

Dracula notes

Dracula may represent where society has got to- are humans attracted to danger/evil? Dracula gets in touch with human's dark side. Similar physical relations between danger thrill and sex thrill. There is an attractive aspect of danger therefore. Maybe a comment on promiscuity- if you're promiscuous, you'll end up as an immoral shell (a vampire)

STRUCTURE

A very logical novel written in letter formation

Changes in perspective means that the reader is unsettled- not prepared for the changes.

Dracula journals- are they all 100% truthful? Or have they been changed/manipulated in case someone reads them?

It is possible that the characters write in journal formation to let stuff out and see it as an entirely private thing (to start with anyway)

Harker's journal becomes increasingly dark- he records things that can't be spoken about

Harker is using shorthand- a sense of new coming in- a new technique

Harker's account appears reliable because it starts off for work- very methodical.

Mystery/disconcerting intro to the book. There is a slow build up in JH's diary at the start which creates tension.

Mina's journal- everything is recorded in the book. It's realistic and authentic.

Seward's diary uses shorter sentences. He doesn't mix his professional and social life so his professional account are very concise.

Structurally, we have all these different accounts of things, and the reader is trying to draw links between them all even though it is very confusing. It makes us on edge as we have a lack of control.

The use of dates puts things into perspective, but the dates always change and sometimes overlap. We're confused and disorientated.

There's no map- doesn't know where the castle really is which is unnerving. 'I was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of the castle Dracula'.

Maps are knowledge, security and safety. A lack of maps makes it the unknown which is insecure.

Dracula seems to be 'full on' gothic from the start.

Use of animals- animals have the 6th sense- use of dogs howling foreshadowing the darkness to come.

Humans civilised themselves out of being instinctive. Society divides us from our natural, instinctive selves.

Descriptions of the peasants- judgemental. Very much 'us and them' feeling. Attitudes to women are questionable- 'clumsy about the waist'. At this point he has drifted from a work journal to more of a recording of his thoughts. Peasants exemplify the cultural differences between west and east.

Men's attitudes to women

Very detailed observations of the 3 female vampires. This extract (pg 44) may be to express Harker's sexual desire. Poetic language- 'teeth like pearls' 'Silvery musical laugh'. His descriptions are different to what we have previously heard. Is this detail a comment of Jonathan? Sense of desire and fear at the same time?

The gothic deals with things that can't be overly stated- this side of his sexuality- the fear of harm makes the sex more exciting.

But in chapter 4, he calls them '4 awful women' and talks about Mina a lot more.

Chapter 19- why do the men withhold information from Mina?

The assumption that she doesn't have the emotional capacity to deal with it all

The fear of Mina being seduced/ unthinkingly preventing her from doing it because she gives into temptation more easily.

Is Stoker complicit with these men, or is he going out of his way to show how men make these assumptions?

Threats to Masculinity- Dracula- 'the strength of 20 men'

Nature

The storm brings the arrival of Dracula to England. Elements of the storm foreshadow him- power, fear, darkness and evil, danger, control of animals.

'The whole aspect of nature at once became convulsed'

'The lately glassy sea was like a roaring and devouring monster'

'White crested waves beat madly'

Personification of nature

The sublime- nature as a force- scary and beautiful

The danger of nature on humans

'White, wet clouds, which swept by in a ghostly fashion'- gothic description of mist

Events in nature often mark/signify a moment in the plot.

Vulnerability of humans against nature- 'the sea, running mountains high, threw skywards with each wave mighty masses of white foam'

Threats

Dracula is a threat because he is able to abandon physical limits.

'Strength of 20 men'- threat to masculinity

Unnatural and has an advantage over humans

Threat to Dracula is God (crucifix, holy wafer)

Women

Mina is an example of a new woman. 'I shall be able to be useful to Jonathan' 'What lady journalists do'- perhaps she is ambitious- trying to find a voice? Or is she only using her voice in mediation to help her husband?

Approved/unapproved femininity- Lucy is not good and deserves what she got. Sleepwalking may be an addiction to Dracula as she can't help herself? Is being manipulated. Alternatively,