Bram Stoker, Dracula

Dracula, written by Bram Stoker, was published in 1897. Though it was not an instant financial success, it had much critical acclaim. Though vampires had been written about before, Dracula brought them into the public consciousness, so much so that the name Dracula has become synonymous with the word vampire itself. Today, Dracula is considered a classic of Gothic literature.

Dracula is also notable for its unique epistolary format. The novel is framed as an edited compilation of the diaries of the protagonists, adding an unreliability to the narrative. The form the novel takes also allows it to be presented in real time, making it nearly impossible for first-time readers to know what becomes of the characters.


**Brief Timeline:**

- November 8, 1847 – Born in Clontarf, Ireland
- 1860 – Attended Trinity College in Dublin
- 1890 – Began writing an untitled vampire novel
- May 26, 1897 – Publication of *Dracula* in England
- 1899 – Publication of *Dracula* in America
- April 20, 1912 – Died in London, England

**Stoker’s Background:**
Stoker was born in Clontarf, Ireland on November 8th, 1847. His parents were Abraham Stoker and feminist Charlotte Mathilda Blake Thornley. He was the third out of seven children. Early in life, he was bed-ridden until the age of seven. He made a full recovery when he began school and became a superb athlete in Trinity College. He graduated from Trinity College in 1870 with honors in mathematics.

After college, Stoker started working as an auditor for the College Historical Society and became the president of the University Philosophical Society. There he wrote his first paper on “Sensationalism in Fiction and Society.”

When he was still employed as a civil servant, he wrote theater reviews on the side for The Dublin Mail, a newspaper co-owned by Sheridan Le Fanu. In 1867, he gave a fabulous review of Henry Irving’s Hamlet at the Theater Royal in Dublin. Irving, a renowned English actor, invited Stoker out for dinner one night and they soon became close friends.

In 1878, Stoker married Florence Balcombe, a radiant beauty previously courted by Oscar Wilde. Within a few months, they moved to London and Stoker became the business manager Irving’s Lyceum Theatre. On December 31st of 1879, Bram and Florence’s only child Irving was born.

Stoker’s connection with Henry Irving led him to gain status in London’s high society. He met James Abbott McNeill Whistler and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, as well as Hall Caine. As a member of high society, Stoker traveled all over the world. He never did visit Eastern Europe, the most famous setting in Dracula. He enjoyed coming over to the United States, where he met his idol Walt Whitman. With Irving, he dined at the White House twice and met Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. While abroad, Stoker developed the inspiration for some of his infamous American characters, like Quincey Morris.

In 1882, Stoker published his first book Under the Sunset. His first novel The Snake’s Pass was printed in 1890. During that year, Stoker also began to write an unnamed novel about vampires. It took seven years, but eventually his masterpiece Dracula was published. Between 1898 and 1905, Stoker wrote four more novels, including Miss Betty and The Jewel of Seven Stars. In 1905, Henry Irving died and Stoker suffered a stroke from the shock. He continued to write afterwards, publishing three more novels before he died in 1912.

Reactions to the novel Dracula:
Dracula was not extremely popular when it was first published, although it received good reviews from critics. The novel is more popular nowadays than it was first published, but many Victorian readers appreciated it as an excellent adventure story. However, the novel did not receive its high literary status until movie adaptation came out in the 20th century.

**Interesting Facts about Stoker and Dracula.**

- Vlad the Impaler was NOT Stoker’s inspiration for Count Dracula
- Stoker originally wanted to name his character “Count Wampyr.” He later changed the name to “Count Dracula” after he learned the meaning of the name
- The word Dracula means “devil” in the Wallachian language (Previously spoken in a southern region of Romania)
- Dracula is NOT the first novel about vampires. Sheridan Le Fanu published the novella *Carinilla* in 1871

Sources:
Further Reading

**Sins of the flesh: anorexia, eroticism and the female vampire in Bram Stoker’s Dracula**

Written by: Emma Dominguez-Rue and Vicki Robinson

This article discusses the overwhelming presence of the feminine ‘self-image’ throughout Dracula and how the Victorian culture regarded anorexia as a female disease, all of which was constructed by the masculine standards of judging women. This article looks to find out what was truly considered to be ‘feminine’, how the process of eating is seen as grotesque, and the detailed representation of the female vampire as compared to the Count himself.

**Heterosexual Horror: Dracula, the Closet, and the Marriage-Plot**

Written by: Barry McCrea

This article looks at the underlying homoeroticism in Bram Stoker’s Dracula compared to how heterosexuality and marriage is seen, therefore making the ‘closet’ seem just as coherent and accepted. It also discusses the desires and other sexual relationships between characters in the novel and how they are seen as simplistic while the heterosexual relationships are seen as more modern.

“A Presage of Horror!” Cacotopia, the Paris Commune, and Bram Stoker’s Dracula

Written by: Eric D. Smith

In this essay, the social anxieties of the Victorian time during which Dracula was written is explored and how these anxieties date back to the 1871 Paris Commune. It then goes into detail about how the imagery of vampires are seen throughout Dracula and how it can be compared to other similar novels.

**English Assimilation and Invasion From Outside the Empire: Problems of the Outsider in England in Bram Stoker’s Dracula**

Written by: Jeffrey Salem Moore

This article looks at the issues in Dracula such as the topics of immigration versus immigrants and the differences between native British people and foreigners. It also looks at how throughout the novel the non-natives are treated and the preconceived feelings of the ‘other’ are shown, which were reflected from the current xenophobic feelings of that time.

Back to Top
Topics for Discussion

- Christianity
- Characteristics of the Victims
- Feminism
- Fear of the Foreign
- Format
- Science Vs. Superstition
- Sexuality

Back to Top
"You are a clever man, friend John. You reason well, and your wit is bold, but you are too prejudiced. You do not let your eyes see nor your ears hear, and that which is outside your daily life is not of account to you. Do you not think that there are things which you cannot understand, and yet which are, that some people see things that others cannot? But there are things old and new which must not be contemplated by men’s eyes, because they know, or think they know, some things which other men have told them. Ah, it is the fault of our science that it wants to explain all, and if it explain not, then it says there is nothing to explain." Van Helsing (204).

This quote demonstrates one of the major themes of the novel, that of science versus the supernatural. In this instance, Dr. Seward represents the typical viewpoint of the mainstream Victorian gentleman. More specifically, his viewpoint is a scientific one, not allowing any room for any supernatural explanations. Van Helsing, meanwhile, represents the new ideas of spiritualism, which were becoming popular in Victorian society. It also emphasizes how the strict Victorian moral codes and mindset limited the people in the society, and how these limitations could be detrimental, as it was in how Dr. Seward was able to treat Lucy.

"Ah, that wonderful Madam Mina! She has man’s brain - a brain that a man should have were he much gifted - and a woman’s heart.” Van Helsing (250).

This quote reflects an anti-feminist aspect in Stoker's novel. While Van Helsing's comment might seem like a compliment, he is telling Mina that she has the clever mind of a man. He believes women are not usually this intelligent and that they are best suited to deal with more emotional matters involving the heart. Van Helsing is surreptitiously saying that men need to be involved with things of reason and logic, while women should be left to analyze their feelings and incapable of accomplishing anything of real substance.

"I can’t quite remember how I fell asleep last night. I remember hearing the sudden barking of the dogs and a lot of queer sounds, like praying on a very tumultuous scale, from Mr. Renfield’s room, which is somewhere under this. And then there was silence over everything, silence so profound that it startled me, and I got up and looked out of the window." Mina Harker (274).

Pure silence is the complete absence of sound, and yet throughout the novel it comes off as completely profound. These instances of silence act like breaks, giving the characters extra time to truly consider their situations, but the fear they bring is absolutely dreadful. Dracula is full of noise, from howling wolves to screaming people, making these quite moments rare. Yet, when they do happen, it becomes chilling. This is when characters truly feel alone, when they become completely susceptible to the will of Dracula. Silence becomes synonymous with fear, a powerful tool in Dracula’s arsenal.

“Thus are we ministers of God’s own wish: that the world, and men for whom His Son die, will not be given over to monsters, whose very existence would defame Him. He has allowed us to redeem one soul already, and we go out as the old knights of the Cross to redeem more. Like them we shall travel toward sunrise; and like them, if we fail, we fall in good cause.” Van Helsing (321)

This quote exemplifies the Christian themes found throughout Stoker’s novel and portrays the struggle of Van Helsing’s group of friends against Count Dracula as a religious crusade. Van Helsing believes that dispatching Dracula is God’s will and that they have a religious duty to God, as Christians, to search the earth for Dracula and rid the world of his corrupting presence. Van Helsing often uses this religious argument to justify some of the more gruesome tasks his company is charged with, such as the cleansing ritual performed on Lucy, and also to motivate the group to pursue Dracula across the continent even after he flees England. This quote highlights the gravity of their mission and shows that there is much more at stake than just his influence on their lives.
Dracula

Due to the many adaptions and spoofs of vampires over the years the original characteristics of Bram Stoker's Dracula have fallen to the wayside. For instance...

Count Dracula maintains a human form, a disguise he uses as a tool for manipulation. When Jonathan Harker describes him upon their initial meeting he is far from fearful. "Within, stood a tall man, clean shaven save for a long white mustache, and clad in black from head to foot, without a single speck of colour about him anywhere" (22). However, there is a sense of evil that accumulates around the Count, as Jonathan later describes, "Never did I imagine such wrath and fury, even to the demons of the pit! His eyes were positively blazing" (46). His red blazing eyes recurred several times in throughout the novel, exemplifying the intensity attached to them.

The count is unnaturally old, hundreds of years in fact. “My revenge is just begun! I spread it over centuries, and time is on my side" he yells (326). He is of a warrior heritage, having lead the invasion that brought him to Transylvania in the first place.

Of his more peculiar qualities, the count has no reflection in the mirror, a fact Jonathan finds out early. “Not only that, but he also possesses strength and agility unequal to any human. "There was something so panther-like in the movement – something so unhuman, that it seemed to sober us all from the shock of his coming" writes Dr. Seward (325). Dracula is a shape shifter as well. Not only does he command a mighty presence with the beasts of the earth, but he takes their forms multiple times. He seems to prefer being a bat, but does take on a wolf like form to escape the floundering sea vessel after arriving to London. To add to his fearful aura fog remains the Count’s constant companion. “only God can guide us in the fog, which seems to move with us; and God seems to have deserted us” writes the unknowing Captain of the ship Dracula stowed away on (94).

Perhaps Dracula’s most defining feature is his thirst for blood. As a vampire this is his only form of sustenance. “For the blood is the life,” claims Renfield, quoting the Bible. The Count doesn’t partake in human food; rather, he despises it. Blood plays a crucial role in his procreation as well. After feeding on Lucy enough she becomes his offspring after her death. “they cannot die, but must go on age after age adding new victims and multiplying the evils of the world” says Van Helsing (229). To do this the exchange blood, the life fluid of vampires, is necessary.

However, as strong as he may be, Count Dracula’s weaknesses are many and exploited by Van Helsing. Given he is evil, objects such as crucifixes, holy water, and holy wafers burn him. Garlic prevents his presence as well. The count also has trouble dealing with large numbers of people, having to run away when he is surrounded. He must be invited in to any place he wants to go. “He evidently fears discovery or interference,” writes Mina (373). However, his biggest weakness, leading to his downfall, is his need for Transylvanian soil. He can only rest in it, thus the team led by Van Helsing easily tracks him down.

Characters

Abraham Van Helsing

Professor Van Helsing is a Dutch medical doctor, doctor of philosophy, doctor of letters, and lawyer from Amsterdam who is Doctor Seward’s old teacher. Van Helsing is originally introduced in the novel as a physician who is called upon to diagnose Lucy Westenra’s illness but it soon shifts to that of a supernatural “metaphysician”, as Seward calls him, who uses traditional superstitious remedies to try and cure Lucy of her ailment. After her death, he assumes the role of a Christian crusader of sorts, and as the leader of a group of vampire hunters bent on Dracula’s destruction. Van Helsing is referred to as a professor throughout the novel, rather than doctor, which shifts the focus of him from a scientist to that of a teacher and leader. Van Helsing becomes the main enemy of Dracula in the novel and his vast knowledge of vampirism helps him plan his demise. Van Helsing’s role as a foreigner also makes him Dracula’s most dangerous adversary because he is not limited to the confines of Victorian science and reasoning that the other characters, particularly Seward, are. Van Helsing is a devout Christian whose faith and religious fervor guide his actions and eventually lead to the destruction of Count Dracula.

Arthur Holmwood (Lord Godalming)

Arthur Holmwood, one of Lucy’s suitors in novel who becomes Lucy’s fiancé, is a loyal and trusting man and even accepts the challenging task of killing Lucy’s demonic form at the end of the novel. Arthur struggles throughout the novel first with the death of his father Lord Godalming and then is deeply upset and distraught over the ailing Lucy and tries to do whatever possible to save her life, but when she ultimately dies his character seems to be torn apart by grief. Arthur is the first person to take part in giving Lucy a blood transfusion and never thinks twice about trying to save her and therefore agrees to take part in her final death. Arthur’s character is defined by his honest and good-nature but slowly he is transformed into looking weak because of his constant breakdowns and unreliable emotions that consistently flood him. His ability to kill Lucy showed tremendous courage and strength and was surprising not only to the reader but also for the other characters involved.
**Dr. John Seward**

Dr. Seward, who works at an asylum, is first introduced in the story as one of Lucy Westenra's three suitors. Though she turns down his proposal, they remain friends, and Arthur calls on him to see Lucy after she falls ill. Seward brings in his old mentor, Van Helsing. He is also treating a patient, Renfield, who has a clear connection to Dracula. Though he does not necessarily jump to supernatural conclusions himself, Seward trusts Van Helsing's judgement and is willing to do anything to help Lucy and, later, Mina.

**Jonathan Harker**

Jonathan Harker’s role in the novel switches throughout, as he is the character that begins that story as a smart man traveling to Transylvania to discuss a real estate transaction with Dracula and soon falls into his trap. He ignores all the signs of the countryside people along the way desperately trying to bless him and stop him from continuing on his journey. Jonathon doesn’t seem to believe in any-type of superstition and is not religious, but he is greatly troubled by the people trying to warn him of what was to come. He continues on and soon finds himself to be a prisoner in Dracula’s castle. Once he barely escapes and Mina goes to find he is in a distraught state for a while and has trouble communicating with her about what happened but gives Mina the journal he recorded his secret findings about Dracula in. Mina at this point is very concerned about Jonathan’s state and the only thing she can rely on is his notes from being trapped in the castle and soon gives it to Van Helsing as evidence to help them. At the end of the novel, Jonathon returns as a strong character who is able to work with the rest of the men and Mina to help defeat Dracula.

**Lucy Westenra**

Lucy Westenra is introduced as Mina’s best friend. Her astonishing beauty and feminine charm easily attracts three suitors, Doctor Seward, Quincey Morris, and Arthur Holmwood. After rebuffing the first two gentlemen, she finally accepts Arthur’s proposal. She seems like the ideal Victorian wife, pretty, poised, and pure. However, she has had problems sleepwalking since she was younger, and recently the issues have intensified. Her nocturnal adventures cause great concern for Mina and soon, it is revealed that Dracula is the cause of it all. He has chosen her as his first victim and is draining her blood nightly. Holmwood, Dr. Seward, Professor Van Helsing, and Quincey Morris all donate their life-blood on Lucy’s behalf, but to no avail. She dies and is buried, completing the transformation into a vampire. Shortly after she is buried, there are reports of a “Bloofer lady” in the news, who abducts children only to return them with a strange mark on their neck. Van Helsing soon realizes that this “Bloofer lady” is Lucy and she must be killed. The men travel to Lucy’s tomb, only to find it empty. Then, they notice Lucy with a small child and begin to pursue her. She drops the child and calls out to her love, Holmwood. Van Helsing springs on Lucy with a crucifix and forces Holmwood to stake her.

**Mina Harker (Mina Murray)**

Mina is Jonathan Harker’s wife and the strongest female character in the novel. She represents the “New Woman” and portrays certain feminist characteristics. She speaks of shocking men with her “New Woman” appetite and proposing to them, instead of just submissively waiting and accepting. At the beginning of the novel, she works as a schoolmistress. Yet, she wants to learn shorthand to assist with her about what happened but gives Mina the journal he recorded his secret findings about Dracula in. Mina at this point is very concerned about Jonathon’s state and the only thing she can rely on is his notes from being trapped in the castle and soon gives it to Van Helsing as evidence to help them. At the end of the novel, Jonathon returns as a strong character who is able to work with the rest of the men and Mina to help defeat Dracula.

**R.M. Renfield**

Renfield is a patient in Doctor Seward’s insane asylum, the only one we hear about in the course of the novel, as he is diagnosed as a “zoophagous maniac” by Seward. Renfield has an obsession with consuming living things and comes up with a strange plan which he feels will allow him to consume as much life as possible; he feeds flies to spiders, the spiders to sparrows, and then eats the sparrows (he tries to further his plan by getting a cat to feed the sparrows to but Seward refuses this request). Renfield struggles with the belief of souls as well, and when he is questioned by Seward about the living things he has consumed and the fate of their souls, Renfield is uneasy and feels guilty. Renfield also has a split personality and is at times prone to violent fits of rage, such as attacking Seward with a kitchen knife and licking his blood, and is also a capable of respectful and intelligent conversation with Seward and his friends (especially Mina Harker). These interactions of violence and compliance are later attributed to Dracula’s influence and it is revealed that Renfield is a disciple of sorts to Dracula, in that he is not a victim of Dracula’s vampirism but rather worships him out of his own free will, although he later expresses a renouncement of Dracula later when he informs Seward and his friends of Dracula’s influence. Renfield is eventually killed by Dracula for his apparent renouncement of him.

**Quincey Morris**

Quincey Morris is introduced as one of Lucy’s three suitors, along with Arthur Holmwood and Dr. Seward, although he is ultimately rejected. He is the only American in the cast, whose Texan roots are emphasized in the text. He talks of spinning “yarns around the campfire in the prairies” and is alluded to as a free American spirit (69).
Morris is portrayed as simple-minded. He fires his gun off at random times shooting at bats he thinks may be Dracula and is the only one of the men that can't speak multiple languages. However, he is looked to in times of action. "In all our hunting parties and adventures in different parts of the world, Quincey Morris had always been the one to arrange the plan of action" writes Dr. Seward (325).

He is a man of few words and fewer emotions that he’s willing to show. That being said, he is the only main character to die a heroic death, giving his life to kill Count Dracula.

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**Dracula in Film**

*Dracula* has had a huge impact on popular culture. The character has been used in over 100 films, beginning with the early silent film *Nosferatu*. The character has also been used in stage and radio productions, and has been featured as a character in short stories, comics, and video games. Additionally, *Dracula* helped to create a whole vampire genre, which has had a huge resurgence in popularity in recent times.

**Nosferatu** (1922)
(Germany) Directed by F.W. Murnau

**Dracula** (1931)
(United States) Directed by Tod Browning

**Horror of Dracula** (1958)
(United Kingdom) Directed by Terence Fisher

**Bram Stoker’s Dracula** (1992)
(United States) Francis Ford Coppola

**Van Helsing** (2004)
(United States) Stephen Sommers

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**Vampires in Pop Culture**

*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003)
Adapted for television from the 1992 film, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* told the story of Buffy Summers, a teenage girl who slays vampires. The show was extremely popular, eventually spawning a spin-off, *Angel*, and an expanded universe of comics.
The dual nature of vampires is not as clear on Buffy as it is in Dracula. Originally, vampires were humans possessed by a demon spirit, completely obliterating the original human spirit. Another theory, however, states that vampires are humans transformed by demon physiology – specifically, the human conscience is gone, leaving behind the basic human, driven only by instinct. There are also numerous other theories as to what exactly constitutes a vampire and debates over just how human they are. According to Buffy, a human becomes a vampire when there is an exchange of blood between a vampire and said human. First, the vampire sucks the human's blood; then, the vampire must feed the human its own blood. Much like in Dracula, humans must be in a weakened state for this transition to be effective. As also seen in Dracula, vampires often live in packs, with the leader being called “the master,” something that is seen in Dracula in the relationship between Dracula and Renfield. Other aspects of vampire lore that are found in both Dracula and Buffy are that vampires can only enter a private residence if invited (though the inviter does not have to know that they are inviting the vampire in) and that vampires do not have reflections.

Source: Vampires in the Buffyverse
IMDb: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0118276/

**Twilight (2005)**

In 2005, Stephenie Meyer published Twilight, the first in a series of four books about the love between vampire Edward Cullen and teenager Bella Swan. Reviews of the book were initially positive, and the books were a wild success, resulting in a series of films being made. The first, also called Twilight, was released in 2008.

Though there has been much scrutiny over Meyer’s portrayal of vampires, her vampires do share some similarities with those found in Dracula. They have super strength and various powers, though their powers are very individualized in that they are often simply the strengths they had as a human magnified. Additionally, vampires primarily live in clans. Those that do live alone, known as nomads, tend to be much harsher. However, the most famous aspect of Meyer’s vampire lore is something not found in Dracula – vampires have a sensitivity to sunlight that causes them to sparkle.

Official Website: http://www.stepheniemeyer.com/twilight.html

**True Blood (2008-present)**

In 2008, The Southern Vampire Mysteries series by Charlaine Harris was adapted into a successful television show, True Blood. The series chronicles Sookie Stackhouse, a telepathic waitress living in a small town. When vampires go public, announcing that they have found a synthetic blood (Tru Blood) that they can live off of, Sookie is drawn to them due to the fact that she cannot read their minds.

As in Dracula, the vampires of the True Blood universe are physically dead – they do not have any bodily functions or brain activity. Despite this, they are susceptible to illness, particularly to a mutation of hepatitis known as “Hep D.” These vampires, like Dracula, also have a type of mind control over humans, known as “glamoring.” Interestingly, vampires can also lay claim to humans to keep other vampires from feasting on them. However, vampires who live together in dens tend to be much more vicious than vampires who try to live alone.

Source: True Blood Reveals Rules of Its Vampire Universe
Official Website: http://www.hbo.com/true-blood/index.html#

**The Vampire Diaries (2009-present)**

Adapted from the book series by L.J. Smith, The Vampire Diaries tells the story of Elena Gilbert, a teenage girl who falls in love with Stefan Salvatore, a vampire. The show focuses around their relationship, the complications caused by Stefan’s brother, Damon, and the supernatural occurrences prevalent in their small town.
As in *Dracula*, vampires can pass as normal humans, though they have fangs and their faces change when they are preparing to feed. Feeding can be painful if the human victim struggles too much, but if the victim is willing it can be pleasurable for both parties. Vampires have super speed and strength, and sharper senses. These include numerous mental powers, including the power to influence humans, telepathic communication with each other, and the ability to read humans’ minds. However, they do have a fatal weakness to sunlight, though they can go into the sunlight if they wear the gemstone lapis lazuli on their person, usually in the form of a ring. In the books, vampires can also shift into animals, though the number of forms they can shift to is limited. They most often shift into bird forms. They must also be invited into a place before they can enter, though they do have reflections and are not affected by crucifixes.

**Official Website:** [http://www.cwtv.com/shows/the-vampire-diaries](http://www.cwtv.com/shows/the-vampire-diaries)

**Sources:**
- *The Vampire Diaries: Vampire Lore 101*
- *Vampire Lore 101: The TV Series Edition*

**Harry Potter (1997-present)**

While there is no mention of vampires in the *Harry Potter* series, there are many parallels with the world of *Dracula*.

In the *Harry Potter* series, the protagonist Harry has a lightning bolt-shaped scar on his forehead from an early battle with the Dark Lord, Voldemort. With this scar, Harry is able to sense when Voldemort draws near, can see glimpses from Voldemort’s eyes and can hear Voldemort’s thoughts. Likewise, Mina has a telepathic connection with Dracula. After a holy wafer burns her forehead, Mina is able to be properly hypnotized by Van Helsing, and she experiences the same surroundings as the Count. This ultimately allows Mina to narrow down the Count’s location and trace his escape.

Both the series and the novel feature a strong female character. In the *Harry Potter* series, Hermione Granger is consistently the brains of the operation. She is at the top of her class, and frequently called the brightest witch of her age. She is always prepared and solves many of the problems Harry faces. Mina is the heroine of *Dracula*. She compiles all the letters, newspaper articles, and journals to create cohesive evidence for the men to follow. Through her telepathic bond with Dracula, Mina is able to locate the monster and advise the men during their hunt. It is rather debatable if the men would have succeeded without her help.

Shape-shifting elements come into play as well. There are many animagi, wizards or witches who can transform into animals at will, in the *Harry Potter* series. A professor at Hogwarts Minerva McGonagall can change into a tabby cat, Sirius Black can transform into a black shaggy dog, the reporter Rita Skeeter can secretly turn into a beetle and many more. In *Dracula*, the Count is able to morph into wolves, bats, and can even disappear entirely into a mist.

The Dark Lord Voldemort and Count Dracula are very comparable. Both immortal, through horcruxes or otherwise, they are known to drink blood to stay alive. In the first book *Harry Potter’s and the Sorcerer’s Stone*, Voldemort possesses Quirinus Quirrell and forces him to drink unicorn blood on Voldemort’s behalf. Unicorn blood is said to “keep you alive, even if you are an inch from death, but at a terrible price” (Rowling 258). As a vampire, Dracula needs blood to survive.

Additionally, both villains control hoards of loyal underlings, whether they are nefarious Death Eaters or a ferocious pack of wolves.

Resources and Links


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Back to Top
Gary Oldman as Dracula in the 1992 film

Map of Transylvania, 1857. (August Petermann)

Bela Lugosi as Dracula.