

“Children of the Night” International Dracula Congress 2022

Keynote Speakers’ Abstracts

Dacre Stoker: Recent Discovery in the London Library Shed Light on Bram Stokers Research for *Dracula*.

My illustrated presentation will be about Mr Philip Speddings discovery in 2018 of 26 books that Bram Stoker used for his research for *Dracula* at the London Library. I will provide the details how I played a small role in helping Philip verify that the markings he discovered in the books were actually made by my great grand uncle. Phillip was a huge *Dracula* fan, worked as the head of fundraising at the London Library, he owned a copy of the *Bram Stoker’s Notes a Facsimile Edition, (2018 Miller & Eighteen Bisang)*. He was curious to see if the books Bram listed in these notes were anywhere to be seen at the library.

Philip knew that his library did not have records of actual books requested by each member, but he was aware that Bram was a member there during the 7 years (1890-97) that he did his research and writing of *Dracula*. Like a detective, he walked thru the rows of shelves and collected the books listed as resource books in Bram’s notes, then he noticed a variety of pencil marks on certain pages of these books.

Philip was able to make a connection between some of the words designated by the pencil marks in these books and what ended up as text in the novel *Dracula*. Sometimes Philip noticed that Bram actually copied passages right out of the books into the notes, at some point some version of those thoughts made it all the way into the story.

Philip contacted me and Robert Eighteen Bisang to ask for our assistance in verifying if the marginalia could be attributed to Bram Stoker. Without a hesitation we both bought our plane tickets for London and met up with Philip a week later where we dove into this most interesting discovery. What follows is how I was able to provide verification:

I had in my possession a copy of the sixth edition of *Dracula* which Bram used to mark up with his pencil when asked to reduce the word count by 30,000 to help create the 1901 abridged paperback edition of *Dracula*. In Bram’s process to cut words, sentences, and whole paragraphs there were pencil marks similar in style to those in the 26 London library books. In some cases, Bram added “bridge words” to link up sentences where portions were edited for length.

Furthermore, Philip showed me one of the books that Bram’s son Noel had donated to the London Library after his father had died, that also contained similar pencil markings in the margins.

I will explain this process using images of various books in the London Library and will also include my opinions about specific passages that Bram highlighted and show how they wove their way into the fabric of the novel *Dracula*.

Enrique A Palafox: *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, a Transmedial Journal.

During the last 5 years, I have been working on a creative investigation that blends the disciplines of graphic design; management, and media study, and the expansion of literary narratives. Coming from diverse academic backgrounds, my work is inevitably multidisciplinary.

From my perspective, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker lost ground at the moment when the author's rights were denied to Dieckmann and Grau, producers of Prana Film to bring *Dracula* to the screen. Just because an image is more powerful than a thousand words. That is why instead of the original narrative being faithfully adapted into the mainstream media, we had a legal dispute that detonated an unlimited of unique interpretations that appear in movies,

caricatures, comics, Tv series and plays around the world, that today compete with the original, whose permanence is diluted because it has never had the tools of the media apparatus to fortify its place within the World's Popular Culture.

Working under this premise, my creative investigation tries to adapt the original vision in the purest way to the different media, creating and recreating images and adaptations that the other versions have had to strengthen its position in the minds of fans and consumers from around the world.

Hans Corneel de Roos, Bantayan: The True Location of “Lake Hermanstadt” and How to Get There: A Travel Report

This paper discusses the location of *Dracula*'s “Lake Hermanstadt” in the vicinity of the Scholomance, the mythical School of the Devil as mentioned by both Stoker (1897) and Emily de Laszowska Gerard (1885 and 1888). It addresses the question whether either of the authors actually was familiar with the lake's exact site, which I was able to reconstruct from Gerard's 1888 travel account, military maps from the Habsburg era and by personally traveling there in August 2013 and July 2015. The second part of this presentation shows map sections and photos from my hiking trips. The final part discusses other reports of foot walks to this lake from the second half of the 19th century, which confirm many curious details presented by Gerard, but not the alleged connection to the Scholomance, and addresses the sources she may have used.

John Edgar Browning: *Dracula Was Legend: Reflections on Critical Reception and the Making of the Modern Vampire*

I've collected approximately 400 contemporary (1897-1920) book reviews and reactions to Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Iceland, Germany, Belgium, France, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, and the US, the majority of which have not been seen in print since they appeared a century or more ago. This collection sets out to dispel definitively the myth of *Dracula*'s “mixed” critical reception, and it reveals as well that *Dracula* was predominantly seen by contemporary reviewers and responders to parallel – even, according to some, supersede – the Gothic works of such canonical writers as Mary Shelley, Ann Radcliffe, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, and Edgar Allan Poe. Yet, also illuminated in the process is a broad range of topics and perspectives raised at the time about the novel and Victorian ideals concerning modernity and the encroaching century, as well as, more simply, what in the public's view comprised an actual vampire (in many early reviews, for example, *Dracula* is described as a “were-wolf”). And finally, also offered is considerable insight into Bram Stoker and his public image and providing simultaneously new ways of re-reading and re-examining *Dracula*. That this is to date the largest collection of *Dracula* reviews ever assembled would be sufficient enough to arouse great interest; but that this collection is also likely the largest assemblage of reviews of any Victorian novel, and that further, *Dracula* may well have been one of the most reviewed books of the entire Victorian literary canon, serves to extend *Dracula*'s and Stoker's legend beyond their already formidable place in Gothic and horror history.

Laura Cánepa: Brazilian Vampires, Military Dictatorship and Pop Culture

We'll investigate the vampire's hiding place in Brazilian film fiction. After facing challenges in adapting to Brazilian cinema, we suggest that these monsters found shelter for their eternal and bloody existence in the most fragile of audiovisual media: the Super-8. Our analysis will focus on the film *Nosferato no Brasil* (Ivan Cardoso, 1971), one of the most famous films of the Brazilian Super-8 cycle of the 1970s, filmed and released in the darkest period of the Military Dictatorship. We intend to describe how the Vampire of this film was

created from a repertoire that includes several references to pop culture of the 1950s and 1960s, which made him perhaps the only powerful vampires in Brazilian cinema.

Leslie Klinger: The Changing Image of the Vampire

A survey of the perception of the vampire, from ancient times to modern day, including illustrations. What do these changing views say about the public attitudes?

Marius-Mircea Crişan: Around Millerian paradigm: Dracula and the Critics in Transylvania

The vampiric myth has enormous staying power, and the best evidence of that longevity, which includes Transylvania and its frightening undead count, is (probably) Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). Focused on the literary criticism that connects Transylvania and the vampire's narrative, my presentation intends to point to some of the main phases in the development of the Dracula criticism. I argue that a key figure of this approach is the late Canadian critic Elizabeth Miller, whose research on this topic had a considerable influence in the development of the field. The syntagm *Millerian paradigm* was coined by Hans de Roos, broadly referring to the influence of Elizabeth Miller on the Dracula studies.

Simon Bacon: The Decade that Changed the Vampire Genre: New Directions and Complications in the 1970s

The 1970s change the nature and scale of the vampire genre. No longer an occasional presence on television it exploded into mainstream popular culture. Yet, as with all beginnings it's not as straight forward as it seems and contained as many undead ghosts from the past as it did premonitions of the future.

This presentation discusses the appearance of the sympathetic vampire, black vampires, vampires and disco, vampires and kung-fu, real vampires, feral vampires, and the vampire apocalypse. Further positing that if every generation gets the vampire it needs, then the 1970s were a lot more complicated than one might have first thought.

Yuri Garcia: The Reconfigurations of the Vampire in Contemporary Cinema

The proposal seeks to analyze the contemporary reconfigurations of the vampire in mainstream cinema. The emblematic change from the predominance of the character in Horror to an increasing appearance in other genres may indicate a difficulty for the vampire to find himself as a metaphorical central figure of Horror today, giving space for an appearance in new narratives. In a contemporary context, permeated by an infinity of varied images available in different media, we perceive the audiovisual as a constant form of representation of this figure. The vampire undergoes a certain taming of his monstrosity with a transformation of his villainous character into other more flexible proposals. We have as an example the films based on the *Twilight* books with the romantic vampire or the *Underworld* franchise (2003-2016) and the film *Dracula Untold* (Gary Shore, 2014) that bring the character as a superhero in the most recent productions of greater investment about this theme. In this way, we seek to investigate the reverberation of the vampire figure in the contemporary scenario and how this monster (or perhaps now a hero and/or humanized persona?) has adapted to the new desires and imagery needs of our current subjectivity.

Speakers' Abstracts

Alessandra Vallim da Silva Villela, Julia de Azevedo Farias, Yuri Garcia: Nosferatu: Expressionist imagery and its artistic influences

The German Expressionist Cinema was a movement that emerged after the First World War in a specific context of a country still marked by the traumas of an overwhelming defeat. Thus, we can understand this artistic manifestation as a consequence of a broken and hopeless place, with a focus directed to darkness and the grotesque. Produced by Prana Films and directed by F.W.Murnau, *Nosferatu* (1922) was an unauthorized transposition of the 1897 book *Dracula*, of Bram Stoker. The art direction and atmosphere created in the film are of great importance, considering a narrative that aims to highlight the aesthetic sensations of the movement. *Nosferatu* has a rich composition, full of details, fruits of a destroyed and dark Germany. The different natural landscapes make room for the imagination in the spectator's mind, as well as the objects in the scene, beyond what is seen in the picture. In short, this role of production becomes central in this work and in its interpretive and sensitive possibilities. The visual element expresses in diverse ways the proposed meanings and its affective impacts. The contorted forms, the use of shadows, the exaggerated body language are characteristics present in expressionist works. This research aims to analyze the scenarios that make up the film of F.W. Murnau, drawing a parallel with Expressionist art and its rich repertoire of creative influences.

Adam Owsinski: Blood Is life: The Bio-Cultural Ontology of Vampiric Identities.

Are vampires a biological reality, fiction or is vampirism best denoted as social identities based on pretence? I will argue that vampirism can be understood by all of these categories and is dependent on an individual's philosophical ideology. This thesis will philosophically highlight that three lineages of vampirism exist and all of them are disputing the term, "real vampire", causing a fissure in common-sense. This thesis determines "real" to be the ontological classification one adopts and the ontological commitment to the lineage of vampire that makes up such a classification and common-sense to mean, "The Commons". A group or land belonging to a certain group of people, in this case a certain group understanding or sense of the word vampire.

As a result of the dispute in common-sense, I propose a new ontology of vampirism and will accomplish this task by historically tracking the term vampire. This chronological trace will be completed using Carlos Ginzburg's microhistory approach in *Ecstasies; Deciphering the Witches Sabbath* (1991) and Ian Hackings *Historical Ontology* (2002), to denote that the term vampire held different meanings between 12th century Europe and contemporary society. Therefore, chronologically denoting vampirism to contemporary pop-culture only, heartens disgust and centres ignorance towards the other lineages and is analytically inaccurate. This thesis will then use Wimsatt and Greismer's *Cultural Scaffolding* framework (2014) to highlight each lineages line of cultural evolution and show how fictional vampirism became entrenched in contemporary society. Finally, this thesis will use Ron Mallon's *Creation of Humankind* (2016) as a framework to develop and synch existing categories of vampirism. Consequently, John Dewey's naturalist pragmatism (1938) and Charles Sanders Peirce *Synechism* (1998) will be used as justification to reincorporate all these lineages into a unified whole, sealing the fissure in common-sense. A unification of the word vampire is important for scientific realism as the natural sciences and psychiatry, as well as various other fields have been affected by the incorrect denotation of the word vampire, describing non-hemtophagic (blood drinking) creatures as being vampiric causing the mystification of a natural biological function.

Bogdan-Alin Imbri, Marius-Mircea Crişan: Dark Knights and Caped Crusaders

The object of the presentation is to analyze how much Dracula, the character created by Bram Stoker, can be considered a source of inspiration for Batman, the Caped Crusader, produced by the modern popular culture. A comparison will be drawn between the two characters in order to identify especially those particular elements which the two “dark knights” may have in common and their reverberation into the psyche of the Gothamite superhero. At the same time care will be given to the issue whether these similarities were conscious and intended as such by Bob Kane and Bill Finger, the creators of Batman, or if they are the products of the collective unconsciousness as defined by Carl G. Jung. Possible connections and comparisons with other figures from the Victorian Gothic imaginary (Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Frankenstein, Sherlock Holmes etc.) or modern (super)heroes (The Shadow, Zorro etc.) and antiheroes (Blade, Morbius, Venom etc.) are not excluded but only inasmuch as they are illustrative and beneficial to the Dracula-Batman parallel (which is, as mentioned above, aimed at outlining the similarities rather than the many more noticeable differences).

Brian Forrest: Blacula Is Beautiful

Observers of contemporary vampire fiction often look at the current slate of vampires and what those creatures might say about the narratives we tell ourselves about the world today. Similarly, others will look back in time to foundational vampire fiction and ask how we got from there to here. Both of these approaches are valid, but they often overlook a key turning point in vampire fiction that celebrates its semicentennial this year.

1972’s *Blacula*, often dismissed by mainstream critics when noted at all, put the vampire into a new context twice over: by grounding the vampire in the history of transatlantic slavery with its reverberations into the 20th century, and by successfully placing the Byronic vampire into modern times. In so doing, the film forged new archetypes and new tropes that are accepted as near cannon in vampire fiction today.

With attention to what the film stated and hinted, with dives into archival material on the film, and with new interviews with director William Crain conducted this year, this paper will show that *Blacula* was ahead of the curve at a time when vampires were just beginning to come into their own as sympathetic protagonists. This paper will urge more attention by the vampire and Gothic community to *Blacula* as both a film and a character.

Brook Cameron: The Queer Animal Gothic in Stenbock’s “The Other Side: A Breton Legend”

No emotion is more inrooted and intense in the minds of common people than hatred and fear of anything "strange." – “The Other Side”

This paper will look at the Queer Gothic in Count Eric Stanislaus Stenbock’s (perhaps second-best known) short story, “The Other Side,” a story about a young boy named Gabriel who, like the identically named protagonist in “True Story,” bears many of the hallmark characteristics of late-Victorian queer decadence. And yet Gabriel’s cross over (the river and to the “Other Side”) into the realm of forbidden desire is, in this second story, framed in terms of an animal turn or transformation into a werewolf, not ‘degeneration’ and death (as criminologists like Max Nordau would claim). This paper reads “The Other Side” in the context of recent work in Animal Studies (Ivan Kreilkamp 2018; Monica Flegel 2015) as well as Post-humanism (Promrod K. Nayer, 2014); I look at how in this story – as well as in his personal life, with his incredible coterie of pets from snakes to peacocks – Count Erik Stenbock models a kind of fluid embodiment that works to deconstruct many of his contemporaries’ binary and exclusionary narratives, including both homophobic and

anthropomorphic thought. Drawing from recent critics like Ruth Heholt and Melissa Edmundson (*Gothic Animals*, 2020), I look at how Gabriel's embodied fluidity challenges many of the rigid human/animal distinctions that sexologists and criminologists, including Nordau, would use to police or keep the "monster" at bay. Just as Gabriel's mother must learn to love and appreciate her misfit son, readers are likewise challenged to question those who police or exclude the Othered. "The Other Side" instead invites readers to cross over and see – if not love – all of our queer animal children.

Camila Dutra: The double in Claudia: the vampire child-woman

Claudia is a known best-seller character of Anne Rice's vampire chronicle *Interview with the Vampire*, published in 1976 in the United States. The infant Claudia was transformed into a vampire when she was five years old. She never knew or felt life from the point of view of being human, at least she cannot remember this. Hence, we can suppose that life as a vampire is the only thing natural for Claudia. She was transformed by two male vampires, Louis and Lestat. The first one bit her until she was close to death, while Lestat gave her your own blood vampire, then she was born through vampire life. According to Schumann (2013), no matter how experienced and strong-willed she becomes, she will look like a doll and be treated as such. Since her transformation into a vampire, her appearance has never changed, she looks like an eternal doll. In spite of this, Claudia is a femme fatale, a truly seductress. When we take a closer look at her, we realized that Rice's character has a dual existence. Claudia appears to be an innocent child, however she is also a vampire monster. However, more important than this, is realizing what she really thinks about herself. Because she feels as a woman, an adult person even if her body does not change over the decades. In this case, we are facing a double character.

Cathleen Allyn Conway: I've crossed oceans of versions to find you': Remediating Mina from novel to screen in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

As the most abject character in *Dracula* – most notably because she is alive but dying, neither dead nor Undead – the presentation of Mina via remediation shapes the overall message and meaning of the adapted text. The characters and themes in *Dracula* are so rich they continue to reward examination and interrogation regardless of era, therefore it is worthwhile to examine how authors reinterpret these characters and this story, tracing the adaptation of characters and how they are presented the further from the original source text they go. The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate how the character of Mina is reconfigured and changed as it makes its way through the process of adaptation.

I explore a number of tie-ins to the film and explore them with regards to Mina: an early draft of the screenplay, the comic adaptation, and the novelisation of the film. The essay follows Mina on her journey from Stoker's text (in which she speaks to the audience directly) through the screenplays, final film and comic book tie-ins of Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 film *Bram Stoker's Dracula*.

Cristian Pralea: Masquerading Vampires

This paper will look at the video games inspired by White Wolf Publishing's "World of Darkness" tabletop role-playing games, with a particular focus on the 2004 cult classic "Vampire: The Masquerade – Bloodlines" by Troika Games. While deeply flawed at release, due to a troubled development cycle, and abandoned post-release due to Troika Games going bankrupt, the game was later on fixed by fans with unofficial patches being released all the way to October, 2022. I will look at what makes up this game's absolutely remarkable staying power, in relation with its source of inspiration, its other related games, but also as a singular video game masterpiece.

David MacDowell Blue: Re-Inventing DRACULA

Literally dozens of different Draculas dot nearly every medium, from stage plays to motion pictures to graphic novels. Can there be any point in yet another? How does one bring anything fresh to a telling of this story? What traps lie in wait? How might one avoid them? David MacDowell Blue created such an adaptation, one produced in 2021. His process is shared, as an example of how to approach this issue, including attempts to make the oft-told story more topical, not by making changes for their own sake but by diving deeper into the text. Tiny clues from not only the novel, but also the published notes left behind by Stoker, led the way in often surprising ways. While he stands by his own choices, he also wants to encourage others to find their own answers to his questions, their own interpretations of the clues he found, as well as finding more.

Dax Stokes: It's Just a Demon: Vampire Activity as Documented by the Church in the Historical Record

Christianity is no stranger to demonic activity. Throughout history, there have been theories that vampire sightings were actually the work of demons inhabiting the bodies of the deceased. Church authorities were often having to intervene with local clergy to stop the spread of superstitious views on vampires. In this follow-up to a previous Children of the Night Dracula Congress presentation (2018's "The Un-Orthodox Vampire: Heresy, Mysticism, and the Eastern Church's Creation of the Undead"), we will explore the role of demonic activity in the historical record of vampires in Eastern Europe.

Florin Nechita and Adina Nicoleta Candrea: Overpromising Dracula from Vlad to Elon

Bran Castle is a famous tourist site in Romania, which attracts both international and domestic visitors. However, international and domestic tourists have different expectations when visiting the castle. While international visitors expect to meet vampires due to the castle's association with Dracula due to Bram Stoker's novel, domestic tourists are interested in the history of the site and its association with Queen Mary, and the Habsburg royal family. Therefore, this presentation is based on the ambivalent approach of the castle's administration when communicating with its public. Initially, Bran Castle representatives preferred to make little connections to Dracula in its communication initiatives both onsite and online. However, in the last years, they ceased the opportunity, they improved the onsite interpretation of dark stories onsite and started to organise vampire theme events. Based on the review of the existing literature, the current presentation highlights Western tourists' disappointment feelings when facing the conflict between history and myth interpretation while visiting Bran castle. Moreover, from the perspective of conflicting discourses, it analyzes the very recent soap opera of real and imagined visit at Bran Castle of a group of billionaires and Hollywood stars for a Halloween theme party.

Gabriela-Marinela Hluşcu: Lugosi from Lugos: Dracula's voice and music in Tod Browning's Dracula (1931)

Starting from Bram Stoker's novel, Dracula, and from the way in which the writer employed acoustic elements like voice, sounds, and music in creating not only the atmosphere in the narrative but mostly his character, Count Dracula, this paper studies the contribution of the same elements in the definition of Count Dracula, the film character performed by Bela Lugosi. By analyzing the film and the instances in which various auditory aesthetic elements are incorporated in the novel, the presentation will suggest possible answers to the question: What in the person and personality of the actor contributed the most to the creation of such a successful character, that has fascinated entire generations of cinema lovers?

Georgeta Moarcă: Mircea Eliade's Miss Christina, a contextual and intertextual reading

Mircea Eliade's well-known short novel, *Miss Christina*, is the first of Eliade's fictional writings, in which he explores Romanian folkloric beliefs, as well as several literature texts dealing with the idea of a revenant fiancée.

This paper analyses the way in which, by extending the exploration of the Romanian beliefs about the undead, as well as the literary intertext Eliade uses to infuse life in his characters, the reader will become aware of the unique nature of this fictional world.

Gustavo Alberto Garcia: Undead undead undead

This presentation will explore the interpretations of Dracula and vampires in modern/contemporary “fine art.” I will discuss works created by a range of artists - Andy Warhol, Man Ray and more. My presentation will show how Dracula and vampires continue to be a deep source of inspiration for visual artists who employ them as avatars of social commentary and contemporary symbolism.

Ian Clark: The lust that dare not speak its name: cruising, code, and queer vampirism in Eric Stenbock's “The True Story of a Vampire” (1894)

This paper will examine Stenbock's *A True Story of a Vampire* (1894) in the context of vampiric queerness and fin-de-siècle homosexual subculture, specifically the non-verbal act of “cruising.” Like the short story's polyglot vampire, Count Vardalek, to be a sexually active queer Victorian was to be fluent in many languages; particularly, the ability to communicate queerness and sexual availability through unspoken, yet understood, signs of homosexuality – and without alerting normative onlookers. This paper looks at the parallels between vampirism and the historic act of cruising in “True Story,” arguing that the instantaneous (and initially anonymous) attraction between Count Vardalek and Gabriel, his victim, depicts the silent language of queer attraction. Uniting these queer characters is a shared fluency in non-verbal communication: music, animals, grooming, touch, all act as signifiers for their mutual attraction and metaphoric Otherness, all while the acts go unscrutinised by Gabriel's father and watchful sister. Further discussion includes the text's subtextual references to contemporaneous queer culture, specifically the Count's frequent trips to Trieste, Italy, a symbolically suggestive naval town where, after 1890, homosexuality was legal (Virga et al, 2017).

Ildikó Limpár: Burying Fears and Fantasies: Vampire Parenthood in Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* and *The Graveyard Book*

In two of his juvenile fantasy works, Neil Gaiman makes use of the vampire parent to suggest the intimidating nature of the process of growing up. In both *Coraline* and *The Graveyard Book* the prospects of becoming entrapped in childhood are linked to a ghost-like undead life and passivity; still, the two works have diverse approaches concerning what there is to fear, and as a result, the two parental figures embody different anxieties. The proposed paper will discuss the significance of understanding death as part of one's maturation process and how this theme links with presenting the undead parents – the other mother (*Coraline*) and the guardian Silas (*The Graveyard Book*). The analysis will highlight that in both works the monster-parent is a signifier of the undead subconscious, which is either to be fought and triumphed over repeatedly or is necessarily forgotten so that the protagonist may live a happy (young) adulthood.

James McCrea: On Dark Wings: The Development of Bat Iconography in Relation to the Vampire Myth

Bats have been associated with darkness and evil in Western art, but a historical survey of how bat imagery has been used reveals this to be a relatively new development. Prior to the nineteenth century, the bat represented the romance of nightfall, humility, and a sense of common affection – "a kind of which is difficult to find in man" as described in medieval bestiaries. Images of bats graced church benches, misericords, and holy manuscripts throughout Europe, which questions their association with vampires who were not represented – nor welcome – in such spaces. This presentation focuses on the development of bat imagery as a signifier of evil, using cross-cultural examples and a survey of bat imagery ranging from ancient cave art to present-day representations to pinpoint how and when such an attribution may have occurred and why it persists. Furthermore, the discussion warrants a close examination of aesthetic crossovers that may suggest a strong but unspoken relationship with the dragon as the original pre-Biblical image of evil, and the namesake of pop culture's most renowned vampire. From dragon to devil, from bat to vampire – webbed wings represent the fall of the angelic into the realm of the demonic.

Jared L. Schmidt: Autoethnography with the Vampire: How Dracula in the Netflix/BBC Miniseries Applies Folkloristic Methodologies to Examine His Undead Rules and Rituals

Throughout the 2020 Netflix/BBC three-episode miniseries, Dracula, the titular count (portrayed by Claes Bang) ponders, tests, and discusses why certain rules and rituals of folk tradition and popular culture do or do not work on/against him. Why, for example, does Dracula recoil at the sight of a crucifix? This is a question the answer to which he seeks even in front of his potential victims. While vampires like those penned by the late Anne Rice explain their boundaries through interviews, this interpretation of Dracula engages in a form of autoethnography. The folkloristic methodology of autoethnography is "a style of writing and research that connects personal and cultural experience" which also examines a researcher's "internal perceptions and feelings about their place in that world" (Berger & Ellis 2007:156). Viewed through this methodological lens, this presentation shows how Dracula gives voice to his own lore, rather than that of the outside expert like Van Helsing. Furthermore, the presenter will consider the role of storytellers Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss in how autoethnographies are constructed and shape monster-centered narratives. This Dracula encourages us to listen to the voices of vampires as they speak from beyond the grave, and perhaps to learn a bit about ourselves in the process.

Kyria Van Gasse: 'Without me, you're only you': playing female characters in Vampire: The Masquerade LARP

Vampire The Masquerade is one of the more popular Gothic role-playing games today, be it in tabletop or live-action role-play (LARP) form. As the title suggests, the game focuses on vampiric characters and their stories. This paper will focus on the female characters created in-game, looking at individual choices in playing characters and external influences. I'm taking an auto-ethnographic approach to this topic, as I'll talk about my own characters and my experiences with other characters. I am an active player in the Belgian LARP group 'Duister Gent' (Dark Ghent), a Vampire game that happens in our time, in Flanders. A limited range of female characters participate consistently, and this paper seeks to investigate the stereotypes described in the next sentence. I will explore two different characters; the (failed) femme fatale and the spiritual woman. I will look at how these characters play or played a vital yet sometimes underestimated role in the storyline, how my experience of playing them changed over time, and how other (male) characters have the need to control or destroy them.

Magdalena Grabias: Juliusz Machulski's Comedy Horror "The Lullaby" as an Exemplar of Post-millennial Patchwork Gothic

While the Polish literary market is abundant with horrors, Polish cinema has conspicuously avoided the genre for decades. The subject of Gothic, once recognised as an inextricable part of the western literary tradition, has always been treated with caution by Polish filmmakers, who have frequently been choosing more familiar Slavic settings and subject matter for their films. Nevertheless, with the ever-growing popularity of Hollywood Gothic cinema in the second half of the 20th century and at the start of the new millennium, a lot of constituents of the classic Gothic genre have permeated into the hermetic Polish moviemaking industry. These include visual and thematic aspects, as well as the characters. An interesting example of such a cinematic intercultural hybrid is *The Lullaby*, a 2010 comedy horror directed by an acclaimed Polish filmmaker, Juliusz Machulski. *The Lullaby* tells the story of a three-generation vampire family, which moves into a small Masurian village in search of a better life and stability. Soon, the idyllic rural place turns into a classic Gothic space, marked by mystery, horror, full moons, howling wolves and blood drinking. However, the director, known for his dark humour and predilection for social critique, eventually places the vampires in the Warsaw Presidential Palace. Such a turn of events does not allow for a misinterpretation of the film. In the disguise of a light comedy horror, *The Lullaby* constitutes a sharp socio-political criticism, in which Gothic elements help to expose the real horror of the nation. This article aims to present and explain the nature of the Polish horror cinema, as well as to conduct an interpretation of Juliusz Machulski's comedy horror in the context of post-millennial "Patchwork Gothic".

Mike Sheperd: Bram Stoker, Cruden Bay, and Dracula

In 1892, Bram Stoker made a systematic search to find a getaway destination for his annual August holiday, and discovered the village of Port Erroll, now called Cruden Bay. Returning to the Scottish fishing village year after year until 1910, his holiday provided the part-time author with the largest slice of time to write his books in an otherwise hectic life.

According to Bram's son Noel, he started writing *Dracula* here in 1895. Both Noel and his mother Florence tell how Bram behaved strangely that summer. They were both frightened of him: 'He seemed to get obsessed by the spirit of the thing.'

Cruden Bay does not provide a setting for *Dracula*, yet hints appear. Bram liked to pepper his books with in-jokes, and some of these alluding to Cruden Bay seem to be in the novel. For example, the octagonal room in Castle Dracula exactly replicates the octagonal hall in Slains Castle, near Cruden Bay.

Although Cruden Bay finds little, if any, space in the existing biographies of Bram Stoker, research into the time he spent here has revealed significant new information about the author of *Dracula* and provides context to the books he wrote in the village.

Nancy Rosenburg England: 'I Don't Live to Drain, I Drain to Live': Examining What We Do in the Shadows' Energy Vampire, Colin Robinson

The American documentary vampire television series *What We Do in the Shadows* (2019-present) is an offshoot of the 2014 well-received (currently 98% "fresh" on the movie review site Rotten Tomatoes) Australian film of the same name. Its main characters are Lazlo Cravensworth, Nadja Demetriou, Nandor the Relentless, Guillermo de la Cruz, and Colin Robinson. The character Colin Robinson, portrayed by Mark Proksch, and his identity as an

energy vampire, will be the focus of this presentation. Many may be familiar with the comparable term psychic vampire: a person who metaphorically drains the energy or life force of other people. Indeed, we may often think of this in terms of a particularly monotonous coworker, friend, or family member. Church of Satan founder Anton LaVey “defines psychic vampires as ‘individuals who drain others of their vital energy... They fill no useful purpose in our lives and are neither love objects nor true friends. Yet we feel responsible to the psychic vampire without knowing why’” (Leblanc 370). This definition is intriguing in terms of Colin Robinson. Further, the energy vampires of WWDITS (four other psychic vampires were introduced thus far) put a spin on this definition with the addition of supernatural abilities. And developments during the most recent season of WWDITS generate provocative questions about Colin’s origin. In this presentation I will discuss what the character Colin Robinson and the psychic/energy vampire may represent now and may represent in the future.

Nina Trzaska: Reflecting on the reflectionless: the appearance of the vrykolakas.

The proposed paper is a sample of one of my PhD research topics concerning the appearance of a vampire in Modern Greek folklore based on the laic accounts collected in a previously prepared text corpus. The data extracted from the collected sources allowed to form a thesis that all descriptions of the vrykolakas could be divided into two categories which should be treated differently. The first category – which could be labelled as ‘dead’ (passive) vampire – should be viewed as a record of an actual observation, while the second category – the ‘undead’ (active) vampire – should be seen as irrational product of imagination or incorrect interpretation of various physical phenomena. The accounts describing dead bodies accentuate physical features that were once seen as aberrance but, in the light of the present medical knowledge, are easily explainable. However, the accounts featuring active vrykolakes shift their focus to less reasonable (but not totally groundless) imagery comprising wide range of anthropomorphic, teratologic, zoomorphic and amorphous forms.

Peadar O’Dea: Disabling Dracula: A Disability Studies Analysis of Dracula, Carmilla and The Historical Context of The Vampire Myth

Dracula has been studied from numerous angles since its publication in 1897, with Marxist, LGBTQIA+, postcolonial, feminist and other interpretations of the novel (to name but a few) being debated. However little to no scrutiny has been paid to the novel through the lens of disability studies, which consequentially has meant, leaving certain questions out of the Dracula debate. Such questions include – do the weakness’s that vampires inherit such as crucifixes, being unable to cross-running water and needing an invite before entering someone’s house, correspond parallel barriers, that hinder disabled people’s ability to be included in society? Is there any correlation between real-life diseases like porphyria and the mythic disease of vampirism? And many more. This presentation will focus on Bram Stoker’s 1897 novel, the recently discovered “Swedish”/ “Icelandic” manuscripts and draw comparisons with J. Sheridan Le Fanu’s novella Carmilla which famously influenced Stoker, to explore parallels between disablism and vampirism using concepts and terms from the field of Disability Studies, which the presenter holds an MA in from the University of Leeds.

Penny Goodman: ‘Doors, doors, doors everywhere’: thresholds in Stoker’s Dracula and its adaptations.

The vampire’s inability to cross a threshold without an invitation originates in folklore. Stoker knew of it and built the idea into Dracula, but the symbolic value which he drew from the crossing and barring of thresholds goes further than invitations alone. The word ‘door’ appears 216 times in Dracula and ‘window’ 136 times: both more than ‘blood’ at a

mere 113. This paper will show how these references build tension, generate plot beats, and convey characters' emotions, agendas and relationships.

Dracula's castle is full of locked doors which he uses to guard secrets and exert power, restricting Jonathan's liberty and his understanding of his circumstances. It is only as the human characters learn to break through the doors which Dracula controls and find ways to shut him out that they are able to reverse this relationship and protect themselves. The privacy of closed doors also allows several characters to express feelings which they could not reveal more openly. Windows, meanwhile, come into play when doors are barred, used for example by Jonathan, Dracula, Lucy and Renfield to act against the will of others.

Stoker's language of doors and windows is usually recognisable in screen adaptations of Dracula but is developed further in some key productions. Nosferatu gives its vampire supernatural control over doors, while Hammer's Dracula brings the sexual connotations of the motif to the forefront. Each enriches the themes and mood of the production in question, further demonstrating what a good threshold can bring to a vampire story.

Patricia Hradec: Giulia Moon and her 'Dama-Morcega': intertextuality among Brazilian vampires

The aim of this presentation is to think over the gothic perspective of how the Brazilian author, Giulia Moon, creates her vampires as seductors, bloody and updated, living in big cities or crossing the centuries in an eternal life. First, we will present the author and her literary characteristics; in a second moment, we will analyze one of her tales surrounded by intertextuality. The one entitled "A Dama-morcega", something translated as "the bat lady", tells the story of a vampire captured to be part of a freak circus. The tale was published in two Brazilian collections, first in 2006, when it names the title of the book and later, in 2014 in the collection entitled Flores Mortais (Mortal Flowers). Besides the gothic aspect, the intertextuality is also manifested inside the tale, which was written in honor of two historical celebrities. First Julia Pastrana, considered the Victorian Era Ape Woman, suffered when she was exposed in a freak show. And also, Monteiro Lobato, a Brazilian well-known writer, who wrote children's stories and about Brazilian folklore. The tale is about vampirism, but also about the selfish and petty human nature that makes us reflect on who is the real vampire, the monster itself or humanity.

Peter Gölz: Flying High: Blood Red Sky and the New Wave of German Vampire Films

This year marked the 100th anniversary of the first German vampire movie, *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror*. Only few productions followed in the footsteps of this expressionist classic until the vampire returned to the German screen with Werner Herzog's *Nosferatu: Phantom der Nacht* and Hans W. Geißendörfer's *Jonathan* in the 1970s. Unlike this limited but significant depiction of vampires in 20th century German films, there has been a virtual explosion of vampire movies from German-speaking countries in recent years and there have been 20 new releases from German-speaking countries since 2000. While this new vampire wave mostly consists of comedies, children's films, and mockumentaries, there have also been some action flicks, most notably Peter Thorwarth's *Blood Red Sky*. Released in 2021, it is now the most watched German movie ever with a viewership of 50 million. This talk will analyze *Blood Red Sky* in respect to the new German vampire wave and its re-reading of the Nosferatus and other milestones in cinematic vampire history.

Roberto Cavalcante: I feel so much yummiier! - Catwoman's vampiric journey in *Batman Returns* (1992)

In this research, by means of a bibliographical survey and debate, we intend to look into the vampiric and sexual narratives presented in "Batman Returns" (Tim Burton, 1992). At

first sight, the movie cannot be labeled as a horror movie, however, it is possible to identify that Michelle Pfeiffer's character, Selina Kyle, undergoes a vampirization process throughout the plot. Murdered by her boss, Selina returns from the dead pale, furious, animalistic, and vengeful. Using the figure of a black cat to represent her new persona, imbued with sadomasochistic elements of the 1980s fetish scene (such as high boots, leather corset, and whip), she seeks revenge against her nemesis, her city, and her own gender. Considering this character as some sort of a contemporary vampire, allows us to realize all the potential possibilities of vampires in cinema, beyond literal caricatures, such as feeding exclusively on blood, sleeping in coffins, being sensitive to Christian symbols, etc. Vampires can be a lot more complex than that, possessing social, sexual, and cultural layers. From an example of immorality in Western literature to sexual freedom in twentieth-century cinema, and, recently, representing marginalized and socially invisible minority groups. With a Foucauldian perspective, we seek to enrich the debates about vampiric narratives in cinema and demonstrate how Selina Kyle, with her tight vinyl outfit and contrasting red lipstick, became the greatest vampire (non-vampire) in 1990s pop culture.

Ruxandra Ivănescu: Bram Stoker's Mythology: From Dracula to The Jewel of Seven Stars
The present paper wants to bring into light another interesting novel written by Bram Stoker, *The Jewel of Seven Stars*, because *Dracula* is the most famous but not the sole book written by Bram Stoker. And, as well as *Dracula*, *The Jewel of Seven Stars* was misunderstood by the critics of the Victorian Age, so that the author had to change the ending of his novel offering a more conventional happy ending. Was it also the case of *Dracula*? *The Jewel of Seven Stars* proves Bram Stoker's interest in the occult, the real core of *Dracula*. This taste for New Age, pagan culture, opposite to the conventional beliefs of The Victorian Age proved to be visionary, according to the mainstream of the XXI century.

Vitor Souza: The Vampire in Colors: Hammer Films' Dracula and the Dynamics of Gender and Sexuality

The overall purpose of this presentation is to discuss the implications of the use of the Technicolor technology in the Hammer Films' Dracula franchise, as it marks a departure from the previous black and white cinematic adaptations. More specifically, Hammer's use of color on screen, harshly criticized by some film scholars and critics, had made it possible to add new layers to the character of Dracula, allowing him to have a better expression of his sexuality and desires. The use of the color red, for instance, contributed for the portrayal of Dracula's relationships with his victims, especially the female ones, as it distinguishly marked the dynamics of gender/power relations. The overall result of this on-screen representation is a more sexually active Dracula, as well as the depiction of the punishment of the female desire, which greatly resembles the ongoing social changes during the release period of the films. Additionally, the Hammer Films of Dracula also helped to shape the overall image of the vampire as a sexually active mythical creature.

Zsolt Bojti: From the Erbkönig to the "real vampire": On the Origins of "The True Story of a Vampire" by Stenbock

"The True Story of a Vampire" from *Studies of Death* (1894) is possibly the most studied work of Eric Stenbock. Scholars have scrutinised the short story for queer codes, autobiographical elements, and manifestations of Aestheticism. I myself argued elsewhere (*The AnaChronisT*, 18.1) that Vardalek, the vampire of the story, embodies the turn-of-the-century conceptual muddle of sexology and is called a "real vampire" for the lack of a better word to conceptualise Vardalek's sexuality when the new classificatory science of sexualities reached Britain from German-speaking Central Europe. This time I argue that

there is also a German literary and musical influence on Stenbock's short story. The paper tries to establish that Stenbock was fascinated by the ballad of the Erlkönig, who became fertile ground to discuss same-sex desire in Goethe's version. I also ponder the musical afterlife of the Erlkönig in Schubert and Liszt's work that might have piqued Stenbock's interest in the style hongrois, the Hungarian-style music Vardalek plays in the short story. Lastly, I shall analyse Stenbock's own translation of the Erlkönig, its "perversion" from the original, and his poem, "The Vampyre," to substantiate how the ballad's figure became a vampire in Stenbock's queer imagination.