

Exploring the Epistolary Style in Two Gothic Novels

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Introduction

In what ways can the epistolary style impact the monster and the narrator? It is essential to determine the method of how the monster in gothic works is absent or included in the narration. In this paper, I would like to provide a detailed examination of the provided narration in two gothic novels individually and comparatively, and also examine the monster's silence; more particularly, why the monster is not allowed to influence the description of the events within the epistolary work. While the main focus will be on examining the narrative purpose of the epistolary style with the narrators in mind, there will also be a significant emphasis on the monster figures and their relation to the epistolary style. Usually, the monster is not allowed to be an active narrator and is silenced. For this purpose, I would like to examine Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* as the two unique representatives of late gothic novels where the epistolary style is a narrative device serving a special purpose. Specifically, both are late Victorian gothic novels; the main antagonist is a monster with human attributes, and both employ the epistolary style in different ways.

Epistolary novels are works usually written as a collection of letters exchanged between two or more fictional characters in the story. However, novels that employ other forms of literary texts, such as diary entries or newspaper articles alongside letters, are sometimes also included under this term. The most popular British epistolary novels that made the genre distinct from other works in the early period of the rising novel were Aphra Behn's three-volume novel *Love Letters Between a Nobleman and his Sister* (1684, 1685, 1687), followed by Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and his other novels, or John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1749).¹ During the eighteenth century, the epistolary novel quickly became frequently parodied and ridiculed, for example, in Henry Fielding's *Shamela* (1741). Leah Price describes the characteristics of the epistolary style in this way: "For a collection of first-person present-tense letters 'written to the moment,' they substitute a single, retrospective impersonal narrator

¹ On the history of epistolary fiction, see Eve Tavor Bannet, *The Letters in the Story. Narrative-Epistolary Fiction from Aphra Behn to the Victorians* (Cambridge UP, 2022); Thomas O. Beebee, *Epistolary Fiction in Europe* (Cambridge UP, 2006); Janet Gurkin Altman, *Epistolarity. Approaches to a Form* (Ohio State UP, 1982).

temporally and diegetically removed from the events described” (88). In other words, the story is told through several letters written by characters that are part of the actual story; however, in writing those letters, they are removed from the narrative as characters. This structure of narration greatly supported the publication of epistolary works in a serialized medium. Interestingly, neither *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* nor *Dracula* were initially published in a serialized format. *Dracula* was published as a book, while *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* was published in paperback, a penny dreadful. Yet, in both of these works, the chapters are divided in such a manner that there are plenty of cliffhangers at the end of each (such as the escalation in Harker’s journal entries), supporting their conversion into a fully serialized format. These letters are always personal and more subjective and are also written in a “writing to the moment” style, meaning the character records their thoughts in real-time and only until that specific time. Thus, these letters can only be retrospective and not reference or allude to future events. Most epistolary novels also employ multiple narrators, which helps the reader experience the same events and settings through various point of views. Synoptic narratives introduce the same event through several perspectives or, in the case of epistolary texts, through multiple narrators. This makes it clear that *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Dracula* are not epistolary novels per se, or at least not in their entirety. However, they partially employ the epistolary format for a reason, as it serves a distinct way of storytelling.

Epistolary texts usually have another layer of metatextuality present. Two types of epistolary conventions were constructed for these narrative-epistolary scaffoldings: the narrative framing of embedded letters and the juxtaposition of narrative and epistolary accounts with characters and events (see Bannet 1). The idea of the characters who are present in the narrative and take the role of narrators is called diegetic narration, which is always interconnected with epistolary texts. This makes these narrators play an active part in the story, similar to the monster, yet they have a lot more privileges compared to the monster. As for the antagonists in these novels, they usually—perhaps with the exception of the Monster in *Frankenstein*—do not have the privilege of having any texts written by them included in these narratives. This might be the writer’s intention, perhaps to keep a distance from the monster to have them shrouded in mystery. There is also a difference between the different styles of epistolary texts. For instance, diary entries are mainly written for personal reasons and are not meant to be seen by anyone else. Letters are written as a form of communication between two or more people, which implies a level of intimacy but also introduces the possibility of either intentional or unintentional misinformation. Newspaper articles are intended to reach a larger

audience, and the inclusion of proper interviews and research makes them a more objective source of information. However, the inclusion of the epistolary style in the gothic novel is an interesting yet logical step in the progression of this genre. Considering that early epistolary novels were commonly sentimental works, with their main aim to elicit emotion from the reader, it is understandable why the gothic genre would rely on using the epistolary style to its advantage, with its desired emotion shifting from romance and love to horror and fear. This can be attributed to narrative-epistolary fiction taking inspiration for the structure of their plot from Aristotle's account of epics in *Poetics* and prose fiction mainly revolving around love. Usually, this narrative structure tends to deviate in either one of two possible directions: to a mundane, ordinary direction or to a supernatural and uncanny direction (Bannet 13). Early epistolary authors such as Richardson went in a more emotional and love-related direction, making their works mainly closer to the mundane and the ordinary, while gothic authors were more concerned with bringing out the more uncanny, supernatural, and frightening side of the epistolary style.

While newspaper articles, letters, and diary entries are all sorted under the epistolary, each of these three writing styles serves different functions. A newspaper article is written as a form of communication and information transfer with a large audience in mind, which is why it is usually as factual as possible and less intimate with its audience. In opposition, a letter is generally meant for either one single individual or maybe for a smaller group as a form of communication, and that is why there is a certain level of intimacy found within letters; however, there is also the possibility of deceit or lies that can be exchanged within the epistolary format that is similarly an important factor to remember. Last, there are diary entries, mainly written by one person as a form of relaxation or trying to document their everyday life to remember it later. A key distinction between diary entries and other epistolary writing styles is that diary entries are not written to be read by others, which also places the factuality of the information presented into an exciting scenario since there is no reason for the writer to deny or fabricate information for themselves. This information can be mainly useful to further analyze a narrator's motives and reliability or to change the scope of the happenings from a self-contained story that only affects one or two people (diary entries, letters) to something that affects a whole community (newspaper articles). Although only *Dracula* uses all three of these formats, it is important to determine the limitations and unique characteristics each of these three writing styles have to avoid possible confusion further on and to also understand that unreliable narration is not as prevalent in newspaper articles and diary entries

because of their self-contained (in diary entries) and necessarily factional nature of them (in newspaper articles).

Both authors handle their narrators and their narrations very differently. In *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the story is told in the third-person, with only the last two chapters presented in an epistolary format, introducing two earlier characters as the writers of those letters, using a dialogic epistolary style. In *Dracula*, we have multiple narrators, each telling their side of the story in first-person, and the entire novel is written in an epistolary format, making the novel a polyphonic epistolary work. While *Dracula* could be considered an epistolary novel in its entirety, Stevenson's work should not be regarded as an epistolary novel but rather as a novel that partially does take merit from the epistolary style with the narrative embedding of letters. While these two stories might initially look like seemingly non-comparable works, several key features are apparent in each. In neither work do we get the whole story from the perspective of the mysterious antagonist in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* or in *Dracula*. This particular choice promotes the creation of a sense of mystery regarding the narration of the story. This is important because the authors build their supernatural monsters as mysterious creatures allowing the clueless narrator to unravel the origins of those man-made monsters gradually. Additionally, both of these works feature (either partially or in full) an epistolary narrative style, whether through letters, journal entries, or newspaper articles. Furthermore, although the two monster figures are quite different from one another, they share a resemblance in the particular evil they represent: there is a dominant desire to masquerade as regular humans, while, even in the world of fiction, they are not. Although an argument could be made for Hyde's case that he is probably the closest to a human being, he certainly is different from one. He was not born as any human should be born; his existence is tied to the life of Dr. Jekyll, and the shift between the two personalities is unique among other humans, making it easier for us to declare him a monster. Considering the inclusion of gothic monsters, it is difficult to examine this topic further without briefly mentioning Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and its monster. Although the creature is also not known to communicate through the written medium (Victor Frankenstein does, but not the monster), he is more frequently present than Hyde or Dracula are in their own stories. Other than that, Shelley's monster is different than Hyde and Jekyll; they are usually referred to as a "degenerate" type of character (Barrett), while Frankenstein's Monster is closer to a "blank canvas" type of monster. Frankenstein's Monster, in the beginning, is a more docile and non-threatening creature, his demeanour changing for the worse as the novel progresses. Gothic monsters tend to represent certain kinds of sexual deviations and perversion (Weinstock 150).

Although Frankenstein's Monster could be attributed to a degree of perversion, considering his desire for a partner, it never reaches the level of obsession Dracula and Hyde seem to exhibit. This sets Frankenstein's Monster apart from the others because, in his case, there is an actual progression and journey for the monster to become "evil," making him a sort of tragic character that falls from grace and turns to violence without being able to achieve his own goals and find happiness. In contrast, Hyde and Dracula are "evil" from the moment they are introduced in the novel, living destructive and predatory lifestyles to satisfy their own twisted pleasures, which is why I will not discuss Frankenstein's Monster in this paper in more detail. The main reason this is relevant to my research claim is that the monster's disposition in the story can affect how they are related to the written medium and their representation through the epistolary style. Frankenstein is supposed to be a blank canvas character, but there is also a tragic side to his story, which cannot be found in Dracula and Hyde. His education is also different from Dracula's and Hyde's: it is mostly derived from his own devotion, while Hyde and Dracula are both well-educated.

Both works approach the epistolary style a little differently. Each story has its own style of narration and its own characteristics that make them unique. One of the most obvious distinctions is that both works have multiple narrators but *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* changes the point of view of the narration from third-person to first-person when it changes its narrators and presents their narratives one after the other. In the first half of Stevenson's story, a third-person narration takes place, with an unnamed narrator following around Utterson's character, while in the last two chapters, Dr. Lanyon and Dr. Jekyll tell their sides of the story in an epistolary format and from a first-person point of view. In contrast, Stoker's work introduces its main narrators fairly early and switches between them regularly without altering the first-person point of view, and it keeps the epistolary format throughout the whole novel. Regarding *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, I will partly rely on Richard T. Gaughan's approach. The main relevancy of his argument is not regarding the epistolary parts of the work; rather, his character analysis places a great emphasis on Jekyll's character and highlights Jekyll's unreliability as a narrator. Gaughan's main claim regarding Jekyll is his refusal of the common misconception about Jekyll being the representation of the morally positive side of the human psyche; he describes Jekyll as a man that wishes to achieve perfect control and order inside his own mind, through the extreme polarization of the two drastically different sides of his own personality. Jekyll should not be seen as a man that is morally good per se, but as a man that created the alter ego of Hyde for mainly selfish reasons. Gaughan also disputes the misconception of Hyde as being the

embodiment of pure evil; rather, he is the embodiment of “pride and impersonal will” (187). Since this essay heavily relies on an accurate analysis of the monsters present in these works, besides the epistolary style, it is really important to have an accurate outline of Hyde, in which I am mostly partial to Gaughan’s approach. Nevertheless, Gaughan raises several claims about the novel’s narration and the inconsistencies in Jekyll’s final statement, which leads us to the following question: is Jekyll an unreliable narrator? Since Jekyll presents his side of the narrative in an epistolary, first-person format, deciphering whether or not he is reliable as a narrator, is essential. There is a high level of subjectivity, when we examine unreliability of fictional works, and considering that Dr. Jekyll’s letter concludes the story, Utterson’s thoughts, regarding the contents of the letter, and whether they are true or false, are left out. However, it would be untrue to state that there is not an anomaly present in Dr. Jekyll’s letter, which influences the truth of its contents. Gaughan’s examination of the work also places heavy attention to Utterson’s character and makes an impressively thorough analysis of him as well. While Utterson presents his own story through a non-epistolary format, the impact of Utterson’s character is significant enough to see what he contributes as a character to the narrative.

Epistolary novels by nature are written by the characters being very much present in the story, which makes the narrative style much more intimate and personal. Because of this factor, there is always the possibility of one character within the narrative having false statements for certain reasons. Although the idea of the unreliable narrator is not exclusive to one specific genre, and neither to the epistolary style, the reason why I mention it is because it has strong ties to the narrative presented in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. This is because Stevenson’s work sparsely uses the epistolary format, and only at the very end of the story. Not to mention that, since the monster is silenced throughout most of the work, and even when we learn the important information regarding its origin, it is told to us by Dr. Jekyll and not by Mr. Hyde himself, further limiting Hyde’s agency. However, not every piece of information Jekyll provides is consistent and some of them could be declared as even contradictory, deeming him as an unreliable narrator. The unreliable narrator is not as prevalent in *Dracula*, which I attribute to the fact that in *Dracula* the story is mainly told through diary entries, which makes unreliability less of a factor. Fortunately, there are possible approaches to identify a narrator as unreliable, which can be achieved with a thorough analysis of the narrator’s statements and actions and we can see if there are any visible discrepancies. Then we have to determine whether the narrator is untrustworthy or fallible and to what degree (Olson 100). Unfortunately, even with this method, verifying the narrator’s statements is not truly possible, yet setting a limited

scope as to how much of their statements is reliable can be essential, mainly in the case of my investigation. Since Hyde cannot have his own voice and considering how closely connected Hyde is to Jekyll, Jekyll's last statement can very well be the most important source of information about Hyde's character.

With Stoker's work, I will mainly look into how the narrative represents the ideas of unity and the seclusion of the monster from others and how this is presented regarding the narrative method of *Dracula*. Seed's approach focuses on the narrative significance of characters and themes presented in the novel, although his most important finding for this research is about Dr. Abraham Van Helsing, who is one of the positive characters of the novel, and the one that quickly becomes sort of a leader figure to the group. Seed primarily examines his character in terms of what he has to offer, as well as how Stoker reflects his own ideas through Van Helsing's monologues: "Both Van Helsing and Stoker in his article (*The Censorship of Fiction*, 1908) insist that opposition to evil must be collaborative, even national, enterprise" (Seed 72). Seed's statement implies that one of the main themes of the novel is the fight against evil through collaborative efforts made by "good" people. The multiple narrators and the epistolary nature of the text seem to confirm this notion. Therefore, while examining *Dracula* the idea of multiple narrators will be an important point of discussion, it should not be forgotten that *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* also employs multiple narrators. While the idea of unity is less prevalent in Stevenson's work, the multiple narrators present in the work help verify the presented information since two characters stating similar events or facts strengthen the validity of presented information. There is a multi-faceted function to the characteristics that the employment of multiple narrators brings to the structure of the work that is definitely worth looking into further.

There is also the situation of the collated text, mainly in Stoker's work, but Jekyll's Full Statement also seems to hold a similar purpose in Stevenson's case. Jekyll's letter and the collated text of Harker, Seward, and Mina are presented as weapons against these monsters. If we consider that both monsters remain serious threats because no one is capable of understanding their origins, weaknesses, and how they operate, any source of information regarding these topics is invaluable in combating them. This is again where the epistolary style of the text gives an advantage to these novels, since the epistolary texts that we read not just function as either a means of communication or as a way for the characters to document their thoughts, but these texts are the reflection of the narrator's opposition and fight against the monster's existence. While the conflict against the monster always ends with a form of physical

confrontation, the moral and intellectual upstanding against the monster's ideology is what truly matters, with the ideologies of the narrators usually being presented within the epistolary texts they present.

Another important part of the essay will be discerning the idea of mystery. I will also briefly mention the idea of omissions. We can relate mysteries to puzzles and mysteries in literature compel readers to focus on the text, attempt to find as many clues as possible, and discover the truth behind the mystery alongside a similarly clueless yet curious narrator (Goldman 263). Since gothic novels usually are centred around a mystery, in the case of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Dracula*, this means discovering the origins, capabilities, and weaknesses of their monsters. Mysteries are created by blocking necessary information through uncertainty and introducing those key pieces of information later in the narrative, while epistolary texts have a highly selective way of presenting information because they are meant to be written by one character who has limited information of the events. These two ideas tend to coincide with each other due to their selective nature. Epistolary novels also contain a form of mystery that the readers have to discover for themselves in parallel with the writers of these letters. With this created mystery, the monster remains in the shadows: the less details there are about them, the more frightening their nature becomes. To remedy this, the characters must uncover the creature's nature by themselves, appealing to a simple yet very strong emotion found within its readers: curiosity. It is also important to note that a work's narrative structure can also be affected by how this mystery is created. Sometimes, the answer is more gradually and naturally built up but the author can also withhold important information that creates a "hidden story" within the work, making the structure recursive (Bannet 15). While Stoker's *Dracula* does not fall under this category, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* definitely does. I believe this is the case because the mystery in *Dracula* is represented in a linear manner. While at first the reader does not know what kind of monster Dracula is, it is already discernible from the text that Dracula is evil and has some sort of supernatural abilities. The story evidences this from the very beginning and only expands upon it with ideas that naturally build upon this existing foundation. With *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, however, Jekyll's final statement completely restructures the first half of the work, bringing that hidden story to the surface. This is possible, since Utterson, along with the reader, had the natural idea that Hyde and Jekyll were two different people, and the novel subverted that expectation by making these two characters the same person.

I primarily aim to explore how and why the two gothic works employ an epistolary style in their narrative. The key aspects I intend to examine are the use of multiple narrators, the reliability or unreliability of the narrators, and the narrative function of shifts in narrative styles. Furthermore, I wish to focus on the narrators' characters, how they change throughout the story, and their significance to the overall narrative. I will also find a possible connection between the epistolary style, the narrators, and the monsters. The main goal of connecting all of this will be to see why the monster is so absent as a narrator and why the epistolary style limits the monster's ability to express itself.

The Fractured Narration of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

The first narrator and character I wish to discuss is Gabriel John Utterson from the *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. This work is not an entirely epistolary novel because only Lanyon and Jekyll narrate their own story through letters, and only in the second half of the work are their letters introduced into the narrative. The first half is told by an omniscient narrator, who narrates Gabriel John Utterson's life from a third-person point of view. His description is the first thing that the narrator presents to us: "Mr. Utterson the lawyer was a man of a rugged countenance that was never lighted by a smile; cold, scanty and embarrassed in discourse; backward in sentiment; lean, long, dusty, dreary and yet somehow lovable" (Stevenson 31). While his character description is more detailed, this serves as the general synopsis of his features. Although he demonstrates other interesting characteristics, for instance, he cares for his friend, Dr Jekyll, and has a bizarre interest in finding and capturing Mr. Hyde, he is not the story's main focus, so his sidelined character is totally understandable. Even Gaughan describes Utterson as "that bland old bird" (185), which is an oddly fitting description. Despite this, Gaughan argues that there is a hardly noticeable but still present change in Utterson's personality. He implies that the existence of Hyde causes a sense of "nausea and weariness of life" in Utterson that is strong enough to make him restless and distraught in his everyday life and in his thought processes (193). This might be a logical reason for his strange fascination and drive to investigate Mr. Hyde. However, what is unique about his character is that he is included in the story but not as the narrator of the story as we might expect from his character but as a character that the narrator follows around; moreover, neither is this narration made in an epistolary format. This makes the contrast to the second half of the narrative all the more curious.

The actual narrator is an unnamed storyteller, an undramatic or omniscient narrator. He seems to follow Utterson around in a non-omnipotent view of narration. The narrator describes everything that Utterson sees, hears, and experiences but he is not able or simply does not wish to get into Utterson's inner thought process. He can describe in vague terms only what Utterson thinks but does not quote his thoughts word by word, and his main focus is the description of the environment and Utterson's actions. While we can view these as the

established rules of narration that the author will follow throughout the story, this narrator is not afraid to break several of these “rules,” either by looking into Utterson’s mind on one occasion or by changing the character that the narrator follows around. The narrator quotes one really interesting thought of Utterson: “‘If he be Mr. Hyde,’ he had thought, ‘I shall be Mr. Seek’” (Stevenson 40). He follows other characters, such as the maid, when Mr. Hyde murders Sir Danvers Carew, an event that Utterson could not have been around. This is nothing new of course, since Dr. Lanyon and Dr. Jekyll also narrate some parts of the story through letters; however, those narratives have a more understandable connection to the already established narration because we can assume that it is Utterson who is reading them. This makes the instance with the maid really interesting, and it most likely only breaks the status quo of following Utterson around for narrative purposes. More specifically, Utterson’s third-person narration contrasts with Dr. Lanyon’s and, most importantly, Dr. Jekyll’s first-person diegetic narration, which somewhat contradicts the personal, subjective nature of the epistolary style of the letter. “The first-person narrator, Jekyll, will have no inner life to narrate while Utterson, who is always presented through the third-person narrator, will” (Gaughan 186). Gaughan wants to point out this ironic twist in the two narrators’ point of view, to highlight that Utterson’s narrative, while more distant because of its third-person point of view, has more inner motivation than Jekyll’s first-person narration. Utterson wishes to know the truth, both for his friend’s sake and to satisfy his own curiosity, while the motivation behind Jekyll’s behaviour, although introduced in first-person, feels a lot more redundant and impersonal, even if Jekyll’s last statement was written as a final “farewell” for his friend.

The question of what exact purpose this style of narration achieves still remains unanswered. The unique choice of the third-person style narration is mainly there to create a distance between Utterson and the reader. While the reader can relate to Utterson’s curiosity and genuine care for his friend’s well-being, the third-person narrative makes it more difficult to connect with him on a deeper level. The lack of subjectivity renders the first half of the work more ambiguous but also more reliable than Lanyon’s and Jekyll’s narratives. In contrast, the second part of the story shifts the spotlight to Lanyon’s and Jekyll’s epistolary narration. Both of these letters hold importance to the story itself, with Lanyon’s letter revealing the true identity of Hyde being Jekyll (and vice versa) and also Jekyll’s statement that technically confesses his motives and comments on the events in great detail. However, the reason for this change in the narrative style is still not entirely known. The most obvious answer would be that because these are letters addressed to Utterson and readers are witnessing the story from his perspective, then

the format of the text should be structured similarly to that of a letter that he is reading in that very moment. Other than that, another possible answer could be that the use of a heterodiegetic narrator in the first half makes the information presented by that narrator more factual and less disputable; the use of homodiegetic narrators makes the information presented more subjective. This may be the case, but there is another, more metaphorical answer to this sudden change in style that this narrative movement could signify. In this case, I believe that the narrative falls into a more synoptic frame.

Synoptic narratives are used when there are multiple narrators that experience the same events or the same setting through their points of view. This allows the reader to have a more detailed understanding of the setting; however, its negative effect is that it sometimes makes the understanding of these events, their place in time and the connections between them, overly complicated and confusing. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is exemplary in this regard because it does not merely switch between multiple point of views but also between multiple narration styles, from third person to first person, from omniscient to a more personal perspective. While Leah Price mainly analyses Richardson's works, one of her passages is nonetheless descriptive of the narrative structure of Stevenson's novella: "As synoptic narrative alternates with synecdochal extracts, each abridgment oscillates between the narrative conventions of eighteenth-century epistolary fiction and those of nineteenth-century omniscient narration" (Price 89). The narrative style of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is similarly a combination of eighteenth-century epistolary fiction and nineteenth-century omniscient style. Furthermore, the work is also told in a synoptic narrative style with the use of multiple narrators showing different perspectives of the same events. While it is unknown what thought process compelled Stevenson to write this story in such a manner, or why he decided to burn the first version of the story, he did write an essay that can give a small insight into how he brought forth this narrative into paper.

"A Chapter on Dreams" suggests that the general theme and key narrative features of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* were conceptualized earlier, making the establishment of the mystery easier and more impactful: "The meaning of the tale is therefore mine, and had long pre-existed in my garden of Adonis, and tried one body after another in vain" (Stevenson, "A Chapter on Dreams"). With this metaphor, the garden of Adonis can be interpreted in several ways but the most direct approach is that it is Stevenson's creativity and imagination symbolized as a place, which in this instance, is the garden of Adonis. The common use of the proverb, the garden of Adonis, usually refers to things that are without roots and wither away

easily reflecting the Greek myth. We can assume that Stevenson ties his created ideas to a place, to Adonis' Garden, where they wither away, since they are "without roots" or are incomplete. While the word "body" implies that he made several other incomplete stories or just smaller fragments, and structures of a story with the same "meaning of the tale;" however, those were probably discarded for reasons only he may know. The first version of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* was thrown into fire by Stevenson, which implies that, besides his wife who criticized it, Stevenson was also critical about his own first attempt at a story like that, and the version that was finally published was as complete as he could possibly make it. After having the complete story planned out, the writer must create intrigue by carefully choosing what details to show to the reader, at what point of the story, and what to leave out. This method of writing is also reflected in John McPhee's idea of omission in his similarly titled article "Omission." While his idea regarding omission was written in the context of writing in general, it is nonetheless applicable to mysteries as well. "Writing is selection" claims McPhee and so is the creation of mystery (McPhee). If the whole mystery is already available to the reader from the beginning of the story, then we would not have a mystery at all. It would have required Stevenson to structure the happenings and the plot of the story differently. The way the story is currently narrated is much more effective, as it builds up the mystery very carefully. Having Utterson as an outsider to Jekyll's experiments, it is easier to create mystery through the eyes of someone who does not happen to be in the "know." Therefore, writing a mystery is also related to the selection of information. This is something where the epistolary style excels, since a letter or diary entry' shared writing-to-the-moment type of narration style, the information presented in these letters can either change or new information can be presented as the story progresses. In Utterson's part, the reader receives the objective, tangible yet scarce clues; in Lanyon's story, the reader receives the twist of the story and verification to a few other clues, and Dr. Jekyll provides the full, but biased version of the narrative. It is essentially how Goldman describes it, comparing mystery novels to crosswords or puzzles in terms of their functionality: "Mystery fiction provides relaxation through intellectual games or puzzles much like crosswords or like magic tricks when the puzzles cannot be solved" (263). A mystery should have an intellectually stimulating feeling experienced by readers, making them think and have them contemplate every little detail, trying to figure out the mystery for themselves. With mysteries in stories, the use of suggestion and vagueness are also a vital part of their effectiveness. Stevenson's work is effective because it presents these clues sparingly until the final revelation at the very end. This segment only serves to help us understand why mystery is a key feature in this work.

The resolution of the mystery, however, is just as important as the effective creation of it. Sometimes, uncovering every little detail about a mystery is not necessary, which can leave the reader with a lingering feeling of dread and/or frustration, depending on how it is handled. The *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a tale that cares to provide quite an over-encompassing answer to every little part of this enigmatic story while also making us question some other parts of it. The resolution is given to us in a chapter aptly titled “Henry Jekyll’s Full Statement of The Case,” which includes Henry Jekyll’s letter serving as his personal confession to his friend Utterson. This letter was written as Jekyll’s first-person narration about his motives and actions, although his reliability can be questioned. His unreliability as narrator can stem from multiple possible reasons. The most logical answer is that they are lying about certain events, creating misconceptions about their own agendas, and this makes them the untrustworthy type of narrator (Olson 100). However, this is not the case with Dr. Jekyll’s account since, even if he lied to Utterson up until that very point, there would be no reason for him to lie now. Jekyll, at this point in the story, is aware that he is going to die, either physically, by suicide, or mentally, with Hyde taking over his body and his mind. He would achieve nothing by keeping his secret anymore, and since Utterson is one of his closest friends, telling him the truth in his final confession would certainly be a logical step for him.

Another reason why unreliable narrators would give an unreliable account is that they are not fully aware of the events themselves: they have a limited scope of the story and can only provide hypotheses about what happened to them. They are the type of unreliable narrators that are referred to as fallible narrators (Olson 100). This seems to be more likely the case with Dr. Jekyll’s statement. His fragmented state of mind seems to be reflected within the letter that he writes for Utterson. While Dr. Jekyll is, without a doubt, presented as a brilliant scientist and chemist who is well-versed in his craft, he is aware that his knowledge about the functionality of the potion is somewhat lacking. He even admits this to Utterson and to himself: “Second, because, as my narrative will make alas! too evident, my discoveries were incomplete” (79-80). Jekyll was not aware that Hyde could take over his body by force, and neither was he aware that the effectiveness of the potion was caused by the impurity of the dust that he used, making the recreation of the potion nigh impossible. While his account is the most accurate available to us as readers, and we are inclined to believe the legitimacy of his words, there remains a hint of skepticism regarding some of his statements, as certain details logically contradict one another. One such detail is his action of leaving most of his wealth to Hyde thinking that, if something happens to Jekyll, he could live on as Hyde, while also keeping his

wealth: "I next drew up that will that which you so much objected; so that if anything befell me in the person of Dr. Jekyll, I could enter on that of Edward Hyde without pecuniary loss" (82). Logically, however, this is somewhat contradictory, since Hyde was the more infamous one of the two; it would have been more likely for something to befall him rather than Jekyll. Not to mention that later on in the letter, he contradicts this statement by saying that if either of them dies, then so does the other. This latter hypothesis seems to be the correct explanation out of the two; since Hyde and Jekyll share the same body, the death of one would also result in the death of the other. The ending of the story confirms this, with Hyde committing suicide and killing Dr. Henry Jekyll in the process as well. Interestingly enough, Hyde does not receive the role of narrator in the narrative. This also makes Jekyll's unreliability all the more prevalent, since Hyde is the only person who can verify that Hyde actually had a personal grudge against Jekyll, yet he makes no attempt to communicate his own narrative. The reason why Edward Hyde does not provide his own narrative is because he has no intention to do so. It is important to note that the reader is only provided with Lanyon's and Jekyll's letters because Utterson received them. The only way Hyde's perspective could be told to the reader would be through a letter meant for Utterson's eyes only. Hyde has no reason to create any form of communication with Utterson and wants nothing to do with him. Hyde's narrative is not revealed because he has no incentive to present his story to Utterson at all. This is why the only way Hyde's characteristics can be displayed is through Jekyll's biased perspective.

The monster, Mr. Edward Hyde, even during Jekyll's final statements, is equally silenced. Hyde's minuscule involvement in the story makes it difficult to analyze his standing in the epistolary style and his existence as a monster, without taking Jekyll's statements into account. Another detail that we might view as contradictory is that Jekyll keeps suggesting that Hyde forcefully tries to take over his body and constantly taunts and torments him. While we cannot fully confirm Jekyll's reliability in this case, since we cannot look into his mind, Hyde's actions suggest otherwise. Hyde never harmed Jekyll in any way and actually helped him out on certain occasions. For instance, when Jekyll turned into Hyde on the street without taking the serum, Hyde could have kept living in his own shape, but instead went to Dr. Lanyon and recreated the serum to be able to turn back into Jekyll. This is somewhat contradictory to Jekyll's other statement, where he deems Hyde as "pure evil;" even so, Hyde's actions do not really reflect this mentality that Jekyll wishes to bestow upon Hyde. "Hyde is less evil than he is the embodiment of pride or, more generally, impersonal will" (Gaughan 187). Other than that, we also never heard Hyde's thoughts and ideas. There are passages about his actions, his

appearance, and some of his dialogue in the narration of others (albeit scarcely), yet his real “voice,” thoughts, and actual views are never actually presented to us through Hyde’s own narration. Jekyll does explain that they share the same memories and body, but it is never explicitly told to us how much they share the same mind. It really makes the reader question whether Hyde really has a distinct personality or Jekyll expands upon this persona of Hyde, perhaps to have someone to take responsibility for the actions that originate from Jekyll. The actual truth that his words govern is something that we are not fully certain about, and while this would make him untrustworthy, is it possible to condemn a man as a liar for something that even he himself struggles to comprehend? It does not make sense for Jekyll to lie here since he is aware that his actual self-image has already been presented to its fullest to Utterson. According to Olson, a narrator is untrustworthy when their account has to be reconstructed to make sense. On the other hand, fallible narrators make a few mistakes or leave a few gaps in their narrative when they relay the information (Olson 104). However, there is a key difference that is implied between these two categories. The difference between an untrustworthy and a fallible narrator is intention. While this is not a definite rule, an untrustworthy narrator implies a narrator that creates an inaccurate narrative with intention through lying or through half-truths for their own reasons. While a fallible narrator is someone who distorts the narrative unintentionally either because they do not know the actual truth or believe what they are saying is the truth, that is not the case. In Jekyll’s case, there is a possibility for him to lie, but it logically makes no sense. Therefore, we can only attribute his inaccuracies to his declining mental state.

There must be a deciding factor in the texts that stimulates this sense of unreliability in the reader: a discrepancy that makes the reader aware of the narrator’s failings. The unreliability of the narrator could serve as a way for the author to highlight certain characteristics or features of these characters, perhaps to move the story forward or to create a sense of ambiguity. Jekyll’s contradictory nature could be there to highlight the broken state of his self-perception and how this affects his mental standing with certain events. Most of his discrepancies originate from the fact that he writes his statement through a retrospective lens, which might alter his original thoughts that he had back then to ones that are more accurate to his current beliefs. The greatest reason that would classify him as an untrustworthy narrator can be that he describes Hyde as being a character that possesses a distinct personality and wishes to taunt and destroy Jekyll, while the actual evidence to support his claim is lacking. Gaughan also questions Jekyll’s intentions, implying that Hyde is the more “authentic” and more

“genuine” of the two, mainly because Hyde is contented with the “basic conditions of his life” while Jekyll is not (Gaughan 189). While I do agree with Gaughan’s statement, I do not think that Jekyll’s less genuine way of thinking should cause him to lie about information like this to Utterson unless there was another factor at play that the reader does not know about. From the perspective of the average reader, Jekyll could just as well be telling the actual truth as he is fabricating this whole situation to put Hyde more into the spotlight as the actual culprit. Although the latter is probably less likely since this letter was originally intended for Utterson, why would he be concerned about who would be identified as the culprit, especially after he already admitted to the murder? “With a transport of delight, I mauled the unresisting body, tasting delight from every blow” (87). Regarding the ambiguous and multi-faceted nature of Stevenson’s work it is possible that Jekyll is an untrustworthy narrator, although, in light of my previous argument, it is also possible that Jekyll is more akin to a highly fallible narrator.

After closely examining Jekyll’s role as an unreliable narrator, let us reconsider the question: what else could this change in narrative style signify? Of course, the logical, more obvious answer would be that this is the only form in which both Jekyll and Lanyon can present their confession to their mutual friend, Utterson, since both of them are technically dead at that point in the novel. However, I believe that Stevenson also aims to blur the lines between believability and fiction. As we remember, Utterson’s narration is told by a third-person narrator, who is not an actual character in the story. While this narrator primarily focuses on Utterson, and almost always excludes Utterson’s personal thoughts and feelings, the emphasis remains on the factual and the tangible. In the second half, however, we get Lanyon’s and Jekyll’s side of the narrative, which are more personal and filled with disbelief and horror. The reader has to believe their accounts of the story because this is the most logical answer to this mystery that exists and the only logical answer that is given. As readers, we can also have doubts, considering the several paragraphs detailing Jekyll’s unreliability as a narrator. There is always the possibility that some details that originate from these two characters are either left out or are contradictory. This is more acceptable in Lanyon’s case, who is only familiar with the fact that Jekyll and Hyde are the same person since he did not want to know about Jekyll’s motives or actions any further. His unreliability as a narrator comes from the fact that he is not familiar with other details of the story, yet the point of view he presents seems genuine. With Jekyll’s case, however, a lot of his statements are contradictory enough that we could assume that his narrative is not entirely reliable. His pronouns regarding himself and Hyde tend to shift around randomly, including the transition from “I” to “we” and from “myself” to “him,” which

makes it confusing to fully know who he actually talks about and when: “I began to perceive more deeply than it has ever yet been stated, the trembling immateriality, the mist-like transience, of this seemingly so solid body in which we walk attired” (79). In this case, the epistolary style adds to the horror of seeing a man lose himself to his own delusions.

As a final point, I also wish to examine the inclusion of multiple narrators in the narrative. One would think that the inclusion of Lanyon’s letter and his own narrative was unnecessary as Jekyll’s Full Statement would have provided a complete conclusion on its own. However, Lanyon is not only there to introduce the plot twist of Jekyll and Hyde being the same person; his account also helps mitigate the unreliability of Jekyll’s statements. The drawback of epistolary storytelling is that, due to its personal and subjective nature, it can be difficult to verify the narrator’s account. To solve this issue, the author can employ multiple narrators to give more merit to the truthfulness of the account. Lanyon’s letter verifies multiple pieces of information that Jekyll later presents, such as the fact that Hyde is Jekyll, that Hyde can re-create the serum, demonstrating Hyde’s partial intelligence, and that Jekyll had to increase the dosage of the serum overtime to switch between the two forms. “Here and there brief remark was appended to a date, usually not more than a single word: ‘double’ occurring perhaps six times in a total of several hundred entries . . .” (73). This way it is possible to verify some of Jekyll’s statements as being closer to the truth. However, this does not alleviate Jekyll’s status as an unreliable narrator. While other characters can authenticate some of his claims as true, his motives, reasons, and the events where only he was present are still left in a limbo of uncertainty. There is no one who could verify his actions he did all alone, and no one can testify the mental struggle he believes that he experiences. Therefore, while the use of multiple narrators can help to reduce the unreliability of the letter writer, the more ambiguous information is left for the reader to decide whether they wish to interpret it as truth or not.

We can conclude that the omission of information, the unreliability of Henry Jekyll, and the inclusion of the epistolary format are conscious choices made by the author to further enhance the mysterious nature of the novel. The first half of the novella is told by a third-person narrator, which implies that the information presented to us is meant to be seen as objective truth. In order to not have every detail of the mystery presented in the first half, the author chose an outsider to the actual mystery itself, Utterson, who was followed by a third-person narrator. In the second part, the epistolary style is presented by Lanyon’s and Jekyll’s letters given to Utterson and presented in their entirety to the reader. The epistolary format makes the narrative more probable to fall under the curse of the unreliable narrator. Since we only get small fractions

of information, which is the detriment of the epistolary style of narration, yet it allows the mystery to unfold in a slow and delicate manner. This might explain the inclusion of multiple narrators since the confession of several characters confirming the same or closely similar events implies a level of authenticity regarding the presented information. In other words, the limitation of information is how the epistolary style further enhances the horror of the gothic in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* through the subjective and fractured accounts of its narrators.

Representation of Unity in *Dracula's* Epistolary Narration

After discussing the rather curious narrative choices in the *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, I will examine another story, which, however, is similar in its tone and theme, and in the inclusion of the epistolary format. Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, in other respects, is strikingly different in its narration compared to Stevenson's work. Its most notable difference is in its employment of multiple narrators. Each of them is a dramatized storyteller rather than a bodiless narrator following the other characters around. In addition, all the three main narrators can be considered to be round characters. While they start off as flat characters, serving a certain role in the story at first, they slowly develop and change. The novel employs the epistolary format to its advantage alongside journal entries and newspaper articles. The difference in Stoker's work is that the full text is written within the medium of embedded written texts, unlike Stevenson's novel. We do not have a third-person omniscient narrator as in Stevenson's case, and neither does a shift of similar magnitude happen. The only pieces of information presented to the reader are the ones that the characters themselves experience and later document in their own diaries, making the work have a writing-to-the-moment type of structure. If an event has not been mentioned by these characters, then we can safely assume that it holds no relevance to the story. But how does all this affect the narrative of the novel and the characters themselves?

My first point is to explore what exactly makes this text epistolary, unlike *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, which includes letters only in the second half of the story. The entirety of the story is presented in an epistolary style through letters, diary entries, phonograph recordings, and occasionally through newspaper articles. The bulk of the text, however, is mainly told through diary entries written by hand or through recordings of a phonograph. The narrators' motivations as to why they record their own perspectives are also explained in the novel. Jonathan writes a diary to record his travel experiences in another country; Mina writes a diary because Jonathan mentioned the idea to her and the actual writing of the diary reminds her of

him. As for John Seward, he makes his own recordings as a way to process the rejection from Lucy Westenra and to monitor and catalogue the changes regarding the behaviour of one of his patients, R. M. Renfield. Jonathan is the first character to present his own narration, uninterrupted by the other narrators so that the reader can get a glimpse into Count Dracula as the novel's main antagonist. Then Mina takes the spotlight as the narrator, quickly followed by Seward, after which the story shifts between their narratives from one chapter to another. During the latter parts of the narrative, Jonathan Harker returns as the third narrator, and the perspective shifts between the three narrators. There are also letters and newspaper articles put in occasionally, such as Lucy Westenra's letter, which introduces John Seward among other characters; at the same time, newspaper articles are introduced documenting strange happenings that occur around London to show the effects of Dracula's actions and how they affect others.

The second point that we should discuss is how each of these three narrators shows different sides of the monster: Jonathan Harker, Mina Harker (formerly Mina Murray), and Dr. John "Jack" Seward, with each of them having their own distinct style of narration (Seed 70). All these three characters have a specific role that they serve with their narration in the plot. Jonathan Harker serves as our introduction to the main antagonist of the story, Dracula. He starts off as a flat character, mostly there to help the audience visualize his travels in the foreign land and to convey the uneasiness and fear that Dracula commands. Stoker could have written him out of the story after he served his purpose, but he included him in later chapters as well and expanded upon his character. Jonathan survives his imprisonment in Dracula's castle, but he is left severely traumatized by the events. Yet, he still finds the courage to fight against Dracula (Seed 64). Mina is a transitory character in the story, who serves to connect other important characters, such as Jonathan referring to Mina in his diary and Mina referring to Lucy in her diary, who later connects the story to Dr. Seward. Dr. Seward, who is the narrator in most of the chapters, is there to introduce Dr. Van Helsing. Stoker expands upon each of his narrators' characters, giving them personal growth and inner conflicts. Jonathan could have died in Dracula's castle, yet he survived; later on, he overcomes his trauma and finds the courage and volition to stand up against Dracula for a second time. Mina Harker, while having the least amount of narration, grows from being a transitory character to a supportive and brave heroine, standing firmly beside her male compatriots. While Dr. Seward has a rather dry style of narration (Seed 70), more akin to that of an academic researcher than a romantic storyteller, he becomes more emotionally invested after Lucy's death and has to confront his own skepticism and essentially re-evaluate his beliefs. Nonetheless, if all of these narrators experience such

progression throughout the story, why are they not more recognized by the audience? In my view, it is because everything these characters represent is culminated in a singular character: Dr. Van Helsing, the main source of opposition and, to some degree, the nemesis of Count Dracula.

It can be stated without a doubt that one of the most fascinating characters in Stoker's work besides Count Dracula is Dr. Abraham Van Helsing, the old Dutch professor of many scientific fields whom we could fittingly label as the main positive force of the story. Seed describes his character in the following way: "Abraham Van Helsing combines the roles of detective, psychic, investigator, philosopher and scientist" (Seed 71). It is possible to draw a parallel between Dr. Van Helsing and Dr. Henry Jekyll, both of whom are scientists, but Helsing's character largely contrasts Jekyll's despite their similarities. Dr. Henry Jekyll is overly ambitious and selfish, fitting under the character archetype of the "mad scientist," while Dr. Van Helsing is much more benevolent and helpful towards others. They both fit the two opposite extremes of the scientist, with one using his knowledge to create monsters, while the other using his knowledge to vanquish monsters and help others. Dr. Van Helsing is also simultaneously the most important driving force of the novel. Since he is the most knowledgeable of the characters, he is the only one who can effectively fight back against Count Dracula and he is the character who takes the most initiative amongst all the others. He is the most memorable character in the story because of his significant involvement. He is initially called to London by Dr. Seward to help cure Lucy Westenra, a character that connects several other characters to each other through the emotional bonds they created with her, whether romantic or otherwise. With her death and the "defilement" of her otherworldly slumber caused by the hands of Count Dracula, Dr. Van Helsing takes on the task of understanding who or what exactly this creature is that he and his friends are up against. Van Helsing is the one who rallies together the three narrators and two other characters, Lord Arthur Godalming and Quincey Morris, to somehow defeat Dracula. His knowledge about the mystical and his eagerness to act in the face of deathly danger are his most appealing characteristics, which usually help win the reader's attention. "Van Helsing not only confronts the irrational but explains it" (Seed 71). Relying again on Goldman's metaphor, mysteries are puzzles that the reader wishes to solve, and since Van Helsing is the one that is capable of providing of an explanation to the secrets of vampirism, it is exactly why the reader's focus tends to mostly gravitate towards him.

The second reason why Van Helsing is more memorable is because he also embodies the joint features of the three main narrators as well. He possesses the bravery of

Jonathan Harker, the kind and caring nature of Mina Harker, and the academic mind that is also present in Dr. Seward. Each of these characters fulfills not just one but several narrative roles in the story. Mina collects several articles from newspapers that hint at the powers that the Count possesses, not to mention that she is the one to first witness what happened to Lucy when Van Helsing was present. Dr. Seward's purpose is not merely to introduce Van Helsing but also to introduce the character of Renfield, who exhibits a form of fanaticism toward the Count. As for Jonathan, his role is strongly secured as the character that experiences the true nature of Dracula. The second reason why these other narrators are important is because one of the central themes of the novel is the strength in unity against the forces of evil. Seed refers to Stoker's article titled "The Censorship of Fiction," in which Stoker states that evil is a force of nature and can be most effectively combated through collaborative effort through the combination of different fields and enterprises (Seed 72). Stoker also presents this idea through one of Van Helsing's monologues: "We have on our side power of combination—a power denied to the vampire kind; we have sources of science; we are free to act and think; and the hours of the day and the night are ours equally" (287). This selfless determination to the cause made by the heroic protagonists perfectly contrasts the selfish and manipulative nature of Dracula, whose connection to people is either through domination or manipulation without the forming of an actual bond with others. Due to the epistolary storytelling of the novel, the final result of the main protagonist group's collaborative effort is present in the "collated text" created from their journal entries, letters, and articles. "All Gothic novels employing this narrative device share an almost obsessive concern with documentation, and they all exhibit a sinister mistrust of the not-said, the unspoken, the hidden and the silent" (Weinstock 165). This makes the narrators' contribution to the story a vital aspect of the plot since Dracula also attempted to destroy this collated text when finding out about its existence. We can view the other characters' collected diary entries and letters as the culminating effort of researchers, educated men, and women trying to analyze and document an unknown malicious force. "Even had we not the proof of our own unhappy experience, the teachings and the records of the past give proof enough for sane peoples" (285). The compiled document they and, by extension, the readers read is the fruit of their joint labour and the main reason why the whole story is presented to us through the written medium instead of having a heterodiegetic narrator following the narrators around. The importance of the diary entries is not in these characters' feelings and confrontation of the horror in that particular moment when it happens, but rather to retroactively rationalize and archive their experiences about Count Dracula and the strange phenomenon surrounding him, which is what helps the reader to relate to their curiosity and their desire to know more. The reader cannot fully

experience every detail of an actual encounter with the monster; we can only see brief insights of the most likely traumatized survivors trying to explain and rationalize the things that they saw. This sense of incomplete narration and unknown details is precisely why the mystery and horror of the epistolary text are so much more effective. Although it might suggest that the deviation to a more sociological approach would deviate from the topic of epistolary style, it is important to note that, the uncovering of Dracula's identity is done through a collaborative effort, hence the polyphonic method of narration. The gothic monster, due to its secretive and destructive nature, tends to work by itself, which is usually represented as a flaw but also as a limitation for the monster to express itself through his very own text, being limited to only show himself through the description of others. Since these monsters do not communicate with others, there is no reason for them to bother writing letters since letters are written as a way of interacting with others. The monsters' reclusive nature limits the possible ways to express themselves through written language, although they are capable of reading and possibly even writing.

However, Stoker's monster, the vampire, was not originally created by him. The earliest inclusion of the vampire in British literature was John Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819), which was followed by Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (1872), then by Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). The vampire is usually depicted in these works as an "undead" creature, drinking the life essence (most commonly the blood) of the innocents, which ordinarily results in the death of its victims, making the vampire an actively hostile and dangerous monster. However, the most interesting feature of the vampire is that it is always shown as a sophisticated monster, usually with a noble or wealthy background, who, while possessing considerable supernatural and physical prowess, its main strength is found within its intelligence and manipulative nature. This is why it comes as a surprise that Dracula is not given the ability to express himself in the form of a letter if he is supposedly capable of reading and writing. As much of a threat as the vampire is as a monster, taking away its means of communication in a work that is primarily written in the epistolary style is nonetheless limiting. His silence and his lack of communication with others serve a narrative purpose.

What is the monster's connection to the epistolary style of narration? According to Jo, there is a direct connection between the reader and the monster regarding their thirst for knowledge. Count Dracula is presented in the novel at first as an educated and civilized nobleman with a large library located in his castle, which he uses to gather information from regarding the culture and language of England. However, his enthusiasm for reading reaches

such an extent that it almost seems to parallel his perverse fixation with women's blood. While Van Helsing is a more morally upstanding character compared to Dracula, he also exhibits the same obsession with reading and studying written works. Jo refers to this phenomenon as "vampiric reading," because the characters do not just read in an average manner, they read "obsessively, excessively, and with great pleasure" (Jo 230). The characters' desire for knowledge and their quest to uncover the mystery behind the vampire mirrors our own. The reader exhibits the same "readerly vampirism" that the characters do.

While the epistolary style is not limited to one genre, it is more commonly used in sentimental novels than in gothic works. As we can see in these two works, they both utilize the epistolary format to make their monsters and mysteries more frightening. There is a sense of tangibility to them since they are presented as first-hand accounts from actual witnesses. This is why another observation that we can make about these two works is that in neither case does the monster express its own narrative. Both works include a few instances of their dialogues, yet neither expresses itself through letters or diary entries despite the fact that both Dracula and Hyde are capable of reading and writing. Within the context of the narrative, the absence of their letters is somewhat understandable. Both oppose the protagonists and wish to remain hidden from them therefore any form of communication would be illogical on their part. However, from a strictly narrative standpoint, revealing too much about the monster can be more counterproductive to the intrigue the monster holds than actually helpful. Gothic stories are meant to be cryptic and disturbing, which is typically achieved by building a mystery around a strange event or, in the cases of these two works, around a monster. The monster is always meant to be something other than human, something unknowable. Interestingly, while the monster is not able to express itself with the same magnitude of diegetic liberty as the narrators do, it is nonetheless capable of influencing the narrative in peculiar ways. Of course, the story revolves around the mystery of the monsters, but the absence of the monsters' voices is what makes their relation to the epistolary style very unique. It is outside of their privilege to express themselves through this format. Both monsters are only capable of destruction; the concept of creation is absent in each monster's case, to the point where even the simple action of writing a single letter is impossible for them. For instance, Count Dracula has a deeper interest in reading, bordering on a level of obsession with consuming and devouring written texts (Jo 229). Van Helsing also possesses a similar thirst for knowledge, but in a more benevolent manner, mainly using the gained information for the good of others, while Dracula uses his acquired knowledge mainly for his own benefit. Dracula's obsession with reading and gaining

knowledge is similar to that of the reader, implying that it is the reader's thirst for knowledge that drives them to continue reading the novel. This is why the concept of "readerly vampirism" is so unorthodox since it creates a point of connection between the monster and the reader. Even when these monsters are so unusual compared to our normal moral standards, the implication of the reader and the monster having anything in common suggests a more complicated nature of their characters. Despite the monsters not being able to create texts meant for the audience or empathize with others, we can relate to their desire to consume knowledge.

We should not forget about the important factor that the structure of these works is mainly related to the presentation of mysteries and unravelling these mysteries. Since the existence of the monster is what creates this mystery, they have to remain shrouded for the major part of the story because the less is known about the monster, the more threatening his visage becomes. "The less Dracula is formulated, the more of a threat he represents. Once the different accounts have been put together, Dracula begins to diminish in stature" (Seed 74). This very same thought of reasoning also applies to Mr. Hyde as well; by learning more about their origin, the narrator can simultaneously diminish the danger they hold. Works written in an epistolary style are usually written in three possible formats: diary entries, newspaper articles, and, most commonly, letters. We should put newspaper articles aside considering that the idea of a monster writing a newspaper article is expected to be in a parody of the gothic rather than in the actual gothic genre. It is clear that letters are nearly never written by the monsters, and even if the existence of a monster's written letter is suggested (for example, Dracula had to establish contact somehow with Harker's estate agency and Jekyll mentions that Hyde became capable of mimicking his handwriting), this letter has to reach the hand of the main narrator(s) in order to present it to the readers. This is not possible due to the monster's secretive and detached lifestyle. This would only leave diary entries as the only plausible way of communication for the monster, only tainted by the fact that how would this diary (if it does exist) reach the main narrator(s). Besides, it seems that the monster is not eager to write diaries either, considering that neither of these two monsters is ever mentioned writing anything for their own pleasure, and they rather consume knowledge. Another frequent characteristic of the monster is its desire to consume, take, or destroy, but it never creates anything. Due to the fact that they are the main antagonistic force of these works, their desire for destruction is definitely not unexpected, but the idea that they are willing to dabble into the field of reading to ravenous extents, yet the "intelligent" monster does not find enjoyment in the process of writing is an interesting limitation to their character archetype.

In conclusion, this paper examined the inclusion of the epistolary style in two gothic works and its connection to the monster present in both works. The epistolary style is a source of privilege that is mainly given to the narrators or to other major characters of the story, but it never becomes a privilege for the monster. Diary entries, letters, and sometimes even newspaper articles are used to oppose the monsters' actions within the work. Since the monsters' strength is often related to how scarce knowledge we have regarding them, the more is known about the monsters, the less powerful they become. Since the epistolary style is used in both works as a way of detailing their origin, behaviour, and weaknesses, we can regard these texts as a means of opposition against the existence of the monster itself. The story is always presented to us from the perspective of the narrators who go against the monster, which is why the audience is not meant to sympathize with the monster but instead to oppose it similarly. There is also the underlying sense of mystery tied to the monster that the epistolary narration style greatly enhances. The monster is introduced in its full glory in the first half of the text but remains hidden afterward, urging the narrator to unravel the full truth slowly, piece by piece, until eventually, the entire story comes together. The "writing to the moment method," closely associated with the epistolary style, supports the gradual discovery of information. Since the narrators can only write about events up to that point in time, their revelations are fragmented yet steady, allowing the progression to be easy to follow. However, each work also has its own peculiarities regarding its epistolarity that sets them apart from one another. Although we wish to always view the narrator's information as definitive, even narrators are not exempt from falling under the possibility of being unreliable. This is mostly prevalent in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, with Dr. Jekyll's letters having several discrepancies that compromise his standing as a reliable narrator. *Dracula* is mainly concerned with the accumulative power of the characters present within the work and their desire to work together against the monster, which is supported by the synoptic and polyphonic structure of the work. To summarize the main point further, the monster is limited by the epistolary style, but this is a necessary limitation. It is limited, so its mystery could remain present; it is limited because of having their own voice in the work because the audience is supposed to side with the writers of the letters, the ones who dare to oppose the monster and learn about the monster's secrets. Although the monster can be cunning and knowledgeable, which can be expressed by their desire or even obsession to read, writing is something that is taboo. The epistolary style distances the narrator from the monster, making the monster's image and the moments of direct confrontation with the narrator even more terrifying. The limitation placed on the monster in terms of expressing itself to the audience enhances the mystery and horror surrounding its existence. In other words, the

employment of epistolary narration intensifies the fear and terror generated by the gothic monster by restricting its means of self-expression and creating distance between it and the narrators.

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