Renderings of the Abyss: some changing nineteenth-century literary perceptions of the animal / human divide.

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to amalgamate philosophy and history of science with literature to achieve an overview of changing ideas of the animal/human divide during the nineteenth century. Drawing on the ideas of Jacques Derrida, Friedrich Nietzsche, Julia Kristeva and Giorgio Agamben. I consider this divide and its contents, often regarded as an abyss. The study is written like a time line, starting at the beginning of the nineteenth century and finishing at the end. I split the nineteenth century into four time periods centred around the emergence of Darwinian theory, considered by this study to be the single most prolific scientific event to have occurred during the nineteenth century. These time frames are the pre-Darwinian, the early Darwinian, the late Darwinian and the post-Darwinian. The study is split into four chapters which coincide with these time frames, covering four different novels which exemplify contextually relevant ideas of the abyss. These are *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville, *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky and *The Island of Doctor Moreau* by H.G. Wells. During the course of this study I consider various ideas applied by the authors about the abyssal limits and what they consist of. These include considerations on reason, society, morality and spirituality, all ideas used in various different manners to attempt to explain the abyss. From these various deliberations I formulate a conclusion which takes into account the various nuances which would have effected each of the writer's formulations of the abyss.

Introduction

The implications of Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection are humbling considering how religion and Cartesian philosophy had previously elevated the human species. With his revolutionary *On the Origin of Species* (1859*)* Darwin produced viable evidence for a theory that had been in scientific discussion for years but never published as a single study[1]. Humans, according to Darwinian theory, could no longer be considered the favoured species of a supreme being. Sigmund Freud summarizes this concept in *An Infantile Neurosis*:

> In the course of the development of civilization man acquired a dominating position over his fellow-creatures in the animal kingdom. Not content with this supremacy, he began to place a gulf between his nature and theirs. He denied the possession of reason to them, and to himself he attributed an immortal soul, and made claims to a divine descent which permitted him to break the bonds between him and the animal kingdom . . . We all know that little more than half a century ago the researches of Charles Darwin and his contributors and forerunners put an end to this presumption on the part of man. Man is not a being different from animals or superior to them; he himself is of animal descent, being more closely related to some species and more distantly to others.[2]

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[1] Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species, By Means of Natural Selection,* London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2012 Subsequent page references in text.

[2] Sigmund Freud, *An Infantile Neurosis*, London: Random House, 2001 (140) Subsequent page references in text.

Freud's argument posits that what separates humanity from the animal is evolutionary success alone, yet arrogance had allowed humans to imagine a gulf between themselves and other creatures. What Freud alludes to when he mentions a "gulf", is a conceptual enigma in philosophy that is described as an "abyss". It is a concept approached by various philosophers in an attempt to explain the distinction between the animal and the human. During the nineteenth century, with the introduction of Darwinism, more philosophical considerations of the difference between animal and humankind were produced, as humanity's place in the world was considered increasingly more dubious. According to Gillian Beer whose seminal *Darwin's Plots* inspired this study: "Instead, in Darwinian myth, the history of man is of a difficult extensive family network which takes in barnacles as well as bees, an extended family which will never permit the aspiring climber-man-quite to forget his lowly origins."[3] What had been a clear, yawning division between human and animal, was now in a state of flux, depending upon whether you were a conservative creationist, a radical evolutionist, or somewhere in between. Darwinism effectively problematized the abyss, opening it up to a discussion that still seems unlikely to ever be resolved. That discussion can be found embedded in much of the literature of the nineteenth century. The purpose of my study is to examine how approaches to the abyss changed and developed throughout the nineteenth century, so I can effectively demonstrate how Darwinism changed the literary perception of humanity's relationship with the animal.

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[3] Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Subsequent page references in text.

Few philosophers would argue that there is absolutely no abyss separating humanity and animality. For example, in *The Animal That Therefore I Am* Jacques Derrida explicitly states: "I have never believed in some homogenous continuity between what calls *itself* man and what *he* calls animal"[4]. Furthermore scientists still actively research and discuss what constitutes the difference between human and animal, for example, neuroscientist V.S. Ramachandran, in his bestselling *The Tell-Tale Brain* (2012) neuroscientist V.S. Ramachandran argues that:

> There is no region or structure that appears to have been grafted into the brain *de novo* by an intelligent designer; at the anatomical level, every part of our brain has direct analogue in the brains of the great apes. However, recent research has identified a handful of brain regions that have been so radically elaborated that at a functional (or cognitive) level they actually can be considered novel and unique.[5]

Ramachandran demonstrates that although the brain is more developed in humans, each part of its structure can be traced back to our simian origins. Although Darwinian theory is generally accepted today in the scientific community, the philosophical implications are still under scrutiny. During the nineteenth century, Darwin's scientific revolution inspired re-examination of many of these questions. Once the theory of the separate creation of humanity could be considered void, there was a necessity for a new explanation of our individuality as a species. Even “Darwin’s bulldog” Thomas Henry Huxley found difficulty explaining the difference that was evidently there. He demonstrated this whilst lecturing at the Royal Institution by saying of humans, gorillas and baboons:

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[4] Jacques Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, Trans. David Wills, New York: Fordham University Press, 2008 (30). Subsequent page references in text

[5] V.S. Ramachandran, The *Tell-Tale Brain*, London: Windmill Books, 2012 (22) Subsequent page references in text.

> Now I am quite sure that if we have these three creatures fossilized or preserved in spirits for comparison and were quite unprejudiced judges, we should at once admit that there is very little greater interval as animals between the gorilla and the man than exists between the gorilla and the baboon. (3)

Huxley’s position demonstrates how, even as a devout Darwinian convert, he still struggled with the concept that man is inherently closer to animals that he may have originally seemed. His attitude was shared by a variety of intellectuals, and not just those working in the field of science. On a wider, cultural level, Darwinian theory took some time to be accepted. Beer suggests that:

> This revolution must take place not only in the minds of scientists but in the beliefs of other inhabitants of the same culture if the theory is to reach its full authority-an authority which rests upon an accepted congruity between theory and nature. (3)

Beer highlights how for a theory to be widely accepted, it should not only appeal to scientists, but must also be acknowledged culturally. Literature is an excellent gauge for this cultural acceptance. My study aims to analyse how throughout the nineteenth century the contents of the novel were affected by Darwinian theory, that is, how can long prose fiction be interpreted in ways that demonstrate a change in public perception of the animal human divide. Focus is placed on the philosophical "abyss", or the space that separates man from animal. I analyse four novels showing how scientific progress at the time in which they were written inspired their authors to consider the theme of the human condition and how we differ from animals.

My introduction aims effectively to commence this study by outlining some of the key principles concerning the difference between human and animal. My discussion will further introduce the abyss, investigating how it functions in philosophy to intellectually engage with the difference between animals and people. I include a discussion on the philosophically constructed abyss and the contents within, involving an outline of the ideas of Derrida, Nietzsche, Agamben and Kristeva. It must be noted that not all of the philosophers under discussion were actively informed by Darwinism. Instead, I use these philosophers' theories on animal phenomenology to reconsider the effects of Darwinism. The aim of this section is to provide a clear view of the different philosophical attitudes towards the abyss, so that I can regularly refer to it during the course of my thesis. Furthermore within this introduction I provide an example of how stories can be used to explored the difference between animal and man. The ancient Greek myth of "Theseus and the Minotaur" exemplifies a way of reading of the liminal space within literature and how it can be conceived. The next section considers writers who have already explored this area of study; what they have discovered, and how my study will contribute to the debate. This section will serve as an introduction to Literary Darwinism and other works of literary criticism that has focused on similar subject matter. Finally, I provide an outline of the study, detailing the literature considered in each chapter.

Yawning Chasms

In recent years, neuroscientists have pinpointed specific developments in the human brain that have catalysed accelerated development. Ramachandran argues that research has demonstrated a development of the cortex, "the tabula (far from) rasa where all our highest mental functions are carried out" (5). Ramachandran argues, that the cortex is the reason for the development of mirror neurons, and thus culture:

> By hyperdeveloping the mirror-neuron system, evolution in effect turned culture into the new genome. Armed with culture, humans could adapt to hostile new environments and figure out how to exploit formerly inaccessible or poisonous food sources in just one or two generations-instead of the hundreds or thousands of generations such adaptations would have taken to accomplish through genetic evolution. (23)

Ramachandran pinpoints the area of the brain that scientists believe to be responsible for the void between animals and humans, and summarizes what we now believe to be the reason for our advanced development. Scientists including Ramachandran argue that this hyperdevelopement is a product of evolution, thus it exemplifies the constant reiterated veracity of the theory of natural selection. Ramachandran is only one of many authors in recent years who have published works for public readership on the subject of humanity's uniqueness.

Yuval Noah Harari's *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*[6] has proven a best seller, and Brian Cox helped promote the subject in his *Human Universe*[7]. Both books, as well as many more approach the question of what defines us as a species, demonstrating the current enduring popularity of the subject.

However, in the nineteenth century evolutionary theory was only recently considered a serious usurper of the original explanation that attributed man's difference to superior creation by a deity. Before Darwinism, religious explanation of the dramatic contrast between man and animal was the most respected theory of man's origins. Religious thinkers considered man greater than animal because God created him as an intrinsically higher being. In both Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Genesis 2:4-2:24, humanity is created superior to animals. In the first chapter, humanity was created in God's image after the animals so as to rule over them: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let him have dominion over the fish and cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth on the earth."[8] In the second chapter, humanity is made prior to animal, but his status as a superior being is reiterated: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."[9] The belief in the "living soul" supports the explanation of individual creation; an idea supported for centuries by philosophers like Rene Descartes, whose arguments

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[6] Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind,* London: Vintage, 2015

[7] Brian Cox, *Human Universe*, London: HarperCollins, 2015

[8] Genesis I: 26

[9] Genesis II:7-8

Gilbert Ryle referred to as “the dogma of the Ghost in the Machine”.[10] Descartes argues that:

> For, examining the functions which might in accordance with this supposition exist in this body, I found precisely all those which might exist in us without our having the power of thought, and consequently without our soul-that is to say, this part of us, distinct from the body, of which it has just been said that its nature is to think-contributing to it, functions which are identically the same as those in which animals lacking reason man be said to resemble us.[11]

Descartes writes that humans differ from animals because we have the faculty of reason, available because we alone have souls, a view that is still held today by many religious groups. Many of those groups are influenced by religious speakers and “scientists” such as John. C. Morris and Henry M. Whitcomb, who published *Genesis Flood* in an attempt to use science to reaffirm literal reading of the Bible.[12] As Darwinism is widely accepted within the scientific community, the opinion of the vast majority of scientists differs from the fundamental religious view, creating a sudden, and dramatic divide between empiricists and spiritualists.

Religious principle is a primary reason that evolutionary theory was held back for so long. As Edward J. Larson has shown it took Darwin twenty years to publish *On the Origin of Species.* [13] Aware of the adverse reaction that his ideas would most likely receive, Darwin strove to perfect his theory over those two decades, whilst keeping in constant communication with Charles Lyell who eventually persuaded him to publish his findings (70-71). To summarize, Larson argues that “Indeed, God became more than superfluous under Darwin’s emerging view of origins-He became problematic. At the very least, the theory of evolution dispenses with the immediate need for a Creator to shape individual species, including humans” (69). Therefore, considering this dramatic step in science, the nineteenth century became a period when the question of humanity and our origins was revolutionized. The established theory that comprised of the “dogma of the ghost in the machine” was more than just threatened; it was usurped by a particularly brutal new concept. Such was the anxiety that makes Tennyson’s *In Memoriam* particularly interesting as a poem that responds to scientific ideas; Tennyson grieving for the untimely death of his friend Henry Hallam, poetically emphasized the doubt that evolutionary ideas inspired within the Victorian mind:

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[10] Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of the Mind*, (London: Penguin Books, 2000)

[11] René Descartes, *A Discourse on the Methods and the Meditations*, Trans. F.E. Sutcliffe, (London: Penguin Classics, 1968) p.100-101 Subsequent page references in text.

[12] Morris and Whitcomb, *The Genesis Flood, The Biblical Record and its Scientific Implications*, (New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company,1961)

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life[14]

The question of humanity’s individuality troubled even atheist scientists of the era, who lacked an explanation for this seemingly great void, so much so that even Darwin's greatest supporters believed that there must be an additional factor that accelerated human evolution. According to Larson "Even Darwin's bulldog, Huxley, envisioned evolution proceeding in jumps (rather than incremental steps) and believed that civilized humans could overcome nature in shaping their own destiny" (100-101). Consequently, although *On the Origin of Species* became the primary theory to explain our origins, even the most fervent supporter could not fully attest to how it changed the relationship between human and animal. The conceptual space that divides animal from human seemingly narrowed, what was generally considered a yawning space now seemed to fluctuate in shape; the uncertainty of this space caused a lot of anxiety for many people, who struggled with self-definition.

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[13] Edward J. Larson, *Evolution: The Remarkable History of a Scientific Theory,* (New York: Random House, 2004) Subsequent page references in text.

[14] Lord Alfred Tennyson, , *In Memoriam*, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003

It is the abyssal space that separates animal and man that I focus on in my study, I have selected literary works from across the nineteenth century that respond to the development of evolutionary science, centring of Darwin's theory of natural selection. The study of literature has always been a particularly vital way of understanding philosophies and trends of thought that define an era. Through critical readings I aim to show how the introduction of Darwinian theory changed perceptions of the abyss.

Minding The Gap

So far, I have discussed the issues concerning the difference between animal and man in a general sense, whilst briefly alluding to the abyss. I now further demonstrate how the abyss has been used to discuss humanity's relationship with animality within philosophy. The primary philosophers which I discuss in this context are Jacques Derrida, Friedrich Nietzsche, Julia Kristeva and Giorgio

Agamben whose concepts can allow us a glimpse of what this abyss may represent. I also briefly mention John Gray, whose approach helps form my conclusion. In a longer study I could perhaps discuss further philosophers, as there are varied approaches to the abyss that could be considered. For example, Martin Heidegger argues that the abyss separating animal and man is extensive. Heidegger considers the animal to be "*poor in the world*" whilst "man is *world forming*".[15] He further describes how: "The leap from living animals to humans that speak is as large if not larger than that from the lifeless stone to the living being."[16] Heidegger imagines a clearly defined abyss, which separates humanity from animality with a yawning expanse. On the opposite side of the argument, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari discuss the metamorphosis of human into animal, a process called "becomings animal". They argue that "Society and the State need animal characteristics to use for classifying people; natural history and science need characteristics in order to classify the animals themselves."[17] There is a transformation that occurs, which decimates the separation between man and animal: "There is no longer man or animal, since each deterritorializes the other, in a conjunction of flux, in a continuum of reversible intensity."(99) Man and animal become interchangeable; the abyss, can therefore be crossed by both parties.

Despite the relevance of these approaches, the authors I have chosen to focus on have been selected specifically to demonstrate the complexity and scope of the abyss. They also exemplify different concepts of the abyss from differing perspective; I have included a modern philosopher (Derrida), a nineteenth century philosophy (Nietzsche), a psychoanalytic perspective (Kristeva) and a Human Rights angle (Agamben).

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[15] Martin Heidegger, The fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995 (177)
[16] Martin Heidegger, Hölderlins 'Germanien' und 'Der Rhein' ed S. Ziegler (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1980), p.75, quoted in Matthew Calarco, 'Heidegger's Zoontology', *Animal Philosophy*, London:Continuum, 2004
[17] G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, 'Becoming Animal', *Animal Philosophy*, London: Continuum, 2004

Derrida's ideas are based on the animal's gaze. He writes that we can find the abyss within the eyes of the animal:

> As with every bottomless gaze, as with the eyes of the other, the gaze called 'animal' offers to my sight the abyssal limit of the human: the inhuman or the ahuman, the ends of man, that is to say, the bordercrossing from which vantage man dares to announce himself to himself, thereby calling himself by the name that he believes he gives himself. (12)

Derrida argues that humanity cannot understand itself unless it seeks definition from an outside source; that is, through the eyes of an animal. It is only when we cross over from animal to human that we can understand ourselves as a species. When discussing the difference between man and animal he declares that there is no "single indivisible line"(31). Instead, he states;

> The discussion is worth undertaking once it is a matter of determining the number, form, sense, or structure, the foliated consistency of the abyssal limit, these edges, this plural and repeatedly folded frontier... one attempts to think what a limit becomes once it is abyssal, once the frontier no longer forms a single indivisible line... (30)

Here Derrida describes an abyss separating man from animal, which has no definite limits; it is ambiguous and indefinable. Derrida therefore argues that there is no particular element of humanity that divides us from animal, but instead we have a multi-faceted and complex relationship with non-human species. He critiques his predecessors; Descartes, Heidegger, Lacan and Levinas, as only observing the animal themselves and not acknowledging that they themselves are also being looked at. Nevertheless, he is adamant that there is a separation between animals and humans, although its not one that can be understood easily: "For that very reason, it can never be limited to a single trait (properties of man) and it is never closed…." (5) H.G. Wells, explores this concept in some depth in his fiction; as an outspoken Darwinist, he believed in the mutability of humanity, using ideas that can be linked to an ever changing, indefinite abyss. Derrida's philosophies can be considered as the general framework for my complete study, as it demonstrates the fluid, changeable nature of our division from animals.

Nietzsche's concepts of the abyss predate all other philosophies that I am discussing. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* he conceives man as an intermediary stage between animal and the "Übermensch" or the "Superman".[18] As a philosopher writing in the wake of Darwinian theory he demonstrates the more immediate effect of Darwinism on philosophical perspectives of the abyss. He discusses how humanity is just a stage in the process of evolution and will be overcome by something greater and nobler: "Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman-a rope over the abyss" (8). Interestingly, Nietzsche considers humanity as a bridge above this conceptual chasm; which divides animality from an improved human being. When Nietzsche discusses the Superman he considers an ideal version of what man should be, and what our species has not reached yet: "Man is something to be surpassed" (6). Here, Nietzsche is not agreeing with Darwin's theories, which suggest a more randomized change in species caused by evolution; Nietzsche's ideas used more Spenserian ideas of a graduated improvement of the species.

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[18] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1997

Perhaps however, the idea of homogenous continuity which Derrida contests can be found along Nietzsche's metaphorical rope. However, this complicates the definition of the abyss. When discussing man's relation to animal Zarathustra makes this damning statement; "Ye have made your way from worm to man, and much within you is still worm. Once were ye apes, and even yet man is more of an ape than any of the apes." (6) The contents of the abyss are perhaps part of humanity, rather than separate from it. The choice of the rope as the metaphorical device to cross the abyss rather than a bridge demonstrates a journey across the abyss fraught with danger. Nietzsche conceives of the path towards the Übermensch as being precariously balanced over animality. He suggests that we need to be able to see into the abyss, to also overcome it.

The abyss therefore is the gulf we must cross the reach super humanity. It contains within it the remnant of humanity's past, and prior links to the animal. Nevertheless, Nietzsche writes "What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what is loveable in man is that he is an *over-going* and a *down-going*." (8) Nietzsche therefore complicates the matter by defining a difference between crossing the abyss and descending into the abyss. We might conclude that the person who descends into the abyss is the Promethean character, who attempts to further humanity by excavating our animalistic history, like Mary Shelley's Victor Frankenstein. It could also, however, be the criminal character, who seeks to defy their own natural course to attempt to reach the other side, like Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, Julie Kristeva's concepts of the abyss further inform an approach to Darwinism and the literature in question.[19] Kristeva's theory of "abjection" can also help formulate a picture of the abyss. The abject describes the part of ourselves that which so disgusts and horrifies us that we must displace or expel it; we move it elsewhere:

> There looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated. (1)

Kristeva refers to the abject as "…something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object. Imaginary uncanniness and real threat, it beckons to us and ends up engulfing us." (4) Therefore, it is possible to consider the abject as a way of postulating the distinction between animal and man: "*The abject would thus be the 'object' of primal repression*." (12).

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[19] Julia Kristeva, *The Powers of Horror*, Trans. Leon S. Roudiez, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) Subsequent page references in text.

Kristeva considers the abject as abiding in a liminal space. That is where how I can link the abject to the contents of the abyss:

> If, on account of that Other, a space becomes demarcated, separating the abject from what will be its subject and its objects, it is because a repression that one might call 'primal' has been effected prior to the springing forth of the ego, of its objects and representation. (10-11)

The abject can be used to explore the contents of this liminal space with reference to the difference between man and animal as a part of ourselves that we reject from ourselves. The products of this separation are therefore "The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite."(4) Helpfully, Kelly Oliver identifies and explores the link between abjection and the human/animal dichotomy: "As Derrida does, Kristeva finds another animal lurking behind the origins of humanity, a darker, more frightening beast, our dependence on we disavow and abject."[20]As Oliver explains, abjection is "the result of the return of repressed ambiguity or ambivalence inherent in these 'fragile' boundaries, which are precarious as they are necessary."(281) According to Oliver, "Abjection, then, is a disavowel of the animal pedagogy at the heart of humanity, or at least at the center of the human sciences, including psychoanalysis"(282) In reference to the abyss, then, abjection is the process in which we reject reminders of our animal origins into a conceptual space. The abject represents the contents of this abyss, which itself contains the abjected aspects of humanity. If these elements ever return, it has the effect of causing horror and revulsion. The classic example of this process is embodied in Frankenstein's creature, the animated corporeal being that represents the physicality(but, not for Victor Frankenstein, the soul) of humanity. Herman Melville also uses concepts of abjection in particularly poignant ways to develop the link between Ahab and Moby Dick.

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[20] Kelly Oliver, *Animal Lessons: How They Teach Us to Be Human*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2009(282) Subsequent page references in text.

Giorgio Agamben's employs the concept of the animal and the human to inform his approach to biopolitics and human rights. He discusses a fundamental difference between the Greek terms "zoē" and "bios"; the two words for "life":

> The Greeks had no single term to express what we mean by the word 'life'. They used two terms that, although traceable to a common etymological root, are semantically and morphologically distinct: zoē, which expressed the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animal, man or gods), and bios, which indicated the form or way of living proper to an individual group. (1)

By considering these two terms, Agamben demonstrates a distinction between what he calls "bare life" and politics. He relies heavily on groundwork of Michel Foucault: "Michel Foucault, who discusses the way that man was conceived in the classical era; as 'a living animal with the capacity for political existence" (2). Agamben's view of the abyss seems clearly defined; zoē represents the animal side, and bios defines the human side. Humans are therefore defined by their capacity for political life.

However, Agamben recognises that the distinction of this separation is impossible, because although the two may be conceived of as separate entities, bare life has always been part of politics:

> Instead the decisive fact is that, together with the process by which the exception everywhere becomes the rule, the realm of bare life-which is originally situated at the margins of political order-gradually begins to coincide with the political realm, and the exclusion and inclusion, outside and inside, bios and zoē, right an fact, enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction. (9)

Therefore, there is an intersection between the two concepts of humanity and animality which results in a blurring of the boundaries. He then discusses the "homo sacer"; a figure from Roman law who was allowed to be killed, but not sacrificed. That figure was therefore both excluded and included from the law:

> The sacred man is the one whom the people have judged on account of a crime. It is not permitted to sacrifice this man, yet he who kills him will not be condemned for homicide…this is why it is customary for a bad or impure man to be called sacred. (71)

The Homo Sacer is representative of this divide, and how it is inherently flawed. He is rejected from the law, yet also included, a paradox that represents the fundamental problem with the abyss. As Agamben himself notices, the division between human life and animal life includes an overlap in which the boundaries that are meant to be kept separate are inherently blurred. Therefore, the division between animal and man is necessarily problematic, as it is created specifically to maintain superiority. Oliver notes how Agamben's philosophy can be linked with Kristeva's: "The so-called abyss between man and animal is produced by abjecting animality from the concept of humanity." (233) She further explains how:

> To Agamben, Heidegger's comparative analysis of man and animal is another example of the anthropological machine in action: humanity is produced by excluding animality, against which it defines the human as precisely not-animal. In this way, the human becomes the exception, the exceptional animal who is not really an animal at all. (233)

Agamben therefore suggests that humanity finds meaning primarily in its exclusion of animality. Humanity transforms itself by ignoring and rejecting its animal origins. The abyss, therefore, is entirely conceptual, based on rejection. Agamben's concept is demonstrated in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, which deals with the concept of Homo Sacer, in the form of the criminal.

A fifth philosopher who is very relevant is John Gray, whose *Straw Dogs* (2003) reflects on the difference between animal and man. To Gray, there is no abyss. Or, if there is, it is merely a social construct created by humanity through its belief in its own individuality. As he rejects concepts of the abyss, his philosophies are not particularly conducive to my central argument. However, his ideas are helpful in drawing a conclusion. Therefore, I explore his work in greater depth in the final stage of my study.

Fundamentally, what I have established from my focus on these philosophers is an abyss that represents the conceptual space that divides humanity from animal. The abyss has no understandable shape that we may visualize, as its boundaries are unknown, Derrida considers them multi-faceted. Yet we can use the idea of an abyss to consider the so-called "missing link" that which falls between man and animal. What my study is interested in is how various authors perceived the contents of the abyss and what the bridge over the abyss is formed of; in other words what makes us human, and what perverts the boundary between people and animals.

Theseus and the Minotaur

To introduce the approach of this study, I have used an ancient Greek myth to demonstrate the topic. “Theseus and the Minotaur” is mythic exemplification that demonstrates how a narrative can explore the nature of humanity in relation to animals. There are various versions of the myth, for example Robert Graves includes the story in his narration of myths in *The Greek Myths* (1955*)*. However, I have used Joseph Campbell’s clear and well narrated version taken from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* for the purpose of my thesis.[21] As Campbell writes “Religions, philosophies, arts, the social forms of primitive and historic man, prime discoveries in science and technology, the very dreams that blister sleep, boil up from the basic, magic ring of myth” (3). Campbell’s proposition is not controversial; many philosophers look for answers to the most elusive questions within mythology.:

> The story is told, for example, of the great Minos, king of the island-empire of Crete in the period of its commercial supremacy: how he hired the celebrated artistic-craftsman Daedalus to invent and construct for him a labyrinth, in which to hide something of which the palace was at once ashamed and afraid. For there was a monster on the premises- that which had been born to Pasiphaë, the queen.

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[21] Joseph Campbell*, The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, (London: Fontana Press, 1993). Subsequent page references in text.

> Minos, the king, had been busy, it is said, with important wars to protect the trade routes; and meanwhile Pasiphaë had been seduced by a magnificent, snow white, sea born bull. It had been nothing worse, really, than what Minos' own mother had allowed to happen: Minos' mother was Europa, and it was well known that she was carried by a bull to Crete. The bull had been the god Zeus, and the honoured son of that sacred union was Minos himself-now everywhere respected and gladly served. How then could Pasiphaë have known that the fruit of her own indiscretion would be a monster: this little son with human body but the head and tail of a bull? (13)

Whilst Campbell is most interested in Theseus as the archetypal hero, I am particularly interested in the minotaur; a monstrous creature that represents the space between man and animal. The narrative demonstrates classic anxiety towards the human/animal divide being crossed. The minotaur only acts as an example; other monsters of Greek myth such as Gorgons, Harpies, Centaurs and Satyrs are all examples of hybridization representing a perversion of the liminal space separating man from animal.

Minos's labyrinth is built for one particular purpose:

> So deceptive was the invention, that Daedalus himself, when he had finished it, was scarcely able to find his way back to the entrance. Therein the Minotaur was settled: and he was fed, thereafter, on groups of living youths and maidens, carried as tribute from the conquered nations within the Cretan domain. (14)

The labyrinth is synonymous with the abyss; it is a complex structure, as Derrida suggested which is mainly in place to keep something horrific and rejected inside, like Kristeva's abject. To explain this relationship with the abject further we must consider how the Minotaur relates to this idea. The abject is the monstrous-it embodies what is rejected, like the Minotaur. The labyrinth is the liminal space into which the abject is discarded. Those who enter this space are sent to certain death; unless, of course, they appear in the shape of a demi-god, who resembles Nietzsche's Übermensch, as does Poseidon's son, Theseus. Daedalus, the creator of the labyrinth, is also a particularly poignant character within the story;

> For centuries Daedalus has represented the type of the artist-scientist: that curiously disinterested, almost diabolical human phenomenon, beyond the normal boundaries of social judgement, dedicated to the morals not of his time but of his art. He is the hero of the way of thought-single-hearted, courageous, and full of faith that the truth, as he finds it, shall set us free. (24)

Daedalus is a vital character whilst considering the abyss. As the scientist who believes himself above morality for the sake of what is empirically evident, Daedalus builds the abyss, but also provides the rope that allows Theseus to traverse it. Therefore, Daedalus represents philosophers who conceived the abyss and scientists who have created the tools to explore it. It is possible that Darwin could be seen as the Daedalus of the nineteenth century. His theories transgress the moral boundaries that were a vital component of society of the time. Additionally to this, in the way of scientific discoveries, and relationships with monsters, Victor Frankenstein could also be considered an updated version of Daedelus; I explore this further in the first chapter. He creates his monster, then rejects it.

Within this story of Theseus and the Minotaur there are four elements in particular than are directly relevant to my study. There is the abyssal labyrinth, the monstrous abject contents, the heroic superhuman who conquers the abyss, and the ambiguous character of the scientist. Campbell does not need to elaborate on what happens next; the heroic Theseus saves the population of Crete by slaying the creature. The myth provides a clean, simple solution to humanity's relationship with animality. However, as I demonstrate within my thesis, the relationship between man and animal is more complex, and the novels studied show how Darwinian theory complicated that relationship.

Previous Work in This Field

To place this study in context I now identify some publications that have examined similar topics. Literary Darwinism is a school of literary criticism that reads Darwinian theory in relation to literature. Joseph Carroll's work is important as he is the founder of that approach. His *Reading Human Nature: Literary Darwinism in Theory and Practice* effectively demonstrates application of evolutionary theory to literary studies as I shall show.[22] Carroll argues that "The central concept in both evolutionary social science and evolutionary literary study is 'human nature'; genetically mediated characteristics typical of the human species" (4). As my study is focused on elemental human nature, it shares some common ground within the school of Literary Darwinism. However, this branch of theory, as Carroll claims, is interested in the “adaptive functions of the arts” (4). Literary Darwinism primarily demonstrates how literature functions as an evolutionary element of human nature that aids our progress as a species, so that in his text *Literature, Science, and a New Humanities*, Gottschall argues that research methods should be applied to the study of literature to investigate this phenomenon[23]. This study will differ to this as it is focused on how the Theory of Evolution affected the literary representation of the link between animal and human.

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[22] Joseph Carroll, *Reading Human Nature: Literary Darwinism in Theory and Practice*, London: SUNY Press, 2011

Another aspect that moves my study away from Literary Darwinism is its interest in poststructuralist theorists. Carroll claims that by coining the term Literary Darwinism he endeavoured to move away from poststructuralist theory; “Since I could not accommodate myself to poststructuralism, my only alternative was to formulate a completely different basis for literary study and to set that new basis into active opposition with the prevailing paradigm” (x). This study in particular is inspired by the ideas of many poststructuralist theorists including Derrida and Kristeva. Post-structuralism, therefore, is inherently central to this study. Nevertheless as Gotschall’s argument emphasizes, Literary Darwinism is an interdisciplinary approach to literary exploration of human nature and Darwinian theory. My study is also aimed to be effectively interdisciplinary, so it may cohere well with this school of literary criticism.

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[23] Jonathan Gottschall, *Literature, Science, and a New Humanities* New York: Macmillan, 2008

Additionally to this there have been various journal articles published on the subject of Darwinism and its influence over literature during the nineteenth century. Charles S. Blinderman argues in "Vampurella; Darwin and Count Dracula" that the character Dracula represents an evolutionary "Übermensch": "Thus, Dracula presents a contest between two evolutionary options; the ameliorative progressive, Christian congregation, or the Social Darwinian superman in the form of Count Dracula"[24]. Similarly, Allen A. Debus's article "Re-Framing the Science in Jules Verne's '*Journey to the Centre of the Earth*'" demonstrates how Verne, whilst embracing scientific theory of the day rejects Darwinism in his portrayal of prehistoric man[25]. In "Scarcity and Compensation in *Moby-Dick*", James Hetch observes how Melville attempts to grapple with ideas of extinction.[26] These articles are representative examples that investigate how nineteenth century writers use fiction to address attitudes towards evolution.

Beer's *Darwin's Plots; Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth Century Fiction* observes how the theory of evolution and Darwinism affected the literary imagination of nineteenth century writers[27]. Beer's book is closest to the topic my thesis, and demonstrates an excellent example of how literature can be interpreted using Darwinian theory. My study, however adds to Beer's book and the articles discussed in the focus on the abyss; by moving forward to synthesize the literary-scientific treatment of Darwinian theory with philosophical interpretations of the space that separates man from animal. Like Beer's study, and building on her seminal work on Darwin studies, my research aims to achieve a contextual map of literary approaches to Darwinism; unlike Beer's text, the focus is on the distinction between man and animal, and the conceptual gulf or abyss that remains.

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[24] Charles S. Blinderman, 'Vampurella: Darwin and Count Dracula', The Massachusettes Review, 21:2 (1980) p.428

[25] Allen A. Debus, 'Reframing the Science in Jules Verne's 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth'', Science Fiction Studies, 33:3 (2006) pp.405-420

[26] James Hecht, 'Scarcity and Compensation in *Moby-Dick', The Massachusetts Review,*40:1 (1999) pp.111-130

[27] Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983)

Kelly Oliver's *Animal Lessons* (2009) takes into account the philosophical abyss, she discusses the different philosophical approaches, and systematically evaluates various philosophers' viewpoints. Oliver uses a variety of sources to discuss how animality, rather that dividing us from our humanity, contributes to it. Similarly, in *Surface Encounters: Thinking with Animals and Art* (2011), Ron Broglio approaches the relationship between humans and animals through an artistic lens[28]. He argues that it is because we are only able to achieve surface encounters with animals, that we are separated from them, and demonstrates how this division is represented through art. I share this philosophical focus with Oliver and Broglio. Therefore, my thesis approaches a prevalent topic, combining a number of angles.

Structure of the Thesis

In the last section I discussed previously published work, and clarified how my thesis aims to contribute to the current discussion. I will now discuss how I intend to achieve this objective. Throughout my thesis, four canonical novels will be studied, one from each of the following subcategories; the pre-Darwinian period, the early Darwinian period, the late Darwinian period, and the post-

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[28] Ron Broglio*, Surface Encounters: Thinking with Animals and Art*, University of Minnesota Press: 2011

Darwinian period. Therefore, the novels studied will be both from the Romantic and the Victorian. This provides a conceptual map within which to plot how attitudes towards the abyss transformed over such a prolific period of change considering the progress of industrialization, science, politics and philosophy. The pre-Darwinian period I am defining as pre-dating any publication by Charles Darwin, but following Georges Cuvier's 1796 announcement of "the existence of a world previous to ours, destroyed by some kind of catastrophe" (7). The early Darwinian period consists of literature published before the publication of *On the Origin of Species* but after the publication of *The Voyage of the Beagle* (1838). The late Darwinian period I define as following the publication of *On the Origin of Species* but pre dating the publication of *The Descent of Man*. The post Darwinian period is defined as after the death of Darwin. The novel I have chosen to represent the post-Darwinian period, though written after Darwin's death, was still written Victorian era therefore maintaining contextual relevance. The four novels chosen span the century in which the theory of evolution was finally championed by scientists. My study creates a varied but also focused view on the literary response to the question of human nature.

The novel that will be studied from the pre-Darwinian period is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*(1818)[29]. It is a novel that actively engages with science to produce a vision of man's insecurity regarding animality. The author that I studied from the early Darwinian period is Herman Melville, focusing on his novel *Moby Dick (1851)*[30]. Within the novel Melville, explores the interaction between human and animal, and shows how by warring against the natural world, humanity also attacks itself. For my late Darwinian novel, Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment (1866)*[31] demonstrates a dark introspection into the nature of the human soul. The post Darwinian novel that I discussed is H.G. Wells's *The Island of Doctor Moreau (1895)*[32], which demonstrates assimilation with Darwinian concepts at the end of the nineteenth century.

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[29] Shelley, Mary W., *Frankenstein: Or `The Modern Prometheus': The 1818 Text*. 2008: OUP Oxford.

[30] Herman Melville, and T. Tanner, *Moby Dick*. 1998: Oxford University Press.

My study is divided into four chapters which include subchapters. I begin every chapter with a detailed analysis of the contextual background in which the novelist was writing. Following the focus on context, I turn my attention to close reading of the novel assigned to the chapter in question. and how it integrates these ideas into discussion of the difference between animal and man.

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[31] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, Trans David McDuff, London: Penguin, 2003

[32] H. G. Wells, *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, London: Penguin, 2005 Subsequent page references in text.

'… an animal as complex and wonderful as man' How Shelley uses Frankenstein's creature to explore humanity, animality, and the in between

Since Hesiod's *Theogeny*, the Promethean myth has functioned to warn humanity against overreaching[33]. Part trickster, part scapegoat he represents the dangers of furthering human knowledge. In rebellion against the Gods he brings humanity knowledge that it was never meant to acquire. Prometheus parallels Satan, who also brings forbidden knowledge to humanity as an act of rebellion against God. John Milton, who used his seminal work to "justify the ways of God to men" seems to also justify the ways of Satan to men[34]. *Paradise Lost* (1667) was an important inspiration, not only for the literary figures under discussion, but for scientists as well, exemplifying the influence that literature had over scientific discussion. Interestingly, as Beer notes, Milton acted as one of Darwin's most important inspirations when conceiving the theory of evolution: "What has gone unremarked is that it (evolutionary understanding) derived also from his reading of the one book he never left behind during his expeditions from the Beagle: *The Poetical Works of John Milton*." (5) It is curious to note that Darwin's discovery of evolutionary theory may in some manner mirror the fall of man. Furthermore, as potentially a Promethean figure, he may have even seen himself within the character Satan, as he imparted knowledge conceived as corrupting the innocence of humanity. Often acting as the protagonist, Satan's ambition led him to challenge God, and is banished from heaven as a result:

> He trusted to have equalled the Most High,

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[33] Hesiod, *Theogeny and Works and Days*, London: Oxford University Press, 2008

[34] John Milton, *'Paradise Lost'*, London: Penguin, 2002, (line 26, 3) Subsequent page references in text.

If he opposed; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Raised impious war in Heav'n and battle proud
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from th'ethereal sky
With hideous ruin and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell (line 40-48, 4)

Mary Shelley used *Paradise Lost* as one of her primary literary influences whilst writing *Frankenstein*, or *The Modern Prometheus*[35]. Within the novel she directly links the creature to Satan. Yet considering how Victor Frankenstein's character resembles the Promethean, he could also be considered a Satanic figure also; in this manner, he is inherently linked to his creature. The relationship between Frankenstein and his creature resemble both the pinnacle of humanity and the nadir. No matter how Frankenstein tries, he cannot detach himself from his doppelgänger; a symbiosis that resembles the relationship between Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Frankenstein's genius is always matched with his primitivism, demonstrating how humanity can never challenge the laws of God and nature. Furthermore, as Satan is sent to the physical abyss of hell, Frankenstein's experiments lead to an exploration of the philosophical abyss that my study focuses on. The first novel explored within this thesis is Mary Shelley's 1818 novella *Frankenstein*; as this is the only novel under consideration written by a female author it will provide a unique insight into the romantic perspective of

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evolution. Being so young yet surrounded by the radical personalities of Percy Shelley and Byron, Mary Shelley demonstrates a well-informed unique approach to the question of life and the human form.

Mary Shelley observes the scientific problems with the principles of human life and the soul in the same way that her primary narrator Walton digests Frankenstein's narrative, as an outsider to whom the more primary figures dictate. Walton's statement on the commencement of his journey is auspicious considering what he finds in 'the land of mist and snow': "am going to unexplored regions, to "the land of mist and snow"; but I shall kill no albatross, therefore do not be alarmed for my safety" (10). Here Shelley directly refers to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (1798), which depicts the disastrous consequences of humanity upsetting the natural order[36]. Both novel and poem warn against detachment from nature and God; by killing the albatross the Mariner demonstrated a lack of respect for both, and consequently causes the death of his crew. The novel demonstrates a clear general feeling of apprehension with regards to science becoming a force that separates man from nature and God. Within the following discussion I demonstrate how Shelley uses these apprehensions to consider the consequences of this potential divide. By considering possible scientific advancements, Shelley uses the creature to conceive a being that resides in the abyss between animal and man, linking us to animality and dividing us from God.

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[36] Samuel T. Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner and Other Poems*. 1992: Dover Publications.

There is considerable focus on the role of science in Shelley's novel within contemporary criticism, and much of that work provides contextual readings of science in the early nineteenth century. Melinda Cooper, in her explanation of the significance of deformation, birth defects and monstrosity in the Romantic period, discusses how: "It is no doubt more than a historical coincidence that Mary Shelley composed and revised her classic novel, Frankenstein, over the very same period that the modern life sciences were developing a formal theory of the monstrous"[37]. Also, published in the same book, Allan K. Hunter's focuses on Frankenstein's creature as a depiction of the potential evolutionary heir of humanity, a concept which will be developed in greater detail later in this analysis.[38] Alan Rauch in his discussion of the novel takes a metaphysical perspective, considering instead the nature of knowledge itself.[39] Rauch contends that it is the misuse of knowledge, rather than the knowledge itself which made Frankenstein's actions problematic: "Frankenstein's lack concern for pragmatism in science parallels his lack of sensitivity to the pragmatic product of his sublime conception." (227) Rauch argues that Frankenstein's private, product-driven science is the evil of the novel, not the science itself. There are many more instances where the scientific influences of the novel are discussed; as the novel is so scientifically focused, it is an important aspect of the novel to consider.

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[37] Melinda Cooper, *'Monstrous Progeny: The Teratological Tradition in Science and Literature' in Frankenstein's Science: Experimentation and Discovery in Romantic Culture; 1780-1830*, ed. C.K. King, C. Knellwolf, and J.R. Goodall. 2008: Ashgate Publishing. (87)

[38] A.K. Hunter, *'Evolution, Revolution and Frankenstein's Creatures' in Frankenstein's Science: Experimentation and Discovery in Romantic Culture; 1780-1830*, ed. C.K. King, C. Knellwolf, and J.R. Goodall. 2008: Ashgate Publishing.

[39] Alan Rauch,, *The Monstrous Body of Knowledge in Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein".* Studies in Romanticism, 1995. **34**(2). Subsequent page refernces in text.

This chapter is focused on the effects that the science of the era had on Shelley which led to the production of her novel, and how she uses these ideas to question the nature of humanity and its complex relationship with animality. However, although the first section will focus on scientific background and context, the following sections will be more philosophical, concentrating on various interpretations of the novel attaining to the human/animal division. I focus specifically on the creature, whose particular liminal attributes make him an important element of my study. Following this discussion, I outline the creature's literary liminality. This section leads to a further discussion of three differing ways of viewing him and how these affect our determination of humanity. The primary argument considers Cartesian dualism, and how it pertains to Frankenstein's creature as a being that has the body and reason of a man, but lacks the divine essence. The second argument establishes the creature as a social monster, or as humanity without society in view of Rousseau's "Origin of Inequality"[40]. Finally, I consider a psychoanalytic reading of the novel, specifically focusing on Kristeva's theories that discuss the process of abjection. My third argument considers the creature as humanity's disregarded self, or the part of ourselves that we have attempted to discount. I argue that the monster could be read not only as Frankenstein's abject self, but also as that of Shelley herself.

The second part of the chapter considers the creature as a symbolic resident of the abyss. When Derrida discusses this space as an "abyss", he demonstrates that the difference between animal and man in not clear cut and in many ways multifaceted: “The discussion is worth undertaking once it is a matter of determining the number, form, sense, or structure, the foliated consistence, of this abyssal limit, these edges, this plural and repeatedly foliated frontier”(30). Shelley’s creature's ambiguous liminality allows us insight in potential contents of the abyss that Shelley evokes, and hence the variety of ways she uses the creature to demonstrate the uncertain separation of man from animal. The first part of the argument begins by observing an easily definable split between animal and man where the monster resides considering the attribution of souls to humanity. In the next section, when I discuss the social needs of humanity and the creature, the difference between man and animal is not quite so definite. The final argument narrows the abyss to a greater degree; the creation of the creature from dead flesh reminds us of our corporeal mortality, the part of ourselves that demands animal requirements and inherently disgusts us.

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[40] Jean Jaques Rousseau, and J.T. Scott, *The Major Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau: The Two Discourses and the Social Contract*. 2012: University of Chicago Press. Subsequent page references in text.

Prior to a close examination of the novel, it is necessary to reflect on the contextual influences that triggered Shelley’s conceptions. A temporal map will be created throughout this thesis of the differing responses of literature to the question of humanity, how and if we are different from animals from the beginning of the Nineteenth Century until the end. It is therefore necessary in every chapter to consider the contextual background in which the novelist was writing.

It is important to mention current debates pertaining to Percy Shelley’s involvement with *Frankenstein*. There has been extensive discussion recently as to Percy Shelley’s involvement with the writing process of *Frankenstein*. Charles

Robinson claims that Percy Shelley made over five thousand changes to her original draft. Robinson asserts that Percy Shelley's influence in the writing of *Frankenstein* is vast and he would have therefore had extensive input into the ideas that were proffered during the writing process about the principles of humanity.[41] Robinson's analysis uses original manuscripts and drafts of *Frankenstein* to demonstrate how Percy Shelley participated in the writing process by editing and rewording Mary Shelley's original work. He argues that there are two versions of *Frankenstein*; the one which had been written by Mary Shelley alone, and the one that was edited by Percy Shelley. Robinson therefore suggests that Percy Shelley should be credited for the novel. The debate is not new; it has been approached by a variety of thinkers like David Ketterer and Germaine Greer. John Lauritsen even claims that the novel was written by Percy Shelley[42]. For the purpose of this study Percy Shelley's influence must be acknowledged, therefore Sharon Ruston's *Shelley and Vitality* informs my discussion greatly.[43] However, the novel is still considered a creation from the mind of Mary Shelley. It is reasonable to suppose that Mary Shelley was influenced to some extent by her husband, even if only through the level of discussion that would take place within a marriage of intellectuals, which is why Percy Shelley's avid interest in natural science and the origins of life is important. However, the novel is and will be still considered an original work by Mary

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[41] Shelley, M., *The Original Frankenstein*. 2011: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.

[42] John Lauritsen, *The Man Who Wrote Frankenstein*. 2007: Pagan Press. Subsequent page references in text.

[43] Sharon Ruston, *Shelley and Vitality*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005 Subsequent page references in text.

Shelley to focus effectively on the novella itself as a product of uncertainty in view of the origins of humanity.

Evolution, Galvanism and Vitalism; Mary Shelley and the Principles of Life

Frankenstein need not be defined as either gothic horror or science fiction, as the novel represents an integral part of both genres. With the classic scenes of terror in the charnel houses and the Alps, and the demonic apparitions of the monster it is exemplary of the gothic literary tradition. Yet science was evoking uncertainty during the romantic era, especially for prominent figures like Samuel Taylor Coleridge whose faith was contradicted by Erasmus Darwin's concepts of evolution. His refusal to accept Darwin's ideas inspired him to write his own “Theory of Life” at the same time that Mary Shelley was writing *Frankenstein*[44]. Science fiction is a genre that considers the effect of potential future scientific developments; the uncertainty felt towards future scientific advances can be easily perceived in Shelley’s work. It is a novel that exemplifies distrust and concern over the most recent advancements. Percy Shelley discusses the potential of the science he was familiar with in his “Preface” to *Frankenstein*: “The event on which this fiction is founded has been supposed, by Dr. Darwin, and some of the physiological writers of Germany, as not of impossible occurrence”. The insecurities divulged in Frankenstein towards perceived potential consequences of science can also be found in more recent science fiction novels, for example, more modern fears of the process of cloning, envisioned in Kasuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* (2005)[45], or anxiety towards artificial intelligence, demonstrated in Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot* (1950)[46]. *Frankenstein*, *Never Let Me Go* and *I, Robot* are each written to philosophically engage with questions of humanity and the rights of man. Asimov does this by attributing Cartesian ideals of humanity to a robot, which further invites debate considering what it is to be alive, and what it is to be human. Ishiguro instead uses the process of cloning to question the potential moral problems of a humanity that is not born, but grown. Both novels use scientific issues that were current at the time of publication to discuss and explore the nature of humanity. Like *Frankenstein* no definite answers are given, and the novels are used as open questions to engage the reader philosophically. *Frankenstein* could therefore be considered as the progenitor of these novels. They query what the outcome would be if there were another being with our faculties of reason, and why we are so troubled by the idea. The fear of "playing God" remains an inherent query of the arts- as science has developed, so has the literature. From Shelley to Ishiguro, these novels demonstrate the failings of scientific progress when left in the hands of humanity, and how, when given the tools to create life, we destroy it instead. In this way, *Frankenstein* deals with an ever present and reoccurring theme, and though the science has changed, the philosophical question has not.

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[44] Samuel T. Coleridge, *'Theory of Life' in Miscellanies, Aesthetic And Literary To Which Is Added The Theory Of Life*. 2005: Kessinger Publishing.

[45] Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*. 2009: Faber & Faber.

Shelley was inspired to pursue the novel after considering potential future scientific advancements imagined at the tail end of the Enlightenment. According to Ruston, "From the 1790s onwards the body had come to be seen among scientists as a mass of diseases heading steadily towards death, while the 'unnatural connexion' which held the body together in life was acknowledged to be the greatest mystery." (2) With further discoveries of electricity and the effect it had on the human body, the findings of scientists including Humphrey Davy's, Benjamin Franklin and Luigi Galvani were both en vogue and abhorrent. Galvani's experiments, which consisted of the stimulation of corporeal matter with electricity, coupled with Erasmus Darwin's ideas that pre-empted those of his Grandson, and Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's primary theories of evolution were inspirations for *Frankenstein.* James Rieger considers these influences in his discussion of Dr Polidori as an influence for *Frankenstein*[47]:

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[46] Isaac Asimov, *I, Robot*. 2004: Random House Publishing Group.

> On the respectable side of this enquiry into the nature of a subtle, universal fluid became the researches into galvanism and electricity of Sir Humphrey Davy, whose Elements of Chemical Philosophy (1812) Mary Shelley got around to reading in October, while composing what is probably now Chapter 2 of *Frankenstein*. It is also closely related to Erasmus Darwin's experiments in medicine, botany, and electro-chemical tropism. Finally, of course, animal magnetism is linked with the name of Benjamin Franklin, who headed the French royal commission which in 1784 exploded Mesmer's theories.

Studies into the effects of electricity on the body, animal magnetism, and evolution simultaneously are suggestive of the natural as opposed to divine origins of life and man, and man's potential God-like power. These two aspects of the sciences had divergent effects; primarily, ideas of human evolution diminished man so he becomes uncomfortably close to the animal. Ruston continues to describe how: “By the year 1800 a new concept of life had emerged, likening animals to human and even plant life. For the first time, life was considered a universal state, and the political ramifications of this idea are seen clearly in the literature of the period.” (3) Life, as Ruston explains, was now seen as something we share with animals. The potential of science to allow humanity control over nature, however, lifted the scientist to a seemingly unnatural god like status. Through smaller discoveries science had begun to make alarming progress. Within *Frankenstein* M. Waldman discusses the matter in a positive light, perhaps mirroring Percy Shelley’s own avid interested in scientific revolution:

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[47] James Rieger, *Dr. Polidori and the Genesis of Frankenstein. Studies in English Literature*, 1500-1900, 1963. **3**(4): p. 461-472. Subsequent page references in text.

> “The ancient teachers of this science,” said he, “promised impossibilities and performed nothing, The modern masters promise very little; they know that metals cannot be transmuted, and that the elixir of life is a chimera. But these philosophers, whose hands seem only made to dabble in dirt, and their eyes to pore over the microscope or crucible, have indeed performed miracles. They penetrate into the recesses of nature, and shew how she works in her hiding places. They ascend into the heavens; they have discovered how the blood circulates, and the nature of the air we breathe. They have acquired new and almost unlimited powers; they can command the thunders of heaven, mimic the earthquake and even mock the invisible world with its own shadows.” (30-31)

The potential outcomes of scientific exploration were exposed to Shelley on a daily basis by her husband and his friends Polidori and Byron whilst visiting Villa

Diodate where the novel was originally conceived.[48] An environment of scientific dialogue was not unusual for Shelley; as Marilyn Butler explains, she was used to listening to her father's friends discuss similar issues: "As she grew up he let her stay in the room when he talked with his intellectual friends, who included Coleridge, Holcroft, Lamb, and Haslitt, listening rather than speaking herself "(x). Shelley was constantly exposed to intellectual philosophical discussions; a unique experience for a female child of her generation. Her radical father, William Godwin, and outspoken mother, Mary Wollstonecraft are the reason she was given the opportunity. Mary's education was affected by her mother's legacy in the field of women's rights, which Wollstonecraft discussed at length in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*.[49] Her mother was a mythical figure to Mary Shelley; having died in childbirth she never knew her, but would sit by her grave reading during her adolescence. Godwin did not fully attest to the methods prescribed in Wollstonecraft's *Vindication*, but he did share many of her ideals about women's rights, and gave Mary an unusually rich education.

Although Mary's elopement made for a drastic transformation in lifestyle, the change of intellectual environments from her childhood to her married life was not dramatic. According to Butler in her "Introduction" to *Frankenstein*, Percy Shelley's interest in the subject of the origins of life was astute, and impressed itself upon his wife:

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[48] James Bieri, *Percy Bysshe Shelley: A Biography : Youth's Unextinguished Fire, 1792-1816*. 2004: University of Delaware Press. Subsequent page references in text.

[49] Mary Wollstonecraft, A.K. Mellor, and N. Chao, *Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: And, The Wrongs of Woman, Or, Maria*. 2007: Pearson Longman.

> A long reading list for the years 1813-1817 can be culled from Percy's letters, the footnotes to annotate works like Queen Mab, and Mary Shelley's Journal; it organizes itself into the pursuit of Enlightenment scepticism (Hume, Voltaire, Volney), anthropology (Buffon, Rousseau, Monboddo), and the so-called French Materialists, Holbach as author of The System of Nature, and from the French-revolutionary period Condorcet, Cabanis, and Laplace. (xvi)

Percy Shelley's fascination with science and the human body had developed from a young age, but his friendship with William Lawrence particularly inspired it. It was therefore a primary part of many of the conversations Shelley had with Byron and Polidori in Villa Diodati; as a secondary participant Mary received a lot of second hand information. Lawrence's ideas contributed to Charles Darwin's Theory, and his feud with John Abernethy famously represented the archetypal debate between materialism and spiritualism. Whilst Abernethy argued for a superimposed life-force separate from the corporeal body, Lawrence argued the opposite, writing in his controversial *Lectures*:

> Life has its origin in that of their parents. From these parents they have received the vital impulse; and hence it is evident in the present state of things, life proceeds only from life; and there exists no other but that, which has been transmitted from one living body to another, by an uninterrupted succession.[50]

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[50] William Lawrence, *An Introduction to Comparative Anatomy and Physiology: Being the Two Introductory Lectures Delivered at the Royal College of Surgeons, on the 21st and 25th of March, 1816*. 1816: Callow. (141-142) Subsequent page references in text.

In this context, Lawrence became the rebellious voice of materialism. Ruston observes that “Abernathy’s particular brand of vitalism can be viewed as the dominant ideology of the Romantic period, with Lawrence as the dissident voice, challenging and questioning this.” (6) Lawrence further writes, to contradict Abernathy:

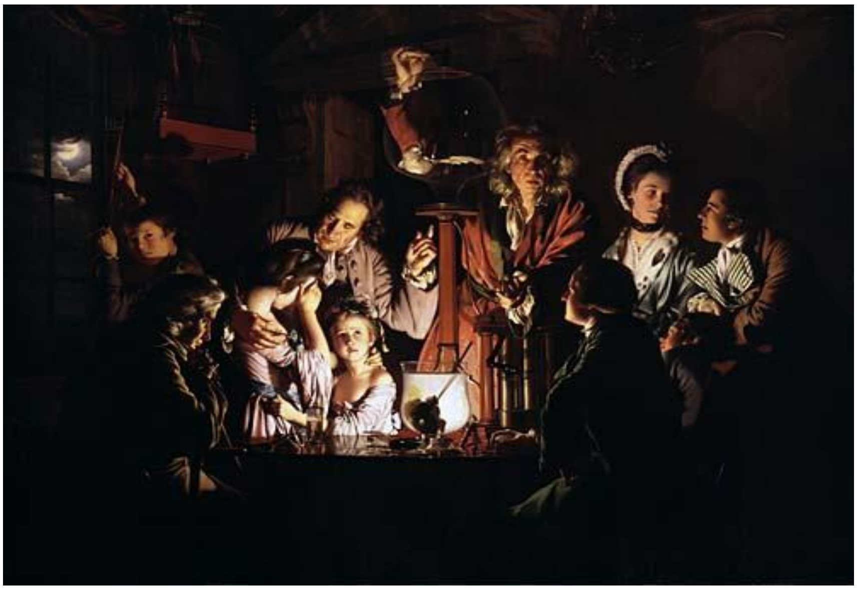
> It seems to me that this hypothesis or fiction of a subtle invisible matter, animating the visible textures of animal bodies and directing their motions, is only an example of that propensity in the human mind, which has lead men at all times to account for these phenomena, of which the causes are not obvious, by the mysterious aid of higher and imaginary beings. (174)

Lawrence explicitly contradicts accepted Cartesian theory with the implications of his words considering religion and the soul, as well as Abernathy’s theory of a superimposed life element. In view of Cartesian philosophy, the implications of his rejection of the superimposed element are astute when questioning Man’s divine superiority. Butler draws attention to the importance of the conflict between materialism and traditional religious ideas, focusing on how they affected the writing of *Frankenstein*. She argues that the novel was perhaps an encoded form of the argument itself: “It would not be surprising, then, if Mary’s contribution to the ghost-story competition to some degree acts out the debate between Abernethy and Lawrence, in a form close enough for those who knew the debate to recognize” (xx). Considering the novels preoccupation with the life principle, and the implementation of an overly materialistic protagonist, Butler's assertion is well founded.

In the novel there are parts where Mary Shelley explicitly highlights the contextual relevance. Percy Shelley's allusion to the work of scientists in the "Preface" foreshadows less obvious references within the novella. For example, Shelley mentions experiments used to create a vacuum by scientists including Robert Boyle:

> The natural phenomena that take place every day before our eyes did not escape my examinations. Distillation, and the wonderful effects of stead, processes of which my favourite authors were utterly ignorant, excited my astonishment; but my utmost wonder was engaged by some experiments on an airpump, which I saw employed by a gentleman whom we were in a habit of visiting. (24)

The air pump experiment has been previously integrated into art by Joseph Wright of Derby in a painting titled *An Experiment with a Bird in an Air Pump*.



Joseph Wright, *An Experiment on a Bird with an Air Pump, Oil on Canvas*, 1768

Wright was a member of the lunar society; a group of individuals including Erasmus Darwin and Josiah Wedgewood who were devoted to learning and current advances in science and technology. Wright was an enthusiast, a trait that the painting demonstrates, however it also reflects the concern and doubt over the perceived brutality of science. The painting itself shows a scientist asphyxiating a bird by depriving it of air for the purposes of the experiment. A woman looks away in horror whilst a small girl watched with concern. A pensive older gentleman looks on whilst the scientist looks directly out of the painting at the viewer, as if to perceive the observer's reaction. Tamar Schlick states that "The curious observers offer a window into society. They experience this scientific demonstration with various emotions: awe, fright and anxiety but also admiration and hope"[51]. Schlick further argues it is within the scientist's power to decide whether the bird lives or dies. The ambiguity exemplifies the concern over morality and also the brutal aspects of science that caused anxiety in the era. Shelley's inclusion of this reference highlights an uncertainty towards the developing sciences that was felt by many. Although the painting depicts an air pump experiment, it could metaphorically be closely linked with the reaction to ideas of evolution, especially considering Wright's links with Erasmus Darwin. The scientist is therefore not only in control of the life of one individual bird, but also humanity's perception of life. The introduction of evolutionary theory was viewed as an asphyxiation of moral and religious values by many. In this sense, Frankenstein takes the place of the scientist in the painting.

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[51] Tamar Schlick, *The Critical Collaboration between Art and Science: "An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump" and the Ramifications of Genomics for Society.* Leonardo, 2005. **38**(4): (323) Subsequent page references in text.

Similarly, the question of the origin of life is explicitly mentioned in the novel, a definite nod towards evolutionary theory:

> One of the phenomena which had peculiarly attracted my attention was the structure of the human frame, and, indeed, any animal endued with life. Whence, I often asked myself, did the principle of life proceed? It was a bold question, and one which has ever been considered as a mystery; yet with how many things are we upon the brink of becoming acquainted, if cowardice or carelessness did not restrain our inquiries. (33)

Evolution during the final stage of the Enlightenment was an uncertain theory, supported by as much evidence as that which stood against it. Allan K. Hunter mentions this by pointing out that: “It is crucial to note that at the turn of the nineteenth century, evolutionary theory was not a single, coherent concept but, rather, the result of a wide-ranging discussion amongst materialist philosophers and gentleman polymaths” (135). Discoveries of Georges Cuvier and Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon encouraged the growing speculation, and in *Zoonomia* Erasmus Darwin asked:

> Would it be too bold to imagine, that in the great length of time, since the earth began to exist, perhaps millions of ages before the commencement of the history of mankind, would it be too bold to

> imagine, that all warm-blooded animals have arisen from one living filament…[52]

The matter was controversial and progressive; a radical idea gaining momentum as palaeontology verified the process of extinction, and geologists like James Hutton demonstrated the mechanisms of the slowly changing Earth. In light of this, Waldman's words to Frankenstein about the minor yet vital developments in science were pertinent during this time of progression that led from the Enlightenment to the Industrial Revolution. The scientific revolution was a disturbing prospect, and Frankenstein's actions demonstrate the potential consequences of this developing school: "What had been the study and desire of the wisest men since the creation of the world, was now within my grasp" (34). Frankenstein conjugates an answer to the questions that scientists were asking. Once Frankenstein finds a practical use for his understanding, he demonstrates the dangerous potential of unchecked knowledge.

Shelley's Presentation of the Abyssal Divide in *Frankenstein*

In the previous section I focused on the contextual environment in which Shelley wrote *Frankenstein* to provide a background knowledge that will help understanding of the conceptual history of the novel. Following this concentration is focused on close literary analysis. I divide this part into two sections; the first discusses the liminality of the creature, and demonstrates how he is considered a boundary residing figure between man and animal. Following this is a longer section consisting of three parts that focuses on the different interpretations that can be applied to the Creature whilst approaching the question of what it is that separates man from animal.

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[52] Erasmus Darwin, *Zoonomia; Or, the Laws of Organic Life: In Three Parts*. 1803: D. Carlisle. Subsequent page references in text.

The Monster of the Abyss; Shelley's Liminal Creation

Shelley's unnamed and undefined monster is a widely discussed literary enigma, which has been regularly analysed by critics, and many may argue that because it has been so well studied all angles have been covered with regards to analysis. Rauch verifies this problem by claiming that "new perspectives on Frankenstein are hard to come by" (227). However, Paul Sherwin argues that the creature as a plentiful analytical source because of liminality and flexibility of interpretation[53]. The creature as a liminal being falls within the void that separated man both from animal and from God. His summary draws attention to how the antagonist is interpreted by critics in a variety of ways within various schools of literary criticism. Sherwin's viewpoint demonstrates the philosophical and psychological readings of the creature that all contribute to the dubious question of what humanity is as a species. Sherwin demonstrates why this is when he discusses the reason for such a variety of readings attributed to the creature:

> Frankenstein never speaks more truly than when he calls the Creature his "daemon'. A marginal or boundary being, the daemon is a powerful representation of our uncertain lot, suspended as we are between knowledge and power, nature and supernature, objectivity and subjectivity. Conceiving the creature as a genius of liminality, a

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[53] Paul Sherwin, *Frankenstein: Creation as Catastrophe.* PMLA, 1981. **96**(5): p. 883-903. Subsequent page references in text.

> type of art's duplicitous interplay of revelation and concealment, restores his virtuality, which is betrayed as soon as he comes to signify something determinate. (891)

Sherwin reads the creature as a creation of the unknown. Fitting distinctly between the known and the unknowable, the monster is a boundary figure that divides man from animal; the theories and potential consequences of science, and the natural, supernatural, and unnatural origins of man: "I found myself similar, yet at the same time strangely unlike the beings concerning whom I read, and to whose conversation I was a listener. I sympathized with, and partly understood them, but I was unformed in mind; I was dependent on none, and related to none." (103-104) Here the creature is shown to be unique as a marginal boundary residing, and therefore is able to personify the Otherness discussed by various schools of thought:

> If, for the orthodox Freudian, he is a type of the unconscious, for the Jungian he is a shadow, for the Lacanian an objet a, for one Romanticist a Blakean "spectre", for another a Blakean "emanation", he also has been or can be read as Rousseau's natural man, a Wordsworthian child of nature, the isolated Romantic rebel, the misunderstood revolutionary impulse, Mary Shelley's abandoned baby self, her abandoned babe, an abhorrent signifier, *difference*, or as a hypostasis of godless presumption, the monstrosity of a godless nature, analytical reasoning, or alienating labor. (890)

Sherwin argues that the key to discovering the monster's significance is not to see him as one particular signifier, but instead to envision him as a liminal creation, which is by nature undefined due to his state as a number of united dichotomies; good and evil, life and death, man and animal. It is therefore the creature's abyssal residence that makes it such an important literary creation. With consideration of the importance that Sherwin places of the creature's liminality, the purpose of this section is to demonstrate potential readings of the novel regarding animality and humanity, and how the creature becomes a representative of both, and neither.

The position of the monster's narrative highlights his function within the novel. Shelley's framed narrative serves as an abyssal descent, reflecting that which we experience when we inquire into our own origins. Beginning on the narratives surface with the account of an objective outsider, Shelley takes the reader deeper into the novel by introducing the account of the protagonist scientist, who endeavours to discover immortality by excavating the abyss. He does this through his experiments with the corporeal human body. Consequently, Shelley uses the framed narrative to take the reader into the heart of the novel to discover humanity's mortality. The creature's own narrative found in the centre of the novel could be strategically placed to emphasize the abyssal descent of the reader. The final resurfacing back into Walton's narrative signifies a return from the abyss, and this cautionary story serves to emphasize the danger of boundary crossing.

The appearance of the creature juxtaposes that of Frankenstein. Primarily, we see the creature as a superhuman monster; "We perceived a low carriage, fixed on a sledge and drawn by dogs, pass on towards the north, at the distance of half a mile: a being which had the shape of a man, but apparently of gigantic structure, sat in the sledge, and guided the dogs" (12). The first view of the monster demonstrates both his human aspects but also his inhumanity. The creature's ambiguity is offset by Frankenstein's appearance, which resembles what was conceived to be the pinnacle of human understanding; "He was not, as the other traveller seemed to be, a savage inhabitant of some undiscovered island, but a European" (13). Shelley's description of the monster as a "savage inhabitant from some undiscovered island" relates to colonial concepts of the "savage" as a subhuman being. The "undiscovered island" from which Walton suggests he originates symbolically recounts the potential animalistic history of humanity yet to be discovered, whilst Frankenstein is distinguished as the pinnacle of "civilized" society and humanity. The creature's gargantuan frame and hideous appearance contrasts with Frankenstein's, and serves to distinguish between the animalistic and the human: "I was, besides, endowed with a figure hideously deformed and loathsome; I was not even of the same nature as man" (96). Whilst the monster is described as hideously ugly, Walton lays emphasis on Frankenstein's beauty: "What a glorious creature must he have been in the days of his prosperity, when he is thus noble and godlike in ruin. He seems to feel his worth, and the greatness of his fall" (179). Immediately the comparison between Frankenstein and Milton's Satan is evident. Despite the fall, Frankenstein is described as angelic. It is therefore possible that Frankenstein is the representation of humanity stretched beyond its limits: "When I reflected on the work I had completed, no less a one than the creation of a sensitive and rational creature, I could not rank myself with the herd of common projectors." (180) In comparison, the creature signifies an inherent fundamentalism of the human condition that Frankenstein finds abhorrent, potentially because serves as a reminder of the animalistic being that lies underneath social conventions and religious belief.

Frankenstein and Walton are both characters attempting to conquer the abyss and rise above humanities limits, like Nietzsche's "Superman" : "And now, dear Margaret, do I not deserve to accomplish some great purpose?' (7). Walton in particular observes Frankenstein in this manner: 'He must have been a noble creature in his better days, being even now in wreck so attractive and amiable" (15). Walton's journey represents this attempt to better humanity as he physically ascends towards the North Pole: "I try in vain to be persuaded that the pole is the seat of frost and desolation; it ever presents itself to my imagination as the region of beauty and delight" (5). Walton and Frankenstein both attempt to further themselves and the human race, by narrowing the gap between humanity and God. The only outcomes possible are an admission of defeat, or destruction. By creating the monster, Frankenstein attempts to reach a God like status: "A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to be." (36) Yet he dies bitter and alone, having caused the destruction of everyone he loved.

Not only does Frankenstein resemble the "Übermensch", but his aim is to discover him, and to elevate humanity to a new plane of evolutionary existence: "…but what glory would attend the discovery, if I could banish disease from the human frame, and render man invulnerable to any but a violent death!" (23) Frankenstein's experiment is aimed at the attainment of the Superman; in many ways he achieves this goal. The monster has super-human skills of strength and speed; he is also portrayed as immune to destruction. Hunter, in his discussion of evolutionary science in *Frankenstein*, argues that Frankenstein's creation is a success, suggesting that the creature is the next step in human evolution:

> She responds to the theory of evolution formulated by Erasmus Darwin in *Zoonomia* (1794), *The Botanic Garden* (1795) and *The Temple of Nature* (1803) and conceives of a situation in which human agency and imagination have made possible the next evolutionary step. The creature is a new species that threatens to supplant the supremacy of man, not out of evil intent, but simply by enacting the natural process described by Darwin. (134)

Hunter argues that Erasmus Darwin's theories are central to the plot; a conclusion that is drawn considering Shelley's opening sentence in the Preface: "The event on which this fiction is founded has been supposed, by Dr Darwin, and some of the physiological writers of Germany, as not of impossible occurrence" (3). Hunter focuses on the importance of the creature, primarily as an improvement on the human but later a potential usurper: "The monster is not simply the sum of reanimated body parts, but an improved and unique species that Victor believes 'would bless [him] as its creator and source." (139) He argues that, further to this, the creature shows a full improvement of the human form, following Erasmus Darwin's particular ideas of an evolution constantly striving for improvement and betterment:

> As an improved design, this new species is the product of what Darwin believed to be a set of natural laws that operated in a perpetual drive for improvement. The creature is eight foot tall, stronger, more agile and possessed of a more highly developed

> physical survival mechanism that regular humans. He can scale glaciers with ease, subsist on acorns and berries and he demonstrates his superior intelligence by learning to read Milton, Plutarch and Goethe just two years after his birth. (140)

Hunter's argument is persuasive in the discussion of Shelley's treatment of ideas of evolution. Shelley's interpretation therefore potentially pre-empts not only Nietzsche's "Superman" but also the inherent problem with eugenics: "Oh! Be men, or be more than man" (183). However, a further complication of the argument is the brutal and animalistic form of the creature. The greater strength and agility of the creature is associated more with a regression into animality rather than a furthering in human evolution; "Besides, the strange nature of the animal would elude all pursuit…" (57) Wells further writes on the potential of this regression in *The Time Machine* (1896), in which he describes the de-evolution of humanity into more animalistic creature, an element of the novel that will be discussed in the last chapter. Charles Darwin approaches this concept in *The Descent of Man* (1871), in which he argues that whilst most animal develop stronger physical attributes over time, humanity's development of reason renders physical evolution less necessary than mental progress:

> Mr Wallace, in an admirable paper before referred to, argues that man, after he had partially acquired those intellectual and moral faculties which distinguish him from the lower animals, would have been but little liable to body modifications through natural selection or any other means. For man is enabled through his mental faculties to keep with an unchanged body in harmony with the changing

> universe…The lower animals, on the other hand, must have their bodily structure modified I order to survive under greatly changing conditions. They must be rendered stronger, or acquired more effective teeth and claws, for defence against new enemies; or they must be reduced in size, so as to escape detection and danger.[54] (152)

Here Darwin argues that humanity has the ability to adapt because of improved mental functions rather than bodily traits; he further claims that whilst animals with changes of climate and environment need to grow fur or become equipped with sharper claws, man makes clothes or develops tools. He suggests that humanity does not need to develop bodily because of our higher mental functions. This physical "evolution" Hunter suggests that the creature represents does not correlate with the Darwinian principle of human evolution; rather it is suggestive of animal evolution. It is consequently possible that although Shelley's creature might resemble the next stage in evolution, he also could demonstrate a regression. Furthermore the two concepts are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The next stage in human evolution could mean a step back to the animalistic; a step that Frankenstein did not anticipate. Frankenstein would therefore resemble Wells's Time Traveller as a genius who, despite his knowledge, miscalculated the future of humanity. This step into the animalistic reminds humanity of its origins, and presents the more randomized evolution that Charles Darwin suggests, as opposed to the directed evolution conceived by Erasmus Darwin, a difference that Hunter further examines:

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[54] Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man: Selection in Relation to Sex* 2004, London: Penguin Classics. Subsequent page references in text.

> In *On the Origin of Species* (1859), Charles describes a divergent course of change that expands outward and lacks any sort of purposeful direction. Erasmus, on the other hand, draws upon a broad scope on Enlightenment ideology to conclude that 'all nature exists in a state of perpetual improvement by laws impressed on the atoms of matter by the great cause of causes; and that world may still be in its infancy and continue to improve for ever and ever. (135)

The narrative presents the contrast in the evolutionary product conceived by Erasmus and Charles Darwin. Erasmus Darwin conceived an optimistic evolution, which achieved an ever improving form of humanity: "Thus it would appear all nature exists in a state of perpetual improvements by laws impressed on the atoms of matter by the great causer of causes; and the world may still be in its infancy and continue to improve for ever and ever." (431) Though Shelley is inspired by Erasmus Darwin, her narrative resembles and potentially pre-empts Charles's concepts considering the outcome of Frankenstein's experiments. Frankenstein attempts the next stage in evolution with the intention of creating a greater humanity, and instead unearths a more primal being that resembles the missing link. Furthermore, although the creature's study of Milton, Goethe, and Plutarch demonstrates improved intelligence, it is more conceivable that they are used as a literary device to explain the creature's ability to speak and read, and to also highlight some of Shelley's most important inspirations for the novel. Therefore, the creature, I would argue, albeit potential "Übermensch", is a cocktail of animalistic and human features. Shelley therefore highlights the ugliness of evolution, through the creation of an exemplary abyssal resident.

In light of this both Frankenstein and Shelley seem unsure of whether the creature is animal or man. On the one hand he is described like an animal: "I do not doubt that he hovers near the spot which I inhabit; and if he has indeed taken refuge in the Alps, he may be hunted like the chamois, and destroyed as a beast of prey." (169) The creature is uncatchable because of his animalistic speed and strength combining the most advantageous strengths of animality against humanity:

> I would willingly afford you every aid in your pursuit; but the creature of whom you speak appears to have powers which would put all my exertions to defiance. Who can follow an animal which can traverse the sea of ice, and inhabit caves and dens, where no man would venture to intrude? (169)

Once again Shelley demonstrates the contrasts between the human Frankenstein and the animalistic creature. There is acknowledgement here of the creatures animalistic traits by Frankenstein and the Magistrate, however the creature himself also recognizes this aspect of himself: "I was like a wild beast that had broken the toils; destroying the objects that obstructed me, and ranging through the wood with a stag-like swiftness." (111) He describes a kind of peace that he found whilst abiding in the natural world, and an affinity towards animals like birds:

> Some years ago, when the images which this world affords first opened upon me, when I felt the cheering warmth of summer, and heard the rustling of the leaves and the chirping of the birds, and these were all to me, I should have wept to die, now it is my only consolation (190).

The descriptions of his natural durability and ability to live off the natural subsistence in the forest are also suggestive of animalistic hardiness, as well as an affinity to the natural world: “My food is not that of man; I do not destroy the lamb and the kid, to glut my appetite; acorns and berries afford me sufficient nourishment.” (120) Similarly, the creature’s superhuman powers of strength and agility are widely attributed more to animals that to humans. For example when considering humanity Jean-Jacques Rousseau writes that “…I see an animal less strong than some, less agile than others, but, all things considered, the most advantageously physically organized of all” (66). Rousseau’s description could be perfectly attributed to Frankenstein, who although weaker, is beautiful in appearance and mentally gifted, which according to Rousseau is the unique quality of humanity. The monster, instead, is not a creature of prime physical organization. He is, nevertheless a more powerful creature: “I was more agile than they, and could subsist upon a coarser diet; I bore the extremes of heat and cold with less injury to my frame; my stature far exceeds theirs” (96). The creature is more brutish, as he can survive in a harsher climate, and more extreme environments, whilst having developed an affinity with nature. Man in comparison, does not require the strength of this animality to thrive due to his ability to reason.

Yet the monster also has a capacity for reason. The monster describes his human attributes, and his ability to do this suggests that he is a rational reasoning being, and consequently perhaps human: "The picture I present to you is peaceful and human, and you must feel that you could deny it only in the wantonness of power and cruelty" (120). Shelley presents an image of a rational, speaking creature, which pertains to humanity according to a variety of philosophers. When Descartes's defines the primary attribute of humanity as the faculty of reason, James Burnet demonstrates humanities development of language to form society:

> The inquiry becomes the more interesting, as well as of greater curiosity, when we consider, that it leads us back to what may be called the origin of human race, since without the use of reason and speech we have no pretensions to humanity, nor can with any propriety be called men; but must be contented to rank with other animals here below, over whom we assume so much superiority, and exercise dominion chiefly by means of the advantages that the use of language gives us.[55]

In his dialogue with Frankenstein the creature shows not only that he has skills of speech and rationality, but that he has become master of them, and speaks with surprising eloquence considering previous ghoul-like descriptions. It is here that the creature succeeds in demonstrating that he not only has a sense of reason, but also of morality:

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[55] James Burnet, *On the Origin of Language*. Vol. 1. 1967, Menston: The Scholar press Ltd. (1-2)

> This trait of kindness moved me sensibly. I had been accustomed, during the night, to steal a part of their store for my own consumption; but when I found that in doing this I inflicted pain on the cottagers, I abstained, and satisfied myself with berries, nuts, and roots, which I gathered from a neighbouring wood. (88)

The creature's ability to sympathize with others inherently demonstrates goodness, albeit one that is warped due to ill treatment. The monster, in addition to this, has a sense of self-awareness, exemplified when he sees his own reflection; a moment which could be considered inherently Lacanian: "I had first admired the perfect forms of the cottagers-their grace, beauty, and delicate complexions: but how was I terrified, when I viewed myself in a transparent pool!" (90) By discovering his reflection, the creature experiences his own birth into self-awareness. Even Frankenstein at certain points, also recognise him as a man: "…I conceived the idea, and executed the creation of a man" (180). The creature certainly bears an uncanny resemblance to a human being despite deformity, and is perhaps, so terrifying because it portrays an unflattering reflection of ourselves.

Nevertheless, the creature cannot be read as a fully human being. His crimes, though understandable are nevertheless portrayed as being too dark to be truly human: "I was firmly convinced in my own mind that Justine, and indeed every human being, was guiltless of this murder." (60) Frankenstein's opinion is not presented as mistaken. The act of infanticide is used to present a chilling inhumanity, and functions to separate the creature from man. The creature's crimes are portrayed as being neither animal, nor human, but something perhaps supernaturally driven; “Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition; for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of envy rose within me.” (105). Shelley’s reference to John Milton’s Satan demonstrates a fall of the creature into liminal territory; and like Satan, Frankenstein’s creature also achieves an abyssal descent into which he becomes a force of wrathful vengeance. The abyss can possibly be considered as the gap between morality, associated with humanity, and amorality, associated with animality. If this is the case, then the space in between morality and amorality is immorality, the knowledge of what is ethical but defiance against it. It is possible that the monster falls into this category, as he understands morality, but chooses to purposefully act in an immoral manner.

The creature, after being rejected from humanity falsely assumes he has the choice to become defined as animal or human, and pleads with Frankenstein to allow him an animalesque existence with a female version of himself in South America: ‘‘You propose,’ replied I, ‘to fly from the habitations of man, to dwell in those wilds where the beasts of the field will be your only companions’’ (120). The creature’s plea is evocative of an inherent urge to be defined, which is also signified by the desire for a female like him to be created, so that he can be liberated from isolation. Yet Frankenstein recognises that the creature is more than an animal, and realizes that although the monster claims to be satisfied with an animal's existence, he cannot speak for an entire species. The human attribute of the creature which allows him rational thought means that Frankenstein cannot allow the creature to choose, consequently abandoning him to liminality: “He had sworn to quit the neighbourhood of man, and hide himself in deserts;

but she had not; and she, who in all probability was to become a thinking and reasoning animal, might refuse to comply with a compact made before her creation." (138) The potential for free will in the creature forces Frankenstein to abandon him due to the potential for evolution, which threatens to usurp the human race:

> Even if they were to leave Europe, and inhabit the deserts of the new world, yet one of the first results of those sympathies for which the daemon thirsted would be children, and a race of devils would be propagated upon the earth, who might make the very existence of the species of man a condition precarious and full of terror. (138)

This passage demonstrates a fear at the concept of extinction, a theory recently approved by Cuvier who suggested that races were finite. The potential consequences of extinction applied to the human race caused anxiety demonstrated by Shelley here, and further in *The Last Man*, in which the entire human race is destroyed by plague:

> Will the mountains remain unmoved, and the streams still keep a downward course towards the vast abyss; will the tides rise and fall, and the winds fan universal nature; will beasts pasture, birds fly and fishes swim, when man, the lord, possessor, perceiver, and recorder of all these things, has passed away, as though he had never been? O, what mockery is this! Surely death is not death, and humanity is not

> extinct; but merely passed into other shapes, unsubjected to our perception.[56]

With this fear of the extinction exemplified in the later novel, Shelley demonstrates concern over the human race's finite existence that is attributed to animalistic corporeal mortality. When Frankenstein decides to destroy the female creature Shelley alludes to the potential for extinction caused by usurpation by a stronger race. By deciding to destroy the creature, Frankenstein reveals an inherent fear of both evolution and man's mortality that the creature represents.

In this section I have reflected on how the creature functions as a liminal being, whose literary power lies in its lack of definition. I have demonstrated how he contrasts to the character of Frankenstein regarding the two limits of humanity, and have focused on the animal/human dichotomy in the monster. By doing this, I have shown how the monster represents neither animal nor human, but incorporates elements of both. He is too human to be animal, too animal to be human, and its immorality gives it an extra element of inhumanity. Hence, as a liminal figure, the creature can be read as a literary interpretation of the abyss that separates man from animal. My demonstration of the uncertain nature of the creature now allows me to explore the implications of this liminal figure; what it tells us about Mary Shelley's digestion of the contemporary science, and how she used this to explore what man is.

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[56] Mary Shelley, *The Last Man*. 2004, Ware: Wordsworth Classics. (330) Subsequent page references in text.

The Significance of the Monster as an Abyssal Resident

I have examined the abyssal habitation of the creature in the previous section, so now I move on to discuss the significance of this in consideration of argument exploring humanity's relationship with animality, and how it is represented within the novella. Primarily, I consider Cartesian philosophy which suggests that dualism is the quality of man that separates us from animals, a duality that the creature lacks. Secondly I examine society as the principle that divides animal from man. The creature craves society but is entirely isolated and therefore abjected from normal human life. Finally, I discuss the creature as the "inhuman" part of humanity, psychologically as the animal part of the human psyche that is abjected. I use these arguments to demonstrate how Shelley digested concepts of man being a divine creation or a corporeal machine.

The Monstrous Body: Matter without Meaning

Primarily, my discussion explores and examines ideas that suggest the monster represents a soulless humanity. Kristeva writes of the corpse as an exemplification of the abject, as it is neither subject nor object, it abides in a liminal space between the two: "A body without soul, a non-body, disquieting matter, it is to be excluded from God's *territory* as it is from his *speech*" (109). Frankenstein's creature is created from the disused parts of various corpses reanimated to create a live being. The creature is both a body and a non-body. The creature consequently can be considered a reanimated corpse, and regarding Kristeva's theories of abjection would be particularly threatening, as it defies the boundary limits of self and matter. When considering how often the "undead" are used as fictitious antagonists in literature and media, Kristeva's principle of abjection becomes important. The creature represents the opposite of a ghost; rather than spirit without a body, he is a body without spirit, consequently Shelley pre-empts the twentieth and twenty first century fascination with a zombie apocalypse. The creature could be the progenitor of this new evolutionary race that is evident in so much current media. Recent examples include the current popular television series, "The Walking Dead"[57], and the film "World War Z"[58]. If Shelley had combined *Frankenstein* with *The Last Man*, the product would have most likely become a much more literary imagining of a similar zombie apocalypse. Therefore it is viable that through this narrative Shelley epitomizes the liminal space separating human and animal by creating a creature whose chthonic origins make him entirely abject. In the novel there is no explicit mention of the creature being without a soul. To the contrary, in one instance Frankenstein mentions his soul; "His soul is as hellish as his form, full of treachery and fiend-like malice." (178) However, despite this there is a strong implication in the novella that the creature's divide from humanity is due to his being created by man, and not by God, and consequently lacking the divine essence of humanity.

According to Butler, Frankenstein's suggestion that electricity provides the essential life element mirrors Abernathy's theory: "Frankenstein the blundering experimenter, still working with superseded notions, shadows the intellectual position of Abernathy, who proposes that the superadded life-element is analogous to electricity" (xx-xxi). Butler suggests that *Frankenstein* serves as a parody of Abernethy who proposed the presence of electricity as the life force that drives the body; Frankenstein assumes that by imbuing the creature with electricity he can give it life force: “With anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet” (38). It is, however, suggested within the novel, that though electricity is used to give animation to corporeal matter, it cannot be used to create an exact replica of humanity. The creature fails to meet Frankenstein’s expectations. From the moment of its creation the creature is inexplicably repulsive despite Frankenstein’s efforts to make him beautiful:

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[57] Walking Dead, dev. Frank Darabont, feat Andre Lincoln and John Bernthal, (AMC, 2010)
[58] World War Z, dir. Mark Foster, feat Brad Pitt and Matthew Fox, (Paramount Pictures, 2010)

> His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful-Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion, and straight black lips. (39)

The ugliness of the creature can be attributed to the absence of a soul, the latter being something that can only be given through divine natural creation. As the creature is purely a product of man and science, Shelley suggests that there is an important element absent from the creature that inspires automatic repulsion: “A flash of lightning illuminated the object, and discovered its shape plainly to me; its gigantic structure, and the deformity of its aspect, more hideous than belongs to humanity, instantly informed me that it was the wretch, the filthy daemon to whom I had given life” (56). The hideousness of the creature is juxtaposed with the beauty of the human form specifically to highlight the inhuman aspect:

> I had admired the perfect forms of my cottagers-their grace, beauty and delicate complexions: but how was I terrified, when I viewed myself in a transparent pool! At first I started back, unable the believe that it was indeed I who was reflected in the mirror; and when I became fully convinced that I was in reality the monster that I am, I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification. (90)

The pleasing appearances of human characters like the cottagers are used as a contrast, evoking the abhorrence of the creature. The trope is used similarly by Robert Louis Stevenson in his gothic horror novella *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*[59]. Hyde is physically repugnant to all those who encounter him. In Jekyll's final revelation of events he reveals that this is because Hyde is a creature driven by pure evil, unlike any other of the human species: "This, as I take it, was because all human beings, as we meet them, are commingled out of good and evil: and Edward Hyde, alone in the ranks of mankind, was pure evil." (58) Hyde's repulsiveness stems from an absence of goodness that Jekyll argues is an integral part in all humanity. In this case, it is not goodness that the creature is missing, but the divine essence of supernatural creation. It is therefore complex as to whether Shelley is parodying Abernethy in the false attempt to add the "life-element", she is instead perhaps suggesting that the theory is valid, but that the "life element" is not something controllable and conceivable by humanity like electricity. Potentially, she suggests that electricity is a poorer synthetic form of the life element than that which animates the human form. She uses Abernathy's ideas to consider Cartesian ideology of the divine soul. The absence of this component part of humanity brings the creature closer to animality than humanity. Shelley therefore also perhaps parodies Lawrence, who suggests that humanity is entirely corporeal.

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[59] Robert Louis Stevenson, and R. Mighall, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Other Tales of Terror*. 2002: Penguin. Subsequent page references in text.

Cartesian dualism suggests that the reason for the divide between animal and human is the presence of a soul. Therefore, although the creature is made of the component parts of a human, he lacks its essence. It could be, in this way, a product of the abyss, as Rene Descartes explains in his *Discourse of the Method* (1637):

> For, examining the functions which might in accordance with this supposition exist in this body, I found precisely all those which might exist in us without our having the power of thought, and consequently without our soul-that is to say, this part of us, distinct from the body, of which it has just been said that its nature is to think-contributing to it, functions which are identically the same as those in which animals lacking reason may be said to resemble us.[60]

The creature, unlike the Cartesian animal, has the faculty of reason; of thought and rationality: "And this does not merely show that the brutes have less reason than men, but that they have none at all, since it is clear that very little is required in order to be able to talk" (108). However, there is no way the creature could possess the soul that Descartes suggests endows humanity with rational thought. To do that would be tantamount to suggesting that the creations of men are equal to that of God, a concept that most Christians living in the regency period would abhor. Descartes describes how the soul can only be 'expressly created', a feat which can only be achieved by a deity: "I had described after this the rational soul and shown that it could not be in any way derived from the power of matter, like the other things of which I had spoken, but that it must be expressly created" (109). The creature is therefore in an inherently problematic position; being imbued with human rationality but not human essence.

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[60] Rene. Descartes, E.S. Haldane, and G.R.T. Ross, *Key Philosophical Writings*. 1997: Wordsworth Editions, Limited. (100-101) Subsequent page references in text.

According to Cartesian dualism, although fundamentally conjoined in many ways, there are two separate aspects of humanity; the corporeal and the incorporeal:

> I showed, too, that it is not sufficient that it should be lodged in the human body like a pilot in his ship, unless perhaps for the moving of its members, but that it is necessary that it should also be joined and united more closely to the body in order to have sensations and appetites similar to our own, and thus form true man (109).

It is Frankenstein's attempt himself to integrate the immortal aspect of the soul within the mortal body that disfigures the creature. However, with the discovery of the immortal body, the absence of the soul is distinguished. It is evident through the description of Frankenstein's endeavours to build the creature that he only concentrates attention on the physical necessities of the creature: "After days and nights of incredible labour and fatigue, I succeeded in discovering the cause of generation of life; nay, more, I became myself capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter" (34). Mistakenly Frankenstein believes that all he must do to ensure man's immortality is to reanimate dead flesh. According to Cartesian principle, once the body has died the soul separates from it; as Descartes said himself on his deathbed: "Now my soul, 'tis time to depart" (105) The souls that supposedly inhabited the body parts used to create the creature would therefore be absent in the new form.

Shelley uses the circumstances in which the creature is created to highlight this point, as Paul Sherwin argues: "The oppressively close, enveloping tomb world into which he descends is a self-engendered abyss that discloses what our finite bodily ground looks like from the heights to which the spirit has ascended." (896) Sherwin reflects on juxtaposition caused by Frankenstein's actions. The spirit is the divine attribute of humanity, whilst Frankenstein's actions necessitate him to physically descend into the chthonic. The creature's creation contrasts directly with divine human creation. Shelley could perhaps have formulated a comparison between divinely created humanity, and humanity created through evolution. Evolution allows little direct potential for the creation of a soul. Therefore the creature can be considered merely a mirror of humanity, created through natural (or in this case unnatural) selection. Burton R. Pollin discusses this in his nineteen sixties analysis of the various influences of Mary Shelley, including Polidori: "on June 15 Shelley and he conversed about "principles-whether man was to be thought merely as an instrument," the primal source of life, Erasmus Darwin's theories, and galvanism."[61] The idea of man being "a mere instrument" is suggestive of the fear of corporeal humanity. Shelley has taken this idea of an instrumental body of humanity, and created a monster. In *The Last Man* Shelley demonstrates a similar fear of the corporeal mortality of humanity:

> We had called ourselves the "paragon of animals", and lo! we were a quintessence of dust'. We repined that the pyramids had out lasted the embalmed body of their builder. Alas! The mere shepherd's hut of straw we pass on the road, contained in its structure the principle of greater longevity than the whole race of man. How reconcile this sad change to our past aspirations, to our apparent powers. (318)

Here Shelley demonstrates doubt about the incorporeal nature of humanity, conceiving a mutable idea of humanity that H.G. Wells develops in his later works. However later in the novel she overturns this pessimistic view of humanity and argues that there must be a higher element that brings us closer to God: "Death is a vast portal, an high road to life: let us hasten to pass; let us exist no more in this living death, but die that we may live!" (330) Shelley convinces herself as she attempts to convince her reader that the body is merely a vessel for our incorporeal selves. Though she explores the concept of purely corporeal humanity, she is not able to attest to it completely, and instead demonstrates a spiritual need for dualism. By attributing this aspect to humanity, she creates a problematic being who lacks this further element.

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[61] Burton R. Pollin "Philosophical and Literary Sources of Frankenstein". *Comparative Literature*, 1965. **17**(2): p. 97-108. (98) Subsequent page references in text.

The concept of the man-made creature is problematic for the creature himself, who is fully aware of his origins, and is resentful of divinely created humanity:

> Like Adam, I was created apparently united by no link to any other being in existence; but his state was far different from mine in every other respect. He had come forth from the hands of God a perfect creature, happy and prosperous, guarded by the especial care of his Creator; he was allowed to converse with, and acquire knowledge from the beings of a superior nature: but I was wretched, helpless, and alone. Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition; for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of envy rose in me. (105)

The creature laments his creation at the hands of a man rather than God; the insinuation is that man is in an inherently favourable position because he was divinely created. As a non-divine creation the creature lack man's primary essence:

> Cursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even you turned from me in disgust? God in pity made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid from its very resemblance. Satan had his companions, fellow-devils, to admire and encourage him; but I am solitary and detested. (105)

Here Shelley explicitly demonstrates how man cannot reproduce God's creation. The imperfections of man's creations are distinguished from those of God, established by the ugly features of the creature.

The absence of a soul is confirmed by both the creature's demonic appearance, and perhaps also by his actions, which he claims were primarily well intentioned, although Frankenstein only directly experiences the creature's evil activities: "Nothing in human shape could have destroyed that fair child." (56). The creature, whose perspective we are shown, confesses to a primary goodness in his intentions, yet these are overturned by his crimes later in the novel. Even though we are forced to sympathise with the creature through his experiences, his wrathful acts outweigh the good, and he demonstrates an inherent darkness that, considering the Romantic positive outlook on human nature, seems inhuman: "A grin was on the face of the monster; he seemed to jeer, as with his fiendish finger he pointed towards to corpse of my wife" (166). From Frankenstein's perspective, these actions are inherently linked to the creature's appearance. We see ugliness and brutality intertwined, despite the moments of sympathy: "He approached; his countenance bespoke bitter anguish, combined with disdain and malignity, while its unearthly ugliness rendered it almost too horrible for human eyes." (76) It is these moments when the creature is most "other". Here the division between man and animal is defined by morality. If humans are considered moral beings, and animals are amoral, then immorality falls in the gap between, defining the abyss. The creature knows morality, but is purposefully defiant of it.

For those who Frankenstein has lost, there is hope in the afterlife, demonstrated through a passionate entreaty by Frankenstein in which he pits materialism against spiritualism, shadowing the argument between Abernathy and Lawrence. In this scene Frankenstein demonstrates disbelief that Henry Clerval can be truly lost through death:

> And where does he now exist? Is this gentle and lovely being lost forever? Has this mind so replete with ideas, imaginations fanciful and magnificent, which formed a world, whose existence depended on the life of its creator; has this mind perished? Does it now only exist in my memory? No, it is not thus; your form so divinely wrought, and beaming with beauty, has decayed, but your spirit still visits and consoles your unhappy friend. (130)

The creature, however, has no new home to which his spirit can ascend. He is entirely chthonic and thus death would render him non-existent. Furthermore his act of self-immolation demonstrates a desire to eradicate his bodily remains as well as his consciousness; an act that demonstrates the importance attributed to the creature's corporeal form. Death is a state that the creature primarily fears, and though he sees it as a potential option to relieve its misery, the uncertainty terrifies him: "I wished sometimes to shake off all thought and feeling; but I learned that there was but one means to overcome the sensation of pain, and that was death-a state which I feared yet did not understand" (96-97). However despite this primary aversion to death, by the end of the novel the creature embraces mortality;

> I shall die. I shall no longer feel the agonies which now consume me, or be the prey of feelings unsatisfied, yet unquenched…Some years ago, when the images which this world affords first opened upon me, when I felt the cheering warmth of summer, and heard the rustling of the leaves and the chirping of the birds, and these were all to me, I should have wept to die; now it is my only consolation. Polluted by crimes, and torn by bitterest remorse, where can I find rest but in death? (190)

The creature reminisces about why he feared death previously; because the pleasant bodily sensations of life would be lost to him, but as such pleasures have become impossible for him he sees death as his only escape from immense guilt and loneliness. At no point does he consider a part of himself that would exist after his death, a strange attitude considering much of his education came from Milton's *Paradise Lost*. He knows that there is no heaven or hell for him, and oblivion can be no worse than the hell he has had to experience alive in solitude. He chooses to lose his self-awareness so as to escape his existence. According to Cartesian principles, he therefore would experience an animal's death, having no soul to be sent to the next life.

In this section I focused on the corporeal nature of the creature, and how that represents a division from humanity according to Cartesian dualism typical of the religious attitude towards humanity within the Regency period. In the following argument, the relationship between animal and man becomes more complex, and within this analysis with respect to Shelley's novel we can witness the narrowing of the abyss.

The Social Monstrosity

In the previous section I demonstrated how the man-made element of the creature sets him apart from humanity. He is therefore born outside of society, as a separate, singular entity: "But I was perfectly unacquainted with towns, and large assemblages on men" (104). The creature's lack of society could potentially be the element that separates him from humanity. Even scientists like Ramachandran as previously discussed believe that humanity is defined by a need for society. Theodore Ziolkowski claims that the novels primary concern is the effect that science has on society: "Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* expresses society's concern at what it perceived to be the mindless pursuit of knowledge with no thought for its social implications."[62] Underlying other concerns about concepts of evolution, there was the apprehension that it would cause a social upheaval, redefining approaches to the law, religion, and the social contract. Butler argues that it is for this reason the scientific machinations of the day were rejected by many who could not stand to look on their ancestral past: "When Natural Man appears in this family's midst it cannot recognise him, and will not give him room" (xxxix). Similarly to natural man, the creature is not given a place in society, and consequently, like evolutionary theory, he is expelled by those who are inherently repulsed by his existence.

The creature, as a representative of the abyssal divide, embodies a form of humanity that may have existed prior to society. In certain parts of the novel the reader is reminded of primitive man in his near animalistic state: "This roused me from my nearly dormant state, and I ate some berries which I found hanging on the trees, or lying on the ground, I slaked my thirst at the brook; and then lying down, was overcome by sleep" (80). Rousseau considers this state as better form of human existence compared to corrupted social man:

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[62] Theodore Ziolkowski, *Science, Frankenstein, and Myth.* The Sewanee Review, 1981. **89**(1): p. 34-56. (40) Subsequent page references in text.

> Now, if one compares the prodigious diversity of educations and ways of life that prevail in the different social orders of the civil state with the simplicity and uniformity of animal and savage life, in which all feed on the same foods, live in the same manner, and do exactly the same things, it will be understood how much less the difference from man to man must be in the state of nature than in that of society, and how much natural inequality in the human species must increase through instituted inequality. (88)

Rousseau denounces society as an evil that has lead humanity from a simpler, noble existence into one that is deceitful and vain. However, society is also the explanation Rousseau gives for the progress of humanity. Darwin similarly attributes much of humanity's evolutionary success to its development in society:

> It deserves notice that, as soon as the progenitors of man became social (and this probably occurred at a very early period), the principle of imitation, and reason, and experience would have increased, and much modified the intellectual powers in a way, of which we see only traces in the lower animals. (154)

The creature attempts to enter into the human social contract. However, he is rejected at every potential opportunity for integration, possibly causing a reversion to a more primal state of humanity. The creature could represent humanity without the nurture of society, consequently marking a departure from Rousseau's concept of inherent positive human nature, and suggesting that to flourish humanity requires civilization. It could also show how a lack of society leads to regression into a more animalistic form of humanity. Marilyn Butler considers the opposing idea to Rousseau's philosophy, suggesting that the creature's singular upbringing in the woods is unnatural:

> The significant point of Mary Shelley's treatment of the Creature's rearing in isolation from humanity is that it makes none of the common exaggerated claims. The Creature's life in the woods is neither superior, nor even natural; it is not introduced as evidence of the existence of a sub-species, whether now or in a remote past, nor of man's affinity with the primates. Mary Shelley takes a more cautious view, and could even be evading or excluding the evolutionist perspective both Erasmus Darwin and Lamark had advanced, that all forms of life had evolved from single cells.[63]

Here Butler suggests that Shelley purposefully avoids the subject of evolution and its implications. In this point, I disagree; it is evident that ideas of evolution permeate Shelley's thinking when considering the nature of humanity. However, Butler does suggest an inherent difference between humanity and animality that the creature embodies. Humanity is defined by development of the individual within human society, whereas the creature's primary life was spent in the woods. His divide from humanity is inhuman and his abandonment by Frankenstein could be argued to be the primary deciding factor as to the monster he becomes. The events following his abandonment force the creature to resort to criminality; as he is not accepted by society he rejects civilizations constraints in an act of rebellion: "I declared everlasting war against the species, and, more than all, against him who had formed me, and sent me forth to this insupportable misery" (111). It is not until the creature faces rejection multiple times that he becomes the malevolent force that haunts Frankenstein until his death. Primarily within the creature we therefore recognize a potential for humanity that is not nurtured by the bonds of a social system. It is therefore possible that Shelley adheres to Rousseau's theory to some extent, and that the creature is transformed into a monster, as opposed to being born as one. James O' Rourke identified the Rousseauean principles being applied to Shelley's novella, albeit in a less derivative way than has previously been explored:

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[63] Marilyn Butler, "Introduction" Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein: Or `The Modern Prometheus': The 1818 Text*. 2008: OUP Oxford.

> The central enigma of Frankenstein is the evolution of this benign creature into a child-murderer, and in sketching this development Mary Shelley uses Rousseauean principles, but she shows an even more fluid transition between the attributes of the natural man and the social being than Rousseau did in his Discourses.[64]

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[64] James O'Rourke, '"Nothing More Unnatural": Mary Shelley's Revision of Rousseau', *ELH,* Vol. 56, No. 3 (Autumn, 1989), (550) Subsequent page references in text.

O'Rourke identifies that Shelley uses Rousseau's principles, but in a more fluid manner, allowing the creature only a short amount of time to be transformed from natural man to fiend.

Beer provides a potential explanation as to why the creature is excluded from human society. She suggests that it is because he is manufactured rather than born, and thus the man-made principle remains relevant, as Frankenstein's method of creation denies the creature the opportunity to grow:

> When Mary Shelley came to describe a monster in Frankenstein she shows a creature denied the experience of growth. He is fabricated as if he were a machine, but out of organic bits and pieces. There is a gap between concept and material. Though he is a creature capable of undergoing the full cultural development of man, he is excluded from humanity because he has never partaken of the primary experience of human kind: that of physical growth. (103)

Beer argues that he is denied the fundamental experience of humanity, that of childhood, which means that he is forever barred from human companionship. Beer further explains that this is the reason for the creature's monstrosity. The absence of a mother in his creation is a possible additional factor to this consideration of manufacture, and a close link between the creature and Shelley.

The cottagers function as the first form of human society that the creature experiences; they demonstrate the importance of social acceptance and interaction: "The patriarchal lives of my protectors caused these impressions to take a firm hold on my mind; perhaps, if my first introduction to humanity had been made by a young soldier, burning for glory and slaughter, I should have been imbued with different sensations" (104). Rejected by society themselves they represent a microcosm of patriarchal civilization. The family model represents civilization on a grander scale; the patriarchal head served by the children. The De Laceys symbolize an idealized version of this system, and represent the civilization that the creature observes:

> I admired virtue and good feelings, and loved the gentle manners and amiable qualities of my cottagers; but I was shut out from intercourse with them, except through means which I obtained by stealth, when I was unseen and unknown, and which rather increased than satisfied the desire I had of becoming one among my fellows. The gentle words of Agatha, and the animated smiles of the charming Arabian, were not for me. The mild exhortations of the old man, and the lively conversation of the loved Felix, were not for me. (97)

The creature, as a rational being desires approval, representing a turning point in the novel. If he had been accepted by the cottagers, from everything we have learnt from the creature there may have been potential for him to have entered into some form of society, and perhaps he would then have not become a beast: "I learned, from the views of social life which it developed, to admire their virtues, and to deprecate the vices of mankind." (102) The creature develops an understanding of the fundamental components of society as he attempts to emulate Felix in his work:

> I discovered also another means through which I was enabled to assist their labors. I found that the youth spent a great part of each

> day in collecting wood for the family fire; and, during the night, I often took his tools, the use of which I quickly discovered, and brought home firing sufficient for the consumption of several days. (88)

The creature's understanding of society and desire to integrate are inherently human traits. Shelley emphasized the goodness of the creature as he strives to become a part of the greater unit. When he finally speaks to the older De Lacey the creature appeals to this fundamental trait of humanity that allows a society to form as factions grow larger. The sightless De Lacey does not question the creature's humanity, as without his abhorrent appearance, the creature shows every aspect of a man through his reasoning and his sympathy, traits which inspire empathy in De Lacey: "I am poor, and an exile; but it will afford me true pleasure to be in any way serviceable to a human creature" (109). De Lacey perhaps speaks falsely when he discusses the superior moral feeling of humanity, which he emphasizes is fundamentally good: "To be friendless is indeed to be unfortunate; but the hearts of men, when unprejudiced by any obvious self-interest, are full of brotherly love and charity." (109) His declaration seems naïve, yet it could echo Rousseau's concept of the noble savage, which asserts that before being endowed with social feelings, man is inherently good, and it is society that makes him cruel. De Lacey may proclaim the inherent goodness in man, which is blinded by societies prejudice against the "other". The creature's acceptance by the patriarchal head of the family seems promising, but the children, representative of the citizens of society, cannot be swayed by the creature's words, as his ugliness blinds them to his potential for humanity. The creature is shunned because he is "other", and perceived as a danger to the social unit. The creature is treated cruelly because he is an outsider, and therefore a potential threat. It is this division between sameness and otherness that is inherently human and also necessarily cruel. Humanity is not humanity without society, therefore Rousseau's concept of goodness is instead attributed to something more primal than humanity. Hence, perhaps it is not only monstrousness that is found within the abyss, but also goodness. This, however, conflicts with notion of morality belonging to humanity, as previously discussed.

The creature only begins to act nefariously after he is rejected, first by burning the cottager's house, then by murdering William: "Believe me, Frankenstein: I was benevolent; my soul glowed with love and humanity: but am I alone, miserable alone?" (78). The appearance of the creature now has no bearing on his separation from humanity; even Justine who was accused of his crime was seen as too terrible to be included in society: "I could not consent to the death of any human being; but certainly I should have thought such a creature unfit to remain in the society of men" (71). According to this perspective the creature, rather than being born an abyssal monster, has instead become submerged in the abyssal liminality that has made him a fiend, and despite his ugliness, his actions make him an abhorrence to society. Justine was cast out of society by death; the creature can never be punished for his actions as he was never part of civilization and its laws. In this manner, Agamben's concepts of the "Homo Sacer" could be considered relevant. The creature is not acknowledged by society, and therefore cannot be considered human in terms of political life, only bare life. It is perhaps his treatment in this manner which causes him to commit criminal acts. As he is shunned as a criminal, he behaves like a criminal. Shelley could therefore, in this manner, criticise certain societal institutions which help create the anthropological machine. Shelley insinuates that without even the most fundamental of social inclusion, the monster becomes the "daemon". Yet even at this stage the creature appeals to certain attributes of human society:

> The guilty are allowed, by human laws, bloody as they may be, to speak in their own defence before they are condemned Listen to me, Frankenstein. You accuse me of murder; and yet you would, with a satisfied conscience, destroy your own creature. Oh, praise the eternal justice of man! (78)

His statement is ironic; the creature is reliant on the ability to reason and 'stand trial', but also hates any semblance of the human society that he cannot attain. The monster is therefore conflicted, he loathes human society but also prescribes to it.

The creature demonstrates in other ways his subservience to civilization; for example by showing religious understanding; hating and lording Frankenstein in equal measure, allowing himself to be ruled by his creator. Shelley shows religion to be an inherent part of a social being-it is natural for the creature to worship Frankenstein as well as loathe him, which is why he is so resentful:

> Remember, thou hast made me more powerful than thyself; my height is superior to to thine; my joints more supple. But I will not be tempted to set myself in opposition to thee. I am thy creature, and I will be even mild and docile to my natural lord and king, if though wilt also perform thy part, that which thou owest me. (77)

The creature's understanding of the mechanisms of society only serves to make his isolation more unnatural. Again, he fits between humanity, which understands and is included in civilisation, and animality, which does not understand it and is not included. A being that knows society, but is not included, could also be considered a rendering of the abyss.

In *The Last Man* Shelley demonstrates the effect of loneliness on civilized man; Verney's isolation transforms him into a more animalistic being resembling the creature: "My hair has become nearly grey-my voice, unused now to utter sound, comes strangely on my ears. My person, with its human powers and features, seems to me a monstrous excrescence of nature" (372). Verney experiences a regression due to the dramatic isolation of the protagonist. This novel published eight years after the first edition of Frankenstein could demonstrate the transformation from human to monster, and thus how closely we resemble the creature when we are deprived of social order. Shelley is not alone in using isolation as a zoomorphic tool. In *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798) the mariner's isolation induces him to find affinity with the animals of the sea, and even after he is saved he leads a singular, nomadic existence. Later in the century, H.G. Wells places his protagonists in positions of isolation from the rest of humanity, which in turn makes them into more animalistic beings. These examples are discussed in more depth later in this thesis.

I have previously argued that the creature's wish to leave for South America demonstrates a desire for definition, if not as a human, as an animal instead. Furthermore, the request could represent the desire to begin a new society; if he is unable to become a part of humanity, the creature looks to create his own society in South America with his female: "On you it rests, whether I quit for ever the neighbourhood of man, and lead a harmless life, or become the scourge of your fellow-creatures, and the author of your own speedy ruin" (79). Rauch argues that Frankenstein's inability to conceive of the social application of his findings leads to the ensuing tragedies. The creature demands the mate to attempt to verify his existence socially: "But the fact of the matter is that the monster, in asking for a mate, is merely trying to find a social context for his own existence" (231). Frankenstein's denial of this potential is driven by the desire to preserve his own species from the potential threat of these stronger yet rational beings. It is another societal drive; kill, or be killed.

Shelley insinuates that humanity is formed through our social interactions. Frankenstein's creature is barred from this and effectively resembles the vengeful Satan from Milton's *Paradise Lost*. I have previously discussed how although the creature directly links himself to Satan, Frankenstein can also be considered akin to the biblical antagonist. In equal measures, Frankenstein can be considered God-like, and the creature satanic. Like Satan, the monster is banished by his creator and instead inhabits a place so undesirable it enlarges the animosity towards Frankenstein. For Frankenstein's creature, Hell is a state of being rather than a physical place, a fact that Shelley's use of *Paradise Lost* puts into perspective, as Pollin argues: "The monster himself reflects that hell is an internal condition, which is intensified, if not produced, through loneliness" (104). The creature was not born into the abyss, but was reduced to it due to neglect. Hunter asserts that the creature was created by a lack of familial influence and the stability of religion: "Shelley personified this conflation in a creature that was a product of Enlightenment materialism, without the morality formed from familial connections or a regulating religious philosophy" (135). Hunter argues that Shelley demonstrates a concern about scientific progress being without social context. Hunter's statement demonstrates the effect of the purely corporeal body of man, and the implications it has on society. The corporeal body is separated from society by ideas of natural creation and evolution which undermine the structure of civilization built on a specific dogma. The creature is a product what is conceived to be this uncivilised, inhuman pursuit of knowledge that strives to undermine the foundations of society.

Through this argument a creature has been discussed that is much closer to humanity than that which has been previously considered. In the next argument the gap will be closed and the creature will be demonstrated to be a personification of the part of ourselves that represents our link to animality.

The Monster of the Mind

Shelley's aim in writing *Frankenstein* was to explore potential consequences of recent theories of life. However, it was also her intention to explore human nature itself; as Pollin notes in his discussion of her philosophical and literary influences: "She herself aptly wrote on February 25, 1822: "Let me fearlessly descend into the remotest caverns of my own mind, carry the torch of self-knowledge into its dimmest recesses" (107). The creature could therefore be used as a reflection of human nature, and our abhorrence at the corporeal, animalistic motivations that are found within the "dimmest recesses" of our primitive minds. Inspired by concepts of evolution that link humanity to other forms of life, she most likely felt various doubts and insecurities pertaining to the individuality of humanity. These doubts perhaps led to an interpretation of the animalesque part of humanity that includes how it could be conceived and what it would mean. Her short story “Mathilda”, written soon after the publication of *Frankenstein*, demonstrates her desire to explore the dark drives of the human psyche. The result was the narrative’s incestuous subject matter which lead to the story being banned for over a hundred years[65]. Shelley certainly used her writing to explore darker psychological themes, especially considering a Freudian approach to narrative pertaining to the Electra complex. My final interpretation conceives of the monster as the Freudian “other”; exemplary of the “uncanny”, representing an inherent dichotomy that resides within the mind. The creature is consequently troubling because he stirs within ourselves the “unheimlich”: that is, the familiar stranger.

Kristeva’s ideas of abjection can be used to explore the creature’s representation of primal humanity. Kristeva writes that the corpse is something inherently abject because it neither represents ourselves, nor the ‘other’ and in that absence of selfhood, neither life, nor death. The corpse is therefore a symbolically pertinent tool whilst considering that abhorrent part of ourselves that we cannot fully desert, as Kristeva explains: “The corpse, seen without God and outside of science, is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life. Abject. It is something from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object.” (4). According to this principle, a creature made of second-hand body parts is invoked to stir horror and revulsion. He is the epitome of death that has infected life, as life has infected his dead body parts; this principle stirs an inherent revulsion within the psyche of humanity. The creature embodies a dichotomy that encourages us to reflect on what we are; the principles of death and the corporeal matter of which human beings are formed.

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[65] Mary Shelley*, Matilda*, London: Penguin, 1992

Frankenstein's creature is abhorred for his liminality-he serves as a reminder of our corporeal selves separated from the spiritual. Yet much of our corporeal self is psychological rather that material. Sherwin describes Frankenstein's success as not being corporeal, but psychological: "Frankenstein's astonishing psychic achievement, in Freudian terms, is the construction of a primal repression, whose constitutive role in psychic development is to structure the unconscious as an articulate erotogenic zone" (886). Sherwin argues that Frankenstein's creature represents an embodiment of the id. Once; again the creature is inherently linked to the antagonist Mr. Hyde of Stevenson's novella. Both Mr. Hyde and Frankenstein's creature are creations of scientists curious about the nature of man. According to Sherwin's argument, in this endeavour both scientists attempt to discover the principles of humanity by separating man's psyche into its component parts. By identifying the part of them that is primal, the animal part of the human, their reaction is horror. They find a being that is neither subject nor object, neither self nor other, the perversion of this boundary is abhorrent. The scientists discover the contents of the space that separates man and animal, and compulsively reject their findings.

The creature is now considered not as a separate entity from man, but an inherent principle part that is rejected by society and the self. Shelley's warning against the products of ambition does not only point to concern over our roots as animals, but also to that inherently animalistic part of ourselves, which remains unacknowledged by society and the self. My argument considers the psychological implications of the creature, and the ways in which he is used to explore the unchartered terrain of the mind. The final part of this chapter begins by considering this revelation of an animalistic other of humanity as a collective. Following this the animalistic other shall be considered a part of Frankenstein's psyche, and subsequently of Shelley's psyche also. As Percy Shelley writes: "I have thus endeavoured to preserve the truth of the elementary principles of human nature, while I have not scrupled to innovate upon their combinations" (3). Shelley's motivation was the discovery of true human nature.

At this point, Marilynn Butler's argument should be reconsidered; that the creature could be seen as the animalistic part of humanity that society endeavours to reject: "Above all it represents the attempt of an over-civilized elite to reject its real past and its membership of a wider animal community" (xlv). The novel could suggest the consequences of the rejection of this animalistic part of ourselves as we attempt to play God, and the abject product of this rejection: "You seek for knowledge and wisdom, as I once did; and I ardently hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you, as mine has been" (17). Frankenstein warns against scientific investigation because it inflicts pain. However, according to this perspective, the Promethean scientist is not punished by the Gods, but by his self.

The creature himself, as discussed previously, through his own action and appearance remind us of our own corporeal selves. However, as a rational outsider he also has the ability to judge humanity himself; a technique Shelley uses to allow him the ability to verbalize and rationalize his response to the race:

> Was man, indeed, at once so powerful, so virtuous, and magnificent, yet so vicious and base? He appeared at one time a mere scion of the evil principle, and at another as all that can be conceived of noble and godlike. To be a great and virtuous man appeared to be the highest honour that can befall a sensitive being; and to be base and vicious, as many on record have been, appeared the lowest degradation, a condition more abject than that of the blind mole or harmless worm. (95-96)

The creature demonstrates the two sides of man; the noble, rational, virtuous side, and the blood thirsty, aggressive, violent side. Objectively he witnesses the goodness of man through observation and study, but his own personal experiences reveal another, darker side of humanity: "Here then I retreated, and lay down, happy to have found a shelter, however miserable, from the inclemency of the season, and still more the barbarity of man" (84). Jacques Derrida's illustration of his cat's eyes reflecting our more barbaric nature is apt in this regard. Shelley uses her creature, which represents neither man nor animal, to verbalize an outsider's view on the human race.

Shelley also demonstrates the duality of man through the words of Elizabeth Lavenza, whose responds to the creature's actions by condemning the depravity of man:

> Before, I looked upon the accounts of vice and injustice, that I read in books or heard from others, as tales of ancient days, or imaginary evils; at least they were remote, and more familiar to reason than to

> the imagination; but now misery has come home, and men appear to me as monsters thirsting for each other's blood. (71)

In many ways, she reacts to the creature's actions, but her statement relates more to the treatment of Justine by the justice system. Justine's name is ironic, as she experiences an extreme carriage of injustice. Through Justine's trial, Shelley demonstrates the brutality of man, how as a collective they "thirst for blood" in response to crime. Elisabeth vocalises how on the surface societal doctrine like the law is based on wisdom and justice, yet underneath it is driven by the primal instincts of man to seek retribution. When removed from the brutalities of humanity, a positive view of human nature may be maintained. However, when the brutality of human nature is experienced, a more realistic notion of humanity is revealed.

Not only is the creature representative of the dual aspects of man as a general concept, but also of Frankenstein himself, who is on many occasions demonstrated to be psychologically in turmoil: "Can you wonder, that sometimes a kind of insanity possessed me, or that I saw continually about me a multitude of filthy animals inflicting on me incessant torture, that often extorted screams and bitter groans?" (123). Prior to this the creation of the creature was driven by his own mental instability when faced with the death of Caroline Beaufort, which caused his fear of human mortality. The dream that he experiences after the creature's creation exemplifies his fears, presenting his own difficulties with the corporeal nature of humanity: "a shroud enveloped her (Caroline's) form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel." (57) The creature is real, verified by Walter's own experience, yet there is suggestion throughout that he is perhaps a formulation of Frankenstein's imagination, as within his narrative Frankenstein is the only character who bears witness to him: "After passing several hours, we returned hopeless, most of my companions believing it to have been a form conjured by my fancy." (166) The creature could be interpreted as a mental formulation of Frankenstein; although shown to be a physical creation he is often connected to Frankenstein as more than this. In numerous ways Frankenstein and the creature become interchangeable.

This principle is evident when Frankenstein attributes the creature's crimes to himself: "As the memory of past misfortunes pressed upon me, I began to reflect on their cause-the monster whom I had created, the miserable daemon whom I had sent abroad into the world for my destruction" (168). As the creator of the creature the murders are caused by Frankenstein's actions; nevertheless he speaks as if he was the murderer directly: "Have my murderous machinations deprived you also, my dearest Henry, of life? Two I have already destroyed; other victims await their destiny, buy you, Clerval, my friend, my benefactor-"(148). The creature acts as Frankenstein's own Hyde; a being born out of the neglected, destructive facets of human nature: "William, Justine, and Henry-they all died by my hands" (156). The inherent connection between Frankenstein and the creature is highlighted specifically when Frankenstein refers to him as "his own vampire", an acknowledgement that the creature is possessed by his own spirit:

> I considered the being whom I had cast among mankind, and endowed with the will and power to effect purposes of horror, such as the deed which he had now done, nearly in the light of my own

> vampire, my own spirit let loose from the grave, and forced to destroy all that was dear to me. (57)

Here Shelley demonstrates both the abject and the uncanny; the creature is neither Frankenstein, nor an outside force, as if he has let loose a Hyde-like part of his self that cannot be controlled. Shelley determines the problematic principle of life infected with death, that which the creature embodies; a personal compunction for self-destruction and the problematic relationship between the spirit and the body.

The creature becomes a mirror of the scientist, as Frankenstein experiences elements of the creature's life despite the surface impression of being juxtaposed: "I saw an insurmountable barrier placed between me and my fellow-men; this barrier was sealed with the blood of William and Justine; and to reflect on the events connected with those names filled my soul with anguish." (131) Like the creature, with the demise of his family, and his guilt over the creature's actions Frankenstein also begins to suffer solitary exclusion. Frankenstein's fate and that of the creature become inherently intertwined. The creature follows him and murders his family, the situations are then reversed, and Frankenstein becomes the vengeful pursuer, following the creature through the Arctic. The delight of the creature at the chase shows that the dismissed element is now finally fully acknowledged. Frankenstein's death and the following death of the creature symbolize the conjoining of these two unnaturally separated elements of Frankenstein.

So far, I have demonstrated that the creature personifies that animalistic, unconscious ignored part of ourselves. I now further develop the argument to consider the novel as a platform of introspection for Mary Shelley personally, as she struggled with her own psychological concerns. Anthony Badalamenti writes about this aspect of the novel, focusing on how the creature can potentially depict a psychological representation of the problematic relationship between herself and Percy: "Thus, the monster is here decoded as what Percy did to the love between himself and Mary"[66]. Badalamenti makes numerous comparisons between the events of the book and the events in the lives of the Shelleys demonstrating how the novel can be read as an unconscious expression of Mary's emotional turmoil. For example, Shelley's visits to Scotland, he argues, are similar to Frankenstein's trip to build the second monster, and the gestation period of the monster mirrors that of Mary's. During the writing of the novel, Mary was pregnant, and therefore working on a creation of her own (428). Badalamente argues that the novel is an expression of Mary's anger at Percy: "The eight-foot monster complains that not only is he alone, he is unique in the world and rejected by it. He accuses his maker of abandoning him, a feeling deep in Mary Shelley's makeup, with likely reference to Percy, as well as her mother and father" (429). It is more poignant, however, to consider the book a demonstration of anger at herself; the mortified, unloved creature, who is encouraged both to be hated and sympathetic. During the years leading up to the creation of the novel Mary Shelley had many reasons to be plagued with guilt and mortification, as Butler notes:

> In the four and a half years from 1815 to mid-1819 she was to lose the first three of her four children. Her suffering over their deaths was

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[66] Anthony F Badalamenti, *Why did Mary Shelley Write Frankenstein?* Journal of Religion and Health, 2006. **45**(3): (420) Subsequent page references in text.

> complicated by her first realization that her own birth had caused the death of her mother. Mary's capacity for guilt must have been further exercised by two pathetic and from her point of view reproachful suicides in the autumn of 1816: those of Fanny Imlay, Mary's half-sister, on 9 October, and of Harriet (Westbrook) Shelley, Percy's wife in November-December. (xiii)

If she was to believe that her own creation and subsequent life was the cause of all this death, it is natural that she would create a creature to represent her own feelings of self-loathing: "Was I then a monster, a blot upon the earth, from which all men fled, and whom all men disowned?" (96). The suicide of Harriet Shelley, her unsuccessful pregnancies, and her mother's death could have induced feelings of guilt: "I, not in deed, but in effect, was the true murderer" (72). When considering the emotional turmoil inflicted on Shelley it is evident that there are various parallels between the creature and herself. Potentially, she recognises the animalistic side of herself that resembles the creature. The monster may represent, rather than a mere abstract concept, the guilt that she felt and must have subsequently attempted to ignore. Rather like Frankenstein's reaction of abjection to his monster, Shelley rejects herself in an imaginative liminal space. The reason why the creature is so sympathetic is because she sees herself reflected within him. Therefore the more shameful instincts of the human mind that we attempt to repress can be found within the abyss.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this chapter has been to demonstrate how the undiscovered and unsettling principles of humanity have been explored in

Frankenstein. In the first part of this argument, I focused on the contextual history of the novel, and how it relates to concepts of the abyssal divide separating man and animal. I further continued to discuss the liminality of the creature, envisioning him as a liminal being between animal and man, and therefore an abyssal resident. Throughout the second part of this argument I specifically focused on how the concept of the abyss can be considered in light of the novel. Primarily, I argued that the novel demonstrates a gaping abyss that separates man from animal, using Cartesian ideas that stress how man is both corporeal and incorporeal, whilst the creature, like an animal, is purely corporeal. The gap narrowed however, as I further consider the perspective that social structure and civilization is what separated man from animal. The creature had a human yearning for civilization, but was denied it; he therefore cannot be considered fully human. Yet this yearning demonstrates how he differs from animals, so that he once again falls into a liminal space, which this time is slightly narrower. The third argument considered a bridging of the abyss, as the creature was conceived as an abjection of humanity. With the emergence of the theory of evolution, this rejected part of ourselves pertains to our animal origins. Therefore throughout the argument the gap between animal and man has been narrowed. I have also demonstrated that underneath traditional dogmatic opinions of the difference between man and animal, there is a fundamental doubt or query about humanity's animality, and how we define ourselves as wholly separate.

Perhaps when Shelley introspects, she sees a different way of conceiving man as separate from animal. Within the novel, higher feelings like prejudice, loathing, and society are seen as fundamentally human. It is possible that she imagined these as restraints from an easier, simpler, more animalistic life, in which feelings like guilt and loneliness had no place:

> Alas! Why does man boast of sensibilities superior to those apparent in the brute; it only renders them more necessary beings. If our impulses were confined to hunger, thirst and desire, we might be nearly free; but now we are moved by every wind that blows, and a chance word or scene that that word may convey to us. (75)

In this sense, it seems that Shelley laments humanity's lack of animality; possibly making the Rousseau's argument for natural man more pertinent, Shelley demonstrates potentially humanity's weakness at our exclusion of the animalistic aspects. Shelley also observes that higher human feeling causes human existence to be more problematic than the life of an animal. Perhaps, therefore, she is envious of the more natural life of an animal, spared from guilt, morality, and grief.

"I grin at thee, thou grinning whale" the blurring of boundaries and animal Will in *Moby Dick*

In the previous chapter, I discussed Mary Shelley's pre Darwinian reaction to ideas pertaining to the origins of life, evolution, and the abyss. Shelley demonstrates, through the medium of her novel a myriad of doubts and insecurities. New ideas seemed to undermine an older form of knowledge, which caused the Shelley to question the place of man in her literature. Although Herman Melville was writing many years later, these doubts and insecurities remain evident in his work. They may even be more pronounced, as the ideas that were still raw in Shelley's time had developed by the time he was writing. Like *Frankenstein*, Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851) is a primary example of a layman's reaction to evolutionary theory in the early Darwinian time frame. Although not a scientist himself, he actively engaged with much of the scientific writing of the era, and famously acquired a copy of *Voyages of the Beagle* in 1847[67]. *On the Origin of Species* (1859) was yet to be published, but science in the 1850s was on the cusp of the revolutionary breakthrough that would transform much philosophical and religious thought. The atmosphere was primed for the publication of Darwin's most seminal work. There was gathering momentum behind theories of natural selection, but they were still yet to be effectively communicated, leading thinkers like Melville to consider and doubt the origins of humanity. The debate on the origins of life were likely a great part of his inspiration whilst writing *Moby-Dick*, evident when he describes the "horrible vultureism of earth! From which not the mightiest whale is free." (278) His statement reveals a pessimistic outlook on concepts of evolution; Melville's attitude is uncannily similar to Tennyson's, who published *In Memoriam (*1849) just a few years earlier, in which he describes nature "red in tooth and claw".[68] Their writing is indicative of a widespread philosophical insecurity over humanity's place within the animal kingdom. This is observable in the 2015 film *In The Heart of the Sea* is based on the true story of *The Essex* that inspired *Moby-Dick*.[69] During a conversation between Captain Pollock and Owen Chase, Pollock asserts "We are supreme creatures made in God's own likeness. Earthly kings whose business it is to circumnavigate the planet bestowed to us. To bend nature to our will." In response, Chase questions this belief: "You really feel like an earthly king? We're specks, dust." By including this scene, Charles Leavitt draws attention to how doubt surrounding humanity's place in the world effected the individual within the early Darwinian period.

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[67] Charles Darwin, E.J. Browne, and M. Neve, *The Voyage of the Beagle*. 1989: Penguin Adult. Subsequent page references in text.

There have been various authors who have approached the influence of Darwin over Melville's work. Eric Wilson, however, asserts that much of previous work is focused on Melville's trip to the Galapagos, which shares uncanny similarities to Darwin's own trip[70]. His treatment of the question of man and animal, therefore, has perhaps not been explored to its full potential. James Hecht writes that '…Melville knew something of the evolutionary account of speciation, which, after all, *rationalizes* the origin of species and dispenses with the *mythos* of divine artifice'[71] (121). Melville as a religious man, yet also a scientific and philosophical thinker was aware of the conflicts caused by evolution and how it affected the relationship between science and faith. This could partially explain how the novel is written like Hamlet; Ishmael left as Horatio, the only survivor after the devastation caused by the pursuit for vengeance of a dubious hero [72]. The idea of the world being billions of years old is a notion Melville found engaging, but also tragic, leading to confused and somewhat contrary ideas of the whale. Within the novel he suggests that the whale predates man, which is indicative of the idea that man represents a short part of history:

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[68] Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003

[69] *In the Heart of the Sea*, Directed by Ron Howard, Birbank: Warner Bros, 2015

[70] Eric Wilson, *Melville, Darwin, and the Great Chain of Being.* Studies in American Fiction, 2000. **28**(2): p. 131. Subsequent page references in text.

[71] James Hecht, *Scarcity and Compensation in Moby-Dick.* The Massachusetts Review, 1999. **40**(1): p. 111-130. Subsequent page references in text.

> When I stand among these mighty Leviathan skeletons, skulls, tusks, jaws, ribs, and vertebrae, all characterized by partial resemblances to the existing breeds of sea-monsters; but at the same time bearing on the other hand similar affinities to the annihilated antichronical Leviathans, their incalculable seniors; I am, by a flood, borne back to that wondrous period, ere time itself can be said to begun; for time began with man. (408)

The comforting and ordered theory of “The Great Chain of Being” was being compromised by Georges Cuvier’s ideas of extinction, coupled with Charles Lyell’s very recent and successful argument in favour of uniformitarianism[73]. The “Great Chain of Being” was an idea that achieved particular prominence during the Enlightenment, depicting a hierarchy that represented order and harmony in creation, implemented by divine forces. Concepts of evolution disturbed this harmonic order, demonstrating flaws with initial theories of creation.

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[72] William Shakespeare, and G.R. Hibbard, *Hamlet*. 1998: Oxford University Press.

[73] Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology: Or, The Modern Changes of the Earth and Its Inhabitants Considered as Illustrative of Geology*. 1872: John Murray. Subsequent page references in text.

This chapter is split into five parts. The first of these considers the context in which Melville was writing. Following this I begin the main body of the argument, in which humanity's relation to animality is considered in four different ways. The first of these is a focus on whaling and the objectification of the animal body, which integrates much of Kristeva's theories into my analysis of the novel. Focus on the abject is then extended into the next section in which I consider the blurring of boundaries and integration of bodies, specifically of Moby-Dick and Captain Ahab. I then turn my focus to a consideration of Schopenhauer's theories theory of the Will and how these can be used to consider humanity's relationship with animality. Finally I consider a more optimistic reading of the novel, which interacts with Rousseauian concepts of the "Noble Savage". From these elements I draw a conclusion.

Eons of Doubt; Melville living on the brink of scientific revolution

Within his *Journal of a Visit to London and the Continent,* documenting a trip which took place from 1849-1850, Melville describes one of his hosts, Mrs. Lawrence as belonging "to the category of the female sex there are no words to express my abhorrence of, I hate her not - I only class her among the persons made of reptiles and crawling things."[74] Although written humorously, Melville explicitly describes Mrs Lawrence as a lower class of life. Melville wrote this very close to the time that he acquired a copy of *Voyages of the Beagle*, and shortly before he started writing *Moby-Dick*. By including this link between animal and man, Melville demonstrates both how Darwin's preliminary work was at the forefront of his mind, and how it inspired him to consider the relationship between human and animal.

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[74] H. Melville, and E.M. Metcalf, *Journal of a Visit to London and the Continent: 1849-1850*. 1948: Harvard University Press.

It is important to note that, at the time in which Melville was writing, the scientific community was being primed for Darwin's theories. *On the Origin of Species*, published in 1859 followed the publication of *Moby-Dick* by only eight years, however Darwin's work took him twenty years to write, meaning that although *On the Origin of Species* was published after Melville's most seminal work, it was conceived many years previously. Throughout Darwin's early scientific career, there were a variety of advancements that made it possible for him to introduce the theory of natural selection. Charles Lyell, for example, was one of Darwin's greatest influences. By establishing a strong argument for uniformitarianism, he became one of the most well established scientists of the early Darwinian period. Another important figure to publish at this time was Robert Chambers, who communicated a speculative theory close to Darwin's own, yet without the scientific credibility.

Uniformitarianism is a concept necessary for the acceptance of ideas of evolution because it allows for the immense time frame required. It argues against ideas of catastrophism proffered by William Buckland that explain the findings of Cuvier by suggesting that a series of great world events caused the mass extinction of previous species. Buckland, by offering this explanation, effectively explained the existence of fossils without upsetting traditional biblical ideas.[75] As John Armstrong notes, Buckland's doctorate was in divinity, not science, so his vested interest was in preserving Christian dogma. Buckland's theory embraced the biblical brevity of the Earth's age and even suggests that the Flood could have been one of these catastrophic events. Uniformitarianism, however, argues for a slower process that was driven by heat under the earth's surface. James Hutton had previously explored the concept in 1785, when considering heat as an agent in geology. Patsy A Gerstner, however, illustrates how his ideas were dismissed by many scientists of the era when heat was considered "caloric" or a material substance.[76] As Gerstner establishes, "arguments against Hutton continued until the time of Charles Lyell." (361) When Lyell was writing, however, science had dramatically shifted and his work cemented the concept as the true mechanism which formed the world. Lyell, a student of Buckland, developed concepts proffered by Hutton, and made them acceptable within the scientific community. Roy Porter writes that in his autobiographical account Lyell considered himself the "spiritual saviour of geology"[77]. Porter further argues that he freed science "from the old dispensation of Moses" (91) to some extent. The heretical implications of this theory are clear; by allowing for a longer timescale, Lyell revealed the more dissenting inferences of an extensive time frame. Furthermore Porter argues that this extended time period of the earth forced humanity out of the centre of the creation. Being a relatively new addition, humanity was no longer the centre of the world anymore:

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[75] John R. Armstrong, "William Buckland in Retrospect", *PSCF* 42 (March 1990): 34-38. Subsequent page references in text.

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[76] Patsy A. Gerstner', 'The Reaction to James Hutton's use of Heat as a Geological Agent', *The British Journal of the History of Science*, 5:4, 1971, pp. 353-362 Subsequent page references in text.

[77] Roy Porter, 'Charles Lyell and the Principles of the History of Geology', *The British Journal for the History of Science,* 9:2, Lyell Centenary Issue: Papers Delivered at the Charles Lyell Centenary Symposium, London, 1975 (Jul., 1976), pp. 91-103 Subsequent page references in text.

> For Lyell, so many theories of the earth had been scientifically useless because the earth had been conceived anthropocentrically and anthropomorphically…Only the mature natural philosopher has the courage to stare resolutely into a world of infinite space and time, and to admit squarely that man is not the sole end of existence. (93-94)

Lyell was, perhaps, the most important contributor to the theory of evolution before Darwin. His theories of uniformitarianism laid the groundwork needed for the acceptance of the theory of natural selection. It gave Charles Darwin the necessary timescale that he needed to develop his theory. Despite the evident implications of his work, however, Lyell was not keen to associate his work with theories of evolution. Porter emphasises this whilst considering Lyell's attitude towards the wider implications of his work:

> Lyell sought to preserve the dignity of man at the same time as freeing the earth for geological science. But Lyell's distinction between man and geology was, however, formal and superficial-a defensive reflex, specifically to reading Lamarck. Right from I830 Lyell was trapped in that web of religious and humanistic projections upon the earth for which he was so eager to ridicule and rebuke others. (94)

The situation was difficult for Lyell. Despite his ardent desire to progress the field of geological sciences, he was wary of concepts of evolution. He was particularly ardent to maintain distance from thinkers like Jean-Baptiste Lamark, whose had outlined his own theory of evolution called "Lamarkism" in *Philosophie*

Zoologique (1809)[78]. His idea, despite being acknowledged as a forerunner for evolution, was dismissed by the general scientific population. Lyell's misgivings were not unreasonable, for despite targeting the right area of study, Lamarck's explanations of evolution seemed to lack credibility. He rightly observes adaptations of animals, but wrongly attributes them to changes that occur within the animal's lifetime, writing that: "The influence of the environments as a matter of fact is in all times and places operative on living bodies; but what makes this influence difficult to perceive is that it effects only become perceptible or recognisable (especially in animals) after a long period of time."[79] Although he attributed the change in species to eons of time, the mechanism he suggests is farcical, perhaps even creating a setback for concepts of evolution. Even Darwin, when writing to Hooker in 1844 described Lamarck's work as "veritable rubbish"[80]. It is therefore perhaps understandable why Lyell was unwilling to entertain concepts of evolution.

Lyell rejected concepts of the "*Progressive development of organic life"* in his *Principles of Geology* (1830-1833).[81] He made reference specifically to the incomplete nature of evidence-how despite the discovery of new evidence, we have yet to have achieved enough knowledge to infer such a thing as the progression of species.

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[78] Jean-Baptiste Lamark, *Philosophie Zoologique*, Editions Flammarion:1994

[79] Jean Baptiste Lamarck, 'The Present and the Past', *Literature and Science in the Nineteenth Century*, Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 2009. Subsequent page references in text.

[80] Charles Darwin in correspondence with Joseph Hooker, November 10th-11th, 1844

[81] Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology*, Project Gutenberg: 2010, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/33224/33224-h/33224-h.htm Accessed 20th March 2015 Subsequent page references in text.

> Our knowledge, therefore, of the living creation of any given period of the past may be said to depend in a great degree on what we commonly call chance, and the casual discovery of some new localities rich in peculiar fossils may modify or entirely overthrow all our previous generalizations. (146)

Lyell further argues that just because we do not have evidence of a certain species being alive within a certain era, does not mean that they were not. He explains that the acquisition of evidence is purely a matter of chance, and we have no way to infer certain generalisations when we are also missing much more evidence that may or may not be in existence: “Time so enormous as that contemplated by the geologist may multiply exceptional cases till they seem to constitute the rule, and so impose on the imagination as to lead us to infer the non-existence of creatures of which no monuments happen to remain.” (146) Lyell suggests that many creatures may have existed previously without us having any remaining evidence of their presence. Lyell therefore relies on our ignorance as a species to justify arguing against principles of evolution. This movement against the idea by a man so well aware of the evidence demonstrates the aversion felt by many when faced with the concept of evolution. By rejecting the progressive development of species, Lyell subscribed to popular belief, whilst also demonstrating his own insecurities about evolutionary theory.

Lyell summarises his position, by demonstrating that though adaptability of the earth is evident, adaptability of life cannot be proven. According to Lyell, inorganic changes are certain and evident, but adaptation of life is far from likely:

> From the earliest period at which plants and animals can be proved to have existed, there has been a continual change going on in the position of land and sea, accompanied by great fluctuations of climate. To these ever-varying geographical and climatal conditions the state of the animate world has been unceasingly adapted. No satisfactory proof has yet been discovered of the gradual passage of the earth from a chaotic to a more habitable state, nor of any law of progressive development governing the extinction and renovation of species, and causing the fauna and flora to pass from an embryonic to a more perfect condition, from a simple to a more complex organization. (146)

After justifying his inability to cohere with concepts of evolution, Lyell then tackles how this translates to concepts of the origins of human life:

> If, then, the popular theory of the successive development of the animal and vegetable world, from the simplest to the most perfect forms, rests on a very insecure foundation; it may be asked, whether the recent origin of man lends any support to the same doctrine, or how far the influence of man may be considered as such a deviation from the analogy of the order of things previously established, as to weaken our confidence in the uniformity of the course of nature. (147)

Lyell rejected the idea that humanity was relatively new, and derived from other animal species. He established this by arguing that species may have outlived the land on which their fossils are found: “Terrestrial species, therefore, might be older than the continents which they inhabit, and aquatic species of higher antiquity than the lakes and seas which they now people." (148) The explanation given by such an intelligent, well informed scientist seems absurd now, that species can be more permanent than the land on which they live. Yet, in a time when evolution seemed so unlikely, and scientists had been schooled in the Christian faith, it perhaps appeared the more likely possibility. Lyell further concludes:

> If this be admitted, it would not follow, even if there were sufficient geological evidence in favor of the theory of progressive development, that the creation of man was the last link in the same chain. For the sudden passage from an irrational to a rational animal, is a phenomenon of a distinct kind from the passage from the more simple to the more perfect forms of animal organization and instinct. To pretend that such a step, or rather leap, can be part of a regular series of changes in the animal world, is to strain analogy beyond all reasonable bounds .(148)

These remarks were made in the ninth edition of *Principles of Geology*. Throughout the first nine editions printed of the book, he remained loyal to his initial evaluations pertaining to evolution, despite being in regular conversation with Darwin. It was not until his tenth edition, that he finally made an allowance for evolution.

It has been noted that Darwin's concept of evolution was not the first. Étienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire's "heterogenesis" approached concepts of evolution from an environmental effects perspective. Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's evolution similarly considered the transmutation of species an effect of the animal's environment-as discussed previously within this section, Lamark's theories were considered farfetched and ridiculous. However Robert Chambers' theory came closest to those of Darwin before Alfred Russel Wallace's. Primarily, *Vestiges of Natural Creation* (1844) was published anonymously, and it was only after his death that the writer's identity was revealed[82]. Richard Yeo describes the importance of his work, regarding adaptation of species, and furthermore how it applies to man: "In spite of his criticism of Jean Baptiste Lamarck, Chambers' work revived the prospect of a connection between science and materialism, an association which had political implications in the aftermath of the French Revolution."[83] Furthermore, Yeo notes how crucial it was for the scientific community to reject Chambers' ideas to preserve the sanctity of the relationship between religion and science:

> But by associating science with controversial materialist ideas in a work of popular circulation, Chambers threatened the rationale of this strategy and the harmony of science and religion it represented. In order to restore this alliance, and to preserve the religious and social respectability of science, it was crucial to show not only that the theories in the book were false and dangerous, but that the work itself could not be classified as "scientific." (11)

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[82] Robert Chambers, T.C. Savill, and J. Churchill, *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*. 1844: John Churchill, Princes Street, Soho. Subsequent page references in text.

[83] Richard Yeo, Science and Intellectual Authority in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Britain: Robert Chambers and "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation" *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Autumn, 1984), (10). Subsequent page references in text.

The book was a best seller, and reached a wide readership, but despite an excellent layman's knowledge of the sciences, Chambers work was not recognised by the scientific community. Nevertheless, within his book, he does outline a theory which demonstrates uncanny similarities to Darwinism:

> It has been already intimated, as a general fact, that there is an obvious gradation amongst the families of both the vegetable and animal kingdoms, from the simple lichen and animalcule respectively up to the highest order of dicotyledonous trees and the mammalia. Confining our attention, in the meantime, to the animal kingdom-it does not appear that this gradation passes along one line, on which every form of animal life can be, as it were, strung; there may be branching or double lines at some places; or the whole may be in a circle composed of minor circles, as has been recently suggested. But still it is incontestable that there are general appearances of a scale beginning the simple and advancing to the complicated. (192)

Similarly to Darwin, Chambers notices that species are developed, but more particularly that their development is not linear, using the image of a branch instead to explain his hypothesis. The concept of a branch further lends itself to the illustration of the entangled bank that Darwin discusses at the end of *On the Origin of Species*. In this manner, Chambers anticipates Darwinian theory, and demonstrates how concepts of evolution had already been surfacing and developing. By discussing adaptation, Chambers identified the incremental adaptation of species as a slow process,:

> Starting from the primeval germ, which, as we have seen, is the *representative* of a particular order of full-grown animals, we find all others to be merely advances from that type, with the extension of endowments and modification of forms which are required in each particular case; each form, also, retaining a strong affinity to that which precedes it, and tending to impress its own features on that which succeeds. (192-193)

Chambers theories were dismissed as unscientific, as Richard Yeo notes: “The Vestiges, as it came to be called, met with a deluge of criticism. The charges brought against the author were serious ones lack of practical research, second-hand knowledge, and disregard of proper scientific methods.” (5) This is perhaps because, as Yeo further discusses:

> Men of science were not differentiated from other educated groups by formal training, and the status of science was not secured by an institutionalized career structure such as that which characterized the legal, medical, and clerical professions. This situation supported a general discussion of science but it also meant that men of science were compelled to defend the claims of science in a public forum against powerful opponents such as the clergy. (9)

As Yeo further writes: “Scientists had to establish the domain of natural knowledge as their own, and monitor the boundaries between science and religion”. (9) There was a form of anarchy within the scientific community; any man could become a man of science, and yet because of this, their authority would always be questioned. Robert Chambers’s work was highly controversial, therefore any weakness in evidence would have been taken advantage of, which is why Darwin took so long to publish *On the Origin of Species*. Being fully aware of the scrutiny that his work would be subjected to, Darwin knew that the evidence he needed to provide should be infallible. Darwin recognised that Chambers did much to ready people for his forthcoming theories, and after his death in 1871, he wrote to his daughter Annie Dowie explaining how:

> Several years ago I perceived that I had not done full justice to a scientific work which I believed and still believe he was intimately connected with, and few things have struck me with more admiration than the perfect temper and liberality with which he treated my conduct.[84]

Perhaps, therefore, Chambers' work was vital for the acceptance of Darwinism. It is important to note that, like Chambers, Melville was a layman with a marked interest in science. Chambers, as a layman with a particular interest, demonstrates how the general public was able to assimilate the science of the time. Similarly to Chambers, Melville, as an active thinker and participant in the scholarly atmosphere can be considered an exemplary well-educated recipient of Darwin's early writings.

William Howarth illustrates the parallels in life choices made by Melville and Darwin, who were equally charged characters forced to reflect on man's place in nature through their individual experiences.[85] Howarth identifies similarities between Darwin and Melville's shipping voyages that took them both to the Galapagos:

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[84] Charles Darwin in correspondence with Annie Dowie, March 24th, 1871

[85] William Howarth, *Earth Islands: Darwin and Melville in the Galapagos.* Iowa Review, 2000. 30((30:3)): p. 95-113. Subsequent page references in text.

> Charles Darwin called at the Galapagos in 1835 and Herman Melville arrived in 1841. Both men were in their twenties, on global voyages with similar agendas. Their principle work was to forage: Darwin remained a month to gather specimens and notes for the HMS Beagle, a ship outfitted for research but also secretly inspecting Spanish colonial defences. Melville's went ashore briefly to glean food and fuel for the Acushnel, a New Bedford whaler. (99)

Considering these similarities it is evident why Melville was attracted to Darwin's publication *The Voyage of the Beagle*. His own observations of the Galapagos as he took a similar journey would have engaged Melville on a personal level when family misfortune left him questioning philosophically many life truths that he had taken for granted[86]. Howarth divulges a number of similarities between the two men, whose querying self-reflection was fed by their contingent experiences: "Both young men faced disapproving fathers, and both rebelled by running away to sea. There they found second lives, gaining new visions to replace paternal values. Darwin's call lay in rocks plants and animals; a new way to see Creation. Melville discovered the indigenous people of the Pacific" (107). However, as Howarth further argues, the similarity ends when considering how the two men processed their new information and experiences: "Darwin seized science and moved toward it. Melville rebelled against Scripture, yet never escaped it. He was stuck in an old narrative, the creationist story of Genesis and man's first disobedience." (111). In this manner, similarities between Melville and Lyell can be drawn, through their reluctance to accept evolutionary concepts. Lyell's reaction proves that no matter how informed and intelligent a thinker might be, it was difficult for any individual of the time to attest to the concepts of evolution, which inherently linked humanity to animal. Though both Darwin and Melville had similar experiences at sea, their differing personalities led them to pursue varying thesis on the matter of life and humanity's place in existence. Darwin after time and consideration coined a theory that consolidated his findings in the Galapagos, whereas Melville used creative means as catharsis to explore his doubts. According to Howarth, whilst using the clinical scientific method Darwin creates something new, whereas hindered by doctrine Melville only found divergence:

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[86] Elizabeth Hardwick, *Herman Melville*. London: Penguin, 2000 Subsequent page references in text.

> Although Darwin often notes in *The Voyage of the Beagle* that birds roost or nest to sustain feeding habits, Melville sees this special order as a malevolent hierarchy. In his islands, birds dive upon fish or infant turtles, sea lions battle for mates, species constantly prey on others or compete against their own. Darwin eventually calls such behaviour natural selection, but in Moby-Dick Melville sees it as "horrible vulturism of the earth"; a destructive voracity that holds all creatures in thrall, even the mighty whale. (107)

Nevertheless, Darwin's findings from the Galapagos had their own unique effect on Melville, whose own personal tragedies and hardships had given him a less than rose tinted view on life.

In the novel, Melville often writes like a naturalist, perhaps imitating Darwin and his contemporaries, for example, the beginning of the chapter "Cetology":

> Now the various species of whales need some sort of popular comprehensive classification, if only an easy outline one for the present, hereafter to be filled in all its departments by subsequent laborers. As no better man advances to take this matter in hand, I hereupon off my own poor endeavors. (117)

The extensive section on the "science" of the whale is written in a style almost like a textbook, which is relevant considering the Ishmael's past as a schoolteacher, mirroring that of Melville himself. It is apparent that Melville considers the whaling ship a place for amateur observation scientifically: "For many years past the whale-ship has been the pioneer in ferreting out the remotest and least known parts of the earth. She has explored seas and archipelagos which had no chart, where no Cook or Vancouver had ever sailed." (97) Melville here announces through the voice of Ishmael the element of exploration which he attributes to whaling. It could be argued that Ishmael in the novel mirrors the position of the "thinker" aboard the ship, putting individuals like the fictional Ishmael and his creator, Melville, in the same category as Darwin on his voyage with *The Beagle.* Although a layman, and not an expert of science of cetology, the desire for knowledge and philosophical pursuits would make Melville feel an affiliation to a sea born naturalist.

David C. Leonard suggests that Melville adhered to Cartesian ideas about the vortex suggested in his unprinted book *The World*[87]. These ideas tainted his view on the world with a nihilistic scepticism which would have had a profound effect on his reading of Darwin: "As a result of his knowledge of Cartesianism, Melville views nature as an impersonal mechanism that runs without human or divine intervention. Therefore Melville's affinity with Cartesianism alienated him from the main currents of nineteenth-century transcendental thought" (109). Unlike Mary Shelley, who drew on Descartes fairly conservative views on dualism, Melville, according to Leonard, was inspired by Descartes dissenting concepts. In accordance with Leonard's work, Melville's understanding of Descartes problematized certain ideas such as concepts of Christianity and God. It also undermines the concept of the Great Chain of Being, a prevalent and accepted idea that dates from Plato and Aristotle that was about to be overturned by *On the Origin of Species*. The concept was developed during the Renaissance by a variety of philosophers, but specifically by Leibniz, explored by Arthur Lovejoy[88]. The implication of "The Great Chain of Being" is that there is a definite all-encompassing hierarchy for everything within a continuous chain linking the lowest common denominator to God. The notion was threatened by the idea of extinction, which suggested that species are not continuous, further insinuating that there must therefore be a breaking of the chain. Catastrophism, however, was seen as a way of perhaps consolidating this idea with Christian doctrine, suggesting that the reason for extinction was a catastrophe like the Flood, or multiple catastrophes that wiped out certain species. Yet it was not until *On the Origin of Species* that this theory of existence was scientifically toppled, although the work that was being forwarded by other scientists did start to show cracks in this Great Chain. The breaking of the chain, according to Wilson in particular, was influential on Melville, and within his writing of *Moby-Dick*.

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[87] David C. Leonard, *The Cartesian Vortex in Moby-Dick.* American Literature, 1979. **51**(1): p. 105-109. Subsequent page references in text.

[88] Arthur.O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea*. 2009: Transaction Publishers.

Tyrus Hillway is scathing of Melville's treatment of science, claiming it to be amateurish.[89] He states that "…his education in science was haphazard rather than systematic or thorough." (411). Hillway is somewhat dismissive of Melville's use of science, querying why Darwin's *Journals* did not feature more prominently in his novel, whilst highlighting Melville's use of Oliver Goldsmith's *A History of the Earth and Animated Nature* (1774)[90] and his incorrect ideas of science, for example, the refusal to accept Linnaean concepts that establish the whale as a mammal. Yet this approach, if it is amateurish, only adds to my insight. The absorption and understanding of evolutionary theory by the layman is not always perfect, and many misconceptions are common, even today. It demonstrates, even if mistaken, one way that scientific evidence was absorbed by the writer in the nineteenth century. In many cases, there would be widely shared misunderstanding of theories. If it is true that Melville's scientific education was indeed incomplete, it is not necessarily harmful for this study, as I am still able to glean understanding of the perception of science at the time.

Contrary to Hillway, Eric Wilson discusses instead how acute and subtle Melville's grasp on Darwinian theory was, despite perhaps not having the most impressive grasp of contemporary science: "Although Melville was not deeply read in evolutionary science, *Moby-Dick* (1851) prophetically details the great scientific upheaval of 1859: the publication of Charles' Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*."(131) Wilson argues that the contrast between Ahab and Ishmael exemplifies the outdated ideas of the Great Chain of Being, and the new science that more accurately described the universe. He further argues that Melville pre-empted many of the ideas Darwin communicated in *On the Origin of Species* within the novel. Wilson's hypothesis is potentially a little far-fetched, although an important argument. Melville's pre-emption of Darwinian Theory is improbable as his grasp of science was unlikely to be so astute; nevertheless, the argument Wilson proffers highlights some interesting and uncanny moments of relevance to Darwinian Theory.

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[89] Tyrus. Hillway, *Melville's Education in Science*. Texas Studies in Literature and Language, 1974. **16**(3): p. 411-425.

[90] Oliver Goldsmith, *A History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, London: Caxton Press, 1824

I have clarified that though Melville's knowledge may not have been perfect, scientific matters were within the forefront of his mind, and definitely influenced his writing. The zeitgeist in which Melville was writing was one of academic tension, as recent scientific work was building to the Darwinian climax. Now I shall consider how his absorption of ideas affected his writing within *Moby-Dick*, specifically focusing on his portrayal of humanity, symbolic use of the whale, and characterization of Ahab, to explore how his writing of *Moby-Dick* can be read as a contemplation of man's place in the world.

Whaling and the Objectification of the Animal Body

One of the most marked aspects of *Moby-Dick* is the presentation of the whale. Before any other consideration of life, God, and humanity's place in the world, *Moby-Dick* is a novel about the practice of whaling, a profession that inherently links the human with the animal body. From the resources harvested from whaling, humanity was furthered throughout the industrial revolution. It is a discipline that profits from the mutilation and disassembly of an animal body to drive human endeavours; a fact that might have been foremost in Melville's thought whilst he wrote. Humanity, throughout the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century, was accelerating faster than ever, yet much of the success of man was reliant on the use of natural resources, like the whale. Therefore, within the novel there is an inherent undertone throughout that marks humanity's reliance on the natural world. The whale's body, as a tool, is disassembled and integrated into society. The whale is part of humanities development, and in this way it contributes to any advancements. Philip Armstrong discusses how the industrial revolution problematized the relationship between the animal and the human:

> That the animal, dead or alive, should figure at the center of these historical and economic shifts is no surprise. Over its two-hundred-year history, industrialization has produced, among its other effects-urbanization, degradation of the economic status of women, redefinition of labor structures, environmental depredation-a radically altered relationship between humans and other animals. [91]

This radical alteration of the relationship between animals and humanity is vital to consider within my study. Armstrong argues that modern farming techniques have succeeded in creating distance between humans and animals. In this manner, the gap between humans and animals has widened. No longer do we nurture or kill the animal ourselves. As Armstrong continues: “geo- graphical and psychological gaps have widened between an increasingly urbanized human populace and other species.” (1040)

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[91] Philip Armstrong, "Leviathan is a Skein of Networks": Translations of Nature and Culture in Moby-Dick Author(s): Source: ELH, Vol. 71, No. 4 (Winter, 2004), 1040

The novel is written with a number of distractions from the primary narrative that focuses on the body of the whale as a specimen. Laura Barratt explores Melville’s narrative detours in her assessment of the abject within the novel: “Moby-Dick exults in descriptions of bodies-of a variety of species-and bodily fluids, but those bodies are more often mutilated than not.”[92] Barratt speaks of human and animal bodies and the emphasis on their physicality through morbid description. However, Barratt’s argument can be furthered to demonstrate an objectification and dissection of the whale’s body representative of the animal body. Armstrong further focuses on the whaler; how he functioned as a figure in nineteenth century society: “His experience routinely alternated between dangerous encounters with the vast materiality of the living animal and its reduction to dead and partial resources, a commodity to be measured by the barrel, reified by the factory ship's technological procedures and its specialization of labor.” (1040) The “vast materiality” is especially important in this context. By focusing his attentions in this manner, the whale’s body becomes abject with relation to Kristeva’s theory identified in *The Powers of Horror*.

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[92] Laura Barrett "[T]he ungraspable phantom of life": Incompletion and Abjection in Moby-Dick and Housekeeping, *South Atlantic Review*, 73:3 (Summer 2008), pp. 4. Subsequent page references in text.

Similarly Melville includes chapters that explore the process of dissembling the whale. After observing the biology of the animal we are invited to observe the process of harvesting its natural resources. In the chapter "Cutting In" Ishmael describes how the blubber "envelopes the whale precisely as the rind does an orange, so it is stripped off from the body precisely as an orange is sometimes stripped by spiralizing it."(273) Ishmael again likens the animal to an object that can be dismantled. The process of deblubbering may seem grotesque to the audience, yet it is written in a factual, emphatic way. Ishmael's description therefore adds to the concept that the animal is an automaton.

Another of these chapters includes "The Whale as a Dish". The animal is depicted as a food source, and as Oliver argues "animals reassure us that if we can eat them, we are human and not animals. That is, they die like animals so that we can live as humans." (296) Yet when the whale is finally ingested by the human consumer it stops being an object and instead becomes the abject; neither part of the human body nor outside of it, making it a liminal feature that Ishmael actively addresses when he notes: "That mortal man should feed upon the creature that feeds his lamp, and, like Stubb, eat him by his own light, as you may say; this seems so outlandish a thing that one must needs go a little into the history and philosophy of it." (269) Melville refers to the unsettling, morbid concept that the animal you are eating is also lighting your meal. The whale's body is particularly abject, as it becomes part of the subject who consumes it, whilst also being an object in the same room used by the same man. The horror of the consumption of the whale's body is exemplified through the behaviour of the sharks at the time of Stubb's meal, as Melville writes: "Nor was Stubb the only banqueter on the whale's flesh that night. Mingling their mumblings with his own mastications, thousands on thousands of sharks, swarming round the dead leviathan, smackingly feasted on its fatness." (263) Melville's gory representation of the sharks both demonstrates the abject nature of the carnivore whilst also aligning Stubb with the sharks that similarly dine on the whale carcass. The relationship between Stubb and the sharks at this time is evident also in the private musings of the cook, who says that he: "Wish, by gor! Whale eat him. 'stead of him eat whale. I'm bressed if he ain't more shark dan Massa Shark hisself." (268) The cook here draws attention to the relationship between Stubb and the whale. Stubb demonstrates his mastery over the whale by consuming it, yet the reader is also alerted to the fact that the whale could also just as easily eat Stubb; this is poignant as the whale is ultimately Stubb's demise. Therefore Stubb is aligned with the whale as well as its consumer, and the boundaries between man and beast are blurred, making them both temporarily abyssal residents. To emphasise this Stubb is related to as 'more shark dan Massa Shark himself.' The cook give the shark a title; "Massa Shark", which is similar to the way he would refer to Stubb himself. The fish is anthropomorphised through the cook's mutterings and the human is zoomorphic, making both parties abject. Barrett's focus on the mutilation of animal bodies within *Moby-Dick* is clear when Melville describes the sharks' reactions to being attacked by the crew of the Pequod. The viciousness of animality is demonstrated; a pure hunger that leads the creatures to cannibalism and even self-consumption when Melville writes: "They viciously snapped, not only at each other's disembowelments, but like flexible bows bent round, and bit their own; till those entrails seemed swallowed over and over again by the same mouth, to be oppositely voided by the same wound" (272). The barbarity of this moment is stressed through Melville's surreal description. The sharks are representative of Uruboros, the self-consuming serpent; a symbol of chaos. An inherently animal image it represents the barbarity of the animal kingdom; a stark contrast between the sharks in the water and the humans on deck. Man is in a place of safety; elevated above the sharks on the Pequod. Their position of safety, however, does not last as Moby-Dick destroys the man-made boundary between human and animal. The ship's crew in this way become victims of the abyss.

The attempt to reduce the animal body is thwarted by the symbolic significance of Moby-Dick, therefore demonstrating how humanity fails to widen the abyss through the objectification of the animal body. The irony of this particular section is that Melville demonstrates how by objectifying the whale to elevate humanity we become intrinsically linked with the animal. The further use of Moby-Dick as a symbolic force which transcends humankinds use of the animal body demonstrates that whilst humanity uses natural resources such as the whale's body, it is not a greater power than nature itself.

Moby-Dick becomes a symbolic presence within the novel, transcending the reduction of the animal. This is because, primarily he is symbolic of the abject; the unknown-as Kristeva argues: "The writer is a phobic who succeeds in metaphorizing in order to keep from being frightened to death; instead he comes to life again in signs." (38) Melville uses the whale to create a signifier which channels his reaction of abjection towards Darwinian theory. The symbol of the whale becomes the axis mundi around which the narrative revolves. R.E. Watten writes on the whale's symbolic potency, considering the significance of the whale to be ambiguous and multi-faceted, rather similarly to how Sherwin argued that Frankenstein's monster is a liminal signifier: "Might it not have been Melville's own intention to invest his great symbolic leviathan with a plurality of meanings?"[93] The mysterious quality of the whale lends it symbolic potency: "As yet, however, the sperm whale, scientific or poetic, lives not complete in any literature. Far above all other hunted whales, his is an unwritten life." (117) A creature that is "an unwritten life" is a plethora of unsourced material; the monstrousness of the creature is almost mythical. The whale was an animal of the unknown, whose history seemed unfathomable. It is natural that this element of the creature would create discomfort within the human doctrine of anthropocentricity.

The whale represents a variety of things; animalistic power, the brutal force of nature, and the uncontrollable wrath of God, as Ishmael states: "The white whale is their demigorgon" (150). The symbolic power of the whale is explicitly explored more by Ishmael within the novel. For example, the character Gabriel, a mad stowaway from the *Jeraboam*, became something of a prophet for the crew, imploring them not to chase the deified animal: "…Gabriel solemnly warned the captain against attacking the White Whale, in case the monster should be seen; in his gibbering insanity, pronounced the White Whale to be no less a being than the Shaker God incarnated…" (284). Gifted by rumour with immortality, Moby-Dick becomes something more than man through his ability to survive: "…some whalemen should go still further in their superstitions; declaring Moby-Dick not only ubiquitous, but immortal (for immortality is but ubiquity in time); that though groves of spears should be planted in his flanks, he would still swim away unharmed…" (163). The supremacy of Moby-Dick is emphasized in the first sighting. The eventual revelation of the whale only occurs at the end of the novel, rather like at the end of life, potentially placing emphasis of the whale's godlike aspect:

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[93] A.R. Lee, *Herman Melville: Modern readings: Typee, Omoo, Mardi, Redburn, White-Jacket, Moby-Dick*. 2001: Helm Information.

> A gentle joyousness-a mighty mildness of repose in swiftness, invested the gliding whale. Not the white bull Jupiter swimming away with the ravished Europa clinging to his graceful horns, his lovely leering eyes sideways intent upon the maid, with smooth bewitching fleetness, rippling straight for the nuptial bower in Crete; not Jove, not that great majesty Supreme! Did surpass the glorified White Whale as he so divinely swan. (484)

The deification of the whale is used to problematize the animal. On the one hand, as Starbuck continually asserts Moby-Dick is merely an animal, and is therefore below humanity according to the Great Chain of Being. It upsets the balance which keeps humanity on superior footing. Instead of a liminal creature, here we have one that sits astride of the human race, incorporating animality and divinity in a way that defies human rationality. Yet in this manner the whale embodies liminality that mirrors humanity, or specifically, captain Ahab himself. Ahab represents a liminality between animal and god, which therefore makes him an intriguing mirror to humanity. The whale's problematic status can primarily be observed by its given name, Moby-Dick. A seemingly human name if the reader approaches the novel from a fresh perspective they may perhaps be surprised to find that the eponymous antagonist is an animal. In appearance the whale seems to represent European humanity, considering his white colouring and large forehead. The whale therefore, becomes anthropomorphised, and embodies the boundary figure of the abyss. I consider this further within the next section, when I discuss the Moby Dick's human qualities, and Ahab's animal qualities, that make them both products of boundary perversion.

The Blurring of Boundaries and the Integration of Bodies

When Ahab first encounters Moby-Dick, his leg is taken, and swallowed by the whale. A human part has been integrated into the animal body. Ahab replaces the leg with a part from the whale in an act of compensation. Yet despite Ahab's reason for using the whalebone in this manner, it serves in the novel as a literary device to demonstrate an incorporation of animality within Ahab's psyche. Moby-Dick incorporates a part of Ahab, and Ahab in attempted retribution incorporates a part of the whale. Because Moby-Dick took within himself a human part, there is a symbolic humanizing of the whales. As we know nothing specific of him previous to his encounter with Ahab, the literary device is useful to explore the human qualities that can be sought in animality. Similarly, the madness Ahab experiences after losing his leg becomes physically manifested in the whale bone leg that he has created for himself. In this manner he experiences a zoomorphic transformation which allows him to become partially animal himself, and therefore inherently abyssal.

Within the course of the novel many characters attempt to logically separate the whale from themselves in order to put a comfortable distance between man and beast. During the Cetology section Ishmael pointedly separates the whale from a mammal: "Be it known that, waiving all argument, I take the good old fashioned ground that the whale is a fish, and call upon holy Jonah to back me." (119) Ishmael's rejection of the Linnaean system of order is poignant, as it represents an attempt to widen the gap between animal and human. The disagreement with this ordering reveals much about the ambiguity within the novel as to whether the whale is a rational vengeful creature, or a mere dumb brute. Ishmael's separation seems to suggest a human necessity to believe the whale a far removed entity, in a different category of existence to humanity. Yet whether Melville actually disagrees with the Linnaean system is questionable. Although as Hecht argues Melville read Goldsmith extensively and used him a source material, it is not known whether he agreed with his assessment considering the whale. Armstrong instead, believes that Melville uses the whale to demonstrate the crossing of borders between animal and human: "I will argue that "leviathan," as understood by Melville and his contemporaries, also crosses back and forth between the human and the nonhuman domains in ways that demonstrate the inextricable interimplication of these apparently discrete and opposed dimensions."(1041) So either Melville believes that the whale is a fish himself, revealing the difficulty he found considering the whale part of the same group as humanity. Or, Melville specifically used Ishmael's perspective to explore this insecurity over our relationship with the whale. Either way, Ishmael's declaration reflects disbelief at this attribution of the whale to ourselves.

Similarly, Starbuck continuously attempts to argue against Ahab's quest by placing emphasis on Moby-Dick's status as a mere animal: "Vengeance on a dumb brute!' cried Starbuck, 'that simply smote thee from blindest instinct! Madness! To be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous" (145).

Starbuck attempts to forcibly create a gap between Ahab and the whale by emphasizing the animal's lack of thought, but also by reminding Ahab of his own humanity. In places, it seems that Starbuck is correct in his belief that Moby-Dick is indeed, merely a whale. For example, when they finally encounter Moby-Dick he is depicted swimming away from the *Pequod* when he could have caused more damage, Starbuck emphasizes this to Captain Ahab: "Oh! Ahab,' cried Starbuck, 'not too late is it, even now, the third day, to desist. See! Moby-Dick seeks thee not. It is thou, thou, that madly sleekest him!" (503). Moby-Dick's indifference, however, disappears when the *Pequod* continues to pursue him. Ishmael, who is portrayed as an unbiased passive observer of the debate notices certain aspects of the whale when they attempt to capture it.

> But soon resuming his horizontal attitude, Moby Dick swam swiftly round and round the wrecked crew; sideways churning the water in his vengeful wake, as if, as if lashing himself up to still another and more deadly assault. The sight of the splintered boat seemed to madden him, as the blood of grapes and mulberries cast before Antiochus's elephants in the book of Maccabees. (468)

The swimming pattern of Moby Dick in this scene is indicative of a calculated manoeuvre. During the confrontation there are multiple incidences that demonstrate Moby-Dick's ability to strategize: "Retribution, swift vengeance, eternal malice were in his whole aspect, and spite of all that mortal men could do, the solid white buttress of his forehead smote the ship's starboard bow, till men and timbers reeled" (506). Here we see Moby-Dick at his most terrifying; the uncanny otherness of the white forehead teamed with the pure malevolence of his countenance. It is at this moment that it is certain that the *Pequod* and its crew are doomed.

It therefore seems, from Ishmael's account, that Moby-Dick is not merely a whale, but instead thinking, reasoning being, which means that he becomes a symbol of the destruction of the Great Chain of Being. Man was given his place near the top of the chain due to his faculty for reason. The presence of a reasoning beast undermines this chain. The reason Ahab pursues the beast is vengeance for his taken leg. But whilst the animal seems to have achieved reason, Ahab lacks this faculty. It therefore seems evident that Ahab not only wants justice for his stolen leg, but also his stolen humanity, the reason that elevates him above the beast. Moby-Dick, in ingesting the leg, took within himself part of Ahab, and the sentient reason that is natural to Ahab as a man becomes part of the whale instead. It seems that Ahab, in his desire to thwart Moby-Dick, also endeavours to retrieve his reason. Thus, according to Ahab's flawed reasoning, the death of Moby-Dick would symbolically return to Ahab that which he lost psychologically when he lost his leg.

It follows that whilst Moby-Dick resembles humanity, Ahab's actions somewhat mirror animality; Moby-Dick therefore can be considered the totem of Ahab's self-loathing. What Moby-Dick gains in human reason, Ahab lacks in madness. Frequently Ahab is described as an animal, for example, when Starbuck thinks mutinously, he considers Ahab like an untamed beast, caged: "Say he were pinioned even; knotted all over with ropes and hawsers; chained down to ring-bolts on this cabin floor; he would be more hideous than a caged tiger, then" (455). Ahab's beast-like qualities are constantly referred to throughout by all characters: “But you must jump when he gives an order. Step and growl; growl and go-that’s the word with Captain Ahab” (83). Furthermore Starbuck’s opinion of Ahab is clarified when he voices his opinions on the mission, simultaneously suggesting that Ahab resembles Prometheus whilst also being devoured by an animalistic force: “God help thee, old man, thy thoughts have created a creature in thee; and he whose intense thinking thus makes him a Prometheus; a vulture feeds upon that heart for ever; that vulture the very creature he creates” (181). Here there are discernable links to Ahab’s Promethean arrogance. Yet Starbuck also highlights how Ahab is plagued by an animalistic spectre that dominates his mind. The image is gruesome and parasitic, as if Ahab is allowing the beast within to feed from his human self. Physically, Moby-Dick’s already taken the leg from Ahab. Mentally, he still feeds on his mind, and consequently Ahab has retained some animalistic qualities.

Ahab’s animality is contrived from his madness; a form of being attributed to a lack of reason:

> All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in Moby Dick. (164)

Ahab’s madness is continually asserted throughout the text as the source of his inexplicable desire to kill Moby-Dick. It is an aspect of himself that he even recognizes: “But he drilled deep down, and blasted all my reason out of me!” (149) The attribution of reason to an animal is, ironically, seen as fundamentally unreasonable; a concept that no rational man would adhere to. The two primary antagonists therefore become liminal symbols of the confusion between animality and humanity. Both cross borders into the empty liminal space separating the two states of being. Melville uses this device to show how Ahab's body becomes part of Moby-Dick, and the two therefore become one. Ahab's use of the whalebone as a leg places emphasis on the intermingling of animality and humanity:

> It had previously come to me that this ivory leg had at sea been fashioned from the polished bone of the sperm whale's jaw. How could one look at Ahab then, seated on that tripod of bones, without bethinking him of the royalty it symbolized? For a Khan of the plank, and king of the sea, and a great lord of Leviathans was Ahab. (113)

However, the whalebone leg is merely an appendage to Ahab, a replacement for a true body part. Stubb demonstrates this when he relays his dream to Flask: "Why' thinks I, 'what's the row? It's not a real leg, only a false one,' And there's the mighty difference between a living thump and a dead thump." (113). He further continues to declare that "what's his leg now, but a cane-a whalebone cane…" (114). Here Melville highlights Ahab's physical deficiency caused by the whale. The whalebone leg is merely an appendage, he takes none of the animal's strength. The substitution is a weak addition.

However, the integration of Ahab's leg into Moby-Dick is different, and can be further experienced as part of Stubbs dream: "While I was battering away at the pyramid, a sort of badger-haired old merman, with a hump on his back, takes me by the shoulders and slews me round… why thunder alive, man, his stern was stuck full of marlinspikes, with the points out." (114) The merman, from his age, hump, and the fact that there are many marlinspikes embedded in his back, is an anthropomorphism of Moby-Dick. Within the dream, Stubb experiences the whale as a mythical speaking rational creature, whereas Ahab is a silent participant supported by a pyramid. Melville here demonstrates the distinction; Ahab is merely a crippled man; a human deprived of the whole. Moby-Dick instead has become an amalgamation of human and animal. When Moby-Dick takes Ahab's leg, it's a consummation. The part of the human becomes a part of Moby-Dick, and as a result human attributes become a part of the whale. The change to Ahab is instead diminutive. What makes Moby-Dick become more powerful weakens Ahab. Moby-Dick has gained something whilst Ahab has lost. Moby-Dick as the reasoning animal counteracts Ahab as the reasonless man.

Ahab is not the only character in the novel to be crippled because of the whale. Captain Boomer of the *Samuel Enderby* lost his arm in a similar previous encounter with Moby-Dick: "With his ivory arm frankly thrust forth in welcome, the other captain advanced, and Ahab, sword-fish blades) cried out in the walrus way…" (391). Yet this is where the similarity between the captains ends; Captain Boomer is cheerful, and lacks resentment towards the whale. He does not share Ahab's blood lust, and when he encountered Moby-Dick a second time after losing his arm, he did not attempt to capture him again: ''But couldn't fasten?' 'Didn't want to try to; ain't one limb enough?'' (394) There is a difference between the circumstances of the loss of limbs that separate Ahab from Boomer. Boomer's limb, unlike Ahab's, was not ingested. Instead, it was taken off, as it became septic from a gash caused by the attempt to capture the whale. The limb was not taken by the whale, it was merely lost as a result of the attack on him: ''And he took that arm off, did he?'… 'Aye, he was the cause of it, at least…'' (391). The difference between the captains demonstrates the importance of the ingesting of the limb by Moby-Dick. Symbolically, Boomer lost something, but not to the animal appetite of the whale. Therefore his human part, his reason, is still intact. The fact that the whale ingested Ahab's leg is the source of his madness.

The concept of the integration of humanity into the animal is mentioned by Melville earlier in the novel, during Father Mapple's sermon pertaining to the biblical story of Jonah and the whale. In the story Jonah attempts to separate himself from God, and is punished by being eaten whole by a whale: "Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord out of the fish's belly. But observe his prayer, and learn a weighty lesson. For sinful as he is, Jonah does not weep and wail for direct deliverance. He feels that his dreadful punishment is just" (41). The primary sin that Jonah commits that Father Mapple highlights is pride. By attempting to separate himself from God, Jonah demonstrates Promethean arrogance. The separation is an attempt to find autonomy from God, and perhaps demonstrates an attempt to scale the Great Chain of Being. As punishment God commits Jonah to the belly of a fish. The act is meaningful, as instead of achieving a separation from God, Jonah is integrated into the animal; becomes part of the whale as punishment. Jonah effectively becomes part of the animal. However, as he becomes part of the animal he learns humility. He accepts his position and thanks God for allowing him the insight. Because of this, God does not allow the whale to digest Jonah, and the whale "vomited out Jonah upon the dry land" (42). According to the story, Jonah is allowed to be separated from the whale, but only when he acknowledges his position beneath god: “And how pleasing to God was this conduct in Jonah, is shown in the eventual deliverance of him from the sea and the whale.” (41) The inclusion of this chapter is used to demonstrate the relationship between God and humanity, and animal and humanity. The integration of the man into the animal demonstrates the close relation humanity has to the animal, and this can only be redeemed through the humble acceptance of humanity’s roots rather than Promethean arrogance.

Ahab acknowledges the animal fury with which he had been hunting the whale. This is his most lucid insight into his own life and flaws. Here he relieves himself of the arrogance and professes the madness of his pursuit: “Aye, I widowed that poor girl when I married her, Starbuck; and then, the madness, the frenzy, the boiling blood and the smoking brow, with which, for a thousand lowerings old Ahab has furiously, foamingly chased his prey-more a demon than a man!” (479) The claim that he is more like a demon than a man is meaningful. The amalgamation of animality into his person has turned him into a subhuman being. The use of the word “demon” suggests that this symbiotic conjoining of the animal and the man has created something monstrous; more monstrous perhaps than Moby-Dick himself. The use of this word is reminiscent of *Frankenstein*, in which the creature is referred to as “demon”. However, it is only in appearance that the creature is daemonic initially, though when he becomes morally corrupted the phrase is more meaningful. In the creature’s case, the phrase “demon” is used due to his hideous appearance, and then a lack of morality. The word is attributed to Ahab because of his lack of reason. The word "demon" can therefore be attributed to a person who lacks some aspect of humanity. It is these demons that reside in the abyss.

Schopenhauer and the struggle of Wills: Ahab's contrary beasts

Thus far, I have applied my focus to the role of the body in *Moby-Dick*, both animal and human. Like Shelley, Melville was driven to consider the corporeal elements of humanity, and how these reminds us what we have in common with the animal. Within this section, I move on to consider Arthur Schopenhauer's theory of the Will, to demonstrate the potential difference between animal and human that Melville proffers[94]. I demonstrate how Melville represents rationality as a weak weapon when attempting to conquer animal instinct. According to Eric Goldman[95], Melville's novella *Billy Budd*(1924) written over thirty years after *Moby-Dick* was published explores the implications of Darwinian Theory more than any of Melville's other fictional works.[96] Goldman writes that "…the novel is more generally preoccupied with the philosophical implications of a Darwinian perspective of human being; in particular, Billy Budd broods over the shrinking possibility of free will in the apparently deterministic universe unveiled by Darwin" (431). *Billy Budd* is a post-Darwinian text that Melville started writing in 1888, six years after Darwin's death. The novel, as a potential reaction to Darwin's *The Descent of Man*, demonstrates, as Goldman argues, a dichotomy present within humanity of animal instinct and human free will. Billy condemns himself to death because of his unescapable urge to hit Claggart that kills him. The action represents the brute instinct within Billy; silenced by his stutter, the only reaction that seems possible for him at that moment is to lash out violently. The absence of speech simultaneously represents animality alongside his act of aggression. However, as Goldman suggests, there is also the ambiguous possibility that at the end of his life, Billy's human strength of will overcomes his animal instinct to twitch during his hanging:

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[94] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Essays and Aphorisms*, trans R.J. Hollindale, London: Penguin Classics, 1976 Subsequent page references in text.

[95] Eric Goldman, 'Bringing Out the Beast in Melville's Billy Budd: The Dialogue of Darwinian and Holy Lexicon on Board the Bellipotent', *Studies in the Novel*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (winter 2005), pp. 430-442 Subsequent page references in text.

[96] Herman Melville, *Billy Budd and Other Stories*, Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1998 Subsequent page references in text.

> With Billy's final, seemingly miraculous act of will power-his defiance of his autonomic reflexes themselves-Melville preserve the *possibility* of transcendent free will in a looming, deterministic universe where people seem guided less by 'the force lodged in will power' than by the 'brute Force' of their animal instincts.(431)

Melville's focus in the novella is on human nature overcoming animal instinct and the ambiguity as to whether this is actually possible:

> Yet in *Moby-Dick*, Melville exposes as Ahab's madness his belief that the actions of a dumb brute attacking out of 'blindest instinct' are somehow evil. In *Billy Budd*, the 'blindest instinct' of the White Whale merges with human nature when characters such a Claggart suddenly reveal a core animal nature that they are helpless to resist. Such devolution, or what Darwin frequently referred to as 'reversion' to primitive forms, occurs time and again to both high and low characters in the novel. (436)

Goldman here argues that in Melville's earlier novel he disembodies the 'brute instinct' that overtook Billy when he committed the murder of Claggart, and symbolically transposed it on the whale that Ahab seeks to destroy. Similarly, Steven Herrmann offers a psychoanalytic reading, suggesting that "Melville's symbol of the White Whale, "Moby Dick" is an image of the Self that stresses the Self's dark side in a way that most of the major religions of the globe have not" [97]. Herrmann argues that the Whale represents a more nefarious part of the human psyche, and describes it as "evil". I endeavour to marry the two arguments of Herrmann and Goldman using Schopenhauer's concept of the Will to demonstrate how Moby-Dick resembles the animal within humanity's core.

Symbolically Ahab seeks to assert human will power over the animal instinct in the emblematic killing of Moby-Dick. The difference in narrative devices that Melville used in both texts to explore the same concept is notable. In *Moby-Dick*, the symbolic war between instinct and human will on the surface is very distinct as it occurs between two separate bodies- the human and the whale. Until one begins to closely examine the zoomorphic/anthropomorphic devices in the novel, the whale and Ahab are opposing antagonists. In his later novel, Melville has disposed of this pretended separation, and demonstrates how the contention between animal and human is something that can be observed within man's individual psyche. *Billy Budd* therefore draws out and exemplifies the central message of *Moby-Dick* that pertains to the difference between animal and man.

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[97] Steven B. Herrmann, Melville's Portrait of Same-Sex Marriage in *Moby-Dick, Jung Journal: Culture & Psyche,* Vol. 4, No. 3 (Summer 2010), 67

Goldman's argument that I am to further extend and examine in relation to *Moby-Dick* is inherently linked to Schopenhauer's ideas of "the Will" as the governing force that presides over life. The difference must be distinguished between Schopenhauer's concept of "the Will" that relates to the uncontrollable "will to live" and animal instinct, and what Goldman refers to as 'the human will', which is used to describe the human strength of mind over brute instinct. The word 'will' can therefore be used to describe opposite concepts and must therefore be used with caution. For this reason when I discuss the "human will" it refers to human ability to overcome instinct through the use of thought, and when I discuss the "Will" I shall be referring to Schopenhauer's uncontrollable force of nature. The Will is seen by Schopenhauer metaphysically as the driving force behind everything:

> Because everything in nature is at once *appearance* and thing in itself, or *natura naturata* and *natura naruratans*, it is consequently susceptible of a twofold explanation, a *physical* and a *metaphysical*. The physical explanation is always in terms of *cause*, the metaphysical in terms of *will*; for that which appears in cognitionless nature as *natural force*, and on a higher level as *life force*, receives in animal and man the name will. (56)

Schopenhauer argues that the Will is a force that animals and humans share, and the only aspect that humans have over animals is the intellect: "It is indeed remarkable how, through the mere addition of thought, which the animal lacks, there should have been erected on the same narrow basis of pain and pleasure that the animal possesses so vast and lofty a structure of human happiness and misery…" (45) Schopenhauer argues that the magnitude of humanity do not philosophize on life: "The rest live their lives away in this dream not very different from the animals, from which they are in the end distinguished only by their ability to provide for a few years ahead." (123) He emphatically declares: "How very paltry and limited the normal human intellect is, and how little lucidity there is in human consciousness…" (123). Ahab in his symbolic quest to quell animal instinct with his human intellect intends, in Schopenhauer's terms, to overcome the Will by using his humanity to subdue the beast. It is Ahab's mission to widen the gap between the human and the animal by asserting the dominance of his human will above the natural Will of the whale, demonstrating himself as part of a higher species that can usurp animal instinct.

As Captain he considers himself to be the pinnacle of the humanity aboard the ship, and works doggedly to maintain his superiority through his incessant pursuit of Moby-Dick. Eric Wilson believes that this demonstrates Ahab's desire to maintain the Great Chain of Being whilst scaling it simultaneously:

> On the one hand, he yearns for a static scale of nature, in which hierarchically grouped animals and men are utterly fated to be what they are, moving with the regularity of machines. On the other, he wishes for himself to progress, to evolve, to the very top of the chain, from which place he will hold the other species below him. From either position, he maintains, violently, the shared assumptions of both pre-Dawinian chains of being: anthropocentrism, hierarchy, design. (135)

Wilson describes Ahab actively putting human intellect over the unstoppable force of the Will. As David C. Leonard argues, Ahab becomes a symbol of Promethean arrogance:

> A more significant basis for the challenge is provided when man feels within his own intellectual or moral nature a superiority to the gods as he has been taught to believe in them. The stories of Prometheus may show such development. Prometheus continued his defiance because he felt he was on solid moral ground, even though Zeus held the superior power. Eventually such challenges lead to a rejection of man's lesser beliefs and a reformation of his theology. (33)

Leonard claims that Ahab's Promethean qualities demonstrate the plight of humanity to scale the Great Chain of Being: "Stand not by me, but stand under me, whoever you are that will now help Stubb; for Stubb, too, sticks here. I grin at thee, thou grinning whale!" (506) Here Ahab reveals his plight to elevate himself above humanity and look the whale in the eye. Leonard would perhaps argue that this is a direct challenge to God, that Ahab endeavours to look into the eyes of God as an equal.

However, unlike Leonard I would argue instead that the Whale, rather than symbolizing God, represents nature as a force of power that usurps diminutive humanity. The Pequod's failure to overcome Moby-Dick and final demise represents the helplessness of paltry human rationality against animal instinct. It demonstrates the power the unconscious, uncontrollable mind has over the comparatively weaker ego. It reveals Schopenhauer's Will overcoming reason, and animality drowns human higher understanding. Humanity is forced to acknowledge its humble place and is unable to stretch to the Godly heights that would allow it to usurp animality. The assessment can be explicitly seen mentioned in the novel:

> But as the mind does not exist unless leagued with the soul, therefore it must have been that, in Ahab's case, yielding up all his thoughts and fancies to his one supreme purpose; that purpose, by its own sheer inveteracy of will, forced itself against gods and devils into a kind of self-assumed, independent being of its own. (181)

Melville uses the word "will" to describe his human will as a separate entity. It describes Ahab's attempt to detach his own 'human will' from the unconscious will shared by the animal; the Will to live. The plight of Ahab to govern the animal is fuelled by the pure resolve of his rage. It is not his intellect that drives his quest, but the determination to assert his human dominance over the whale.

Yet in this way Ahab is a contradiction in himself; as previously discussed his animal instincts and insanity are fundamentally the reason for this desire to overcome the beast. It is Starbuck who uses reason to attempt to quell the power of Ahab's animal Will that drives him against the whale. And at only one stage within the novel does Starbuck almost succeed. When this occurs, Ahab has one moment of lucidity, where he recognises the superior humanity in Starbuck; "Close! Stand close to me, Starbuck; let me look into a human eye; it is better than to gaze into sea or sky; better than to gaze upon God" (480). At this point Ahab is persuaded by the humanity of Starbuck's feeling: "Come, my Captain, study our course, and let us away! See, see! The boy's face from the window! The boy's hand on the hill!" (480). Yet it is Ahab's Will that drives him on; spurring him to defeat the very part of himself that steers his course. Ahab seeks to conquer the animal, but it is the animal within himself that drives him to do so. Here he admits to this:

> What is it, what nameless, inscrutable, unearthly thing is it; what cozening, hidden lord and master, and cruel, remorseless emperor commands me; that against all natural lovings and longing, I so keep pushing and crowding, and jamming myself on all the time; recklessly making me ready to do what in my own proper, natural heart, I durst not so much as dare. (481)

The nameless power that drives Ahab is his instinctual need to recapture his leg. His will to recapture the part of himself that the whale took overcomes the reasoning that tells him that the mission to overcome Moby-Dick will end in his death. Reason tells Ahab at this point that if he continues his course, he will die. Yet his Will to dominate the whale overcomes this, and his moment of insightful reflection is momentary. He mistakenly assumes that his undeterminable drive to kill the whale comes from God, and he uses it as justification: "…how then can this one small heart beat; this one small brain think thoughts; unless God does that beating, does that thinking, does that living, and not I?" (481) Starbuck's protestations are weak against Ahab's rage. Melville uses this to demonstrate the weakness of rationality against the potency of the Will, and it becomes apparent to Starbuck that the only way to quell Ahab's Will is in an act of animality itself, to kill him. However he refrains, as it would undermine his own humanity, and thus sacrifices his life and the lives of the crew to preserve himself. In Starbuck the Will to live, Schopenhauer's animalistic Will, is weaker than his humanity, yet because of that he perishes.

Wilson discusses how Ahab, through his attempt to usurp the animalistic Will, fails to reinforce the arrogance that humanity holds over the animal:

> A primary subtext of Melville's novel is the passing of pre-Darwinian, anthropocentric thought, espoused by Ahab, and the inauguration of a version of Darwin's more ecological evolution, proffered by Ishmael. With Ahab's demise end the related pre-Darwinian beliefs that man, through his rational facilities, sits atop and controls the great chain of being; that civilized man is fundamentally different from the savage and the animal, one guided not by a linear plan but, to use Darwin's famous phrase, by an inextricable web of affinities. (131)

Ahab, as a crippled man represents human will, ironically considering his madness, and the whale represents the unstoppable animal Will, therefore undermining the Cartesian idea that rational thought can overcome animal instinct. Rationality only serves the Will, since it cannot combat it. For this reason perhaps Moby-Dick seems to be a rational creature. He could be symbolic of Schopenhauer's Will within ourselves, aided by reason but driven by *the will to live*.

Within *Moby-Dick*, Melville includes a narrative called "The Town Ho's Story" which somewhat resembles that of *Billy Budd*. The framed narrative involves the inclusion of a character named Steelkit, who resembles Billy Budd, in that he is noble, yet also animalistic: "Steelkit was wild-ocean born, and wild-ocean nurtured" (220). Like Billy, Steelkit experiences unprovoked antagonism from a jealous mate, and like Billy Budd, Steelkit has to combat the Will within himself which inspires him to react violently:

> But as he sat still for a moment, and as he steadfastly looked into the mate's malignant eye and perceived the stacks of powder-casks heaped up in him and the slow-match silently burning along towards them; as he instinctively saw all this, that strange forbearance and unwillingness to stir up the deeper passionateness in any already ireful being- a repugnance most felt, when felt at all, by really valiant men even when aggrieved-this nameless phantom feeling, gentlemen, stole over Steelkit (223).

Steelkit is riled by the mate, yet his human reason quells the instinctual need to retaliate. At this moment, Steelkit is heroic because he has the unusual ability to quell his Will. Steelkit momentarily is able to stave off his animal instincts using human temperance. Yet when Radney escalates, it is as if Steelkit is possessed. His next actions are described not as his own, but as an impersonal event: "Immediately the hammer touched the cheek; the next instant the lower jaw of the mate was stove in his head; he fell on the hatch spouting blood like a whale" (224). The event runs almost parallel to the altercation between Billy Budd and Claggart. Claggart unreasonably antagonizes Billy, like Radney did with Steelkit, and similarly to Billy Budd, Steelkit reacts violently. This causes mutinous trouble, and then violence on the ship. Radney reacts towards Steelkit, and Steelkit plots revenge on Radney. Yet revenge is not necessary, as the *Town Ho* encounters Moby-Dick, and Moby-Dick kills Radney. The death is symbolic; Moby Dick represents omnipotent Will, Steelkit's animalistic Will overcoming Radney. The story fundamentally describes Moby-Dick's power, yet it also displays the overwhelming strength of animal instincts. Steelkit's vengeful hatred of Radney is so powerful it manifests itself as Moby-Dick. Melville, through this story demonstrates the power of animal instinct over humanity.

Through the use of Schopenhauer's concept of the will in this section I have established a concept proffered by Melville that though humanity holds the power of reason that could potentially elevate them above animality, it is weak in comparison to animal instinct. For Melville, the abyss is worryingly small and easily traversed. Melville uses Ahab's impossible plight to demonstrate his own doubts and insecurities about the superiority of humanity.

The Noble Savage: the optimistic portrayal of human nature in *Moby Dick*

Through readings of Schopenhauer and Kristeva, I have so far demonstrated a rather pessimistic reading of *Moby-Dick*, with regards the abyssal separation of animal and man. However, there is a Rousseauian element that also requires consideration. Yet unlike Shelley, Melville approaches the concept of "the noble savage' in a more positive manner. Laura Otis, argues that before Darwin the "savage" was seen to be a step down towards animal from humanity on the Great Chain of Being: "According to a cultural tradition that preceded Darwin, the move from savage to beast was just one step down, a small slide along a continuum." (487) This is, however, a position that Melville disagrees with, as he portrays the 'savage' within the novel as highly misunderstood and a more noble form of humanity. When discussing the idea of "savages", you are able to detect Melville's own voice most poignantly. Howarth notes that during his time as a whaler he spent some time with the natives in the South Pacific before returning home, which is most likely where he received such a positive view on the indigenous population: "Five months later he reached the Marquesas, jumped ship to live with natives, then rejoined the frigate United States for a homeward cruise in 1843-44" (102). Therefore, throughout *Moby-Dick* Melville actively endeavoured to demonstrate a controversial, progressive opinion on the matter of so called "savages". Melville's respect for indigenous people is evident especially throughout the first part of the novel. Ishmael's experience of Queequeg is used to challenge prejudices that were present in the nineteenth Century. Ishmael begins by portraying Queequeg as a threatening character, adhering to stereotype: "You shuddered as you gazed, and wondered what monstrous cannibal and savage could ever have gone a death-harvesting with such a hacking, horrifying implement" (10). Yet when Ishmael begins to talk to Queequeg, he explicitly rejects his former prejudices, recognizing the arrogance of European ideas of supremacy: "What's all this fuss I have been making about, thought I to myself-the man's a human being just as I am: he has just as much reason to fear me, as I have to be afraid of him. Better sleep with a sober cannibal than a drunken Christian." (22) He finds Queequeg both a kindred spirit and a figure of mysterious power and wisdom: "But savages are strange beings; at times you do not know exactly how to take them. At first they are overawing; their calm self-collectedness of simplicity seems a Socratic wisdom" (45). The opinion of Ishmael's, and indeed, Melville seems to represent Rousseau's conception of ideal humanity, the noble savage. Melville implies that if you strip a man of his society he becomes a far better creature, and potentially closer to god:

> Men may seem detestable as joint stock-companies and nations; knaves, fools and murderers there may be; men may have been mean

> and meagre faces; but man, in the ideal, is so noble and so sparkling, such a grand and glowing creature, that over any ignominious blemish in him all his fellows should run to throw their costliest robes. (102)

In this sense, Melville depicts humanity as a higher form of being, but only when stripped of those appendages that Rousseau suggests make humans higher than animals: "There he sat, his very indifference speaking a nature in which there lurked no civilized hypocrisies and bland deceits." (45). At this stage, Melville seems to stray from Rousseau's philosophies. Although he notices the value in concepts of "the noble savage", it seems that he does not consider humanity's progression as a symptom of society. Instead, he considers man naturally noble, in his more simplistic form.

For this reason, slavery is problematic in the eyes of both Melville and Darwin. If the more fundamental, pure form of humanity is superior, then slavery entirely undermines humanity's advantage over animality. Darwin, who came from a family of abolitionists, mentioned the effects of slavery on humanity in *Voyage of the Beagle*:

> While staying at this estate, I was very nearly being an eyewitness to one of those atrocious acts, which can only take place in a slave country…I shall never forget my feelings of surprise, disgust, and shame, at seeing a great powerful man afraid even to ward off a blow, directed, as he thought, at his face. This man had been trained to a degradation lower than the slavery of most helpless animals. (62-63)

Darwin's insight into slavery offers a view on humanity within the slave trade. Darwin speaks of a strong man placed below animality in his degradation; considering Melville's opinion of humanity this demonstrates a sacrilegious perversion. Slavery was implemented for the purpose of forwarding western and European concerns, by creating an unjust hierarchy between men. It therefore subverts the nobility in humanity underneath that of the animal by giving a man's life a monetary value, an act that Melville mentions in the novel: "We can't afford to lose whales by the likes of you; a whale would sell for thirty times what you would, Pip, in Alabama" (370). Stubb compares the cost of the young black cabin boy Pip to the cost of the whale, and suggests the whale to be worth more, demonstrating the subversion of Pip's humanity. The implementation of Stubb's threat, which left him alone in the ocean reveals the result of considering humanity something of fiscal worth. The subversion of Pip's humanity causes a loss of his own humanity due to a lack of compassion from those who should have shown him mercy. Melville therefore establishes the slave trade as a system that undermines the nobility of humanity, both within the white masters, and the African slaves. We are invited to empathize with Pip; who, as a mere boy was exposed to the harsh realities of the world. You could perhaps argue, that the novella *Benito Cerano* contradicts my reading, as a work of fiction based on the slave mutiny of *Tyrall* in 1805[98]. However, I would argue that Melville's novella, in fact, supports this assessment. Within the novella, Delano, the protagonist, explicitly thinks "Ah, this slavery breeds ugly passions in man. Poor fellow!" (129). Here Melville highlights the reason for the mutiny; the 'ugly passions' that slavery breeds in man. These are the very passions that sent Pip mad. *Benito Cerano* emphasizes the drastic measures that the desperate are forced into, regardless of how illogical their success may seem.

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[98] Herman Melville, "Benito Cerano", *Billy Budd and Other Stories*, Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1998

Within Pip's micro narrative Melville considers the consequence of undermining of a humanity that would otherwise exceed and flourish over other forms. The three harpooners, Queequeg, Tashtego and Dagoo represent the pinnacle of humanity; out of all the crew they are the characters that overpower the whale through their strength and their skill. The presence of the three harpooners may represent the holy trinity, demonstrating the association between pure, raw humanity and godliness. Pip, however, counteracts these characters in showing, as a child, what happens when human spirit is perverted by Western ideas of humanity's worth.

According to Philip Armstrong, Melville was writing at a pivotal time, concerning more than just science: "1850 and 1851, the years during which Melville wrote his novel, were the years of the doomed compromise between opponents and proponents of slavery." (1034) Michael C. Berthold argues that in narrative style *Moby-Dick* resembles the American Slave narrative. Berthold argues that Moby-Dick in narrative style resembles the works of Solomon Northrup and Frederick Douglas. He draws attention the whale symbolically used within the debate over slavery: "Before and during the Civil War, the whale itself was a popular symbol of slavery and its prophesized eradication."[99] (135) Given the significance of this symbol and the time in which the novel was written, Moby-Dick as a symbol of the eradication of slavery cannot be ignored. His eventual triumph over the Pequod and Ahab demonstrates more than just a disruption of hierarchy of human over beast, but also of human over human. The whale functions here as a signifier of political unrest in America at the time.

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[99] Michael C. Berthold, "Moby-Dick and American Slave Narrative", *The Massachusetts Review*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Spring, 1994), pp. 135-148

Conclusion

There is a reason why the whale is considered symbolically both the embodiment of God and brute force. The omnipotence of animality over humanity is something that frightens Melville, and in their abilty to usurp humanities rationality in the form of sheer force, God and animality seem to be inherently linked and similar. In comparison human rationality seems to be a weak and pathetic. Melville regards human rationality as a factor that separates human from animal, but it is demonstrated to be comparatively weak. Unlike Descartes and similarly to Schopenhauer, Melville does not put reason on a pedestal above the animal as a superior force, but rather as a flimsy addition.

Yet the novel is not entirely pessimistic in regards to humanity. By regarding characters like Queequeg, and the other harpooners, Melville demonstrates a respect, and deference towards humanity that is more untainted by civilisation. By doing this, he approaches a more spiritual, holistic interpretation of religion that would have been regularly regarded during the nineteenth century.

Super or Superfluous Men; Dostoevsky's spiritual approach to the animal/human divide in *Crime and Punishment*

When discussing Fyodor Dostoevsky's writing, Anna Schur Kaladiouk refers to Dostoevsky as a scientist himself, partaking in literary experiments, writing in ways that were new and exploratory: 'It is not surprising, therefore, that for over a century now students of Dostoevsky continue to see him as something of a scientist himself and to draw a parallel between his novelistic method and experimental science of the time'.(421)[100] *Crime and Punishment*[101] (1866) is a primary example of this experimentation; hailed by many as the first psychological thriller, Dostoevsky uses the novels protagonist to explore concepts of criminality. Yet when science threatens the sanctity of religious discourse, Dostoevsky becomes inherently protective; it is this drive that inspired him to write his masterpieces.

Within this chapter I discuss the influence of Darwinism on Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and how it altered his philosophy regarding the difference between animal and man. Similarly to previous chapters context is initially discussed. Contextual examination is particularly important within this chapter, as the novel was written soon after the publication of *On the Origin of Species*. The introduction of Darwin's seminal work caused a storm within the scientific community, the effects of which affected the entirety of society. Following this I examine three elements of the novel. The first section is focused on "Svidrigailov" and pays particular attention to the role of the criminal within Dostoevsky's novel. Following this, the "superfluous man" is discussed; an ineffectual idealist who becomes a social outcast. I argue that while the superfluous man's goal is to transcend his own animality, he instead becomes a resident of the abyss. Finally, Dostoevsky's "*pocchnichestvo principles"* are discussed, which are concerned with how man transcends the animal in Dostoevsky's philosophy.

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[100] Anna Schur Kaladiouk 'On "Sticking to the Fact" and "Understanding Nothing": Dostoevsky and the Scientific Method', *The Russian Review*, 65:3 (Jul., 2006), pp. 417-438 Subsequent page references in text.

[101] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, Trans. David McDuff, 1991: Penguin Classics Subsequent page references in text.

Dostoevsky and the Effects of Darwinism

When Dostoevsky published his psychological masterpiece *Crime and Punishment,* it had been seven years since the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) in English but only two years since its publication in Russian (although Dostoevsky would have certainly read it in English). The ideas that were developing whilst Melville was writing had become scientifically plausible. The emergeance of Darwinism catalysed a new phase of Dostoevsky's writing, in which he focused on the more universal message of his fiction tackling many concepts inherently linked with the emergence of Darwinian theory. The following section will be split into two parts: part one will consider the science relating to man and animals prevalent at the time, including the rise of Darwinism, and part two offers a brief examination of Dostoevsky's personal life with reference to his philosophical ideas about humanity.

Science at War: The Immediate consequences of *On the Origin of Species*

In this first section I discuss scientific ideas of the 1860s and 1870s, and how the radical materialist movement in Russia was inspired by Darwinism. By 1866 the concept of Darwinism, with its focus on the "struggle for existence" and theory of natural selection, was firmly within the public domain. The emergence of Darwinian theory almost exactly corresponds with the great change in Dostoevsky's writing that Joseph Frank calls "The Miraculous Years"- given the magnitude of the response to the *On the Origin of Species,* it is unlikely that this development is coincidental[102]. The publication of *On the Origin of Species* itself was catalysed by a strong reaction from Darwin to a paper by Alfred Russel Wallace that treated evolutionary science similar to his own theory of species development. The threat of being beaten to publication shocked Darwin into action, leading both scientists to collaborate on a paper presented to the Linnaean Society on July 1st 1858[103]. The reception to the paper is marked as ironic, as Richard England observes:

> In 1858 Thomas Bell, president of the Linnean Society, uttered the words that would make him the fool of a hundred histories: the year, he said, "has not, indeed, been marked by any of those striking discoveries which at once revolutionize, so to speak, the department of science on which they bear.[104] (267)

Bell's remark demonstrates the dramatically opposing reactions to Darwinian theory that led to a decade of academic conflict. Naturalists, as England argues, were generally conservative and "dismissed out of hand the idea that species might transmute into other species. Their job, as they saw it, was to determine just what constituted a species" (269). The mechanisms of evolution were generally regarded as dubious and although Lamarck and Chambers had previously made attempts at proving something similar, the majority of the scientific community did not take it seriously. Darwin had succeeded in suggesting a theory of evolution that could be accepted by many scientists who had originally dismissed it. The repercussions for theology and philosophy are well known: evolution required a dramatic reassessment of ideas about what constitutes humanity, particularly when considering our relationship to animals and God.

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[102] Joseph Frank *Dostoevsky: A Writer in his Time*, 2009: Princeton University Press Subsequent page references in text.

[103] Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, 'On the Tendency of Species to form Varieties; and on the Perpetuation of Varieties and Species by Natural Means of Selection' (paper presented at the Linnaean Society of London on 1st July 1858) Neither author was present as Darwin was at his son's funeral and Wallace was still in Borneo. The papers were given to the Linnaean society by Lyell and Hooker, and presented by the secretary J.J. Bennett.

[104] Richard England, 'Natural Selection before the Origin: Public Reactions of Some Naturalists to the Darwin-Wallace Papers', *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (1997), 267-290

Yet the fact that Wallace and Darwin reached similar conclusions around the same time exemplifies how important the mid-Victorian years were for the development of natural science. Darwin writes of the uncanny synchronicity: "I never saw a more striking coincidence. If Wallace had my M.S. sketch written out in 1842 he could not have made a better short extract! Even his terms now stand as Heads of my Chapters."[105] It therefore appears, that the theory was merely waiting for the right time, and the right scientists to be verified. The theory that he and Wallace proposed is described by David Hull as being as "competitive, individualistic and dog-eat-dog as Victorian society because of Darwin's experience in Victorian England."[106]. Society in the mid nineteenth century was often seen as callous and rationalistic exemplified by some of the seminal literary works of the decade like Dicken's *Hard Times* (1854)[107]. Perhaps this is the reason that a theory as brutal as Darwinism could be more readily accepted.

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[105] Charles Darwin to Charles Lyell on the 18th June 1858, Darwin Correspondence Project <https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/entry-2285> Subsequent page references in text.

[106] David L. Hull 'Deconstructing Darwin: Evolutionary Theory in Context' *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (2005) Subsequent page references in text.

By the late 1850s the concept of evolution was gaining momentum. As discussed in the previous chapter, Robert Chamber's *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creationism* (1844)[108] although not scientifically respectable gained ideas of evolution popularity, and Charles Lyell's defence of Uniformitarianism in *Principles of Geology* (1830-1833)[109] was widely accepted and acclaimed in scientific circles like the Linnaean Society. According to Hull, external factors including the social mood of the time affected the acceptance of Darwinian Theory. Malthusian theory of economics was being applied to anthropology of England, as Hull writes: "When Darwin returned from his voyage, two million people lived in London and its immediate environs. Before Darwin died, the population had grown to four million." (138) The dramatic change that Hull highlights shows the acceleration of society during the years in which Darwin was working. In turn, it led to new and radical ideological thinking about population management, with a divergence from existing religious and moral ideas. Malthusian theory was popularly characterized by a dismissal of moral sympathy; the principle he argues in "An Essay on the Principles of Population" (1834) suggests that disease and death are natural controls on population growth.[110] In this way, it was perceived that Malthusian theory applied the way we treat animals to humanity. Similarly, the implications of social Darwinism were taken to imply a need for utility over morality, evident through the introduction of "poor laws" which Hull describes as "so harsh that one might suspect that they were devised to make poor people strive even harder to free themselves from poverty." (142) Ingrained on society was the concept of "survival of the fittest" already; Darwinism was a logical progression in science that seemed to reflect the zeitgeist.

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[107] Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* Worsdsworth Classics: 1995

[108] Robert Chambers, *Vestiges of Natural Creation*, Cambridge University Press: 2009

[109] Charles Lyell *Principles of Geology* Penguin Classics: 1997 Subsequent page references in text.

[110] Thomas Robert Malthus *An Essay on the Principle of Population* Oxford University Press: 1999

The environment was prime for Darwinism to gain a strong following, as James Moore asserts: "Converts were won, alliances formed, and within a few years Darwinism became notorious as much for the friends it kept as for its political enemies"[111] (365). Moore acknowledges the most influential of the Darwinian converts as being central to the theories kudos:

> Charles Lyell, a geologist, was his father-superior in science; Joseph Hooker, a botanist, was his oldest and closest friend outside the extended family; Thomas Huxley, a zoologist, was chief among the "young and rising naturalists" whom Darwin was determined to get on "our side of the question of the mutability of species." (366)

Considering the publicity of Darwinism Moore writes: "It was Huxley alone who occupied the limelight for several years, baiting bishops, settling old scores with scientific bigwigs like Richard Owen, and generally using Darwin's book as an ideological weapon" (369). In 1860 Thomas Henry Huxley, also known as "Darwin's Bulldog" entered into his historic debate with Albert Wilberforce[112].

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[111] James Moore 'Deconstructing Darwinism: The Politics of Evolution in the 1860s' *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (1991)

[112] Thomas Henry Huxley and Albert Wilberforce (30th June 1860 to the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Oxford Science Museum)

Edward J. Larson observes that whereas Darwin preferred to shun publicity, Huxley became a spokesman for Darwinism. In effect, he was the public face of evolution, engaging in public discourse and founding the evolutionist journal the *Natural History Review*. The debate with Wilberforce was characterized by Huxley's application of clear, evidential science compared to Wilberforce's dogmatic and poorly rationalized perspective. Supposedly, according to J.R. Lucas when Wilberforce joked: "Is it on your grandfather's or your grandmother's side that you claim descent from a monkey," Huxley retorted that he would rather be descended from a monkey than from a bishop that obscured the truth[113].The debate did much to raise the profile of the theological problem: were humans created especially by God or did we descend, like everything else from animals? If Darwin was the author of evolutionary science, Huxley was his publicist.

Huxley also engaged in a dispute with Robert Owen in which they discussed the anatomical differences between humans and animals. Owen was one of the primary biological scientists of the nineteenth century, having helped found the British Museum of Natural History and superintending the Royal Society. However in his Anglican philosophies and resistance to evolution, he was unswerving, especially considering the question of the human/animal divide.[114] Owen argued that the main difference between humans and animals was the presence of the hippocampus minor, a part of the brain that according to Owen is unique to the human; he concluded that because of this humans cannot have descended from apes.[115] After extensive research, Huxley dissected Owen's claim in a lecture of his own to the Royal Institute[116]. Other scientists that rallied to Darwin's cause include Charles Kingsley, Asa Grey and Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, who in 1964 first formed what they called the "X Club"; a group dedicated to the promotion and defence of Darwinism (376). The group collaborated in 1869 to found the journal *Nature*, one of the most prominent scientific journals today which "unabashedly promoted Darwinism in its pages" (108). Edward Caudill emphasises Joseph Dalton Hooker's great impact on the acceptance of Darwinism: "Huxley was the publicist who wrote reviews and debated clergy; Hooker was the politician who operated in the circles of power, a little less visible and much less vociferous than Huxley but just as important."[117] (453) Although Hooker was not as publicly vocal in his support of Darwinism he was a constant source of support of the theory; it was, for example, within a letter to Hooker that Darwin revealed his new scientific leanings. Between them, Caudill refers to both Huxley and Hooker as Darwin's greatest support, and this lead to what he considers the victory of Darwinism: "By the end of the 1860s, the Darwinians had won. The victory was not absolute, but it did not need to be. Hooker became president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1868, followed by Huxley's ascendancy to the same office in 1870" (454-455) When Caudill refers to a "victory" he is referring to scientific and public acceptance of the theory. The fact that it took a whole decade for the theory to be accepted demonstrates how controversial it was, and how much resistance there was.

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[113] J.R. Lucas 'Wilberforce and Huxley: A Legendary Encounter', *The Historical Journal*, Vol 22. No. 2 (1979)

[114] Christopher M. Owen, Hippocampus Minor, Calcar Avis, and the Huxley-Owen Debate, Neurosurgery Vol 65, No.6 (2009)

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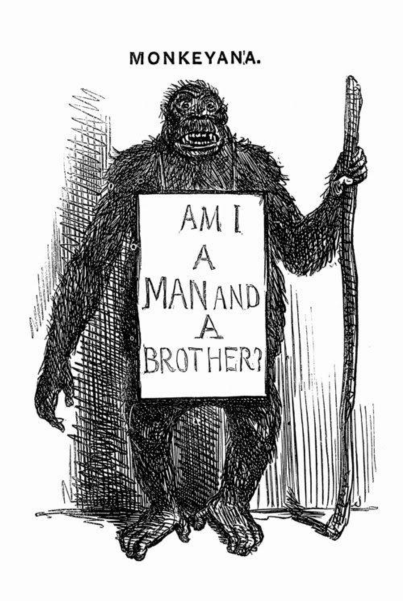
[115] Robert Owen, 'On the Classification and Geographical Distribution of the Mammalia Being the Lecture on Sir Robert Reade's Foundation, Delivered before the University of Cambridge, in the Senate-House, May 10, 1859: To Which Is Added an Appendix, "On the Gorilla," and "On the Extinction and Transmutation of Species." London, Senate House, May 10th 1859.

[116]Thomas Henry Huxley "On the Theory of the Vertebrate Skull", the Croonian Lecture, The Royal Institution, 17 June 1858

[117] Edward Caudill, 'The Bishop-Eaters: The Publicity Campaign for Darwin and on the Origin of Species', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (1994)

Darwin did not mention humanity's origins until he published *The Descent of Man* in 1872. However, the implications for human evolution were evident in *On the Origin of Species.* The popular media exploited public uneasiness over the possibility that humans might be related to animals. Darwinian science was ridiculed in popular publications like the American *Harper's Weekly*[118] and the British *Punch*[119]. Some cartoons explicitly highlighted how strange the idea of human-animal connectedness seemed by questioning it. For example, this cartoon of a gorilla from the May 1861 edition of *Punch* depicts an ape wearing a notice that asks a rhetorical question:


MONKEYANA.
AM I A MAN AND A BROTHER?

The cartoon explicitly refers to Josiah Wedgewood's abolitionist slogan to emphasize the blurring of boundaries between humanity and animality. Within 1860s in the United States the question of who was human and who was animal was being fought within the civil war. The question of slavery considered whether slaves were property or deserved basic human rights. Considering the questions inspired by Darwinism concerning the relationship of all humanity to animals this is particularly poignant. The abolitionists strove to raise the slave to an equal position within humanity. Evolutionist humbled humanity by demonstrating its animal origins.

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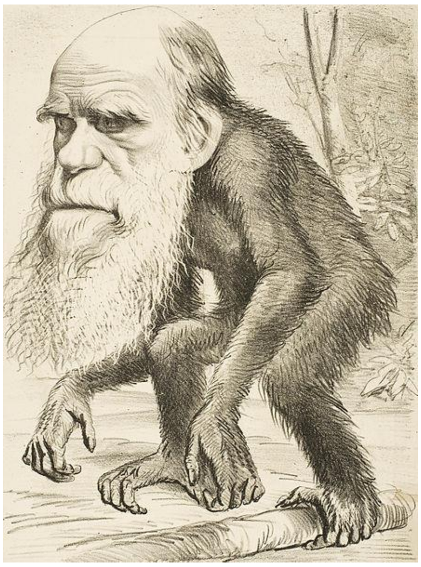
[118] *Harpers Weekly* Harper and Brothers: 1857-1916 <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=harpersweekly>
[119] *Punch*, 1841-2002 < http://www.punch.co.uk/>

This attribution of man to animal was furthered to Darwin, so as to apply what they believed to be the implications of his theory to the scientist himself. The image below from *The Hornet*[120] in March 1871 is particularly typical of these images, which became popular after the publication of *The Descent of Man*.



In these images the human is lowered to the status of a beast so as to satirize this blurring of boundaries, thus within the publication of these magazines the abyss is excavated theoretically in the form of humour to demonstrate the presence of specific separations of the species. This boundary blurring is also ridiculed when the ape is elevated to human status.

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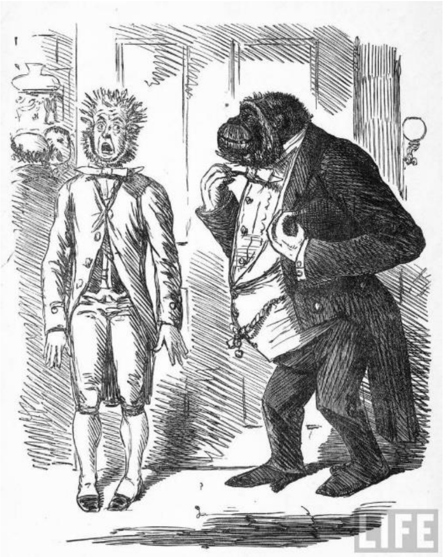
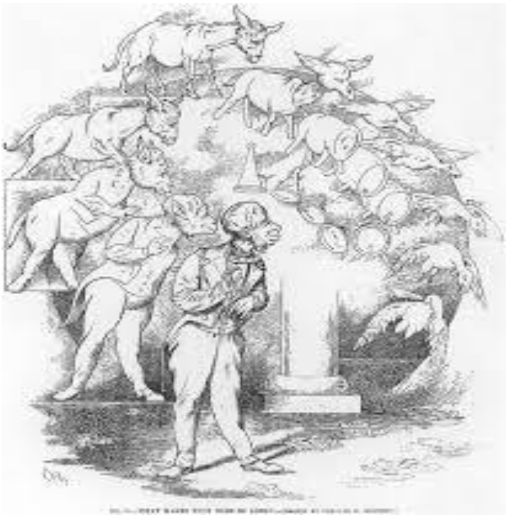
[120] *The Hornet* <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/ucl-views/0809/orangutan>



The cartoon from *Punch* entitled "The Lion of the Season" published in May 1861 demonstrates the use of anthropomorphism as a weapon against Darwinian Theory. Similarly to the cartoons ridiculing Darwin, the blurring of boundaries accentuates the ridiculousness of evolutionary theory as perceived by much of the Victorian population. A similar method used to ridicule the theory was cyclical caricatures, for example this one by Charles H. Bennett of a barrel and a goose transforming into a man.



Janet Browne examines this mentioning that “The shift towards these circular images of evolutionary progression is interesting when compared with Darwin's more linear branching tree. In *On the Origin of Species* Darwin took pains to emphasise that evolution was neither progressive nor circular.” Browne uses these images to demonstrate the level of misunderstanding in society of Darwin’s ideas, and a misconception that is applied even today. By many Darwinian Theory was severely misunderstood, a crucial fact when considering literary attitudes toward evolution.

This excessive development in society within Western Europe affected the Russian consciousness. M. Gordin and D. Hall argue that “The generation of the 1860s transformed “intelligentsia” into a central notion of Russian popular discourse, cementing its association with revolutionary politics— and with natural science”[121]. Gordin and Hall argue that the intelligentsia of Russia in the 1860s amalgamated natural sciences and politics. Darwinism infected philosophy and politics in Russia soon after the publication of *On the Origin of Species*. Daniel P. Todes draws attention to the immense popularity of Darwin in Russia: “For the great majority of Russian intellectuals he became a highly prestigious figure-the embodiment of modern natural science, the author of a powerful argument for evolutionism, and the discoverer of an important factor in evolution, natural selection”[122]. However, he also argues that the primary problem the intelligentsia found with Darwinian theory was the concept of a general "struggle for existence" (537). The phrase is primarily Malthusian and was troubling when applied to Christian ideas about morality. Todes allows that "These thinkers generally admired Darwin, and very few thought that this flaw justified total rejection of his theory" (538). Yet the association with Malthus was a problem, mainly because it did not prove itself in the great expanse of Russia, but also because of its dubious morality. Even Nikolai Chernyshevsky, thinker, evolutionist and author of the contentious *What is to be Done* (1863) took offence at this alignment with Malthus.[123]

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[121] Michael D. Gordin and Karl Hall, “Intelligentsia Science Inside and Outside Russia”, *Osiris*, Vol. 23, No. 1, Intelligentsia Science: The Russian Century, 1860-1960 (2008) Subsequent page references in text.

[122] Daniel P. Todes Darwin's Malthusian Metaphor and Russian Evolutionary Thought, 1859-1917, *Isis*, Vol. 78, No. 4 (1987) Subsequent page references in text.

Aside from the Malthusian problem, however, radical thinkers like Chernyshevsky accepted evolutionary theory with enthusiasm. The association with radicalism became detrimental to Darwinism according to James Allen Rogers: "Following the assassination attempt of Dmitri Karakozov against Alexander II in 1866, the Tsarist government revealed its belief that there was a close connection between revolutionary thought and Darwinism"[124](487). The conflation of revolution and evolution led to a temporary ban of *On the Origin of Species* and an association with violence. The book was therefore highly contentious; to many it represented an accumulation of Western ideas which some were open to more than others.

Dostoevsky: Life, Inspirations and the Miraculous Years

Having considered the wider contextual landscape in the 1860s pertaining to the acceptance of Darwinism I now discuss Dostoevsky, and how his experiences effected his writing thematically. It is vital to consider the traumatic experiences of his life; these experiences inspired his need to preserve the sanctity of man through religious fervour. Freud considered Dostoevsky a genius, writing of him in his essay “Dostoevsky and Parricide”:

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[123] Nikolai Chernyshevsky, *What Is To Be Done?* Cornell University Press:2014

[124] James Allen Rogers, 'Russian Opposition to Darwinism in the Nineteenth Century', *Isis*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (1974) Subsequent page references in text.

> Dostoevsky's place is not far behind Shakespeare. *The Brothers Karamazov* is the most magnificent novel ever written; the episode of the Grand Inquisitor, one of the peaks in the literature of the world, can hardly be valued too highly. Before the problem of the creative artist analysis must, alas, lay down its arms.[125]

Freud was deferential to Dostoevsky as a writer, but was also interested in the psychology behind his writings. To understand the motivation behind his literature it was important for Freud to understand Dostoevsky’s personal life. The study of Dostoevsky’s childhood and struggles of adulthood are vital because within his literature these influences are easily recognised. It is therefore necessary to consider these early stimuli. I primarily use Joseph Frank’s detailed and extensive biography, which represents arguably the most recent and thorough consideration of Dostoevsky’s life.

As well as a creative genius, Freud recognized Dostoevsky as a flawed moralist: “The moralist in Dostoevsky is the most readily assailable. If we seek to rank him high as a moralist on the plea that only a man who has gone through the depths of sin can reach the highest summit of morality, we are neglecting a doubt that arises.” (176) Dostoevsky’s father, instead of becoming a clergyman like his own father, became a medical practitioner. Although his professional career privileged science over spirituality, his personal life was still greatly affected by his religious faith. Frank outlines: “But in his very darkest moments, when no earthly succour seemed available he took refuge in the conviction of his virtue and rectitude, and in the belief that God was on his side against a hostile and indifferent world.”(11) Dostoevsky’s father saw truth in the cruelty of nature that can be garnered from the ideas Darwin was later to proffer, yet assuaged this cruelty he saw within nature and mortality with religion. It was in this religious environment that Dostoevsky developed his deeply complex relationship with religion.

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[125] Sigmund Freud, “Dostoevsky and Parricide”, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XXI (1927-1931): The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and its Discontents, and Other Works*, (1928) 173-194 Subsequent page references in text.

In his childhood Dostoevsky’s family purchased a property outside of Moscow as a country retreat. There Dostoevsky developed his respect for the rural people and peasants. It is likely that it was his time in the country that inspired his support of the “pochvennichestvo principles”, according to Frank: “This untroubled boyhood relation with the peasants certainly contributed to shaping Dostoevsky’s later social ideas; one may say that he aimed to bring about, on a national scale, the same harmonious unity between the educated classes and the peasantry that he remembered having known as a child.” (16) These principles, which I later discuss in depth, consider the nature of humanity and how higher thought must be united with a purer way of living. In this stage of his life, Dostoevsky integrated with a simpler form of life.

Frank argues that “The most important event in Dostoevsky’s life during his years at the academy was the death (or the murder) of his father.” (45). Although

Dostoevsky's father was a strict man, he was undoubtedly loved and respected by his children. Freud cites the murder of Dostoevsky's father as the cause of a neurotic trigger for psychosomatic epilepsy: "The most probable assumption is that the attacks went back far into his childhood, that their place was taken to begin with by milder symptoms and that they did not assume an epileptic form until after the shattering experience of his eighteenth year—the murder of his father." (180) However, as Frank asserts, Freud's evidence for this insinuation is weak: "The "facts" that Freud adduces can be shown to be extremely dubious at best, and at worst simply mistakes; the case history Freud constructed in the effort to "explain" him in psychoanalytic terms is purely ficticious" (45). Nevertheless, the violent death of Dostoevsky's father certainly had an effect on him.. He increasingly clung to the religion that comforted his father.

Dostoevsky's life after his exile and incarceration was extremely troubled; due to a financial crisis he became involved with a circle of utopian socialists, and following that with the Petrashevsky circle. Dostoevsky's main contention was that he was faithful enough to maintain his belief in God, but intelligent enough to question it nevertheless. The Petrashevsky circle was denounced and Dostoevsky was accused of reading heretical banned works. The members were sentenced to death, but for Dostoevsky the punishment was waived just before the execution. Instead he was sent into exile in Siberia for eight years, a sentence that was halved eventually. His time in Siberia inspired the semi-autobiographical *House of the Dead*[126]. The years following this did not show much improvement in Dostoevsky's fortunes. Some of Dostoevsky's troubles, like his gambling, were self-inflicted. Others were just bad luck. Frank's concise summary of this time in Dostoevsky's life exemplifies the misfortune he suffered:

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[126] Fyodor Dostoevsky *House of the Dead*, Trans. Jessie Coulson, Oxford World Classics: 2008

> Beset by debts and creditors and importunate relatives, in chronic bad health in spite of his robust constitution, a victim of frequent and debilitating epileptic attacks and a gambling obsession…his fortunes reached their lowest ebb in 1864 (the year of publication of Notes from Underground) with the death of his brother and business partner Mikhail, the death of his closest literary collaborator, the brilliant and eccentric Apollon Grigoryev, and the inopportune closure by the government of his main source of income, the journal Time-a series of catastrophes eminently worthy of a novel by Sue. (7)

Yet out of all this pain and misfortune Dostoevsky was able to create some of his most important works, perhaps because he clung to his faith through a period of difficulty. Although he was aware of the weaknesses in his faith, it served as comfort in a time when Dostoevsky could find little elsewhere. Works like Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, along with many other seminal philosophical endeavours felt like an attack on this faith and he found it imperative to defend it. Anna Schur Kaladiouk summarises Dostoeksy's stance: "As a person of deep religious conviction, Dostoevsky mistrusted the claims of science and doubts the power of human reason that arrogates to itself the right and the ability to solve the "ultimate" question”[127]. Religion was, for Dostoevsky, an aspect of his life that was ever present throughout every hardship in his life. Darwin’s seeming attack on religion, by suggesting that man was nothing more than an animal, was automatically abhorrent for Dostoevsky. He took comfort in man’s relationship to God, the destruction of this would decimate his own sanity.

Freud’s personal opinion of Dostoevsky’s spiritual and political conformity is negative; he suggests that although as a writer Dostoevsky excelled, he could have had a more profound political and philosophical input. Freud believed him to be crippled by his need to conform to Russian ideas about spirituality:

> After the most violent struggles to reconcile the instinctual demands of the individual with the claims of the community, he landed in the retrograde position of submission both to temporal and spiritual authority, of veneration both for the Tsar and for the God of the Christians, and of a narrow Russian nationalism— a position which lesser minds have reached with smaller effort. This is the weak point in that great personality. Dostoevsky threw away the chance of becoming a teacher and liberator of humanity and made himself one with their gaolers. (177)

Whether or not Freud’s disappointment has any foundation is questionable. Dostoevsky is considered one of the world’s most important novelists, and his works address great and important problems. Yet one may conjecture what would have happened if Dostoevsky had a less religious upbringing, if his father had not been so brutally murdered, if he hadn't been incarcerated in Siberia for radical thinking.

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[127] Anna Schur Kaladiouk, “On "Sticking to the Fact" and "Understanding Nothing": Dostoevsky and the Scientific Method” *The Russian Review,* Vol. 65, No. 3 (Jul., 2006), pp. 417-438. Subsequent page references in text.

According to Ladislav Kovac, when considering his attitude towards Darwin, Dostoevsky was willing to allow that humanity had evolved from the ape.[128] However, he also was unable to consider man a 'mere ape', writing in a letter to V. A. Alekseev sent 7th June 1876:

> By the way: Recall the current theories of Darwin and others about man's descent from the ape. Without entering into any theories, Christ announces straight out that in addition to an animal world, there is also a spiritual world in man as well. Well, and difference does it make where man came from(it's not at all explained in the Bible how God sculpted him from clay, took it from the earth), but on the other hand God breathed into him the breath of life…'[129]

Larson mentions that this was the way many of the intelligentsia dealt with concepts of evolution; by amalgamating them with their faith (221). Dostoevsky's explanation therefore of the difference between man and animal is spirituality. Furthermore in this letter to Alekseev he mentions the difference between human and animal: "The Devil's idea could only apply to an animal mankind, but Christ knew that you can't renew man with bread alone." (285) For Dostoevsky, you cannot merely appeal to people material needs as you can with animals. You must apply to their inherent spirituality primarily, for then they can overcome all hardships, like Sonja in *Crime and Punishment*. Although he was willing to admit some truths in the theory Dostoevsky was regularly scathing of Darwin because of the link between his theories and materialism, in particular within his non-fictional *The Diary of a Writer* (1873-1881). In his diary he writes: "Please note, gentlemen, that all these high European teachers, our light and our hope-all those Mills, Darwins and Strausses-sometimes consider the moral obligations of modern man in a most astonishing manner"[130]. Ronald D. LeBlanc also argues that Dostoevsky's scathing attitudes towards Darwinism are inherent in his novels: "In *Crime and Punishment*, for instance, Darwin's theories are implicit in Raskolnikov's ambition to prove to himself that he is an "extraordinary" man who belongs to a superior race of Napoleons."[131] Dostoevsky's problem with Darwinism therefore is not with the theory itself, but the implications when considering religion and morality, which shall be discussed within the remaining part of this chapter.

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[128] Ladislav Kováč, *Darwin and Dostoyevsky: twins*. Vol. 11. 2010. 815-815

[129] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Letter 1872-1877*, Ed. and Trans. David A. Lowe, Ardis:1991 (286). Subsequent page references in text.

Svidrigailov: The Human Beast

Within the last section I established the context in which *Crime and Punishment* was written. Having considered the scientific and personal elements that contributed to the themes of this novel, I can now focus on the novel itself. In this section Dostoevsky's philosophy on the criminal is discussed with particular focus on the character Svidrigailov who embodies the criminal drive through the novel as that of wanton hedonism and a disregard for morality.

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[130] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, Trans. Boris Brasol Charles Scribner's Sons: 1954
[131] Ronald LeBlanc *Slavic Sins of the Flesh: Food, Sex, and Carnal Appetite in Nineteenth-Century Russian Fiction* UPNE: 2012

In her critique on the relationship between the law and the individual Colin Dayan writes on the metamorphoses of a person into a spirit/animal/object in *The Law is a White Dog*[132](2011). She considers in particular Guantanamo Bay and the exiling from personhood that occurs, writing:

> In the long history of what I call 'negative personhood', I focus on slaves, animals, criminals and detainees who are disabled by the law. Legal thought relied on a set of fictions that rendered the meaning of persons shifting and tentative: whether I" creating slaves as *persons in law* and criminals as *dead in law*, or in the perpetual re-creation of the rightless entity. (xii)

Dayan discusses the "deprival of personhood" that occurs in the eyes of the law to a criminal; the "creation of a species of depersonalised persons." (32) The criminal is placed in a state of liminality where they are a human physically yet not socially. There is a special category developed for the criminal, outside of regular human society but not entirely excluded; controlled bodily like an object rather than a subject, and therefore "othered". Dayan's concept of "depersonhood" demonstrates how a person can be placed in the abyssal space between human and animal through rejection of a conventional social contract. Dayan's theory can be inherently inked to Agamben's " Homo Sacer", who exists both inside and outside of bios, or political life. Agamben uses Pompeius Festus's definition to discuss him: "The sacred man is the one whom the people have judged on account of a crime. It is not permitted to sacrifice this man, yet he who kills him will not be condemned for homicide…"(47) Similarly to Dayan's depersonalised persons, the "Homo Sacer" is a man when considered an organism, but not in terms of his political being, as he is effectively stripped of his human rights. This idea of the criminal can also be considered with reference to Kristeva's concept of the abject. Kristeva's approach to crime adheres with Agamben and Dayan's theory, as she applies her theory of abjection to crime: "…Any crime, because it draws attention to the fragility of the law, is abject, but premeditated crime, cunning murder, hypocritical revenge are even more so because they heighten the display of such fragility."(4) The abjection of crime that Kristeva discusses must further be applied to the criminal; he or she becomes a liminal being, a monstrous 'it' found in the gap between human and animal. Considering the treatment of Dostoevsky as a criminal before the publication of his seminal novels these theories are useful when discussing criminality as a transformative process which changes the criminal from human to subhuman abyssal resident. Dostoevsky's exile and death sentence imbues him with a unique view of the treatment of the criminal, having inspired him to write *House of the Dead* on the subject, he experienced this process of depersonhood himself. It is therefore possible that Dostoevsky had first hand experienced the abyss himself prior to writing *Crime and Punishment*.

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[132] Colin Dayan, *The Law Is a White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons,* Princeton University Press: 2011

I argue that the criminal is stripped of part of his identity due to a lack of morality, or spiritual sense, adhering to Dostoevsky's opinions of what makes humanity. The criminal, in his rejection of morality is deprived of his humanity and becomes a form of sub-humanity, demonstrated particularly in the use of the name "Svidrigailov", a character who in his treatment of Dunya and others shows himself to be almost entirely void of moral feeling throughout the novel with only occasional moments where his conscious reanimates. The name is used to represent the criminal and the subversive within the novel. Svidrigailov becomes more than a name to represent an individual character and instead signifies the sordid criminal mind, established primarily when Raskolnikov attempts to chase a man with nefarious intentions away from a girl who is intoxicated: "Hey you! Svidrigailov! What do you want here?" (59) Although the sexual predator is not actually Svidrigailov, the use of his name in this context implies an application of his identity on all subversive characters within the novel. Raskolnikov, by using his name in this manner has taken Svidrigailov's identity from him and manipulated it to become a uniform term to describe all criminals. It is this loss of identity that is dehumanizing, and lowers the criminal from a status as an individual to an abyssal resident.

Svidrigailov is a gauge of criminality as he is the character who can most be described as 'evil', yet he is also the one who, unlike many of the others like Raskolnikov and Marmaladov, refers to himself as "human": "…I am a human being, et nihil humanum…in a word, that I am capable of being attracted or falling in love…" (336) This declaration of humanity contrasts greatly with the claims of animality by Marmalodov, who frequently refers to himself as a "louse" or a "swine": "…But no, I must put it more strongly, more figuratively: not can you, but dare you, as you look upon me in this hour, say beyond all shadow of a doubt that I am not a swine?" (19). Ironically the most base character is the one who claims ownership of humanity, and he does this by referring to the more animalistic aspects of humanity; lust. In many senses, Svidrigailov's greatest crime is a lack of guilt that is maintained through most of the novel. He reasons that instead of being a criminal he is merely a sufferer of the human condition: "…am I a monster or am I myself a victim?" (336) This claim loses meaning considering the crime we learn that he commits; driving a young girl to suicide after sexual assault:

> She had a distant relative-a niece, I think it was- living with her; this girl was a girl of about fifteen, or possibly even only fourteen, a deaf mute… One day the girl was found hanging in the attic. Her death was adjudged to be suicide. After the usual legal proceedings the matter was dropped, but later on someone made a statement to the police that the child had been…brutally raped by Svidraigalov.' (356)

It is Svidrigailov's inability to recognise himself as a wrongdoer that makes him so nefarious and therefore the archetypal criminal and abyssal dweller. It is frustrating for the reader that Svidrigailov throughout the narrative entirely evades the reach of the law and therefore retains his identity as a human within society; perhaps this is the reason for his vehement claims of humanity. Yet it is the nature of his crimes that makes Svidrigailov stand out as the animalistic criminal. In Svidrigailov's final scene he relinquishes humanity through suicide; where the law has not taken his personhood from him, he instead relinquishes it himself. Dostoevsky uses Svidrigailov's suicide to demonstrate that the only alternative outcome of criminality to incarceration is self-destruction. The self must be relinquished to the social contract, otherwise eradicated altogether. Dostoevsky insinuates that this is also the decision Raskolnikov will eventually have to make; the choice between suicide and submission to the law. According to R.E.Richardson: “Porfirii Petrovich is the police magistrate who in Raskol’nikov’s mind represents the way of confession, punishment, and expiation. Porfirii is the path to a return to conservative law and order and normal social contact with ordinary humanity.”[133] Richardson argues that Raskolnikov can either face the effects of the law or be driven to madness and consequentially death. Dostoevsky insinuates that it is impossible to live as a human without the appropriate moral sense. Humanity cannot function with the guilt. Therefore a sacrifice must be made, and Richardson clarifies that Raskolnikov can either submit to Porfiry, or transform into a creature resembling Svidrigailov.

Richardson believes that Svidrigailov is a victim of some form of mythmaking; although nefarious he argues that his crimes have been extremely exaggerated by the members of the rural Russian countryside. He argues that we cannot draw a distinction between Raskolnikov and Svidrigalov, claiming that Raskolnikov is a hypocrite, equally indulging in his animalistic qualities through his own crime: “At any rate he apparently begins at this point to believe the stories and accuses Svidrigailov of indulging his sensual appetites and of behaving monstrously. The obvious irony here is that Raskol'nikov's appetites are, while purely intellectual, even more monstrous. How dare Raskol'nikov accuse anyone of self-indulgence.” (547) In many ways, Richardson is right; Raskolnikov admits himself to Sonja that his reasons for murdering Lizaveta were purely selfish:

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[133] R. E. Richardson “Svidrigailov and the "Performing Self", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 46, No. 3-4, (1987) Subsequent page references in text.

> I simply killed; I killed for my own sake, for no one but myself, and the question of whether I'd become someone's benefactor or spend all my life like a spider, drawing people into my web and sucking the vital juices from them, was a matter of complete indifference to me at that moment… (500)

His confession demonstrates that Raskolnikov shares many similarities with Svidrigailov in his criminal drives. He is therefore not the Napoleonic "ubermensch" that he hoped to be, and is instead a more base, animalistic form of humanity. The rejection of moral sense for their more bestial urges places them in the abyss that separates man from animal. Raskolnikov also identifies with Svidrigailov, demonstrating the unwanted link the characters have: "Raskolnikov gave him a gloomy look. "Actually, I think you're probably very far from being a boor," he said. "I even think that you may be a man of very good society, or at any rate you can on occasion behave like a decent human being." (339). Gary Cox, who discusses the relationship of tyrant and victim in Dostoevsky's work, demonstrates how Raskolnikov can be considered an example of the Dostoevskian psychopath similar to Svidrigailov:

> The Dostoevskian psychopath begins where the where the dreamer does, alienated from the society of men because, in his insecurity about his personal identity, he dares not define himself as part of that society. Cut off from others, he becomes absorbed completely in his own internal reality. Like a philosophical solipsist, who denies the reality of the world outside his mind… The dreamer, feeling rejected by society, or, more precisely, having rejected himself on behalf of

> society, responds only passively, but the psychopath character responds aggressively![134]

Cox’s assessment of the “Dostoevskian Psychopath” defines Raskolnikov as the same kind of creature as Svidrigailov, lending credence to Richardson’s argument. Raskolnikov is unable to look past his own mind, and his inability to function in society leads him to his immoral actions.

However, despite this argument I cannot entirely agree with Richardson. Svidrigailov, unlike Raskolnikov delights in his monstrosity, joking about how he allows himself to follow is base animalistic urges. Raskolnikov uses rationality to explain his actions as a morally greater act, interacting with utilitarian ideas. In my opinion, this places Raskolnikov in the similar, but more problematic category of “superfluous man”, which will be discussed in the next section. And despite his principles Raskolnikov feels the effects of his moral transgression immediately. Svidrigailov stands for nothing, he allows himself complete devotion to his primal instincts: “Reason is, after all, the servant of passion… ” (336) He lacks guilt until the end, and his final actions can be arguably conceived as immoral considering the Dostoevsky’s Orthodox Christianity. Although he is portrayed as a “gentleman” he is the character that is most animal, demonstrating how the criminal can be conceived as a liminal creature between animal and humanity.

The concern Raskolnikov has about his criminality and how it affects his personhood is described by Svidrigailov:

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[134] Gary Cox, *Tyrant and Victim in Dostoevsky*, Slavica Publishers: 1983

> I understand the kind of problems that are currently on your mind: they're moral ones, aren't they? Problems to do with man as a citizen? Oh, put them to one side; why should you bother with them now? Hee hee! Because you're still a man and a citizen? Well, if that's so, then you shouldn't have poked your nose into all that in the first place; it's no good if you don't know your own job. Well, you'll just have to shoot yourself; but perhaps you don't feel inclined to? (578-579)

Svidrigailov here refers to Raskolnikov's moral sense. He suggests that by having such a sense, he finds himself questioning his place as a man and as a part of society. Dayan's theory of man in society as a criminal is applicable here. Raskolnikov is torn by his moral sense. He has not yet been convicted, and therefore in the eyes of the law is still a man with all the respective rights, as opposed to Agamben's "Homo Sacer". However, his actions make him a criminal, just one that has not yet been identified by the law. Dostoevsky therefore demonstrates that this relationship between humanity and criminality transcends the power of the law. He establishes here that humanity lies intrinsically within man's sense of morality. Therefore even if the criminal is not caught, as a human he feels the weight of his actions nevertheless, leading him to two options; confession or self-destruction. Dostoevsky therefore emphasizes that what defines a criminal as human is the inability to live with their actions. They are self-motivated to either commit themselves to the mercy of the law, and thus lose their civil rights for a brief time. Or they must destroy themselves.

Considering the concept of the "depersonalised person" Svidrigailov takes on some inhuman qualities in the novel, becoming a caricature and a madman.

Svidrigailov's hedonism and lack of humanity is demonstrated in a variety of ways, allowing him a more Dionysian presence within the novel. His appearance, Raskolnikov notes, is disturbingly unnatural:

> For about a minute he studied Svidrigailov's face, which even on earlier occasions he had always found startling. It was a strange face, and almost resembled a mask: white and rubicund, with rubicund, scarlet lips, a light-blond beard and blond hair that was still quite thick. His eyes were somehow excessively blue, their gaze excessively heavy and immobile. There was something terribly unpleasant about this handsome and – if years were anything to go by-face. (558)

He is eerily inhuman in appearance, and with his red lips and extreme youth seems vampiric. The "extreme blue" of his eyes is particularly notable, as blue is representative of purity and innocence in Russia, which is why Sonja's eyes are also this colour. So although *Crime and Punishment* is not a supernatural novel, there is something superhuman about Svidrigailov. The attribution to the supernatural is also notable when he claims to see and converse with Marfa Petrovna's ghost: "Well, she's been to see my three times now. The first time I saw her was on the very day of her funeral, an hour after we'd put her in the ground." (342) The connection Svidrigailov claims to have with the dead is double edged. On the one hand his claimed abilities represent a place of liminality; the ability to talk to the liminal exemplifies his own boundary crossing facets: "Ghosts are, so to speak, shreds and fragments of other worlds, their source and origin." (345) This extenuates the supernatural quality of his appearance and makes him more "other". It also highlights his madness, which

Michel Foucault also attributes to animality, an aspect which will be discussed in more depth in the next section.[135] Additionally he is constantly giving sinister looks and speaks in a nefarious way "…consequently I decided you must have a great influence on her; that's not too little by way of explanation is it? Hee-hee-hee!" (559). Primarily, however, it is the delight he seems to take in his lechery that emphasizes his base criminality. These features leave the reader as well as Raskolnikov repulsed: "His suspicions of Svidrigailov had been confirmed: he saw him as the most empty and worthless villain in all the world." (563) Despite Vladimir Nabokov's distain for Dostoevsky's work, I would argue that Svidrigailov resembles and perhaps inspired his most villainous character Humbert Humbert in *Lolita* (1955). Nabokov's paedophilic character is also charming and seductive. Both authors use their characters fascination with the nymphet to excavate the depths of human depravity, making them quintessential creatures of the abyss.

Ergenia Cherkasova remarks that "Dostoevsky himself never attempted to define humanity because he deeply appreciated the immense complexity of a quest to comprehend human nature and the human condition."[136] (44) Nevertheless in her comparison between Dostoevsky and Kant's moral ideals, she demonstrates how, in agreement with Kant, Dostoevsky believed in a "catagorical imperative": "Like Kant, Dostoevsky wants to believe that no "zero point" exists in ethics and that the innate sense of good never disappears without leaving a trace." (44) Cherkasova's assessment of Dostoevsky's ethics and affiliation with Kant encourages investigation into the place of the criminal within his theory of ethics; a dismissal of this “moral sense” or “sensus moralis” would thus lower the status of the criminal’s humanity.

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[135] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason,* Psychology Press, 2001

[136] Evgenia Cherkasova *Dostoevsky and Kant*, Rodopi:2009

Cherkasova’s assessment is evident in Dostoevsky’s important distinctions between “criminals”. On one end of the spectrum Dostoevsky places Sonja. Although she is not considered a criminal lawfully as prostitution was legalised at the time in Russia, she is still shunned and rejected from society, proven by the treatment of her when Luzhin attempts to frame her for stealing: “*Gott der Barmherzige!* I always knew she was stealing!” (471). Although she is not refuting the law, she is still seen socially as a criminal and evicted from society to some extent. Yet when confronted with Raskolnikov’s crime she presses him to turn himself in. Sonja may be seen as subhuman by society within the novel, but because of her *sensus moralis* Dostoevsky presents her as most human. Sonja, therefore, could perhaps represent an alternative reading of the “Homo Sacer”. Not officially condemned but socially shunned she signifies the taboo, rejected figure from Roman law. Yet she also remains an entirely sympathetic character. On the other end of the spectrum, Dostoevsky places Svidrigailov, a man who seems to have little *sensus moralis* if any at all. During the novel Raskolnikov moves between these extremes, finally falling to Sonja’s side when he confesses and bows to her. As a result both Sonja and Raskolnikov are exiled from Russia into Siberia; a temporary rejection from society and symbolic of their residence within the abyss. Yet Dostoevsky presents this as a requirement; a chance to cleanse and regain their humanity. Svidrigailov’s unholy death instead portrays a permanent decent into a very different abyss.

Dostoevsky's other novels from this period similarly deal with the relationship between criminality and animal sensuality. In *The Idiot* (1869)[137] the corrupt sensualist Rogozhin, similarly to Svidrigailov is driven by his more animalistic urges which leads him to the seduction and eventual murder of Nastasya Filippovna, an outcome that Myshkin predicts. Myshkin perhaps expects this outcome as he observes the animalistic tendencies of Rogozhin. However, Rozoghin, like Raskolnikov, is allowed to atone for his actions when he is sent to Siberia. However, in *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880)[138] there is a departure from this characterization. Dmitri is characterised in a similar way as Svidrigailov and Rogozhin; he is sensual and volatile, having suggested previously that he would murder his father over his love of Grushenka. However, it is revealed that Smerdyakov, who is the illegitimate child of Fyodor Karamazov, is in fact the murderer. Although he is merely a servant he is more characteristic of the superfluous man as opposed to the sensual criminal. He is inspired by Ivan's rationalism to murder his father. His adherence with atheism allows him to reject his moral sense and murder Fyodor. Therefore, although Dostoevsky considers the animal urges of humanity to represent criminality, he also considers the higher forms such as reason and ideology to result in it also. It is, therefore, the abandonment of spirituality and religious feeling that results in criminality. The animalistic facet of the human is present in great sensuality and great rationality when it usurps moral feeling within the soul of a man. The man is therefore robbed of his humanity in one of the two ways discussed; either through the law or by his own hand. Dmitri, innocent of the crime yet guilty in the eyes of the law is sent to Siberia; he is exiled temporarily from humanity through this banishment. However, because he never did actually commit the murder he is rescued and repents, thus regaining the humanity he was temporarily deprived of. Smerdyakov, however takes Svidrigailov's option and commits suicide. N. Norman Shneidman asserts that "The suicide of Smerdiakov is for Dostoevski not only an artistic necessity, it is also an expression of Dostoevski's ethics and of his understanding of the nature of man."[139] (26) I agree with Shneidnam's assessment; the suicide encapsulates Dostoevsky's philosophy on the nature of man. Accorning to Dostoevsky, a man cannot commit a crime and continue living as a validated human; the act is animal, and therefore the punishment must therefore involve committment to the abyss. Either the criminal surrenders himself to the law, or commits an act of self-destruction. To Dostoevsky, humanity is hinged on morality, without it the criminal shares the same rights as an animal. This, many would agree, is an extremely harsh assessment. But considering his terrible experiences in Siberia that shaped his work, I could perhaps suggest that such an uncompromising attitude towards the criminal comes from a place of self-loathing created by years of mistreatment.

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[137] Fyodor Dostoevsky *The Idiot*, Trans. David McDuff, Penguin Classics: 2004

[138] Fyodor Dostoevsky *The Brothers Karamazov*, , Trans. David McDuff, Penguin Classics: 2003

Faithful to Dayan's assessment on humanity in the eyes of the law, the criminal must surrender to the law and experience a form of depersonhood to atone for their actions. Yet further to this, considering Cherkasova's analysis of Kantian morality within Dostoevsky, the problem with depersonhood and the criminal reaches further than this. Myshkin within *The Idiot* asserts that "Compassion was the chief and perhaps only law of human existence." (208) Therefore to Dostoevsky what makes a human is his sense of morality and his ability to be kind towards others. One that lacks this, therefore, is subhuman, and if they do not find their humanity through submission to the law they are bound to self-destruction.

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[139] N. Normal Shneidman 'Murder and Suicide in The Brothers Karamazov: The Double Rebellion of Pavel Smerdiakov', *Dostoevski and the Human Condition after a Century*, Greenwood Press: 1986

The Superfluous Man: Humanity Without Purpose

In the previous section criminality was considered as a form of subhumanity, with particular reference to Svidrigailov. I consider a complex character archetype unique to Russian literature in this next part; the "superfluous man"; a character who simultaneously considers himself the pinnacle of humanity whilst also partly exiling himself. Furthermore, I discuss how Raskolnikov can be considered the superfluous man and how Dostoevsky uses this archetype to explore the boundaries dividing human and animal.

It is difficult to find an exact definition of the "superfluous man", as Jahanne M Gheith explains:

> It is perhaps even detrimental to attempt a strict definition of this motif as it represents a moment, an attitude, a fluctuating mode in Russian literature and culture. Superfluous men represented, among other things, varying forms of opposition, but the specific contours of this opposition shifted with the times and changing political developments.[140]

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[140] Jehanne M Gheith The Superfluous Man and the Necessary Woman: A "Re-Vision" *Russian Review*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (1996) Subsequent page references in text.

The superfluous man, as Gheith suggests, has been used in a variety of ways by a variety of authors. Alexander Pushkin used it to demonstrate the futility of the outcast in *Evgenii Onegin*[141], whereas Doctor Zhivago in Boris Pasternak's eponymous novel is celebrated for his superfluity[142]. Gheith does, however, furnish us with a generalised description of the character: "…superfluous men share a radical alienation from society and an inability to take personally meaningful or socially useful action. These characters also usually demonstrate talent or promise that remains eternally potential; finally, central to all superfluous-man texts is a romantic relationship and separation." (230) Ellen Chances offers a similar but also differing assessment of the superfluous man as: "an ineffectual aristocrat at odds with society…"dreamy, useless"…an 'intellectual incapable of action', and 'ineffective idealist', a 'hero who is sensitive to social and ethical problems, but who fails to act, partly because of personal weakness, partly because of political and social restrains on his freedom of action."[143] (112) Chances, I would argue offers a more negative definition of the superfluous man, focusing on his inability to act. The superfluous man therefore resembles Hamlet as an intellectual figure whose ability to reason is a hindrance more than a help. Similar features can, however, be determined from both Chances' and Geith's assessments on the superfluous man; he is an intellectual outsider who holds many opinions of the world but rarely acts upon them. He could be considered the pinnacle of humanity according to materialists, as he often appears as the extreme rationalist. However, he is exempt from the social order; according to Rousseau's concepts attaining to the social contract and Russian Orthodox beliefs on community this makes him more animalistic.

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[141] Alexander Pushkin, 'Eugene Onegin', Penguin: 2003

[142] Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago,* Vintage Classics:2002

[143] Ellen Chances 'The Superfluous Man in Russian Literature, *The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature*, Routledge: 2002

Dostoevsky's most archetypal superfluous man is the "Underground Man"; the unnamed narrator of his novella *Notes from the Underground* (1864). The "Underground Man" is evidentially a superfluous man from the first half of the novella, in which no action happens. Instead the narrator explains his internal conflicts and thoughts, demonstrating the character to be an intellectual, who holds many opinions on the world and yet does not act upon them. This aspect of the character is exemplified when he describes how he comforts himself with feelings of superiority:

> That was my ruin, for when I was in the mud I comforted myself with the thought that at other times I was a hero, and the hero was a cloak for the mud: for an ordinary man it was shameful to defile himself, but a hero was too lofty to be utterly defiled, and so he might defile himself. (39)

Here Dostoevsky presents the beginnings of the character he extends and explores in *Crime and Punishment* with Raskolnikov. The Underground man demonstrates a belief that certain nobler men, or 'heroes' cannot be defiled because they are greater than common man. The character separates and isolates himself from normal men, demonstrated particularly in the description of a meeting with his old school friends. The scene is painful to read; it is evident that these other characters wish to distance themselves from the Underground Man, and with his erratic behaviour it is clear why. The Underground Man embarrasses himself and is depicted as a social outcast. The character is contradictory. He sees himself as above the common man, condescending him as "stupid, you know, phenomenally stupid", and yet also "not at all stupid" (19). He also defines himself as a creature lower than man: "I want now to tell you, gentlemen, whether you care to hear it or not, why I could not even become an insect. I tell you solemnly, that I have many times tried to become an insect. But I was not equal even to that." (3). Therefore the superfluous man thinks himself higher than man, and yet somehow finds himself beneath him simultaneously. The animality of the character is evident, and also inherently links to Raskolnikov of *Crime and Punishment*.

Dostoevsky's own perception of the superfluous man archetype is clear; he is depicted as a negative insidious character that hurts those around him almost as much as he hurts himself. Louis C. Midgley describes Dostoevsky's view of the superfluous man.

> The Russian wanderer, in spite of his original high mindedness, and in spite of his lofty idealism, was somehow forced to adopt an extreme position from which he frequently was willing to crush the people in the name of the people. The wanderer after having first imbibed intoxicating Western ideologies at last becomes a demon desiring only terror and destruction. (57)

The terms in which the superfluous man or the "wanderer" as described by Midgley are extreme, yet when he describes him as a "demon" it is reminiscent of Shelley's depictions of Frankenstein's monster. Therefore the characters are inherently linked; like the creature the superfluous man is a morally corrupted social outcast. Similarly in Raskolnikov's case also, their twisted philosophies on man drive them to murder. The monster and the superfluous man are both above humanity and yet beneath it, the Underground Man's inability to speak with his peers demonstrating equal solitude to that of the creature. Shelley's creature and the superfluous man are therefore in many ways similarly outcast from humanity.

Chances definition could allow the supposition that Raskolnikov cannot be counted as a superfluous man because he does take action; he murders Alyona and Lizaveta. However, this would be insuffient evidence against Raskolnikov's place in the Russian cannon as the superfluous man. He is ineffectual; as an ex-student he lives of the money his mother and sister send him, resides in a hovel and dresses in rags. From the first chapter it is made clear that he adheres to the archetype; the opening section is written in the third person as Raskolnikov's stream of consciousness:

> That's why I never do anything-because I ramble on to myself like that. Or perhaps it's the other way round; I ramble because I never do anything. It's during this past month that I've picked up this habit of rambling, lying on my back for whole days and nights on end in my room and thinking…about Cloud-cuckoo land. (6)

In this section Raskolnikov resembles Ivan Gonchorov's *Oblomov* (1859), who as an archetypal superfluous man remains in bed for a third of the book. He is presented as being so lost in his own thoughts that he lives more inside his head than in the outside world. Additionally, although it is true that Raskolnikov is active in that he commits the murder, he is inactive as to his purpose. Instead of using the money he stole for a greater good, he hides it making both the purse and the action superfluous. The reliance on thinking and rationalising is not practical; it leads to the creation of inactive men who are of no use to society. Considering Rousseau's conception of humanity within his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality,* a man who does not fit into human society does not therefore elevate himself above animality, thus the rationalism that many materialists prized as elevating the human instead meant they became outcast from human society, and therefore residents of the abyss. Chances writes that "In Russian Orthodoxy, human beings are viewed more as an integral part of a larger community rather than as individuals." (112) A human being must maintain his part in society according to Russian Orthodox view. Therefore, whilst the criminal is rejected by the law from humanity as Dayan argues, the superfluous man, instead leaves human society of his own accord. His idealism leads him to the abyss.

Within Raskolnikov's theories and similarly to the Underground Man, a figure from Nietzsche's philosophy resides, one that has been spoken of previously and regularly drawn upon within this thesis. The "Ubermensch" again finds relevance within the protagonist's ideals, and similarly to Ahab, he also strives for superiority over the common man. There is no evidence of Dostoevsky's awareness of Nietzsche's existence, and it was not until later in the century that the latter philosopher began publishing his most important work. However, the ideas Nietzsche was to write about especially considering morality were prevalent. According to Dirk Robert Johnson in terms of his adherence to Evolutionary Theory, Nietzsche ended life with an adversion to Darwinism, although much of Darwin's influence can be found in his work including *Thus*

Spake Zarathustra: "To use a metaphor, I believe that the many branching tributaries of Nietzsche's middle period philosophy can best be understood if one recognizes that Darwin stands as a mighty river behind them."[144](658) Therefore, despite Nietzsche's concerns over Darwinism, the theories are inherently linked and Nietzsche's ideas. It is Nietzsche's concept of the "ubermensch" that Dostoevsky draws upon; in his paper Raskolnikov suggest that there is a certain type of higher man who has the ability to thwart the law and moral codes in the quest for greatness. Raskolnikov desires to be a revolutionary; a Napoleon. Yet similarly to Ahab in this pursuit of greatness Raskolnikov reaches a lower form of being. Raskolnikov acted in accordance to Nietzsche's ideals on morality, and this was supposed to elevate him in humanity to the "ubermensch" Instead of scaling the evolutionary ladder, however, Raskolnikov experiences a period of animalistic madness.

Because of his criminal act, Raskolnikov's inner animal is triggered, and he descends into a madness that Michel Foucault inherently attributes to animality when considering how insanity is treated from the Renaissance onwards:

> But at the beginning of the Renaissance, the relations with animality are reversed; the beast is set free; it escapes the world of legend and moral illustration to acquire a fantastic nature of its own. And by an

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[144] Dirk Robert Johnson *Nietzsche's Anti-Darwinism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Page 658. Subsequent page references in text.

> astonishing reversal, it is now the animal that will stalk man, capture him, and reveal him to his own truth.[145] (66)

The animal which Foucault refers to that stalks man is his own, and it is his inner animal that reveals him to himself, just as Raskolnikov's inner animal hunts him mentally. Foucault's theories of animality and madness during the Classical period highlight the process that Raskolnikov experiences: "Animality has escaped domestication by human symbols and values; and it is animality that reveals the dark rage, the sterile madness that lie in men's hearts." (67) Foucault explains the attitude towards madness during the seventeenth and eighteenth century: "Madness borrowed its face from the mask of the beast. Those chained to the cell walls were no longer men whose minds had wandered, but beasts preyed upon by a natural frenzy…" (68). The criminal act, caused by his excess use of reason and western ideology ironically strips him of the faculty that led him to commit the atrocity.

His animalistic phase has already started at the beginning of the novel when he attempts to quantify the crime he is about to commit: "Could I really ever have contemplated such a monstrous act? It shows what filth my heart is capable of, though! Yes, that's what it is; filthy, mean, vile, vile!" (12-13) Raskolnikov is aware that the act would be base, but he still commits the crime because he wishes to become a superman. Dostoevsky writes Raskolnikov's thoughts at this juncture to create an image of him standing on a precipice. In Raskolnikov's philosophy he believes that to become superior to man one must descend into the abyss so as to emerge the other side. He expects his descent to create more of a man of him. In this instance he shows similarities to Frankenstein who also attempts the journey across the abyss. However, the products of their extreme rationality are very different. Frankenstein creates a monster whilst Raskolnikov become the monster himself. Raskolnikov in his plight to become one of the few exceptional individuals who can ignore the laws of morality attempts to straddle the abyss that separates animal and man. He believes that by compromising his morality, he will prove himself greater than the ordinary man. He strives to demonstrate that human reason can allow a man to commit a crime without consequence:

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[145] Michel Foucault, "Madness and Animality", *Animal Philosophy*, London: A & C Black, 2004 Subsequent page references in text.

> Little by little he had arrived at certain diverse and interesting conclusions and, in his opinion, the principle cause was to be found less in the criminal's lack of ability to conceal the material evidence of his crime than it was in the criminal himself; if he was the criminal himself who, in almost every case, became subject at the moment of his crime to a kind of failure of will and reason, which were replaced by a childish and phenomenal frivolity, and this right at the very moment when the things that were needed most of all were reason and caution. (87)

The passage ascertains that Raskolnikov considers criminal activity an exercise of human reason, and he is willing to dismiss morality to prove his thesis. His philosophy suggests that a madness occurs in the criminal before the crime is committed which undermines their reason and therefore their ability to avoid punishment. It is therefore only the man who can overcome his conscience who can commit a crime successfully without arrest. Here Raskolnikov theorizes that criminal brain loses its senses: “According to the way he saw it, this eclipse of reason and failure of will attacked human beings like an illness, developing slowly and reaching their crisis not long before the enactment of the crime.” (87) Raskolnikov believes murder to be a philosophical exercise that proves human rationality can usurp morality. Furthermore to return to Cherkasova assessment of Dostoevsky’s work Raskolnikov desires to demonstrate that the hypothetical imperative which is based on logic can transcend Kant’s categorical imperative introduced in *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). The categorical imperative states that to be morally correct you must treat a human like an end in itself rather than a means to an end; a critique of the utilitarian mode of thinking. Kant is proven right, however, and the compromise of Raskolnikov’s morality leads to the descent into fervour, as if the disregard for the categorical imperative undermined and usurped his humanity.

The descent into animality begins when Raskolnikov decided to commit the crime, demonstrated by Dostoevsky use of bestial language and imagery to highlight Raskolnikov’s state of mind before the murder: “He wanted to jeer at himself with malicious spite… A slow-witted, animal rage seethed up inside of him.” (88) Yet when the murder is committed this process speeds up exponentially: “A certainty that everything, even his memory, even the simple faculty of reason, was deserting him had begun to torment him unendurably.” (111) Dostoevsky does consider reason a primary human faculty, but one that is reliant on morality. Once morality has been compromised reason soon follows. Accordingly Raskolnikov slips into a state of wild and rabid animality. He begins to question everything in a bout of Cartesian doubt once he realizes that his reason has been compromised: "A strange thought suddenly came into his head: what if all his clothes were covered in blood, what if there were man stains, only he could not see them, could not find out where they were, because his reason had grown feeble, broken apart…his mind grown darkened." (111) The animalistic loss of reason is primarily a troubling experience, but Dostoevsky also describes a kick of exhilaration due to the adrenalin that Raskolnikov experiences when he realizes that he has not been called into the police station about the murder. The moment is described in a particularly animalistic way, as if he is a fox that has escaped the hunt:

> An exultant sense of self-preservation, of having escaped from the danger that had been crushing him-that was what filled the whole of his being at that moment, and it contained no predictions, no analysis, no plans or guesses about the future, no doubts and no questions-It was a moment of total, spontaneous, pure animal joy. (120)

He experiences animal urges towards those he meets, and is driven by emotional irrational drives as opposed to the reason he prized: "He found all the people he met repulsive-their faces, their manner of walking, their movements were repulsive to him. He reflected that if anyone had said anything to him he would quite simply have spat at that person or bitten him… (135). It is whilst he wanders the streets in this animal state that something turns him to Razumitkhin for help. Razumitkhin notices this animalistic change in his friend, and takes care of the physical ailment that is paired with it: "For we must make a proper human being of you." (156) Whilst he means this in a cheerful and light hearted way, when Razumitkhin speaks to Raskolnikov's mother and sister his concern is palpable, especially considering his lack of moral fibre and feeling: "But sometimes it's not hypochondria at all that he's suffering from, he's simply cold and unfeeling to the point of inhumanity…" (257) There is something that is lacking about Raskolnikov that scares Razumitkhin:

> But the workings of some strange, almost animal cunning suddenly prompted him to conceal his strength until the right moment, to lie low, pretend to be not yet quite conscious, if need be, while all the while listening and pricking up his ears to find out what was going on. (148)

Raskolnikov is aware that his reaction to the murder is irrational and bestial. The self-hatred that Raskolnikov feels because he did not manage to prove his thesis acurate causes him to condemn himself as a base creature:

> If you really did that with all your wits about you and not like some fool in a trance, if you really had a firm and definite goal before you, then how is it you still haven't even looked in the purse to see what you've got, the prize for which you've taken all those torments upon yourself and intentionally done such a base, vile, loathsome thing? (134)

His madness, in his opinion proves that he is a mere "louse", and not a "Napoleon" like he had hoped. Yet in his desperation he attempts to reach out to Sonya, who he imagines has committed a similar immoral act through her use of prostitution to support her family. His reaction demonstrates a hope that together they can live an animal and base life separate from the usual human existence: “You’ve done the same thing, after all haven’t you? You’ve also stepped across…found it in yourself to step across. You’ve committed moral suicide, you’ve wrecked a life…you’re own (it’s all the same!)” (392) Yet Sonya, as will be further explored later, maintains her humanity and cannot be compared to Raskolnikov in this way; although she acted in what could be considered a morally degenerate way she does it for noble reasons, and retains her humanity despite the levels she had to sink to. Here Dostoevsky demonstrates the difference between an immoral act and an act of desperation.

Within this section I have demonstrated how Dostoevsky portrayed the criminal act as a catalyst for becoming animal, showing how the abandonment of morality causes humanity to move closer towards animality. The criminal act is shown to be a traversing of the abyss, and the character Raskolnikov is used as a demonstration of this. Dostoevsky also demonstrates how morality is fluid and more dependent on the individual and their reasons for subversion. Raskolnikov’s act is committed purely for selfish reason; it is an exercise of rationality over morality, and for that reason he is humbled to experience his own animality.

Dostoevsky and the ‘Pochvennichestvo’ Principles

Within this section, I highlight how Dostoevsky’s “pochvennichestvo” principles can be discovered within the novel through characterization and how they are used to reflect on the human condition. In *Madness and Civilization* Michel Foucault argues that:

> The animality that rages in madness dispossesses man of what is specifically human in him; not in order to deliver him over to other powers, but simply to establish him at the zero degree of his own nature. For classicism, madness in its ultimate form is man in immediate relation to his animality, without other reference, without any recourse. (69)

Foucault outlines how during the Classical period (the seventeenth and eighteenth century) madness was automatically associated with animality. As madness requires an escape from reason Foucault exemplifies how it was an accepted principle that the animal mind is inherently linked with the absence of reason. Foucault highlights the popular notion that without reason, there is no difference between human and animal. Foucault writes that in the Classical period this was believed so adamantly that people who were conceived as mad were treated as animals because they were believed to be more resiliant than the reasoning human: "It was common knowledge until the end of the eighteenth century that the insane could support the miseries of existence indefinitely. There was no need to protect them; they had no need to be covered or warmed." (69) This, however, is a view that Dostoevsky does not share, as he demonstrates within *Crime and Punishment*. Within *Notes from the Underground* Dostoevsky develops a metaphor that was consequentially used by religious philosopher V.S. Solov'ev.[146] Vladimir Wozniuk explains that it was an image which demonstrated the failings of both capitalism and socialism in the emphasis on the importance of rationality:

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[146] Vladimir Wozniuk, "In the Shadow of the Anthill: Religious Faith, Individual Freedom, and the Common Good in the Thought of V. S. Solov'ev" Volume 67, Issue 4, October 2008, pages 622–637. Subsequent page references in text.

> He would exert considerable effort explaining how this true unity differed from the false unity of what Dostoevsky had called the 'anthill', a metaphor that referred to a European civilization increasingly based on the principles of materialism justified by autonomous human reason in the name of progress (622).

What Solov'ev develops from Dostoevsky's original idea is an argument that contrary to the belief of many philosophers, writers and scientists since Peter the Great and the Enlightenment there has been too much emphasis put on man's rationality; a misguided distraction from what Dostoevsky really believes separates man from animal, which is spirituality. Dostoevsky explains his reasoning in *Notes from the Underground*: "It may be the law of logic but not the law of humanity." (34) Dostoevsky demonstrates that whilst Western philosophy of civilization and materialist principles may adhere to logic, this does not mean that it can be applied wholly to humanity, which transcends logic. Dostoevsky further argues in the anthill analogy that man loves to create, but does not love to achieve; that he enjoys the journey rather than the finished product, unlike the sensible ant, who builds to construct a finished product. He reasons that economists from both the socialist and capitalist perspectives consider man a progressive ant, with greater brain power but driven by the same inherent principles. In Dostoevsky's argument, man is not like the ant:

> With the ant-heap the respectable race of ants began and with the ant-heap they will probably end, which does the greatest credit to their

> perseverance and good sense. But man is a frivolous and incongruous creature, and perhaps, like a chess player, lovers the process of the game, not the end of it. (36)

Dostoevsky acknowledges here that man is fallible, and therefore more complex than the ant. The ant works to produce and then dies. It is an animal of sense and logic. We are not. We build the anthill but we question why and are troubled by the inevitability of the finished product because we would lack further purpose. As previously discussed it is a fundamental belief in philosophy that man is a reasoning animal. Dostoevsky inverts this idea and uses it instead as an argument for spirituality. The animal is the rational creature, the human is not. It is the element of ourselves that transcends reason that makes us human; the morality and the spirituality. In Dostoevsky's opinion although man should embrace his great powers of reason his spirituality must not be denied, as this is what separates man from beast.

Ellen Chances explores this in a wider sense by focusing on Dostoevsky's pochvennichestvo ideology, or the "concept of the soil." Chances explains how Dostoevsky worried that the 'intelligentsia' were becoming to separate from the "narod", or the people, and that harmony needed to be struck to solve Russia's problems. It is a belief which links to Dostoevsky's anthill, and focuses on humanity's loss of spirituality that brings us closer to the animal. Rather than being elevated by reason, we are animalized by moral degeneration: "The beginning of the human being's humanity, therefore, is not through the appearance of reason. Man has lost a basic spiritual power precisely because of the turn towards rationality" (164). In this way Dostoevsky believes that somehow without losing the benefits Russia had gained from Western influence, the Russian people had to return to the soil, and become reacquainted with their mother country.

The "pochvennichestvo" principles are most evident through the character Sonya, a simple but good young woman: "Sonya has received no education" (22). Because of her father's vices she was forced into prostitution to support her impoverished family. Yet though fundamentally morally she has degraded herself, Dostoevsky emphasizes that although her body might be corrupted, her soul remains untainted: "she's as meek as a lamb, and has such a gentle little voice…" (23). She consequentially becomes the beacon of morality for Raskonikov throughout the course of the novel, beginning with his inability to fathom why, in such a state of destitution, Sonya hasn't resorted to suicide: "What preserved her? Not lust, surely? It was quite evident that all this turpitude affected her only mechanically; not one drop of genuine lust had yet penetrated her heart: he could see this; she stood before him exposed in her reality…" (384). Raskolnikov shows concern for Sonya; unable to understand why she can maintain her purity of spirit he questions it thinking: "Can it really be that this creature, who still retains her purity of spirit, will at last be consciously drawn into that loathsome stinking pit?" (385) Yet when he asks her what she will do if her family are forced to beg after the death of her step mother she simple answers: "No…God won't let it happen." (381) The effect Dostoevsky creates through the medium of Raskolnikov is a sense of wonderment that even though this girl has suffered such hardship her faith remains intact. Raskolnikov has been corrupted by science and new political ideology, yet Sonya's purity of spirit and immunity to doubt make her a spiritual role model and an exemplification of humanities triumph over the bestial. Raskolnikov is so astonished by Sonya's almost superhuman perseverance that he gets to his knees and attempts to kiss her feet: "It wasn't you I was bowing to, but the whole of human suffering." (383) For Raskolnikov, Sonya is a symbol. She represents humanity, its suffering, but also its salvation, which is why in this biblical display of reverence Sonya is treated like a Christ figure. She suffers for the sake of others, and demonstrates what can potentially make humanity greater than the animal. In this way, she serves as an alternative to Nietzsche's "ubermensch". She transcends humanity and according to Christian principles creeps further towards divinity.

Yet whether or not God actually exists or not at this point seems inconsequential. The focus here is on Sonya's faith; her undying hope that whatever terrible things befall them God will help them struggle through. It is her belief that lends Sonya her superhuman resilience that allows her to suffer the trials of life whilst retaining her inherent goodness. It is not the actual existence of God, but the ability to have faith. Through the character of Sonya, Dostoevsky demonstrates how faith is the way to achieve true humanity.

Sonya experiences a moment of crisis caused by the mercenary Luzhin; a test to demonstrate whether she will suffer condemnation for her meekness. Having been accused of stealing a one hundred rouble note Sonya is mistreated. Yet it is her goodness that protects her, demonstrated by the reputation she has garnered from those who know her:

> Why, you don't know, you don't know what a heart this girl has, what sort of girl this is! She take the money, she? Why, she'd take off her

> last dress and sell it, go barefoot and give you the money if you needed it, that's the sort of girl she is! She took the yellow card because my children were dying of hunger, she sold herself for our sake! (473)

Although this is spoken by a mad Katerina Ivanovna the character analysis is accurate. It is because of Sonya's faith that she is virtuous, and her goodness shields her. Although she has suffered greatly Dostoevsky does not allow her to remain tarnished in this way. Her defence is merely her innocence, a contrast to Raskolnikov who continues to evade arrest. Dostoevsky allows an element of justice into Sonya's story; the truth is unearthed and Luzhin is thwarted. Yet the only weapon Sonya has is her faith; a possible way of Dostoevsky incorporating divine justice into his novel. By surviving Luzhin's accusations Sonya proves that to overcome human inadequacies one must be merely faithful and good, and deny the animal temptations of corruption.

It is not coincidental that immediately following this scene Raskolnikov confesses to Sonya. Dostoevsky writes this scene as if Sonya momentarily infected Raskolnikov with her innocence and he suddenly feels the necessity to confess: ''Look, Sonya, all I killed was a louse-a loathsome, useless, harmful louse!' 'But that louse was a human being.'' (497) With that final statement Soyna undermines the ideas Raskolnikov holds about Darwinism, Utilitarianism and the "Ubermensch" that separates humanity into two categories; the base and the intellectual superiors. By merely stating that Lizaveta was human Sonya undermines the argument that he put forth as a means of explanation: "It was something else I needed to find out; it was something else that was forcing my hand: what I needed to know, and know quickly, was whether I was a louse, like everyone else, or a man. Whether I could take the step across or whether I couldn't." (500) Through his theory of superior humanity Raskolnikov summarizes potential conclusions that could be drawn from thinkers including Darwin, Nietzsche and Malthus. His philosophical stand point represents the conclusions many were afraid could be drawn from contemporary materialism, driving him to want "to become a Napoleon." (495). Yet Raskolnikov's argument is proven weak by Sonya's declaration 'But that louse was a human being.' It's a simple statement, and contradictory, but also poignant in its juxtaposition. Raskolnikov killed a human being; no matter what metaphysical philosophical theory can be applied. What makes Lizaveta a person is emphasized when Sonya mentioned how they exchanged crosses, highlighting the spirituality of Lizaveta and why she is more than a mere beast:

> Well, here you are, take this one; it's made of cypress wood. I have another one, made of copper, it belonged to Lizaveta. Lizaveta and I swapped crucifixes, shegave me hers and I gave her mine, the one with the little icon on it. I shall wear Lizaveta's from now on, and this one's for you. (503-504).

Dostoevsky stresses that Lizaveta was a believer, and in many ways akin to Sonya - humble and pious. They are icons of the "pochvennichestvo", and by accidentally murdering Lizavetta Raskolnikov showed a disregard for the part of man that makes him human.

The "pochvennichestvo" principles are also highlighted in the character Razumitkhin. Within Sonya and Raskolnikov's interchange Sonya functions as the corresponding other part to Raskolnikov's psyche. Thoroughly focused on reason and intellect Raskolnikov is so much the superfluous man that he lacks spirituality. When he meets Sonya who is entirely spiritual and moral she makes Raskolnikov a whole; she is literally his “other half”. However, Razumitkhin represents a character within which the two elements of humanity, mind and heart, are harmoniously joined to demonstrate how one can still maintain rationality but still be “of the soil”; Dostoevsky uses this character to demonstrate that one can still be moral without sacrificing his intelligence. Arguably Razumitkhin is the most likeable character in the novel, being both academically able, yet also kind. He, like Raskolnikov, is an ex-student who during the novel survives from translating essays. Yet when Raskolnikov visits him in turmoil he is quick to aid his friend even though he has been neglected by him for so long, and is primary in his recovery. His philanthropy is so great that Raskolnikov questions the logic behind it: “And what is this desire of yours to do good deeds for people who…spit upon them?” (201) He is also an emotional man, falling swiftly in love with Dunya who he aids without expectation throughout the novel alongside her mother. He admits to having impure thoughts, and doing improper things, although we never find out what they are: “Everyone ought to be a decent human being, and a clean one, too, and…and even so (this he remembered) in his time he had done some nasty things… not exactly dishonest ones, but all the same…And the thoughts he had had!” (253) He rationalizes that he is not a perfect human and reflects on his flaws, yet he has high standards for humanity morally. He is able to reflect upon his moral digressions, and approach them with guilt, yet also understanding. It is his ability to empathise and reflect spiritually that characterises him as a truly human character; the difference between human and animal. It is through Razumitkhin that Dostoevsky explores the meaning of humanity as a spiritual creature, with heightened abilities to reason, yet defined by his morality. He is demonstrated to be imperfect, an inherent trait of humanity, but unlike Luzhin he recognises this aspect of himself, and reflects on how to improve. Dostoevsky therefore uses Razumitkhin to represent a truly human character.

Conclusion

It is clear that within Dostoevsky's seminal works, he writes to preserve religious authority and the meaning of spiritual discourse. When considering his approach to spirituality and science within *The Brothers Karamazov*, Kaladiouk summarises previous readings of the novel: "In this conflict, as the argument goes, Dostoevsky firmly comes out on the side of faith and gives his sympathies to those of his characters who possess it." (417) It is clear, that Dostoevsky falls on the side of religion when the two concepts are pitted against each other, and this is noticeable within *Crime and Punishment*. Dostoevsky writes with the distinct purpose to preserve religious meaning, by drawing on the moral obligations of humanity. He relies on religion for moral purpose, and it is this morality that he uses to separate man from beast. His creatures of the abyss including Raskolvikov and Svidrigailov are demonstrated to be less than human because of their moral transgressions. The only escape is repentance; an acceptance of guilt. Raskolnikov, by admitting his guilt, and allowing the influence of Sonja's spiritualism, is banished from the human race only temporarily. Svidrigailov, however, is unable to truly repent, and he is thus abjected forever.

However, as Ladislav Kovac explains recent scientific research into genetics suggest the belief of God is an evolutionary fact in itself. Kovac highlights "Dostoevsky's views on the human soul might be closer to those of Alfred Russell Wallace, who believed that an unknown force directed evolution towards an advanced organization." (815). Kovac insinuates that Dostoevsky's beliefs, in fact, adhered to other evolutionary theorists who were more resistant to atheist ideologies. Although the soul is a matter of belief, there is scientific evidence that evolution has allowed us to develop a "god gene", which would function in an evolutionary context proven by the various ways that the church and religion has benefitted social organization and progress over the years. Kovac reiterates Dostoevsky's view saying: "In addition, "the mystery of the human being does not only rest in the desire to live, but in the problem: for what purpose should one live at all?" We might say that these faculties make *Homo Sapians* a religious species." (815) Kovac argues that the main function of religion is to give humanity something to strive for, and thus aiding evolution itself. Indeed, Kovac further argues for scientific evidence of a "god module" in the brain: "These areas represent a new stratum of evolutionary complexity, an emergence specific to the human species." (815). Richard Dawkin's explores a similar idea in his seminal book *The Selfish Gene* (1976), which discloses the concept of selflessness as an evolutionary aspect, an adaptation that aids preservation.[147] Therefore, perhaps evolution begets morality, as it begets religion. It is therefore possible, by considering these theories, that Dostoevsky's religious ideology is driven and created by evolution. If humanity developed an inherent necessity to believe in a divine presence, Dostoevsky is therefore a victim of the evolutionary process. Perhaps, in this case, what separates human from animal is our belief in an immortal being, rather than the presence of one itself.

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[147] Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, London: Oxford University Press, 1976

"They may once have been animals. But never before did I see an animal trying to think" Evolution, Regression, and Mutable Humanity in The Island of Doctor Moreau

After considering Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), H.G. Wells's *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) represents a return to many underlying concepts. Both are defining works of science fiction, written by authors deemed progenitors of the genre. Both apply a framed narrative to relay the story of a man found at sea through the account of an objective outsider. Both stories contain gifted overreaching scientist whose Promethean arrogance eventually causes their downfall. Finally, both approach the theme of playing God and creating a new species of man. Steven Lehman emphasises the unnatural desire of Moreau and Frankenstein to stray into the territory of womanhood to create life:

> The theme was reworked in one more very effective version before the end of the 19th century. H.G. Wells's *The Island of Doctor Moreau* inspired the same outrage upon publication as had Frankenstein, and for very similar reasons. Both depict the takeover of natural female function by crazed male science.[148]

Lehman's argument draws upon the Promethean elements of both scientists and the consequences of tampering with the principles of human life. The result is monstrous in both cases, and farcical in Moreau's. Roger Bozzatto summarises the relationship between the two books in his discussion on tragi-farcical elements of the later novel: “Like Dr Frankenstein, Moreau plays sorcerer's apprentice.”[149] (37) Bozzatto’s allusion to the sorcerer’s apprentice refers to super human abilities paired with the weakness of human judgement, a classic image for the Promethean scientist who features eponymously within both novels.

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[148] Steven Lehman, The Motherless Child in Science Fiction: "Frankenstein" and "Moreau" (L'Orphelin de mère dans la science fiction: "Frankenstein" *Science Fiction Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Mar., 1992), pp. 49-58 Subsequent page references in text.

Yet Wells possesses very different insight to Shelley; within the seventy-eight years dividing the publication of both novels the scientific field had changed dramatically. The earth had been confirmed within the scientific community as much older than previously considered, and man’s place within “natural selection” was generally accepted. Although Wells was inspired by Shelley’s novella, he was informed by a greater wealth of knowledge. The archetype was not only used by Wells; for example, Robert Louis Stevenson also reimagined the Promethean scientist in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.* In his novella, Stevenson portrays how a respected scientist attempts to separate his animal self with the intellectual, causing a descent into abyssal animality eventually instigating his death. Both Stevenson and Wells used aspects of Frankenstein’s tragedy to reimagine the story of the overreaching scientist in the drastically changed world of the late nineteenth century.

Wells uses Shelley’s pessimistic concerns about the implications of human evolution, yet strays from her romantic vision favouring the outcome of the “struggle for existence”. Anne Stiles, who discusses the significance of the “mad scientist" in Wells's work, asserts that the similarities to Shelley were purposeful, and emphasises that previous drafts of the novel contained subtle references to the older work, which were removed in the published version[150]. Despite this removal, Wells endeavoured to situate his work within the genre and align himself with other science fiction authors, as Stiles continues: "The first draft of Moreau, with its deleted references to *Frankenstein* and its structural resemblance to *Jekyll and Hyde*, suggests that Wells self-consciously situated his novella within this emergent tradition of mad scientist fiction." (323) Primarily, Stiles argues that Wells provides disturbing caricatures of the scientists of the age, like Galton and Haeckel, yet Wells himself was an emphatic, self-confirmed Darwinist. Further to Stiles's arguments, Faye J Ringel emphasises the importance of interspecies amalgamations within The Island of Doctor Moreau: "Unlike Frankenstein, who reanimated dead matter, these mad scientists concentrate on hybridizing life, blurring and crossing the boundaries between animal and human, in the process exalting the animal and dehumanizing the human being."[151](64) Ringel identifies an important departure for Wells from comparisons with Shelley's novella; she highlights that Wells further blurred the boundaries between animal and human through hybridization. In this final chapter, I shall discuss how Wells's acceptance of Darwinism affected his attitude towards the separation of animal and human, and how his scientific background led to the creation of fresh reimaginings of the abyss.

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[149] Roger Bozzetto, “Moreau's Tragi-Farcical Island”, *Science Fiction Studies*, 20:1 (Mar., 1993), pp. 34-44 Subsequent page references in text.

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[150] Anne Stiles, 'Literature in "Mind": H. G. Wells and the Evolution of the Mad Scientist', Journal of the History of Ideas, Apr 01, 2009; 70:2 Subsequent page references in text.

[151] Faye J. Ringel, 'Genetic Experimentation: Mad Scientists and The Beast', *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 2:1 (5) (Spring 1989), pp. 64-75 Subsequent page references in text.

Roger Bozzetto asserts that “this text occupies a distinct place in the Wellsian oeuvre by reason of the way that it "reflect[s] upon" the human scene.” (34) It is written, as Bozzetto notes with a conscientiously pessimistic approach to the human condition, reflecting the evolutionary origins that interested Wells. Therefore, it is an ideal novella to discuss concerning literary contents of the abyss. Within this chapter, *The Island of Doctor Moreau* is considered primarily, although I also be making frequent and extensive references to Wells’s earlier novel *The Time Machine* (1895)[152]. The latter novella written at a similar time deals with many parallel and relevant themes, and can be used to enhance the reading of *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. The argument is split into five parts; the first, as with the other chapters, is focused on context. The contextual section is particularly concerned with Wells’s scientific education under Huxley, and how this affected his interaction with scientists of the era who were furthering Darwinian theory for controversial social endeavours, like Ernst Haeckel and Francis Galton. Following the context section, the novel becomes the central focus; the first part of this argument considers the abyss as a metaphorical device used to explore the space between animal and human in *The Island of Doctor Moreau* and *The Time Machine*. Following this I discuss Wells’s use of the animal voice in defiance of the theory that language is a symptom of the separation between human and animal. The next aspect discussed is Wells’s concept of humanity in flux, defying the conceived rigid difference between human and animal. This argument is developed into a conversation of de-evolution; a pessimistic concept that conceived a regression into animality as opposed to a steady progression to the Ubermensch; particularly relevant considering the implications of Darwin's branch of evolution which describes a more randomised progression of characteristics rather than a steady and logical development to a superior species. These elements have been chosen for discussion specifically because they are aspects actively targeted by Wells to conceive the difference between animal and man, which he believed to be mutable. The conclusion will consider how Wells is able to justify his moral values within his adherence to Darwinian theory.

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[152] H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine*, London: Penguin, London, 2005

A Darwinian Zealot: Huxley's Influence over Wells

Of the authors studied in this thesis, Wells is by far the most positive on the subject of evolution. Wells was so impressed by Darwinian theory that, as Brian Stableford asserts:

> Wells adopted the Darwinian faith with the fervour of a religious convert, and it permeated everything that he wrote. Wells took up the task that had been left frustratingly undone, and began to work out the logical consequences of Darwinian theory in a series of literary thought-experiments. His stories carried great conviction, and were constructed with an imaginative power that was hitherto unparalleled [153]

Stableford argues that, in the manner of a scientific trial, Wells used his knowledge of science to complete a literary thought experiment with his writings. In this manner, his writing shows similarities to Dostoevsky's work;

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[153] Brian Stableford, *Scientific Romance in Britain, 1890– 1950,* London: Macmillan, 1985, 29 Subsequent page references in text.

both authors use the medium of literature to engage in a form of hypothetical thought experiment. Wells begins his novels with a hypothesis and follows it to its logical conclusion imaginatively. His approach to literature is evident in some of his titles, for example his autobiographical short story "A Slip Under the Microscope"[154] or his actual autobiography, *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934) [155]. Adhering to Stableford's argument, not only does Wells react to science, but he applies scientific methodology to his writing, demonstrating a form of literary hypothetical science. Within his early works he explores potential outcomes of Natural Selection and uses this to create his science fiction. Within her focus on the mad scientist, Stiles agrees with Stableford's assessment, as she comments on his active use of biology within his novels and short stories: "Wells absorbed Huxley's pessimistic take on late Victorian evolutionary theory, particularly his emphasis on the inherent brutality of natural selection." (319) Wells uses the consequences of evolutionary theory to scientifically evaluate man's relationship with animal as a consequence of evolution, yet he chooses fiction to explore this relationship.

Wells was brought up in a culture of Darwinism, at a time when it was widely discussed and accepted. However, it was not until he began university that he became particularly knowledgeable pertaining to the theory, as Michael R. Page notes in his discussion on the effect of evolution on the literary imagination:

> In 1884, the eighteen-year old Wells attended Huxley's lecture course on biology and that course was to change his life. Huxley's lectures on

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[154] H.G. Wells, 'A Slip Under The Microscope', London: Penguin, 2015
[155] H.G.Wells, *Experiment in Autobiography*, Volume 1, London: Camelot Press 1934, Subsequent page references in text.

> evolution were a revelation to the young student and it was the Huxleyan vision of the cosmos and humanity's place in it that was to drive his imagination during the period of the scientific romances and beyond.[156]

Wells was emphatic about the effect that Darwinism had on him, and was particularly impressed by Huxley, who he studied under at the Royal College of Science, describing him in *Experiment in Autobiography* as: "the acutest observer, the ablest generalizer, the great teacher, the most lucid and valiant of controversialists."(199) The theory was well established, but "the fact of evolution as such was still not universally conceded," (200), and there were many finer details that Wells cites which left the field open still to gross generalizations. Yet despite that, or maybe because of that, Wells describes his year with Huxley as: "the most educational year of my life." (201) Peter Kemp, in *H.G. Wells and the Culminating Ape* (1982) examines the particular affect that Huxley had on the young Wells: "This veteran campaigner for evolutionary theory and scientific education influenced his student in two ways. His career showed Wells what could be achieved, despite a disadvantaged background, by conviction and pugnacity. His course in biology…mapped out what Wells would try to establish and convey throughout a prolific writing-life."[157] He mentions how Darwin himself used to appear at some of Huxley's lecture through the curtains at the back of the lecture theatre. However, as Wells attended these a year after Darwin’s death he missed the opportunity to see him. This must have disappointed Wells as he describes how “These two were very great men. They thought boldly, carefully and simply, they spoke and wrote fearlessly and plainly, they lived modestly and decently; they were mighty intellectual liberators.”(202) Wells depicted these two scientists as almost legendary figures, writing that: “They put the fact of organic evolution upon an impregnable base of proof and demonstration so that even the Roman Catholic controversialists at last ceased to vociferate, after the fashion of Bishop Wilberforce…” (203) The admiration Wells felt for the fathers of evolution transcended respect, and they both appear as inspirations for his early novellas. For example he shares the experience of being taught by Huxley with his protagonist Prendick in *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. Wells perhaps uses Prendick’s character as a lens through which to dissect the theories he learnt at university. Whilst Wells undertook an imaginative exploration of the concepts of evolution, Prendick embarked on a physical exploration of Moreau’s Island.

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[156] R. Page, Michael. Literary Imagination from Erasmus Darwin to H. G. Wells : Science, Evolution, and Ecology. Farnham, Surrey, GBR: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2012.

[157] Peter Kemp, 'H.G.Wells and the Culminating Ape: Biological Themes and Imaginative Obsessions', London: Macmillan Press, 1982 Subsequent page references in text.

John Glendening argues that despite Wells fascination and acceptance of Darwinian Theory, he did not entertain optimistic opinions on the consequences of the theory. Despite his fierce approval of Darwin and Huxley, he was not confident on the future it, as Glendening writes:

> *The Island of Doctor Moreau* picks up on the negative implications of natural selection that the entangled bank disguises. In Wells's text entanglement means disorder, not order or harmony: it entails the commingling of objects, processes, and qualities that strike the human mind as incompatible or antagonistic in Wells's text

> entanglement means disorder, not order or harmony: it entails the commingling of objects, processes, and qualities that strike the human mind as incompatible or antagonistic because they upset boundaries and categories; and it points to the limits of knowledge, since the mind, caught in the very processes it tries to understand, is continually confounded by contingencies, like those governing the course of Darwinian evolution, too complex to be anticipated or fully comprehended. [158]

Wells coined his own readings of theories of evolution, which he relayed in many of his works of nonfiction. Patrick A McCarthy observes Wells's use of Huxley's work: "Wells adapted Huxley's ideas to his own purposes in such essays as "Human Evolution, an Artificial Process" (1896) and "Morals and Civilisation" (1897), as well as in *The Time Machine*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, and *The War of the Worlds*."[159] In his paper "Man Becomes a Different Animal"[160] Wells refers to the illusion of human fixity, and claims that at the times he was writing, human life was changing more than it ever had before:

> Perhaps never in the whole history of life before the present time, has there been a living species subjected to so fiercely urgent, many-sided, and comprehensive a process of change as ours to-day. None at least that has survived. Transformation or extinction have been

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[158] John Glendening "Green Confusion": Evolution and Entanglement in H. G. Wells's "The Island of Doctor Moreau" Victorian Literature and Culture, Jan 01, 2002; 30:2 p. 573 Subsequent page references in text.

[159] Patrick A. McCarthy, "Heart of Darkness" and the Early Novels of H. G. Wells: Evolution, Anarchy, Entropy', *Journal of Modern Literature*, (13:1) (Mar., 1986), p. 39 Subsequent page references in text.

[160] H.G. Wells, 'Man Becomes a Different Animal', *The Way the World is Going*, London: Ernest Benn, 1928 Subsequent page references in text.

> nature's invariable alternatives. Ours is a species in an intense phase of transition. (3)

He refers to evolution currently occurring at the time he was writing as a "biological revolution."(5) When Wells speaks of humans, he is very clear that he thinks we are animals, referring to humans in a scientifically as another category of animal: "Very few of us realize the enormous distortions that are now going on in the life cycle of the human animal."(5) When discussing the sexual drive of his generation he describes: "man was almost as sexual as a cat with its ever recurring kittens."(7) His terminology is biological, scientific, the same kind of descriptions including that of a "life cycle" that would be used to discuss any other creature, yet he also uses metaphor alikening us to other animals. This suggests that Wells's opinion of the abyss would be opposed to that of Heidegger, who ascertains a great difference between man and animal, describing man as "world forming", and animals as "poor in world."[161] He instead more closely aligns with Derrida's conception of the abyss, admitting a difference between humanity and other animals, whilst also acknowledging the human as an animal. Furthermore, Wells adheres to Derridean thought by cohering to a mutable difference between human and animal; a boundary in flux, with little sustainable fixity. It is through Derrida's philosophical lens that we can especially understand Wells's attitude towards human animality.

However, despite this adherence to the concept of fluid humanity, Wells also sees the potential for humanity to move beyond traditional values, writing that "Man was a family animal. Now this is no longer the case. Now family life becomes merely a phase in an ampler experience. Human life escapes beyond it." (7) Here Wells mentions hope for humanity to move in an upward trajectory of development. Within "A Human Adventure", as part of *An Englishman Looks at the World*, Wells writes of man:

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[161] Martin Heidegger, "The Animal is Poor in the World", *Animal Philosophy*, London: Continuum, 2004

> Alone among all the living things this globe has borne, man reckons with destiny. All other living things obey the forces that created them; and when the mood of the power changes, submit themselves passively to extinction Man only looks upon those forces in the face, anticipates the exhaustion of Nature's kindliness, seeks weapons to defend himself.[162]

He further includes an argument with a classically Cartesian element pertaining to human reason: "All this has come as a necessary consequence of the first obscure gleaming of deliberate thought and reason through the veil of his animal being." (5) In this passage, Wells seems to defy his philosophy of man's animal truth. Despite his opinion of humanity in flux, he does not wholly seem able to separate himself from the concept of the abyss that separates human from animal. Freud's theory on humanity's need to separate itself from other animals may be pertinent here-perhaps Wells is unable to conceive himself as wholly animal, so slips into Cartesian discourse. However, it is more likely that he writes to promote the potential of education and science, which identifies more with his socio-political beliefs. Despite the pessimistic outlook of *The Time Machine*, this later writing demonstrates Wells's socialist hope that man can move past his trappings: “He has changed these cardinal points in his biological process in the last hundred years almost unawares. So far he is already a different sort of animal from his ancestors, or, indeed, from any species of vertebrated creature that has ever lived upon earth.” (8) These beliefs, in man’s ability to progress are, however, entirely based on a faith in education inherently linked to his socialist political stance, rather than a belief in progressive evolution. Despite full acceptance and interest in evolutionary theory, this was not where Wells’s hopes for humanities future lay.

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[162] H.G.Wells*, And Englishman Looks at the World*, London: Cassel and Co, 1914

Beginning with this fascination with evolutionary theory, as Richard Pearson writes, Wells became part of a movement which engaged with this focus:

> In the mid- to late 1890s, as part of a group of writers and thinkers that included Grant Allen, Edward Clodd, and George Gissing, and through correspondence with the emerging novelist Joseph Conrad, Wells found himself drawn into debates that embraced new thinking around the origins of man, prehistory, primitivism and savagery, ritual and cultural survivals, and the new evolution of man, which itself established a scientific opposition to the Church.[163]

During the time in which Wells was writing evolutionary theory was affecting anthropology on a wide scale. Darwin by this time had published his *Descent of Man* (1871), and the link between human and animal were well known and accepted throughout the scientific community, made clear when he writes:

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[163] Richard Pearson Primitive Modernity: H. G. Wells and the Prehistoric Man of the 1890s The Yearbook of English Studies, Jan 01, 2007; 37:1 (59)

> We must, however, acknowledge, as it seems to me, that man with all his noble qualities, with sympathy which feels for the most debased, with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his god-like intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system- with all these exalted powers-Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin. [164]

Whereas Darwin avoided discussing "social Darwinism", and any particular moral implications of his theory, other scientist followed the rational of his theory to more sinister conclusions. A primary example of this is Francis Galton, who is considered the father of eugenics. Galton and Darwin had a close familial bond, yet whereas Darwin was a cautious thinker, Galton was more of a maverick. Edward Larson explains Galton's theory:

> As a Darwinist, he believed that humanity had risen to its present level through an evolutionary process driven by the natural selection of persons with beneficial inborn traits. Galton's scheme involved identifying the traits that advance humanity and then artificially selecting persons with them to dominate in reproducing the next generation.

Galton's viewed eugenics as a logical way to progress the human race, and considered peoples moral concerns irrational, writing in "Inquiries into Human Faculty' (1883): 'There exists a sentiment, for the most part quite unreasonable, against the gradual extinction of an inferior race…"[165] According to current standards this statement is racist and absurd. Yet considering the mind-set of the typical Victorian combined with the lack of taboo caused by the atrocities of the Holocaust, it was not quite as outlandish as it seems in today's society. As he further explains: "what Nature does blindly, slowly and ruthlessly, man may do providently, quickly, and kindly."[166] This was not a position that Darwin disagreed with, writing in *The Descent of Man*:

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[164] Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, London, Penguin Classics, 2004, pp.689

> At the present day civilised nations are everywhere supplanting barbarous nations, excepting where the climate opposes a deadly barrier; and they succeed mainly, though not exclusively, through their arts, which are the products of the intellect. It is, therefore, highly probable that with mankind the intellectual faculties have been mainly and gradually perfected through natural selection; and this conclusion is sufficient for our purpose. (153-154)

What Galton proposed was a kind of "positive" eugenics, which supported the encouragement of men and women with what was considered "superior" heredity fitness to marry, thus encouraging the development of humanity. When considering later works of science fiction, like George Orwell's *1984*(1948)[167], the radical dystopian consequences of this philosophy are disturbing, and a modern day supporter of Darwinian theory may understand why there was so much fear over the implications of evolution. Wells describes how "The mechanism of evolution remained therefore a field for almost irresponsible speculation." (200) When considering the "irresponsisible speculation", he could have been considering the studies of scientists like Galton. Treating humanity as another species of animal rather than a separate entity necessitated a reengagement with moral principles assumed by humanities individuality and Biblical teachings on ethics.

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[165] Francis Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development*, London: Macmillan, 1883
[166] Francis Galton, *Essays in Eugenics*, London: Eugenics Education Society, 1909
[167] George Orwell, !*984*, London: Penguin, 2003

Although Galton's version of eugenics is extreme, it was not as dangerous as that of his German counterpart Ernest Haeckel, a friend of Darwin's and champion of "recapitulation" theory. Haeckel, in his *History of Creation* (1968) writes: "Passion and selfishness, conscious or unconscious, is everywhere the motive force of life…Man in this respect is no exception to the rest of the animal world."[168] According to Richard Weikart, Haeckel: "condoned the extermination of 'primitive' races which were losing the struggle for existence."[169] Haeckel's statement demonstrates the animal aspect of humanity, and also the amoral implications linked with it. Wells perhaps used his separated human species, the Eloi and the Morlocks, to demonstrate how eugenics would affect society long term. Through the features of the Eloi and the Morlocks, he demonstrates the possible negative effects of classism, in consideration of Galton's avocation of breeding between people

This is possibly, as Ann Stiles discusses, one of the reason why Wells incorporated focus on the mad scientist within his literature, partially in a deferential way, in remembrance of the brilliant Huxley, but also in a cautionary way whilst considering Galton and Haeckel:

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[168] Ernst Haeckel, *Naturliche Schopfungsgeschichte*, Berlin:1868
[169] Richard Weikart, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, July 01, 1993, 54:3

> Wells's malevolent mad scientists and extra-terrestrials owe an intellectual debt not only to Huxley, but also to discussions of genius and insanity in late- Victorian issues of Mind (1876-present).4 The now-familiar trope of the mad scientist in fact traces its roots to the clinical association between genius and insanity that developed in the mid-nineteenth century. Authors like Scottish journalist and materialist philosopher John Ferguson Nisbet, English eugenicist Francis Galton, and Austrian Jewish physician Max Nordau - all of whose works were reviewed in Mind - argued that mankind had evolved larger brains at the expense of muscular strength, reproductive capacity, and moral sensibility.(319)

According to Richard Hofstadter in *Social Darwinism and American Thought* (1944) Darwinian concepts of the struggle for existence were used to justify a competitive and brutal political ideology.[170] Social Darwinism was the initial trigger for the Totalitarian ideology of the Nazi's, leading to the atrocities of the Holocaust. Agamben's theory of the anthropological machine describes the effects of treating humans as animals; the Jews, along with the other groups vilified by the Nazi's were perceived socially as animals; they were expelled into the abyss and therefore deprived of human rights. These atrocities occurred within Wells's lifetime, but years after the publication of his most seminal works, and within his life he remained fervently opposed to fascism.

Applications of Darwinism in other spheres of study were not, however, entirely harmful. Huxley, for example, was keen to preserve moral integrity within his perception of evolution, writing in "The Struggle for Existence in Human Society"(1888) that the civilised man: “devotes his best energies to the object of setting limits to the struggle.”[171] He differentiates the “civilised” human from the animal through the moral faculty, in a way reminiscent of Dostoevsky’s approach to the abyss, though without the focus on religion. Furthermore, he argues that the individualism of the age is “a misapplication of the stoical injunction to follow nature” (82). McCarthy argues that: “One of the impulses behind Huxley's Romanes Lecture was the attempt to demonstrate that while man was biologically related to the other animals, human society required an ethical sense that has no counterpart in animal society.” (46) Therefore, according to Huxley, the difference between animal and man is one developed by evolution in a society which allows humanity to transcend “survival of the fittest”. Huxley’s particular attitude towards evolution found practical applications in society, for example, with William Booth’s foundation the Salvation Army, which Laura Otis describes: “In the formulaic tales of Salvation Army founder William Booth, degraded workers recovered their humanity when they were dragged back across a boundary between animal and human.”[172] Huxley was scathing of Booths application of the theory. However, by focusing charity on the physical needs of the poor, Booth demonstrates a realisation of the corporeal, animal needs of lives, believing that by healing the body the soul may thrive.

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[170] Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, New York: Beacon Press, 1944

Wells, according to John S. Partington, followed Huxley’s particular form of ethical evolution: “Wells followed Huxley’s lead during the late Victorian and

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[171] Thomas H. Huxley, *Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays, volume 9 of Collected Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1894), pp. 203

[172] Laura Otis, ‘Monkey in the Mirror: The Science of Professor Higgins and Doctor Moreau’, *Twentieth Century Literature*, 55:4, Darwin and Literary Studies (winter 2009), pp. 485

Edwardian period, devising social policy based on the "minimum standard."[173] Furthermore, as Kemp argues: "he came to believe that science was-as he affirmed in his college's old school bulletin-'the light and redemption of the world."(1) Despite this, according to Partington, although Wells was ahead of his time in ethical matters involving race, class and gender, he did conceive of a place for eugenics, albeit a version that contrasted with that of Galton: "However, Wells did not reject eugenics outright but considered it of possible use in improving the survival chance of the human species and preventing the occurrence of unwanted births."(74) Wells considered eugenics a possible solution not only for the species but also in consideration of living conditions for the poor, a matter that actively engaged him. His advocacy, as Partington writes, was more focused on his "social policy concerns such as improved housing, better education and universal healthcare." (74) Theoretically, Wells may have believed that negative eugenics was possible, for benevolent reasons as well as evolutionary ones. Yet he maintained that it was not possible in practice at the time he was writing. Instead, he spent the latter part of his life advocating educational reform, a measure he though would be more effective in promoting the success of humanity as a species. Furthermore, Martin Danahay cites Wells's writings of the 1890's as evidence that Wells contradicted Galton's eugenic theories: "Wells's writings of the 1890s mount a critique of the use of the breeding of animals as a model for this deliberate manipulation of the human population"[174]. Works like *War of the Worlds* (1897) demonstrate the effects of a superior race dominating what they believe to be an inferior race. His conflicting beliefs in human rights and the potential of eugenics led him to write his *Rights of Man* in 1939, initially as a letter in a newspaper but later as pamphlets and chapters in written works. [175] From this, his moral sense and political ideas conflicted with many of the possibilities that evolution suggested for the advancement of the race. As Partington continues: “He considered negative eugenics as an enquiring biologist was perhaps bound to do, only to ultimately (though after many years of considering its value) dismiss it as a breach of human rights.” (79) He later wrote in his doctoral thesis “Galton had the mental disposition of a Fascist and was all for fuehrers and duces.” (79) The struggle that Wells had, however, with the theory demonstrates how through fluctuating concepts of the human/animal divide through the world of science and politics into a moral confusion over human rights. Wells held a particularly astute view of eugenics at the end of his life, having experienced it both in theory and as a historical event, and though he adhered to Huxley’s concepts of ethical evolution, it was difficult for him to differentiate what was moral. In hindsight he was able to condemn the theory, yet it was only after application by the Nazi’s that he come to realize the moral implications. Although he considered man an animal, he believed that humanity had a moral entitlement, though not one he could entirely explain or cohere with evolution.

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[173] John S. Partington, "H.G. Wells's Eugenic Thinking of the 1930s and 1940s", *Utopian Studies,* 14:1 (2003), p.74

[174] Martin Danahay, "Wells, Galton and Biopower: Breeding Human Beings", *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 17:4, 2012

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[175] H.G.Wells, *The Rights of Man; an essay in collective definition*, Poynings Press: Brighton, 1943

Wells's Abyssal Space

Now that I have considered the context of the novel I shall move on to discuss the contents. Out of all the novels examined so far Wells's work is the most self-evidently Darwinian. One particular element of Wells's writing that can be noticed with regards to this argument is his use of the abyssal space to explore his extrapolations of Darwin's theories. Despite no intentional relation to the abyss as a philosophical concept, Wells's writing perhaps demonstrates the symbolic importance of the abyss within humanist thought.

In both *The Island of Doctor Moreau* and *The Time Machine* Wells actively creates an abyssal space for the protagonist. In *The Island of Doctor Moreau* Prendick becomes lost in the Pacific Ocean for eleven months, a deliberate tactic to alienate his protagonist from human society. The ocean is symbolic of a primeval space, believed by both Charles and Erasmus Darwin to be the birthplace of life. It is therefore fitting that the abyssal space resembles the place where life and humanity originated from. It is not coincidental therefore that three of the four novels explored in this study have used the ocean as the setting for their narratives. When describing his uncle's disappearance the narrator declares that "….my uncle passed out of human knowledge about latitude 5°S. and longitude 105°W., and reappeared in the same part of the ocean after a space of eleven months." (6) The evocative part of this section is the use of the concept "human knowledge"; the statement has multiple meanings, the first basic connotation is that humanity lost all knowledge of him. The second reading is more significant; he passed out of human knowledge, meaning that he was separated from human knowledge himself. He was in a space absent of humanity. In Freudian psychoanalysis this could mean that he moves from a world dominated by ego to the realm of the id. As the truth of Prendick's story is questioned, there is a definite hint of madness, or a separation from reason. In philosophy, however, it means the movement into a more animalistic state. He is drawn unwillingly into the abyss literally just as Raskolnikov was psychologically.

Abyssal spaces serve as important motifs within a variety of literary visions, representing a descent into chaos and a transformation of state. John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) provides an example of the abyssal space, as Satan must traverse the abyss to reach Earth:

Chance Governs all. Into this wild abyss,

The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,

Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,

But all these in their pregnant causes mixed

Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight.[176]

Satan, the Promethean character who challenges God, traverses the abyss to tempt Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. Considering the links between humanity, rebellion against God, and knowledge, Satan's journey resembles that of Moreau, who defies law and morality to create his own images of humanity. The abyssal space is used to represent a perversion of boundaries. As Satan transgresses the boundary separating Hell from Earth, Moreau perverts the boundary of animal and human. The concept of literary abyssal spaces can be particularly noted in much eighteenth and nineteenth century adventure fiction, which is often focused on the island as a limited space outside European societal control, and thus a microcosmic landscape for humanity to be pushed to its limitations. Wells draws on much of this prior literature in his conception of his own abyssal space. Within this category are various works of adventure fiction, including Robert Stevenson's *Treasure Island*[177](1883) and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*[178](1719). Robinson Crusoe especially shares Moreau's focus on a "them and us" divide between versions of humanity, a division that Moreau further problematizes. The division between Crusoe and the cannibals demonstrates the ability of humanity to separate itself psychologically from its more primal self. Like Crusoe, Prendick seems an isolated higher form of humanity in comparison with the Beast People he is stranded with. Furthermore, within the society of the Beast People there are the more docile members, for example the St Bernard creature resembles Friday, and there are more savage creature; in this manner the Cannibals take form as the Leopard Man and the Hyena Swine. Wells was also, as Roger Bozzetto notes, inspired by Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*[179] (1726), and drew on this prior fiction to write his novella. Bozzetto, in his focus of the "tragi-farcical" elements of the novel, observes that the space is used specifically as the grounds for a symbolic demonstration of human nature: "The island on which it centers at first appears as a terrain for adventures; but these, while remaining anchored in the reality of the represented world and sharing its solidity and coherence, take on an allegorical coloration as they put to work the elements of various myths."(34-35)

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[176] John Milton 'Paradise Lost', London: Penguin Classics, 2003 (p.47-48, line 910-914)

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[177] Robert Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, Ware, Wordsworth Classics, 1992
[178] Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1992
[179] Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1992

The Island is purposefully emblematic, used as a space for exploration, of both space and identity. The island itself is a mystery, and previously uninhabited prior to Moreau's experimentation, therefore emphasising the unknowable, demonstrative of an abyssal space. However, as Bozzetto further claims, the island can be placed in the same area as the Galapagos Islands:

> It is somewhere in the Pacific Ocean between Chile, to which Montgomery is returning, and Hawaii, towards which the Ipecacuanha is headed, or between Apia, Samoa's capital, and San Francisco, according to the route followed by the ship that picks up Prendick at the end. In short, the island is in the vicinity of the Galapagos Islands, where Charles Darwin conceived of The Origin of Species. (35)

Bozzetto concludes that Moreau's Island is not as abstract as many other literary islands, including the island of More's *Utopia* (1516) or Swift's nations in *Gulliver's Travels*. Yet it takes some attention to the details of the novel to place it as Bozzetto does. Furthermore, the association with Darwin's discoveries, and the situation of the island inherently tie it to the Darwinian abyss.

Glendening argues that in this space Prendick faces his own animality, as well as the horrors of the island: "…physical suffering, fear and the instinct for self-preservation cause him to confront a violent, animalistic part of himself, a dimension he will encounter repeatedly before he escapes the island."(576) Further to Glendening's argument, I argue that this created space is designed specifically by Wells so that his protagonist can confront the abject horror of his primal being. Montgomery also notices the abject qualities of the Island, having turned to alcohol to sustain his continued existence: "Why am I here now – an outcast from civilization- instead of being a happy man enjoying all the pleasures of London?" (19) Yet readers are aware that Montgomery has been placed on Doctor Moreau's island due to an immoral act during his time studying medicine. Similarly Moreau was hounded from society due to his questionable experiments. It can be deduced that the two scientists have been rejected from human society due to criminal impulses, which, as was established within the last chapter, can be inherently linked to animality. Prendick may also find himself stranded in the abyss due to his desperate acquiescence to cannibalism. Because he was driven to such measures, and does not, in the end, commit them, he is allowed to leave the abyss and re-join human society. Yet becoming a part of the abyss means that he will never again be able to enjoy human company. For Prendick, the boundary between human and animal has been blurred permanently, and he can no longer ascertain the distinction between man and animal.

Pearson also observes the symbolic relevance of Wells's created space: "When the Time Traveller ventures into the future, he enters a symbolic realm, much like Moreau's island, or the atoll of the Aepyornis, or, indeed, the primitive landscape of prehistoric Britain." (73) Pearson finds the similarities in both imaginary spaces in the primitive qualities that Wells evokes. Primitivity or human prehistory, is crucial to the philosophy of the abyss where space and time is concerned; before recorded history, but after the separation from animal, and it is within the mysterious primitive history of man that the missing link within the abyss can be found. Differing from the space created in the Island, the Time

Traveller is displaced in time; the abyss is found within the distant future, a space that becomes abyssal because it is absent of humanity, and is instead inhabited by creatures who resemble elements of man but are so far removed that these are uncanny and abject. It is unique, because when considering the abyssal contents scientists and philosophers tend to think back to the origins of humanity. Wells instead looks ahead to the possible reunion between human and beast. The futurity of this landscape perhaps makes it more terrifying than Moreau's Island, as it is situated closer to home.

The creatures that reside in the Time Travellers abyss are polar opposites; the Eloi and the Morlocks, who will later be discussed in relation to regression and de-evolution. These creatures represent two conflicting elements of humanity. Logically, if these two species were combined, you could consider them a pessimistic view of humanity-the pathetic and the vicious. However I would argue that Moreau's Beast People resemble a conglomeration of the Eloi and the Morlocks. The more benign Beast People become dependent on Prendick, as Weena becomes dependant on the Time Traveller. Yet the more carnivorous creatures like the Hyena Swine and the Leopard Man resemble the Morlocks in their savagery. However none of the creatures could entirely be mistaken for humans. The Beast People are Wells's primary abyssal residents. They are curiously mismatched, originating from a variety of different animals, symbolising the numerous different sources of common ancestry. The Beast People are bound by a particular experience; they have all been through the same initial process that Moreau put them through to make them more human. Some are harmless, and almost endearing, like the little slothman. Others are merely irritating like the ape-man considering his “big thinks” and pretensions to humanity. Yet other creatures on the Island are threatening and dangerous like the leopard-man. The spectrum of the Beast Folk included on the island represents Derrida’s concept of the *animot*; the animals cannot be generalised into a certain variety of savagery. All the animals show signs of animality that represent the beasts they were before Moreau tampered with them, demonstrating that animality is not one inherent trait shared among animals. Mirroring humanity, this also demonstrates that humanity cannot be reduced to one single quality.

E. E. Snyder agrees that the Beast Folk are the abyssal monsters of the island, clearly situated between human and animal: “The Beast Men are the novel's evident monsters, at least to start with. They are Moreau's creations, not human yet no longer animal after what he has done to them. The Beast Men represent a confusion between human and animal, a blurring of boundaries.”[180] Snyder’s reading of the Beast Creatures is evident within the novel by Prendick’s contrary reaction towards them: “That these man-like creatures were in truth only beastial monsters, mere grotesque travesties of men…” (80) Although Prendick develops relationships with some of the Beast Folk, he is primarily pleased to be separated from them: “It is strange, but I felt no desire to return to mankind. I was only glad to be quit of the foulness of the Beast Monsters.” (129) Prendick’s desire to remove himself from the Beast Folk reflects the psychological need of humanity to separate itself from its own inherent animal. However, although the

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[180] E. E. Snyder, ‘*Moreau* and the Monstrous: Evolution, Religion, and the Beast on the Island’, *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural,* 2:2, 2013 p. 215

Beast Folk are the most obvious abyssal residents of the Island, each human character can also be considered as traversing the space between animal and man. Prendick driven by hunger and thirst turns to his more fundamental bodily instincts to survive. Montgomery, an alcoholic is no longer fully in possession of his human faculties, and Moreau's genius extends itself to madness, his rationality crossing into irrationality as his morality is detached from his humanity. Moreau may have elevated the creatures temporarily, so they become contents of the abyss, yet the humans of the novel had to descend into the abyss from the opposing edge. The humanity of the men who reside on the Island is tested within the novel, and the hierarchy they tried to maintain fails, meaning there is only one human escapee. Yet although Prendick escaped the Island, he remained part of it psychologically.

Principally, the abysses that Wells creates demonstrate something akin to Derrida's philosophy of the multifaceted void in flux. Derrida's theory of a mutable abyss suggests that there is no definite distinction between man and animal: "This abyssal rupture doesn't describe two edges, a unilinear and indivisible line having two edges, Man and Animal in general." (31) Moreau's varied Beast People reflect the complexity of humanities origins, and therefore the complexity of the abyssal contents. Because there is no definite trait that defines man from animal, Wells introduces a concept of humanity that becomes important throughout much of his literature, both fiction and nonfiction. Wells demonstrates that humanity is not a constant, an aspect that will be further considered later in this chapter. The abyss is constantly changing, and we cannot pinpoint anything that directly and cleanly divides animal from man, a point that Glendening also notes in his consideration of Wells:

> Indetermiacy, for instance, governs the novel's treatment of the relationship between humans and animals, another area of uncertainty relavent to evolution. Evolutionary theory complicates the distinction between the two; because humans evolved from animals and bear innumerable traces of this incestry, there can be no absolute or essential gap between them-a point that Darwin makes repeatedly in The Descent of Man(1871) and The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animal(1872). (2002)

The difference cannot be found in the human voice, as Moreau is able to imbue the animals with speech. The animals do not lack morality as Dostoevsky would argue, as they have created their own sense of morality through The Law and their own spiritualism with a focus on Moreau. Furthermore Prendick's St Bernard creature gives his life trying to protect him from the Hyena-Swine that the animal feared, demonstrating a capacity for selflessness: "My St Bernard creature lay on the ground dead, and near his body crouched the Hyena-Swine, gripping the quivering flesh with misshapen claws, gnawing at it and snarling with delight."(125) The belief in a human soul is unacknowledged in these novellas, so it can hardly be recognised and reason is demonstrated to be such a weak and fragile commodity that it is linked as much to madness as it is to humanity. Therefore Wells's created abyss is horrifying because there is very little that separates animal from man, an assertion that can be verified by the fact that Prendick, whilst on the island becomes more bestial himself: ''In this way I became one among the Beast People in the Island of Doctor Moreau." (118) Predick transforms into a human animal just as the Beast Folk are transformed into animal humans, and for a certain amount of time the two live together in a form of society. The ape-man irritates Prendick by a likening the two due to the shape of their hands: "The ape Man bored me however. He assumed, on the strength of his five digits, that he was my equal, and was forever jabbering at me, jabbering the most arrant nonsense." (122) Yet although the apes arrogance annoys Prendick, there is an element of truth in the Ape Man's notion; the two are more inherently linked than he admits. Furthermore the animal creatures' society functions as a microcosm of human society, with its hierarchies, criminals, and complexities.

The abyss is used by Wells to demonstrate the philosophical difficulty in dividing human from animal. In the abyssal space animal and human are interchangeable, and society is warped. The boundaries are blurred, creating liminal creatures used to mirror a Wellsian form of warped humanity. The abyss is transient, demonstrated by the fact that the protagonist is able to leave, and is used to allow the human characters' space to explore their own animality which is not easily defined. Furthermore, another aspect of Derrida's philosophy which would have resonated with Wells is the seemingly extreme divide that occurs in the present:

> The multiple and heterogeneous border of this abyssal rupture has a history. The multiple and heterogeneous border of this abyssal rupture has a history. Both macroscopic and microscopic and far from being closed, that history is now passing through the most unusual

> phase in which we now find ourselves, and for which we have no scale. (31)

Derrida argues that the abyssal limits are complex and in flux, yet according to Wells's interpretation of Darwinian theory, currently we are more divided from animals than we have ever been before. As the abyss is changeable, however, there is no guarantee that this separation will last.

Speaking Beasts; Giving the Animal a Voice

In Derrida's *The Animal That Therefore I Am* he argues that philosophers have always considered the animal and the human in binary opposition because animals lack a voice. They are unable to describe their suffering: "Can they suffer?... The answer is well known: no, and precisely because these automatons are incapable of responding" (81) Derrida revisits a question asked by Bentham and answered by Descartes. Animals become automatons because they cannot protest against their pain. Gillian Beer further considers the anthropocentric aspect of language, arguing that: "Language is anthropomorphic by its nature and anthropocentric in its assumptions. Only somewhat later in the century did it begin to frequently be argued that this anthropocentrism in itself might subvert the truth telling powers of language and must conscientiously be resisted." (45) Beer argues that whereas many assumptions about the superiority of man were hinged on language, it may have in fact obscured certain truths. She suggests that with our use of language we forcibly separate ourselves from animals, assuming that because they cannot describe their pain they do not feel it. She further argues: "If the material world is not anthropocentric but language is so, the mind cannot be held truly to encompass and analyse the properties of the world that lie about it." (45) Thus, rather than revealing truths about the world, language is responsible for an anthropocentric deceit. We are able to convince ourselves that we are the centre of the world. In *The Island of Doctor Moreau* Wells does not deprive the animal of a voice, allowing a theoretical examination of the moral implications of this separation. He also demonstrates that though an animal may not have language, they are able to communicate their pain, particularly demonstrated through the tortured puma.

Wells focuses specifically on the voice, which is drawn attention to frequently by Prendick. His first experience of the Island is on the ship after being rescued by Montgomery, and some of the first sounds he hears are the mingling of human and animal sounds; "Then the noise overhead began again, a snarling growl and the voice of a human being together." (11) The sensory addition of the human and animal voice being heard together is a precursor for the themes in the novel, and the blending of sounds represents the blurred boundary between the human and animal, whilst also drawing a distinction between the two noises. Furthermore when Prendick encounters the figures in white on the beach he is especially focused on their strange voices: "…the deformed and white-swathed man on the beach…I wondered what language they spoke. They had all seemed remarkably taciturn, and when they did speak, endowed with very uncanny voices." (33) The Unheimlich is one of the most important features of the novel. The creatures that Moreau creates on the Island are the embodiment of this uncanny sensation that Wells creates: "The three creatures engaged in this mysterious rite were human in shape, and yet human beings with the strangest air about them of some familiar animal" (42) The voices are therefore exemplary of this uncanniness. The animals speak like humans, but there is a strange difference, one that is not definite but still obvious. Prendick cannot decipher exactly what makes the voices unusual, but there is a definitely noted difference nonetheless.

Perhaps one of the most important moments in which voice becomes meaningful is when considering the pain of the puma. The puma's cries caused by Moreau's experiments are the driving force behind Prendick's primary exploration of the island; "And presently, with a positive effect of relief, came the pitiful moaning of the puma, the sound that had originally driven me to explore this mysterious island." (47) Despite not having any particular qualms with vivisection, the sound of the animal's pain troubles Prendick so much that its drives him out in a weakened state. However, the matter changes dramatically when the puma's animal voice becomes a human voice: "There was no mistake this time in the quality of the dim broken sounds, no doubt at all of their source; for it was groaning, broken by sobs and gasps of anguish. It was no brute this time. It was a human being in torment." (50) Although the creature does not speak, there is a definite human quality to the voice, again left unspecified. The instigation of human pain and animal pain are immediately for Prendick separate issues. Though he may have been troubled by the puma's pain he did not consider it immoral. When the voice became human however, the sounds of pain transformed into an alarm, driving Prendick to escape. The sounds of human pain represent a threat to Prendick. Whilst it was still the sound of animal pain, Prendick could remove himself from it. However, when the noises became human the subject of Moreau's experiments transformed into a creature that

Prendick could identify with. The pain inflicted upon this other creature he can therefore imagine being inflicted upon himself. Yet the voice is never transformed into coherent words.

Laura Otis argues that the animal voice becomes particularly relevant to the question of the division between animal and man considering Prendick's assumption of the Beast People's humanity: "Prendick presumes that they are or were human because they can speak, and that Moreau's operations have stripped people of their humanity." (500) Otis's assesment is clarified when Prendick comes into contact with the Beast People, who speak to him: "'You,' he said, 'in the boat.' He was a man then- at least, as much of a man as Montgomery's attendant-for he could talk." (55) The Beast People do not all speak well, and some better than others: "The speaker's words came thick and sloppy, and though I could hear them distinctly I could not distinguish what he said." (42) Later, following the escape from the laboratory after hearing the Puma's human cries he comes into contact with an ape like creature, whose being he questions. From the ability to speak Prendick identifies the simian creature as a human rather than an animal, although the form of humanity is measures in doses, as he is "as much of a man as Montgomery's attendant". Wells demonstrates that a creature can be imbued with varying levels of humanity. The ability to speak classifies the animal as human in a limited manner.

The simian creature, however, chooses a different method of distinguishing men from beasts, through the number of fingers they are in possession of: "One, Two, Three, Four, Five-eh?" (55) This is particularly significant, as it demonstrates the subjectivity of human signifiers. The Ape-Man believes himself higher than the other Beast People and closer to humanity because of the features he shares with the human members of the Island. Prendick emphasises that this is a ridiculous measure of humanity: “He assumed, on the strength of his five digits, that he was my equal, and was for ever jabbering at me, jabbering the most arrogant nonsense.” (122) Yet if it is arbitrary to find humanity in the digits on our hands, it could be equally arbitrary to consider verbal communication as a signifier of humanity. Perhaps this is proven by the Beast Peoples’ command of human language. However, Wells’s focus on the Ape-Man’s hand demonstrates a fundamental use of logic, an application of causation, and with this ability the creature demonstrates a fundamental element of humanity. Similarly, the simian creature is able to manipulate and create with language: “One thing about him entertained me a little: he had a fantastic trick of coining new words.” (122) For example, the Ape-Man used the term “Big Thinks” to explain abstract thoughts. The ape man is, perhaps, a pastiche on what could have been considered “primitive” society. He is still very brutish, and with this come an annoying arrogance, but also his ability to extrapolate information. The Ape-Man’s use of language, therefore, is particularly meaningful when considering Wells’s application of the animal voice within the narrative.

With the Beast People’s grasp of human language comes another very human attribute-discourse. With this, they created a law, and from the law they form a religion: “He must learn the Law.” (58) This law is a list of rules and boundaries that they have been told by Moreau to adhere to if they are to define themselves as men: “Not to go on all-Fours; *that* is the Law. Are we not Men?” (59) By including this “Law” within the Beast People’s society, Wells alludes to “The Law of the Jungle" that Rudyard Kipling includes in *The Jungle Books* (1894)[181]. The Beast People are required to repeat these rules, which also include not sucking up Drink, not eating flesh or fish, not to claw bark and not to chase other men. To ensure the repetition of this law is maintained there is a Sayer of the Law, who acts like a priest. The method of upholding values by repetition suggests indoctrination which develops into a universal truth. By including these Laws Wells critiques Kipling's concept of a proselytized humanity. Bozzetto identifies how Wells does this within his argument focusing on the tragi-farcical elements of the novel:

> What we have here, as various commentators have remarked, is Wells's ironic revision of the man-cub Mowgli learning the Law in Kipling's first Jungle Book. The connection, however, goes further than literary parody. Kipling, after all was not simply the marvellous storyteller; he also "sung the hymn of the dominant bourgeoisie, the war march of the white man round the world, the triumphant paean of commercialism and imperialism. (40-41)

As Bozzetto argues, Wells did not adhere to Kipling's views on white supremacy; using comedy to highlight the absurd nature of these created Laws, Wells deeply criticises Kipling. Therefore, when Bozzetto discusses the "tragi-farcical" elements of the novella, he emphasises a deeper moral tone to Wells's writing. Furthermore, considering concepts of eugenics that Wells struggled with throughout his career, the use of the Law highlights an inherent problem with the assumption that one man's comprehensions are better than another's. It is morally corrupt to assume superiority over another form of humanity, and concepts of eugenics make this concept of moral superiority especially dangerous. Thus, through imposing discourse on the Beast People, Wells is able to critique hierarchical concepts of humanity that make eugenics problematic. Similarly, using the Law Wells critiques the dictatorial elements of religion. Using the Law Wells ridicules religion by creating an absurd image of animals pretending to be humans controlled and driven by the arbitrary rules given to them. Wells also uses the Law, however, to convey pessimistic suggestions of the societal purpose of religion. The Law also demonstrates that whilst speech is perhaps wrongly considered a signifier of humanity, it is a powerful tool which can direct humanity's development, adhering to his beliefs in the power of education. The second part of the Law includes a threat of Moreau's laboratory, written like Hell: "*His* is the House of Pain." (59) Moreau, who created the Law originally, is portrayed as a malevolent God, perhaps based on readings of the Old Testament. Wells demonstrates how language is used to create systems of control and, therefore, society. Yet this vision of society and this use of words are a lie. As Beer argues, it is possible that language is used to create divisive lies rather than universal truths. Lies are therefore, perhaps, more of a human quality than the use of language itself.

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[181] Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Books*, Ware: Wordsworth, 1992

The animals' grasp of language proves to only be temporary, undoubtedly due to the persistence of the "stubborn beast flesh" that Moreau laments. Otis argues that the reversion by the Beast-People allows Wells a unique insight into the intermediary stages of human language:

> Prendick's observations of the intermediate stages of language subvert the notion of it as a unique capacity. Between animal grunts and human eloquence lies a continuous spectrum, and articulate speech can be simulated, learned, and lost. By representing language coalescing and dissolving, Pygmalion and Doctor Moreau disqualify language as a well-defined boundary separating people from animals. The beast folk's failure to retain speech suggests the limits of plasticity: language can be acquired, but it will slip away unless integrated into a receptive structure. (500)

She further argues that the Beast People can resemble the lower echelons of society through their inability to conquer English language, and demonstrates a social element to Wells's use of animal language within the novel. She draws attention to this using George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*(1913)[182]. As both authors were socialists, this engages with perceptions of the poor and lower classes as humanity closer to animality.

Wells uses the animal voice to demonstrate the tenuousness of the separation between man and animal. A man may list certain qualities that a human has which an animal lack, but through his thought experiment, Wells demonstrates that voice could purely be a matter of bodily limitations and education, both elements that can be manipulated through science as Moreau does. Wells thus shows that the human voice is a weak argument for humanity's separation from animal. However, he also demonstrates the power of language; an argument Otis proffers when she says: "With a certain irony… Wells pinpoint language as the most essential skill for success in social adaptation" (499). The Beast People are caricatures of humanity, and Wells's adherence to Darwinian theory makes this possible. Like humans in society, a number of individual characters appear. Prendick's Dog Man is a creature who is almost sympathetic; the Ape-Man is obnoxious and annoying, whilst the leopard man and Hyena-Swine are antagonistic. Wells imbues the animals with speech as an experiment to hypothetically explore the effect of giving animals voices. And despite the voice being a tenuous explanation of humanity, the animals demonstrate an uncanny mirror of humanity in the temporary society they create on Moreau's island.

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[182] George Bernard Shaw, Pygmalion, London: Penguin, 2003

Mutable humanity; The Abyss in Flux

According to Gillian Beer, the introduction of evolutionary theory transformed humanity from a fixed state of existence to something transformative: "Evolutionary theory suggested that fixed laws no longer implied a fixed universe of matter. Instead, everything was subject to irreversible change. Whole species had vanished and even evidence of their existence had crumbled away." (37) The most obvious example of this in literature is Wells's *The Time Machine*, in which all traces of humanity are eventually wiped out as the Time Traveller journeys into the distant future. The concept of mutable humanity was not limited to Wells's literature. Robert Louis Stevenson also demonstrates humanity in flux within *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Within the novel, Stevenson portrays a scientist who endeavours to separate his humanity from his more bestial facets. By attempting to create a more Heideggerian abyss between himself and the animal, he instead entered a state of flux in which he would transform from the human to the animalesque with decreasing control.

The effect of the experiment is opposed to the desires of the scientist, who endeavours to increase the gap between animal and man. Instead, the transient nature of humanity is highlighted. Doctor Moreau's tactic is very different. Instead of separating humanity from animality, he uses animals to demonstrate the ability to further a species. Nevertheless, the effect is the same. Moreau, like Hyde, demonstrates the mutable nature of human nature, which can be manipulated and fluctuate but never fully controlled.

Within *The Island of Doctor Moreau* the definition between human and man is purposefully blurred to demonstrate this mutability, as Otis argues in her comparison of the novel with *Pygmalion*(1916): "In Wells's novella people such as the alcoholic Montgomery behave like animals, and some of the beast folk have sympathetic qualities."(490) Otis writes on the subject of talking animals and social experiments, and further argues that "The difference between people and animals, Wells's story implies, is one of degree, not kind".(490) As Otis contends, Wells held a firm belief that qualities in humanity were not definite, but found in higher quantities than they are in animals. They are qualities, therefore that fluctuate and change, demonstrated by the imbuement of human qualities on the Beast People. This is an aspect of humanity that Wells demonstrates within much of his fiction, as Pearson also notes:

> The transitional being is found in all of Wells's early novels. Griffin, in *The Invisible Man*, propels himself into his own modernity through the discovery of invisibility, which transforms him into a superhuman figure holding an advantage over his species. This mutation, however, proves the perverse feature of Darwinism and natural selection: its

> wastage, and the threat of mutation leading only to extinction. (64-65)

Pearson, in his consideration of primitive, transitional man, observes a demonstration of unsuccessful, unsustainable mutations. Similarly when the Time Traveller is given a glimpse of the far reaching future he sees what would happen to human evolution if we accelerated it. Correspondingly, in *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, Moreau attempts to accelerate the evolution of animals, assuming that they will evolve the same way as humans. However this is proven also to be unsustainable, as once Moreau dies, the animals revert back to their original states.

The transient element of humanity Wells presents can represent a movement away from animality as well as a return to it. Ringel, in her argument focusing on the animal/human hybrid, considers the mad scientist a figure of fear: "Most of all, we fear the ruthless Mad Scientist, whose single-minded pursuit of knowledge and pure reason has carried him so far away from the rest of humanity that he has lost "the human touch."(74) For Ringel, the real monstrosity within *The Island of Doctor Moreau* is Moreau himself, who has lost touch with his humanity. He believes that humanity must overcome bodily impulses like pain, so as to further himself from animal. Although Moreau is not monstrous in appearance, the emphasis of the whiteness of his hair can be associated with patriarchal domination. The presence of a full head of snow white hair on a man can be associated with God-like power, for example traditionally linked with wizards from Merlin to Gandalf and Dumbledore. This symbolism is particularly present in Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* (2008) in the character of President Snow, the corrupt patriarch who asserts God-like control by imposing The Hunger Games on Pandem; similarly Moreau imposes his Law on the Beast People.[183] The name "Snow" makes direct reference to the symbolic qualities of his white hair representing purity and corruption as a united dichotomy. Similarly Moreau seeks purity within humanity by separating man from his corporeal reactions, yet his actions are inherently corrupt. Moreau's first name is never mentioned, he is always referred to by his last name united with his title; this has a dehumanizing quality, imbuing the character more clinical associations. Moreau is therefore elevated from his humanity through representation. Ann Stiles writes specifically on the focus in the late nineteenth century on the mad scientist. A possible throwback to the concerns of Mary Shelley divulged in *Frankenstein*, these scientists are depicted as reaching towards God, whilst furthering themselves from their corporeal animality. Stiles demonstrates that Wells's early novels are specifically a demonstration of the danger of this cerebral being: "Wells's nightmarish vision of the massively over evolved brain unites these three works, as the ruthlessly intellectual biologist Moreau morphs into the amoral, top-heavy Martians and lunar inhabitants." (319) Stiles furthers her focus on the mad scientist by demonstrating a development from the monomaniacal Moreau to the amoral aliens of *War of the World* (1897)[184]. Echoing some of Dostoevsky's considerations of morality, Wells portrays the human who considers himself further from animals than the remainder of mankind. This Promethean being is revealed as being more monstrous than common man, as despite being intellectually advanced he lacks empathy. Patrick A. McCarthy also notices this element of Wells' stories, citing the "moral ambivalence and degeneration of the self-appointed superman"(39) as a theme that Conrad also used to create the character Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness* (1898). McCarthy's reference draws on Niezschean element of Wells's work. The character of the Promethean scientist pervades both novellas; by relying on the ability to transcend the body both Kurtz and Moreau become charges of beings with which they feel no empathy, demonstrated by Moreau's disregard of pain: "So long as visible or audio pain turns you sick, so long as your own pain drives you, so long as pain underlies your propositions about sin, so long, I tell you, you are an animal, thinking a little less obscurely what an animal feels."(73) It is this lack of empathy that allows them the ability to transcend the human and the animal; they believe their extreme rationalism an improvement on humanity, yet their actions lack morality. Therefore their excess of rationality allows them to become more animal. However, whereas Shelley invites us to some extent to empathise with her protagonist by giving him the narrative voice, Well's allows the reader no compassion for Moreau. He is written through the eyes of Prendick, who shares no emotional attachment with him, and because of this Moreau becomes a caricature, an allegory used as a warning against excessive materialism, despite Wells's affinity with Darwinism.

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[183] Suzanne Collins, "The Hunger Games": London: Scholastic, 2009

[184] H.G.Wells, *The War of the Worlds*, London: Penguin, 2005

Examples of this manically intelligent scientist in history include Francis Galton, and Cesare Lombroso. Similarly, Stiles notices the active use of the mad scientist within The *Island of Doctor Moreau*: "French psychiatrist Jacques Moreau's Morbid Psychology (1859) became the most influential early treatise on genius and insanity. Moreau, who is today best known for his experiments with marijuana, almost certainly served as the model for Wells's villainous biologist of the same name.” (324) According to Stiles the use of the name “Moreau” is an definitive nod towards concepts of genius, madness, and a form of evolution that is unsustainable. Wells uses Moreau to argue that a movement away from the animal which is too rapid and too artificial is unsustainable and immoral. Furthermore, Moreau takes rationality to a new level where it defies itself and resembles madness, as the captain of Prendick’s rescue ship suggests: “What the devil…want beasts for on an island like that? Then that man of yours…Understood he was a man. He’s a lunatic. And he hadn’t no business aft.” (16) Although Moreau establishes himself as a God to the creatures of the island, the drunken captain, despite his vices, sees Moreau more as a devil and a madman. It is madness that causes feelings of supremacy and monomania, creating what Prendick describes as a religion: “A horrible fancy come into my head that Moreau, after animalizing these men, had infected their dwarfed brains with a kind of deification of himself.” (59) Here, the self-appointed God of the Island is belittled and questioned, and by breaking ties with Montgomery the captain succeeds in excluding the residents of the Island entirely from the real world.

When Prendick remembers stories of a “Moreau”, he recollects that the doctor was expelled from human society due to atrocities committed in his lab: “It was not the first time that conscience has turned against the methods of research. The doctor was simply howled out of the country.” (34) The Doctor was responsible for experiments that were referred to as “The Moreau Horrors” (34), which Prendick does not elaborate on, but clearly exemplify the scientists disregard for moral feeling when endeavouring to further scientific exploits. E.E. Snyder argues that "Moreau's definition of humanity is a creature that is not driven by pain, for that takes only rational action; his definition of sanity similarly requires action to be purposeful and directed, taken in the name of progress." (213) Moreau's vision of humanity is an example of the overt rationalism associated with the scientist. The opinion that man can supersede his bodily urges demonstrates a disregard for the lessons that evolution teaches us, whilst simultaneously exploiting its principles. Yet Moreau, through his own death, proves this theory wrong. Rationalism, like every aspect of humanity within the novel, can be lost, either through madness or death. Moreau suffered both fates.

Within *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, the eponymous character demonstrates how humanity can be artificially bestowed and created. Humanity is literally manmade, and Moreau is able to bestow various gifts of humanity upon animals, including the ability to speak and to stand upright: "They may once have been animals. But never before did I see an animal trying to think." (69) Although he does this using horrifically cruel methods of vivisection, he is so successful that to begin with Prendick assumes that the creature he meets are human, albeit disfigured, strange humans: "He was, I could see, a misshapen man, short, broad, and clumsy, with a crooked back, a hairy neck, and a head sunk between his shoulders." (13) M'Ling is Prendick's first experience of the beast people, and although he assumes the creature is a man, he is struck by an uncanniness: "The thing came to me as a stark inhumanity. That black figure, with its eyes of fire, struck down through all my adult thoughts and feelings, and for a moment the forgotten horrors of childhood came back to my mind.” (20) It is this marked uncanniness that infects the entirety of the novel, a fact highlighted by Wells’s use of an almost exact description of the Unheimlich:

> I perceived clearly for the first time what it was that had offended me, what had given me the two inconsistent and confliction impressions of utter strangeness and yet of the strangest familiarity. The three creatures engaged in this mysterious rite were human in shape, and yet human beings with the strangest air about them of some familiar animal. (42)

Nevertheless, when Prendick begins to fathom the meaning behind Moreau’s experiments, he assumes he was changing men into more animalistic beings rather than the other way round: ‘’They were men-men like yourselves, whom you have enslaved, and whom you still fear” (66) However Moreau uses what he describes as a “humanizing process” (67) to transform his creatures. Yet it is not only bodily changes that Moreau has to instigate to create men from animals. He notes instead that much of the necessary work is in the education of the animals: “Very much indeed of what we call moral education is such an artificial modification and and perversion of instinct; pugnacity is trained into courageous self-sacrifice, and supressed sexuality into religious emotion.” (73) This perhaps suggests that much of humanity is found in aspects of society that are taught, or indoctrinated. Furthermore it suggests that by creating law and religion, humanity can be created. Yet with the application of these aspects of society Wells creates a ludicrous scene in which the animals are ridiculous for worshipping a man who they consider to be God. The deification of Moreau suggests that humanity is an almost farcical application of certain arbitrary lies.

Moreau describes animality as the drive of bodily inpulses, suggesting that humanity rises above this: “So long as visible or audible pain turns you sick, so long as your own pains drive you, so long as pain underlies your propositions about sin, so long, I tell you, you are an animal, thinking a little less obscurely what an animal feels.” (73) Moreau’s belief that the body is responsible for animality, however, proves the mutability of humanity, as “they revert. As soon as my hand is taken from them the beast begins to creep back, begins to assert itself again…” (78) The body is a changing, transitory object that cannot be conquered by Moreau’s endeavours. Nevertheless, he promises to: “… burn out the animal…” (78), as if humanity is something infinite that can be imposed upon the right body. Moreau attempts to argue that after he has created the creatures, they are unquestionably human: “These creatures of mine seemed strange and uncanny to you as soon as you began to observe them, but to me, just after I make them, they seem to be indisputable human beings.” (78) Moreau denies the argument that Wells asserts within his writing, that the nature of humanity is disputable in itself, and imposing it upon animals merely exemplifies this. Furthermore, Moreau is wrong in believing that humanity can conquer the body, proven when he dies himself. Despite his belief that humanity is something that can be applied with the proper moderations to the body, it is his own animal mortality that kills him; the very reason that the body remains the master of the human soul. In fact, the humanity of Moreau and Montgomery proves too unreliable to be trusted: “Montgomery and Moreau were too peculiar and individual to keep my general impressions of humanity well defined." (84) Prendick begins to see flaws in the concept of humanity, and it begins to become a blurred concept within itself.

It is also evident that whilst humanity can be synthesised, it can also be lost; a creature considered "human" can revert back to animality, be it one of Moreau's created creatures, or they human characters of the Island. Prendick reverts to an animal state when he panics about his own safety on the Island. Otis argues that Montgomery had always been a liminal figure between animal and human: "Montgomery, who, as an alcoholic, is himself half beast…" (498) Yet when Moreau dies, who represents the only figment of human society on the island, Montgomery completely reverts to animality when he gets drunk with Moreau's beasts, causing Prendick to dismiss him saying: "You've made a beast of yourself. To the beasts you may go." (107) At this moment Montgomery has actively relinquished his links to the human world, and instead allows drink to drive him towards the animals: "We're on the edge of things. I'm bound to cut my throat tomorrow. I'm going to have a damn good bank holiday tonight." (107) Furthermore, the most profound reversion is perhaps the reversion made when Montogomery dies, and Prendick is left alone with the beasts. "In this way I became one among the Beast People." (118) In his time on the island Prendick remains with the beasts, talks with them and develops a social relationship with them. When the Beast People begin to revert back to their own original animalities, Prendick experiences an almost sentimental sadness when faced with losing his companions: "The little pink sloth thing became shy and left me, to crawl back to its natural life once more among the tree branches." (123-124)

When Prendick's St Bernard is killed he senses the danger for himself. This drove Prendick's last senses of humanity to find a way off the Island. Yet although he was successful, the effect of the island was lasting. Before his encounter with the Hyena-Swine, he is changed from a man into a more animal-like creature: "I, too, must have undergone strange changes. My clothes hung about me as yellow rags, through whose rents glowed the tanned skin. My hair grew long, and became matter together. I am told that even now my eyes have a strange brightness, a swift alertness of movement." (124) During his time on the Island Prendick's own humanity proved mutable. He is consequently permanently transformed into an abyssal resident: "I was almost as queer to men as I had been to the Beast People. I may have caught something of the natural wildness of my companions." (130) Furthermore, this aspect of his transformation allowed himself to see humans as they are, merely animals bestowed with fleeting humanity: "I could not persuade myself that the men and women I met were not also another, still passably human, Beast People, animals half wrought into the outward image of human souls; and that they would presently begin to revert, to show first this bestial mark and then that." (130) Wells perhaps draws attention here to the tenuous separation humanity makes between themselves and the animal other. The vision he leaves the reader with is a weakly transformed creature who, as Darwin says in *The Descent of Man*: "still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin" (398). Wells shows how with our newly developed humanity comes the threat of the subsequent loss: "I felt as though the animal was surging up through them; that presently the degradation of the Islanders will be played over again on a larger scale." (130) On reaching humanity finally, Prendick discovers that he finds himself with another form of Beast People, who are more convincingly human yet still portrayed as animals masquerading as a higher form of being.

Turning back the clock: Devolution and the Regression of Humanity

Following the previous section in which I discussed how Wells portrays the transient nature of humanity, we examined how in the last part of the novel the Beast People became gradually more animal and regress, a process that Prendick mirrors to some extent. The permanent movement of the Beast People from human to animal demonstrates that in the grand time scale of the Earth humanity is merely an anomaly that will not persevere as other species adapt. Beer summarizes how inconsequential humanity can be considered when discussing the place of humanity in the story of the Earth: "Lyell, and later Darwin, demonstrated in their major narratives of geological and natural history that it was possible to have plot without man-both plot previous to man and plot even now regardless of him." (17) Beer uses the concept of plots to describe a move away from anthropocentrism. The movement away from anthropocentrism caused by evolutionary theory is evident in *The Time Machine*. In the novella the Time Traveller finds himself surprised when he travels past humanity and further past life itself, achieving a glimpse of man's insignificance in the process. Furthermore, Wells also demonstrates how humanity may change and transform, perhaps slipping back into more prehistoric forms. Martin Danahay explores how Wells uses misreading of evolution to demonstrate the concept of directed evolution:

> *The Island of Dr. Moreau* plays with two divergent readings of evolution, one as 'progress', what Wells derisively termed 'excelsior

> biology’ in ‘Zoological Retrogression’, and the other drawing on the widespread fears of human degeneration in the 1890s. Prendick initially fears that Moreau is performing a forced degeneration, sending humans ‘down’ the evolutionary scale.

According to E.E. Snyder “*The Island of Doctor Moreau* demolishes the idea of evolutionary progressivism or directionalism, a response to Darwin that was common in the mid to late nineteenth century.”(214) Many misreadings of Darwinism took a Lamarckian direction by assuming that as part of the course of evolution, humanity would become a greater version of itself. However as Darwin argues, natural selection is randomised and non-directional, resulting from a series of chance mutations that could progress in any direction, not necessarily one that champions humanity. Pearson, who discusses Wells’s sociological focus, argues that he took a Darwinian outlook as to the future of humanity:

> Wells always rejected the Spenserian promotion of progress for the more Darwinan cocktail of chance, coincidence, and contingency…Wells bases his system of evolution on Darwin's trinity of chance, waste, and pain, the workings of nature being seen as without design, 'careless of the type', and inducing suffering in those creatures unfit or unable in the struggle for survival (58-59)

Contrasting with Spenser’s ideas of evolution there is a nihilistic quality to Darwinism; his theories suggest that, unlike Erasmus Darwin’s thesis on the steady progression of humanity, the future of man is left to chance and the ability to survive. The Darwinian concept of chance caused the Victorian fear of the possibility of "de-evolution"; the idea that when natural selection progresses the human race may retire into a more primitive form of being. How humanity adapts to this is without morality of reason, therefore we cannot expect to be moving towards a superior state of being, just a different one. Wells presents this sentiment in particular in *The Time Machine*, which communicates a disturbing glimpse into the distance future.

Primarily the Time Traveller claims that he expected a progression in human society; "When I had started with the Time Machine, I had started with the absurd assumption that the men of the Future would certainly be infinitely ahead of ourselves in all their appliances." (54) Wells bestows upon the Time Traveller a Spenserian assumption that evolution moves in a forward direction, and species can only progress. In *The Island of Doctor Moreau* Montgomery tells M'Ling "Your place is forward" (13), and though he is speaking of his place on the ship, the sentence is poignant, as it represents a widely held yet mistaken view of evolution. Moreau and Montgomery's goals with the Beast People are influenced by the idea that they are driving evolution forward, and it is this vision of evolution that the Time Traveller shares. The great scientists of Wells's novels are dedicated to humanity's progression forward, a concept that verifies their own assumptions of intellectual superiority over the rest of the human race. The Time Traveller finds instead that he is a common ancestor to two species who are both flawed and animalistic, both more base than modern day humans, yet also mirroring us. When he first arrives in the future, the Time Traveller encounters the ineffectual Eloi who initially resemble a perfect progression but are also reliant and weak, a critical exploration of the concept that Darwin and Wallace proffer, suggesting that as our minds grow our bodies need not develop:

> Mr Wallace, in an admirable paper before referred to, argues that man, after he had partially acquired those intellectual and moral faculties which distinguish him from the lower animals, would have been but little liable to bodily modifications through natural selection or any other means. For man is enabled through his mental faculties 'to keep with an unchanged body in harmony with a changing universe. (152)

The Time Traveller is curious because the Eloi's language is less complex than human languages, as he believed that the progression of humanity would necessitate the progression of human speech: "Either I missed some subtle point, or their language was excessively simple-almost exclusively composed of concrete substantives and verbs. There seemed to be few, if any, abstract terms, or little use of figurative language." (39) Wells's focus on language and speech is used to demonstrates de-evolution of the mind as well as the body, and a loss of creative vocabulary signifies a move towards animality. The Eloi body is a weaker, as predicted, but the mind is also feebler. The Time Traveller attempts to explain the emergence of the Eloi using principles of progressive evolution, suggesting that society developed extensively so that great minds or physicality was not needed: "I thought of the physical slightness of the people, their lack of intelligence and those big abundant ruins, and it strengthened my belief in a perfect conquest of nature…Very simple was my explanation, and plausible enough-as most wrong theories are!"(32-33) By assuming that humanity moves in an upwards trajectory, the Time Traveller wrongly hypothesises that he is safe. His assumption is demonstrated to be false, a mistake that may have cost him his life. The Eloi who at first resemble dependent children, are later revealed to be livestock.

The Morlock, due to the hardship they had to adapt to, are the antithesis of the Eloi. They are violent, and because they consume their distant relatives the Eloi, there is a cannibalistic element to them: "The Morlocks at any rate were carnivorous! Even at the time, I remember wondering what large animal could have survived to furnish the red joint I saw." (58) Yet despite their animalistic tendencies, the Morlocks demonstrate more intelligence than the Eloi, who they control. The Time Traveller surmises that the must be partially cared for by the Morlocks, as if they are being farmed: "And the Morlocks made their garments, I inferred…" (58). The Morlocks also moved the time machine to stop the Time Traveller from escaping. These acts demonstrate reason; a nefarious intelligence that is not directly observed, but is evidential, making the Morlocks seem uncannily human as well as animalistic. According to the Darwinian law 'survival of the fittest', this makes the Morlocks the master race:

> What if cruelty had grown into a common passion? What if in this interval the race had lost its manliness, and had developed something inhuman, unsympathetic, and overwhelming u powerful? I might seem some old-world savage animal, only the more dreadful and disgusting for our common likeness- a foul creature to be incontinently slain. (22)

Within Wells's futuristic dystopia he envisions the Eloi and the Morlocks as a degeneration of humanity. The two species that depend on each other are generated from a mutual progenitor. This could allude to Darwin's observation of slave and master ants in *On the Origin of Species*: "The latter does not build its own nest, does not determine its own migrations, does not collect food for itself or its young, and cannot even feed itself: it is absolutely dependent on its numerous slaves." (223) The ants that Darwin discusses have somehow adapted so that one becomes the servant of the other, an allusion to the more brutal aspects of present day humanity that links us to our animal selves. Ironically, the Time Traveller's final hypothesis on the development of the two species demonstrates a role reversal. The Time Traveller blames a rigid social hierarchy for the development of the two species: "The Upperworld people might once have been the favoured aristocracy, and the Morlocks their mechanical servants; but that had long since passed away. The two species that had resulted from the evolution of man were sliding down towards, or had already arrived at, an altogether new relationship." (58) Wells demonstrates an irony in evolutionary mechanisms; due to the rule "survival of the fittest" the Morlocks, who are originally the down trodden are forced to develop into the amoral creatures they become, whereas the Elois' more comfortable existence meant that the species did not need to adapt to survive. Therefore, it is possible to consider the Morlocks, more adapted to survival and therefore the more developed humanity, and the Eloi to be the regression. The Eloi are therefore the regressive species. By creating these juxtaposed species Wells demonstrates that humanity is not driven by some reasoning power towards perfection. Furthermore, by depicting these two species, which on the one hand could represent the evolution of the human race and on the other represent the regression, Wells proffers a future in which no matter whether humanity transcends or descends it is bound to move closer to animality, therefore bridging the gap that it momentarily created.

Furthermore throughout his adventure the Time Traveller begins to realize that he is now the missing link. As the ancestor of these creatures, he becomes the link between them and other previous animals through evolution. Comparatively these creatures, especially the Morlocks, seem to be abyssal residents, but in the future he is the missing link which connects the two species. Therefore the abyssal resident can be read in two opposing ways; the Morlocks in comparison with the Time Traveller could be abyssal, as they represent a development of the primal urges of humanity. However, the Time Traveller could be abyssal himself as he finds himself between the childlike Eloi, and the carnal Morlocks. His primal instincts become clear when he talks to the Eloi, especially when he attempts to find his time machine. He also demonstrates a carnivorous nature when he returns from the future craving meat… "Save me some of that mutton. I'm starving for a bit of meat." (14) Richard Pearsons draws on this theory, describing how the Time Traveller recognises himself more in the Morlock than in the Eloi:

> By splitting primitivism and civilization between the Morlocks and the Eloi, Wells plays a game with the reader. The Time Traveller associates himself with the Eloi, he calls them 'human' or near human and feels sympathy for them. He even strikes up his friendship with the androgynous Weena, and sees her as the hope of humanity symbolized in her white flowers. But it is with the Morlocks that the

> Time Traveller really has the most association. His repulsion at them, his retreat to Weena are only a denial of what the text makes clear: the Time Traveller contains the primitive, just like the Morlock. He is the labourer, loving machines, the eater of meat, and the violent destroyer of what threatens him. (74)

According to Pearson "The Victorian being of futurity, metamorphosing between the Eloi and the Morlock, provided a symbol for the modern age of the fundamentally divided and self-destructive psyche of the new man." (64) Pearson's assessment demonstrates how Wells uses these two species as a pastiche to critique the values of the new Victorian man.

This division between the amoral and the ineffectual, the mind and the body represents a divide between the two aspects of humanity. Similarly, in *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, the Islanders are split into two separate species; the cerebral humans, and the almost comical Beast People. Once again, Wells's protagonist is found in between these two extremes. Having been stranded and traumatised, Prendick literally regresses throughout his experience: "Hunger and a shortage of blood-corpuscles take all the manhood from a man." (24) It is, however, this regression that allows Prendick to survive on the Island. As opposed to Moreau's cerebral belief in the human ability to overcome pain, Prendick uses his more animal instincts, and this leads to his survival.

Conclusion

Throughout this argument, I have noted that Wells, as a fervent Darwinist sees the human as a form of animal; there is no distinct, obvious difference between human and animal, demonstrated clearly as Otis argues when Prendick, on entering the Beast People's village, attempts to identify humanising characteristics: "As Prendick learns more slowly than the reader who Moreau's beast folk are, he assesses them with all the criteria he can think of to distinguish humans from beasts. They talk, build houses, have erect posture, even try to think. But one by one, these potential boundaries collapse." (490) Otis's argument shows that there is not one attribute that a man can point to and declare it the difference between human and animal. Similarly, Snyder argues that the horror of the novella is sourced in the uncanny similarity between the humans and the Beast Folk: "The central concern of the book is that the Beast Men cannot be distinguished from other men, and that in our bodies and beliefs, we are all monsters." (215) The abyss, similar to Derrida's abyss, is fluctuating, changeable and multifaceted. Yet with the feeling of uncanniness that he imbues through his writing Wells demonstrates that though the distinction is not definable, it is definitely there. There is an abyss in existence, it is just not an absolute.

Wells was not merely a Darwinian, but also a political reformist and a socialist. He was not an individualist, as many of Darwin's followers were during the era, and he demonstrated a strong intersectional moral empathy for women, the lower classes and certain ethnicities comparitavely considering the attitude of the time. Pearson writes:

> Thus, human advancement, in Wells's view, is not solely the province of biological evolution, and is not to be seen as a complacent progression towards ever higher civilization. Indeed, the interaction

> of cultural change and biological change is complex; but for Wells the component of culture is the more significant of the two. (65)

Wells was a Darwinian evolutionist, and Darwin's theory of evolution was, for him, a matter of fact. Yet he believed in the power of social reform, and considered education the primary method to develop the human race. He believed that the future of man could potentially be terrible if not checked by pacifism, socialism and equality. Pearson argues that "For Wells there is a residual savage state in the individual (and in society) that is only held in check by moral conscience." (70) According to Wells, a man must not be the insipid Eloi, or the vicious Morlock. Instead, we must retain our human ability to learn and develop. For example, despite Moreau's actions being comparatively inhumane, the beginnings of society seen within the Beast Peoples' community demonstrate the need for the higher, more human qualities of language, education and community to be retained, in order to maintain humanity's more sympathetic characteristics.

However, Pearson suggests that for Wells, humanity needs to understand its primitivism in order to survive: "Modernity for Wells is the recognition of the primitive fundamental nature of man, and the feeble artificial character of his civilization. Man's folly, like Almayer's, is to believe that his civilization will save him. Wells's modern man must understand his primitivism, or perish." (74) To Wells, our humanity is in the understanding of our animal origins. Ideas which consider humanity as somehow higher than other animals will only allow humanity to degenerate into complicity. The assumption that our natures are inherently different leads to an inactivity, that allows the development of species like the Eloi. To separate ourselves from our animal selves, we must primarily accept them.

In many ways, Wells's philosophy on human nature can be seen as very pessimistic. He rejects concepts of meaning in the individual life, as Peter Kemp argues: "Individual life-even human life, he emphasises-is just an experiment, a slight modification which may, along with other slight modifications, alter a little the future development of the species to which it is utterly subordinate." (2) Wells rejects the concept of individual agency within the progression of life, which explains partially his portrayal of the megalomaniac scientist. However, he does hold hope for humanity as a race, acting within society for positive change. Page suggests that Wells's separation of humanity from animality is imbedded in the subjective self: "Despite the implications of Darwinism— that humankind may be just another biological mechanism in a cold, uncaring universe— Wells maintained that humans had a subjective self that had its own innate urge to develop." (150) Wells, despite his pessimistic dystopias and microcosms, is still hopeful that human nature can overcome the more negative, primitive aspects of humanity. And that is perhaps, the element he shares the most with such a contrasting author like Dostoevsky. Although Wells's moral sense is not sourced from religion, he still believes that man can overcome the more negative aspects of his primal instincts through educational and societal means. Despite a wealth of scientific evidence that proves otherwise, Wells demonstrates a necessity to elevate man about animal.

Conclusion

Within my thesis I have examined various approaches to the abyss separating man from animal; differing concepts of the difference between man and animal, and the contents of the mysterious abyss that perhaps contains the secrets to man's superiority over animal, if there is any at all. Throughout I examined the various creatures of the abyss, all monstrous in varying different ways, from Raskolnikov the superfluous man to Moreau's Beast People; from Moby-Dick to Frankenstein's creature. The examination of these beings has allowed me to consider the aspects which separate human from animal. By considering the work of these prolific novilists, I have demonstrated how philosophically important literature is. I shall now conclude by discussing the various potential elements of humanity which these novelist discuss, and whether they can be considered adequate limits of the abyss. I then finally reflect on the work of John Gray, whose philosophies categorically disregard a difference between animal and man.

Darwin argues human intellect is the reason why man maintains his place above animals in the world. In Darwin's opinion, it is humanities intellectual ability that separates us from animal, as he observes in *The Descent of Man*: "Of the high importance of the intellectual faculties there can be no doubt, for man mainly owes to them his predominant position in the world." (153) However, despite recognising intellect as a special feature of humanity, not one of the four authors discussed acknowledge it as the meaning behind the division of animal and man. Shelley demonstrates that reason only elevates man to remind him of his bodily self through the medium of scientific experiment. Despite Frankenstein's godlike intellect he is unable to recreate the essence of man. Despite being abjected from humanity, the Creature is fully capable of rational thought. Rationality is one part of humanity that the Creature shares with humanity, yet it is still not human. The Creature is rationally and bodily human, yet without the essential essence. In Melville's *Moby-Dick*, he imbues the whale with reason and Captain Ahab with madness. By doing this, he reflects on human rationality as a weak addition to humanity. The animal gains rationality as easily as Ahab loses his leg. Reason is a mere appendage to the human condition, not a defining feature. By representing rationality in this way he portrays intellect as a weak addition to humanity, easily conquered by the animalistic Will. Dostoevsky demonstrates through Raskolnikov that excessive intellectual application without a moral balance can, in fact lead to a regression towards animality in the form of criminal activity. For Dostoevsky, humanity is distracted from its purer essence by intellect. Rationality is therefore a hindrance for humanity, which is perhaps antithetical to Darwin's opinions. Finally, Wells demonstrates that rationality can be bestowed and removed. It is mutable and does not overturn the bodily self. According to Wells, it is science and intellect that helps us explain humanity's animality, as Doctor Moreau demonstrates on his island. That is the real horror that remains with Prendick after his escape. These authors therefore acknowledged rationality as one of the many limits of the abyss yet not important enough to divide humanity cleanly from their animal predecessors. Furthermore, they used their work to demonstrate this misconception about rationality. Every author I have studied is linked by the use of characters to disprove the idea that intellect and rationality are the defining feature of humanity. Therefore, I can surmise that though intellect is most certainly a unique feature of human nature, in the opinions of these writers, it is not a satisfactory explanation as to our particular separation from the rest of the animal kingdom.

On the matter of religion, however, the authors are divergent in opinion. A primary interpretation of Mary Shelley's novella suggests an inability for humanity to extend its reach to the God's, condemning the protagonist to a life of suffering caused by his ambitions. By attempting to recreate God's work, Shelley demonstrates that humanity can therefore lose its privileged position. It is important to Shelley that man accepts his place as below that of God. Therefore, in accordance to the difference between human and animal, Shelley demonstrates humanity as perfect in its creation because of the divinity of the Creator. Humanity is created by a perfect creator, making it a perfect creation in itself; exemplary of Descartes ontological argument. However, a human being perfect in creation cannot sufficiently recreate perfection. Therefore, through the creation of the creature, Frankenstein demonstrates a rigid hierarchy pertaining to the place of man; above animals but below God. Nevertheless, despite Shelley's assertion, underlying this is an inherent uncertainty on the fundamental principles of humanity. These insecurities hinted at by Shelley are exemplified by Melville in *Moby-Dick*, who demonstrates both fear of God, and a fear of the absence of God in his seminal novel. Dostoevsky however asserts the importance of religion as a defining factor which does not refute science, but undermines it when considering the definition of man. To Dostoevsky, the very meaning of humanity is discovered within spirituality. The closer man is to God, the more elevated he becomes. For Dostoevsky, the answer to the abyss lies firmly within spirituality. Controversially, for Wells the figure of God is symbolically portrayed by the monomaniacal Doctor Moreau, who believes himself great, but his morally dubious experiments achieve strange and repulsive results, perhaps mirroring the creation of humanity itself. For Wells, religion is merely a farce, acted by Moreau's Beast People to keep them in order. Completely contrasting with Dostoevsky's assessment, Wells considers religion a mere method to control the humanoid beast.

It seems, from the various different interpretations of the abyss throughout the thesis, that despite the differences of the authors, there is one aspect of the novels that stands out above any other. Each writer, in their own ways, preserves the importance of human morality. Shelley, from a religious perspective questions the ethical implications of scientific experimentation, and suggests that it is far more important for a human to maintain their bonds with the people they love rather that to attempt to exceed the human condition. Melville asserts the nobility of his characterised "savages", for whom it does not matter that they are Christian, but that they are instead inherently good. Dostoevsky affirms that human morality is found through Christian spirituality, and is therefore what separates man from animal. And finally, Wells, despite a love and fascination with Darwinism, also believes in necessity of moral fortitude within humanity. Darwin himself agrees that retaining a strong moral stance is of primary importance, writing in *The Descent of Man*:

> I fully subscribe to the judgement of those writers who maintain that of all the differences between man and the lower animals, the moral sense or conscience is by far the most important… It is the most noble

> of all the attributes of man, leading him without a moment's hesitation to risk his life for that of a fellow creature; or after due deliberation, impelled simply by the deep feeling of right or duty, to sacrifice it in some great cause. Immanuel Kant exclaims, 'Duty! Wondrous thought that workest neither by fond insinuation, flattery, nor by any threat, but merely by holding up thy naked law in the soul, and so extorting for thyself always reverence, if not always obedience; before whom all appetites are dumb, however secretly they rebel, whence thy original? (120)

By directly referring to Kant, Darwin in some ways agrees with Dostoevsky's particular assertion about morality, albeit without the zealous religious angle. It seems that writers and scientists alike strove to cling the concept that humanity was defined by morality. That we are inherently a "good" species, with an ethical sense absent in animals. However, I would argue that this humanist approach so important within the Victorian psyche no longer provides a compelling explanation for the abyss. Today the average person is constantly exposed to information about the numerous and various atrocities caused day to day by humans to other humans. Can we now truly maintain this faith in the goodness of human nature? I personally could not.

Since the nineteenth century there has been a wide variety of new literary interpretations which engage with man's relationship with animality. In Franz Kafka's *Metamorphoses* (1915) the protagonist Gregor transforms into an insect with no identifiable cause, a demonstration of the absurdity of human life.[185] In

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[185] Franz Kafka, *Metamorphoses and Other Stories*, London: Penguin, 2008

"The Lurking Fear"(1922) H.P. Lovecraft demonstrates a potential regression into animality of the higher classes, similar to that in Wells's *The Time Traveller*, yet in Lovecraft's story, it is the higher classes that resemble the Morlocks, savage and cannibalistic.[186] In later texts, humanity's relationship with animality is celebrated more than it is condemned, for example in Yann Martel's *Life of Pi* (2001) the young protagonist it shipwrecked on a boat with a tiger, insinuating that the tiger represents a dichotomous aspect of Pi's nature that he must learn to accept to guarantee his survival.[187] It is perhaps possible that a change has occurred since the nineteenth century, with an emergent pessimism caused by our realisation of how flawed our moral laws are, further transformed by acceptance of our animal selves. The animal that we attempted to further ourselves from, is perhaps now accepted more as a part of ourselves. It is possible that we are learning that attempts to distinguish ourselves from the animal are inherently flawed, because we are animals in our nature.

There is one predominant key feature found in every novel I have discussed within this thesis. In each book, the writer includes a vision of the fall of man. Furthermore, the fallen man is represented using is a Promethean narrative chronicling the folly of overreaching. Each novel contains its own version of Daedelus. The modern Prometheus, in this manner, is found in Shelley's Frankenstein, Melville's Ahab, Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov, and Wells's Moreau. Shelley's Frankenstein represents the Promethean character in his pursuit of the scientist. Like the Titan, Frankenstein tries to bestow humanity with more control over its own destiny. Like Prometheus, he is severely punished. In *Moby-Dick*, Captain Ahab represents the Promethean character because of his defiance; his dogged intent to gain revenge. By hunting Moby Dick, Ahab is presented by Melville as challenging God himself. The death of almost the entire crew is his punishment for overstepping his limits. In *Crime and Punishment*, the protagonist Raskolnikov attempts to overreach by committing murder. By doing this, he attempted to demonstrate that certain men can extend beyond the limitations of morality to act to promote the greater good. By acknowledging his mistake, Raskolnikov suffers less that he perhaps would have if he had not confessed. Finally, Doctor Moreau is banished from England because of his attempts to create humanity. Like Frankenstein, he suffers for his arrogance. Yet after the first creation, Frankenstein understands his mistake at least in part, and refuses to create more human life. Moreau, however, does not learn from his banishment, and continues to pervert the natural order with science from his island. His death is his punishment for overreaching, demonstrating how mortal he actually is. The use of the Promethean character suggests less of a concern in separating man from animal, and more of a concern for man overreaching. Therefore, it is possible that these authors are more unsettled by the prospect of the trajectory of science, and less concerned about separating man from animal. In this manner, perhaps the abyss, or lack therefore was not such a terrifying prospect. Perhaps, instead, they feared the progress of man, the extension of that space separation man from animal, rather than the space itself.

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[186] H.P. Lovecraft, *The Lurking Fear: Collected Short Stories Volume Four*, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2013

[187] Yann Martel, *Life of Pi*, London: Cannongate, 2012

John Gray uses the Promethean myth to demonstrate a major failing of humanism; the dogmatic belief in the ability for humanity to progress:

"Knowledge does not make us free. It leaves us as we have always been, prey to every kind of folly. The same truth is found in Greek myth. The punishment of Prometheus, chained to a rock for stealing fire from the gods, was not unjust." (xiv) To Gray, the Promethean myth demonstrates that by reaching further than our limited abilities, we have doomed ourselves to an eternity of suffering. The myth was coined years before it had been written down by Hesiod, but it would seem that the concept was prophetic. Science may have changed the world for the better in many ways, but it has also helped facilitate our own self destruction through new and varied manners of warfare. The atom bomb was created with one purpose alone; to eradicate life. That we have conceived the very means to our own annihilation through the pursuit for progress, seems to vindicate Gray in many respects.

Furthermore, Gray argues against the very concept of "humanity". Gray instead declares that ""Humanity" does not exist. There are only humans, driven by conflicting needs and illusions, and subject to every kind of infirmity of will and judgement." (12) This viewpoint entirely undermines the concept of the abyss. According to Gray, the abyss is merely an illusion created by humanity to forge a separation; he considers the abyss briefly by swiftly dismissing it: "The humanist sense of a gulf between ourselves and other animals is an aberration." (17) Gray suggests that the whole principle of "humanity" is an illusion; he insinuates that there is no such collective. For such a regarded pessimist, Gray is exceedingly popular. His supporters and collaborations include J.G. Ballard, Will Self, and Andrew Marr. Within the present day literary scene, he explains what might perhaps be the most popular viewpoint held by academics, exercised by current authors. For example, Ballard's *High Rise* (1975)[188] is exactly the type of novel that explores the themes discussed by Gray. The descent of the residents into madness observed by a scientific professional is almost a modern reimagining Wells's novels. Yet unlike Prendick, who manages to escape Moreau's island, Laing is never able to leave. This change demonstrates how attitudes towards such questions have transformed, becoming more pessimistic, yet also more accepting of our animalistic selves, hailing potentially a movement away from humanism and towards a form of nihilism that essentially undermines human nature.

In his "Foreword" to *Straw Dogs* (2003), Gray clarifies his attack on humanism. "Humanists like to think they have a rational view of the world; but their core belief in progress is a superstition, further from the truth about the human animal than any of the world's religions." (xi) According to Gray, Humanism is, at its core, a paradoxical belief, attempting to marry science and faith with opposing principles. This can be observed perhaps through Wells's particular approach to the question. Unlike the other authors discussed he is able to dispose of the concept of a creator. However, he seems unable to entirely let go of the belief that man is in charge of his own destiny. Through his non-fiction works he demonstrates that although he does not believe that humanity will continue to progress in the biological sense, he puts faith in education and socialist reform instead. Where religious belief once prevailed, humanism becomes a seemingly more rational option. It is this "new religion", however, that Gray criticises for its inconsistencies and its optimism.

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[188] J.G. Ballard, *High Rise*, London: Fourth Estate 2014

Within his criticism of humanism, Gray could be seen to be criticising ideas held by Wells, and his belief in human agency:

> Darwin has shown that we are animals; but-as humanists never tire of preaching-how we live is ‘up to us’. Unlike any other animal, we are told, we are free to live as we choose. Yet the idea of free will does not come from science. Its origins are in religion-not just any religion, but the Christian faith against which humanists rail so obsessively. (xi-xii)

In arguing so passionately against humanism, Gray undermines the hope Wells holds for the human race. As Wells is potentially the most pessimistic author that I have studied, it is enlightening to consider how the other authors would have reacted to Gray’s philosophy. Dostoevsky, in particular, would have found the theory upsetting; the writer who puts his faith in humanity in his belief in moral good. Preferring Schopenhauer over Kant, Gray rejects the concept of moral human nature. Gray does, however, call upon Dostoevsky to exemplify a contradictory statement. According to Gray, elements of Nietzsche’s final madness resemble a dream sequence in *Crime and Punishment*, in which Raskolnikov throws his arms around a whipped horse. Gray argues that this scene demonstrates an underlying guilt, a crisis of conscience felt by humanity; whilst on the surface we attempt to explain our superiority, underneath we acknowledge our mistreatment of other species. Dostoevsky would not approve of Grays pessimism, yet Gray does find some truths within Dostoevsky’s work. Melville would perhaps have considered Gray’s emphasis on the illusion of free will with interest, but would eventually rejected it, preferring the more optimistic stance, that allowed Billy Budd to control his bodily impulses at the moment of death.

According to Gray, the belief that humans are different from other animals is unnatural. It is in this concept, that perhaps we find the most likely difference between our need for separation during the nineteenth century, and our need for separation now. During the nineteenth century, after Darwinism had been accepted by such radically progressive thinkers such as Wells, it was still difficult to imagine that no difference between humanity and animals exists. Given space during the twentieth century to let this concept sink in, general attitudes towards animals have changed. In the last few hundred years' progress has ironically shown us how primal we are.

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