliments are always focused on the purity and piety of Mina’s character.

Throughout the novel it is not clear that Quincy is a force for good, and Count Dracula is obviously a force for evil from the opening chapters of the text, so in order for his role as de facto leader of the Crew of Light to be accepted without question, Dr. Van Helsing must be established as the ultimate acceptable outsider. Within the context of the novel there is no better way for this to be established than for Dr. Van Helsing to provide the information and skill necessary to kill Count Dracula. Dr. Van Helsing is also the last major character introduced into the text. Dr. Seward suggests calling up on him to save Lucy from Count Dracula because he considers Dr. Van Helsing to be an “advanced scientist” with an “indomitable resolution” and “views… as wide as his all-embracing sympathy” (97). Dr. Van Helsing must receive approval from Dr. Seward, but not until after Dr. Seward has himself exhausted all available resources to save Lucy. It would not be suitable for a man established as a perfect example of Englishness to be outdone by an outsider unless all other reasonable or rational options have been exhausted. As educated as he may be, Dr. Van Helsing’s accomplishments and credentials are nothing compared with the stamp of approval from an honest, upright Englishman. Dr. Van Helsing’s role as the acceptable outsider is threatened by the fact that he is eager to kill Lucy, but it must be remembered that at the time of her death Lucy has been tainted by the outsider Count Dracula. As previously discussed, Lucy’s ability to drain the Englishness out of
other characters in the text makes her not only a threat but a sort of outsider. Dr. Van Helsing’s eagerness to kill Lucy and restore her to her previous self symbolizes a celebration of the good English image Lucy once had, and which Dr. Van Helsing seems too eager to encourage and support. This eagerness is later mirrored in the vigor with which Dr. Van Helsing praises and attempts to save Mina. The conditional acceptance of both Quincy and Dr. Van Helsing confirms the theory that Victorian English society had no problem with foreigners as long as those foreigners contributed their talents to the cause of the English. That is to say, they can operate as outsiders, providing “the knowledge of the Continent” and the “virility of America,” so long as their actions have no direct impact on the lives of the English, and the outsiders are not successful in assimilating into the society (Tomaszewska 4).

CONCLUSION

Bram Stoker’s Dracula has inspired a seemingly endless string of adaptations and imitations. Everything from breakfast cereal mascots to puppets on children’s television shows can claim Count Dracula as their ideological foundation. But Stoker’s original story still inspires as much fear among 21st century readers as it did for Stoker’s contemporary audience. Dracula was not the first vampire story written in English; if anything, Dracula cashes in on the success of previous vampire stories by Dr. John Polidori, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, and James Malcolm Rymer. Dracula has endured because of more than a macabre setting and story. Stoker’s text was a success in part because it tapped into cultural fears present in Victorian society. Namely, the texts looks at the problem of outsiders in the English empire, and the dangers outsiders pose to the
sense of Englishness felt by many Victorian Britons. The fact that Count Dracula is a foreigner with repulsive physical features who makes English women his victims suggests the character speaks to Victorian fears of immigration and invasion from abroad. Stoker purposely creates a sense of outsiderness within the novel by contrasting Count Dracula, and to a lesser degree Quincy Morris and Dr. Abraham Van Helsing, with recognizable English characters like Jonathan Harker, Arthur Holmwood and Dr. John Seward. This contrast creates a sense of foreboding and distrust in foreigners that supersedes the vampire trope. Harker’s observations in particular also highlight the attitudes of the middle- or upper-class English traveler, who enjoyed the advantages of their wealth as they traveled through countries or regions populated by poor foreigners (Armitage 1). Harker’s comments about “leaving the West and entering the East” are especially telling, as they imply a sense of western—specifically English—superiority. Harker marvels at the bridge he sees, focusing on its Western-influenced splendor as if he cannot believe people so far removed from Western Europe could create structures like this. The same audience that read travel narratives would likely have read Dracula, so by tapping into their expectations of what a traveling Englishman would experience Stoker can again invoke the image of English normality.


