

Psychoanalysis and Duality in Stevenson's "The Strange Case of
Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde" and in David Lynch's Film "Blue
Velvet".



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Abstract

The official title of this dissertation is ' Psychoanalysis and Duality in Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and David Lynch's film *Blue Velvet*.

In the dissertation, the focus will be on the literary and artistic elements of the Gothic and its' notion of the sublime or the abject against the social and moral respectability of the middle-class life. Gothic fiction portrays a kind of evil that is more disgusting and distasteful rather than fearful or threatening.

A 'compare and contrast' analysis will be carried out to show how the two different media of film and novel bring out the elements of the sensual and the violent within the gothic genre in the contemporary period and in the Victorian period, respectively. Themes such as the duality of light and dark, good and evil; and the notion of the double life will be discussed extensively.

Psychoanalytic interpretations such as Lacan's distinction between the 'imaginary' and the 'symbolic' and his concept of the mirror-stage; together with Freud's theories of the 'Oedipus Complex' and the 'ego and the id' will be applied to the theme of schizophrenia in Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*'. Baudrillard's *Simulations* will be used to discuss the role of postmodernism in the 1986 film *Blue Velvet*. According to Norman K. Denzin with reference to Baudrillard, films such as *Blue Velvet* bring the 'unpresentable' in front of the viewer in ways that challenge the common boundaries between public and private life.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Miller in 'Doubles', Duality is a colloquial nineteenth-century word and an unstable one. It reflects human inconsistency and uncertainty. Miller insists that the reference to the nineteenth-century narrative of the double goes beyond the literary subject. At the same time, however it is a subject, which is literature.

Miller continues saying that duality produces a giddy sense of uncertainty- a sense that 'recedes' to the past and which confuses the mind and the will and known to have been subject to physical change in certain cultures.

Freud knows that one also has to include the subject of 'repression' when discussing the 'double', and also the strong sense of the feeling of the uncanny that it represents; '...Our knowledge of pathological mental processes enables us to add that urge towards defence which has caused the ego to project that material outward as something foreign to itself. When all is said and done, the quality of uncanniness can only come from the fact of the 'double' being a creation dating back to a very early mental stage, long since surmounted- a stage, incidentally, at which it wore a more friendly aspect.'¹

The romanticism that differs from what is familiar and from the rules and accords of the senses involves the behaviour of the passer-by in the street that may own a hidden secret of his inner self. In Miller's words '...the idea that the single self with which we are

¹ Freud, *The Uncanny*, trans. Alix Strachey, (C.P. 4, 368-407, 1925)p.236

familiar may be experienced as two selves or a compendium, or as a continuum of times or moments- this idea can usually be assigned to the unhappiness which attempts to escape. Many refer to the unhappiness caused by this split or division within the self.'

In 'The double in Nineteenth-century fiction', Herdman states that the double is a romantic central image which was most popular during the nineteenth-century. He affirms that the significance of the double is usually unfolded in the action and is closely connected to the notion of fate that echoes through the development of the plot. The theme of the double did not die in the nineteenth-century even though its' popularity has deviated from the standard state. Herdman declares that it has survived in a different form and with a prominent change during the present century.

It is the experience of duality that underpins human consciousness and this is that which embraces a crucial distinction between the 'I' and the 'not-I'. The recognition of the existence of these two distinctive elements is essential for the basic dialectic that leads to the possibility of language. Herdman influenced by Lacan explains that consciousness becomes part of the child once the latter is able to recognize the other and its' rights. The not-I is not experienced as external to the individual but an existent element within the self. Herdman expounds that: 'Self-division ...is almost an inseparable condition of consciousness.'

In the years 216-76 A.D, the Gnostic faith had a fresh revival in the form of Manicheism, founded on the faith in primeval opposition between light and dark.

It spread widely and lasted long as it was very popular. When Augustine was twenty years old he became a 'manichee hearer'. It was the Manichean solution to the dilemma of evil that first attracted Augustine.²

The religion of Mani served Augustine to satisfy his urge to understand reason behind irrationality in the world and the presence of evil and its' conflict against good. It provided him with a universal symbolism to objectify his inner tensions. Augustine was aware of the powerful feelings that could be stirred beyond the rational control of the mind, and this teaching gave him a set of images, which made endemic the conflict between a world of light and that of darkness.

According to Ambrose's teaching in Milan, it was not man that sinned but an inherent nature within him. As Augustine explained: ' ...I very much preferred to excuse myself and accuse some other thing that was in me but was not I ...But in truth I was one whole; it was my impiety that divided me against myself.'

Manicheism preached that darkness was part of man and should not be disowned or pushed away, but should be integrated as one whole as part of the 'I'. Augustine felt that he could not trust his mind especially when it asked itself on its' own powers. His

² Robert A. Markus, *Conversion and Disenchantment in Augustine's Spiritual Career*, (Villanova University press, 1989) pp 8-15

'confessions' deals with the man who learns to unite a fragmented personality and attains resolution of conflict in mature acceptance. He has accepted himself as 'problematic' – 'I have become a question to myself'. In this acceptance lies a central clue to some of his theological insights and what committed him to the unrelenting struggle against Donatism.

His impatience with Donatism stems from the impatience of a man who has not come to see that the conflict between light and darkness as holiness and sin, respectively, cannot be confined within clear cut borders. "Man must learn to accept the darkness within him and he must live as a question in front of god." Augustine could not accept the church of the pure.

Augustine's break with Manicheism came from the need to acknowledge the indivisibility of the self in all its' inner struggle and at the same time the need to accept responsibility for the sin within the self as a symbol of mature theology.

Augustine's philosophy is that the universe is a cascade that transcends light which dissipates into multiplicity and limitation and it finally arrives in the non-darkness of the non-being (the unconscious).The soul needs to liberate itself from darkness and to retrace its' place of origin.

Augustine writes that 'my inner self was a house divided against itself. He felt incapable of making the right decision and 'the necessary act of will.' He could not understand the reason behind some of the actions he took and why he took them and especially why he wanted to take certain actions and he had the will to do them, yet could not bring himself to do them. He comes up with the explanation that this occurs, as the sense of will is not 'wholehearted'. It is in his opinion 'a disease of the mind' that habit and vice pull the mind away from achieving the truth.

He also rejects the possibility proposed by Manicheism that we own two minds; one that is good and the other, evil. He believes that there can be a number of discordant wills in us, which cannot relate to the equal number of opposed natures.

Augustine's conversion led him to believe that man could only will to do good by the aid of the divine grace. Augustine valued freedom rather than free will and thus he argued that through grace the will could recover the capacity to choose good over evil. Christian freedom depends on the complete willingness to submit and surrender to God. However that willingness itself is a gift of grace.

Herdman explains that the Romantic obsession with the irrational found its' most marked symbolisation in Fate. The notion of Fate was then associated to Augustinian and Calvinist theology of foreordination, which also implies the consequent concern regarding the status of free will and the chance of redemption and repentance. Kant held

to the idea that good and evil shared an equal space within the soul, and also spoke of a conflict between logic and evil and the irrational, in which reason will triumph if good is to survive and win over.

Jean-Paul Richter invented the term *Doppelgänger*. The *Doppelgänger* is a second self or alter ego, which appears as a separate being but exists in a dependent relation to the original. Herdman is careful to declare that by 'dependent' he does not mean 'subordinate' as often the *doppelgänger* comes to usurp and dominate the role of the subject; however the double has its 'raison d'être' in its relation to the subject and very often the subject and the double are physically similar. Herdman insists that there is almost always a supernatural or extraordinary element in the relationship between them beyond any merely natural relationship.

Hoffmann developed the theme of the supernatural double to the point at which the device became a mechanism of psychological penetration, which quickly became naturalised in Scotland and Russia. Stevenson and Hogg, master pioneers and contributors to the theme of the double were Scottish. Herdman declares that Scottish awareness of duality lies deep within the history and the national psyche and the major contributing factor in this is definitely the Calvinist theology.

In *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*, Jung describes a dream in which there is the small figure of a 'brown-skinned savage' who he states was 'an embodiment of the primitive shadow.' He defines this shadow as: 'the "negative" side of the personality,

the sum of all those unpleasant qualities we like to hide, together with the insufficiently developed functions and contents of the personal unconscious.' Jung expands by saying that everyone owns such a shadow and so 'the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is...if it is repressed and isolated from consciousness, it never gets corrected, and is liable to burst forth suddenly in a moment of unawareness.' This is most apt to occur in people who are 'highly moral.' These features that describe the shadow are immediately recognizable in the fictional character of Mr Hyde.

Jung describes the shadow as having 'inferiorities' which 'have an emotional nature, a kind of autonomy, and accordingly an obsessive or, better, possessive quality.' The shadow is not entirely evil, according to Jung but 'is merely somewhat inferior, primitive, unadapted, awkward; not wholly bad.' Jung states that the lowest levels of this inferior personality are 'indistinguishable from the instinctuality of an animal.' Jung presents an ambivalent view regarding the nature of the inferior personality. At times, he does suggest that the confrontation between certain people and their 'blackest shadow' is an opposition against the power of evil. Like the character of Jeffrey in *Blue Velvet*, one must do his utmost 'to prevent the pressure of evil from becoming too powerful for him.'

For Jung, the deeper the unconscious, the more alien and darker the repression lies. The primitive man within oneself is a world that can scarcely be reached or illuminated by

consciousness. The primitive psyche of man borders on the life of the animal soul just as caves of prehistoric times inhabited by animals before man laid claim to them.

Jung also investigates the problem of self-knowledge and the individual who wishes to have an answer to the problem of evil. One must have knowledge to his wholeness. He should know how much good he can do and what crimes he is capable of. He must beware of regarding one as real and the other as illusion. Both are elements in his nature and both are bound to come to light in him, should he wish to live without self-deception and self-illusion.

The Argentinian author, Borges is one among the authors of the modern world who intimate that the self which creates a work of art is able to put itself aside temporarily whilst creating other fictitious selves or diffusing itself with the other selves which the work builds up or animates. Thus any present authorial self is usually doubtful or illusive. This characteristic of modernism and duality is found in *Labyrinths*- in the narrative 'Borges and I'.³

Jung explains that evil is a determinant reality and good and evil represent a judgment. He further affirms that the Creator and his son are a whole and therefore a splitting of this wholeness would result in a split in the realm of light and that of darkness. Every man can partake of the whole of God through the Holy Spirit. The *complexio*

³ Karl Miller, *Doubles: Studies in Literary History*, (Oxford University Press, 1985) ,p.34

oppositorum is that which enters into man as conflict: the dark half of the image coming into opposition against God which is the light.

Jung states that the importance of consciousness is so great that one cannot help suspecting that the element of meaning within the monstrous is the intended and the unforeseen out of some dark urge. Everything through which 'the other' wills proceeds from man. Nothing promotes growth of consciousness as the inner confrontation of opposites and man should be aware of this polarity superior to the self.

This is also reminiscent of the Romantic poet Blake for whom innocence cannot last unchallenged forever and although it can be retained or prolonged through poetry, love, and beauty, it is nonetheless threatened by the force of adulthood which is accompanied by responsibilities, cares and duties. Although Blake declares that this 'progression' is inevitable it is made harsher by the 'rule of moral law' and 'the ethic of punishment' rather than pardon at the religious level and by possessiveness, jealousy and egocentrism at the psychological level.⁴

Herdman quotes Jung who states that : 'Projections change the world into the replica of one's own unknown face.' The reality of an unattainable dream instils frustration and unfulfilment, which is then turned into fate – 'the malevolence of the environment'.

⁴ York notes Advanced, *William Blake*, (London: York Press, 1998) p.46

It is the excessive pride and belief in his own righteousness that causes the individual the complete repression of his dark inner self. This repressed self separates itself as the conscious ego and is thus projected as a double. The subject's powerlessness in confrontation to his double 's menacing behaviour and control of his will is then transformed into a fatalistic theological position. The subject then starts believing that his actions will lead him to reprobation and this makes repentance and the integration of the self, impossible.

Jung is of the belief that good and evil are complementary opposites and thus each of these elements are necessary one for the other and is also firm on the idea of the reintegration of the dark face of God in the Divine image; he makes a special emphasis on the importance of the question as to whether in the power of evil, God might have placed a special purpose that each of us should know. Jung describes the self as *complexio oppositorum* and even though he believes that Christ is the image of the Self and that the image is weakened by the separation from it and from its' dark side in the subordinated figure of the Devil. The repression of the dark side or evil side of God results in 'enantodromia'.

Jung's argument on the subject is quite conflicting. His imagery of the shadow represents the inferiority of the dark side of the self and this can imply its' subordinate status. On the other hand Jung is also using the term in a special sense: the unconscious lies below the ego consciousness and thus the term 'inferior' could be applied to it in this context.

Jung affirms that in truth man seeks to possess energy and be possessed by it. This energy is love; that which endures and bears all things. We are its' victims and at its' mercy as man's light and darkness is dependent upon it and sustained by it. Man should call love by the name of God as he represents meaning against all meaningless.

CHAPTER 1.1

“ It had to be an ear because it’s an opening. An ear is wide and as it narrows, you can go down into it.”-
David Lynch.

According to Clive Bloom, the murders of autumn 1888 in London allowed for the appearance of ‘ a new urban dweller’ who lived on the borders of society yet intermingled completely with it. This ‘urban dweller’ was *the psychopath killer*. Unlike Sade , the psychopath is always ‘disguised’ and his secret intentions and actions are on another surface from his social responsibilities.⁵

Jack the Ripper, however was seen as not only split in personality but also in morality. The psychopath unites the lowest and the highest inclinations of society; religion and science. He is ill but nonetheless he has to make his mark and impose his force on his setting. The psychopath ‘lets go’ only to protect the lost side of his split personality during the daylight hours of responsibility. The demonic had not lost its’ impact in the 1880s as it was ‘reinforced’ by scientific research.

Bloom makes an analogy between the story of the Ripper and the popular fiction of the 1880s and thus turns to Stevenson’s *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, which was published in 1886, two years before ‘Jack’ made his own ‘spectacular’ presence.

⁵ Clive Bloom, *Cult Fiction: Popular Reading and Pulp theory*, (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1996), p. 167

Jekyll is the quintessence of middle-class propriety, living in a street which is described as having houses with “freshly painted shutters, well polished brasses and general cleanliness”, while Hyde is a monster and an ‘ape-like’ psychopath who lives in the sexual degeneracy of Soho: ‘that dismal quarter of Soho seen under these changing glimpses, with its’ muddy ways, and slatternly passengers, and its’ lamps, which had never been extinguished or had been kindled afresh to combat this mournful reinvasion of darkness, seemed, in the lawyer’s eyes, like a district of some city in a nightmare.’

The blend of Darwinism and ‘pseudo-science’ aid to make this tale of the duality of split-personality and social class even more intricate. According to Bloom ‘Degeneracy for Stevenson is a decline into an animal state- the noble savage has become the sex-crazed ape.’ However, this theme is disturbed by a ‘psychological’ study of Jekyll from whose dark side Hyde has evolved.

Just like the dual character of Kurtz in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, an eloquent speaker and writer, who has written a beautiful piece on bringing the light to the darkness of the Congo, but whose avarice and infinite ambition leads him to steal ivory from his savages,⁶ it is Jekyll’s aspiration towards the ideal that caused his deterioration and corruption. Such a duality propels Jekyll to believe that ‘if he is the chief of sinners he is the chief of sufferers too.’

According to Bloom what is foregrounded here is not schizophrenia as illness but Jekyll’s fragmented nature that shows signs of debaseness and corruption. Stevenson

⁶ Karl Miller, *Doubles*, (Oxford University press, 1985) p. 263

opens his novella with ‘the description of Hyde’s manic progress’ by making the narrator recall that ‘then came the horrible part of the thing; for the man tramped calmly over the child’s body and left her screaming on the ground. It sounds nothing to hear, but it was hellish to see. It wasn’t like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut’.

Hyde is then described as ‘an abominable *it*’ - all that profanes and desecrates the sanity of humans who react towards him with distaste and repulsion. This intermingles with the weird, ‘freakish’ and grotesque appearance of ‘the culprit’. Hyde fuses that which is ‘savage’, ‘barbarian’ and the terror of the ‘troglodytic’ with fear of malignity and villainy, for he has ‘a kind of black sneering coolness...really like Satan.’

Hurley explains that the repulsive yet fascinating possibility of the loss of self-identity is the subject matter of Julia Kristeva’s *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Abjection for Kristeva, ‘is a nauseating affective state: like ambivalence but more wracking; more violent than the sensation of uncanniness; too primordial to be called an emotion, for it refers back to the affective state of the self *before* it has become a self.’

Abjection means “casting off” and produces a separation from the self not on the basis of the Freudian sense of repressing an object choice but by removing something that was once part of the self. Thus, the abject is associated with *taboo* and the idea of waste or debasement. ‘The reaction that its’ confrontation typically elicits is disgust, horror, shame, as well as fascination.’ The abject thus confronts the subject with the reverse of

what it should be, it should be controlled 'with strict prohibition.' When it erupts unexpectedly, its' materialization marks a transgression and poses a threat to the self: 'the object marks a point on which the subject falters and meaning collapses.'⁷

An image that illustrates abjection in the film *Blue Velvet* is the ear. Lynch in *Blue Velvet* uses the same plot device as Bunuel and Dali's surrealist masterwork, *Un Chien Andalou*, where the protagonist finds a severed hand (a symbol of castration fears) severed by ants in a Parisian gutter. Analogously, in *Blue Velvet*, Jeffrey Beaumont finds a severed ear crawling with ants while returning home to see his stricken father.⁸

Denzin describes abjection in *Blue Velvet* thus: 'The viewer is taken inside the ear. It fills the screen. Strange, roaring sounds are heard. In an even earlier scene Lynch takes the viewer into a front lawn where blades of grass 'as tall as redwood trees' are teeming with black insects. The film quickly moves from this violence in nature, to the sado-masochistic rituals between Frank and Dorothy and Dorothy and Jeffrey. Violence, and the unrepresentable, Lynch seems to be suggesting are everywhere, not only in nature, but next door to the middle-class homes in Lumberton, USA.'⁹

⁷ Julia Kristeva, *Powers of horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez , <<http://social.class.ncsu.edu/wyrick/debclass/krist.htm>>

⁸ Philip French, *The Observer*, <http://film.guardian.co.uk/news_story/Critic_Review/observer_review

⁹ *The Postmodern reader*, p.231

In Stevenson's novella, this is what Jekyll says upon his first impression of Hyde the first time he saw him in the mirror:

'And yet when I looked upon that ugly idol in the glass, I was conscious of no repugnance, rather a leap of welcome. This too was myself. It seemed natural and human. In my eyes, it bore a livelier image of the spirit, it seemed more express and single, than the imperfect and divided countenance I had been hitherto accustomed to call mine. And in so far I was doubtless right. I had observed that when I bore the semblance of Edward Hyde, none could come near me at first without a misgiving of the flesh.'

The combination of animality and the satanic stems from the corrupt standards of Jekyll, a scientist and 'pillar of society' who is driven on freeing his own possibilities to experience the borders of perception through the 'power of his own will.' His science is therefore put to the justification of metaphysical contemplation. The scientist engineers the soul in order to reform the system of the body, and thus in demolishing the 'fortress of identity', Jekyll employs science as if it were magic: "man is not truly one, but truly two."

Stevenson exploits this duality of religion and science and hence, comments recurringly on the nature of evil and link with madness:

'This familiar that I called out of my own soul, and sent forth alone to do his good pleasure, was a being inherently malign and villainous; his every act and thought centred on self... The situation was apart from ordinary laws, and insidiously relaxed the grasp of conscience. It was Hyde, after all, and Hyde alone, that was guilty. Jekyll was

no worse; he woke again to his good qualities seemingly unimpaired; he would even make haste, where it was possible, to undo the evil done by Hyde, 'And thus his conscience slumbered.'

It is thus 'will' and 'the drive to power' that usurp the laws of consciousness of mankind and succeed in dominating it. Bloom states that the message Stevenson wanted to convey was that 'from the socially responsible, the morally restrained, and the intellectually ideal come anarchy, moral degeneracy and perversity dominated by a Calvinistic notion of predestined sin.'

Likewise, Jack the Ripper was seen as an inhuman (a non-human) monster who fused middle-class respectability (a doctor or a surgeon) with working-class barbarianism '(an immigrant, a mad butcher)'. The Ripper united both classes but nonetheless, his actions excluded him from both. He was at once able to concentrate his violence and aggression in anatomical detail and yet unable to control its' force. His work provided fodder for the riffraff to gain prejudice against professions which dealt with the human body (psychologists, doctors, post-mortem surgeons, forensic experts.) The Ripper's 'supposed' anatomical skill linked him to the very professionals paid to search for his identity.

The Ripper was not just a murderer but also the mechanism behind a series of psychological and social reactions. He combined the idea of the specialist and that of the darker side of the madman, lunatic and the savage 'degenerate'. Serving as a bridge between middle-class respectability and debased Darwinian masses, 'the Ripper became

the invisible man' and like Jekyll 'for him in his impenetrable mantle, the safety was complete. Think of it- he did not exist.'

The very people Jack killed added to the contradiction within him and thus completed his split nature. 'The Magdalens' were themselves invisible as they acted as an 'outlet' to urban society and were regarded as posing on the very edge of the border of urban society. Both the psychopath and the prostitute were at the edge of a society that refused to accept their existence. They gave their services on the edge of 'the rational', morally depraved as both presumably were.

Bloom explains that the Ripper's attacks signify a quest for otherness that is totally non-human. The uterus is what gives life to the growing foetus, and thus the 'innerds' of the female body possess some sort of a code. Through the use of the technique of manic autopsy, Jack tries to search for the non-body- 'the beyond and yet absolute of his own existence.' Bloom suggests that The Ripper might have been searching for the soul. Thus Jack wanted to find his own significance and the body proved no obstacle to him as he was forced to kill.

The body of the prostitutes signifies 'the absence of purity' and the existence of sin and Bloom asks whether it is possible to explain the Ripper's violence as a quest 'for a lost and discarded origin' even if his method was a repressed and obsolete one. Thus, Jack's objective when he kills is not to take 'power' over the other but 'to bypass "the other" altogether in order to confront otherness itself.'

Returning to Jekyll and Hyde, Jekyll evolves from his own personality the traits of a psychopath. His split ego is a cause of aspects from within himself. His aggression and violent acts stem from a hatred of his own class and its' expectation of suppression and propriety. Girard as quoted by Bloom comments on the Bible story of Cain and Abel. 'Cain's "jealousy" of his brother is only another term for his own characteristic trait: his lack of sacrificial outlet.' Utterson, the lawyer in the novella, is the epitome of respectability and decorum, he was 'austere with himself' and yet he declares ' I incline to Cain's heresy.' However, with Jekyll , the problem is beyond a psychological one as like the ripper he transgresses 'a profound border', one which perturbed both 'anthropologists' and 'theologians.'

Jack circumvents the criminal underworld as he does not make part of it. He stands outside of it as it is defined within the limits of the living humans unlike Jack. The ripper is the satanic/animal and therefore the other- 'the unrecognisable' as he is well-concealed and out-of-sight. He is hence 'the perfect criminal.' He molests the human only to fortify it. 'This monstrosity' envelops himself in the thoughts and minds of each generation that acknowledges and thus recalls his presence. For this simple fact, the Ripper has an eternal smile on his face- 'he is the undead.'¹⁰

¹⁰ Bloom, p. 177

According to Dean, before the Great War, deviance was connected to a degenerate sexuality. Nineteenth-century medical men could not make the distinction between 'biological dysfunction' and the morality of the sufferer and thus used the biological imperfection as connotation of the pervert's soul. Sexual and other deviants were all considered as debased and degenerate.

Prostitution in the nineteenth-century had represented a symbol of danger that has to be eliminated by regular roundups and incarceration. Bizard's location of prostitution in all settings ironically connected it to 'the clear dissolution of clear marks of criminality.' As Alain Corbain noticed, the fact that brothels were forced to close down, new, more open and latent forms of prostitution emerged. Max and Alex Fischer stated that "in fifty years time, professional prostitution will have completely disappeared, submerged by amateurism, by the elegant woman, the pretty woman, the woman who does it for nothing."¹¹

This liquefaction of conventional boundaries between honest women and prostitutes blurred the line of demarcation between masculinity and femininity.

For Dean, the deviant woman acted as an autonomous individual as she chose her partners when and where she wanted, she usurped male prerogatives and, in so doing, acted out the insatiable longing and lack of self-control which purportedly characterized female nature.

¹¹ Carolyn J. Dean, *The Self and Its' Pleasures: Bataille, Lacan and The History of the Decentred subject* (London: Cornell University Press, 1992) p.69

According to James Bernardinelli, in *Blue Velvet*, Dorothy ‘allows Frank to brutalize her in order to keep her loved ones safe, but the reality is that she is a masochist and gets off on being beaten and raped. Jeffrey discovers this first hand when he begins an affair with Dorothy and learns that she likes her sex rough-rougher than he is initially willing to provide.’¹²

Pichon believed that patriarchy was the ideal form of social order as it was the basis of language. Together with Laforgue, he argued that normality could be reached through the child’s moral capacity to repress its’ infantile desires and encounter the world as an adult.

In contrast to Freud’s theory of the Oedipus complex, this maturation emerged from an “innate” ethical capacity to surrender desire for the mother and accept the father’s authority. Pichon , condemns any repudiation of the father’s law and yet he was unable to provide a clear explanation of how the capacity of sacrifice came about.

Unlike Freud, Lacan affirms that the father’s function is ‘itself determined by a cultural form of social organization’- the patriarchal family. Lacan however claims that paternal authority does not necessarily originate from nature and agrees with Pichon by affirming that for him patriarchal authority has its’ roots in cultural forms (e.g. language) rather than in “real” fathers. However, Lacan also rejected Pichon’s view

¹² James Berardinelli’s Reel Views < http://movie_reviews.colossus.net/movies/b/blue-velvet.html> [accessed 4 april 2005].

‘that the patriarchal family in its’ modern form is the natural basis of social and psychic organization.’

According to Dean, when Lacan referred to the “excess of paternal domination”, typical of the modern, nuclear family he was alluding to the ‘narcissistic, sadomasochistic, *imaginary* identification with the father’ which he believed was intrinsic to modern cultures and fascist movements. Lacan believed that the appeal made by traditional organizations regarding the decline of paternal authority actually helped to reinvigorate it.

Lacan states that : “Our experience has led us to designate the principal determinant of neurosis in the personality of the father, which is always deficient in some way, absent, humiliated, divided...It is this deficiency, that, in accordance, with our conception of the Oedipus complex, exhausts the instinctive élan as it perverts the dialectic of sublimation.”¹³

In the hospital scene in *Blue Velvet*, Mr Tom Beaumont has been hospitalised as he has suffered a seizure (captured in the opening scene). He is connected to an ‘oxygen-mask breathing device and his head is held perfectly still and ‘incapacitated’ and thus he is ‘emasculated’. Jeffrey is ushered in the room to see his father and he grasps his hand.

¹³ Dean, p.92

However Jeffrey and his father are unable to communicate as Beaumont's words are garbled and incomprehensible.¹⁴

Lacan tried to solve the problem and declared that in modern cultures, the paternal imago had to be distinguished from the neurotic father. In those cultures undergoing paternal decline, children had to identify with the "neurotic, overburdened, excessively authoritarian paternal person" rather than with a "symbolic" one, which he describes as "that in his (the parental person) comportment which can be objectified."

In Stevenson's novella all the characters are middle-aged bachelors who have no relationship with women except the servants. They are celibates whose major emotional contacts are with each other and Henry Jekyll. In fact the central narrator of the story, Gabriel John Utterson, is described to us by Showalter as 'a Jekyll manque'. 'Like many narrators in the late Victorian period, he is a lawyer and 'a spokesman for the Law of the Father and the social order'. 'His demeanor is muted and sober,' "scanty and embarrassed in discourse"; "undemonstrative" and "backward in sentiment", 'austere and self-denying'.

This symbolic father can thus function as an agent of sublimation to the extent that his manifest function is always "split" off him or "barred". This is because 'the father is the fundamental condition of normative identification, of knowledge, there is no way of knowing that his own authority is not natural, no way of knowing, on another level, that

¹⁴ Tim Dirks in *The Greatest Films - comprehensive analysis of classic US film*
<www.filmsite.org/blue.html>

he is the centre not just of sublimation but also of prohibition, and hence no way, to repeat Lacan's words yet of reviving "the aggressive ambivalence immanent" in the relation to the "primary object of identification." The imaginary father can only be known when "sublimated" and thus sublimation constitutes the instinct.

Lacan claimed much later, that "the function of psychic development" is to "resolve [the primordial discordance between ego and reality] by developing it." Thus, the subject must accept the 'alterity' of the other and must accept the fact that his desire for the other can never be satisfied.

'The symbolic is an entry into language effected by the "name of the father", which organizes, guides, and structures imaginary perceptions.'¹⁵

The phallus signifies the principle of sexual difference. It represents the capacity to name and thus to differentiate from and compensate for the loss of the mother. The 'introjection' of the father's incest obstruction enables the child to pass from primary identification with the mother to a secondary identification with the father.

The phallus thus represents a truth about the setting up of "sexual difference" that in Lacan's terms is always "veiled". Dean states: 'For Lacan, patriarchy no longer

¹⁵ Dean, p. 96

functioned as the foundation of truth but became instead an anchor of cultural fictions.’
The father is both genuine and a quack as he doesn’t know he is also always ‘l’autre’,¹⁶

In *Blue Velvet*, Dirks tells us that ‘Sandy asserts the definitive dichotomy in the film when she cannot distinguish whether Jeffrey is a “detective or a pervert”- He’s probably a combination of both ends of the spectrum:

Sandy: I don’t know if you’re a detective or a pervert.

Jeffrey: Well, that’s for me to know and you to find out.

In the scene after the dream, Jeffrey realizes that he has transgressed moral boundaries and that he possesses a “perverted” nature within himself. Dirks states that it is too much for him so he breaks down and cries. However, Jeffrey does grow from the experience.

For both Freud and Lacan, it is the fear of castration, symbolic of the father’s interdiction of the mother, that causes the boy to surrender his mother and abide by the law of the father. This facilitates the normal resolution to the Oedipus complex through which the sexual identity of the boy is identified. According to Lacan, if a boy has never passed through the developmental stage of sexual maturity because he has not symbolized castration, he will attach himself to the mother and would not identify with the father. If castration is never symbolized, this rejection would be lived through psychotic hallucinations.

¹⁶ Dean, p.97

After Dorothy finds Jeffrey in her closet, she takes on a patriarchal role as she threatens him with castration. She forces him to undress and look vulnerable. She is the master and dominates the situation while he is under her control. She has already cut his face with a blade. As he is 'sexually used' and 'physically threatened', he becomes an object under study.

Lacan used the paranoid Schreber's howl to describe the connection between the psychotic's suspended relationship to the symbolic. Lacan interpreted the howl as a "call for help" on one level but he also saw a deeper side to it as – that of 'an image of transparency between words and meaning, as an "assignification" that contained all possible signifiers'. In this sense the psychotic is what Lacan referred to as a *trou symbolique*, a symbolic hole that is full of signification.

Dirks describes Frank Booth as a 'memorable, deviant, fiendish evil sadist'. The first scene he appears in is a 'disturbing, cruel, sadomasochistic, kinky' one, where Frank starts cursing angrily at Dorothy. He is demanding and condescending to her as he establishes an abuser/victim relationship over her whilst she submits to his debasing and degenerate commands:

Dorothy: Hello Baby

Frank: Shut up. It's daddy you s—t-head. Where's my bourbon?

In *Blue Velvet*, the sado-masochistic scene with Frank and Dorothy, reaches its' climax, when Frank repeatedly demands that Dorothy look away from him as he denies her the sight of his 'dark' nature. The abusive scene is heightened once Frank puts on his helium gas to reach sexual climax as he exhibits 'infantile- regressive, animalistic/reproductive, and compulsive-addictive behaviour' as he debases Dorothy as both 'a prostitute, mother figure, or a copulatory partner in the natural world':

Frank: Mommy. Mommy .Mommy .Mommy

Dorothy: Mommy loves you.

Frank (as he begs and whines mercifully): Baby wants blue velvet.

He then seizes Dorothy and throws her to the floor as he splutters vulgar words.

Coughlin affirms that: 'Frank's obscenity-laden dialogue is one of the striking aspects of *Blue Velvet*. It is an example of excess in every sense of the term, not the least because it has generally defied any rational sense. Frank's repetitive use of the word "fuck" is gratuitous, yet it is not the case that Lynch's use of it is also warranted.'¹⁷

The psychotic, is considered by Lacan to be 'a "martyr" of the unconscious'. Even though he surrenders his psychic stability to the production of meanings, psychosis is unreadable. The lack of 'symbolic anchorage' for the hallucination renders it impossible to grasp at the same time that it allows it to be apparent and noticeable.

¹⁷ Paul Coughlin, *Blue Velvet: Postmodern Parody and the Subversion of Conservative Frameworks* in *Literature Film Quarterly* 2003, Vol.31, No.4, (US: Salisbury University Press)p. 307

Since psychosis is defined by the absence of the original signifier, the psychotic becomes a split in the symbolic order, a rift that designates the symbol as symbol and not as truth. Psychosis thus implies an identity that is never original but is the product of a symbolic order into which the psychotic has not accessed.

In *Blue Velvet*, Frank smears red lipstick all over his face and starts kissing Jeffrey passionately while the song 'In Dreams' is used as a soundtrack and as a metronome by which Frank humiliates Jeffrey sexually and violently. Kaleta suggests that Ben's song has instilled a secret fear in Frank. Kaleta thus asks: 'Is there in the lyrics' message of violent and sexual attraction between singer and listener another level of painful understanding now hideously awakened in Frank and Jeffrey?'

Dean states: 'The psychotic is thus a metaphor for what is impossible, unknowable, and yet most true about the self: what Lacan calls 'the real.' As Shoshana Felman argued, 'the Lacanian unconscious cannot be "discovered" under layers of repression.'¹⁸

The deviant- the psychotic, the criminal, the prostitute- represent that which cannot be known, forms a lack into the heart of knowledge. However no deviant can escape the law of language which is also the law of the father, even as she or he resists symbolization. However, for Lacan deviants, like Jack the Ripper do point to a place beyond culture which mocks our pretensions towards further knowledge and deceives in

¹⁸ quoted by Dean, p.118

particular those individuals who pay high risks on its' claims-fathers, scientists, professors.

For Lacan, then, knowledge is fated to be forever lacking, the desire for it urged by an 'eternal quest for an ever irretrievable other'.

Surrealists in the 1920s , like Sade's biographers portrayed Sade as both victim and 'idealist' as his name was made synonymous with truth. They used him as 'an emblem of the affirmative force of the libido' and of aristocratic defenders of the state and patriarchal family. They sought to liberate the potential and truth of human nature from the imprisonment of its' morality and traditions. Sade emerged as one of the major figures in the Surrealist circle, at once a 'prophet', a leader and sacrificial victim of modernity.

In Sade's world, nature is 'cruel' and 'indifferent', as the state abandons man to the law of the jungle where the guilty sacrifice the innocent and the strong dominate and oppress the weak. Sade reconstructed nature in the image of the father rather than that of the mother. The mother represents all the foolish and romantic illusions about the 'plenitude' of nature; she personifies the hypocrisy that covers the truth that nature is indifferent and even pushes for human suffering. " In Sade's eyes", Kolssowski claimed, "the image of the father symbolizes the realization of all the passions with which nature has invested man, an image to which Sade desperately aspired."¹⁹

¹⁹ quoted by Dean, p.175

According to Denzin, women in *Blue Velvet* are treated as sexual objects as they are 'the recipients of sexual and physical violence. Women are contained within one of two categories: respectable, middle-class marriage, or disrespectable, occupational and sexual categories.'

Berardinelli states that in *Blue Velvet*, Dorothy and Frank represent the 'film-noir refugees- the femme fatale and the terrifying killer.' Isabella Rossellini who plays Dorothy in the film, 'captures the full-breadth of Dorothy's complex personality- her vulnerability and degeneracy, her desperation and longing, her hatred of Frank and need for him.'

In one of the most controversial scenes in *Blue Velvet*, Isabella Rossellini is stumbling around, outside, bruised and completely naked. Most critics found this scene to be very degrading. Berardinelli states that the scene is not gratuitous or exploitative. Lynch included it for a specific reason. Its' ability to disturb is a testimony to its' power. By causing us to flinch, it displays its' effectiveness by depicting the level of despair to which Dorothy has descended. She has hit rock bottom.'

Klossowski argues that Sade maintained his moral boundaries even while he severely preached atheism. 'It is consequently the cruelty of God that necessitates man to become cruel as 'he is abandoned by a father who abuses and ravages his children 'to destroy their own creatures or be destroyed in return.' Sade thus subverted the Manichean

notion of good and evil by replacing it with a paradoxical one: an evil God or an “absent God.”

The libertine’s atheism is not a denial of god but an angry attempt to compel God to manifest himself. It is his love of God that motivates hatred. The libertine aims to provoke God by denying him, to make God manifest by rejecting his presence.

Sade’s fantasy no longer signifies as it is for the surrealists, a drive to liberation, a sort of will to pleasure, but symbolizes a drive to self-liquidation, a desire not to be guilty which painfully suggests the wrenching of moral conscience over and over again. ‘Sade’s revolt against God and against the human justice that conceived itself in his image was therefore destined to cleanse his soul.’

According to Blanchot: “ The pleasure Sade’s heroes find in degradation never lessens their self-possession, and abjection adds to their stature. Shame, remorse, a penchant for punishment, all such feelings are foreign to the them.”²⁰

Sade’s revolt was about self-fashioning. His dream of total omnipotence was only an inversion of his inner void, his inner emptiness, the mirror of a place where he alone existed in and for himself. Sade’s revolt signified the absolute denial of the world, ‘a metaphysical revolt masquerading as a political one.’

²⁰ quoted by Dean, p.189

Lacan states thus: "Sade is not close enough to his own evil to meet his fellow men there. A trait that he shares with many and notably with Freud." Dean states that it is Sade's incapability of living up to his dark side that sets off this rebellion as it is impossible to will evil and be evil at the same time : "For Sade we see the test of this...in his refusal of the death penalty, which history, if not logic, would suffice to show is one of the corollaries of charity."²¹

Desire is thus brought about through the renunciation of desire, to be the father one must surrender being the father. To fulfil one's desire, one must repress it; Sade's dreams of absolute mastery could be satisfied only when he surrendered to the law. Mastery, thus, is only its' own illusion, one lived and yet suspended. 'Sade can be master only to the extent that he is not one.'

From the surrealists through Klossowski and to a certain extent Lacan, 'the image of a neurotic father burdened by his own authority, tormented as well by his unfulfilled dreams and aspirations, an image fashioned after Sade, became the central metaphor for the production of culture.'²²

Jekyll in the end destroys not only himself but also Hyde as the two personalities are inseparably attached together. Jekyll is aware that he can eliminate Hyde at any time he wishes by taking away his own life too and this is made clear at the end of his confession:

²¹ quoted by Dean, p.191

²² Dean, p.196

‘But his love is wonderful! ...I, who sicken and freeze at the mere thought of him, when I recall the abjection and passion of this attachment, and when I know how he fears my power to cut him off by suicide, I find it in my heart to pity him.’

Thus Jekyll is forced to recognize that there is no simple choice between good and evil but that either both exist or neither.

CHAPTER 1.2

A great chocolate –coloured pall [of fog] lowered over Heaven... Utterson beheld a marvellous number of degrees and hues of twilight; for here it would be dark like the backend of evening; and there would be a glow of rich, lurid brown, like the light of some strange conflagration; and here, for a moment ... a haggard shaft of daylight would glance in between the swirling wreaths. The dismal quarter of Soho seen under these changing glimpses, with its muddy ways, and slatternly passengers, and its' lamps, which had never been extinguished or had been kindled afresh to combat this mournful reinvasion of darkness, seemed, in the lawyer's eyes, like a district of some city in a nightmare.

(Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, p.62)

With reference to this quote, Hurley comments that in the fin-de-siecle gothic novel, it is the entire metropolis of the city, not just its' slum neighbourhoods that were seen and described as an "awful slough", a "seething mass" and according to her 'an uncharted wasteland'. Hurley comments: ' The Gothic certainly does not scruple from identifying the urban slums as sites of abjection: as with the surreal Soho neighbourhood, "like a district of some city in a nightmare," described in the quote from *Jekyll and Hyde* above.'²⁴

In the biography 'Robert Louis Stevenson', James Pope Hennessy explains how the story of Jekyll and Hyde was inspired by a 'fine bogey tale' Stevenson was having one night. According to his wife Fanny Van der Grift Stevenson, he screamed so loudly and with such horror that she had to wake him up. Stevenson had dreamt the first transformation from Jekyll into Hyde including the potion made with white powder.

Hennessy explains that there was a time in his early youth in Edinburgh when he had been haunted by a series of dreams in which he was leading a dual life. These dreams

²⁴ Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body; Sexuality, Materialism, and degeneration at the fin de siecle* (Cambridge University Press; 1996) p.161

were as real to him as his day-life activities. In his dreams he worked in a surgery by day whilst by night he lived in one of the tall lands of the old town. He became so obsessed with the idea of the double life that he had to consult the doctor who gave him a narcotic, sedative drug to stop these dreams.

J.R. Hammond declares that Stevenson was always fascinated by man's double-being and 'those provinces of good and evil' that divide and unite man's dual nature. Stevenson was from a very young age obsessed with the double life of the notorious Scotsman William Brodie who was a respected Edinburgh businessman by day and an unscrupulous thief by night.

Herdman writes that 'In Jekyll and Hyde there is the powder and the licquor which positively smell of the chemist's shop. Had it been possible by any means to get rid of these, and by some mystic spell to accomplish the transformation, the story would have gained a safer foothold in the spectral world. Yet, on the other hand, any such device would have taken it out of the actual life of modern men, and its' hold on that was more important for its real purpose than the mere point of artistry.'²⁵

The difficulty that a late nineteenth-century writer like Stevenson must have encountered when it came to writing a tale about the supernatural double, according to Herdman was the lack of belief in any 'spiritual reality' outside the 'human psyche' that signalled the absence of an actual figure that could have inspired the psychological-spiritual tones he sought to shape the story with.

²⁵ John Herdman, *The double in the Nineteenth-century Fiction*, (London: The Macmillan Press, 1990) p.132

According to certain writers such as Henry James, the transformation from Jekyll into Hyde was 'too explicit and explanatory'. Some people criticized Jekyll's use of the powder as too materialistic. Even in Victorian times the revelation that a change of personality could be blamed on drugs did not appear far-fetched. Hennessy comments that Stevenson "conceived" the method by which one human could mentally, spiritually and physically transmute into 'another'. Hennessy explains that Stevenson could have been influenced by the dreadful changes he had witnessed in his friend Walter Ferrier who had become an alcoholic. However Hennessy says, this was not what fascinated the readers, but the idea of the 'total incarnation' of a good man's evil nature turned into a caliban figure.

According to Herdman, the structure of the tale consists of a factual, external narrative of the events, followed by the private confession of the central character. The main narrative breeds an atmosphere of detection, pursuit and 'an uncovering of strange events': "If he be Mr Hyde...I shall be Mr Seek". The lawyer, Utterson, and his kinsman Richard Enfield are two of a kind, who have nothing in common but are the best of friends and whose hearts are both set on their Sunday rambles together. The other prominent character in the story is Dr. Lanyon, a former friend of Jekyll's, who turned away from him as Jekyll had started to go 'wrong in the mind' and according to the same Lanyon, had started to succumb to 'such unscientific balderdash [as] would have estranged Damon and Pythias.' Herdman notes that in Dr Lanyon's statement, one can detect Stevenson's uneasy conscience of the very shady degree of the hero's 'science'.

Hyde is the inborn enemy of 'innocence and goodness' as his first victim is a child whilst his principal crime is the impulsive murder of Sir Danvers Carew, an old man whose looks are of 'such an innocent and old-worldly kindness of disposition, yet with something high too, as of a well-grounded self-content.'²⁶ Hyde's malevolence results specifically from a distinct opposition towards all that is good and benevolent.

In the story we find that Hyde causes revulsion in the eyes of all those that he meets-

all human beings, as we meet them are commingled out of good and evil ... Hyde, alone in the ranks of mankind, was pure evil.'

Even though Hyde is a projection of what Stevenson calls 'pure evil', Jekyll remains the same 'incongruous compound' as before. Jekyll has projected his inferior and second self as Hyde, his holistic balance is lost and faced with the burden of Hyde, he is vulnerable. Hyde, freed from Jekyll's weak and good qualities, can usurp over him. It is the separation and independence of Hyde, which allow it to take over and manipulate the personality of Jekyll.

'At that time my virtue slumbered, my evil, kept awake by ambition, was alert and swift to seize the occasion.'

Jekyll's dilemma consists of the fact that even though there is part of himself that wants to be Hyde, there is nothing in Hyde that wants to be Jekyll. According to Herdman, this is the 'conceptual' flaw in the whole idea: as Hyde is pure evil, why should he revert to Jekyll, even once? According to Herdman the motive lies in pure opportunism as he

²⁶ Herdman, p. 134

remembers of his creator 'as the mountain bandit remembers the cavern in which he conceals himself from pursuit'. Herdman persists that this is not a sufficient argument.

After denying himself the potion for two months, Jekyll finds himself sitting on a bench in the park on a beautiful winter's day, when a 'vainglorious thought' comes to him and he contemplates his behaviour favourably to other men. This short interlude dedicated to evil is what finally destroys the balance of his soul; as he soon finds himself transformed into Hyde.

When he is Hyde, he can only come out in the dark and as Jekyll he is constantly tormented by the horror of this reversion. As G.K. Chesterton highlights: 'The real stab of this story is not in the discovery that one man is two men; but in the discovery that the two men are one man.'²⁷ Hyde finds himself locked in a prison called Hyde where he has to resort to the role of a 'part instead of a person'; while Jekyll's opinion of Hyde is that of 'something not only hellish but inorganic'. Herdman comments that Stevenson is another fiction writer that lends his attestation to the teachings of Augustine, 'that evil is nothing, merely negativity, death, privation.'

²⁷ quoted by Herdman, p.137

Hammond comments on the fact that Jekyll finds it hard to include in his confession a full statement of his emotions and reactions and how he is drawn in this life of duplicity. This is the horrible torment of a man who is fully aware of his degeneration and consumed with remorse for his wrong-doings. He finds himself powerless to resist what he calls an 'insensate readiness to evil.'

According to Lacan when reality is always constituted through identification, reality itself becomes an illusion about reality, a projection of narcissistic desire onto another. Therefore even in Jekyll's case since the ego is not clearly separated from the id; as in autopunition, identification always involves misrecognition of reality which constitutes what is real, a repression of the truth about the self ('that it is inadequate, guilty, homosexual...') which fulfils its' narcissistic desire.

In the mirror stage, Lacan explains that the self is not, as Freud had argued, constituted by an increasing adaptation to reality through the ego's mediating, repressive function; as 'the self is constructed through a misrecognition of reality which is always repressed, a misrecognition of truth (the truth about the real fragmentation, helplessness, and lack that defines human identity), whose repression constitutes pleasure (the infant's jubilation before its' image).'²⁸

²⁸ Carolyn Dean, *The Self and Its' pleasures: Bataille, Lacan and the History of the Decentred subject*, (London; Cornell University press, 1992) p.51

Thus the ego in this case is always 'an illusion trapped within the mirrors of its' own making,' and according to Dean through the use of the term 'self-punishment paranoia', Lacan explained the collapse of the id and ego into an imaginary *moi* as the site of repression that is always pleasurable.

According to Hammond, the reader shares with Jekyll his slow awareness of the decline of his morality and his initial curiosity on assuming the persona of Hyde. When Jekyll-Hyde locks himself in the closet, the reader is made to share his fascinated terror and the deep inclination towards the life of depravity.

Stevenson had already dealt with the theme of evil before in his tales 'Markheim' and 'Thrawn Janet' in which both stories the devil appears as a person. The former involves a pointless murder by a man who is possessed by an inclination towards committing evil actions. Although it is quite a short tale, it is very intense and possesses a very cathartic element as towards the very end of the tale, the murderer is able to confess his crime and so give himself up to the Devil. It concerns the triumph of evil and how the idea of giving oneself up to it is reassuring.

Showalter states that in film, the Jekyll-Hyde story has become the dark-side film where a young, well-raised man meets a femme fatale who makes him realize that there is a dark, hidden side within himself which can make him perverse, violent and sadistic.

Showalter refers specifically to David Lynch's *Blue Velvet* and says that Hopper's character Frank is a psychopathic version of Spencer's Tracy sadistic Hyde.²⁹

Like Stevenson's dream of a 'bogey tale', Lynch's *Blue Velvet* is described by Graham Taylor as containing the 'stuff of nightmares'.³⁰ *Blue Velvet* is a journey into 'the rotting underbelly' of sleepy small town America'. The film's plot centres on Jeffrey Beaumont, a young man who lives in the suburbs and who ends up playing detective after he found a human ear in a field. Jeffrey is aided to unravel the mystery by Detective Williams' blond daughter, Sandy. She is not involved in the dark and evil side of Lumberton, the way Jeffrey is. Lynch uses her character in the film as a contrast to the violent and sadistic scenes, which involve Dorothy.

At the start of the film, the camera has panned from the rich, blue sky, past the brilliant white picket fences and crimson roses. Fire-engine truck driver stops to wave, children are crossing the street on their way to school. Life in Lumberton seems like one, big happy place to live in. The camera then focuses its' attention on a middle-aged man watering the garden. The water-hose is soon entangled into a branch as Mr Beaumont falls to the floor looking like a geriatric 'manneken-pis'. A dog rushes into the scene, wagging his tail. In reality, Mr Beaumont is having a heart attack. From there the camera pans down beneath the grass and shows us a repugnant underworld of darkness

²⁹ Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy*, (Bloomsbury Press, 1990) p.124

³⁰ British Magazine, *Hot dog*, December issue 2003

full of predatory black bugs making a horrendous squelching sound as they slaughter each other. This last scene in the opening sequence is Lynch's method of suggesting to us that the opening scenes of the film were too good to be true and that there is a black, dark side to Lumberton.

In his book *David Lynch*, Kaleta states that *Blue Velvet*'s world is structured to move the characters and audience from night to day. 'The feeling of reawakening from the night is reinforced by characters coming from the dark, where so many of the film's gruesome events transpire.' However Sandy's dream of peaceful, bright days full of love is also told to Jeffrey at night. Kaleta also suggests that what is interesting about Sandy's character in the film is that she comes out of darkness into the light in a stylistic inversion of Jeffrey's moves. Sandy offers her help to Jeffrey before he seeks for it. Jeffrey feels safe with her and after he hears about her dream he tells her 'You're a neat girl, Sandy.' He even feels he can talk about the most trivial things with her and he even tries to impress her by performing the animated 'chicken walk.'

On the other hand, Kaleta describes Dorothy as 'the creature of the night.' She works by night as a singer in the club. She wears a black wig over her equally dark, black hair. Dorothy falls in the category of the 'Femme Fatale.' Her sexual and moral feeding on Jeffrey point out the visual representations as she becomes almost vampiric. Jeffrey's meetings with Dorothy are always in the secrecy of the night and her relationship with

Jeffrey is better staged in muted tones and darkness. The walls of her apartment are the colour of bruised flesh while Sandy's room colour is a variation of whites and pinks.

Kaletka states that the film is full of dual realities, which permeate the film. There are shifts from light to darkness and from the silence of the woods to the sound of the roar of Frank's engine. Jeffrey goes from the known (the convertible ride with Sandy in the light of day) into the unknown (darkness of Deep river Apartments).

CHAPTER 2

‘That damned old business of the war in the members’ was the phrase used by Stevenson to describe *The Strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in a letter to his writer- friend, John Addington-Symonds.

Stevenson’s own character and imagination were invariably marked by a rebellious streak against a strict Calvinistic upbringing and the narrow morality of Victorian Scotland. The tale’s ambivalence lies in the fact that although the text clearly illustrates that evil is self-destructive , it also portrays how impossible it was for good to resist it. Dr Jekyll cannot resist becoming the ‘abominable’ Hyde, not because he is ‘bad’ but because he feels that respectability is too heavy a burden for him to carry. To give himself up to evil, however, would mean ‘to spring headlong into a sea of liberty.’³¹

After having read the novella, John Addington-Symonds wrote to Stevenson about it and like others before him he harshly criticised it: ‘The fact is that, viewed as an allegory, it touches one too closely.’ Symonds compares Stevenson’s ending of the story to that of Dostoevsky in *Crime and Punishment* , where the murderer, Raskolnikov converts to Christianity while he is in exile in Siberia: ‘How fine is that ending! Had you made your hero act thus, you would at least have saved the sense of

³¹ Jenni Calder, *RLS: A Life Study*, (Glasgow: Richard Drew, 1990) p.222

human dignity.’ For Symonds, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* was ‘indeed a dreadful book because of a certain moral callousness, a want of sympathy, a shutting out of hope.’³²

While Symonds could not tolerate exposing an evil outlook to the public, Stevenson felt the need to share with his readers the view that evil was most perilous when it disguised itself in the human form as in the case of Jekyll, a professional man who called for respect and honour but at the same time could not refrain from liberating his illicit desires.

According to Hammond the story is also a study of hypocrisy as Jekyll believes that the throwing off of moral control is a sort of liberation and he cannot tolerate the fact that certain behaviour is impermissible. Calder, on the other hand believes that Stevenson was striking at the hypocrisy of Victorian society that ‘forces’ Jekyll to repress his inclinations for what Calder calls ‘probably innocent pleasures’, and then having to free himself from his ethical responsibilities by having to resort to Devilish means.

Moretti in *Signs Taken for Wonder* declares that between the inventor-scientist and the monster he creates there is a dialectic relationship, which could be paralleled with the connection which Marx made between capital and wage-labour. As soon as the scientist gives life to his creation, he realizes that this creature is stronger than him and from which he cannot wrench himself free easily. This curse afflicts Jekyll: ‘to put your good

³² Nicholas Rance, *Introduction in 'The Strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'*, (Everyman's Library, 1992) p. x

heart at rest, I will tell you one thing: the moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr Hyde. 'However, it is Hyde who takes over his master's life and the fear aroused by him for Jekyll is the fear of one who knows he has produced 'his own gravediggers.'³³

'The strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' is about the male world of isolation and guilty privacy. According to Baldick it brings to the fore the theme of irresponsible secrecy of Romantic misdemeanour pervading the nineteenth-century tradition.³⁴

Baldick contrasts Stevenson's tale to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Both Scientists in the tale are derided by their creations: by appearing in the shape of their conditions in which they were brought forth as opposed to the ends in which they were conceived. Baldick comments that in these two tales both projects were started with the best of intentions. However they were internally paradoxical: *Frankenstein* tries to become the patron of the race by turning his back on it. Jekyll tries to abandon his shameful side by secret means. Jekyll starts to understand this logic when he ponders on his faults:

'

'Had I approached my discovery in a more noble spirit, had I risked the experiment while under the empire of generous or pious aspirations, all must have been otherwise and from these agonies of death and birth I had come forth an angel instead of a fiend.'

Punter suggests that it is repression that has led to the production of Hyde and therefore logically, any denial of Hyde's claims will lead to greater violence. Later in the novella, Jekyll's efforts to suppress his feelings are futile and Hyde's wrath bursts forth: 'my

³³ Franco Moretti, 'The dialectic of Fear' in *Signs Taken for Wonder*, (London: Verso, 1983) pp. 85,86

³⁴ Chris Baldick, *In Frankenstein's Shadow*,(Clarendon, 1987) p.144

devil had been long caged, he came out roaring.' For Stevenson once the beast is loose, the problem can only be resolved through destruction and hence, death. Jekyll's weakness comes through when he says that had his desires been of a different kind when he first took the potion, the second self would have been different. Punter declares that this could have been hardly possible since the idea of a sweet and light Hyde sounds too unrealistic.³⁵

Baldick like Moretti does not believe that purer aspirations would have barred the calamity. Baldick argues that this could not have been so since Jekyll's 'empire' under which he is reborn is that of 'the locked study and the scientific secret'. Hence, he is already moulded as Hyde before he takes the draught. Secrecy and shame stimulate one another and this leads Jekyll to behave in a guilty manner with his friends. Stevenson's tale juxtaposed to that of Frankenstein is recognized less by the hideous façade of Hyde alone, or his brutal pleasures than by the approach which Hyde uses to bring forth the incongruity between Jekyll's aspiration and the conditions of its' implementation. Baldick asserts that Jekyll's fruitless attempt to recreate himself leads him to what Baldick sees as an inevitable subjection to his own creation. Baldick specifies that Jekyll's destruction of himself and Hyde together and at the same time is 'more clearly cathartic' than Mary Shelley's conclusive end of the monster and his creator. He states that Jekyll foresees the culmination of this process, and according to him '...he translates his sense of horror into Frankensteinian terms' in his 'full statement of the case':

³⁵ David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: a history of gothic fictions from 1765 to the present day*, (Longman, 1996), p. 5

‘He had now seen the full deformity of that creature that shared with him some of the phenomenon of consciousness, and was co-heir with him to death: and...he thought of Hyde, for all his energy of his life, as of something not only hellish but inorganic. This was the shocking thing; that the slime of the pit seemed to utter cries and voices; that the amorphous dust gesticulated and sinned; that what was dead, and had no shape, should usurp the offices of life.’

Baldick expounds on the sense of usurpation, in this case of the human-being who becomes dominated and oppressed by his own disastrous simulation of the inert, a theme that pervades the nineteenth-century gothic myth and which is given a disturbing propinquity which gets literally under the skin: Jekyll cannot run away from Hyde because he is literally part of him and, therefore the uprising of the monster is of a kind that can annihilate any traces left of Jekyll’s already weakened identity. Baldick adds that what looks like a simple adaptation of Calvinistic dualism goes further beyond that point as Jekyll is made to attach an unusual afterthought saying ‘that man is not truly one but two’:

“I say two because the state of my own knowledge does not pass beyond that point. Others will follow, others will outstrip me on the same lines; and I hazard the guess that man will be ultimately known for a mere polity of multifarious, incongruous and independent denizens.”

Stevenson envisaged like Dickens did before him that the human identity is made up of a collection of diverse fragments and that in reality the ‘individual’ is incessantly divisible.

Baldick concludes his argument on Stevenson's tale by saying that Jekyll's experiment becomes an attempt to escape the world of responsibilities ,which only reappears in more humiliating forms the more one tries to evade it.

Showalter hints that Stevenson was a man who led a sexual double life. She also writes that in an essay on dreams Stevenson described a passionate drive of his to find a strong body to act as a medium for a strong sense of double being. Showalter says that Stevenson refers also to the double life he led as a student in Edinburgh. According to her, the life of the day and that of the night signifies the double life of all writers; the division between reality and imagination. Showalter affirms that even Stevenson's biographers have hinted that the writer's double life went beyond frequent visits to brothels and night time bohemia. Some have as she argues '...rattled such skeletons in Stevenson's closet' as to accuse him of " homosexuality, impotence, a passionate feeling for his stepson, submission to a wilful and predatory wife."³⁶

However Stevenson's sexuality is not so much an issue as much as the theme of male hysteria in Stevenson's horror story. Showalter argues that the story is a case study not only of Henry Jekyll but also the men in the community around him. Showalter affirms that it is a tale about the communities of men. The characters are all middle- aged bachelors who have no contact with women except the servants in their households and whose major companionships are with each other and Henry Jekyll.

³⁶ Showalter pp.106,107

What seems to be particularly striking in the story for Hammond other than Jekyll's transformation into Hyde is the relationship between Utterson and Richard Enfield who wander through the busy quarters of London on one of their Sunday strolls. According to Hammond this is no ordinary relationship:

'It was reported by those who encountered them in their Sunday walks , that they said nothing , looked singularly dull , and would hail with obvious relief the appearance of a friend.'

For Hammond this could be considered a relationship between two affiliated spirits and a silent companionship of two friends who do not need to converse to find sufficient pleasure in the proximity of one another. Hammond is of the opinion that a relationship of this kind is rare and has its' own satisfactions.

Utterson's repression and fantasy lead him to delve deeper into the mystery of Hyde and he voices his commitment to unfold the secret behind it when he utters: "If he be Mr Hyde...I shall be Mr Seek".

In Stephens Heath's words, "the organising image for this narrative is the breaking down of doors, learning the secret behind them." This is precisely what Utterson's narrative consists of ; breaking through locked doors into private cabinets and closets to attempt to open up the mystery of another man (Hyde) , not by comprehension or trust, but by force.³⁷ Showalter quotes Utterson who beseeches Jekyll: "make a clean breast of

³⁷ Showalter, p.110

this [to me] in confidence,” while the other slights him by replying “...it isn’t what you fancy; it is not so bad as that.” Hence, Jekyll cannot even trust his friends who must therefore spy on him to infiltrate his mind and unfurl his secret. In the first chapter “The Story of the Door”, Stevenson constantly draws the reader’s attention to the fact that Hyde has a key to Jekyll’s house. In correlation to this, Utterson also violently forces down Jekyll’s private closet with an axe into what Jekyll calls “the very fortress of identity.

One of the secret objects found behind these doors is that Jekyll has a looking-glass. This object of discovery is a shock to both Utterson and Jekyll’s butler Poole. “This glass has seen some queer doings,” says Poole in the text. For Showalter the mirror is a proof of Jekyll’s effeminate self-admiration but it is also the sense of the mask and the other which has made the mirror such a fixated symbol in homosexual literature. It is at that moment that Utterson comes to fully recognize in his reflection on the mirror, his repressed desires which neither axe nor cane can smash down or shatter.

Utterson, Lanyon and Enfield at the outset suspect that Jekyll is keeping Hyde and they believe he has willed his expensive estate to this brutish, young man who moves from Jekyll’s house and back whenever he pleases, and who now owns expensive pictures and offerings given to him by Jekyll and who cashes large checks signed by Jekyll. When Hyde is suspected of crime Jekyll implores Utterson to take care of Him: “I do sincerely take a great, a very great interest in that young man.”

Jekyll's fascination with Hyde reflected the fin-de-siecle bourgeois eroticization of working-class men as ideal gay lovers. Weeks emphasises that :

'the moving across the class barrier on the one hand the search for 'rough trade' , and on the other the reconciling effect of sex across the lines, was an important and recurring theme in the homosexual world.'

Critics suggest that when Hyde is approached by the 'aged' Sir Danvers Carew, late at night and strikes him to death, Hyde is either striking at the father figure, or implying a male prostitute assaulting a client at the docks.

In his early draft of the story, Stevenson was more open with regards to the sexual activities that led Jekyll to a double life. Jekyll was 'from an early age...the slave of certain appetites.' These corruptions were viewed as "criminal in the sight of the law and abhorrent in themselves. They cut me off from the sympathy of those whom I otherwise respected." Even if these passages were omitted from the published version, Stevenson tried to maintain the sense of repugnance and abomination that surrounded Hyde. The negative metaphors that envelop Hyde are those of contagion, death, disease and crime. They remind one of the hysterical homophobia that permeated the late nineteenth- century. Even though most of the characters in the tale find something *unspeakable* about Hyde that was utterly revolting and repugnant, Jekyll expounds that when he first takes the potion, he feels "younger, lighter, happier in body." Hyde is described to us as monkey-looking, pale and misshapen, reminiscent of the syphilis disease that infiltrated the nineteenth-century medical texts. Utterson also questions

whether Jekyll may have been afflicted with an illness from Hyde, “one of those maladies that both torture and deform the sufferer” for which he is seeking the drug as a cure. Pondering on Jekyll’s veiled crime, Utterson dreads that it is ‘the cancer of some concealed disgrace; punishment coming, *pede claudo*.’ Showalter states that this latin phrase is linked to “pederasty”.

Showalter also affirms that the male homosexual body is also detected in the text in a series of images indicative of anal contact. Hyde travels in ‘chocolate-brown fog’ while the streets he passes through are “muddy” and “dark”. Jekyll’s house is the strongest example of the male body for the reason that it has two entrances.

There is however, a narrative viewpoint that is missing in the text and that is of Hyde himself. We never learn what he felt and what he really went through as Jekyll’s evil side. Showalter suggests that Hyde’s side of the story would create an outrage and ‘a sense of panic’ as it would unleash a most perverse desire.

According to Nicholas Rance, Freud might not have read the tale but he has no doubt it would have interested him. In his ‘Full Statement of the case’ Jekyll remarks that many men would have given free reign to the evil nature within men but Jekyll repressed his evil nature in fear and with shame.

“It was thus rather the exacting nature of my aspirations, than any particular degradation in my faults that made me what I was...’

In *Civilization and its' discontents*, Freud explains that what we refer to as 'ethics' is a form of 'therapeutic attempt – as an endeavour to achieve, by means of a command of the super-ego, something which has so far not been achieved by means of any other cultural activities.' Freud complains that the cultural super-ego imposes the same ethical demands as those of the super-ego of the individual:

'... the id cannot be controlled beyond certain limits. If more is demanded of a man, a revolt will be produced in him or a neurosis, or he will be made unhappy.'³⁸

Jekyll tries to handle the problem by acting in accordance with the moral and ethical standards and separating off his id in the form of Hyde. However the potions soon fail him and according to Rance, Jekyll 'half-reneges' that '...man is not truly one, but truly two', in favour of the idea of an identity or lack of one that is quite close to Freud's own concept of the id.

Rance also comments on the fact that Hyde is described as 'sub-human' and his growth is stunted. He is 'pale and dwarfish; he gave an impression of deformity, without any nameable malformation...'. There is an explanation, however, to his dwarfishness. The evil nature that resides within Jekyll is much less developed than the respectable one. 'And hence, as I think, it came about that Edward Hyde was so much smaller, slighter and younger than Henry Jekyll.'

³⁸ Rance, p. xi, xii

In the 1880s Hyde-like creatures were observed walking on the streets of London. Rance comments that Stevenson's story has linked Hyde with the proletariat of London and has given him a residence in Soho. Soho was also well -known for its' slums just like the East end. Utterson visits Soho together with a policeman:

As the cab drew up before the address indicated, the fog lifted a little and showed him a dingy street, a gin palace, a low French eating-house, many ragged children huddled in doorways, and many women of different nationalities passing out, key in hand, to have a morning glass; and the next moment the fog settled down again upon that part, as brown as umber, and cut him off from his blackguardly surroundings. This was the home of Henry Jekyll's favourite; of a man who was heir to a quarter of a million sterling.'

According to Gareth Stedman Jones, the theory of urban deterioration provided for the middle-class a mentality, which they could recognize and within which they could voice their anxieties regarding urban existence.³⁹ They could therefore come to grips with the fact that poverty was not just a problem of isolated individuals but also that of growing masses of the population. Even though they were aware that life in the city was a constant battle against poverty, the jargon borrowed from Darwin exculpated the middle-class of any responsibility. There were crowds applauding in the pulpits and elsewhere in Victorian England as regards the policy that individuals suffering from poverty and miseries had only themselves to blame as opposed to the theory that recognized the problem of mass poverty.

³⁹ Rance, p.xv

Rance comments that the notion of Hyde and Jekyll being divorced so that 'the unjust might go his way, delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his upright twin; and the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path, doing the good things in which he found pleasure, and no longer exposed to disgrace and penitence by the hands of this extraneous evil,' might be considered as too extravagant . There was another calamity that struck Victorian England at the time and this regarded housing. This was forcing the 'respectable' working classes to throw in their lot with the poor or 'residuum'.

Rance contrasts this with Lanyon's comments in relation to Hyde on 'the odd, subjective disturbance caused by his neighbourhood.' Hyde's neighbourhood seemed to influence his intransigence and this is the force that infects the residuum already in decline. The residuum does not attempt to divorce itself from the more respectable sector as its' ultimate aim is to corrupt it. Hence, if the residuum was to unite forces with the respectable working class, benefactors such as Jekyll would be next to be overruled.

According to Moretti, the monster in the Victorian Gothic becomes an object of an instinctive and elemental hatred ; men need this hatred to offset the force set free by the monster. Moretti also agrees with Rance and declares that difference in rank is engraved more deeply: in the skin, the shape and the voice in Hyde's case. The monster also makes us realize that in an unequal society, even though he proves as a threat and in a way this makes the bourgeoisie acknowledge the fact that all beings ought to be equal,

inequality does exist because his outer shell makes it so. The monster is disfigured because he is a representation of how things actually were in the first decades of the industrial revolution. The monster incarnates the dialectic of alienation which Marx discussed: 'the more his product is shaped, the more misshapen the worker; the more civilized his object, the more powerless the worker; the more intelligent the work, the duller the worker and the more he becomes a slave of nature...it is true that labour produces...palaces, but hovels for the worker...It produces intelligence, but it produces idiocy and cretinism for the worker.'⁴⁰

Moretti continues affirming that capitalist production is a two-sided process that engages affirmation and negation as it 'forms by deforming, civilizes by barbarising, enriches by impoverishing'. The monster is also described by negation as man is well-proportioned while the monster is not; man is beautiful, the monster is ugly; man is good and the monster is evil. Hyde has no autonomous existence and he can never be really free or have a future. Just like Mary Shelley's monster, he lives on the other side of the coin, which is Jekyll. Just like in Frankenstein, the two extremes are the scientist and the monster. The novel rests on an elementary scheme; that of splitting just like in society where we have the division of two classes. Moretti declares that Jekyll and Hyde are consigned the status of mere accidents; theirs is only 'a strange case'. Therefore this is representative of the fact that capitalism has no future and that it is now all over. Jekyll and Hyde both die leaving their estate to Utterson. This signifies for Moretti that the creation of Hyde i.e. of the proletariat, is a disinterested piece of work.

⁴⁰ Moretti, p.87

Hurley also comments on the way the Victorian middle-class subject viewed the poor, who were regarded as ‘dangerous, yet intriguing, agents of physical and moral contamination.’ These ‘social explorers’ looked down on the working-class person as ‘an exotic native- exhibiting wild and primitive behaviour. The Gothic doesn’t falter to urban slum areas as sites of abjection’. Hurley emphasises this by quoting directly from *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* when Stevenson describes the Soho neighbourhood at night “like a district of some city in a nightmare.”

In his essay ‘The Uncanny’ Freud describes this as that feeling which ‘arouses dread and creeping horror’ related to but yet dissimilar to that which is ‘fearful’. It is not however a response to something that is completely strange or unknown but something that takes us back to the familiar; “something long known to us”. Freud calls the uncanny simultaneously *heimlich* and *unheimlich*. Freud states that the object of uncanniness is “something familiar and old-established in the mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression”. Hence, the object becomes *Heimlich* at the level of the unconscious and *unheimlich* to the conscious mind. ⁴¹

David Pole in ‘Disgust and Other forms of aversion’, declares that disgusting things must fulfil two criteria in order to disgust. The first one is liminality of which he says: ‘Nothing is more fearfully disturbing than experiences that seem to call in doubt the

⁴¹ Hurley, pp.. 39, 40

whole scheme of known distinctions by which we live". This however cannot entirely suffice to explain the ambivalence that compounds repugnance and desire, repulsion and fascination. 'What is lacking is some element of self-identification...that makes the horrifying thing also a part of me'.⁴²

In Stevenson's tale Jekyll's researches bring him "steadily nearer to the truth...that man is not truly one, but truly two," and his draught allows him to concretise the "truth" of split subjectivity through doubling. This division in subjectivity provides the most basic and accessible interpretation of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* as it 'stages' an altercation between good and evil. The human being entrapped within this Manichean drama is divided in two, and he is situated within the field of meaningfulness. Meaning is extracted from the 'constant' and 'steady' tension between terms fixed in opposite relation to one another. Hurley however states that to be more than simply split but become fractured and dissolved is to become emptied of a meaningful self-identity.

Kristeva calls this a repulsive yet fascinating possibility of a loss of self-identity as abjection. The subject facing abjection struggles with two possibilities: that of investing in the construct of a stable identity; and that attracted to the chaos and turbulence associated with pre-Oedipality.⁴³

"Mr. Hyde was pale and dwarfish, he gave an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation...[all] these were points against him, but not all of these

⁴² quoted by Hurley, p. 41

⁴³ quoted by Hurley, p. 42

together could explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing and fear with which Utterson regarded him.”

Pole writes that as disgust is contagious, it ‘...contaminates its subject as well.’ Both Sartre and Kristeva agree with this view, as the subject that becomes affected by the disgusting object is also however drawn into its’ field of Thing-ness. According to Hurley, the feeling of nausea felt by the text’s characters is a strong suggestion of how the reader should respond to characterly nausea.

As regards the sexuality of Hyde, Hurley argues that a “fully human” sexuality entails the subject to be either one thing or another, male or female. To appertain to a mix of both sexes and therefore to be a Thing is to be removed from the ‘traditional field of sexual difference’ and therefore to become an It, rather than a him or her.

William Veeder states that “despite all his ‘masculine’ traits of preternatural strength and animal agility, Hyde is prey to what the nineteenth century associated primarily with women.” Hyde is also heard ‘weeping like a woman’. Hyde’s presence comes alive through Jekyll in the shape of his hand, his voice, and his attitude and behaviour.⁴⁴

The sense of nausea inspired by Hyde can take on different sexual connotations; a horror of femininity of which Hyde’s body bears traces; anxiety about masculine heterosexuality; or the conflict regarding “the love that dare not speak its’ name,” the

⁴⁴ quoted by Showalter, p.114

unspeakable possibility of male homosexuality elevated by the mysterious confidence between Jekyll and Hyde.

CHAPTER 3

It's like saying that once you've discovered there are heroin addicts in the world and they're murdering people to get money, can you be happy? It's a tricky question. Real ignorance is bliss. That's what *Blue Velvet* is about."- David Lynch.

It is a strange world, isn't it? -Sandy, *Blue Velvet*, 1986

In 'Blue Velvet', Lynch creates a world of his own. Each scene is presented to us quite vividly and the shots are crafted as graphically as possible. However Lynch does not comment- 'he only presents'. According to him, the world is a combination of contradictions. Life is both good and bad, as all those who live it.⁴⁵

In Kaleta's opinion, the film opens to the image of Lynch's pastoral America. The opening sequence signifies for Kaleta, both aurally and visually, nostalgia. 'The opening is a collective romantic rendering of innocence lost by America's move from its' small-town, agricultural childhood to industrial, sterile, urban maturity.' It reminds the audience of their childhood- 'unsophisticated, sentimental, even a bit tacky.'

Jameson affirms that in postmodern culture we have not quit our preoccupations regarding history and the past; "...indeed, at the very moment in which we complain, as here, of the eclipse of Historicity, we also universally diagnose contemporary culture as

⁴⁵ Kenneth C. Kaleta, *Lynch, David: An Elusive Vision*, (Twayne Publishers, 1992), p. 91

irredeemably historicist, in the bad sense of an omnipresent and indiscriminate appetite for dead styles and fashions; indeed, for all the styles and fashions of a dead past.”⁴⁶

Coughlin disagrees with Jameson on this and according to him “It does not follow that merely by recalling a narrative representational framework one is requesting a return to the values with which those representations are often associated.” For him, Lynch recalls this particular kind of representation to examine it from within; “to exhibit how it breaks down when infected by another logic, a logic that refuses to conform to the limitations that these representations desire.”⁴⁷

For Norman K. Denzin these films make the past the present as they portray a certain terror in nostalgia for the past. ‘The signifiers of the past (i.e. 1950s and 1960s rock and roll music) are signs of destruction. In Lyotard’s sense, these films wage a war on nostalgia.

Denzin believes that films like *Blue Velvet* expose and bring forth the margins of the social such as dope fiends and sexual perverts . These are then placed in small towns like Lumberton next to the middle- and lower-class Americans who lead protected and ‘respectable lives.’ Denzin affirms: ‘These late-postmodern films locate violence and the simulacrum, not just in Disneyland, Mtv or in television commercials. They locate

⁴⁶ Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, (Verso:1991), p. 286

⁴⁷ Coughlin, p.306

these phenomena within the everyday and give to the simulacrum a violent turn that it never had before.’⁴⁸

Baudrillard in *Simulations* states: ‘Simulation is master and nostalgia, the phantasmal parodic rehabilitation of all lost referentials, alone remain.’⁴⁹

Kaleta points out that the film is also about sound. It revolves around the discovery of an ear and the story is presented to us from within the ear as the camera leads us into a universe of sound. Lynch states that the genesis of the film was the music as “ It was hearing Bobby Vinton’s song that got things rolling”. Kaleta expresses that ‘Strains of music, industrial and mechanical sounds, comic and graphic expletives are so integral to *Blue Velvet* that mute moments become just as loud, just as heard.’

The ear in the film is loaded with metaphoric meaning as it symbolizes the auditory elements in the film as an abstraction; the ear ‘is a concrete object for the camera.’ It serves as a reminder of Vincent Van Gogh’s severed ear and it also suggests Jeffrey’s dark pursuit of its’ meaning as it implies his artistic creation and invention within the film, recalling in reality Lynch’s artistic creation and invention of the film. It signifies the metaphor for new illusions within the film’s visual framework.

⁴⁸ Norman K. Denzin, ‘Blue Velvet: Postmodern Contradictions’, in Charles Jencks’ *The Postmodern Reader*, (St. Martin’s Press, 1992) p.226

⁴⁹ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchman (New York: Columbia University, 1983) p. 72

The combinatory changes of auditory and visual elements in the film create new meaning within the film. The nostalgic scenes and the music of the opening sequence are overturned by the film's first words. The calm and quiet scenery of Lumberton is cut by the display of a billboard and a radio jingle followed by an invitation to "get out your chain saws". Kaleta suggests that without a narrative context to accompany it, the invitation is quite frightening.

The shot of Jeffrey walking in the Lumberton wood, is exceedingly tense as he walks towards his discovery of the severed ear. Lynch also tricks the audience by intermeshing and mixing sight and soundtrack messages. Jeffrey is dressed in a dark suit and looks sombre and serious. The audience does not hear directly the sound of woods but the sounds of wood on a radio, and so Lynch baffles his audience as one does not know whether they are playing within or without Jeffrey's hearing. As Jeffrey continues walking the sounds of felling trees on the radio continue. Kaleta states that: 'The sounds gain a charge not as background to the narrative but as sounds on film. The sounds are larger than the life of the narrative.'

Blue Velvet's earliest shots commence to mount the film's visual force, with the brightly coloured flowers in front of a white picket fence under the blue skies and the menacing black world under the grass. These images were shot in Cinemascope ratio 2.35 to 1, making them larger than life.

This 'glorious' image of the garden and picket fence under the bright sun followed by the dark underworld of the scattering predatory bugs under the grass is described as 'epic' by Kaleta, as it is suggestive of Eisenstein's cinema pattern as 'an artistic compilation of individual parts in *Film Form*. Lynch's photographic fragments of nature merge in montage.'

The opening sequence with the shot of the fireman atop his truck to that of the group of schoolchildren with their lunchbox in their hand, who in disconsolation have to put aside their 'summer fun' and go back to school, induces the nostalgia for childhood adventures even though the narrative lead is discontinued.

The hospital scene is, described by Kaleta as 'sterile, static and institutional.' The scene is loaded with thwarted messages as father and son are unable to communicate comprehensibly, as they grasp each other's hands. Jeffrey never manages to say what he wants at the sickbed and equally crucial to that, he does not hear what he needs to hear.

The film begins with Summer turning to Autumn, as bloom turns into 'decay'. However, Lynch invites the audience to think of fall as filled with new possible things. The film ends in Spring, 'the season for new life and order', as the season of promise. The passing of the school year must part the characters from the security of their childhood. Lynch also leads the audience together with the characters to take a journey of discovery into the glaring world of reality. The film also concludes with duality, as

Jeffrey is safer despite being wiser and more serious in the daylight of a fine spring's day.

Through the ear, Jeffrey enters a dark world . Despite being warned and advised not to pursue the mystery of the ear by Detective Williams, and not to go by Lincoln avenue by aunt Barbara, Jeffrey devises a plan with Sandy to disguise himself as an exterminator and go and search Dorothy's apartment.

Kaleta suggests that Jeffrey has played the part of an exterminator to enter the treacherous world of the dark femme fatale, Dorothy. In this context his role is symbolical as Dorothy signifies the complete object of study under the microscope.

The film has already shown us the predatory dark underworld of the bugs squirming and scampering under the surface. Here the throbbing of the insects in the film reverberates. The concluding scene of the mechanical robin gorging on the huge black bug is foreshadowed.⁵⁰

After Jeffrey takes the spare key in Dorothy's kitchen he goes on a 'decoy date' with Sandy to the Slow Club where he sees Dorothy perform 'Blue Velvet' for the first time. While Dorothy is still performing Jeffrey and Sandy leave the club. Jeffrey then sneaks into the deep river apartment. However his need to urinate is what eventually propels

⁵⁰ Kaleta, p.101

him into trouble. As he flushes the toilet, he drowns the sounds of 'Sandy's warning horn blast.' Dorothy enters the apartment and Jeffrey has to find a hiding place.

As Jeffrey observes and watches Dorothy change her clothes, he revels in her silent ritual until the sound of the ringing phone disrupts the mood. Jeffrey listens to the 'cryptic' conversation and is also in rapt by the power of his 'espionage'.

The camera then crosscuts between Dorothy in the room and Jeffrey who takes the position of the voyeur in the closet. Jeffrey is shot in close-up and Dorothy is shot from a distance. Jeffrey is afraid of looking and caught being looked at. However he is compelled to watch. The scene is filled with built-up tension. The tension and intensity of the scene reaches its' climax when Dorothy hears noises from the closet and Jeffrey's dominating power over her privacy is shattered. 'She is suddenly master over her-and his- fate.'

She holds him at knife-point after she makes him come out of the closet, and she orders him to stand and undress. Now the audience is placed in the role of the voyeur as Jeffrey who had assaulted Dorothy's loneliness is the prey as he is threatened with castration.

Dorothy kneels before him and points the knife at his crotch ordering him not to look at her or to touch her. She completely humiliates him as she arouses him and forces him to appear naked and vulnerable, while she takes on a male gaze and sexuality, connected

with violence. Dorothy is in power and Jeffrey is under her control. He is both sexually used and physically threatened by the knife and thus he becomes ‘the object to be studied.’

This sadomasochistic inversion and the duality of excitement and humiliation continue to gyrate in the scene. Jeffrey’s fear and horror at being the victim of such defenceless humiliation is also part of the aggressor’s thrill.

Frank’s sadomasochistic torment is the most disturbing element in the film. He immediately demands his bourbon and he orders Dorothy to partake in acts of perversity and shame. The scene obtains a distasteful crudeness with the recurrence of Oedipal references- Frank who uses profane maternal references , then Jeffrey who watches through the slats of the closet doors the ‘tirade’ of ‘mommy’ and ‘daddy’. Kaleta states that the scene is ‘embedded in repulsive violence.’

According to Coughlin, Frank walks in the apartment like the father of a long –running tv sitcom who returns home after a day at the office and repeatedly declares “ Daddy’s coming home” in a crude pun about his(lack of) ability to reach sexual climax. However Frank’s attitude and demeanor is different from that of those of TV fathers.⁵¹

Hutcheon suggests that postmodern agenda works by using the conventional frameworks in order to subvert them. Thus Frank and Dorothy ‘engage’ in a ‘sick’ sado-

⁵¹ Coughlin, p. 307

masochistic tirade witnessed by Jeffrey. Frank beats and degrades Dorothy 'in a subversion of the stable fatherly role associated with Tv patriarchs who are always the rational backbones of their homes.'

The sadomasochistic ritual reaches its' climax when Frank puts on a mask and starts to inhale gas. The method of drug use in the scene loads it with medico-sexual innuendo. In this sexual meeting, Frank 'debases' Dorothy as a whore and as a mother and the gown of blue velvet she wears is a symbol of their relationship. According to Kaleta, 'this image will colour forever the old Vinton classic.' He places a fragment of the robe into his mouth to intensify his sexual indulgence.

Kaleta notes that the voyeurism in this sequence 'expands in concentric circles.' First we watch Jeffrey who spies on Dorothy, then Jeffrey watches Frank who in turn watches Dorothy. Kaleta notices that unlike Jeffrey and Dorothy, Frank never appears without his clothing- he wears a leather jacket and the facemask. Frank also believes that he is the only one committing the sadomasochistic and contemptible acts. However both Dorothy and the audience know that Jeffrey is behind the closet doors watching, while the audience and Jeffrey can also see Frank. 'This spins an unending circle of aggressor and victim, watcher and watched relationships.'

After Frank leaves, Jeffrey comes out of the closet to comfort Dorothy and takes on the role of protector. The auditory and visual contexts of the scene move from 'tender

lovemaking' to 'brutal sex.' Kaleta declares that 'violence forced upon violence is seen as a sadomasochistic choice.'

In one scene we have Jeffrey's mother and his Aunt Barbara sitting in front of the television. Jeffrey leaves his lighted room at the top of the staircase for the absolute dark of the outside. He is beginning his night and he seeks his adventure. The Tv scene is also sinister and foreboding as the audience watches Jeffrey's mother and his aunt watch the tv's character ascending the stairs in a film whilst the audience watches Jeffrey descend the staircase of his own house. Lynch is including another level of illusion within his virtual world as the audience watches actors watching actors. The tv's character ascending the stairs into the unknown is reverberated in the plot later on as we see Jeffrey climbing up the stairs into the dark Deep river Apartments.

Jeffrey walks to the police detective Williams' home to check on the investigation. On the way he passes a man walking his dog. The man is wearing glasses that are too black for him to see on this dark night. Jeffrey walks by disinterested. However in the sequence set in daylight Jeffrey is impressed by one of the store clerk's ability to be able to guess the number of Jeffrey's fingers even though he is blind. Kaleta thus points out that at night, Jeffrey is solely interested in the ear and the truth.

After Detective Williams cautions Jeffrey to stay away from the case, Jeffrey walks out from the Williams' home into the darkness. Lynch once again highlights an important factor through the sound and visual images. Jeffrey's promise to Williams has

disappeared into the darkness. Suddenly out of the darkness we hear a woman's voice asking if it was him "who found the ear". The audience recognizes Sandy who emerges from the shadows wearing a swirling, pink dress.

Jeffrey keeps hearing about Dorothy before he sees her. Sandy warns him that his willingness to get to the bottom of the case will only lead him to perilous possibilities. Jeffrey has also been admonished by his Aunt Barbara not to go near Lincoln Avenue (where Dorothy resides). Detective Williams has also warned him not to seek information about the ear and Sandy told him that Dorothy has an infamous reputation. Hence, there seems to be a pattern where one sees or hears about the characters before they actually appear.

Jeffrey's and Sandy's walk together from Lincoln Avenue recalls that of George Bailey and Mary in Capra's *It's a wonderful life*. The young lovers walk home discussing their dreams. They look shy as they walk with their hands in their pockets. He tries to impress her by performing the animated 'chicken walk.' They seem to speak the same things at the same time and are able to finish each other's sentences. He looks impulsive and eager to obtain her approval.

In an obvious parallel to the scene of Capra's film, Jeffrey and Sandy walk by a deserted and abandoned house. However in the Capra classic, the dreamhouse was going to be retrieved for George and Mary's future together. However Sandy and Jeffrey do not plan a life together in this house. Lynch here gives Jeffrey 'the

inappropriate anecdote' to the narrative but within the film's context. Jeffrey reveals that he knew a childhood classmate who once lived in that house who had the world's largest tongue. This image is tied to the grotesque.

Sandy is *Blue Velvet's* 'angel in training'; the all-forever American sweetheart. She dreams the American dream of ever-lasting goodness, prosperity and peace. She is Jeffrey's confidante and listens with full concentration and attention to his stories. She is the only one who listens to his version of his feats with Dorothy. Without Sandy, Jeffrey would have no 'conduit' between the film's stories. She serves as his bridge from dark to light, evil to good and illusion to reality. Even more crucial to this, however is the fact that Sandy becomes Jeffrey's ear as she is willing to participate in his obsessive quest for the truth.

At the end of the film, Sandy accepts Jeffrey's dual world. As he looks out of the darkness, he sees her as the 'creature of light.'

After Jeffrey leaves Dorothy's apartment on his first night in Lincoln Avenue, the audience sees him descending the stairs into the dark night. The film then cuts to Jeffrey's grotesque dream where there is the howling whisper of the ear. Pauline Kael states that listening to the sounds of the ear is similar as to listening to the sounds of the conch shell. One can hear the immortal power of the sea.⁵²

⁵² Kaleta, p.118

Kaleta suggests that it is the sound of the interior world, deep and magnanimous like the ocean. Jeffrey is seen drowning in 'hissing' sounds. Jeffrey becomes enveloped by the sound of the ear as he sinks deeper and deeper into darkness. Kaleta suggests that he sinks even deeper than the deep river of Dorothy's address.

The dream continues. Lynch cuts to Frank's face as he punches loudly Dorothy in the face. Then there is Dorothy's face as she pathetically begs to be hit and asks for physical abuse. Then the camera closes up on her red lips which look enormous, passionate yet also disgusting because of their liquid redness. The flame extinguishes abruptly and Jeffrey wakes up.

John Nesbit believes that the flame in the dream 'is a recurring image.' It is the small light that attempts to shine through darkness or darkness that 'continually surrounds' beacons of light. Either way, the implication is that even though Lumberton has a few good and innocent people living in it, when you look closer there is a dark side. Even innocent robins may have a dark side to them.⁵³

Sandy's dream stands in contrast to that of Jeffrey's. In her dream, the world was dark and there were no robins. The robins are a metaphor of love. Suddenly the robins appear out of nowhere. The organ music in the background is heard loudly. The dream is then

⁵³ John Nesbit, 'Looking Deeper into Small-Town Life' in [culturedose.net](http://www.toxicuniverse.com) <<http://www.toxicuniverse.com>> [accessed 4 april 2005]

filled with the “blinding Light of Love”. The world awakens from its’ death and decay to a world of peace and love.

The bright light coming from the church in the background serves ‘as a testament to the human spirit.’ The characters do not fade into the darkness as Jeffrey and Sandy give each other the strength to move on. The shot ends in an unusual manner as it ‘stresses promise’ through its’ colour and light.

Coughlin believes that Sandy and Jeffrey are ‘archetypes’ and that the scene is obvious in a literal sense; Jeffrey is the all-American boy and Sandy is the all-American girl. These “obvious” motifs obey the representational frameworks of the television sitcoms. Yet Lynch throws these characters into the world of Frank, Dorothy and the Yellow man. This subversion serves to undermine the narrative representational frameworks, which traditionally seek to reason every problematic detail encountered and resolve all the dilemmas in the final scene.’

The meeting between Jeffrey and Frank reaches an inevitable climax in the plot. This happens one night as Jeffrey is coming out of Dorothy’s apartment. Frank is instinctively jealous and he tries to intimidate Jeffrey. Dorothy introduces him as the kid ‘from the neighbourhood’. Frank and his obscure squad tease and torture Jeffrey until they finally assault him.

The term 'neighbour' has a dual meaning in the film's narrative context. Firstly, Lumberton is a small town where everyone is a neighbour. Aunt Barbara and Sandy present us with ample remarks that Lincoln is situated geographically in Jeffrey's neighbourhood. Frank places the term on an analogous level when he labels Jeffrey's sexual behaviour with Dorothy as behaving 'like a good neighbour.'

Rod Armstrong comments that when Frank says to Jeffrey "you're like me", it could be Lynch speaking to the audience. We're always curious to know more about the world even if the truth is ugly or hurtful. 'We cannot look away.' With its' stimulating and 'always-surprising surrealism', *Blue Velvet* serves as a reminder that our dreams and wishes that belong to our subconscious are dangerous and enticing; 'its' surface reality that is mundane.'⁵⁴

According to Baudrillard 'Surrealism's secret already was that the most banal reality could become surreal, but only in certain privileged moments that nevertheless are still connected with art and the imaginary. Today it is quotidian reality in its entirety-political, social, historical, and economic-that from now on incorporates the simulatory dimension of hyperrealism.'⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Rod Armstrong, 'Review of Blue Velvet' in reel.com <<http://www.reel.com/movie>>

⁵⁵ Baudrillard, p. 147

There is a discussion about beer in which Jeffrey acknowledges his preference for Heineken which disgusts Frank. Frank's devotion to Pabst Blue ribbon detaches him widely from Jeffrey both 'socially' and 'culturally'.

In the brothel, Ben starts to lip-sync Roy Orbison's song 'In dreams'. The scene contains elements of the grotesque as Ben uses a workman's flashlight as a microphone. He sings with melodramatic moves to Frank. Kaleta suggests that these homosexual innuendos seem to excite Frank. Even though Frank calls Ben 'suave', the suggestion that they are alike disturbs Frank and he stops the song.

He then takes his gang together with Jeffrey and Dorothy on their screech car ride. Later he puts on his mask to gain a sexual urge while he gladly highlights that Jeffrey is just like him. Frank then starts degrading and humiliating Dorothy. When Jeffrey tries to stop him, he punches him and has him dragged out of the car.

Frank smudges red lipstick all over his mouth and forces kisses all over Jeffrey's face as part of a 'sadistic tirade'. Frank orders Roy Orbison's song to be played again and lip-syncs the lines to Jeffrey whilst severely punching him. Frank continues beating Jeffrey until he is senseless. The car moves away with a screech of the tires to the rhythm of the beating. Jeffrey is left lying unconscious in a field.

Jameson comments that in the film, evil is depicted as ‘ more distasteful than it is fearful, more disgusting than threatening: here evil has become an image.’ The simulated replay of the fifties has become a simulacrum in its’ own right.⁵⁶

Coughlin argues that Frank is the only character in the film to use obscenity . Frank not only is the sole character in the film who swears but ‘who does so with the rapacious conviction of a child who realizes s/he is breaking the rules, but does so in spite of them.’ Lynch ridicules these rules of representations through Frank who indulgently breaks them in a manner that is utterly ‘irredeemable’ and twisted.

Coughlin also notes that in the penultimate sequence when Frank walks in Dorothy’s apartment searching for Jeffrey, he shoots a buzzing and malfunctioning television set . He does this as a denotation of what he has been doing all along- ‘destroying television.’ Frank is Lynch’s right-hand man in his war against these conventional frameworks, which ‘implicitly declare’ that perversity, sado-masochism, and psychotic behaviour do not even exist.

After he cries himself out, Jeffrey walks into the kitchen where he finds Aunt Barbara who shocked and in awe inquires after his visible cuts and bruises. Jeffrey replies, “Aunt Barbara, I love you but you’re going to get it.” Kaleta suggests that violence has crept into Jeffrey’s home, his family and his daytime.

⁵⁶ Jameson, p. 295

When Sandy and Jeffrey return from the prom still being chased by Sandy's boyfriend, Mike, they find Dorothy naked with her arms spread on Jeffrey's lawn. Dorothy is constantly portrayed as the pathetic victim of physical violence. Her nudity does not suggest sexuality but a medical victim. The human body in this context signifies 'a live cadaver' ready for 'dissection.'

Jeffrey's secret in reality is not about having spread his seed and about having orgasms, but it is about the possibility of human corruption. In his hands there lies the power to kill or to create. Jeffrey's problem does not regard sexual climax; but about settling the score with his human conscience. Now that he has acknowledged his dark side, he can never go back to being the Beaumont boy again. He has to move forward with the truth and knowledge he has come to possess from the ear.

After Dorothy is taken to hospital in an ambulance, Jeffrey goes to her apartment and there find a gruesome scene of murderers and victims, with gunshot holes and hard bloody wounds, 'one-eared Don' is sitting down whilst 'the yellow man' looks like a display prop as a standing dead man. It looks like one gruesome and ghastly art installation.

Frank has bugged all the police calls and Jeffrey tricks him by letting him think he is in the bedroom. When Frank forces himself on Jeffrey in the closet, Jeffrey shoots him in the face, destroying 'the monster' that always saw him and Jeffrey as being alike.

Jeffrey is thus destroying that part of himself and is therefore shattering the mirror. Jeffrey can walk away from the darkness of Lincoln avenue towards the light of Lumberton.

The film's conclusion portrays a robin-filled spring. Kaleta points out that even though it was Sandy's dream, it was Jeffrey's epiphany. The shot of the mechanical robin with the dangling bug in its' beak is suggestive of the beautiful and the ugly. The dual image is both attractive and disgusting at the same time. The shot also demands an 'input' from the viewer that goes 'beyond the replication of reality.

Dorothy and her little boy are brought back together and in the final scene they are sitting on a bench. The sound of Dorothy's version of 'Blue Velvet' can be heard in the background. As Dorothy hugs her son, she looks up at the sky and tears well her eyes. This is the concluding shot: ambiguous and dual again. Dorothy looks morose and yet happy as 'blue velvet' for her signifies the entanglement of joy and pain.

Baudrillard declares 'The old slogan "truth is stranger than fiction", that still corresponded to the surrealist phase of this estheticization of life, is obsolete. There is no more fiction than life could possibly confront, even victoriously- it is reality itself that disappears utterly in the game of reality- radical disenchantment, the cool and cybernetic phase following the hot stage of fantasy.'⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Baudrillard, p. 148

CONCLUSION

I am a fictitious article and have long known it. I am read by journalists, by my fellow-novelists, and by boys.' –Robert Louis Stevenson.

In *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, J.R. Hammond argues that Jekyll is inevitably drawn more and more into a life of duplicity and is unable to confess in his account the state of his emotions and reactions as he is doing this. He feels tormented by his awareness of his moral decline and feels devastated and guilty for his wrongdoings, yet he is powerless to resist this inner force of evil. Kenneth C. Kaleta in 'Lynch' says the same thing of Jeffrey. The ear Jeffrey has found in the woods, later on comes to symbolise all that Jeffrey refuses to hear and follow.

Hammond states that the reader shares with Jekyll his feeling of fascinated terror and his curiosity when he transforms himself into Hyde. Jeffrey, like Hyde, also gives in to these feelings... 'of fascinated terror, his deeper and deeper enmeshment in a life of unbridled depravity.' When Kyle McLachlan who played Jeffrey in the film, was interviewed by *The Guardian* he had this to say on Jeffrey's journey to the underworld 'I think people watching recognise that Jeffrey's is one of those journeys: a true one. It's embarrassing and-harder words than that-it's debilitating and exposing'. 'I was fascinated by Jeffrey. As human beings, we don't necessarily want to go on his journey

but we're fascinated by the idea of it and what would happen and what it might feel like.'⁵⁸

James Wall in the 'Christian century' calls 'Blue Velvet' the best film of 1986 because of the sensitive way it handles the theme of evil 'as an ugly reality in life.' The film according to Wall conveys clearly St Paul's point that all of God's creatures are inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless and ruthless (Romans, 1:29-30). Wall, however declares that he cannot recommend the film for just anyone to watch as it contains scenes of brutality and violent sex that are realistic and ugly. Lynch's film realistically depicts 'the unrepresentable' and succeeds in conveying its' message regarding ultimate human values.⁵⁹

Jung sees very clearly the importance for our mental sanity to accept the sinner within oneself. He declares that we should not reprimand ourselves that to love the sinner within ourselves is equal to making an accord with the devil. 'Love makes a man better, hate makes him worse- even when that man is oneself.' 'This line of thinking is analogous with to the teachings of the Catholic theology of the Christian church: the sinner must believe that it is never too late to repent and be blessed with God's mercy.'⁶⁰ Herdman states that even after mercy from God has been obtained, it is a particularly harmful 'form of pride' to be unable to forgive oneself. However this unfortunately is 'the case with our divided heroes of dualistic fiction.'

⁵⁸ Brian Logan, 'A Touch of Evil' in *The Guardian*, <<http://film.guardian.co.uk/features/feature pages>>

⁵⁹ quoted by Denzin in *The Postmodern Reader*, p.227

⁶⁰ quoted by Herdman, p. 159

As regards Stevenson, Karl Miller states thus: 'Duality can itself be called a fictitious article, and yet Stevenson's own duality seldom seems blankly inauthentic. It expressed and compromised the 'feverish desire for consideration' ascribed by him to his childhood, a repudiation of the father he loved and resembled, a dual nationality, pride in a masterful foreign wife, Markheim's evil genius, Jekyll's prediction that the human condition would one day be recognized as a 'mere polity of multifarious, incongruous and independent denizens'. It was a figment of his imagination. It was literary, stylish, fabulous. But it was more than that. This too was Stevenson. At the same time, the case may have been less strange than has been supposed. His experiences as a son, and his marriage, may have been more like those of 'every thinking creature' than has been supposed by thinking creatures with books and articles to write.'⁶¹

In *Blue Velvet*'s final scene we find out that life for Jeffrey and Sandy who are now together is a contented and happy one. Lynch portrays an idyllic scene where the two families enjoy Sunday afternoon together. The puffy, artificial, mechanical robin at the end with the worm hanging from its' beak implies that even though life looks happy and blissful, evil is still lurking beneath. For Janet Preston:

'All the bright sunlight now flooding the protagonist's new world, the complacency signalled by the unity of the lovers and the families, the promise of salvation heralded by the robin's appearance, do not dispel the knowledge that the far more powerful images have evoked: evil does hide in the human soul; depravity is a condition of life in this world; and the irrational lurks within the ordinary.'⁶²

⁶¹ Miller, p. 215

⁶² Coughlin, p. 309

'Duality is departure and return. It is theft and restitution. It is megalomania and magnanimity. It is weakness, illness, and illusion, and it is the advantages they confer. It is divided and diffusive, hostile and hospitable. It is bisexuality and dual nationality. It courts and contemplates uncertainty, vacancy, doubt, dizziness, and arrest. It is behaviour and capacity of an author, and it is the theory which explains him.'⁶³

⁶³ Miller, p.416

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