"Writing the Vampire: M. E. Braddon's "Good Lady Ducayne" and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*"

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Writing the Vampire: M. E. Braddon's "Good Lady Ducayne" and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

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By the *fin-de-siècle,* vampire fiction already had a long-standing Gothic heritage, and yet, in the mid-1890s, two authors published their own vampire tales, hoping to make their mark in the popular genre. One author was an established best-seller with thirty years' experience of the market, while the other was a lawyer[1] and theater business manager by profession and wrote in his spare time. The professional writer, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, published her short story "Good Lady Ducayne" in 1896, while the part-time writer, Bram Stoker, published his novel, *Dracula,* a year later. Braddon's tale was quickly lost to the annals of time while Stoker's novel became a staple of the Gothic mode. As a result of this close proximity, a potential crossover has been noted by several scholars, with Richard Bleiler commenting: "[b]ecause *Dracula* (1897) was written in 1896, the question arises as to whether Stoker and Braddon discussed subject matter and, if so, who influenced whom, and how. This has not yet been resolved" (131). By comparing both authors' theatrical backgrounds and literary careers and their life-long friendship, as well as their texts' literary formations, sources, and themes, this article establishes their potential influence on each other and discusses their social commentary to examine how this impacted their popular and literary reputations.

Engaging in contemporary debates such as the "New Woman," scientific breakthroughs, and technological advances, Stoker's novel contrasted a bygone age with modernity while cementing the genre's patriarchal male Count as the epitome of evil. Braddon's "Good Lady Ducayne" dealt with the same concerns of modernization and women's changing place in society, but has been critically neglected until the twenty-first century due to its short story form and antidimactic ending. Yet Braddon's tale is more radical than Stoker's classic text in its representation of vampirism, scientific advances, and rational influences, as well as its gender and genre expectations. *Dracula* may have captured the public's imagination, leading to it being reproduced and adapted countless times over the last century, but Braddon's short story was potentially too close to reality to bear thinking about. This article postulates that Braddon's moving away from the supernatural to penning a scientifically and socially realistic vampire challenges the vampire's literary landscape more effectively than *Dracula*, because the horror in her tale was *not* displaced onto the supernatural but firmly centered in modern life.

Mary Braddon and Bram Stoker

Braddon's career as an actress began in 1852, and it is through theatrical connections that she met Stoker, who became Sir Henry Irving's business manager at the Lyceum in 1878. In his *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* (1906), Stoker writes that "[t]he first time I ever saw Henry Irving was at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, on the evening of Wednesday, August 28, 1867. Miss Herbert had brought the St. James's Company on tour, playing some of the Old Comedies and Miss Braddon's new drama founded on her successful novel, *Lady Audley's Secret*" (1). In this "new drama," Irving played Robert Audley (Brereton 73), indicating both were aware of Braddon's writing from the start of their acquaintance. Later in Irving's career, he was renowned for entertaining in the Gothic-decorated Beefsteak Room behind the Lyceum's stage (Frayling ix), where Braddon was an occasional guest (*Reminiscences* 319).[2] Braddon and Stoker's burgeoning friendship throughout their theatrical careers indicates similarities in their working lives; they were both professionals who understood the theater and the illusions that it enacts. The theater provided them with a working knowledge of classical to contemporary drama and literature; they both knew how to perform a variety of different roles and to set a scene, and they shared an understanding of the theatricality of everyday life. From these similar theatrical upbringings arises a potential influence on each other, which would only strengthen as their friendship matured; the Stoker family and Braddon remained close friends until Stoker died in 1912.

Their friendship is confirmed by their general correspondence on a range of topics that informs the modern researcher of the strength, intimacy and type of friendship they had. The main topic of Braddon's letters to Stoker is requests for free theater tickets at the Lyceum: "If you find by any chance you have any spare room for Shylock … we shall be most grateful–but I dare say the theatre is already gavé–there's a bit of French slang for you." This joking, playful request indicates their familiar correspondence style and sense of humor, although Braddon understood the frequency with which she asked these favors may have been too much, as she also writes: "Don't think me greedy in asking for a box." Braddon's closeness and comfortableness with Stoker is referenced in her candid disclosures of her family life. She updates Stoker on Maxwell's illness–"P.S. Max is decidedly better"–and of her son, Gerald's, progress in life: "It seems to me that a few months in a travelling company would be the best start for him." As Braddon usually kept discussions of her private life to a minimum, these family details indicate the high level of trust between the two authors. Finally, her friendship with both Stoker and Irving is demonstrated by her condolences on the death of Irving's dog: "I regret greatly to read of poor Fussie's death–but do not like to

plague Sir Henry with a letter of condolence … I can most sincerely sympathize with him in his loss of a dear companion." Braddon was a devout dog lover and her letter indicates her profound sense of commiseration and upset on this life event. Overall, the letters reveal their playful, intimate and practical friendship, in which they confide in each other about their thoughts, actions and family circumstances (Braddon, Stoker/Braddon Correspondence).[3]

During the 1880-90s, Stoker visited Braddon often in her Richmond home when she held garden parties (Braddon, *Sensation Fiction* Reel 6), which her son, W. B. Maxwell, describes as a "focal point or place of assembly for the brotherhood and sisterhood of the pen" (183). In addition to Stoker, writers such as Wilkie Collins, H. Rider Haggard, Henry Irving, Charles Reade, George Augustus Sala, and Oscar Wilde were all present (Phegley 200), and it is likely that they discussed their literary pursuits. When considering Braddon and Stoker specifically, this later period of the "brotherhood … of the pen" becomes significant, as they published their vampire texts within one year of each other, and this article will now compare both authors' creative literary processes and source texts to establish links between the two texts.

The Evolution of "Good Lady Ducayne" and *Dracula*

Despite the overarching similarity of being *fin-de-siècle* vampire narratives, both texts evolved in different ways; Stoker chose to write a novel that protracted readers' suspense, while Braddon opted for a short story that was succinct and fast paced. By the 1890s, Braddon was an adept writer of supernatural fiction, having published sixteen paranormal short stories in various periodicals, making her an established figure in the form alongside Dickens, Collins, and Rhoda Broughton. Yet this form negatively impacted the standing of "Good Lady Ducayne" in popular culture and literary studies. Short stories were perceived as ephemeral when originally published on their own in magazines, and because they were then often republished in collections, individual stories were not always considered on their own merits but as a part of a whole. As a professional writer, Braddon understood and addressed this by having "Good Lady Ducayne" illustrated. Gordon Browne's illustrations (as depicted in Figures 1 and 2) are chillingly effective, but they were lost after the story's initial publication; subsequent reprints did not include them (possibly due to cost), so the tale's impact decreased. Stoker, on the other hand, was not an established author; he had published "The Chain of Destiny," his first horror story, in 1875, but it was not until *Dracula* that his reputation as a writer was cemented (Hindle xxvii). Stoker imbued his text with great theatricality with an eye to putting it on the stage; he gave a theater reading of *Dracula* before the novel was published to claim

theatrical rights (Steinmeyer 119-20), indicating his understanding of his text's powerful imaginative qualities that have been utilized by countless authors, artists, and filmmakers since its publication. Thus, the choice of form for their vampire tales had a significant impact on the influence of their work in the literary field and the cultural consciousness. Stoker's novel became a staple of vampire fiction while Braddon's short story remained relatively obscure until recently.

This difference in form is also reflected in both authors' methods of composition. Stoker's working notes prove he had been planning *Dracula*–under the working title *The Un-Dead*–since 8th March 1890 (Eighteen-Bisang and Miller 17), and it was finally published on 26th May 1897. His many differently headed notepapers indicate that Stoker planned his novel meticulously over a seven-year period, while also writing on the run between different engagements. During this time, he also published three other novels, indicating his dedication to the longest piece of work he had ever undertaken (Frayling xi). This disjointed writing pattern is similar to Braddon's writing of "Good Lady Ducayne." According to her diaries, she began her tale on 4th December 1893 but put it to one side for almost two years before finishing it relatively quickly on 18th and 19th of September 1895 (*Sensation Fiction* Reels 6-7). Braddon's usual timeframe for writing a short story was two to three days; as a professional author, she had a demanding writing schedule, so she rarely put a tale down unfinished. "Good Lady Ducayne" is therefore a significant departure from her usual writing practice. This protracted composition time for both authors implies that they both took more care over their vampire tales than they did their other works, because they both sought to stand out amidst the vampire's long-standing literary history.

This timeframe also indicates a three year period when both authors were writing their vampire tales, but not that they were aware that each other was doing so. It is only *after* the publication of *Dracula* that Braddon indicates her knowledge of Stoker's novel in a letter that directly compares "Good Lady Ducayne" to *Dracula*:

> June 23rd 97
>
> Dear Mr. Stoker
>
> You remember Sydney Smith's definition of a good novel! Well! I can honestly say that "Dracula" cut down my letter-half-hour to a rush + a scramble of 15 minutes–I took up your book, meaning to cut it–+ read after dinner–having some heavy revises to get through between 5.30 - + 7–I read and read till 7.15. Thank you greatly for the book, + yr. pretty inscription–We will talk of it more anon! When I have solemnly read + meditated thereupon. I have done my humdrum little story of transfusion - in Good Lady Ducayne - but your "bloofer Lady", bangs Banaghen![4]
>
> I am sending you "London Pride". A "fun thing", but the book I

personally like best of my long line of nonsense stories.
Fondest regards to you + Mrs Bram
From yours most sincerely
Mary Maxwell (Braddon, Stoker/Braddon Correspondence)

This letter reveals several significant aspects of their relationship and the connections between their two vampire tales. Firstly, Braddon's reference to Smith's definition of a "good novel" is most likely taken from his artide in *The Edinburgh Review* that discusses the silver fork novel *Granby* (1826). His definition reads: "did it amuse? were you surprised at dinner coming so soon? … and did you sit up beyond the usual hour? If a novel produces these effects, it is good; if it does not–story, language, love, scandal itself cannot save it" (395). For Smith, a novel "is only meant to please; and it must do that, or it does nothing" (395); pleasure and entertainment are his priorities for the fiction he reads. Whether Braddon's exdamation of "You remember" refers to a previous conversation on this definition or is a general remark on Smith as she herself was "surprised" how time had passed is beside the point; what this remark indicates is an understanding between the two authors of what makes an effective story. Secondly, that Braddon will discuss the novel with him once she has "solemnly read + meditated thereupon" indicates that she had not read the novel in advance of its publication–otherwise she would have known the content. This confirms that they did not comment on drafts of each other's work, although general discussions at parties probably occurred (Tomaiuolo 103). Thirdly, Braddon humbles her own story in deference to her friend when she writes of her own "humdrum little story of transfusion," deliberately prioritizing Stoker's work to flatter him.[5] Furthermore, by sending her own "nonsense" novel, *London Pride* (1896), in return, Braddon illustrates a reciprocal relationship where they read each other's work–but again, only after publication. Finally, Braddon comments directly on *Dracula* itself: "your 'Bloofer Lady'–bangs Banaghen!" Braddon's singling out of the "Bloofer Lady" indicates that it was Lucy's nocturnal activities that were the text's most disturbing aspects for her. This could be accounted for by Braddon possibly only having read the opening of *Dracula* in this first sitting, but it also suggests Braddon's preference for *female* vampires, also demonstrated through her own story.

While Braddon's letter proves that she did not read his work before publication, whether Stoker read "Good Lady Ducayne" on its publication still remains unknown, so this direct influence cannot dearly be stated. Nevertheless, Stoker's biographer Paul Murray writes that he probably did read the story (204), even though there is no mention of this in his working notes. What is evident from this discussion of their relationship is that Braddon and Stoker did read and discuss their work when they met and so would have influenced each other's writing,

possibly with regard to exchanging sources and discussing literary style and writing practice, as well as literary themes, any and all of which indicate subtle connections between the two texts.

Furthermore, Braddon was not the only reader to notice connections between herself and Stoker. Contemporary critics, while not necessarily noting direct comparisons between the two tales, did comment on similar aspects of both writers' accomplishments. For instance, contemporary reviews of *Dracula* celebrate Stoker's "ghastly skill" ("'Books of the Day" 676), his "ingenious … romance" (B-W- 327), and his "vivid pen" ("Literature" 8), indicating that his Gothic-horror writing style was what captured the public's imagination. There is no direct contemporary criticism of Braddon's tale as an individual piece, but her short fiction generally and supernatural tales in particular did gain critical notice. For instance, her *Mistletoe Bough* contributions are noted as being "full of romantic interest … with enough ghostly glamour to please the most ardent spiritualist" ("Current Literature" 1878: 1527), as well as being "very eerie" ("Current Literature" 1880: 1293). This indicates that both authors' works were moderately well received as popular literature by readers and critics, and that they were noted as being written in the same vein.

Nevertheless, it is only since Braddon's resurrection from literary obscurity, through the work of Kathleen Tillotson, Winifred Hughes, Elaine Showalter, Lyn Pykett and Ann Cvetkovich, that other critics have begun to examine "Good Lady Ducayne" and note its similarities to *Dracula*. Similarities are to be expected, as both writers were drawing on similar sources, such as previous vampire literature, as well as historical and fictional figures. Vlad the Impaler (1431-1476-7), Erzsebet Bathory (1560-1614), William Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819), Theophile Gautier's "Clarimonde" (1836), James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney the Vampire: The Feast of Blood* (1847), the anonymous "The Mysterious Stranger" (1853), George Eliot's "The Lifted Veil" (1859), Miss Havisham of Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1860), Sheridan Le Fanu's "Carmilla" (1872), Cesare Lombroso's *L'uomo delinquent* (1876), Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* (1882), Max Nordau's *Degeneration* (1892), and Arabella Kenealy's "Some Experiences of Lord Syfret: A Beautiful Vampire" (1896), alongside more general Gothic and supernatural fiction, have all been noted as potential sources for one or both of these tales.[6] These common literary influences, much like their theatrical knowledge, create connections between the two texts that cement their *fin-de-siècle* updating of the vampire tradition. As Saverio Tomaiuolo notes, these "intertextual similarities" include "the mysterious carriage, the alien intruder, the common physical traits, the aristocratic origin, even the capacity to deal with modern technologies and new scientific discoveries" (111). However, other similarities, such as the preference for female vampires, the draining of women, female sexuality,

doctors and their dubious morals, the use of employees for their professional and physical attributes, and the depiction of New Women are worth examining with regard to the authors' commentaries on the social and cultural contexts of their day.

Lady Ducayne and Dracula

The affinities between the two texts are apparent in their overarching structure and character depictions. "Good Lady Ducayne" and *Dracula* each begin with the heroine, Bella, and the hero, Jonathan, respectively, entering the world of work to fulfill their duties, only to be drained in different ways by a self-serving aristocratic vampire who has employed them for more than just their professional services. Lady Ducayne employs young women as her personal companions; they travel around the world with her, reading to her to keep her company. She is described as having "a withered, old face," a "sharply pointed chin," "daw-like fingers" and "shining black eyes" (Braddon, "Good Lady Ducayne" 187-8). This dehumanizing description does not on first reading depict her as a vampire. Nevertheless, in the original text published in *The Strand,* the opening title's illustration (Figure 1) clearly depicts Lady Ducayne as a vampiric figure for the reader. The large bat ominously has its wings outstretched, indicating its threatening intentions, but it is almost an extension of herself, as it appears to be perching on her shoulder and protectively positioning its wings around her.[7] In Figure 2, the two are linked together by Lady Ducayne's "daw-like fingers," as they resemble bats' feet, confirming their bond.[8] This particular vampiric imagery links her to Dracula, who is also described as having a "strong … aquiline" face and whose "nails were long and fine, and cut to a sharp point" (Stoker,

Figure 1: Title Image of "Good Lady Ducayne"

Dracula 24-5). These similar descriptions may be incidental, indicate that both writers had contemporary Jewish physiognomy in mind when constructing their vampires and that they fed fears of anti-Semitism and xenophobia (Tomaiuolo 110; Valman 188). Dracula's associations with creatures of the night, like Lady Ducayne's, extend to control over different animals–rats, dogs and wolves–as well as the ability to turn himself into these animals, mist and dust. This capability to physically transform himself into different creatures and states is a clear marker of his vampire status for the reader, and so there is no question about his supernatural origins, while Lady Ducayne's withered body presents no overt vampiric traits once the sinister illustrations are lost.

Figure 2: Lady Ducayne

Despite this difference in their vampiric characteristics, the threat of violence from them both comes in the form of physical, rather than economic, violation. Lady Ducayne hires young, healthy women as companions in order to secretly drain them of their blood. Her first questions to Bella are specifically about her physical well-being: "'Have you good health? Are you strong and active, able to eat well, sleep well, walk well, able to enjoy all that is good in life?'" (188). Bella's sound health

is her most important quality because Lady Ducayne needs to suck the vitality out of her to remain alive, while Bella becomes weaker and weaker–though Lady Ducayne pays her handsomely for the privilege. Dracula also drains women, both Lucy and Mina, in order to achieve his ultimate goal, which is to gain power and control over everyone: "'Your girls that you all love are mine already; and through them you and others shall yet be mine'" (326). This physical draining of the women is prefigured by his draining of Jonathan's sanity. Dracula's welcoming words–"'Come freely. Go safely; and leave something of the happiness you bring!'" (22)–take on a sinister meaning when Jonathan realizes that he is being emotionally and intellectually drained. The Count mimics Jonathan's accent and steals his clothes, metaphorically subsuming Jonathan's identity into his own. When Jonathan has fulfilled his purpose, he will be disposed of to the three sisters, who are lined up–"'You go first, and we shall follow'" (45)–ready to feast on his physical being. Jonathan then, just like Bella, was hired for his physical assets alongside his professional status. This places Lady Ducayne and Dracula in the same continuing tradition as vampires from Heinrich August Ossenfelder's poem *The Vampire* (1748) to Charlaine Harris's *Southern Vampire Mysteries* (2001-13), because their sole aim is to consume blood to maintain eternal youth. They achieve this by becoming the alpha matriarchal/patriarchal vampire that positions itself above its prey, while centralizing women as the physical commodity that is drained. Lady Ducayne and Dracula's efficiency at this accumulation of power is emphasized by both texts being eponymously named after them; they are the named threat that looms, controlling, above everything. These similarities between Lady Ducayne and Dracula indicate that both Braddon and Stoker deliberately tapped into the nineteenth century's xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and Marxist concerns about the ability of the upper classes to exploit those under their employ.

Having postulated that the short story form and the loss of the illustrations negatively impacted "Good Lady Ducayne's" literary standing and popularity among readers, another aspect to consider is the difference in the vampires' motivations. Lady Ducayne merely wants to live a longer, secluded life in order to have "a few more years in the sunshine" (198), and she only drains a handful of young women to achieve this goal. As Lauren Goodlad explains, "the vampirism she practices is decadent and lethargic" (215); she takes what she needs to survive and hides herself away from people, minimizing her impact on the wider community so that she is not perceived as an all-encompassing threat. Dracula poses a threat not only to both men and women, but also to England's foundational structures, such as the property market and the legal system; his vampirism is "aggressively monopolistic and imperial" (Goodlad 215). This difference in their victims and readers' subsequent dismissal of Lady

Ducayne as an imminent threat to themselves and society plays directly into the problematic realism Braddon is exposing in her short story. Readers are no longer as interested in threats to young women as they were with previous Gothic literature; they now want more formidable threats to society's structures. As the "fin" in *fin-de-siècle* notes, belief in the "end" of Britain as a nation meant that "present threats and future security and prosperity (if not survival) … were presented as being at stake and the most important" aspects for protection (Baycroft 326). This means that single, working women like Bella are doubly disenfranchised. Lady Ducayne preys on vulnerable women because they are neglected by society within the story, while the popularity of Braddon's tale dwindled because extra-textually, the reader was also not interested in protecting individual women.

Lady Ducayne and the "Bloofer Lady"

Eugenia DeLamotte argues that vampirism represents a physical transgression against the body, which is the last barrier protecting the self from the other (21). What is most horrific about vampires is their ability to make the self become "other," a confrontation between what is regarded as familiar, or self, and fundamentally opposed values, be they cultural, sexual, economic, or otherwise. This "othering" of the female body by Lady Ducayne highlights one of Braddon's original contributions to vampire fiction: notably, that the threat against women in this genre is not always from the Gothic's traditional overpowering patriarch, like *The Castle of Otranto's* Manfred or Stoker's Dracula, or indeed from an external threat as illustrated by Sheridan Le Fanu's Carmilla. Instead the terror originates from Lady Ducayne, whom Bella describes as "a fairy god-mother" (187), and whom she positions in this maternal role when she writes to her own mother that: "'I feel as if Lady Ducayne were a funny old grandmother, who had suddenly appeared in my life, very, very rich, and very, very kind'" (189). The threat emanates from within the "family" unit from the woman who is traditionally associated with a caring and understanding maternal role. Unlike Mina, who notes that "[w]e women have something of the mother in us that makes us rise above smaller matters when the mother spirit is invoked" (245), Braddon demonizes the mother-figure specifically. The horror of her tale is not controlling patriarchy or women as physical commodities, but matriarchy and women's attempts to control and dominate other women through domesticity. The representation of Lady Ducayne's body as a vampiric anti-mother is an intertwining of the supernatural and the domestic that positions the mother as the other; as Julia Briggs states, the "cruel lady may represent a fascinating if forbidden ideal" (121). Braddon's monstrous mother who preys on her charges, who by extension can be

seen as her "children," to keep herself youthful and powerful represents the "forbidden ideal" of women breaking free from the conventional constraints of motherhood by using their children to their advantage.

This monstrous mother figure is a key comparator between the two texts, one which Braddon highlighted as the noteworthy aspect of *Dracula* in her letter to Stoker. The patriarchal male vampire is not as significant to Braddon as the "Bloofer Lady" is; it is Lucy as an anti-mother who preys on children that Braddon prioritizes as the most memorable and haunting aspect of the novel. Lucy is the epitome of the anti-mother as she lures children away from their homes and drains their blood. The pinnade of this imagery is when, "[w]ith careless motion, she flung to the ground, callous as the devil, the child that up to now she had clung strenuously to her breast growling over it as a dog growls over a bone" (226). Dracula's own breast-feeding of Mina indicates his almost maternal approach when it comes to feeding his children of the night—"his right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down onto his bosom" (300)—while Lucy's dismissal of the baby at her breast indicates her own foul rejection of societal norms because she subverts the traditional parent/child dynamic. Lady Ducayne and Lucy are female vampires driven by their desire for eternal life, but it is as anti-mothers that they reflect the emerging fear of women rejecting their traditional positions as care-givers in society. Thus, Braddon and Stoker engage with society's belief in the need to control and regulate women's representations and actions so that they will continue to conform to traditions.[9] Nevertheless, while Braddon's vampiric representation has a more subtle social critique than Dracula's narrative, it still keeps the female vampires within a domestic setting (albeit, Lucy wanders the heath). This means that the overall threat that they pose to society is still somewhat diminished when compared to Dracula's potential destruction to the housing and financial sectors, indicating again why it is Dracula whom society continually reinvents as the ultimate vampire.

Science and the Supernatural

As Braddon's tale was published before *Dracula,* Leah Larson states that it is "important because it is the first [story] to combine traditional vampire superstitions with the Victorian interest in technology, especially in transfusion" (170). Braddon and Stoker's engagement with the mid- to late-nineteenth century's rapid scientific and medical advancements derives from two opposing perspectives: Lady Ducayne as a "non-supernatural vampire" who uses blood transfusions to stay alive (Pitt 381), and Dracula as a traditionally self-sustaining bloodsucker. Dracula is the epitome of the patriarchal male vampire who preys on young women, and whose control relies on hypnotism, trances, and thought-reading to

subconsciously influence his prey so that they bend to his will; Lucy sleepwalks to St Mary's graveyard, and Mina is drained while in a trance. To fight Dracula, Dr. Van Helsing uses the contemporary scientific practice of blood transfusion to try to save Lucy. In opposition to Tomaiuolo's assertion that Braddon only makes "implicit references to blood transfusion" while Stoker "illustrates … the practice of transfusion … in detail" (114), I would argue that it is the opposite: Van Helsing's medical approach is hidden through vague descriptions–"Van Helsing took some things from his bag and laid them on a little table out of sight … Then with swiftness, but with absolute method, [he] performed the operation" (133)–as he pits his knowledge against Dracula's supernatural powers. Van Helsing's efforts are to no avail, though; science's life-saving potential has no standing against the supernatural, ultimately revealing its ineffectualness.

Unlike Dracula, Lady Ducayne cannot carry out her destructive behavior on her own; she requires external help. Thus, it is Lady Ducayne's physician, Dr. Parravicini, who uses his scientific knowledge to keep her alive. He bleeds Bella using chloroform and then transfuses this blood to Lady Ducayne. Braddon's descriptions of the process are more detailed than Stoker's, even if they are obscured through Bella's semi-consciousness:

> The dream troubled her a little, not because it was a ghastly or frightening dream, but on account of sensations which she had never felt before in sleep–a whirring of wheels that went round in her brain, a great noise like a whirlwind, but rhythmical like the ticking of a gigantic clock: and then in the midst of this uproar as of winds and waves she seemed to sink into a gulf of unconsciousness, out of sleep into far deeper sleep–total extinction. And then, after that blank interval, there had come the sound of voices, and then again the whirr of wheels, louder and louder–and again the blank–and then she knew no more till morning, when she awoke, feeling languid and oppressed. (192)

Unlike Stoker, Braddon pens the sounds, motions and feelings of receiving a blood transfusion for her readers. She focuses on the patient's perspective, depicting the effect of blood loss on Bella and how she feels when revived. Braddon's descriptions of the "sensations which [Bella] had never felt before in sleep," draw on her previously successful sensation fiction, which deliberately aimed to make the reader "feel" the shocking sensations in her novels. This direct account of the patient's confused and vulnerable feelings heightens the reader's horror at the modern scientific practice. This horror is emphasized by the "whirring of wheels" and the "rhythmical … ticking of a gigantic clock"–the machinery itself makes fearful noises. Every item of scientific advancement–the chloroform, the instruments and the process–all combine to create a sinister, unknown

and fearful situation for the patient. Overall, this process, which "sink[s … Bella] out of sleep into far deeper sleep—total extinction" before she wakes up "feeling languid and oppressed," mimics the vampiric transformation that effectively kills the human and awakens the creature. The fact that the process is dangerous for Lady Ducayne is also commented upon when she states: "an air bubble, and I should be gone" (198); the dangerous realities of the still developing medical field are apparent for all to read. Both vampires therefore drain women to prolong their lives, but Lady Ducayne's non-supernatural vampire status is emphasized by her lack of agency in draining the women, which subsequently decreases her imminent danger to society and the reader. This is confirmed by Braddon's more accurate descriptions of the blood transfusion process from the patient's perspective, while Stoker provides neither Lucy nor Mina's feelings, or the donors' inner experiences, as they remain consensually silent. Stoker's genius relies on Gothic obscurity, allowing the reader to form their own nightmares, whereas Braddon's demythologizing of the medical reality enables the reader to form their own opinion of how frightened they should be in their modern daily lives.

This blood transfusion process also has a particular effect on Lady Ducayne as a vampire; her hiring of a third party effectively splits the process of vampirism into two distinct stages: the draining and then the drinking.[10] This separation produces a scientific and supernatural ambiguity. As Anne Stiles notes, "[t]he primary distinction between Van Helsing's penetration and Dracula's is that Van Helsing only facilitates Lucy's blood transfusions, rather than directly benefiting from them as Dracula does. In this respect, Van Helsing is similar to Braddon's Dr. Parravicini [sic], whose transfusions ultimately benefit his vampiric employer, Lady Ducayne" (135). However, because Parravicini drains Bella's blood against her own medical needs, he is placed in the position of the controlling patriarchal Dracula figure, rather than that of Van Helsing, who is trying to help Lucy. Van Helsing also mixes medical and superstitious practices in an attempt to save Lucy's life, while Parravicini hides behind superstitions to drain Bella for his own gain—in this case, money. Like Bella, he is paid handsomely by Lady Ducayne for his services. This means that Lady Ducayne *almost* becomes a passive recipient who benefits from her doctor's immorality, rather than inflicting the harm herself. This passivity is supported when Paravicini's morally and scientifically questionable actions are inextricably linked to his physical attributes by a hotel guest. The lady remarks: "I don't believe the foul fiend himself can beat [the physician] in ugliness" because he has a "face that was more like a waxen mask than any human countenance" (191). This description also associates him with Dracula, who is described as having a "waxen face" due to his extreme old age (305). Overall, these comments dehumanize Parravicini and associate him with the devil,

indicating his own vampiric status, separate from Lady Ducayne, who is ultimately reduced to a withered old woman, which undermines her as a credible threat.

In using science as an explanation for the supernatural in "Good Lady Ducayne"–where medical advances demonstrate affliction and anxiety rather than comfort and stability–Braddon reveals the danger of advancing technology for the body and how science destabilizes the moral balance of nineteenth-century society. This is particularly relevant when considering that doctors–the professionals who are charged with preserving life–have the power, skills, and technology to use their patients for their advantage. As William Hughes notes, individual doctors reflect "a pervasive perception of the greater profession. If there is a dominant focus … within Victorian Gothic, then it would seem to be the overwhelmingly materialist … attitude to the patient" (197). Herbert, Bella's suitor and a respectable doctor, emphasizes this point when he states: "'Oh Lady Ducayne, need I put your wickedness and your physician's still greater wickedness in plain words?'" (198). Herbert considers Parravicini's deception to be worse than Lady Ducayne's because, as a man and a doctor, Parravicini should represent the epitome of nineteenth-century masculinity and uphold Victorian medical ideologies; instead, he is a threat to scientific discourse because he destabilizes the respectability of advancing technology by revealing that doctors are far from infallible (Briggs 22). Parravicini is able to accomplish this because he works alone; he can undertake risky and invasive procedures without the knowledge of or consultation with any other doctors, or indeed his patient, as Bella is kept in the dark. Van Helsing, on the other hand, has a team of people working with him; he collaborates with Steward, Godalming, Morris, Harker, and Mina, and "explain[s] in a kindly way" to them what is happening (132), positioning them as the most important piece of the process. Despite Stoker not describing Lucy or Mina's experiences of the blood transfusion process, Van Helsing takes a more patient-centered approach overall when compared to Parravicini. Nevertheless, while Stoker may have depicted a fearful yet commanding vampire who initially triumphs over Van Helsing's medical knowledge, Braddon's positioning of a doctor as a vampiric figure makes a more nuanced political and social point. This point again enhances "Good Lady Ducayne's" problematic realism. Braddon represents a major concern for the Victorian period, medical quackery, by highlighting how doctors who work as sole practitioners can undertake dangerous operations with few repercussions, sidelining patient care for economic profit.

Conduding the Vampire

The endings of both texts also indicate a subtle yet significant difference in their approaches to the marriage question, which is inextricably linked to their depictions of their alpha vampires' demises. *Dracula* has a restorative ending in which Quincy Morris dies, Van Helsing and Dr. Seward continue their scientific pursuits, Lord Godalming marries, and Mina and Jonathan resume their marital bliss. Everything is brought to a sound condusion, and the terror of the text is neutralized; the three sisters and Dracula are put to rest. This demise of the vampire allows Stoker to conform to societal norms as Mina—who has been read as a New Woman because she can use a typewriter, knows the train timetables, and is "[f]ortunately not of a fainting disposition" (238)—is forced back into the home. Mina also bears a son who is named after each member of the Crew of Light (402), ultimately reproducing patriarchal control within the novel. While this ending appears restorative and inkeeping with societal norms, Maurice Hindle has noted that within Mina's son is the blood of Dracula—transmitted to him through Dracula's breastfeeding of Mina (xxxvi)—and so, the ending resists the definitive demise of the supernatural evil; however, it is Braddon's tale which offers nothing nearly as comforting as this remote possibility of the return of the vampire.

"Good Lady Ducayne" seemingly ends with a restorative ending for the heroine as well, as Bella is removed from the world of work, like Mina, through her engagement to Herbert Stafford. Herbert's denouncement of Parravicini and Lady Ducayne implies an end to their destructive behavior, yet there is a lack of dosure with Lady Ducayne that undermines this neat condusion. Elizabeth Gruner argues that, at the end of the tale, Lady Ducayne presumably dies, despite vowing to find another, less homicidal method of prolonging her age (106). Nevertheless, there is no bodily destruction of the vampire, as in "Carmilla" or *Dracula*, and Lady Ducayne, after having spent years and a vast amount of money developing a method to sustain her life, is not likely to submit to Herbert's ruling. This open-ended strand of the narrative subverts the conventional marriage condusion and confirms Braddon's short story as the more disturbing and destabilizing vampire tale. Dracula was killed because he was a traditional vampire, and this other-worldly threat needed to be eliminated, while Lady Ducayne, because she is human, could not be killed in the same manner. It is Braddon's use of the non-supernatural vampire that meant there could be no final destruction scene, and so, Lady Ducayne is left to ambiguously succumb to the effects of time, effects that she has already been driven to homicidal methods to avoid. Yet this contrast in the demise of the two vampires may also have impacted the texts' literary standing. *Dracula,* with its theatrical destruction

scene, is a visually provocative conclusion that draws together the main characters for a final encore, while Lady Ducayne drifts off into obscurity after a somewhat "antiklimactic" and "unsatisfying" judgment from Herbert that she should atone for her sins (Braun 242), leaving readers with a moral lesson rather than a dramatic climax. Despite her background in the theater, Braddon's deliberate avoidance of a dramatic scene suggests her priority is the harsh reality that persecutors can remain unpunished, strengthening the problematic realism she depicts for her readers.

Overall, Stoker and Braddon's theatrical background, source texts and correspondence indicate that they influenced each other's writing, and that "Good Lady Ducayne" and *Dracula* should be considered in concert because they have several key features in common–domineering alpha vampires, passive female victims, and an engagement with medical and technological developments–that situate them both as typical *fin-de-siècle* vampire narratives. Despite being published within one year of each other though, their differences indicate a subtle, but vital shift in the vampire's literary standing. While Stoker created the epitome of the terrifying supernatural vampire who can mesmerize his victims to bend them to his will, Braddon's non-supernatural vampire challenges the vampire's literary landscape more effectively through her move from the supernatural to the realistic. Nevertheless, due to Braddon's choice of the short story form, a "realistic" vampire, and a less dramatic ending, her vampire contribution has been neglected by critics and readers alike. This article has aimed to rectify this imbalance by demonstrating that Braddon's non-supernatural approach is more chilling and progressive in its social commentary because it is grounded in the reality of a fast-paced advancing civilization. Doctors use their medical knowledge against their patients, anti-mothers hide behind superstitions in order to control and dominate other women through domesticity, and capitalist society is manipulated by experienced and wealthy aristocrats who prey on the weak and suck the life out of the young and innocent; human beings are more dangerous than the monsters our own imaginations can create.

Notes

1. Stoker was called to the bar in 1890, but he did not practice (Eighteen-Bisang and Miller 15).
2. Braddon paid tribute to the Lyceum and its leading actor in her article "Fifty Years and the Lyceum," published 1903 in *The Strand*, but she unusually makes no reference to its business manager.
3. Leeds Brotherton Library's letters date from the 1880s and only contain Braddon's letters to Stoker; his responses remain unfound. This is common for Braddon's correspondence–few letters from other people remain in her personal family archive.
4. "Bangs Banaghen" (or Banaghar) has several meanings; the most relevant being

an "Irish saying of one who tells wonderful stories. Perhaps Banaghan was a minstrel famous for dealing in the marvellous [sic]" (Grose np). Braddon's slang comment to Stoker that his novel bests the "marvellous" stories of Banaghen indicates her enjoyment of the tale and Stoker's mastery of the "wonderful."

5. These last points are supported by Braddon's working relationship with Edward Bulwer-Lytton and John Gilby, who commented on drafts of her literary endeavors. Similarly to Braddon's flattery of Stoker's novel, she uses the same self-depreciating style of correspondence with Bulwer-Lytton when she writes, "I shall devote myself to a course of your books, & Balzac's for the next three months, … not that I place Balzac beside you for a moment, since in construction, poetry, dramatic power, the whole art of the story teller in short he is entirely deficient where you are so inimitably great" (Wolff 27).

6. See Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller's edited *Bram Stoker's Notes for Dracula* (2008), Raymond McNally's *Dracula was a Woman: In Search of the Blood Countess of Transylvania* (1983), Saverio Tomaiuolo's "Reading between the (Blood)lines of Victorian Vampires: Mary Elizabeth Braddon's 'Good Lady Ducayne'" (2009), and Heather Braun's "Idle Vampires and Decadent Maidens: Sensation, the Supernatural, and Mary E. Braddon's Disappointing Femmes Fatales" (2009).

7. Bats have been associated with folkloric vampires since the eighteenth century. The first reference to a mythological "vampire bat" was in 1734, while the discovery of the animal "vampire bat" was not noted until 1774 (OED).

8. With withered features and claw-like hands, Lady Ducayne seems to prefigure the famous *Nosferatu* look as portrayed by Max Schrek (1922).

9. A woman's unquenchable desire to drain other females of their lives is also depicted by Kenealy's Lady Deverich, when she sucks the "vitality" out of women and children, stating she "'would drink blood out of living bodies'" if she could (43, 44). Arthur Conan Doyle also plays on vampiric imagery in his later short story "The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire" in *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes* (1924), where he depicts a mother draining her baby's blood, not to sustain her own life, but to prolong the life of her child who has been poisoned; the vampire woman becomes a savior figure.

10. The male intermediary also removes the lesbian undertones commonly found in vampire literature, as exemplified between Laura and Carmilla, demonstrating that Braddon does not engage with Victorian fears of female sexual digression. Contrastingly, Braun argues that the relationship between Bella and her mother is romantic, thus potentially implying lesbianism (indeed incest) (244), but the desertion by Bella's father would create a negative association with men for Bella and form a close personal bond between the two women.

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