# *History of Prostitution*/Vampires in the American Republic

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# APPROVAL PAGE

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# ABSTRACT

The two papers that comprise this masters portfolio are "*The History of Prostitution* by William Sanger as a Basis for Modern Studies of Prostitution" and "Vampires in American Newspapers: 1820-1840"

*"The History of Prostitution* by William Sanger as a Basis for Modern Studies of Prostitution" examines how Sanger's work has influenced the historiography of prostitution in New York City. This paper begins by examining William Sanger as an individual, and demonstrates how despite claiming to be objective, his work is clouded by his role as a resident physician on Blackwell's Island. His work is unique because it can be read as a primary and secondary text: the first half of his work is a discussion of the history of prostitution and its causes, while the latter half is documented quantitiative research. The main argument of this paper is that historians should read his text as a primary source: both his quantitative research and reproduced history is inherently biased, making many of his claims difficult to use as a secondary source. This paper points out several historians who cite him, and either do not point out his historical bias and inaccuracies, or in several cases miscite his arguments.

"Vampires in American Newspapers: 1820-1840" examines American newspaper articles published between 1820 and 1840 that contain references to vampires. The authors of these articles engaged with vampires for multiple reasons and for multiple purposes: they refer to vampires as literal monsters (such as giant squid), monsters who disguised themselves as men, politicians, and foreigners. This paper demonstrates that "vampires" existed in the United States, and that they had a distinct American nature.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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# THE HISTORY OF PROSTITUTION BY WILLIAM SANGER AS A BASIS FOR MODERN STUDIES OF PROSTITUTION

Shannon Christensen

The focus of this article will be William Sanger's book, *The History of Prostitution: Its Extent, Causes, and Effects Throughout the World*, written in 1858 and published in 1859. William Sanger was the appointed Resident Physician of Blackwell's Island, New York from 1853 until the time the book was published. Blackwell's Island was a collection of buildings on what is now known as Roosevelt Island, and which in 1858, included the Island Hospital (formerly known as the Penitentiary Hospital), the Small Pox Hospital, the Alms House, the Work House, and the Penitentiary.[1] As resident physician, Sanger was responsible for reporting all medical practices occurring on Blackwell's Island, although his focus was the Island House, where the majority of the facilities' patients were treated. Sanger initially published *The History of Prostitution* as a commissioned study to chronicle and manage the outbreak of syphilis occurring in Blackwell's Island hospitals, an outbreak which he believed, and which was largely believed by educated persons at the time, to be directly linked to the parallel increase in the practice of prostitution in the city. However, as Sanger himself writes, his objective grew in scope to include the "origin, progress and end" of prostitution in not only New York City, but the world.[2]

Sanger organizes his book around this phrase: "the origin, progress, and end" of prostitution.[3] Sanger begins his work at the time of the Jewish people and Moses, and then continues on to Ancient Greece and Rome, later to the Middle Ages, and then to "modern" time, including in his survey European countries such as France, Italy,

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[1] William W. Sanger, "Report of the resident physician of Blackwell's Island to the governors of the Alms house on the several hospitals under his charge," Volume 1859, New York, 3-4.
[2] Sanger, William W., *The History of Prostitution: It's Extent, Causes, And Effects Throughout the World*, (New York City: Harper & Brothers Publishers) 1859, 17.
[3] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 17.

England and Spain, as well as more “foreign” and regions such as Portugal, Russia, Mexico, “Central and South America”.[4] Sanger also includes chapters on “North American Indians,” “Barbarous Nations,” and “Semi-civilized Nations,” before commencing on the second half of his book, which is his conducted study on prostitution in New York City. Sanger conducted a survey in 1858, carried out by police officers, on two thousand women who were hospitalized in Blackwell’s Island, New York City, and were known to practice prostitution. He includes approximately two hundred pages of statistics he collected during that year, ranging in subjects from age and former occupation, to drinking habits and religious beliefs. Following these data, Sanger shifts to a general discussion of prostitution in New York City, including descriptions of brothel houses, living conditions of prostitutes and financial costs of prostitution to both its “customers” and the state.[5] However, the primary financial cost that Sanger is concerned with, especially as a physician, was the cost of treatment for individuals afflicted with venereal diseases, specifically syphilis. Sanger encloses additional data he collected from other New York City hospitals to demonstrate the significant spread of these diseases and how they are correlated with the increase in prostitution. After briefly expanding to include prostitution statistics from various U.S. cities, Sanger concludes with a mediation on possible remedial practices in order to stop the spread of prostitution and associated social ills.

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[4] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*. I use the terms “modern” and “foreign” in quotations to demonstrate how Sanger would have related to these countries. “Modern” in this sense refers to the time of this work’s publication, which was 1859; while “foreign” refers to how Sanger would relate to countries outside of the United States and Europe.

[5] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*. “Customers” in this sense refers to the gentlemen that pay money not only for the prostitute’s services, but also for food and liquors consumed during their visit.

The following are themes in *The History of Prostitution*, listed in no particular order: the degradation of American society by vice; the legal measures taken by societies to address social ills, whether they were effective, and how they were manipulated by those in power; America's corruption by foreign influences; the origin of prostitution as a product of man's desire and women's weakness; economic inequality as both a cause for prostitution, and as a mark of a prostitute's social position; and finally the necessity of societal reform to "save" not only prostitutes, but American society in general. Sanger's work represents the first major American study on prostitution, and was one of the earliest American works to use extensive data as a call for social reform. Sanger is both a man of his time, and a man before his time: he simultaneously offers scientific data on spread of venereal diseases, while at the same time, burdening his readers with moral diatribes on how a prostitute's immoral degradation infects all of society.

My argument is that Sanger's text is a lens to view prostitution in the mid-nineteenth century, and subsequently that Sanger laid the groundwork for the historiography of prostitution in America. While *The History of Prostitution* is at times a secondary historical source, I will mostly consider it as a primary source. For the first three sections of this article, I will analyze how Sanger's text exposes his social biases, rather than critique the accuracy of his work; for my textual analysis, I am more interested in the author himself, and his vision, rather than the validity of claims. I will later demonstrate that Sanger laid the groundwork for the modern historiography of prostitution, and prove that one hundred and fifty years later, his work is still widely cited.

## I. Prostitution "Throughout the World"

*There appear to have been in every age men who did not avail themselves of the marriage covenant, or who could not be bound by its stipulations, and their appetites created a demand for illegitimate pleasures, which female weakness supplied. This may be assumed to be the real origin of prostitution…*[6]

*Prostitution is coeval with society. It stains the earliest mythological records…We can trace it from the earliest twilight in which history dawns to the clear daylight of to-day, without a pause of a moment of obscurity.*[7]

Sanger begins his historical study of prostitution with what he believes is the dawn of time: the time of the Jewish people, Moses and Babylon. According to Sanger, venereal diseases have been present since the birth of mankind: Moses was so concerned with their spread that he outlawed sexual intercourse between healthy individuals and those infected, and banished the latter from the community.[8] Sanger argues that the Jewish people dealt with disease in the simplest and most effective way: they exiled afflicted individuals to ensure the group's survival. The Jewish people differentiated between prostitution by their own members and prostitution by outsiders. Although prostitution was outlawed within the Jewish community, many Jewish men,

[6] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 35.
[7] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 35.
[8] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 36-37.

including Moses, kept prostitutes.[9] Thus, even though the Jewish people forbad prostitution within their own community, outsider practices' eventually corrupted them.

Unlike the Jewish people, Sanger writes that the "states" in Ancient Egypt, Syria and "Asia Minor" did not even bother to outlaw prostitution of their own people.[10] At the time of Alexander the Great, in Babylon, immorality freely reigned: even during ordinary meals, if win was offered, once modest women "lost all their restraint…[and] threw off one garment after another…"[11] Sanger is shocked this behavior, especially that these were women from the highest-ranking families.[12] It is clear that Sanger makes a distinction between women of "higher" and "lower" rank; since Sanger expects ladies of the best families to exhibit higher standards of moral behavior, he is surprised to find that these women did not met his expectations.

Sanger uses the example of Ancient Greece to demonstrate how prostitution can lead to state corruption. In Greece, rape, seduction and adultery were outlawed by penalty of death, but that did not apply to the system of "religious prostitution" in Greek temples, where female slaves, "bought with public money," were "bound by law to satisfy the demands of all who visited them."[13] These slaves were "a legitimate source" of state revenue and their prostitution was a profitable "state monopoly": prostitution became incorporated into the function of the Greek state.[14] This is a theme in Sanger's subsequent chapters: state power, when involved in social vices, leads to social corruption.

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[9] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 37. Sanger claims that Moses himself, "took an Ethiopian concubine."
[10] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 41. I use the term "states" here because that is the term Sanger used, not because these regions are referred to as such.
[11] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 42.
[12] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 42.
[13] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 43.
[14] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 43.

Sanger argues that the "Early Christian Era" was the beginning of modern morality because the Christian doctrine stressed the ideal of chastity.[15] Sanger argues that Christianity changed the concept of marriage because Christianity promoted marriage exclusively for procreation and outlawed it from being used "as a cloak of immorality," as it often was "among the heathen."[16] Sanger includes "the heathen" as a lower class in Early Christian society, and argues that they were not worthy of the Christian marriage sacrament because they did not appreciate its true meaning; if the "heathen" had truly understood the Christian message, they would not have used the marriage sacrament for the purpose of immoral conduct.[17] This is the same logic he later uses to argue that prostitutes cannot be truly religious, because their faith would have kept them from prostitution.

According to Sanger, early modern France was an example of failed public reform, starting in 1254 when Louis XI passed an edict exiling all prostitutes from the country. Sanger applauds the king's effort to reduce vice and corruption, but claims that because the edict was only partially enforced soon, "*a clandestine traffic succeeded to the former open debauchery*, and in the dark, the evils of the disease were necessarily aggravated."[18] In this example, severe repression was not effective: the edict's immediate and violent suppression of prostitution actually caused its increase.

Sanger uses King Francis I of France as an example to show how the elite ruling class can perpetuate immorality. Prior to the reign of King Francis I, the court of France

[15] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 86.
[16] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 87.
[17] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 87.
[18] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 95.

had always retained a body of prostitutes attached to the court for the personal use.[19] However, Francis I disbanded them, and "invited" the ladies of the French court to take their place, thus producing "the greatest immorality ever known in France."[20] Not only did Francis I force men to allow their wives to be his mistresses, but Francis also contracted syphilis and knowingly infected many women. Sanger uses Francis I as a cautionary tale of how a "Great Man" that abused his power could produce vice and immorality. Sanger is more concerned with the "innocent" wives who were forced to engage with Francis, rather than the already "corrupted" prostitutes formerly kept at French court. This is another instance where Sanger values the virtue of higher-class women over the virtue of lower-class counterparts.

## II. Sanger's Survey

*But in an instant o'er her soul*
*Winters of Memory seem to roll*
*And gather in that drop of time*
*A life of pain, an age of crime*[21]

*Destiny seems from their birth to have intended them for vagrants, and has planted them so low in the moral sense, that they can scarcely hope to rise.*[22]

This section concerns the data that Sanger collected from police interviews with two-thousand prostitutes admitted to the Island Hospital in 1857 and 1858. As

[19] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 110.
[20] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 120.
[21] Lord Byron, The Giaour, "A Fragment of a Turkish Tale," *The Works of Lord Byron*. Vol. 3. Sanger includes this selection of Byron's poem on page 486.
[22] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 564.

previously mentioned, I struggled with addressing these statistics; Sanger's data collection has a plethora of problems, and therefore it cannot always be taken as accurate representation of these women's lives. Therefore, in this section, I will limit my analysis to the types of questions Sanger asks, what they contribute to his work as a whole, what they reveal about his beliefs, and finally what they reveal about American society in1858.

Sanger first asks the women's age, finding that a large percentage of these women are between eighteen and twenty-three years old. Sanger argues that as women age and spend more time as prostitutes, drop down the imaginary ladder of prostitution.[23] Based on this theory as well as his admittance records and case studies, Sanger contends that "the average duration of life among these women does not exceed four years from the beginning of their career."[24]

The results of Sanger's survey also illustrate that New York has a greater proportion of prostitutes than any other state besides New Jersey, largely, Sanger claims, because of the increase of manufacturing. Sanger proposes that prostitution in the Northeast "arises from the employment of a much larger proportion of females in manufacturing and sedentary occupations," which allows women to form relationships with the opposite sex, relationships that for women often end "disastrously."[25] Sanger also blames New York's "immense maritime business" because it provides a "constant flood of immigrants and strangers" as an additional cause.[26] According to Sanger,

[23] Sanger, History of Prostitution, 455. Sanger refers to this declining social mobility as the "downward scale" of prostitution.
[24] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 455.
[25] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 457-8.
[26] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 458.

"if…all the seamen and strangers visiting New York could be transformed into moral men, at least one half to two third of the houses of ill fame would be absolutely bankrupt."[27] Sanger is concerned with the corruption of New York City from foreign influences, a theme he continuously refers to, especially in the latter half of his work.

Sanger wonders why so many American women enter prostitution, since he believes education is freely available to all Americans, and that even if industry fails to provide a decent living (something Sanger believes is unlikely to happen), America has an abundance of natural resources to support its citizens. Perhaps if Sanger had personally interviewed these women, instead of relying on police officers, he would have seen that most of them did not have the opportunities he so naively suggests are inherent in American society.

However, when it comes to marriage and conjugal duties, Sanger is more compassionate, aware of the unfair situation of wives compared to their husbands:

> "If the husband has been guilty of a breach of his conjugal duties, he read the whole of the evidence, graphically reported, with occasional embellishments, in the column of the daily papers, flatters himself that he is acquiring notoriety, is congratulated by friends of his own predilections on his success, and in a short time, is fully reinstated in his former social position. On the contrary, if the weight of the evidence is against the wife, the whole artillery of the world's scorn is leveled at her head. She is driven from society, crushed by the proudly virtuous frowns of her own sex and the contemptuous sneers of the other. Dishonored and despise, she is…left with no means of existence but…prostitution…"[28]

Sanger is critical of the double standard that existed in nineteenth-century America for men compared to women: he even proposes greater accountability and if necessary, harsher punishments for abusive husbands: if a husband "ill-used" his wife,

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[27] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 458. A brief summary of this quote would be the saying, "in every port a wife," which Sanger also quotes.
[28] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 474

then Sanger argues he ought to be "tried by a jury of married women and hanged without the benefit of a clergy."[29] Sanger takes marital duties seriously, and has a much softer tone towards married women, especially concerning their treatment by husbands. In this case, he addresses with the unequal treatment of men and women in conjugal duties, but he places the blame on society as a whole, without acknowledging the individual power dynamics between men and women.

Sanger is concerned with the "cause" of prostitution; he believes that there can be a single motive that drives a woman to engage in prostitution and that discovering a prostitute's motive will make future reform easier. Sanger publishes his findings as a list of proposed causes, and it is assumed (Sanger does not detail his methods) that the women were either asked to choose the reason that most closely resembled why they became a prostitute, or that they gave the officers free responses, out of which Sanger complied this published list. Either way, the results are problematic: one of proposed causes on the list is "inclination," which Sanger defines as "a voluntary resort to prostitution in order to gratify sexual passions."[30] According to Sanger, a woman's "sexual passions" female sexuality in general, is "the full force of sexual desire…seldom known to a virtuous woman."[31] To Sanger, as to many men in the mid-nineteenth century, female sexuality was at worst evidence of their immorality and at best, something that should be reserved for their husbands; men, are the "aggressive animal[s]" and it is the lack of female desire or passion that keeps the spread of prostitution under control.[32] Not only does Sanger consider men's desire to be the origin

[29] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 477
[30] Sanger*, History of Prostitution,* 488.
[31] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 489.
[32] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 489.

of prostitution, but he believes that a large portion of women's misery is caused by men's seduction and subsequent abandonment. Sanger describes how the women he is studying are similar to the "heroine of a modern novel" who trusted the man she loved until "he deceived her, as all modern rakes deceive their victims."[33]

Sanger shifts to the economic aspect of prostitution, when he asks the women about their prior occupation. He is surprised to find that forty-four percent of women who reported working at a trade before entering prostitution said they made less than two-dollars per week, and that women made only sixteen cents per day.[34] The public supports this system of "starvation or crime, and for the sake of saving few cents, add their influence to swell the ranks of prostitutes, and condemn many a poor woman to eternal ruin."[35] Sanger recognizes the economic desperation these women face, and agrees that the industry is rigged against them. He even discusses the power of male employers over their charges, stating that "in many cases [the boss] wields a power the determinations of which amount to this: 'Shall I have any food to-day, or shall I starve?"[36]

Sanger struggles to determine where he stands on this issue, as he previously stated that all women could save themselves from prostitution through education and industry. Part of his struggle is his inability to compromise on his beliefs of Christian morality and temperance. According to his study, eighty-two percent of all women reported consuming liquor, although Sanger questions the accuracy of these responses,

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[33] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 519.
[34] Sanger, History of Prostitution, 532. Sanger states that sixteen-cents per day is a "starving wage" in New York City.
[35] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 532.
[36] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 533.

claiming that the true answer is likely higher because when it comes to questions that seem "degrading," such as relating to "habits or the state of her health," a woman is more likely to answer dishonestly. Sanger's belief that alcohol leads to immoral behavior means that he is less sympathetic towards women who consume liquor, and is more likely to see them as responsible for their own condition. As for religious beliefs, Sanger is especially concerned with the results of his survey. He records that forty-three percent of women stated that they "observed religious requirements a year or less ago," but he feels it necessary to qualify that,

> "if the articles of faith of either Church are honestly observed by those who professedly believe in them, they will be effective in preventing immorality; but when this observation is confined to words, and not exemplified by actions, neither the simple rituals of Protestantism nor the more elaborate and artistically arranged ceremonials of Roman Catholicism can be of any avail."[37]

Sanger doubts the religiosity of these women and even compares their answers to his question to concerning the length of time each woman has engaged in prostitution. He argues that there is a negative correlation between the two; these women must have stopped engaging in religious rituals shortly after taking up prostitution. Sanger's inability to grapple with the complexity of religious beliefs and the practice of prostitution is a clear weakness in his work; while he does propose secular, or legislative, reforms, it is clear that he believes religious faith is the simplest path to moral behavior.

## III. Lifestyles of New York City Prostitutes, Statistics on Venereal Diseases and a Discussion on Societal Reform

[37] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 547.

*She knows that the world condemns her, and her own heart admits the justice of the verdict. She knows that he who is so ostentatiously parading his admiration regards her but as a purchased instrument to minister his gratification. She feels that she is, emphatically, alone in the world, and her merry laugh but ill conceals a broken heart.*[38]

*They can scarcely be called prostitutes, for their aspect is so disgustingly hideous that all feminine characteristics are blotted out, and thoroughly sensual and animalized but he be who could accept their favors.*[39]

The two opening quotes represent Sanger's diverging opinion of prostitutes according to their wealth and social status. The first quote represents the women who live in "parlor houses" and who are "the most respectable of their class, if any respectability can be associated with so vicious a course."[40] Their houses are "furnished with a lavish degree of luxury" and that "kindness toward the unfortunate of their own sex and grade is a striking trait."[41] Sanger even poses the question, "are they happy?" despite all of his work spent implying that prostitution is a wretched state where true happiness is not attainable. Sanger is sympathetic to these women, and romantically believes they succumbed to the lifestyle of prostitution either because of broken promise of from the seduction of comfort and luxury.

However, his tone drastically changes when discussing the lower "grades" of brothels.[42] According to Sanger, these prostitutes are "the refuse of the other classes who have fallen through the successive gradations on account of disease and drunkenness, or they are some of those children of iniquity who, born in scenes of vice

[38] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 553.
[39] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 569.
[40] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 550.
[41] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 552, 448. Sanger even goes so far as to write that "truly they are an atom in the balance, but like an oasis in the desert, they show all is not arid and sterile."
[42] Sanger describes four "grades" of brothels in the city, beginning with the luxurious parlor houses, each decreasing in respectability and comfort, until he ends with the prostitutes who walk on the streets.

and squalid misery, know nothing of a virtuous or happy course of life."[43] Sanger sees class and virtue as inherent characteristics: while, like Lucifer, "parlor house" women were once virtuous but fell, lower-class women never attained any form of virtue. This is actually one of his nicer quotes on the "lower grades" of brothel houses: he follows up by claiming that most of these women spend their time in the prisons of Blackwell's Island and that the lowest among them are "truly wretched beings, the outcasts of the outcasts" who, "destitute of home or shelter, diseased, starving and afflicted with an insatiable thirst for ardent spirits…scarcely [retain] any vestiges of humanity."[44]

It is these women who Sanger claims are responsible for the rapid spread of venereal diseases. Within this section, Sanger gives a brief description of syphilis, breaking it down into a primary and secondary form.[45] According to Sanger, the primary stage of syphilis is "the commencement of the disease, or symptoms which are the direct result of an impure connection," while secondary syphilis, is the "comparatively remote result of infection; never appearing until after the primary symptoms are well-developed, and finally not until all traces of them are removed."[46] Sanger discusses how prostitutes continue to work even when they contract venereal diseases, writing:

"Syphilis, when manifested in its secondary stage in the shape of sores, eruptions, and blotches upon the face or person, is so disgusting that no prostitute thus

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[43] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 564.
[44] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 565.
[45] The following definition of syphilis is limited to Sanger's use in 1858. Modern definitions of syphilis categorize it into three stages: primary, secondary and tertiary; the primary phrase is the onset of the disease, with little to no symptoms; the secondary stage consists of prominent symptoms such as rashes, inflammation and flu-like symptoms, and is the most infectious or contagious stage; and finally tertiary syphilis, which is the stage that occurs in thirty-five to forty percent of untreated patients and leads to multiple other associated diseases including Neurosyphilis.
Frey, Rebecca J., "Syphilis," *The Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine*, 3rd ed., vol. 4. Gale, 2006, 1040. Accessed electronically.
[46] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 589.

disfigured could retain her place in any brothel, unless it was one of the very lowest grade, because her appearance would immediately repeal all visitors."[47]
Yet, according to Sanger, during the primary stage of syphilis, women were easily able to conceal their infection from customers, and that this concealment accounts for why two-thirds of all women interviewed were "diseased."[48]

Based on his research as well as from collaboration with other New York City hospitals, Sanger concludes that the total number of syphilis cases in all New York City hospitals in 1858 is 9,847.[49] However, he admits that this number may be too low, not only because some hospitals refuse to treat patients suffering with syphilis or gonorrhea due to the attached social stigma, but also because many upper-class individuals seek treatment from private doctors to hide their affliction. In order to "right" the accuracy of these statistics Sanger decides that the former number is only two-thirds of the aggregate number of cases, which he then concludes is 14,770.[50] This is only one example of how Sanger manipulated his statistics: he frequently makes estimates when dealing with collected numbers, such as disease rates or population counts, and then "corrects" them by either multiplying by a coefficient (like in this case) or adding a coefficient to their original value. Therefore, the reader should not rely on Sanger for accurate statistical reporting. While the purpose of this article section is not to address Sanger's accuracy, this is important to note because it demonstrates the lack of standards for "scientific" research before the creation of the social sciences discipline, and because it will allow the reader to be critical of other texts that cite Sanger's work.

Having discussed the symptoms and prevalence of syphilis, Sanger moves on to possible remedial measures. As he addressed in his history of prostitution, Sanger is

[47] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 598.
[48] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 597.
[49] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 589.
[50] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 594.

convinced that stringent prohibitive measures against prostitution are not effective and that no "system of laws will entirely eradicate prostitution; history social arrangements, and physiology alike forbid any such utopian idea."[51] Instead he believes that "the most effectual way to deal with criminals is to attempt to raise them above what they were… [instead] of sinking them lower."[52] In this way, Sanger ties back the themes of his earlier chapters: his history juxtaposed "ancient" societies that exiled prostitutes, such as the Jewish community or the Roman state, with the Era Christian community which sought to convert prostitutes so they could be "redeemed" in God's eyes. Sanger states that "it is now freely acknowledged that the elevating, instead of depressing process is consonant both with the spirit of our republican institutions and with humanizing policy."[53]

Sanger argues that this is possible first, and most importantly, through public responsibility. The public is responsible for prostitution partly because general society precludes women from entering certain careers, where they could become a productive citizens and avoid turning to prostitution.[54] Sanger also holds the community responsible, claiming that when it comes to prostitution, the community places all the blame on the woman, while letting the man escape "all censure."[55] According to Sanger, "public responsibility must be understood in its broadest and most literal sense, as meaning the individual accountability of every member of the community," and that the avenue for legislative reform only opens when community members start demanding

[51] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 628.
[52] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 629.
[53] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 629.
[54] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 642.
[55] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 643.

change. Sanger considers his work as representative of this community voice, and therefore concludes that the avenue is open to discuss legal reform.[56]

Sanger poses the following question: after all of the evidence that he has presented, should prostitutes and prostitution itself be placed "under the surveillance of a medical bureau in the Police Department?"[57] Sanger assumes that the reader's answer to this question is yes, because he goes on to list the following requirements for his surveillance proposal:

1. "A suitable hospital for the treatment of venereal disease;
2. A legally authorized medical visitation of all known houses of prostitution, with full power to order the immediate removal of any woman found to be infected to the designated hospital;
3. The power to detain infected persons under treatment until they are cured…"[58]

Sanger believes that supervision rather than imprisonment is the best solution to the problem of venereal disease and prostitution, arguing that "no amount of imprisonment as a punishment ever yet reformed a prostitute, and it never will…"[59] He claims that if brothel houses and other homes of prostitution were open to police and physicians, women would be less likely to engage in prostitution for the fear of "falling into the hands of a doctor."[60] His plan is to place prostitution under state regulation, making it more transparent and easier for physicians to treat and monitor the spread of venereal diseases. This is the ultimate goal of his work; this is what his entire history of prostitution, and his statistical data on New York City prostitutes is leading to. Through

[56] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 643.
[57] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 643.
[58] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 643-644.
[59] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 644.
[60] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 652.

these remedial practices, Sanger hopes to save the city from immoral collapse and hopefully provide a plan that other urban cities can follow.

## Part IV: Sanger as a Basis for Modern Studies of Prostitution

To discuss the value of Sanger's work in the entire historiography of prostitution, or even the historiography of prostitution in nineteenth-century New York City, would be exhaustive. Since its publication in 1859, *The History of Prostitution* has been referenced in almost every book dedicated to the study of prostitution, and his data is cited both to argue for social reforms as well as to demonstrate how the field needs to progress. Thus, for the purpose of this article, I will look at how three contemporary authors have chosen to incorporate Sanger into their work, and how he is generally received in the historiographic field today.

The first work I will examine is *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918*, written by Ruth Rosen and published in 1982. Rosen cites Sanger as a leader of the "regulationist" movement, which she describes as "the second wave of moral reform" beginning in the 1870's as "a response to a growing campaign to regulate prostitution."[61] Rosen describes how this movement relied "on medical and scientific evidence" to achieve its goals of "social control and management" and that Sanger's work, as one of the movement's key texts, "established the scientific model for most future research on prostitution."[62] The "regulationist" movement argued for state

[61] Rosen, Ruth. *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1982, 9.
[62] Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood*, 9.

regulated prostitution and used Sanger's data and history to promote their viewpoint. Rosen even argues that "Sanger's book supported growing xenophobic attitudes by underscoring that most prostitutes were recent immigrants."

It is necessary to address this point. While Sanger's work does list that 1238 women interviewed were foreign-born while 762 were born in the United States, Sanger's description of European travel might be more useful to demonstrate his contribution to the rising xenophobia at the end of the nineteenth century. Sanger writes:

"Every day makes the system of New York more like that of the most depraved capitals of continental Europe, and it remains for the good innate sense of the bulk of the American people to say how much farther we shall proceed in this frivolous, intriguing, and despicable manner of living; or whether they will not strive to perpetuate the stern morality of the Puritan fathers, our great moral safeguard so far, and thus put an effectual barrier against the inroads of a torrent which must undermine our whole social fabric, and finally crush us beneath the ruin."[63] Sanger even argues for the creation of a governmental bureau to regulate European travel:

"We might establish a phrenological and psychological bureau, armed with full powers to examine all persons desiring to travel, so as to ascertain whether they may safely make the grand tour, and have sufficient strength of intellect and firmness of principles to resist the vitiating influences and examples which will surround them there, so that they may return only with a knowledge of the good and valuable lessons taught!"[64]

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[63] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 572.
[64] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 571.

Thus, while Sanger's data may be cited as evidence supporting a xenophobic agenda, his digressions on travel provide more support Rosen's argument than his statistical results alone.

Vern and Bonnie Bullough's work*, Women and Prostitution: a Social History*, also references Sanger. Similar to Rosen, they argue that Sanger's work became intertwined with the agenda for social reform, specifically after the Civil War.[65] They argue that, "following the example of Europe, Americans after the Civil War attempted to confine prostitutes to certain segregated areas of the city, to register them, and to provide for compulsory physical examinations," and that Sanger was one of the leaders in this agenda.[66] They explicitly quote Sanger's work on regulation:

"History proves that prostitution cannot be suppressed, it also demonstrates that it can be regulated and directed into channels where its most injurious results can be encountered, and its dangerous tendencies either arrested or materially weakened."[67] They also find that his categorization of brothel houses and "houses of assignation" display his prejudice towards lower-class women and immigrants, arguing that this classification "indicates his own prejudices as much as it does reality."[68] Sanger's prejudice is also evident in his consideration of "third-class houses" as either "equal to

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[65] Bullough, Vern and Bonnie*. Women and Prostitution: a Social History*. Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1987.
[66] Bullough, *Women and Prostitution*, 222.
[67] Bullough, *Women and Prostitution*, 222, original quote from Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 460.
[68] Bullough, *Women and Prostitution*, 226.
Although I previously discussed Sanger's discussion of brothel houses, Sanger also included a description of what he called "Houses of Assignation." These houses were used for secret meeting for sexual intercourse, but differed from brothels because they required appointments and women did not live on the premises. Similar to brothels, Sanger ranks these houses into four categories, with the highest being the houses used by women whom he doesn't fully consider prostitutes, but rather women desiring secret affairs with "certain gentlemen," and the lowest being women that pick up male customers by streetwalking.
Sanger, *History of Prostitut*ion, 566-569.

or better than" the "second-class houses" except that they are largely controlled by immigrant women and have a larger percent of immigrant clients.[69] Vern and Bonnie Bullough also argue that Sanger links prostitution with crime, saying that he accuses prostitutes of the lowest assignation houses to be "league with petty criminals."[70]

The final work I will discuss *is Uneasy Virtue: the Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition*, written by Barbara Meil Hobson and published in 1987. Like Bullough and Rosen, Hobson cites Sanger's text as a central component of the reform tradition of the late-nineteenth century. Additionally, she uses Sanger to argue that prostitution was a "transitory phase in the lives of women," since according to Sanger's survey, sixty-percent of women had practiced prostitution for three years or less and a "significant portion" had only entered prostitution within the previous six months.[71] In this case, Hobson and Sanger seem to be in disagreement: Sanger would argue that his statistics demonstrate that women do not stay in the prostitution for long periods of time, because the longer women are prostitutes, the more they descend into poverty. In fact, Sanger claims that prostitutes have an average life expectancy of four years, making the short-lived careers that Hobson refers to a product of their short life span rather than their choice to change careers.[72] Hobson's argument seems more in line with the work

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[69] Bullough, *Women and Prostitution*, 226.
[70] Bullough, *Women and Prostitution*, 226.
[71] Hobson, Barbara Meil*, Uneasy Virtue: the Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition*, 1987. 86-87. The "significant portion" that Meil is referring to comes the statistics published by Sanger, which he displays in a table on page 484 of *The History of Prostitution*. Sanger claims that 435 (or 25%) of women surveyed have practiced prostitution for six months or less. The exact percent of women that have practiced prostitution for three years of less, according to Sanger's data was 63% (rounded up from 62.95%). This is including the 53 women surveyed by Sanger who either declined to answer, or whose answer was not obtained and were thus labeled "unascertained." The fact that almost every data collection Sanger includes contains a number of women's responses listed as "unascertained," makes it difficult not to question the accuracy of his data, specifically his method. Sanger does not explain what this category includes nor does he attempt to control for it.
[72] Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 455.

published by the British physician William Acton, who also studied prostitution, and who had a more optimistic outlook: it is Acton rather than Sanger who argues that prostitution is a "transitory state." Acton, like Sanger, argues for reform in order to "see these women through that state" so that they can become once again "the wife of an Englishman and the mother of his offspring."[73] It seems that Hobson is either conflating the two authors (she also cites Acton in multiple chapters), or that she is misinterpreting Sanger's conclusions.

Ultimately, William Sanger's text, *The History of Prostitution*, is undoubtedly a keystone text in the historiography of prostitution, specifically in New York City. Since its publication, Sanger's work has been cited in almost every historical volume written about prostitution, and his proposals for legislative reform were incorporated by reform movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Even modern texts cite Sanger, although their citations are much more conservative, and tend to use his text to illustrate reformist traditions and Victorian Era policies. Sanger himself is a complicated individual: while it is clear he desires to improve American society, his work is clouded by his nativist approach and his bigoted class bias. His research is at times illuminating, but the accuracy of his data comes into question if one examines his methods and sources. While he attempts to give the women he interviews were a voice, that voice is muffled through his own social agenda. Thus, the true voices of the two thousand women Sanger interviewed will never be heard. Sanger's history itself is more valuable as a representation of his own social and political views, than for its historical accuracy.

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[73] Acton, William, *Prostitution, Considered in Its Moral, Social, & Sanitary Aspects, in London and Other Large Cities, with Proposals for the Mitigation and Prevention of Its Attendant Evils*, 1857, 73. Archive source, accessed electronically.

Therefore, it is important for modern authors to consider the complexity of his study; by citing only his data without any context, authors can easily misinterpret his findings or add a level of validity to his conclusions that his statistics themselves do not merit.

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# VAMPIRES IN AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS: 1820-1840

Shannon Christensen

## Vampires in American Newspapers: 1820-1840

"No fear is *only* personal: it must steep itself in its political and ideological ambience, without which our solitary terrors have no contagious resonance."[1]

"The vampire becomes our reflection."[2]

Vampires, in some form or another, have existed in every society. As Paul Barber argues, vampire lore is "an elaborate folk-hypothesis designed to account for seemingly inexplicable events associated with death and decomposition." All societies have encountered confusing phenomenon, and supernatural forces, such as the vampire, offered explanations. In early modern Europe, death was a constant shadow, and it needed a monster that was just as hideous, and just as ubiquitous. The origins of the vampire began as an answer for disease and death, especially long, painful deaths, such as tuberculosis. From the early modern period to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, the vampire was fundamentally different than we know him today: while fictional vampires are typically "tall, thin and sallow," the vampire in early-modern folklore was "plump and ruddy, or dark in color." Compared to the noble vampire who resides in a castle, the folkloric vampire was "of peasant stock" and "lived in the graveyard in which he was buried."[3] However, as Nina Auerbach, author of *Our*

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[1] Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago, 1995), 6.
[2] William Patrick Day, *Vampire Legends in Contemporary American Culture: What Becomes a Legend Most* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 5.
[3] Paul Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality* (New Haven, 1988), 4.

*Vampires, Ourselves*, contends, "there is no such creature as 'The Vampire'; there are only vampires."[4] As our constant companions, vampires are very versatile, taking multiple forms as it suits them, but always going "where the power is."[5] This power means that "vampires oscillate between aristocracy and democracy, at times taking command with elitist aplomb, at times embodying the predatory desires of the democracy at large."[6] I will use this as a guiding framework to analysis the appearance of vampires in American newspapers, specifically between 1820 and 1840, twenty formative years where America was creating its own democratic identity.

This paper draws not only on the historiography of vampires in literature and folklore, but also on the history of American newspapers and their influence on American democracy. In Jeffrey Pasley, author of *"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic*, describes how newspapers operate as political tools, and how, in the nineteenth century, we must be open to the idea that newspapers may have other functions besides "gathering, writing and disseminating news stories." Newspapers did not operate in the manner we are accustomed to now, with large reporting staffs and a focus on local events; instead, Pasley contends, newspapers "delivered the 'news' in a desultory, haphazard fashion, printing letters...to the editor, material from other newspapers, and raw government documents." The importance of newspapers in nineteenth century party politics cannot be understated: according to Pasley, "the newspaper press was the political system's central institution, not simply a forum or atmosphere in which politics took place." Newspapers were "purposeful actors

[4] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, 5.
[5] Ibid., 6.
[6] Ibid,7.

in the political process, linking parties, voters, and the government together, and pursuing specific political goals." Newspapers also "contributed in fundamental ways to the very existence of the parties and to the creation of a sense of membership, identity and common cause among political activists and voters." Editors pushed aside the "elaborate classical republican code" which "condemned parties and eschewed political competition and self-promotion," instead favoring "blunt rhetoric and direct methods."[7] Stephen Campbell also discusses the role of newspapers in American politics in his dissertation, *Fighting the Bank War*. Campbell contends that "as vehicles for transmitting ideas, values and beliefs partisan newspapers played a significant role in shaping the culture of honor, both obscuring and illuminating its most pernicious aspects." Not only were newspapers vessels for "explosive contests of male egos," they were also notoriously vituperative, scathing and vicious."[8] As I will demonstrate in this work, newspaper editors invoked vampires to manipulate public opinion in their favor, or against their opposition.

In the nineteenth century, party politics was a relatively new feature of American democracy. While Marcus Daniel argues that "scandal and incivility have always been a part of American politics," in the nineteenth century, politics began to shift from a separation between public and private character, to "a politics of intrusion and suspicion, of personal scandal and corruption." Daniel argues that "far from being an age of classical virtue and republican self-restraint, political life in the post-revolutionary

[7] Jeffrey L. Pasley, "The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic (Charlottesville, 2001) 2.
[8] Stephen William Campbell, *Fighting the Bank War: How Newspapers, Banks, and the Post Office Shaped Jacksonian Era Politics, 1828-1834* [Dissertation] (Santa Barbara: University of California Santa Barbara 2013), 5.

United States was tempestuous, fiercely partisan, and highly personal." The newspaper articles I will discuss in this article fit within the context of this changing American democracy, and succeeded in manipulating their intended audience using slander and inflammatory language, while simultaneously causing many Americans to yearn "for a more civil politics, projecting a lost moral unity and political consensus back into the revolutionary past and attacking the organized, self-interested agents of party politics."[9] In fact, as we shall see, some newspaper editors ran articles criticizing this very phenomenon; in several cases, editors call political institutions and political parties vampires, although in some cases it is unclear whether they are frustrated with the political system itself or if this self-awareness was a tool to garner even more public support. Another feature of American democracy during this period was a growing voter base: as Campbell discusses, "in the Jacksonian era, the number of individuals constituting the 'public' grew substantially with an expanded electorate, spread of newspapers and growing literary." While Campbell specifically focuses on the so-called "Bank War" between Jackson and his supporters and the Whig party and promoters of the National Bank, his ideas can be applied to American politics as a whole. For instance, Campbell argues that by analyzing politics surrounding the National Bank establishment we find that the public and private spheres blur, and that "even if it was not explicitly stated, both sides in the Bank war needed to win over public opinion and work through the democratic process."[10] Thus editors turned to more inflammatory language to invoke emotional responses. This brings me to the central point of this

[9] Marcus Daniel, *Scandal & Civility: Journalism and the Birth of American Democracy* (Oxford 2009), 6.
[10] Campbell, *Fighting the Bank War*, 35.

historiography: between 1820 and 1840, editors used language that could be counted on to invoke the public's emotion.

Vampires had been features of American folklore before this period, so they were an easy choice to feature in persuasive articles. Yet, by 1840, the newspapers use of vampires had fundamentally shifted America's understanding of vampires as a whole. Thus, while literary scholars such as Nina Auerbach contend that vampires "began their significant literary life in 1816 while the self-creations of Byron," I am challenging this assertion: in 1820, when this paper begins, just four years after the date Auerbach claims was the first "significant" literary mention, newspapers were frequently drawing on vampires, most without connecting them to Byron.[11] Thus, I argue that scholars studying the literary history of vampires should look beyond literature and poetry, to examine their concrete existence in the national print culture. In fact, newspapers are key examples of how vampires of folklore merged and then were replaced by literary vampires. Between 1820 and 1840, vampires existed in a literary plane somewhere between these two categories; newspapers drew on the folklore of vampires to instill fear in the public, but also used the newfound literary vampires to create more complex metaphors, where vampires did not just draw blood of individuals, but sucked the life essence out of both individuals and the public.

If vampire folklore existed prior to this period, why focus on the early American republic? It is true that vampires did appear in American newspapers in the late eighteenth and early twentieth century, and there were even some late vampire "scares" in New England correlating with outbreaks of tuberculosis. Yet, before approximately

[11] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, 1.

1820 the vampire had yet to take on specifically American characteristics; it had yet to, again borrowing the words of Auerbach, "become subject to the dominant American market."[12] But between 1820 and 1840, the American market needed vampires. First, vampires in print and in theatre made money; during these twenty years, as I will later demonstrate, advertisements for plays and books featuring vampires were widespread, and were increasingly profitable for American venues. Second, vampires reinforced traditional moral understandings of the American republic: vampires represented individuals that were too greedy, not diligent enough in their work, or disrespectful of private property. Third, similar to the previous contention, vampires could be used for political purposes. Vampires were men with too much power that feed off the poor, or conversely, vampires were the poor who rose too high above their station and lusted after power they were not responsible enough to hold. Fourth, vampires were true monsters, as well as monsters who masqueraded as men. Monsters could be hideous creatures reminding Americans of the dangers of nature, and the vastness of the unknown world, but monsters could also be men that attacked others without clear motive. Finally, vampires were foreigners. Like the foreign vampire bat, these vampires were dangerous, and threatened the American republic. These categories are all distinctly American, and all bridge the gap between the vampire in later literature (i.e. Dracula) and the early modern folkloric vampire. These vampires did not necessarily follow later popular literary tropes: they did not always hide from the sun, seduce women to suck their blood, or be killed by a stake to the heart; yet they were

[12] Ibid., 6.

everywhere, and could be anyone. American newspapers sought to find and expose these vampires, and thus preserve republican values.

The appearance of vampires in American literature and poetry is largely credited to the printing of the poem, "The Vampyre," originally credited to Lord Byron and widely circulating in American cities beginning in 1819. On June 3 and 5, *The Evening Post* of New York City, published two advertisements for separate publishing companies, C. Wiley & Co., and J. Haly and C. Thomas, that both cited the publication of this work, and both attributed it to Lord Byron. Yet this publication was a center for controversy.[13] On August, 20, 1819, *The Susquehanna-Democrat* published an article titled, "The Vampire," claiming that Lord Byron "disclaimed authorship" of this work, and that they "are glad of it: that production would add nothing to the reputation of this celebrated poet."[14] Today, "The Vampyre" is largely credited as the first fictional work to feature a vampire of the upper class, who intelligently manipulated those around him in order to eventually drain their blood. It is unclear whether public opinion wavered on the work because of its "inferior" quality compared to Byron's other works, or because the idea of a vampire belonging to the gentry class, was unheard of, but what is known is that Byron publicly denounced "the Vampyre" in the *Paris Messenger* shortly thereafter, refuting the claim that he was the true author. Even ten years later, *The Newbern Spectator* published an article written by an acquaintance of Byron and his family, who described how Byron and Poldori had a falling out, and "in proof of his vindictive temper [Polidori] published...a miserable squib called "the Vampire" which he had the

[13] "The Vampyre, by Lord Byron," *The Evening Post* (New York, NY) Jun 3, 1819; "Lord Byron's New Work," *The Evening Post* (New York, NY) Jun 5, 1819.
[14] "The Vampire," *The Susquehanna-Democrat* (Wilkes-Barre, PA) Aug 20, 1819

imprudence to try and palm off on the public as the produce of Byron's pen."[15] This author seems to imply that Polidori published his story under the guise of Byron's authorship in order to sell more copies. Whether these were Polidori's true intentions or not, the results were the same: the attachment of Byron's name, and the controversy that followed, firmly planted the "modern" vampire in nineteenth-century American literature. Following its publication, the short story was quickly adopted into a play similarly titled, "The Vampire, Or the Bride of the Isles" which premiered in America in 1820, and advertised in as *The Evening Post* as a "new melodrama."[16] It's "last performance" was subsequently advertised in the *Hartford Courant* in August, 1821, and in *The National Gazette* in July 1821.[17] In 1822, *The Evening Post* began running advertisements for its revival, demonstrating the play's popularity in American theatre. The success of "The Vampire," paved the way for later theatrical productions featuring vampires, including "The Vampire Bride," which began to be promoted newspapers in 1838, including *The Evening Post*, and continued to be promoted into 1840, this time by the Baltimore Sun, which promoted it as a "romantic drama."[18]

During this time, American newspapers also published poetry featuring vampires. In 1827, the *Buffalo Emporium* published a poem titled, "The Strangers Grave," that described a young, beautiful maid slowly succumbing to her death from a vampire, who either literally drains her body, or leaves her heartbroken, unable to continue living:

A vampire that seem'd a fond lover and friend,
Stole away from her lip all its beauty and bloom;

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[15] "Lord Byron at Brussels," *Newbern Spectator* (New Bern, North Carolina) Oct 10, 1829.
[16] "Theatre-Anthony Street," *The Evening Post* (New York, NY) Oct 23, 1820
[17] "Circulating Library," *Hartford Courant* (Hartford, CT) Aug 28, 1821; "Last Night of Performance," *The National Gazette* (Philadelphia, PA) Jul 14, 1821.
[18] "W.M. Sefton's Benefit. Franklin Theatre—Chatham Square," *The Evening Post* (New York, NY) Mar 12, 1838; "Amphitheatre—Front Street," *The Baltimore Sun* (Baltimore, MD) Feb 14, 1840

Then left her, alone and heart-broken to bend
Her footsteps along the dark path to the tomb.[19]

The vampire in this stanza is clever enough to disguise himself, a common trope beginning to be assigned to vampires in the 1820's, especially following Polidori's work.

In the same year, *The Susquehanna Democrat* published Milford Bard's poem, "Consumption" which had similar themes of death and decay, describing consumption, as "thou sly assassin of the heart," and "thou vampire and thou vile viper."[20] By comparing consumption to a vampire, Bard is invoking both the literal activity applied to vampires (i.e. consuming blood) and the metaphorical quality applied to them: vampires, as promoted in Polidori's story, also drained their victims of vigor and spirit. Finally, Bard claims that similar to vampires, consumption is "delusive e'en in death." This idea can be compared to Auerbach's argument that in the nineteenth century, "vampires were 'indeterminate creatures who flourished not in their difference from their human prey, but through their intimate intercourse with mortals, to whom they were dangerously close."[21] Also similar to consumption, vampires bound themselves to their victims, and this attachment lead them to the grave.

Vampires were also men who masqueraded as virtuous citizens but acted like monsters. For instance, the *National Gazette* published the article, "Attack on the Vampire" describing how a young boy was looking through a crack in a building wall when he was stabbed in the eye from a man inside. According to the Gazette, "a number of persons were soon collected...[and] immediately proceeded to take

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[19] "Poetry. From the Token. The Stranger's Grave," *Buffalo Emporium and General Advertiser* (Buffalo, NY) Dec. 17, 1827.
[20] Milford Bard, "To Consumption," *The Susquehanna Democrat* (Wilkes-Barre, PA) Apr 6, 1827
[21] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, 13.

vengeance upon the Vampire..."[22] On a less violent note, over ten years later, in 1837, *The National Gazette* advertised twenty-dollar reward for anyone with information on the "vampire" who had leveled a citizen's fence, "trampled" their vegetables and fruit trees and "mutilated" a "hedge of lilies."[23]

In addition to literary monsters, and men who acted like monsters, vampires in the early-American republic, were often literal monsters. Perhaps one of the most popular examples during this time was a creature dubbed the "Vampyre of the Ocean." In 1824, the *New England Farmer* published an account of this beast, stating that "a curious monster...is now exhibiting at No. 13, Brattle-street Boston," and describing it as "an inhabitant of the deep, caught in the Atlantic Ocean...and supposed to have weighed...between four and five tons." It was, according to an interviewed man referred to as Dr. Mitchell, "'a fish considerably different from any seen before, and unlike all descriptions I could find in the books.'"[24] The *Sentinel and Democrat* also published an account of the "Vampyre of the Ocean," approximately three months later, recording that it took nine hours to catch the fish.[25] In October, 1823, *The Evening Post* published an article discussing the existence of the elusive "Sea Serpent," claiming that "considering the immense extent and depth of the ocean, it is surely no way unreasonable to believe that it is inhabited by animals of a much greater bulk than those we are accustomed to see." The *Post* describes that the existence of the "Vampire of the Ocean," which they claim "exceeds in magnitude any thing of the kind ever seen in the country," confirms the likely existence of the "Sea Serpent" since "it would be

[22] "Attack on the Vampire," *The National Gazette* (Philadelphia, PA) Dec 5, 1823.
[23] J.G. Smith, "Twenty Dollars Reward," The National Gazette (Philadelphia, PA) May 16, 1837.
[24] "Vampyre of the Ocean," *New England Farmer* (Boston, MA) May 15, 1824
[25] [Untitled] *Sentinel and Democrat* (Burlington, VT) Sep 26, 1823

carrying incredulity too far to persist in denying that the sea may contain others of an equal, and even of a larger size, and species totally different from any with which we have been hitherto familiar."[26] The "Vampyre" (or "Vampire") of the Ocean was not just an unusually large marine creature that attracted large crowds, but it was symbolic of an unknown world. Perhaps that was the reason it was called a vampire, since it was a member of a vast, dark, virtually unknown, world, whose existence took on a supernatural element, and reminded human observers of their small, fragile existence.

While the "Vampyre of the Ocean" may have been the most well-known individual vampire, as a species the "Vampire Bat" was the most wide-spread species of vampire creatures, and the most feared. Physically, vampire bats were frightening creatures, and may have even influenced the appearance of literary vampires: vampire bats sported wings and practiced the art of hanging upside down, well before these features and habits were adopted by "human" vampires. Yet vampire bats were also feared because they were foreign creatures that preyed on innocent American travelers in their sleep. In 1826, the *Long-Island Star* featured a discussion of the vampire bat's habits:

> At the close of the day, the vampire leaves the hollow trees whither they fled at the morning's dawn, and scour the river's banks in quest of prey. On waking from sleep, the astonished traveler finds his hammock all stained with blood. It is the vampire that hath sucked him. Not man alone, but every unprotected animal, is exposed to his depredations; and so gently does this nocturnal surgeon draw the blood, that, instead of being roused, the patient is lulled into still profounder sleep.[27]

[26] [Untitled] *The Evening Post* (New York, NY) Oct 25, 1823
[27] Wateron's Wanderings in South America, "The Vampire," *The Long-Island Star* (Brooklyn, NY) Mar 20, 1826

The Western Carolinian similar featured a piece on the vampire bat, publishing an account of a "gentleman" who was attacked by a vampire in his sleep:

> Knowing by instinct, that a person it intends to attack is in sound slumber, they generally alight near the feet, where, while the creature continues fanning with its enormous wings, which keeps one cool, he bites a piece of the great toe...through this orifice he continues to suck the blood, until he is obliged to disgorge. He then begins again, and thus continues sucking and disgorging till he is scarcely able to fly, and the sufferer has often been known to sleep from time to eternity.[28]

In both accounts, the vampire bat, like its literary and "human" counterpart, is a stealthy predator, that feeds on human blood. The vampire threatens not only to human beings, but also their property; representing the dangers of foreign lands and foreign exploration. Perhaps this is the reason why the *Tennessean* published an article in 1839 concerning the arrival of a "real live vampire," that because of the "horrible associations of blood and terror" connected to "popular ideas of this extraordinary animal," caused a "great deal of curiosity" and a "most intense desire" to "obtain a peep at it."[29] Public interest in vampire bats was apparent also by the exhibition of vampire bats in museums; in 1823, the *National Gazette* published an advertisement for the Philadelphia Museum which described how "there is now living in the Museum a Bat of the largest kind...whose habits and appearance are so peculiarly different from all others as to render it an object of much interest...it is a species called Vampyre, of which so many fabulous tales have been told."[30]

Americans feared vampire bats not only because they had the appearance of monsters, and the stealth of vampires, but also because they were foreign. As Dr. Bob Curran, author of American Vampires, contends, the vampire is an "embodiment of

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[28] "The Vampire," *Western Carolinian* (Salisbury, NC) Apr 23, 1822
[29] "The Vampire," *The Tennessean* (Nashville, TN) Sep 6, 1839.
[30] "Fourth of July. The Philadelphia Museum," *The National Gazette* (Philadelphia, PA) Jun 30, 1823.

xenophobia...,anyone who was foreign, anti-social or had strange ways about them was almost certain to become a vampire..."[31] Throughout the early American republic, newspapers applied the term "vampire" to any foreign individual or entity that either went against American values or potentially threatened the nubile American republic. The *Journal of the Times* featured a piece on Portugal politics, describing how in this "unhappy country" led by a "blood thirsty tyrant who govern it with a rod of iron...Twelve more victims have been sacrificed to the vampire which is now sucking the heart's blood of Portugal—twelve of the most respectable of those who wished for their country's good have been butchered...by the monsters, who, under the mask of supporting religion and monarchy, are fattening on the property of this wretched people." There are multiple vampires at work here; the King of Portugal himself is a vampire, but his supporters are also vampires or "monsters" who live by siphoning wealthy off of the Portuguese people. This language also conveys the idea that all supporters of monarchies and religious institutions are vampires who charm the masses into supporting them, while in reality they are draining them of wealth and resources. The article discusses how the twelve victims were "most respectable" and only "wished for their country's good," implying similarities between these individuals and "virtuous" American citizens. [32]

Newspapers were also concerned with the political situation in South America, specifically the relationship between Spain and her colonies. In 1820, the *Louisiana State Gazette* published an article discussing how the representative of the Republic of

[31] Dr. Bob Curran, *American Vampires: Their True Bloody History from New York to California* (Pompton Plains 2013)
[32] "Portugal," *Journal of the Times* (Bennington, VT) Jul 1, 1829

Colombia, Don Loni Lopez Mendez, published an address in London arguing that Colombia will never again submit to Spain. According to the newspaper article author, Mendez believed that Colombia already has "everything which Spain could give them; reformation of abuses, a representative government, free trade...[Colombia] must have a government of her own, modled upon the wisest principles, consulting her own interests, and removed from the shock of European wars..." The *Gazette* author added his own input arguing that "Spain and South American have no need of each other...Let Spain shake off her shackles at home, give wings to her industry and crush the vampires that have sucked her blood, and she may become a great and prosperous people. South America has only been a clog to her *liberty*, and *industry*."[33] Ironically, or perhaps not, considering deep rooted racism and xenophobia in America, the vampires here are the Colombian people who want to form their own, representative government, presumably modeled on the United States. All of the principles that Mendez outlined matched the founding principles of American government and society: representative self-government, free trade, and a removal from European wars. Yet the *Gazette* author choses to sympathize with Spain, arguing that the Spain should give up Colombia as a colony, not because Colombians deserve a right to self-governance, but because Colombians themselves are "vampires," draining Spain of precious resources and holding Spain back from true prosperity.

A more nuanced discussion of foreign revolutions was featured in the *Hillsborough Recorder* in 1820, in an article titled, "Revolution in Naples." This piece recorded the writings of Sheffield Iris, discussing how the Naples revolution

[33] "From Europe," *Louisiana State Gazette* (New Orleans, LA) Jun 19, 1820.

"promises...liberty and justice to an enslaved, degraded, and miserable people—but whether more miserable, degraded and enslaved by their own vices and turpitude, or by the tyranny of a weak and intolerant government, it might be difficult to determine. The character of a political revolution in such a state must be exceedingly questionable, and its result proportionally ambiguous. It may indeed by [sic.] life from the dead, when health and enjoyment must follow the resurrection; but it may be, more probably, only a monstrous abortion from the grave—like a night-walking vampire, escaped from its bed of corruption, to suck, demoniacal instinct, the blood of sleeping wretches, and infect with the plague of its own nature every victim of its horrible appetite."[34]

The vampire in this case is a revolution that is untaken without proper consideration. This vampire, like Americans' ideas of other revolutionaries during this period (specifically the aforementioned revolutionaries in Portugal and Colombia), could potentially cause more harm than good as it spreads its "plague" to the masses.

Finally, vampiric characteristics can be attributed to foreigners as a way to mock their customs and habits. In the *Richmond Weekly* satire "Shaking Hands," the author argues that since foreigners frequently complain about the American practice of shaking hands, Americans should replace this custom with a foreign greeting. The author continues on to list several "foreign" greetings, concluding with the practice of the "inhabitants of *Caramania*" whose salutation consists of "meeting a friend by opening a vein [and] presenting it to him to suck the blood." The author claims that "this vampire fashion has not much to recommend it...[and] as a general usage, it would be inconvenient and undesirable."[35] In this case, the *Caramania* people are not themselves vampires but practice a vampiric custom that, in general, many Americans would find disturbing. The purpose of this article as a whole, is to criticize foreigners who refuse to

[34] "Revolution in Naples," *The Hillsborough Recorder* (Hillsborough, NC) Oct 18, 1820
[35] "Shaking Hands," *Richmond Weekly Palladium* (Richmond IN) May 18, 1839.

submit to American customs, and to apply mock customs to foreign peoples in order to demonstrate their ridiculous fashions.

In the early American republic, vampires were also used to invoke public morality, by describing not only individuals committing crimes, but also individuals doling out unfair punishments, as vampires. In 1826, the *Hartford Courant* published an article titled "Hanging," in which the author begins by listing a series of men that will hang from crimes of stealing, and ends by condemning the hypocrisy of the system that punishes them. The author even compares these common men, who are sentenced to death, to a certain "thief of distinction," or English nobleman or royal family member, who did not receive repercussions for crimes of stealing, and is an example of a class of men who are exempt from the law. He describes the latter thieves as "vile a set of beings as ever was" and how "times will come, perhaps, when batches of these fellows will be *gallowsed*." The author describes these men as "cold calculating villains, who associates himself with others to establish banks, insurance companies, &c. on the modern plan, and of conducting them in the new-fashioned way; the capital stock of which is imprudence and cunning, and proceedings that of counterfeiting and forgery; whose principle is reckless that of the hyena, and relish for the earnings of others as insatiate as the vampire for blood—which when full disgorges itself, and sucks again."[36] There are a number of current coursing through this depiction. First, the author begins by identifying a powerful "vampire" in England, and arguing that "such things do not happen only in England." He then transfers to digress on the state of American noblemen, who like their English counterparts, "suck" the common men dry. These

[36] "From Niles Register. Hanging," Hartford Courant (Hartford, CT) Sep 4, 1826

vampires are “cunning,” and “reckless” and like vampires, seek to drain others of earnings.[37] While this article is political (especially when the author invokes the establishment of banks), the main point is to bring attention to the public the corruption of republican values in America by elite men, who are not looking out for the public interest. His complaints, and the “vampires” he invokes are universal; there are, and always will be, individuals abusing power to steal (both illegally and legally) from others. As Auerbach proposes, “individual vampires may die...but as a species vampires have been our companions for so long that it is hard to imagine living without them.”[38] By invoking these powerful elites as vampires, the author therefore immortalizes vampires.

American morality was not just focused on powerful elites, however. In 1827, *The Susquehanna Democrat* published an article titled, “Ingratitude of Man,” which focused on the morality of individual men, listing a series of faults men possess, from finding “fault wherever he possibly can,” to not being grateful for blessings, and finally, onto to the worst fault a man can possess, continuing to find sources of complaint when he has “much to be thankful for.” These men “will yet continue to seek for causes of complaint—will insist upon grievances that never existed, and will feel and act, having nobody and nothing to quarrel with, like a vampire without his blood...yet how many such infest and disturb this land—this favored, peaceful and happy land.” The author argues that men should appreciate their blessings, primarily health and “liberty—fair, rational, well understood Liberty” that “raps at every man’s door.”[39] The comparison of ungrateful men to vampires, invokes the idea that these men “like a vampire without his

[37] “From Niles Register. Hanging,” Hartford Courant (Hartford, CT) Sep 4, 1826
[38] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, 9.
[39] “Miscellaneous. Ingratitude of Man,” *The Susquehanna Democrat* (Wilkes-Barre, PA) Oct 5, 1827.

blood" will be constantly unhappy, because nothing they seek will fulfill their unlimited desires. Instead, the author proposes that men should appreciate ideas, not goods; he argues that peace, health, and liberty are available to all men (it is unstated but assumed through virtue of being American citizens) and that by valuing these virtues a man can avoid being part of the "infestation" of vampires (i.e. ungrateful citizens) haunting the land. In this sense, being a vampire is turning away from God and one's country, and thus being the antithesis of virtue and morality.

In some cases, author discuss morality in a less abstract, more concrete sense. For instance, in 1831 the *Long-Island Star* published an untitled article under their heading "Daily Advertisements" describing a proposal to shut down city gambling houses. The proposal consists of publishing a monthly periodical titled, *Vampires of New-York*, which would be a "full account of the gambling houses in this city, the names of the persons engaged in keeping them, and of their transactions for the last four years, and the names of those who have suffered by them." The author suggests that this periodical would be a form of revenge, for "the persons who are interested in getting up the publication, are said to be those who have been ruined by gambling establishments."[40] In this case, the "vampires" in this article are clear-cut criminals, whose never-ending greed drains men of their fortunes and livelihood.

Finally, not even American authors are immune to the charge of immorality. In 1824, the *Mississippi Free-Trader* published the article, "The Devil and Tom Walker" criticizing Washington Irving for his immoral tales. The author argues that "it is a source of regret, that...Irving should seek solely to amuse the world by his writings, instead of

[40] Daily Adv., [Untitled], *The Long-Island Star* (Brooklyn, NY) Jan 5, 1831

trying to instruct and inform it." The author even charges Irving with cloaking his stories in "the wild legendary dress of superstition" and for featuring a character in his work "The Fortunes of Nigel" that is the epitome of a usurer, which the author contends is the worst sin possible. A usurer, according to this unknown author, makes a curse out of wealth, and "instead of dispensing happiness around, he makes it the bait, the snare to draw the unwary into the vortex of destruction," and that the usurer "inverts the order of nature, and instead of being a useful member of society, he like the fabled vampire, feeds upon the life blood of his fellow creatures." Instead, the author argues that Irving ought to condemn usury, by exciting "the public feeling of contempt" against its practice. Thus, this author believes that as a popular writer, Washington Irving has a responsibility to educate the public, and uphold the "natural order." In this article, vampires are outside the natural order, but they are still defeatable foes: as usurers, they can be eliminated through public education and through the "professions of physic and the law."[41] By comparing vampires to usurers, the antitheses of American values, the author implies that vampires themselves are the opposite of American values, an argument that continues to appear in many other newspaper publications.

Perhaps the articles that demonstrate this most, are the ones that feature political vampires. Political vampires, as individuals, not only fail to demonstrate American values, but endanger the American republic as a whole. For insistence, in 1818, *The Evening Post* published the article, "On the National Bank. Messrs. Gales & Seaton," written by an individual using the pseudonym, "Antimonopolist." Antimonopolist argues that "the wealthy vampires, through their agents, those vultures on society called

[41] "The Devil and Tom Walker," *Mississippi Free Trader* (Natchez, MS) Dec 8, 1824.

brokers, will pursue the same legal robbery, under the plausible and specious terms of *premium* and *discount*, which they do at present, though not so great an extend."[42] In this case, as in the previous examples, the vampire was a wealthy man who took advantage of others, although in this case, the vampire has state support. An additional example occurs in the *Vermont State Paper*, and in the *Lamoille and Orleans Co. Democrat*, both of which published an untitled article on June 22, 1838, criticizing the American aristocracy. The article argues that "stern Democracy has awakened, the voice of the people is raised in this dark house with a determination to purge the country from the vampires from aristocracy. The voice of true patriotism has whispered in the ears of the souls of freedom to be no longer deceived by the clamor of rag speculators, but to be determined to conquer the rag King who is leading his trembling slaves, in a bondage more painful than that of the African Negro." While the passionate language of this article makes a hyperbolic, and untrue, comparison between free white Americans and enslaved black Americans, it demonstrates the concern many Americans had during this period, that the corrupt "vampires of aristocracy" like vampires in the current circulating fiction, were able to deceive virtuous American citizens into a system of "bondage" that can only be dissolved through "Stern Democracy."[43] These political vampires are sometimes singular individuals to be hunted down and eliminated, but more often are part of a complex web of deceit that threatens the character of American democracy.

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[42] Anti-monopolist, "On the National Bank. Messrs. Gales & Seaton," *The Evening Post* (New York, NY) Sep 10, 1818.
[43] [Untitled] *Vermont State Paper*, and *Lamoille and Orleans Co. Democrat* (Johnson, Vermont) Jun 22, 1838.

Vampires can also be political organizations. In 1832, the *Vermont Intelligencer* published the article, "Power of Masonry," which speaks against the Freemason association for shield its members from the law, and holding too much sway and influence over state governments. The anonymous author urges readers to "not cherish an institution which may be 'fastened like a Vampire to the bosom of your country, sucking the life-blood of its constitution;' but come forward in the good work; banish this secret, selfish, and dangerous institution from this land of liberty, to its native land of Despotism." The reputation of vampires as cunning and manipulative, being able to seduce its victims by posing as caring friends, lends itself easily to this comparison to secret political organizations, which this author would argue, drain the resources of the American republic from behind closed doors, without any consequences. The author contends that the only way to defeat this vampire is for the American "brethren to dwell together in unity."[44] Thus, vampires are isolated individuals or societies that are separate from the virtuous American public who must join together to defeat them.

Similar to political parties, vampires could also be political institutions. In 1837, the *Weekly Standard* published an article titled, "Whig Modesty," which separates "Wall Street brokers, bank officers, and monopolists, and their dependents—federal lawyers and aristocrats—pensioned editors and defeated and broken down politicians" from the "nineteen twentieths" of Americans who are "farmers, mechanics, and working-men."[45] The latter, according to the *Standard*, are the people that supported General Andrew Jackson "in his opposition to a great moneyed power that would reduce them to the

[44] "Power of Masonry," *Vermont Intelligencer* (Bellows Falls, VT) Nov 12, 1832.
[45] "Whig Modesty," *The Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, NC) Jun 21, 1837.

level of serfs and servile liegemen."[46] The *Standard* argues that these same supporters "will sustain the present administration, in its effort to cast from the bosom of the republic that insatiate vampire, the United States Bank, that is wasting the life-blood of its independence!"[47] The National Bank is a vampire in this case, because it drains the financial resources of productive American citizens, and reduces them to the lowest state, a state opposed to American democracy, that of serfdom. Thus, the vampire destroys not only individual livelihoods, but the existence of a democratic nation.

Vampires are also central figures in character assassinations. *The Lorain Standard* published an article titled "Circumstances Alter Cases" in 1840, criticizing what the editors believe to be a double standard applied to Democratic Party members. The article argues that "if a democrat utters...the fact which history has recorded of Harrison's public career and character he is forthwith denounced by the trainbands of the banks as a graceless ingrate. They now take the position that an old man who as they say has served this country in the field, should be exempt from investigation even in his public capacity..." The author believes this criticism is an example of clear hypocrisy, since "the authorship of the Declaration of Independence did not shield Thomas Jefferson from their fiend-like assaults upon even his private character, while the living and their vampire attacks upon his memory are dead..."[48] The vampires, in this case, are not only the current Whig party members, who according to the author of this article, unfairly dredge up unfair attacks against former President Jefferson, while arguing that President Harrison should be shield from (again according to the author)

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[46] "Whig Modesty," *The Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, NC) Jun 21, 1837. The "great moneyed power" here refers to the National Bank.
[47] "Whig Modesty," *The Weekly Standard* (Raleigh, NC) Jun 21, 1837.
[48] "Circumstances Alter Cases," *The Lorain Standard* (Elyria, OH) Aug 11, 1840

valid criticisms, but the former attacks themselves, which exist as vampiric charges that are still not put to rest.

Using vampiric metaphors to attack political parties was also a common practice. In an untitled article published in 1834, editors of the *Pittsburgh Gazette* attack their competitor the *Washington Globe*, and its portrayal of the Whig party. The *Washington Globe*, according to the former editors, published multiple articles "fit to excite a degree of horror and the strongest disgust in all well constitute bosoms."[49] Apparently, the *Globe* had published an article on the previous day whose "ribaldry...against the candidates of the Whig party in the city of New York, could scarcely be exceeded. Not content with an attempt to lacerate the honorable living, it preys, with the ferocity of the hyena, and the instinct of the vampire, upon the illustrious dead...In short, it heaps upon a noble and republican name and national reputation, criminality as hateful as fictitious..."[50] The vivid language of this article, especially the invocation of the hyena and vampire, is used not only to pander to the readers emotions, but to create a clear division between the "honorable living" Whig party members, and the Democrats who not only lacerate this virtuous men, but defame the dead who cannot defend themselves. The Democrat attacks, according to the *Gazette*, threaten the national reputation, which during this period (i.e. 1834) is still in the fragile stages of its formation.

Vampires were often a feature of political poetry published in nineteenth century newspapers. The *Vermont Mercury* reprinted or "paraphrased" a poem, the first stanza of which read:

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[49] [Untitled] *The Pittsburgh Gazette* (Pittsburgh, PA) Nov 6, 1834.
[50] [Untitled] *The Pittsburgh Gazette* (Pittsburgh, PA) Nov 6, 1834.

Vampires and pirates, hail!
Ye fatteners on the spoils of honest men;
How long will you prevail?
How long ere freeman stand erect again?
Bowed to the earth—our fathers left us free—
Hewers of wood to traitors such as ye![51]

The *Madisonian* also featured a poem, titled "The Banner of Tippecanoe," describing a patriotic scene of men fighting for liberty:

Already the foes of the People are quailing
The vampires of office turn pale with dismay;
And Tyranny's panders their fate are bewailing
And Slander's harsh voice sinks in hisses away.[52]

These scenes not only invoke the public emotions for patriotism, but also feature vampires alongside another evil figure, pirates. By using vampires, the latter poem sets up clear dichotomy between good and evil: vampires, alongside tyranny, are evils that must be defeated through forces of good.

Ultimately, all the previous newspaper articles demonstrate that vampires were deeply rooted in cultural history and national understanding. These papers were published across the United States, demonstrating that vampires were not simply products of regional folklore. Vampires were invoked in numerous different fashions; vampires could be your neighbors, disguising themselves as good men but hiding an evil intent; literal monsters from unknown depths or flying beasts that drained one's blood; politicians, trying to portray themselves on the side of the general public but really interested in draining their supporters of wealth; institutions promising good but delivering inequality; and foreign revolutionaries who masqueraded as fighters for

[51] "Poetry. Paraphrased for the Pontiac Jeffersonian. TO LOCO FOCO OFFICE HOLDERS. Mene Mene tekel Upharsin!" *The Vermont Mercury* (Rutland, VT) Feb 14, 1840
[52] "The Banner of Tippecanoe," *Madisonian* (Washington D.C.) Aug 28, 1840

democratic values, but who were more interested in gaining power for themselves. The central idea is that during this period (1820 to 1840), vampires were national figures, and key features of American folklore. Editors could choose which vampires they used depending on their aims and circumstances, but in the end, they still featured vampires.

The question, then, is why does this matter? Why does it matter that all of these newspapers featured vampires, when there is already a large scholarship discussing the history of nineteenth-century literary vampires, and a discussion of the multiple forms vampires could take? The answer is that the history of vampires in newspapers has been ignored. It has been ignored because scholars have either bypassed these sources or assumed that these papers simply invoked vampire metaphors without significantly changing the image and appearance of vampires themselves. Yet the fact that they appear is significant in itself. To get to this point, it is first necessary to consider America as a nation. According to Benedict Anderson, a nation is "an imagined community" which is "*imagined*" because "even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."[53] According to Anderson, newspapers were crucial to establishing this community, and thus the American nation, since they "created an imaged community among a specific assemblage of fellow-readers," to whom specific issues were important.[54] Thus the imagined community that newspapers created, was either aware of vampiric folklore, or became aware of this folklore as newspapers continued to expand. Newspaper advertisement for vampire fiction, such as the story,

[53] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 2006) 6.
[54] Ibid., 62.

"The Vampyre," by Polidori, or later the play, "The Vampire Bride," continued to spread ideas of vampire folklore, but also promoted new ideas of the literary vampire. Newspaper promotion was a key reason why there was an explosion of vampire literature beginning in this period and continuing later into the twentieth century. Without newspapers spreading vampire literature throughout their imagined communities, and thus the nation, the story of the vampire would have likely been contained to regional folklore, and never gain national prominence. The story of the vampire in American newspapers demonstrates the value of tracing literary characters and folkloric creatures in history. Literature does not exist outside history, and by historicizing literary monsters we can further understand why they evoke such powerful emotions and why they are successful literary creations. As Auerbach states, "no fear is *only* personal: it must steep itself in its political and ideological ambience, without which our solitary terrors have no contagious resonance."[55] If vampires reflect our culture and values, then the history of the vampire is the history of America.

[55] Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves*, 6.

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