

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: University of Hull
Unit of Assessment: D29: English Language and Literature
Title of case study: Bram Stoker, <i>Dracula</i> and the Gothic in Victorian Theatrical Culture
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Bram Stoker (1847-1912), celebrated as author of <i>Dracula</i> (1897), was also business manager at Henry Irving's Royal Lyceum Theatre, London (1878-1902). Dr Wynne's innovative research on Stoker's life and writings establishes his importance as a drama critic and the impact of the theatre on his fiction. <i>Dracula's</i> melodramatic and visual dimensions may now be viewed in the context of a Victorian theatrical culture immersed in the Gothic. Wynne's landmark work on Stoker and <i>Dracula</i> has influenced school teachers and students by changing their approaches to teaching and learning and has engaged the attention of regional museums and literary societies. Disseminated worldwide through conferences and symposia, organised in Hull and Whitby, and in national and international radio, television and newspapers, Wynne's innovative perspectives are energising debates on Stoker in the twenty-first century.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Dr Wynne's research and publications focus on the Gothic, from her doctoral work on the colonial Gothic on Bram Stoker and Conan Doyle undertaken at the University of Oxford (1996-9) and as Lecturer (2000-2012) and Senior Lecturer (2012-present) at the University of Hull. Wynne published <i>The Colonial Conan Doyle: British Imperialism, Irish Nationalism, and the Gothic</i> (2002). Subsequent research focused on Stoker. Wynne published on the performance of mesmerism on stage in the Victorian period ("Mesmeric Exorcism, Idolatrous Beliefs and Bloody Rituals: Mesmerism, Catholicism and Second Sight in Bram Stoker's Fiction." <i>Victorian Review</i> 26.1 (2000): 43-63) and produced a co-edited collection of essays, <i>Victorian Literary Mesmerism</i> (Rodopi, 2006). This attention to the performance of occult rituals on stage led to Wynne's current interest in Stoker's place in the theatre, first his role as critic and then as business manager, and crucially how Victorian theatre impacted on his fiction. In 2003 Wynne was approached by the Oscar-winning Ferndale Films as consultant on their documentary <i>Dracula's Bram Stoker</i>, with a particular focus on Stoker's theatrical relationships. In 2009 Wynne published a scholarly edition of a little-known Stoker story, <i>The Watter's Mou'</i>, and an equally neglected Doyle story, <i>The Parasite</i>. Academic research for this edition on the two authors' parallel lives was published as an essay ('Arthur Conan Doyle and Bram Stoker: Biographical and Literary Convergences') in <i>Canadian Holmes</i>, the magazine of the Bootmakers of Toronto: The Sherlock Holmes Society of Canada. Wynne's essay won 'The Derrick Murdoch Memorial Award', for the best article published in the magazine for 2011 (http://www.torontobootmakers.com/types-of-awards/). Wynne revealed the Gothic connections between these writers' fictions.</p> <p>Pioneering publications by Wynne on Stoker's theatrical reviews established Stoker within a Victorian theatrical context. Her work displays original ways of reading Stoker's writings through a dramatic lens. Wynne's two-volume critical edition (supported by a Society for Theatre Research award), <i>Bram Stoker and the Stage: Reviews, Reminiscences, Essays and Fiction</i> (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012) gathered together Stoker's extensive theatrical reviews from the <i>Dublin Evening Mail</i> between 1871 and 1876 (vol. 1) and Stoker's theatrical journalism, memoirs and fiction of the stage (vol. 2), revealing new insights into theatre life from the 1870s to 1911. Crucially, Wynne's discovery and presentation of Stoker's hitherto neglected and unknown drama reviews, is transforming Stoker scholarship. The <i>Times Literary Supplement</i> review of <i>Bram Stoker and the Stage</i> by theatre specialist Tracy C. Davis on 23 January 2013 was the magazine's leading review article and even inspired the magazine's jacket image of Henry Irving. http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article1199974.ece. <i>Bram Stoker and the Stage</i> was also reviewed by the foremost Stoker scholar, Carol Senf, who noted in her review published in <i>English Literature in Transition</i> that the 'The project is the result of a great deal of archival research as well as Wynne's effort to identify some of the early unsigned reviews of Stoker's work, and Wynne's generous acknowledgements recognize the libraries and institutions who assisted her' (October 2013).</p> <p><i>Bram Stoker and the Stage</i> was followed by Wynne's monograph on Stoker entitled <i>Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage</i> (supported by a British Academy Small Research</p>

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Grant). Wynne focuses on how the plays produced at the Lyceum theatre influenced Stoker's writing and demonstrates how melodrama, the leading theatrical mode throughout the nineteenth century, with its emphasis on spectacular and sensational scenes and intense feeling, was reproduced in *Dracula* with its visually dramatic scenes of terror. Wynne's book also establishes the relationship between the novel and *Macbeth*, which Irving performed at the Lyceum theatre in 1888-89, just as Stoker began research on his famous novel.

Through further examining Stoker's 'mummy' novel, *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903), Wynne makes a landmark connection between the rituals performed over the bodies of the undead (mummies and vampires) to the practices of Victorian stage magic where, similar to Stoker's fictions, bodies were often dismembered or disappeared. *Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage* also explores Stoker's friendship with Victorian magicians and illusionists.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

(i) Authored books:

Bram Stoker, Dracula and the Victorian Gothic Stage (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013). ISBN: 978-1137298980

(ii) Critical edition: 2 volumes:

Ed., *Bram Stoker and the Stage: Reviews, Reminiscences, Essays and Fiction*, 2 vols. (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012). ISBN: 978-1848931428

(iii) Critical Edition:

Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Parasite* and Bram Stoker's *The Watter's Mou'*, edited and introduction by Catherine Wynne (Kansas City: Valancourt, 2009). ISBN: 978-1934555569

Journal article:

(iv) "Bram Stoker, Geneviève Ward and *The Lady of the Shroud*: Gothic Weddings and Performing Vampires." *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920* 49.3 (2006): 251-71.

Book Chapter:

(v) "Ellen Terry, Bram Stoker and the Lyceum's Vampires." *Ellen Terry, Spheres of Influence*. Ed. Katharine Cockin (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), 17-32. ISBN: 978-1848931121

Co-edited Collection (with Martin Willis)

(vi) *Victorian Literary Mesmerism*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006. ISBN: 978-9042020085

4. Details of the impact

The original research findings from Wynne's work on Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, the Gothic and Victorian theatrical culture have had a diverse range of interconnected impacts with local, regional and international reach in the second-level educational sector, the heritage industry and literary tourism.

Educational development: At the Bram Stoker Birthday Symposium (hosted by Wynne) on 8 November 2012, Wynne's 45-minute presentation on the influence of the stage on Stoker's Gothic fictions changed the way school teachers and pupils thought about Stoker's writings. A teacher described how Wynne's lecture would influence her lesson planning and delivery. One pupil noted that she 'learned more about the adaptation of novels to the stage as melodramas and will use it in my exams'. Wynne's presentation also enabled the audience to think about how melodrama has evolved in soap operas such as *Emmerdale* and *Coronation Street*. (See Sources 1).

Wynne's volumes on Stoker's theatrical writings impacted on a literary reading public when *Bram Stoker and the Stage* became the leading review article in the *Times Literary Supplement* on 23 January 2013 (see unpinning research). (See Sources 2)

Heritage and Literary Tourism: In April 2012, Wynne organised the largest international conference to date on Bram Stoker with 90 delegates drawn from academia and the general public. This Bram Stoker Centenary Conference (supported by the British Academy) took place at the University of Hull and at Sneaton Castle in Whitby. Wynne's own research findings look anew at how Whitby is presented in *Dracula*, by demonstrating how Stoker's descriptions of light and colour over Whitby Abbey are derived from his close attention to the use of stage lighting at the Lyceum Theatre. This aspect of Wynne's research has drawn the attention of Whitby's Literary and Philosophical Society (<http://www.whitbymuseum.org.uk>) and their Chair, David Pybus, who, as a

result of the 2012 Centenary Conference is now collaborating with Wynne on the Second Bram Stoker Birthday Symposium in Whitby on 8 November 2013. The Stoker family (Dacre Stoker, Jenne Stoker and Robin McCaw) were guests at the 2012 Centenary Conference and also run the Bram Stoker Estate website (<http://www.bramstokerestate.com/Home-of-Bram-Stoker-Estate-Gothic-Dracula-Official-website-Bram-Stoker-Estate.html>). They describe the impact of the 2012 Bram Stoker Centenary Conference had on them (See Sources 3). Wynne's research and work during the conference further made connections between Whitby and Hull. She invited the eminent Egyptologist and BBC presenter on Egypt, Professor Joann Fletcher (University of York) to deliver a conference keynote paper. Fletcher made connections between the mummy in Hull's Hands on History Museum, which had originally been in a private house in Whitby in the 1890s, and Stoker's mummy novel *The Jewel of Seven Stars*. During the 2012 conference Wynne's photograph with this Egyptian mummy in Hands on History Museum appeared alongside an interview in the *Yorkshire Post* on 12 April 2012. The photograph and article was one-third of a broadside (See Sources 4). Wynne was also interviewed on BBC Radio Humberside with Dacre Stoker on 12 April.

Contribution to public debate: By hosting the conference in both Hull and Whitby, Wynne underpinned the Stoker connection between the two places, prompting the *Guardian* newspaper to put Whitby-Hull on the map as dual Stoker locations. (Sources 5). The *Times Higher Education Supplement* reported Professor Clive Bloom's opening conference keynote which called on delegates to return to an earlier Gothic and to resist the cult of the teen vampire romance. The article also reported Wynne's comment that the conference looked back from *Dracula* to earlier Gothic and forward from Stoker. (See Sources 6)

As a direct result of this conference organisation, the BBC producer Conor McKay commissioned Wynne to deliver the first essay in the highly prestigious BBC Radio 3 series of *The Essay* dedicated to Bram Stoker in the week of the centenary of his death in April 2012. Other contributors to BBC's *The Essay* on Bram Stoker included the renowned Irish writer Colm Toibín, Sir Christopher Frayling and Roger Luckhurst. In this first *Essay* broadcast on 16 April 2012, Wynne took Stoker to centre stage to examine him within the theatrical climate which inspired his greatest fiction, *Dracula*. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01g4xt1> (See sources 7).

Wynne's longstanding research on the Gothic brought two iconic writers together: Stoker and Conan Doyle. Her research on these writers has been distributed internationally and has received the recognition of the Bootmakers of Toronto: The Sherlock Holmes Society of Canada for an essay on Stoker and Doyle, published in their society journal in 2011 (see underpinning research above). The Bootmakers of Toronto take their name from Doyle's most famous Gothic detective novel, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, with its Canadian associations. In this story, the Canadian heir to the Baskerville estate in Devonshire, has one of his boots stolen, as the novel's villain needs an item belonging to Sir Henry so the deadly hound will pick up his scent. Established in 1972, the Bootmakers of Toronto is one of the foremost global Sherlock Holmes societies, with hundreds of members, devoted to a mixture of 'scholarship and whimsy'. Each month 25-40 members, Canadian and international fans, meet in the Toronto Reference Library. *Canadian Holmes*, the Society's magazine, was established in 1973, and features a mixture of popular and scholarly articles. Wynne's article was, committee Chair Donald Zaldin noted, 'unanimously chosen by the committee' who described it as a 'very fine article about the two most enduring literary icons of the 19th century and their respective creators.' (See Sources 8)

As a result of Wynne's long-standing research on Stoker and her research presentation to the Bram Stoker Society, Dublin in 2002, Wynne was commissioned by Ferndale Films as academic consultant on a TV documentary on Stoker in 2003. *Dracula's Bram Stoker* was directed by Sinéad O'Brien with whom Wynne co-wrote the voice-over. Ferndale is a double Oscar-winning production company (*My Left Foot*, 1990). *Dracula's Bram Stoker* was narrated by the actor John Hurt and featured interviews with Christopher Lee, Sir Christopher Frayling and the director Neil Jordan. The documentary has been broadcast by RTE (National TV in Ireland, equivalent of BBC 1) and regularly repeated on SkyArts 2 (November 2008; July 2012) and currently advertised on SkyArts2 for 24 October 2013, 31 October and 3 November 2013. It is also being shown as part of the Bram Stoker Festival in Dublin on 26-28 October 2013. <http://www.bramstokerfestival.com/draculas-bram-stoker/> with viewings of the documentary in Dublin Castle on 26 October. (Sources 9)

Wynne's paper on Stoker and melodrama at the University of Hertfordshire's Bram Stoker Centenary Symposium on 20-21 April 2012 at Keats' House, Hampstead, was described as

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'compelling' by Sinclair McKay in the *Telegraph* newspaper 23 April 2012: 'whatever you may think of such academic conferences, there's something curiously compelling, about - for instance - being pointed to the links between late nineteenth century stage melodrama and the juicy jeopardy that Stoker invented for his heroes.' <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/9220788/Bram-Stoker-is-Undead.html> (Sources 10)

Longevity Wynne inaugurated the first ever Bram Stoker Birthday Symposium and Birthday Lecture on 8 November 2012 in Hull. Participants included the public and local schools. Wynne also presented her research on Stoker and the theatre at this conference alongside other leading Stoker scholars such as William Hughes and Andrew Smith. Following on from this success, Wynne has organized the Second Bram Stoker Birthday Symposium in Whitby on 8 November 2013 at Whitby Museum where she is working with the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society to raise awareness about Stoker in Whitby. Her paper on Stoker, Oscar Wilde and Egyptomania, examines the influence of stage magic in both writers' literature and thus adding another iconic late-Victorian writer to her repertoire of research. Sir Christopher Frayling delivered the Second Bram Stoker Birthday Lecture, 'Mr Stoker's Holiday in Whitby.' Wynne is further cultivating the cultural and historical connections between Hull and Egypt. In September 2013 she hosted an international conference, 'Visions of Egypt', at Hull's History Centre and at the University of Hull. Keynote speakers included Professor Joann Fletcher and Professor Roger Luckhurst.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Results of Questionnaire based on Wynne's paper on Stoker and melodrama at the first Bram Stoker Birthday Symposium. Respondents noted how Wynne's paper made them think differently about Stoker 'especially his theatrical input' and were inspired to see a play (melodrama or adaptation). The paper also had an impact on the planning and delivery of school coursework.
2. *Times Literary Supplement*: Front page and lead review article of **Bram Stoker and the Stage (2012)** by Tracy C. Davis <http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article1199974.ece>
3. Comments from the Stoker family on the **Bram Stoker Centenary Conference (2012)**: 'were more than pleased with the 2012 Bram Stoker Centenary Conference that you put on in Hull. Quite a lot of new material on Bram Stoker has become available in the last year, owing in part to the challenge put forth at your conference - to stop recycling the same papers and information about *Dracula* and come up with something different on the subject. This was a wake up call that jerked a lot of scholars out of a serious rut.'
4. **Yorkshire Post** interview with Wynne and photo with mummy at Hands on History Museum <http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/at-a-glance/main-section/fangs-for-memory-dracula-experts-pool-ideas-1-4443873>
5. **Guardian Newspaper**: 'Book Club.' 14 April 2012.
6. Stoker Experts Bite Back' *Times Higher Education Supplement* <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=419700>
Please note that this interview was picked up on the *Spectator Blog* and *Inside Higher Ed*.
7. **BBC Radio 3 Bram Stoker: The Essay** by Catherine Wynne (16 April 2012) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01g4xt1>
8. **Bootmakers of Toronto: The Sherlock Holmes Society of Canada Award**: <http://www.torontobootmakers.com/types-of-awards/>
9. **Documentary: Dracula's Bram Stoker**, dir. Sinéad O'Brien (Ferndale Productions 2003). http://www.iftn.ie/production/whoswho/whoswho_sub/producers/prodwhos_sub/filmproducers/?act1=record&aid=70&rid=440&tpl=filmography_dets&only=1&force=1
<http://www.ferndalefilms.com/documentary.htm>
10. *Telegraph article on the Bram Stoker Centenary Symposium* (University of Hertfordshire): <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/9220788/Bram-Stoker-is-Undead.html>