PIERCING VIBRATIONS:

ORALITY AND LITERACY IN VILLIERS DE L'ISLE-ADAM'S *L'EVE FUTURE* AND BRAM STOKER'S *DRACULA*

by

NICOLE CATHERINE LOBDELL

(Under the Direction of Richard Menke)

ABSTRACT

In Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *L'Eve Future* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, networks of orality and literacy collide with one another. Written more than a decade apart and with no known connections to one another, Stoker and Villiers create novels in which unnatural mediums create and control oral information networks that question the primacy of literacy in the late nineteenth-century. In this study, I examine how the oral and literate networks of *L'Eve Future* and *Dracula* function, and question the role phonographic sound recordings affected orality's position within literate information networks.

INDEX WORDS: *Bram Stoker, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Dracula, L'Eve Future, Tomorrow's Eve, Android, Network, Orality, Literacy, Communication, Information.*

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INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth-Century Networking: Inventions, Orality, and Literacy

The nineteenth century was a century of inventions and networks. Morse code, shorthand, and typewriting sped up the printed messaging systems, while telegraph cables and railway lines created networks of communication that hastily conveyed the notations across America, Britain, and Europe. The nineteenth century was quickly becoming an era of messaging, recording, and archiving through print media, when in 1877 the invention of the phonograph textualized the spoken word and melded literacy and orality together. For a century fascinated by mechanized and electrical progress, the phonograph represented a culminating point of industry and technology. In 1875, Alexander Graham Bell completed his first phone call; in the two years from 1875 to 1877, technology achieved the ability to transform human voices into electric signals and to record aural sound waves. At the time, the accomplishments realized went beyond the public's collective imagination. Thomas Alva Edison, the inventor largely credited for the phonograph's creation and a one-time collaborator with Bell, designed the device as a response to Bell's achievements. Initially, he intended the machine as a recording device for private telephone conversations and an aid in stenography, but, three years after his invention, he saw no larger commercial success for the machine. "They will never try to steal the phonograph," Edison said of his competitors in 1880; "it is not of any commercial value." Although Edison may not have believed in the initial commercial success of his invention,

writers of the period saw the machine's ability to free speech from the page as a progressive sign of things to come.

Public enthusiasm for phonographs had two boom periods in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the late 1870s and the 1890s. Along with expectant wonder came new concerns over the efficiency of print-based networks. Dictating information to typists or telegraphers left room for human error. The phonograph offered to record orality directly from the source, eliminating the human interaction in the middle. For stenographers, the phonograph meant they would no longer be directly involved in the transference of information; instead, they would be relegated to an indirect role of transcribing printed copies from oral copies. Unlike typewriters and telegrams, the phonograph's abilities to record, inscribe, and produce audible sound put it both within and without the established literate networks of the time.

For a century focused on information control, organization, and classification, the instrument's capabilities, as a literate and oral machine, created problems When Edison filed his patent in 1878, no category existed that would properly label the machine's functions, and due to the lack of an appropriate category, it was designated a "Measuring Instrument" (Gitelman, *Scripts* 98). Not until 1886 was the category "Acoustics" created by the United States Patent Office (98). With so many cultural shifts in the perceptions of writing, print, and sound, new inscription devices like the phonograph "had to be con*textualized*: to be defined against, and mutually to define the printed word as well as its established oral, aural, and readerly relations" (98). The response of many late Victorian writers to the presence of a primarily oral device such as the phonograph, in the midst of newly established electrical and mechanical print networks, was a mixture of fascinated enthusiasm and concern. Two late Victorian novels that seem to dwell upon this issue are Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *L'Eve Future*

(1886) and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) both of which deal with phonographic recordings in oral and print-based networks.

By examining the oral and literate information networks in *Dracula* and *L'Eve Future,* we can consider the response of print-based communication networks to oral communication networks. How do literate networks react to the presence of oral information networks? Can literate networks incorporate orality? If so, how is such a network established and controlled? Stoker and Villiers seem to respond to the changing roles of literacy and orality in the last quarter of the nineteenth century with similar reactions. How did these two authors both independently write novels that question orality and the positioning of orality in literate networks?

The orality of these texts follows the definition of what Walter Ong defines as "secondary orality" (11). Primary orality exists in cultures that have no knowledge of written language. Secondary orality has emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through the electronic technology of "telephone, radio, television and various kinds of sound tape" and "has striking resemblances to [primary orality] in its participatory mystique . . . its concentration on the present moment . . . .[I]t is essentially a more deliberate and self-conscious orality" (134). Literacy is the reliance on writing and print-based information exchanges. With print-based inventions of the nineteenth century, such as telegraphs and typewriters, literate networks become the norm of the period. But the orality of *Dracula* and *L'Eve Future* suggests strong dependence on communication that does not involve printed materials. In these works, oral networks of the past continue to haunt the literate networks, while the substance of future oral networks, represented by the phonograph, complicate them. In *Dracula*, the Count's oral

network is the symbol of a past era, and in *L'Eve Future* Sowana's oral network warns of the potential danger posed by man's technologically enhanced orality.

Webs, Networks, Phonographs: Capturing the Vibrations

The image of the web, as best popularized in George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871), is an appropriate visual metaphor for the nineteenth century. From the 1830s onward, networks and webs were commonplace images in Victorian writing, and scientists, writers, and thinkers frequently used the web metaphor to describe the relationships between Man and his environment. Although *web* and *network* are synonymous, the term *network* implies a certain degree of cooperation among the participants. In the decades leading up to Eliot's publication, scientists were exploring the interconnected nervous system and nerve networks and their contributions to the body's functions; the elaborate British railway system began linking towns and cities together; and the complex system of sending and receiving information had been put into overdrive by the speed of the telegram and the postal system developed via railway. The web imagery Eliot uses in *Middlemarch* characterizes the entangling forces of gossip among the characters of the Middlemarch community. By its nature, gossip is not a form of open communication; it is selectively controlled, and the web image associated with gossip suggests the presence of an unseen information controller.

Eliot's web implicitly calls to mind the web construction of a spider. The spider builds its web and waits for others to fill it; victims, once trapped, send vibrations, which the spider collects and upon which it acts. The image works as a poignant symbol for the phonograph's position in oral and literate networks. The phonograph, like the spider, functions as a collector of vibrations; it collects, then acts upon those vibrations, inscribing them as indentions in paper

or tinfoil, or grooves into wax.[1] Inscribing the vibrations allowed for the preservation of orality as inscription. With the phonograph, orality could be captured, preserved on cylinders, and later remade as sound. While experimenting on the phonograph, Edison noted in his journal, "there's no doubt that I shall be able to store up and reproduce automatically at any future time the human voice perfectly" (Gelatt 19). Unfortunately, the early recordings on tinfoil cylinders were flawed reproductions and a bit unnerving for the ordinary listener. Upon replaying them, the tinfoil had the adverse effects of producing scratchy, metallic, and rather ghostly voices. Although the essence of the sound was preserved, the distorted aesthetics of the playback was uncomfortable for listeners who struggled to recognize the voice through the metallic echoes.

The anxiety surrounding the phonograph's abilities stemmed from issues of embodiment. Until the phonograph's invention, orality had been solely a human function—no machine had been able to copy and reproduce sound. The phonograph called into question the source of orality. If machines could reproduce orality, what effect did this development have on language? Villiers and Stoker explore social anxieties about orality, the embodiment of orality, and the changing structure of the oral network in their novels. In both novels, unnatural mediums create and control the oral networks; this choice reflects Stoker's and Villiers's responses to the shifting cultural perceptions of self-autonomy, self-preservation, and self-awareness that the phonograph and sound recording produced.

Public reactions to the phonograph's embodiment also demonstrated the cultural shifts of the period. Just as the patent office was uncertain of the phonograph's categorical label,

[1] The early phonograph machines of the late 1870s created indentions on paper or tinfoil, based on the intensity of the sound waves it received. The tinfoil cylinders did not hold much information nor did they last long. In the 1890s, when Edison returned to perfect his phonograph (after seeing improvements in the phonographs of his competitors), he developed a wax cylinder that could hold more minutes of information and last longer. The indention point was adjusted to create grooves in the cylinders, rather than the puncture points and indents as with the earlier versions.

newspaper and magazine reporters had difficulties describing the invention. In December 1877, Edison took his machine to the offices of the *Scientific American* journal. Before seeing the machine firsthand, the office workers had expected the contraption to possess rubber lips and larynx to form the sounds of words. The viewers expected to hear the human voice from a machine that physically resembled something like a human mouth. Edison revealed the phonograph was little more than a diaphragm membrane, embossing point, cylinder, and turning crank; the onlookers were amazed at the machine's mechanical simplicity.

That the participants in Edison's phonograph demonstration expected to see reproduced lips was not unusual, given the previous inventions of the period that physically combined human body parts with machines. One example was Alexander Graham Bell's 1874 phonautograph; "a direct ancestor of the telephone and the phonograph, it consisted of an excised human ear attached by thumbscrews to a wooden chasis . . . .[The machine] used the human ear as a mechanism to transduce sound: it turned audible vibrations into something else. In this case, it turned speech into a set of tracings" (Sterne 31). Bell's work certainly seems to have affected Edison's theories of the transmission of sound vibrations. Just as scientists were studying the nervous system to understand electrical networks, Bell studied and examined the workings of the ear, the vibrating inner membranes as mechanisms, to understand sound reproduction.

Authorial Voices

The nineteenth century was the age that imagined and created "many machines for language" (Gitelman, *Scripts* 101). The boom in language machines such as the telegraph, typewriter, phonograph, and telephone had a dramatic impact on even the most established writers of the period. "Dickens's development as novelist and public reader has a particular kind

of acoustic significance, once rooted in his own sense of the literal and figurative power of his authorial voice" claims John Picker (12). If Dickens derived some of his authorial power from the acoustics of language, how did later writers respond to the phonograph's power to capture the authorial voice? The 1890 phonograph recording of Tennyson reading "The Charge of the Light Brigade" is well known. The existence of the sound recording is a positive and a negative. We know that Tennyson intensely practiced his recitation, deliberately making sure every phrase, pause, and nuance, was exact, and his reading provides an interesting look into how Tennyson *heard* his own work. The negative side to the phonograph recording, that Friedrich Kittler explores, is that the recording becomes the official "take" and prevents future generations from reinterpretations of the work. For Kittler, "Phonography means the death of the author; it stores a mortal voice rather than eternal thoughts and turns of phrase . . . As a photograph of the soul, the talking machine put an end to the innocent doctrine of innocence" (qtd. in Picker 116). When future generations listen to "The Charge of the Light Brigade," they will only hear the resonance of Tennyson's voice—not the play of his phrases and words. If Dickens believed his authorial power arose from a distinctively acoustic quality within his authorial voice, what happens when a vehicle other than the corporeal body can produce the authorial voice? After Tennyson recorded "The Charge of the Light Brigade," was there transference of authorial power from his body to the phonograph cylinder that could reproduce his voice? Did authors feel threatened by the phonograph's ability to record permanently their voices? I believe Stoker and Villiers are responding to these questions in their portrayals of conflicts and tensions between oral and literate networks.

Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's novel *L' Eve Future* or *Tomorrow's Eve* tells the story of a fictional Thomas Alva Edison, whose quest is to complete the perfect woman—a female android.

Her body is a complex system of mechanical and electrical technology; instead of vocal chords, Edison places two golden phonograph cylinders in her chest, which contain specifically chosen words and phrases that encompass her language abilities. Villiers builds his work on the imaginative technological possibilities of the era, represented by the Edison figure. In the first chapter, I examine how Villiers's relationship to the inventor and writer Charles Cros affected his imaginative style, and then move on to discuss issues of embodiment, orality, and controlling an oral network. The second chapter is devoted to Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, a text that is itself a homogenized literate network. By comparing the Count's primary oral network to the heroes' literate and print-based network, I analyze and measure the threats primal orality posed to the literate network. I also examine the literate network's ability to expand and colonize oral discourses. Dr. Seward's phonograph cylinders, images of the new secondary orality, set up an interesting contrast with Dracula's primary orality. Once incorporated into the literate network, Seward's recordings prove extremely important to unearthing Dracula's plans. Yet their role in the novel has been partly concealed by the work's focus on printed media. Considering the supernatural control Dracula exhibits over his oral network in conjunction with Seward's phonograph recordings, reveals orality's lingering and haunting presence at the close of the nineteenth century, even after literacy's attempts to subdue and colonize it.

CHAPTER ONE:

L'Eve Future

Villiers de l'Isle-Adam and Thomas Alva Edison

In 1877, Thomas Alva Edison invented his first prototype phonograph, and in the same year a French dramatist and author named Jean-Marie-Mathias-Philippe-Auguste, Comte de Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, began writing the earliest drafts of his novel *L'Eve Future*. The first formulations of what would become *L'Eve Future* actually began with a short story entitled "Miss Hadaly Habal," about an android who is the perfect woman (Raitt 188). The publication date of the short story is unknown, but it was the basis of Villiers's novel *L'Andréide paradoxale d'Edison*, later renamed *L'Eve Future*. Villiers worked on *L'Eve Future* from 1877 to 1878 (the year Edison patented the phonograph), and he would continue working intermittently through 1886, ending with the novel's single volume publication. From July 1885 to March 1886, *L'Eve Future* was published in serial form in the French magazine *La Vie Moderne* (283). Serial publication was often erratic, as Villiers worked to perfect each draft; in one instance readers had to wait five weeks, from October 10, to November 21, 1885, for the next installment (283). After the serial's completion, *L'Eve Future* appeared in book form in May 1886 (303).

At the time of Villiers's writing of *L'Eve Future*, Edison's fame was already widespread; "Everyone knows nowadays that a most distinguished American inventor, Mr. Edison, has discovered over the last fifteen years a prodigious number of things, as strange as they are ingenious. . . . In America and Europe a LEGEND has thus sprung up . . . regarding this great

citizen of the United States" (Villiers 4). In the preface to the text, Villiers acknowledges the Edison legend and its effects: "A perfectly natural enthusiasm . . . had conferred on him a kind of mystique . . . Henceforth, doesn't the personage of this legend—even while the man is still alive who inspired it—belong to the world of literature?" (4). With *L'Eve Future*, Villiers's endeavor was to transform the legend of Edison and his inventions into timeless literature. Villiers, however, distinguishes his protagonist from the historical figure:

> The EDISON of the present work, his character, his dwelling, his language, and his theories, are and ought to be at least somewhat distinct from anything existing in reality. . . . the hero of this book is above all 'The Sorcerer of Menlo Park,' and so forth—and not the engineer, Mr. Edison, our contemporary. (4)

Modern biographers and editors have debated Villiers's knowledge of and personal interest in technology. Positioning the most famous inventor of the century as the novel's hero, suggests a certain amount admiration and idealizing of the inventor figure. The author's intense reliance on electrical and phonographic technology would lead one to believe the advancements of the era had impressed him. But Robert Martin Adams, a translator of Villiers's work, asserts that Villiers "loathed common sense, materialism, making money, getting ahead, the very idea of progress . . . .He therefore despised science (of which he knew practically nothing), viewing it as the collective blindness of a society" (xv). Adams also emphatically states, "For a fact, [Villiers] knew nothing of science and cared less; even in terms of the science of the 1880s, much technical jargon in [*Tomorrow's Eve*] is mere mumbo jumbo" (xv). Though Villiers's syntactical choices are not wholly accurate, it seems hasty to assert he had no knowledge and no interest in the science of his era. Villiers was actually closely connected to one of France's most

famous inventors, the man who is still considered Thomas Edison's rival phonograph inventor—Charles Cros.

Edison, Cros, and Villiers: The Phonograph Debate

A longstanding debate has been played out in the scientific communities as to who invented the phonograph first, Thomas Edison or Charles Cros. Cros was an inventor, writer, and poet. He and Villiers met in Nina de Villard's Paris salon, "one of the liveliest and most entertaining centres of Parisian artistic activity in the late 1860s and 1870s" (Raitt 81). Cros was a frequent guest in the Paris salons (at the time he met Villiers, he was Villard's lover) and was known for showing off his inventions and ideas to the artistic crowds therein. In April 1877, Cros submitted a written description of a theoretical sound recording device, which he called a paleophone, or voice of the past, to the Academy of Sciences in Paris (Gelatt 22-23). Edison, however, demonstrated his own working prototype of a sound recording machine that he termed a phonograph and filed for a patent application in December 1877, before Cros could ever follow up on his paper with a working model (Gelatt 22).[2] In February of 1878, Edison received a United States Patent for his phonograph. A month later, Edison demonstrated his invention to the Academy of Sciences in Paris, "the body which less than a year before had ridiculed Cros's paleophone" (Sutton 518). After Edison demonstrated his working model, the fame and credit for the phonograph went solely to him, and Cros's earlier proposal for a sound recording machine was forgotten. The extent of Villiers's involvement with Cros's phonograph theories is unknown. In 1878 when Edison's phonograph exhibit took place, Villiers was living in Paris, and he would have heard of the exhibit and probably read a few of the hundreds of news reports

[2] Cros biographers generally believe a lack of funding prevented Cros from building a working model of his paleophone before Edison revealed his phonograph (Sutton 517-18).

and publications on Edison's invention and the demonstration. It is very plausible that Cros's theories, Edison's triumph, and the widely advertised 1878 Paris demonstration had a large impact on Villiers's imagination.

Villiers and Cros's friendship was an artistic, creative, and intellectual one.[3] Cros's work in the fields of science and technology not only included phonography but also telegraphy and photography.[4] Adam's assertions that Villiers had no knowledge or interest in science appears dubious when the scope of his creative relationship with Cros is brought to light.[5] Modern readers often find the language and format of *L'Eve Future* tedious and frustrating because of the lengthy monologues of Edison and the extraneous technical jargon. Villiers's friendship with Cros, however, may explain these stylistic choices, which closely resemble the language, format, and style of the patent. The specific characteristics of orality and literacy in the patent appear reflected in the artistic style of *L'Eve Future*. Examining Villiers's novel as an appropriation of the writing style associated with patents suggests not only an acknowledgement of the role of science in the production of literature, but literature's role in explanations of the scientific.

Villiers and Edison's 1878 Phonograph Patent

Edison's phonograph patent was notably unusual for the period because of its style and language choices. At the time, no standardized patent format had been conceived. The only two requirements for a patent were a written document and an oral narrated demonstration of the

[3] Villiers and Cros even held co-ownership together of a dog named Satin. Villiers insisted that the spirit of Baudelaire (who had an enormous impact on Villiers's personal life and artistic style) had taken residence in the dog (Raitt 30).

[4] In 1867, Cros unveiled an improved telegraph, and in 1869, his theories on developing photographs with a three-color process were published (Sutton 514).

[5] Cros's influence may even extend further than just his phonograph theories. The inventor was also known for writing poems, short stories, and plays, and his farce entitled *La Machine a changer le caractere des femmes*, roughly translated *The Machine to Change the Character of Women*, was performed in Nina de Villard's salon, and, a few weeks later, was presented again with Villiers acting a lead part (Raitt 160).

invention. The written portion was a detailed description of how the invention was built, what purpose it served, and how it would aid individuals and society in the future. Inventors were responsible for writing their own patent applications, and some chose to include sketches or drawings with indicators as to the individual parts and functions. Edison's phonograph patent, however, had one more component; he included a bit of personal narrative about his work:

> Within his introduction, Edison even makes himself the subject of one paragraph, narrating that 'after a long series of experiments' he has discovered that the human voice produces 'separate and distinct' vibrations in a diaphragm 'or other body,' and 'therefore it becomes possible to record and reproduce the sounds of the human voice.' Such an explicit narrative, an almost autobiographical digression, is unusual and unnecessary in patent documents; most patents do not look like the stories of inventions or inventors. (Gitelman, *Scripts* 104)

For Edison to receive his patent, he not only had to provide and demonstrate the working prototype, but he had to find the appropriate diction and style to explain the machine's function and purpose. Edison's personal digression suggests that he could not explain the phonograph without taking a divergence into the autobiographical aspect of the invention's conception and production. Villiers's use of specific technical jargon, yet vague conceptual ideas, also follows the language employed in patents:

> The patent document is a double-edged sword of specificity and vagueness. Inventors must 'open,' or disclose, their ideas so that no one can steal them, and in so doing, must describe their ideas minutely. Yet, they must also withhold as much as they can get away with and leave

> themselves covered in case of many possible unforeseen alterations . . .
>
> .The patent means to keep secret the very thing it means to reveal.
>
> (Gitelman, *Scripts* 102-03)

Looking at the novel's layout, one can see the markings of a possible patent, with sections on the invention's conception, production, and implications for the future. The patent process, with an oral and a literate section, embodies the oral and literate aspects of the very invention it seeks to credit—the phonograph.

The novel's typed appearance reflects attempts to translate the nuances of aurality in print. Looking through the text, one notices the frequent shifts between standard type and italics, and between standard lower case and all uppercase print. The shift from standard type to italics would usually indicate a sense of importance, just as a shift to all uppercase letters would suggest urgency. With Villiers's novel, however, the shifting inscriptions have another meaning. The depth of the indention on a tinfoil phonograph cylinder reflects the decibel level of the sound recorded. Louder sounds result in deeper indentations. The printed style of Villiers's novel is a direct reflection of this quality; words placed in all uppercase letters are the equivalents of the deeper cylinder indentions. Just as the phonograph inscribed sound onto the cylinder, Villiers attempts to translate the effect into print.

The phonographic features of Villiers's novel are also evident in the monologic qualities of the Edison character. In the book five, entitled "Hadaly," Edison delivers a kind of academic lecture and oral narration of the android's functions and parts. "The Android" he says, "is divided into four major parts: 1. The living system of the interior, consisting of equilibrium, walking, talking, gestures, senses, the expressions of the face which is still to come, and the inward regulator of movements, or, to put it more simply, 'the soul'" (Villiers 129). The

performance of this monologue is without expression, delivered almost robotically as if Edison, the man, were not present. The detached character of Edison's voice parallels the disembodied voices of his oral network. Lord Ewald notices the distinct change in Edison's tonality as Edison begins an explanatory lecture on the Android's makeup: "Edison delivered this lecture in the monotonous tone . . . . From his tone of voice Lord Ewald gathered not only that the engineer was going to resolve all the problems raised . . . but that he had already resolved them, and was simply concerned to set forth the proof of established facts" (129). Edison's monologue has the cold, distant, and metallic quality of a phonograph recording. His lecture sounds rehearsed and the delivery methodical. The effect on Ewald is a stirring "beyond expression . . . the icy chill of Science at his heart," but Ewald, like Edison, is also playing a part, "the man of the world," and does not comment on the chill Edison's speech and demeanor produce in him (129). Roughly two-thirds of the novel consists of Edison speaking, either to himself or to Ewald. Ewald's role as "man of the world" is a silent and supporting role, contrasting with Edison's speaking role. Their relationship is not unlike the one between a phonograph recording and a listener. One does all the talking, while the other is a silent audience.

"The Phonograph and Its Inventor"

That the phonograph should be the primary vehicle to bring Villiers's supernatural android to life is less surprising when one examines the period's pamphlets on the uses and functions of Edison's phonograph. One such 1878 pamphlet entitled "The Phonograph and Its Inventor Thomas Alva Edison," when considered in the context of *L'Eve Future*, sheds light on the some of the android's intricacies and the role of the phonograph operator. One of the ideas promoters used to draw people to the phonograph was that a phonograph recording could

preserve a person's voice after death. The pamphlet made the claim "We shall be enabled *literally* to assert of Mr. Edison that 'He being dead, yet *speaketh*,' through his invention" (Garbit 7). When the Edison Standard Phonograph was sold it was "marketed in a wooden box that look[ed] very much like a little sarcophagus" (Miller Frank 158). Ironically, the traveling case belonging to Hadaly, the phonographic android, is also coffin-shaped; "perhaps the sight of wooden boxes that contained preserved voices suggested this [the shape of Hadaly's traveling case] to Villiers" (158). In either case, the connection between the phonograph's and the android's associations with iconographies of death and immortality is an important relationship. Eternal existence in an inorganic medium was a subject of fantastical exploration by many people at the time, and Villiers's placement of the phonograph inside the android reinforces their immortal connection to one another.

With the phonograph's ability to embody disembodied voices, it seems inevitable that some anxious viewers would believe the machine possessed supernatural powers. The pamphlet also describes the phonograph as having human characteristics: "it is optional with the operator whether he uses the funnel or not, for, like the ladies, *it will speak anyhow*," and the pamphlet explains that "the phonograph sets an admirable example . . . it never speaks until it has first been spoken to. It has no original ideas to advance . . . it is possessed with innate sense of modesty and retirement that preclude the possibility of its annoying the public" (Garbit 8-9). The pamphlet ultimately suggests that the machine exceeds humanity, female humanity in particular, in its manner and speech.

Ironically, the phonograph pamphlet is about the phonograph operator as much as it is about the phonograph itself; the title "The Phonograph and Its Inventor" reflects this fact. The stated description of the operator appears complimentary but is in fact a conflated description of

an organ grinder. The pamphlet states: "The phonograph only consents to astonish the world at the instance of some dominating controlling mind. When it is about to exhibit itself, an operator must be on hand to put it through its paces" (9). One of the phonograph's mass-market appeals was that no special training was needed to operate the machine, unlike the knowledge and training necessary for telegraphs, typewriters, and shorthand. The thrill of seeing a phonograph demonstration was witnessing ordinary men and women test the invention themselves. Edison's posturing over Hadaly's construction has the partial feel of an exhibit demonstrator reciting what he has memorized. He even knows the exact amount of time he will need to go through the performance. Edison says to Ewald, "The train from New York to Menlo Park will arrive in a hundred fifty-six minutes, that's a bit more than two hours and a half—and we'll need just under an hour and three-quarters to run through the outlines of the experiment" (Villiers 87). His fast rate of speaking, especially as he describes Hadaly's maintenance to Ewald, suggests that taking care of Hadaly is like operating a phonograph—anyone can do it, even Lord Celian Ewald.

The invention and its inventor become performers (Gitelman, *Scripts* 177). Villiers's depiction of Edison and his android has all the aspects of a performance. In the opening vignette of *L'Eve Future,* Edison is introduced as "the man who made a prisoner of the echo," "the magician of the ear," and "the phonograph's Papa" (Villiers 7-8). The title of "magician" implies a performative role, which Edison fulfills in his first melodramatic and lamenting lines: "What a latecomer I am in the ranks of humanity! Why wasn't I one of the first-born of the species?" (9). Edison imagines himself at the dawn of Man "lurking behind some secret thicket in Eden" waiting to record "first of all that sublime soliloquy, 'It is not good for man to live alone!'" (9). John Anzalone points out that "had Edison been hidden with a live microphone behind a bush in the garden of Eden . . . men would never have been taken in by the false word,"

("Golden" 43). If Edison and his phonograph had been present in the Garden of Eden, he would have circumvented Satan and God's plans. Villiers and Edison seem to be asking, if the phonograph could save man from temptation and expulsion, what other potentials does the phonograph possess?

Menlo Park: The Electric Network

From the novel's opening, Villiers posits Edison and his home at the center of a technological network, where Edison controls the flow of electrical information in and out of the network's core. His home, Menlo Park, sits "twenty-five leagues from New York, at the heart of a network of electric lines" (Villiers 7). For Edison, Menlo Park is a new, technological Garden of Eden. The entire novel's action takes place in the park, except when Ewald and Hadaly leave the park at the novel's conclusion. As God in Eden, Edison creates his own paradise in Menlo using technology, electricity, and industry. The network within Menlo Park is primarily oral and comprised of phonographically captured, disembodied voices and echoes. As with the phonograph, all the seemingly disembodied voices actually emanate from physical objects—just not the expected physical objects.

One example is the bird menagerie Edison creates for the android Hadaly. When Ewald enters the underground garden, he sees a flock of birds, who upon seeing him "burst all at once into a cackle of laughter, within which both male and female voices were heard. For a moment, the young man felt he was facing an assemblage of human beings" (93). Ewald assumes the voices resonate from a "pack of demons that this sorcerer Edison has shut up inside these birds" (93). Again, Villiers portrays Edison as an entrapper of voices. The inventor explains that the birds are nothing more than "winged condensers," whom, he thought "fit to give . . . human

voices and human laughter" to keep "with the Spirit of Progress," and because "real birds are so bad at repeating the words one teaches them" (93). The only real bird's song comes from the nightingale; however, that bird, like the others, is an aural illusion. The nightingale's body is mechanical, but his song (recorded before his death) plays on a phonograph twenty-five leagues away in Edison's New York home: "I've connected [the phonograph] to a telephone, the wire of which reaches into my laboratory up above; an extension brings it into the cave, down to this group of blossoms, and culminates in this particular flower" (95). Ironically, the nightingale's recorded real song does not come from the artificial nightingale's body; the song actually emanates from an "imitation-orchid" (95). As Edison explains the source of the bird's song to Ewald, Ewald asks, "That nightingale who was singing his heart out is really dead?" and Edison replies, "Dead, you say? Not altogether, since I've recorded here his song and his spirit" (95). For Edison, the soul of the bird resides in the bird's ability to produce intelligent sound; the body is negligible. Ewald expects the birds to sing, and they laugh at him; he expects the nightingale to laugh at him, but it is silent; and he expects the flower to be silent but it sings the nightingale's song. These topsy-turvy details of Ewald's experience bear similar resemblance to Edison's phonograph demonstration in December of 1877, when the viewers expected to see mechanical lips and were surprised when all they saw was a tinfoil cylinder.

Phonograph and the Android: Body and Soul

The phonograph's ability to embody disembodied voices questions the potential separation of the voice from the body and the body from the soul. Ewald's frustration over Alicia Clary is that her outward aesthetic design does not make her inner spiritual being. Her voice and her body are aurally and visually perfect to Ewald; she possess such grace, beauty, and

pose, that Ewald believes she physically resembles a *Venus Victorious* statue, specifically the *Venus de Milo*. From the first meeting between Ewald and Hadaly, he notices something absent from her makeup: "inside every living creature there is an unchanging, essential base which imprints on all the ideas . . . . And whatever *exterior* modifications they may undergo, these are the fixed qualities of such a creature's experience and thought. Let us call this substratum the *soul* if you will" (31). Ewald attempts to discover and understand the soul within Alicia Clary. She describes to him her desire to be a singer, but her purpose in becoming a singer is only to possess the vanity of glory. Alicia tells Ewald:

> Art alone erases the past and liberates me for the future . . . .I shall transcend myself without the least regret into those undying imaginary beings created by Genius . . . .And then perhaps some great poet will . . . immortalize my beauty, my voice, my soul, my ashes! Thus I shall bury my grief in the light, and disappear into those regions of the Ideal to which the insults of humanity can never attain. (38)

To Ewald, the substance of Alicia Clary's soul and purpose in life is vacuous vanity. When he tries to leave her, he finds himself trapped "a little like Gulliver in Lilliput, held down by a million strings" (38). Lord Ewald attempts to endow Alicia's soul with intellectual substance by taking her to museums and galleries and showing her artistic masterpieces and informing her of the proper opinions and responses to them. He exclaims to Edison, "in an effort to understand this woman, I tried to endow her . . . . too late, [I recognized] that this was a sphinx without an enigma" (38). Ewald's discovery of Alicia's disjointed body and soul and his inability to communicate and understand her lead him to despair; his failed attempts to comprehend her leave him feeling equally empty: "Burned by the embraces of Alicia, my native energies had

weakened. . . . Rather than abandon the body, like a man of courage, I shrouded my soul; I fell silent" (39). Ewald reveals that the crux of his difficulty with Alicia is their empty communications: "The only misfortune that has befallen Miss Alicia is thought! . . . If she were deprived of all thought, I could understand her . . . Ah! Who will deliver this soul out of this body for me?" exclaims Ewald (41-44). Ewald's efforts to endow Alicia's soul with the appropriate words and phrases have failed; he has been unable to escape the attractive allure of her beauty; realizing that his own soul and voice are being silenced by an utter lack of effective communication, he briefly contemplates suicide as his only alternative.

His cry, "Who will deliver this soul out of this body for me" (44), is Edison's cue to reveal his "deepest professional secret: for many years now, he has been working on the potential answer to the timeless question of what to do with woman, and he now has the answer . . . simply do without her" ("Golden" 39-40). Edison proclaims:

> All right! Since this woman is precious to you—I AM GOING TO STEAL HER OWN EXISTENCE AWAY FROM HER" (Villiers 63). Edison proposes to Ewald to duplicate Alicia's body and *"in place of this soul which repels you in the living woman, I shall infuse another sort of soul,* less aware of itself perhaps . . . a soul capable of impressions a thousand times more lovely, more lofty, more noble. (Villiers 63-64)

Ewald's request of separating Alicia's soul from her body is implicitly murder, and Edison's agreement to complete the act seals her fate in the novel's conclusion. Edison agrees to help Ewald because of his hatred towards women, a feeling that has been building ever since a dancer named Evelyn Habal destroyed his friend Edward Anderson. Edison began building his first female android as a replacement for all women and

vengeance for his friend. He tells Ewald the story of Evelyn's seduction and deception, describing her and all women as vampires who prey on men's weaknesses: "this vigilant vampire recognizes her possible prey, intuits his hidden, still un-awakened sensuality, weaves her web, catches him in it, leaps on him, ties him hand and foot, lies to him and poisons him as her trade teaches" (113). Edison claims that women like Evelyn Habal and Alicia Clary lure men, like Edward Anderson and Lord Celian Ewald, with the illusions of dress, perfume, false physical enhancements, makeup, and speech. Edison says to Ewald, "Look at these women with a cold eye for *what produces* the illusion, and it will dissipate in thin air, leaving a sense of invincible disgust, deadly to the slightest stirring of desire" (116). In response, Edison will make a woman who is pure and perfect illusion; he will make the Ideal woman—an android. Lord Ewald once gave Edison money with which the inventor was able to save his life, continue his work, and build his laboratory. Edison feels that by offering to free Ewald from Alicia's web, he will fulfill the life-debt he owes Lord Ewald, even though in the process of saving Ewald, they will kill Alicia Clary.

The key to Edison's android and the answer to Ewald's prayers lies in the phonograph, "the machine that [separates] the human voice from the body" (Miller Frank 144). Edison offers to complete for Ewald a female android whose soul will be encased in the orality of the golden phonograph cylinders in her chest. Just as Edison extracted the nightingale's song from the bird's body and placed it in the flower, he offers to extract Alicia Clary's voice and place it within the android Hadaly: "Her accent, her diction, her intonations, down to the last millionth of a vibration, will be inscribed on the discs of two golden phonographs . . . perfected miraculously by me to the point where now they are of a tonal fidelity . . . practically . . . *intellectual!*"

(Villiers 79). Edison explains his choice of gold for the inscription tablets, because gold "yields a more feminine resonance, more sensitive and more exquisite, especially when it's treated in a certain ways, [and] gold has the marvelous quality of not oxidizing" (80).

Edison displays Hadaly's golden phonograph cylinders for Ewald: "Here the two golden phonographs, placed at an angle toward the center of the breast; they are the two lungs of Hadaly. They exchange between one another tapes of those harmonious—or I should say, *celestial*—conversations" (131). Hadaly's phonographs run because of electricity, not mechanical playback as the phonograph of Villiers's time would have run. This small detail is part of Villiers's extraordinary ability to look forward to the potential possibilities that electricity, technology, and industry encompassed. Edison says to Ewald, "You see, here are the two almost imperceptible needles of pure steel, trembling within their grooves, which turn perpetually beneath them, thanks to the subtle, unceasing energy of that mysterious electric current" (131). In addition to possessing phonographs for language, Edison also inscribes Alicia Clary's movements and gestures on a cylinder: "Below the lungs, you see here the Cylinder on which will be coded . . . *.all the gestures, the bearing, the facial expressions, and the attitudes of the woman that one incarnates in the Android*. The inductors of this Cylinder are, so to speak, the great sympathetic nervous center of our marvelous phantom" (131). Villiers's description of the Android's nervous system as a complex electrical network reflects the nineteenth-century interest in networks as metaphors for the body's internal construction.

Villiers's interpretations of the transformative properties of the phonograph are stylized idealizations of technology's effects on the body, voice, and soul. For Edison, Alicia's voice represents a potential building material, one that he can remove and reuse. By recording her echoes on the phonograph cylinders, Edison is not diluting the essence of the phrases she speaks;

he is merely separating Alicia's deadened soul from her body. Edison offers Ewald a language machine that will produce the words and phrase he wants to hear, a machine that will be completely reliant on him for its own completion. Ewald failed to endow Alicia's empty words with substance; he failed to complete her as she failed to complete him. Edison presents Ewald with another chance to complete the form of the woman he desires, and, in the process, reaffirm his own existence. But Ewald worries that the android Hadaly will not be an improvement over Alicia; he asks Edison "But *without soul*, will she have any consciousness?" (85). The inventor, a bit incensed by his friend's question, replies:

> *Isn't that exactly what you asked for when you cried out*, WHO WILL TAKE AWAY THIS SOUL FROM THIS BODY FOR ME? You called for a phantom, identical with your young friend, *but without the consciousness with which she seemed to be afflicted*. Hadaly has come in answer to your call; that's all there is to it. (85)

Ewald has concerns that over time Hadaly's words will become repetitive and archaic. Edison explains, "It will be up to you to create the depth and beauty of her response in your own question . . . . Her 'consciousness' will no longer be the negation of yours, but rather will become whatever spiritual affinity your own melancholy suggests to you. You will be able to evoke in her the radiant presence of *your own, your individual passion*" (133). Through the process of creating Hadaly, Ewald becomes as much of a creator as Edison is. Edison reassures Ewald that Hadaly's true purpose is to allow him the opportunity to create and define her orality for himself. Edison's greatest magic trick is ultimately creating a machine that gives the "illusion of presence" (Forrest 77).

The Illusion of Control

Not only does Edison exalt the powers of the phonograph and the android, but he also excitedly speculates on his own contributions to the world of men. In keeping with Garbit's pamphlet on "The Phonograph and Its Inventor," the subtitle of *Tomorrow's Eve* could be "The Android and Its Inventor." Edison believes his position within his artificial oral network as the creator and controller is permanent; he sees himself as the phonograph operator in possession of a "dominating controlling mind" that allows him to command the oral network and put it "through its paces" (Garbit 9). In a speech to Ewald he describes himself as a gift to Man: "I have come, I, the 'Sorcerer of Menlo Park,' as they call me here, to offer the human beings of these new and up-to-date times, to my scientific contemporaries as a matter of fact, something better than a false, mediocre, and ever-changing Reality; what I bring is a positive, enchanting, ever-faithful Illusion" (Villiers 164).

The "ever-faithful" and never changing stasis offered by the phonograph is a true illusion. Edison repeatedly describes Hadaly as a phantom; she is an illusion of a presence, an illusion of a soul. The golden phonographs in her chest maintain and control her illusive presence. To create Hadaly's body, Edison employs the talents of the sculptor Mrs. Anny Anderson, who is actually a sleepwalker and the betrayed wife of Edison's deceased friend Edward Anderson. From within Mrs. Anderson's perpetually suspended sleep state, another spirit emerges who calls herself Sowana. Edison finds himself establishing a communicative and working relationship with the unknown spirit. By placing a ring filled "with a certain amount of magnetic influence" on Mrs. Anderson's hand and a matching ring on his own, Edison discovers his ability to form an invisible connection with Sowana:

> She not only received, instantaneously, impulses from my will, but found herself mentally, sympathetically, actually in my presence, to the point of hearing my voice and obeying my orders . . . . How many conversations we have carried on in this way, to the actual contempt of space! As you can see, she's a pretty sensitive spiritual receiver. (210)

The image of Edison placing a ring on Mrs. Anderson's hand echoes the exchanging of rings in a marriage ceremony. Through their identical rings, Edison and Sowana communicate telepathically. In a similar gesture, when Edison builds the female android Hadaly, her fingers are covered in rings, each containing a different jewel. Edison explains to Ewald that Hadaly's rings are control mechanisms for her various functions and movements: "To rouse her to her mysterious existence, all you need do is take her by the hand, setting in motion the fluid in one of her rings . . . . Touch ever so gently the turquoise on her ring finger, and she will sit down" (80-81). The rings on Mrs. Anderson and Hadaly's fingers suggest not only marriages among the characters but also emphasize issues of control, influence, and manipulation.

As Edison exalts his own inventive genius over Hadaly's creation and his ability to communicate telepathically with Sowana, he fails to realize his own manipulation. He tells Ewald of his earliest plans to build a female android body and Sowana's enthusiastic response to his ideas. Edison reveals to Ewald, "I gave [Sowana] a fairly distinct outline of my plan for Hadaly. You can't imagine the gloomy delight, the vengeful excitement, with which she accepted and encouraged my plan" (211). The spirit Sowana becomes equally obsessed with Hadaly's completion: "Once having seen it, Sowana, as if subject to some demonic spirit of exultation, forced me to explain all its most hidden secrets—until, when she had studied ever last

detail, she was able, *occasionally,* TO INCORPORATE HERSELF WITHIN IT, AND ANIMATE IT WITH HER 'SUPERNATURAL' BEING" (211). Sowana's ability to inhabit the android body shocks even Edison: "I tell you that the sight of that vision caused the most terrible shock I ever felt in my life. The workman was aghast at his own work" (211). Edison's creation, like Frankenstein's monster, begins a life of its own, outside of Edison's control: "I must make this point very clear . . . *not everything about this creature is an illusion!* It is really an unknown creature . . . though I know Mrs. Anderson, *I swear to you on my soul* THAT I DO NOT KNOW SOWANA!" (211). Edison's revelation puts fear and fascination into Ewald.

Sowana's ability to infiltrate Edison's thoughts, the android, and the oral network calls into question man's ability to control the technology he creates. Sowana's unknown and uncontrollable abilities and the prospect of the "INSUBSTANTIAL transmission of . . . living thought . . . *without conductors or wires*" take network control away from the inventor (213). Without realizing it, Edison has ceded command of his network to Sowana and his inventions. After she brings Hadaly fully to life, Sowana reveals herself to Ewald and exposes the real machinery behind Edison's network:

> I called myself into existence in the thought of him who created me, so that while he thought he was acting of his own accord, he was also deeply, darkly obedient to me. Thus, making use of his craft to introduce myself into this world of sense, I made use of every last object that seemed to me capable in any way of drawing you out of it. (198)

The network's source of command and control is no longer the human inventor, but the invention, the "spiritual receiver," as Edison describes his android (210). Edison loses control of his network when he explains his secrets, his technological inventions, to Sowana. Unaware of

his own removal, Edison persistently believes that he created Hadaly; in actuality, she created herself, as she tells Ewald, she "called [herself] into existence" with the aid of Sowana and without Edison's knowledge.

Ewald's involvement in Sowana's network is both voluntary and involuntary. Although Ewald agrees to Edison's plan, he, like Edison, remains particularly unaware of Sowana's motives. When she reveals herself and the control she holds over Edison, Lord Ewald "could not fail to be aware that he was involved in an adventure far darker and more serious than he had anticipated" (202). Ewald is both spectator and participant in her creation, and when he hesitates to accept her completely, Hadaly says to him, in a scene reminiscent of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, "Creator doubtful of your own creation, you destroy it the instant it is called into being, before you have even finished your own work on it" (202). Although she called herself into being, Hadaly's existence still depends on Ewald's need for her and his ability to give her purpose, language, orality—in essence, a soul. For Edison, Hadaly was always an experiment, an invention, a distraction from his other projects; to Ewald, however, Hadaly represents the perfected completion of his expectations and desires. Through Hadaly, Sowana takes her existence into her own mechanical hands; she takes power away from her creator and gains autonomy.

"Fate" and the Promethean Fire

The novel's conclusion is both frustrating and elusive. When Sowana leaves Mrs. Anderson's body, Edison discovers her dead, and "after an hour of anxiety and vain efforts to rouse her, [he] sensed at last that she who seemed to sleep had definitely left the world of living men" (218). The last chapter of Villiers's work, entitled "Fate," reveals that three weeks after

leaving Menlo Park, a fire breaks out on the ship taking Ewald, Hadaly, and Alicia home. Hadaly perishes in the fire, an appropriate Promethean image for the death of unknown android.

Edison reads the news of the ship's fire and the drowning of Alicia Clary through the evening newspaper. As he is reading, he receives a telegraphic message from Ewald stating, "*My friend, only the loss of Hadaly leaves me inconsolable—I grieve only for that shade. Farewell*" (219). Ewald's message leaves his fate ambiguous. After Edison reads the telegram, the only sounds left are silence. With the deaths of Hadaly, Sowana, Mrs. Anderson, and very probably Ewald, Edison's network disappears. He is left alone:

> And the melancholy dreamer, losing himself in unknown thoughts, lifted his eyes to look through the open window, out into the night . . . . raising his eyes even higher toward the ancient luminous spheres which still shone, unmoved, through the gaps in the heavy clouds, and sent their glints forever through the infinite inconceivable mystery of the heavens, he shivered—no, doubt, from the cold—in utter silence. (219)

The ambiguity of the novel's ending leaves several openings for literary interpretation. The origin of the fire is perhaps the biggest mystery of the novel, and it is the one mystery Edison cannot solve. Edison's silence at the novel's conclusion could suggest he is pondering the events that are ultimately out of his control. Although he can build the "perfect woman," he cannot control her fate once she leaves his laboratory. Edison's shivering "in utter silence" could also reflect the state of his oral network. The destruction of Sowana and the phonographic android, the oral center of command, results in an oral collapse, leaving Edison speechless. With no invention to demonstrate and posture over, Edison's repetitive, mechanical performance is over.

Villiers's novel ultimately suggests several questions about man's role in technology and the limits of his understanding. The dangers of the android body and the Sowana spirit are the unknowable combination of organic and inorganic materials. Just as the phonograph represents the combination of an organic material, the voice, with an inorganic body, the android's creation makes her an enticing but deceptive construction. The android's "supernatural vitality" compares with the suggestive immortality that the phonograph's early campaign offered to users (Miller Frank 160). The oral nature of Edison/Sowana's network makes issues of embodiment imperative.

For Marshall McLuhan "Automation is not an extension of the mechanical principles of fragmentation and separation of operations. It is rather the invasion of the mechanical world by the instantaneous character of electricity" (*Understanding* 349). If McLuhan's statement is accurate and Hadaly's electrical makeup is an invasion and colonization over the primitively mechanical human body, then is her destruction through fire an act of Nature rebelling against Man's insidious technology? Perhaps this holds true; Villiers gives us no definite answers. Hadaly's existence as an artificial human and language machine keeps her outside the ordinary structures of human and communication networks; in the end, she can only exist within the fanciful networked world of Edison's Eden, Menlo Park.

How the historical figure Thomas Edison ultimately felt about Villiers and his novel is unknown, though there survive anecdotes of an attempted meeting between the two. In June of 1889, just two months before Villiers's death, Villiers and Edison were in Paris at the same time. Biographer A.W. Raitt relays that "Edison had come to Paris for the Exhibition, and a copy of *L'Eve Future* was sent to him by Villiers's friends, in the hope that he would consent to see the man who had made him a remarkable fictional character as well as an outstanding inventor. But

nothing came of it" (354). Edison, however, did contribute money towards the erection of a statue of Villiers at the request of a Villiers literary society: "The only existing record of Edison's reaction to [*L'Eve Future]* is a letter of 1910 from Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's 'committee' in Paris, thanking the inventor for his donation of $25 towards a statue of Villiers. Given this gesture, and his taste for his own mythology, it's unlikely Edison would have been displeased by the book" (Woods 145). Though Woods believes Edison received the novel well, whether he gave the donation out of an affectionate remembrance for the writer or out of obligation remains unclear.

CHAPTER TWO:

Dracula

Historical Beginnings

In Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula*, the oral and literate, historical and modern, human and supernatural collide in a spectacular exchange of blood and information. Stoker aligns the Count's atavistic orality with ancient bloodlines, feudal kingdoms, and powerful rulers. In one of his conversations with Jonathan Harker, Dracula recounts the battles and victories his ancestors endured, leading up to the greatest battle, the Battle of Mohács where, Dracula reveals, "we threw off the Hungarian yoke, we of the Dracula blood were amongst their leaders, for our spirit would not brook that we were not free" (Stoker 25). The Count's obsessive retelling of his powerful history reveals his blood ties to Attila the Hun and the Norse gods Thor and Wodin. For the undead vampire, blood is nourishment. For Stoker's Count Dracula, blood is information, history, and physical evidence of links to the past. By taking the blood of his victims, Dracula not only satisfies an undead hunger but also creates invisible bonds with each victim. Through the invisible tethers, the Count creates an invisible, oral network that passes information either through oral communications or telepathy. Dracula's oral retelling of his ancestor's triumphs is an early indicator of his central position of control within an ancient oral network.

To combat Dracula, the heroes of Stoker's novel, Jonathan and Mina Harker, Dr. Seward, Professor Van Helsing, Lord Arthur Godalming, and Quincey Morris, create their own network

of information exchange. The heroes' nineteenth-century information network exudes nationalistic ideals, and relies on print and electrical technology and willing cooperation among all the members. Whereas the Count's network operates through a strict hierarchy of control, there is no central source of absolute power in the information network of the heroes. The lack of a central organizing structure allows their network to expand and adapt as the need arises. Their strong reliance on elements of print media is their greatest tool in combating Dracula's parasitic orality. As in *L'Eve Future*, the phonograph is a site of conflict between the oral and literate networks, and a site in which we witness the colonizing threat of modern print media to the elements of orality. As Dracula's oral network continually looks backward in the past for stability, strength, and power, the nineteenth-century print network looks forward, in almost obsessive displays of anticipation and preparation for social shifts and technological advancements. Through the clashes of the two information networks, oral and literate, Stoker creates a story in which we can see orality's autonomous resistance to the effects of late nineteenth century technological homogenization.

Dracula's Oral Information Network

The first chapter of *Dracula* finds Jonathan Harker "leaving the West and entering the East," or leaving a literate print society and entering a superstitious and oral one (1). Jonathan's immediate encounter with several languages confirms the primacy of orality in Europe's eastern regions. Harker tries to use his "smattering of German" (1) but encounters Slovak, Serbian, and "some other language which [he] did not know at all" (4). The flurry of activity the local people create around him in languages and signs he does not understand causes Jonathan unease. [6]

[6] The local people are repeatedly shown crossing themselves, which Jonathan recognizes, but they also make a sign towards Jonathan. A local later explains to him that the sign is a protective gesture against the evil eye. The

"Some of the people who were sitting on the bench outside the door—which they call by a name meaning 'word-bearer'—came and listened," and as they watch Harker entering the coach, they talk, point, and make signs (5). As "word-bearer," the bench validates that in the East words are conversational and oral rather than textual and literate as in the West. Jonathan can only remember the repetitive words the people around him utter, and he is forced to consult his "polyglot dictionary" (a tool of a highly literate culture but one which does not exist in an oral culture) before making sense of the orality around him. "Extensive use of lists and particularly of charts so commonplace in [a] high-technology [culture]," such as Jonathan's dictionary and train timetables is "a result not simply of writing, but of the deep interiorization of print" (Ong 99). Prior to his trip, Jonathan visits the British Museum to examine the Transylvanian books and maps; he finds, however, that he is "not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this country as yet to compare to our own Ordnance Survey maps" (Stoker 1). Harker's reliance on maps, train time charts (which are of little use in Transylvania since the trains do not follow exact schedules), and the dictionary reveals a "deep interiorization of print"; he stands out as a stark figure of literacy in an unknown world of orality.

Jonathan's memorization of timetables not only reflects his interiorization of print but also an interiorization of time. Because of improved road conditions and railway networks, space in the nineteenth century became a function of time; journeys were no longer quantified by mileage but by hours and minutes. Jonathan's diary entries reflect that the train schedules, as he moves from West to East, become less reliable, and his noted obsession with the train's delayed departures is a product of his increased awareness of time.

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combination of Catholic gesturing and superstitious gesturing emphasizes the mixtures of languages, religions, and customs that Jonathan is encountering. The historical Transylvania has been noted as a crossroad for Western and Eastern religions and traditions, and, I believe, could also be considered a crossroad of orality and literacy.

In Transylvania, where the documentations of history occur through the oral traditions of storytelling and folklore, Jonathan's literate shorthand diary (another form of interiorized writing) begins to break down; the dates become less sure, and the diary entries occur with less frequency and coherent organization. The first five entries of his diary are quite lengthy and occur in sequential order, one entry per day. As Dracula pulls Jonathan deeper into his network, the entries become erratic. The entry on May 8th is divided between the second and third books of the novel, effectively breaking the entry in half. Additionally, the May 8th entry has two separate sections, one labeled May 8, and another simply labeled *"Midnight"* (24). After May 8th, the next entry is not until May 12th (which also has two sections, one labeled May 12 and the other *"Later"* [28]), and the one proceeding is May 15th. Later in Book Four, Jonathan's diary jumps from May 31st to June 24th with no explanation for the lapse in writing. Jonathan's literate qualities, such as meticulous diary entries on the exact dates and time, begin to break down the longer he stays within the Count's oral culture. The effects of temporal breakdown Harker experiences will be reversed only later when Mina transcribes his diary entries and places them within the context of the other character's diaries and notes; her transcription will allow the literate network access to the previously inaccessible itemized time of Harker's journal.

The local Transylvanian peasants treat dates and years in a the same non-literate and non-numerical ways as they record their history. When an elder woman approaches Jonathan, attempting to warn him of the dangers he unknowingly faces, she exclaims, "It is the eve of St. George's Day. Do you not know that to-night, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway? Do you know where you are going and what you are going to?" (4).[7] The elder woman's surprise at Jonathan's ignorance of the *day* emphasizes her

[7] This is another instance of Catholic beliefs (patron St. George who slayed a dragon) mixing with superstitions (in Romanian, "Dracula" is often translated to mean Dragon).

oral culture and highlights the absences of carefully measured, catalogued, and uniform time. To Jonathan, the day is simply May 4th.

As he travels by coach from Bistritz towards Castle Dracula, Jonathan writes in his diary, that unlike London roads, the Transylvanian road is "rugged. . . Of old the Hospadars[8] would not repair [the roads], lest the Turk should think that they were preparing to bring in foreign troops, and so hasten the war which was always at loading point" (6). The suggested feudal nature of Transylvania and the pun Jonathan unknowingly makes are both elements of his place within an unknown oral network. Since he is of the literate information network, Jonathan's pun on "loading point" passes by him unnoticed, even as he writes it. The puns and double entendres that other characters of the oral network make around him often elude Jonathan, who does not register their double meanings. The coach driver says to him, "'No, no. . . you must not walk here; the dogs are too fierce'; and then [the driver] added, with what he evidently meant for grim pleasantry—for he looked round to catch the approving smiles of the rest—'and you may have enough of such matters before you go to sleep'" (7). The entendre of the driver's phrase "you may have enough of such matters before you go to sleep" could be interpreted as "you may have enough of such matters before you die." The orality of the phrase reveals the potential meanings of the driver's "grim pleasantry" and the passengers' "approving smiles." Jonathan writes their expressions off (no pun intended) as meaning one thing, when in actuality they mean something else. Just as he cannot make sense of the old woman's superstitious concern of St. George's day, Jonathan cannot rationalize or literalize the spoken double entendres.

Dracula's absolute control over his oral network puts him at the core of his network; not only does Dracula know everything happening within the oral network, but he does most of the

[8] "Hospadars: The word is of Slavic origin. The rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia were called Hospadars from the fifteenth century to 1866" (Wolf 10).

physical work himself. Stoker's decision to have Dracula, disguised as his own coach driver, meet Jonathan's carriage reveals the extent of the Count's direct involvement. He trusts no one else and refuses to delegate even the most menial of tasks. Dracula's guarded position at the end of the Carpathian mountain Borgo Pass also seems to parallel the Transylvanian role in the 1526 Battle of Mohács, in which the Transylvanians, including those of the Dracula blood, were responsible for guarding a strategic passageway that prevented their enemies from fleeing. The results of the historical 1526 battle led to the formation of Transylvania as an independent principality. The scene recalls many of the same elements from the historical battle, which Stoker may have used for inspiration. In Stoker's novel, Dracula guards the passageway, preventing the coach driver from passing through without depositing Jonathan Harker literally into the Count's hands. By obtaining his solicitor, Dracula positions himself to expand his network into the West. The coach exchange scene is the first instance in which we see Dracula's intense desire to control the pathways and flows of information, and the scene emphasizes a certain reliance on the precedence of historical events to dictate current actions.

Oral memorization and recitation of his family tree is another tool the Count uses to keep the connections with his lineage alive; the lack of specific dates or years in Dracula's oral narration results in a timeless ancestry that never dies. "In functionally oral cultures" Walter Ong writes, "the past is not felt as an itemized terrain. . . . it is the domain of the ancestors, a resonant source for renewing awareness of present existence, which itself is not an itemized terrain either" (97). The villagers' dependence on the folklore surrounding St. George's Day reveals the pre-literate and pre-modern treatment of history; the present becomes nothing more than an eternal reenactment of the past.[9] Dracula's lack of physical documents recording his

[9] A/N: I would like to thank Richard Menke for his help in clarifying this particular point regarding oral narration and the perpetual present in the primary oral culture of Dracula's world.

family history also supports the need for a continual oral replaying and awareness of past events. Harker notices that, "whenever [the Count] spoke of his house he always said, 'we,' and spoke almost in the plural, like a king speaking" (Stoker 24). Using the term "we" not only reinforces his feudal position of control, but it keeps the connection between the Count and his ancestors flowing and serves as a constant reminder of his lengthy and powerful lineage. When Harker inscribes Dracula's history in his diary, he itemizes and compartmentalizes the Count's lineage, taking away some of its overwhelming mystique and power. The Count's historical data has been catalogued, labeled, and controlled.

For Jonathan Harker, up-to-date knowledge and information are extremely important, and during his stay at Castle Dracula, he notices that "a table in the centre was littered with English magazines and newspapers, though, none of them were of very recent date" (16). For Dracula, who is immortal and timeless, the material is no less useful even though it may be months old. Dracula's methods of learning and conducting business affairs are based on direct face-to-face communications. Jonathan notes the Count's unusual mode of questioning, but does not realize to what ends the methods lead. Later, Harker writes in his diary, "There was a certain method in the Count's inquiries, so I shall try to put them down in sequence; the knowledge may somehow or some time be useful to me" (25). Using Jonathan as he uses his other victims, Dracula draws out information on how to perform London business affairs with discretion; the purpose of Dracula's method is to establish a center of command without attracting attention. He tells Harker plainly, "I have sought the services of one so far off from London instead of some one resident there, that my motive was that no local interest might be served save my wish only" (26). To which Jonathan adds, "'Such is often done by men of business, who do not like the whole of their affairs to be known to any one person'. . . . he [Count Dracula] certainly left me

under the impression that he would have made a wonderful solicitor" (26). When Dracula manages to create a secret information network throughout London, a network that is almost untraceable to the literate network, the truthful irony of Jonathan's assessment appears.

In *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, Marshall McLuhan suggests, "the marginal man is a centre-without-a-margin, an integral independent type. That is, he is feudal, 'aristocratic,' and 'oral'" (213). McLuhan could have been thinking of Dracula when he wrote that sentence. In Transylvania, Dracula is master: "Here I am noble; I am boyar; the common people know me, and I am master" (Stoker 17).[10] Like a feudal aristocratic lord, Dracula views himself above the lower Transylvanian classes,[11] and he wants to continue being master once in London: "I have been so long master that I would be master still—or at least that none other should be master of me" (17). To Dracula, the peasants are marginal and beneath him, which is why he does not feed from them; instead, his attacks are selective, focusing solely on the members of London's middle to upper-class society.

To gain power over the London space, he establishes a network that is, to use McLuhan's phrase, a "centre-without-a-margin" (*Gutenberg Galaxy* 213). Once in London, he moves from place to place, and because of his constant movement, he establishes no boundaries or margins.[12] Dracula builds an orally based information network under his sole command, by positioning himself at the center and creating marginal points (Renfield, Lucy and Mina) to which he connects, but who cannot connect to each other. When two of the marginal points do manage to

[10] Boyar is a term meaning prince (Wolf 24).
[11] As Jonathan tells Dracula that Carfax Abbey has its own chapel, Dracula says to him, "We Transylvanian nobles love not to think that our bones may lie amongst the common dead" (20). Not only does he demonstrate that his superiority (as an immortal and a nobleman) extends beyond the limits of death, Dracula also plays on the idea that as a vampire, his bones cannot lie amongst the common dead in the common ground, but must rest in sacred Transylvanian soil.
[12] Dracula claims to be a descendent from the Huns, specifically Attila the great Hun leader. The Huns were nomadic peoples who moved their "center" constantly from place to place, and therefore also had no margins or boundaries.

connect (through Seward and Van Helsing, Mina connects to Renfield), the Count's reaction is to destroy one of the points, Renfield, breaking the connection and ending any flows of information that he cannot control.

Because he is the creator of a feudal and oral information network, Dracula desires absolute command over communication and land. Before he reaches London, he purchases homes at Purfleet, Exeter, and Whitby. He establishes Carfax in Purfleet as the physical command center. Like a military center of operation, Carfax is "four-sided, agreeing with the cardinal points of the compass. . . . contains twenty acres, quite surrounded by the solid stone wall. . . . one part [of the house] is of stone immensely thick, with only a few windows high up and heavily barred with iron" (Stoker 19). The house, which resembles a fort, dates back to the medieval time and, with the additions, covers a large amount of ground; in description, the house sounds similar to Castle Dracula. For Dracula, Carfax Abbey is perfect. He says, "I am glad that it is old and big. I myself am of an old family, and to live in a new house would kill me" (19). Geoffrey Winthrop-Young describes this statement not as a play on words, but a "literal truth" (128). For Dracula a new "house," or new soil in which he rests, would literally kill him; he must bring his old home soil with him to survive. Like many of the puns and double entendres, the literalness and figurative nature of Dracula's statement is unique to his position within the oral network, and the exact meaning of his statement is lost on the literal man, Jonathan Harker.

By creating a command center through oral methods, Dracula believes he moves invisibly through the city, but he never realizes the trail (a series of invisible signs which become visible with the mass of typewriting) he leaves behind him. Dracula manages to elude his chasers for a period, because he manipulates an oral information network, which the heroes cannot immediately access. Because of their inexperience in dealing with primarily oral cultures,

Dracula's victims, most notably Lucy who is already uncomfortable moving between orality and literacy, are not initially aware that he is the source of the dream messages they receive. In *Signs, Language, and Communication*, Roy Harris suggests

> at certain times serious problems are caused by the possibility that messages *not* available to normal sensory perception, but assumed to emanate from God, might in fact be messages from Satan. When there is no overt sensory check on communication processes, there can be no ultimate assurance as to their source. Saint Joan thought her voices came from heaven. Those who burnt her (or some of them) thought otherwise. (110)

When Lucy receives messages from Dracula in her dreams, she assumes they emanate from nothing; she ignores the messages. Similarly, when Mina receives messages, she initially ignores them. The dreams and the puncture wounds the victims receive cannot be explained by "normal sensory perception," so the victims ignore them. When Lucy and Mina are asleep, Dracula engages them in a communication process that falls below the radar of normal sensory warnings; in their sleep, their sensory defenses lower, and Dracula is able to penetrate their dreams (and their skins) without setting off alarms. Only when Mina gains special sensory perceptions in the form of Dracula's blood can she decipher the messages Dracula has been sending her. The exchanged blood acts as an information messenger, linking their bloods and their veins, bonding their information networks together, and creating an invisible connection between the two characters and the two networks. Through the linkage, Dracula enters Mina's mind, and later Mina discovers her ability to enter his. As Dracula feeds on Mina's mind, he

also parasitically feeds on the literate network in an attempt to gain knowledge and information for his oral network.

Dracula's oral network functions like the spider's web, but Dracula's position within the web is more direct. In Dracula's network, he sends out the vibrations, literally feeling out his victims. He is the sole instigator and conductor of all the interactions in his network. Stoker worked as a clerk in a similar system, and when he became the manager of the Lyceum Theatre Company, he employed the same techniques. Paul Murray's insightful biography, *From The Shadow of* Dracula*: A Life of Bram Stoker*, reveals that Stoker's work as a "Clerk, Second Class" was tightly regulated and controlled by the Senior Clerk: "A strict hierarchy was in operation, which laid down, for example, that only the Senior Clerk could conduct business of a financial nature: this was a forerunner of the system that Stoker later installed at the Lyceum, which centralized the finances of the theatre in the hands of Henry Irving and himself" (45). Stoker also put himself entirely in charge of the company's media and marketing campaigns, channeling the release of all the company's theatrical news through himself. Stoker kept the Lyceum Theatre Company running through financial troubles, scandals, and Henry Irving's disastrous business dealings by never giving full disclosure of the company's business or financial status to any one person. That Stoker chooses to fashion the Count's network in a similar fashion to his own managerial practices is particularly suggestive of the need to control and manipulate information for lucrative benefits, and the members of such a network are unable to recognize the extent of their manipulation. The Count operates his network with secrecy and discretion as he prepares to expand his supernatural army into the Western world.

The Heroes' Nineteenth-Century Print Information Network

Like Dracula's historically based information network, the heroes' print-based information network also has its historical development in the sixteenth century, with the advent of the printing presses and the book trade as important means for transporting and disseminating communication and information. Harold Innis suggests the "effect of the discovery of printing was evident in the savage religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Application of power to communication industries hastened the consolidation of vernaculars, the rise of nationalism, revolution, and new outbreaks of savagery in the twentieth century" (29). With the portability of print, information was able to travel intact over large distances; the result was an increase in rates of literacy and the beginnings of unification through information. Similarly, in Stoker's work, the effects of print consolidate the various languages and vernaculars in the text and allow the heroes to unite their forces in a move reminiscent of the rise of nationalism. The print network's unity and homogeneity are similar, in a sense, to the political principles of nationalism, in which a state is unified under common ideals, beliefs, and laws, and everyone has access to information and the abilities to interpret it. Benedict Anderson elaborates on the importance of print media in the rise of nationalism, particularly focusing on the newspaper, as an important connection between the consumer-readers of a nation: "The obsolescence of the newspaper on the morrow of its printing . . . creates this extraordinary mass ceremony: the almost precisely simultaneous consumption ('imaging') of the newspaper-as-fiction. We know that particular morning and evening editions will overwhelmingly be consumed between this hour and that, only on this day, not on that" (427). The crux of Anderson's theory linking nationalism and print lies in the almost ritual aspect of the simultaneous occurrence of reading and interpreting information, in individual but communal ways every day; with the rise of

printing and the ready access of print media, the rise of nationalism followed. The members of the heroes' information network consume the diaries and notes simultaneously yet individually through the availability of the duplicated manuscripts, and only through their joint knowledge and understanding of the information does the literate network function. Unlike Dracula's feudal and centrally controlled network, the structure and lack of hierarchy allows the heroes' print network to adapt and restructure its organization when new information or new members appear.

Not only does the structure allow adaptation, it *requires* adaptations to stay up-to-date and prepared. The heroes' information network undergoes several adaptations before they successfully create an entirely functional and sustainable one. The first network places Lucy at its center, and surrounding her are Dr. Seward, Professor Van Helsing, Quincey Morris, and Arthur Godalming. The men form a protective ring around Lucy, in which she is safely not included in the information flows. In this network configuration, information passes through the marginal points but does not reach the center. The speed at which information travels allows for the network to survive; much as the heart, a muscle with its own electrical connotations, provides and pumps blood to the rest of the body, the electric print network continually pumps and pushes information through the connectors to the individuals. In the nineteenth century, when information transmissions are instant thanks to the telegraph and relatively constant due to news reports and newspapers, a lack of sending or receiving information breeds anxiety.

The pressure Dracula exerts upon the heroes' network reveals the weaknesses of its informational flows. The heroes' responses are to increase the speed at which information is collected (through the use of typed print) and travels (through telegraphs). Marshall McLuhan asserts that "an increase of power or speed in any kind of grouping of any components whatever is itself a disruption that causes a change of organization. The alterations of social groupings,

and the formation of new communities, occur with the increased speed of information movement" (*Understanding* 90). After Lucy's death, Van Helsing contacts Mina, making the first extensions of the network outward. Mina provides new information and new services (shorthand and typewriting), which results in an informational speed-up and the need to reconfigure and reorganize the network. The old network now must be adapted to incorporate Mina and Jonathan.

The second version, however, is not much of a change from the first version. The men now encircle Mina, who Jonathan claims has "consented to hold back and let [the] men do the work" (Stoker 213). This newer version of the network has more information and operates at a higher processing speed but with the same problems as the older unsuccessful version. Mina's writing on her exclusion suggests that the decision was not entirely hers:

> It is strange for me to be kept in the dark as I am to-day; after Jonathan's full confidence for so many years, to see him manifestly avoid certain matters, and those the most vital of all. . . . he never mentioned a word of what had happened in the visit to the Count's house. And yet he must have known how terribly anxious I was. . . . They all agreed that it was best that I should not be drawn further into this awful work, and I acquiesced. But to think that he keeps anything from me! (220)

The lack of information breeds anxiety within Mina. Even though the men all surround her, their attentions are turned outward, expecting the enemy to attack from without. Instead, Dracula attacks from within the network through Mina. After Dracula attacks her, the men realize the need to keep Mina informed; their mistake with Lucy was not giving her the necessary information, and they cannot make the same mistake with Mina. They allow Mina to organize

the diaries and notes and be a part of their discussions and meetings, ultimately creating a third variation of the information network, in which Mina is at the center, with the men surrounding her. The unified typed manuscript is the difference now; the typed pages interconnect all the members of the literate network.

Puns, Phonographs, and Professor Van Helsing

Van Helsing's role in the information network is to help the heroes surmount the gulf between their electrical print network and Dracula's oral one. Van Helsing's non-English origins put him in a unique position either to participate within the heroes' information network or to stand outside of it and observe how it functions. Van Helsing, like Dracula, is primarily an oral character; he keeps no written diary and writes few letters; his speech denotes a non-standard form of English pronunciation and sentence construction, and, like Dracula, he commits both verbal puns and literal truths. The pun is an interesting language trick that is both oral and literate; one can pun on a word's sound as well as a word's definition, and spoken puns are as easy to create as written ones. Noticing and deciphering puns, however, can be difficult for members of a literate network, as already noted with Jonathan Harker. Because puns are products of orality and literacy, the character that falls between the oral and literate networks makes the most puns—Professor Van Helsing.

Leaving Mina at home, the men go to Dracula's house to examine the boxes of wood, and, describing their small victory, Van Helsing exclaims, "It [the discovery of the Count's house] has given us opportunity to cry 'check' in some ways in this chess game, which we play for the *stake* of human souls" (218; emphasis added). When Van Helsing describes the need to sterilize the boxes of earth, he tells Dr. Seward, "Already all of his lairs but one be sterilize as for

him. And before the sunset this shall be so. Then he have no place where he can move and hide. I delayed this morning that so we might be sure. Is there not more at *stake* for us than for him? Then why not be more careful than him?" (260; emphasis added). After Dracula attacks Renfield, Van Helsing says to Seward, "There is no time to lose. His *words* may be worth many lives; I have been thinking so, as I stood here. It may be there is a soul at *stake*!" (238; emphasis added). In this instance, not only does Van Helsing make a pun on stake, but he also speaks a complex literal truth. Up to this point in the novel, the value placed on words has focused on printed words within the literate information network. Van Helsing redirects the focus and puts value on Renfield's spoken words, merging (for a brief moment) the two information networks. Van Helsing is the arch between the two gulfs of the oral culture and the literate culture, because he recognizes the importance of the printed manuscript Mina creates and the importance of Dracula's oral communications.

Like the pun, the phonograph falls within both the oral and the literate networks. Modern critics, such as Jennifer Wicke, Jennifer Fleissner, and John Picker, have begun examining the phonographic media separate from the novel's print media. Their works have helped to emphasize the unique role sound recordings play in Stoker's story. The phonograph allows the heroes of the literate network to capture the sounds of the novel's orality. Dr. Seward, Jonathan Harker, Mina Harker, and Professor Van Helsing all have specific and unique experiences with phonographic technology, and their experiences in part dictate the novel's final format. The phonograph is not only a tool of the literate network but a parallel for Jonathan Harker's experience in Castle Dracula. Jonathan's literate presence in an oral culture places him in a unique position to record orality in print in a manner reminiscent of the phonograph. John Picker deftly notes Jonathan Harker appears as "a sound-recorder whose modern hieroglyphs keep his

journal safe from the count's prying eyes. But Harker, trapped literally in the castle, is also *used* by Dracula as a language machine, much as Edison had envisioned phonographs would be used for language tutorials" (134).

Dr. Seward uses his phonograph to record his diary. Mina happens to stumble upon Dr. Seward as he is dictating an entry:

> After I had tidied myself, I went down to Dr. Seward's study. At the door I paused a moment, for I thought I heard him talking to some one. As, however, he had pressed me to be quick, I knocked at the door, and on his calling out, 'Come in,' I entered. To my intense surprise, there was no one with him. He was quite alone, and on the table opposite him was what I knew at once from the description to be a phonograph. I had never seen one, and was much interested. (Stoker 188)

Mina's interest in the phonograph is heightened when she learns that she may be of use to the literate network by transcribing the doctor's phonograph cylinders. Seward reveals: "I do not know how to pick out any particular part of the diary . . . do you know that, although I have kept the diary for months past, it never once struck me, how I was going to find any particular part of it in case I wanted to look it up?" (189). Mina's quick reply is, "Then, Dr. Seward, you had better let me copy it out for you on my typewriter" (189). The manner in which Dr. Seward describes searching the phonograph cylinder is "to look it up," and his language reveals a problem with the interchangeability between sight and sound, literate and oral.

The language associated with the phonograph reflects much of the same language employed by phonograph users, critics, and viewers of the period, such as displayed by Garbit's phonograph pamphlet. Mina believes Dr. Seward is talking to "some one" and is surprised when

she discovers "no one with him" (188). She asks Dr. Seward, "May I hear it say something?" (188). After she finishes listening to his oral diary, she says, "That is a wonderful machine, but it is cruelly true. It told me, in its very tones, the anguish of your heart. It was like a soul crying out to Almighty God. No one must hear them spoken ever again . . . . I have copied out the words on my typewriter, and none other need now hear your heart beat, as I did" (190). Mina's personification of the phonograph humanizes the machine and dehumanizes Dr. Seward. Similarly, in *L'Eve Future*, the stolen voice of Alicia Clary humanizes the phonographic android.

When Mina transcribes his words, her demand that no one hear the anguish of his heart is complete; by turning his orality into literacy, Mina removes the human emotions from the language. Just as the literate mass of type buries Dracula's voice, the transcribed phonograph records erase the Seward's voice and sterilize his emotions. Van Helsing makes one recording on the phonograph, and Stoker formats Van Helsing's entry in the form of a letter, with an address, "This to Jonathan Harker," and Van Helsing's name (a kind of printed signature) at the bottom. Stoker seems focused on how a person unfamiliar with the workings of a phonograph (which both Van Helsing, who records the message, and Mina, who transcribes the message, are initially unfamiliar with the technology) would act when recording a verbal message.

Once transcribed by Mina, Dr. Seward's phonograph cylinders become an integral part of the literate network's information flows. Dr. Seward's recorded notes on Renfield's behavior prove to be one of the most important clues for the heroes' decoding of Dracula's motives. Only after Seward's patient notes have been transcribed can the heroes connect Renfield's behaviors and mannerisms to the Count. Seward realizes the importance of his cylinders' inscription in print: "In the meantime I should see Renfield, as hitherto he has been a sort of index to the coming and going of the Count. I hardly see this yet, but when I get at the dates I suppose I

shall. What a good thing that Mrs. Harker put my cylinders into type! We never could have found the dates otherwise" (193). Through the transcriptions of phonograph recordings, the literate network can connect the points and reveal Dracula's invisible network. Without the recordings, the typed manuscript would have been insufficient to aid in discovering Dracula's plan. Mina's transcriptions of the information held on phonograph cylinders composes almost half of the novel's ultimate makeup. [13] Although the novel is one large print network, the novel's debt to the fictional phonograph recordings is substantial.

The phonograph's presence in *Dracula* exerts its own unnatural power over the oral and literate networks, and images of feeding (Dracula feeds on humans; the heroes feed information into Mina, and she produces the typed manuscript; each network feeds off the other in attempts to suck the other dry of information) and colonization become associated with the machine. Jennifer Wicke's article "Vampiric Typewriting: *Dracula* and Its Media" brings up several crucial points regarding Dr. Seward's use of the phonograph and Mina's transcriptions of the records:

> Seward's diary constitutes the immaterialization of a voice, a technologized zone of the novel, inserted at a historical point where phonography was not widespread . . . but indicative of things to come. We are not dealing here with pure speech in opposition to writing, but instead with speech already colonized, or vampirized, by mass mediation. (471)

Wicke's argument focuses on the literary colonization of orality, which she asserts is no less parasitic than Dracula's feeding on the literate network. John Picker links the phonographic representations in *Dracula* more closely to a feeling of consumptive hunger for sound that its

[13] From the Dover Thrift Edition of *Dracula*, the percent of pages credited to Dr. Seward's Diary (including the recording by Professor Van Helsing) to the pages credited to diaries, newspaper clippings, and letters is 139 pages to 187 pages, or 42%.

inventor demonstrated. Because of his severe deafness, Edison would bite on materials to receive the sound vibrations: "clenching his teeth around a metal plate . . . .vibrations were conveyed through his resonating jawbone—meaning, in effect, that *he virtually heard through his teeth*" (Picker 133).[14] Edison even bit down on his personal Disc phonograph, which still exists, his dental indentations preserved (133). Picker makes a unique connection between Edison's bite marks and Dracula's teeth:

> As if to express his hunger to hear, Edison gnawed the grooves of his own incisors into the wood of the groove-machine. From pricking to biting, from blood to bone, there is something primal, piercing, about the phonograph, the needle, and the biting inventor; something, one might even say . . . vampiric. (134)

The vampiric quality of the phonograph's modern orality creates parallels with Dracula's primal orality. Dracula's destruction of the phonograph cylinders through burning is in part an attempt to staunch the literate network's flow of information and a symbolic act of primal orality's resistance to colonization through print media. Dracula destroys the print manuscript and the phonograph cylinders by throwing them into the fire, a death rather of reminiscent of the phonographic android's demise in Villiers's *L'Eve Future*. Arthur Godalming tells Seward, "All the manuscript had been burned, and the blue flames were flickering amongst the white ashes; the cylinders of your phonograph too were thrown on the fire, and the wax helped the flames" (Stoker 244). That the phonograph's own materials, the wax on which the eternal grooves are etched, aid in hastening its destruction seems rather ironic since the phonograph was so closely aligned with permanence and immortality. The blue flames of the fire also recall the blue flames that appear on St. George's day, as Jonathan travels toward Castle Dracula. Those blue flames

[14] From Neil Baldwin's *Edison: Inventing the Century* (New York: Hyperion, 1995). 72-73: quoted in Picker.

characterize the supernatural elements at play, and Jonathan watches from the carriage as Dracula, in disguise as the driver, puts each one out. The reappearance of blue flames at the novel's conclusion connects the phonograph with Dracula, more specifically the phonograph's orality with Dracula's orality.

Although Lord Godalming gives the verbal report revealing the cylinders' destruction, Dr. Seward's diary records the event. If Dracula destroys all his cylinders, does Seward record the report of their demise on more cylinders? The answer, I believe, is no. In the novel's endnote added seven years after their experiences, Jonathan Harker writes:

> I took the papers from the safe where they had been ever since our return so long ago. We were struck with the fact, that in all the mass of material of which the record is composed, there is hardly one authentic document; nothing but a mass of typewriting, except the later *note-books* of Mina and Seward and myself, and Van Helsing's memorandum. (326; emphasis added)

Up to this point, Dr. Seward only records his diary orally on his phonograph, but Stoker seems deliberate in revealing that after the cylinders' destruction, Seward suddenly switches formats and begins keeping a literate print diary. Through the literate network, not only are Seward's phonograph cylinders transformed into printed elements of that network, but he is as well.

Oral Destruction and Literate Homogenization

Because the heroes possess the means and abilities to adapt new information, technologies, and speeds into their network, they overcome Dracula's static system. As he begins to lose power over his network, Count Dracula retreats to Transylvania, to the seeming

safety of an oral culture that he can control. Through their updated technologies, the heroes have the capacities to extend their network outward as they pursue him. Using charts and telegraphs to follow the Czarina Catherine, the ship on which Dracula returns to Transylvania, the heroes cast out their network and incorporate the London port authorities and the captain of the Czarina Catherine. As they follow Dracula's procession along the waterways towards Castle Dracula, the final convergence of the two networks, oral and literate, culminates in the last chapter. As the gypsies convey Dracula, Harker, Seward, Quincey, and Godalming race after them. The oral and nomadic nature of Stoker's stereotyped gypsies puts them under the Count's control; he offers them money for service, and they accept. In the last scene, the confrontation between the Eastern gypsies and the Western men represents the clashing of the oral culture with the literate culture. Seward, Godalming, Harker, and Morris manage to stop the gypsies before they reach the castle. Van Helsing and Mina watch from a distance, and Mina recounts in her diary, "all four men of our party threw themselves from their horses and dashed towards the cart. . . . Seeing the quick movement of our parties, the leader of the gypsies gave a command; his men instantly formed round the cart" (323). Just as the literate network formed a ring around Mina to protect her from unknown outside forces, the gypsies encircle the earth-box in which Dracula rests, protecting him from the foreign outsiders.

As Mina infiltrated Dracula's mind earlier in the novel, Jonathan physically infiltrates the gypsies' circle: "Jonathan's impetuosity, and the manifest singleness of his purpose, seemed to overawe those in front of him. . . . In an instant he had jumped upon the cart. . . raised the great box, and flung it over the wheel to the ground" (324). Jonathan physically removes Dracula from the middle of his network, and then with a "flash of [his] great knife . . . . shear[s] through the throat" of Dracula (324). Jonathan not only evicts the oral network's center, but he savagely

rips through the center's throat, destroying the physical source of orality and sound production. As Dracula punctured the throats of others, Harker exacts appropriate and meaningful revenge by destroying the oral center's oral facilities. Jonathan's actions lead to the destruction of the Count's network: "the whole body crumbled into dust and passed from our sight . . . . The gypsies, taking us as in some way the cause of the extraordinary disappearance of the dead man, turned, without a word, and rode away as if for their lives. . . . the wolves followed in their wake" (324). As the center crumbles, the network cannot hold and, "without a word," collapses.

The last image of the literate network reveals its complete colonization of the oral network. Jonathan and Mina's son, Quincey, with his "bundle of names [that] links all our little band of men together" is the product of the two networks (326). He contains a bit of everyone's personalities and blood, including the blood of Dracula. The pages of the typed mass itemize Dracula and incorporate his orality and the secondary orality of the phonograph into the dominate nineteenth-century print network. Now that the heroes' travails have been put into a printed document, representing a "history almost at variance with the possibilities of later-day belief," the events that took place can be buried (vi). The nineteenth-century print network, which consolidates and liquidates history, instead choosing to feed and thrive on fresh and current events, has overtaken the oral network and made it out-of-date with a vengeance.

CONCLUSION

While there are no known personal connections between Bram Stoker and Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, an examination of *Dracula* with *L'Eve Future* reveals similarities in the authors' treatment of orality, literacy, and the phonograph as the site of conflict between the oral and literate networks. The oral network of Count Dracula ultimately proves too slow and outdated to complete with the modern, fast-paced network of the heroes; at the novel's conclusion, Dracula's successful conversion rate of human to vampire reaches a grand total of one. The downfall of the Count's network is his failure to realize that by attempting to incorporate the modern and literate Mina, his exchange of information through blood gives Mina and the literate network the last bit of knowledge they need to reveal his oral network and infiltrate it. The end of Edison's oral network meets a similar fate. Within the confines of Menlo Park, he creates a secure oral network that incorporates machines and technology in the forms of mechanical birds and androids. Edison fashions and gives Sowana the ring that grants her the ability to communicate telepathically and to infiltrate the android body. Edison, like Dracula, crafts the machines and machinations that lead to his doom.

L'Eve Future and *Dracula* expose the phonograph to be a meeting point between humans and machines, mortality and immortality, speech and print. Stoker and Villiers create a close alignment between the phonograph and the female body (human and android) as vehicles to be filled with information and vibrations. The outcome of filling the female body and the phonograph, however, is a collapse of the oral networks in both novels. For Ewald, the problem

with Alicia Clary is that the misalignment of her soul and body distorts her ability to be the perfect receiver for his signals, or his orality. Although she receives his vibrations (his input) her inability to interpret the signals correctly and produce the appropriate output reveals her flaw as a receiver. For Edison, the android offers Ewald the chance to acquire the perfect "spiritual receiver"—Hadaly. His offer to build Ewald an android with Alicia's looks and the illusion of presence is an offer to create the Ideal woman, who is the perfect receiver of all his signals. Like Alicia Clary, Lucy Westenra also proves to be an imperfect message receiver. Lucy can neither interpret the signals Dracula sends her, nor produce the correct messages to help the men protect her. Her imperfect functions lead to her vamping and subsequent death. After failing to incorporate Lucy fully into his network, Dracula turns to Mina, who proves to be a more open receiver, but whose central location within a literate network keeps her from being incorporated into Dracula's orality.

As responses to the conflicts between orality and literacy, both novels question how to represent language that has become unstable and unpredictable because of new oral and print technology. I have asserted that Villiers's novel is a stylized literary appropriation of the writing patterns of a patent, specifically Edison's patent. Besides the language Villiers employs, the work's division into books, further sectioned into vignettes, is not altogether different from the format Stoker uses. *Dracula* is a large typed manuscript that correlates and unifies letters, telegrams, sound recordings, and diaries, capturing the evidence of the experience in a written document. *L'Eve Future* unifies Edison's personal life with his inventions and technology with the life of the android and the life of Lord Celian Ewald. Before the first page of Stoker's novel, a note informs the reader that the ordering of the documents is deliberate. But because of the document's ordering one often loses site of which character's diary or letter one is reading; the

diaries, letters, telegrams, and sound recordings become uniform and indistinguishable. Similarly in Villiers's work, the start and stopping points of Edison's long monologues are not clearly defined; his speeches often run over several vignettes, and without clear indicators to mark off the dialogue, one is often confused as to who is speaking.

As the nineteenth century fantasized over the combinations of human bodies and machines, the works of Stoker and Villiers also question the state of humanity's soul in an emerging world of sound recording technology. Destruction by fire of the phonograph cylinders in both novels offers a compelling Promethean image, possibly indicating the dangers technology poses to humanity. Edison and Ewald's metaphorical removal of Alicia's soul from her body and Van Helsing's puns on "souls at stake" suggest an anxiety of the soul's existence and role in a modern electrical and industrial world. Like Van Helsing, even Villiers's narrator declares that Edison's decision to build an android body is a game in which "the stakes [are], literally, nothing less than a soul" (65). This particular exclamation could refer either to the state of Ewald's soul or to Alicia's soul; in either case, both souls are in physical jeopardy. If Edison does not succeed in removing Alicia's soul, Ewald will commit suicide. If Edison does succeed, Ewald will live, but Alicia Clary will die. Although Ewald's exact fate is ambiguous, in the novel's conclusion neither soul has survived intact. The anxiety revealed by both authors questions, in what network does the soul belong? Neither author offers a definite answer.

The phonograph's offer to free speech from the pages ultimately revealed the complex interconnected relationship between orality and literacy. The phonograph was neither a machine of pure orality or pure literacy but a hybrid of both. To patent his phonograph Edison was required to produce an oral narration of the invention's function and written documentation; the two step process was necessary to verify the invention's authenticity. Charles Cros's attempts to

obtain a patent for his paleophone were unsuccessful because he only provided the written document presenting his theories; without the physical evidence and the oral narration to prove his theories worked, Cros's paleophone could not be authenticated. In Stoker's *Dracula*, the heroes' accounts cannot be authenticated because an original manuscript (i.e. a patent) for their experiences does not exist; they are only left with the copies and no physical evidence to verify their statements. In Villiers's *L'Eve Future*, the loss of Hadaly, Edison's greatest invention, leaves the fictional inventor with no physical proof of his success at building an artificial human. The historical Edison prophesized that his phonograph would lead to a paperless future, but this vision can never materialize because of orality's reliance on literacy for authentication. Ironically, Edison imagined the phonograph would end the need for literate networks, when in actuality the phonograph verified the necessity for literate networks. Although its inventor initially doubted the longevity of the machine, later in his life when asked about his work, Edison is credited with responding, "Of all my inventions, I liked the phonograph the best." Through the phonograph and all the sound recording technology that followed in its wake, the continued need for oral and literate networks was verified.

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