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Vampirism in Hawthorne's "The Birthmark," The Scarlet Letter, and "The Minister's Black Veil"

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Abstract
Erik Butler's predicates for vampirism apply in some degree to Nathaniel Hawthorne's male protagonists who skulk in the margins of "The Birthmark," *The Scarlet Letter*, and "The Minister's Black Veil." As metaphoric vampires who seek weak prey in order to manipulate power structures, these monomaniacal parasites assume paternalistic positions in order to control and manipulate their victims, and they disguise their exploitive and egotistic sides with idealistic and altruistic passions for science and religion. This thesis explores how Hawthorne's protagonists' corrupt and consuming spirits echo traditional vampiristic characteristics.

Keywords
Vampirism, Hawthorne, Dimmesdale, Aylmer, and Hooper

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While spiraling sin and somber Puritan settings typify Nathaniel Hawthorne's literature, there – in between his lines – roams a dangerously alluring sect of men. Lusting after scientific idealism and spiritual reverence, Aylmer in "The Birthmark," Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter*, and Reverend Hooper in "The Minister's Black Veil" are the men your parents warned you about, and despite their experiences in the lab or the pulpit, they might be better suited for the dark, dank shadows of society.

Many critics, however, argue that these male protagonists deserve to be swathed in radiant light instead of shrouded by shadows. Mary Rucker admires Aylmer's "selfless and worthy motive" as he extirpates his wife's sole flaw (453). Carmine Sarracino marvels at Dimmesdale's martyrdom as he seeks the "greater happiness of his flock" (56), and G.A. Santangelo labels Hooper as a "hero [who] go[es] on to higher realizations of man's moral position in the universe" (66). While these critics esteem Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper's social positions and moralistic roles in Hawthorne's texts, it is vital to consider what propels these men up the social hierarchy. How do they maintain their elevated status? How does this status affect their relationships, and what lessons can readers derive from the common traits of these protagonists and their experiences?

Reading Hawthorne's "The Birthmark," *The Scarlet Letter,* and "The Minister's Black Veil" as cautionary tales of sin, self-destruction, and social ruin, the answers to these questions appear bleak, and the critics who position these protagonists on perfectly dusted pedestals may need to rent out a few public scaffolds instead. Because while Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper hold socially prominent positions, their reputations come at a frightening price. Considering Jules Zanger's definition of vampirism as "a metaphor for a relationship in which one partner

gains life at the expense of another," Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper are the metaphoric vampires skulking in Hawthorne's margins, manipulating power structures, and seeking weak prey (366).

Butler points to John Polidori's "The Vampyre" (1819), which introduces Lord Ruthven, "the first iconic representation of the vampire," who leaves an indelible mark of suffering on everyone he meets (13). Lord Ruthven, "who possesses the august dignity of a noble man," invades and destroys, and while "bloodsucking and 'undeadness' receive relatively little attention…[his] predations record the upward mobility of a new group" (177, 14).

While Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper cannot be found sucking blood, rising from the dead, or killing numerous women, like Ruthven, they seek upward mobility, and dressed as noble men, they also selfishly seek out occasions that allow them to manipulate and exploit others. Instead of blood, they suck out happiness. Instead of the stereotypical black cloak, they wear lab coats and religious vestments, and instead of fangs that puncture, they employ words that cut.

Seeking self-betterment, Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper obsess over perfection, and rejecting their own moral nature, they neglect Hawthorne's message that "in every heart, even the holiest, there is a germ of evil" (qtd. in Darrel 226). Driven by their common appetite for the ideal, Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper are opportunistic feeders in paternalistic positions who hypocritically and deceitfully choose victims who willingly share their innocence, strength, and love. They seduce their prey, and their spell-binding nature advances their metamorphoses and the spread of chaos. As selfishness corrupts Hawthorne's protagonists, they violate the integrity of relationships, threaten communal life, and alienate themselves, and while they lack the vampiristic quality of resurrection, they pursue immortality through the guise of science and religion.

Although the 21st century has experienced a resurgence of vampire plot lines, Nathaniel Hawthorne's 19th century hungry male parasites arrived fashionably early to the vampirism motif. In *Metamorphosis of Vampirism in Literature and Film*, Erik Butler identifies the following as some of the basic traits of vampires in literature and film: vampires are male creatures who disguise themselves in some way so as to feed off of weaker, usually female, characters; they assume a paternalistic position in order to control and manipulate their victims; claiming power over both humanity and nature, they draw energy from their victims, often sucking the life from them. Butler's predicates, it will be seen, apply in some degree to Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper, Hawthorne's cloaked men who abuse their respective positions to seduce and manipulate others. Riddled with monomania, they attempt to prey on man and nature by masking their exploitive and egotistic sides as idealistic and altruistic passions for science and religion. This thesis will explore how Hawthorne's protagonists' corrupt and consuming spirits embody traditional vampiristic characteristics.

"The Birthmark" (1843) introduces Aylmer, a fervid crusader for scientific advancement, who leaves his lab only to marry and later returns hand-in-hand with his next scientific experiment – his wife, Georgiana, and her cheek's crimson birthmark of shame. Throughout "The Birthmark," Aylmer's scientific desperation contributes to his vampiristic monomania. Although he believes that he can create the universal solvent, bottle the Elixir Vitae, and challenge Pygmalion's success, his rampant failures make him "desperate…for a sustaining success" that will uphold his scientific confidence (Zanger 366). Georgiana, who comes to admire her husband's ambitious spirit, encourages Aylmer's unrealistic aims, and despite her knowledge of his previous "failures" in the lab, her praise coupled with Aylmer's potent pride allows his egocentrism to dominate their marriage (Hawthorne 1298, 1296). While Aylmer

naively clings to his idealistic goals, Aylmer and Georgiana fail to acknowledge Aylmer's hubris or its crushing consequences. This denial empowers Aylmer, and as his scientific ambitions and intellectual pride grow, so does his obsession with Georgiana's birthmark, marking the bloody hand as his next quest – and Georgiana as his prey.

In order to undertake his new scientific aim, Aylmer strengthens his paternalistic position by exhibiting his vampiristic trait of manipulation. He must weaken Georgiana's confidence, convince her to offer up her birthmark as a sacrifice to love, and construct her new "mentality of submission" (Zanger 366). While Georgiana has viewed her birthmark as a "charm," Aylmer's definition of the birthmark as a "symbol of…sin, sorrow, decay, and death" crushes her confidence and turns her into a weak heroine and submissive wife who allows newfound guilt and insecurity to convince her of her husband's "honorable love" and her own lamentable crimson flaw (1290-1291, 1298). She internalizes Aylmer's uncompromising revulsion and scientific hauteur, and in doing so, becomes the abused wife, tormented by his physical shudders and violent heart-wrenching dreams. In order for Aylmer to preserve his self-worth, he must link his love for Georgiana with his passion for science, and "compelled to preserve her own and her husband's sanity, [Georgiana] permits Aylmer to create the equivalent of a mechanical art object" (Rucker 456). She welcomes Aylmer's attempts to transform her into an object that he can isolate, study, and manipulate, and he metaphorically sinks his arrogant, scientific, vampiric teeth into her cheek – instead of her neck.

Aylmer's attempts to transform his wife into a mechanical art object that will be his "triumph, when [he] shall have corrected what Nature left imperfect" speak to his own inadequacies, which challenge his paternalistic position (1292). Because "Georgiana's lovers were wont to say, that some fairy, at her birth-hour had laid her tiny hand upon the infants cheek,

and left the impress there, in token of the magic endowments that were to give her such sway over all hearts," Georgiana's birthmark appears to represent an alluring romantic or sexual feature (1290). Cindy Weinstein believes that "Aylmer experiences the independent life of the birthmark as a diminution of both his sexual and economic power, which can only be resuscitated by the scientific erasure of 'the Crimson Hand'" (46). If Georgiana's birthmark symbolizes her sexuality and independence, Aylmer must seek its removal to eliminate any possible power struggles. Zanger suggests that Georgiana's birthmark "resists conventional male conceptualization and suggests an autonomous female nature" (370). Because Aylmer shows no disdain for Georgiana's "possible defect" before marriage, his newfound shock strengthens the theory that Aylmer's marriage has called his masculinity into question (1290). Perhaps sexual insecurities or his awareness of the birthmark's clear link to "menstruation as an element in the sexual life of marriage" lead him to reject Georgiana's body (1290; Zanger 368). As Georgiana's birthmark has encouraged many a man to risk his life "for the privilege of pressing his lips to the mysterious hand," Aylmer must now risk Georgiana's life in his egotistical quest to secure his own dominance in their marriage (1290).

Because Georgiana becomes psychologically weakened by Aylmer's revulsion, Aylmer easily seduces her, and as Georgiana's birthmark represents her sexuality, Aylmer's quest to extract it from her cheek makes use of his vampiristic characteristics. The "bloody hand" leads Aylmer "to have transformed himself into a perfect uxorious husband by elevating his wife into a scientific problem to be solved…[resulting in] if not marital happiness, at least a feverish compatibility, a temporary symbiosis that finally degenerates into vampirism" (Zanger 366). Because Georgiana's birthmark engages Aylmer's passion for science and offers him the opportunity to overcome his scientific failures, he preys on her birthmark to sustain his own

sense of worth and pride. However, Georgiana also plays into the traditional vampire myth, and Zanger describes her as "an active participant in the procedure that destroys her" (366). Because Aylmer loathes Georgiana's birthmark, she too struggles with the shame of the "hateful mark" and confesses that "danger is nothing to me; for life – while this hateful mark makes me the object of [Aylmer's] horror and disgust – life is a burthen which I would fling down with joy" (1292). As if mesmerized, Georgiana succumbs to the victim role in her marriage. If vampirism is regarded in Zanger's terms as "a metaphor for a relationship in which one partner gains life at the expense of another," Aylmer's obsession with the removal of Georgiana's birthmark sustains his life while Georgiana sacrifices her own (366).

In order for Aylmer to sustain his life, he must "draw a magic circle round [Georgiana]," marking his territory and fortifying his paternal dominance (1294). By removing Georgiana from society, she becomes entirely his subject, and he can both maintain a "hermetic marriage" and demonstrate dominance (Zanger 366). Aylmer exhibits this dominance by controlling Georgiana's emotions and creating optical illusions to divert her when she feels lonely or confined. Additionally, Aylmer confirms his dominance when Georgiana enters his lab, and "he [rushes] towards her, and [seizes] her arm with a gripe that left the print of his fingers upon it" (1297). Paralleling the birthmark on her cheek that can be covered with the "tips of two small fingers," Aylmer leaves his own stain of mortality and imperfection on Georgiana's arm in an attempt to demonstrate his control (1292). His obsession with her birthmark creates a new marking – a blemish that penalizes her independence on entering the lab and chastises her courage to confront Aylmer. Declaring "'You distrust your wife!...Think not so unworthily of me, my husband! Tell me all the risks we run," Georgiana challenges Aylmer's unspoken fears; however, moments later she adds "I submit…and Aylmer, I shall quaff whatever draught you

bring me; but it will be on the same principle that would induce me to take a dose of poison, if offered by your hand" (1298). Although Georgiana reveals moments of boldness, Aylmer has won her trust and her heart, and although she recognizes the dangers ahead, she vows to submit to her husband because she believes that "[her] share in it is far less than [his] own" (1298). Aylmer has "select[ed]" Georgiana's birthmark as the mark of her imperfection, the means to his scientific advancement, and the method of demonstrating his masculine authority. He seeks control of Georgiana's body, convincing her that his selection demonstrates a love "so pure and lofty that it would accept nothing less than perfection" (1298).

Just as Aylmer confines Georgiana to demonstrate his dominance, he also manipulates her social space to eliminate Georgiana's female authority. By removing the normative spheres which gave women "authority over the private home while men dominated the public world" (Weinstein 48), Aylmer removes all sources of Georgiana's independence, and "the fact that she faints upon being helped over 'the threshold of the laboratory' calls attention to the radical nature of her transition from the domestic space to Aylmer's laboratory" (1293). By removing Georgiana from domesticity and eliminating the distance that separates him from his life source – Georgiana's birthmark--Ayler can rely on Georgiana's blood red cheek to invigorate his spirit. In the course of Aylmer's "mortifying failures" in the lab, he renders Georgiana "flushed and exhausted," and her presence awakens his spirit and inspires him to "sp[eak] in glowing language of the resources of his art" (1294). Because Aylmer has elevated himself to a more powerful position and has restricted Georgiana's authority, he celebrates science, reveling in the history of Alchemists, which has helped him exploit his wife.

Aylmer's paternalistic position seduces his wife out of their bedroom and into his lab, and in exchange, she grants him honor as well as access to her psychological and physical

integrity. Mary Rucker paints Aylmer as someone who is driven by "a selfless and worthy motive – worship of divine beauty, a specimen of which he wishes to bestow on humanity – that is rooted in humility before the transcendent and in a fundamentally noble conception of human potential and worth" (453). Given Aylmer's arrogance and manipulation, however, his exploits fail to appear selfless or noble. Aylmer obsesses over Georgiana's mark of horror despite her beauty. He drives her to embrace her own death if it will rid her of the birthmark's repulsiveness, and he recklessly and selfishly converts love and trust into a means to a scientific end by constructing a threatening scientific scaffold that he invites Georgiana to climb upon. Aylmer's obsessive need to feed his egotism compels him to undertake the unattainable goal of extracting Georgiana's mortal flaw and guarantees his failures in science, love, and nature. Alfred Reid defends Aylmer's quest as "high and holy," but the dominance Aylmer seeks in his relationships with science, love, and nature appears more selfishly motivated than "high" or "holy" (349). Reid also claims that the name Aylmer "is a variant spelling of *Elmer*, which means 'noble' or 'excellence,' and its use suggests Aylmer's pursuit of these qualities" (350). However, while Aylmer claims to attack Georgiana's mark to ensure her perfection, he also seeks to rid himself of horror. In this way, his motives confirm Reid's assertion that Aylmer suffers a disease that "makes him *ail more*," as he is unable to tolerate his own mortality (350). Due to Aylmer's concern with his own obsessive suffering, he pursues a self-seeking cure for earthly perfection, despite the threat it poses to Georgiana.

Just as Aylmer dishonorably engages Georgiana in his trial, he also reveals his vampiristic traits as he strives to seduce and dominate Nature, If Aylmer can rid Georgiana's cheek of the "Crimson Hand," he will successfully critique Nature's failures, manipulate her work, and discover a new means to control her. While nature denies mortality and perfection,

Aylmer desires to foil nature to secure a scientific conquest. Aylmer believes he will "correct what Nature left imperfect, in her fairest work," and his intellectual pride allows him to believe that he can "divorce matter and spirit…[to] impose his vision" (1292; Rucker 460). Driven by his monomania, Aylmer irrationally strives to lump both Georgiana and Nature under the gendered category of "confined," believing that he has the knowledge to concoct universal solvents and Elixirs Vitae. However, because he "caustically interprets [the birthmark's] import in a manner that will permit him to conquer nature and create a living and holy artifact," his own arrogance blinds him to the doom that will ensue as he attempts to make Nature his servant instead of his mistress (Rucker 453). Despite his own dream that foreshadows the inextricable link between Georgiana's little hand birthmark and her heart, Aylmer's monomania "prohibits appropriate humility before and cooperation with nature," and he dismisses Nature's upper hand (Rucker 455).

Despite Aylmer's vampiric attempts on Nature via Georgiana, he is unable to turn Nature into an active or willing participant in his quest for scientific dominance. Although he is able to destroy Georgiana's resistance to his scientific exploits, his "very quest for more than mortal beauty ironically releases the mortal flaws of the finite artist," and Nature notices and responds (Rucker 447). Aylmer as a finite artist cannot create an infinite work, and in his final attempt to steal the rights to Georgiana's beauty from Nature, he watches the birthmark fade as if "watch[ing] the stain of the rainbow fading out of the sky" (1299). Aylmer "reject[s] the best that earth could offer," and his irrational attempts to challenge Nature's role in Georgiana's imperfections lead to the tragic loss of Georgiana's life (1300). Because Aylmer "fail[s] to look beyond the shadowy scope of Time," he is unable to appreciate the beauty that Nature has offered him in the present. Instead, he pushes his science and his luck and "[flings] away the

happiness, which would have woven his mortal life of the self-same texture with the celestial" (1300).

Throughout "The Birthmark," Aylmer plays the metaphorical vampiristic role, weakening Georgiana's psychological integrity and using this weakness to propel his scientific endeavors. He seduces her into his lab, and in her "pavilion among the clouds," he bolsters his paternalistic and scientific position by undermining her confidence and strengthening her disgust for her cheek's stain (1293). While Georgiana reveals momentary bursts of boldness, she ultimately surrenders her life to Aylmer, actively participating in his selfish aims for dominance. Recognizing Butler's claim that the vampiristic form often mirrors a changing world, Aylmer's egotism and monomania may reveal Hawthorne's assessment of 19th century scientific advances and his worry that "science had not entirely escaped the clouds of sorcery that had clung to it in dreamier and less efficient ages" ("Nathaniel Hawthorne and the Spirit of Science" 160).

The Scarlet Letter (1850) introduces Arthur Dimmesdale, a Puritan minister whose adulterous affair with Hester Prynne results in the conception of their daughter, Pearl, and the devastating weight of Dimmesdale's silent and haunting guilt. Dimmesdale allows selfishness and status to control his decisions, and while Hester is forced by Puritan society to advertise her shame and bear her scarlet letter on her chest, Dimmesdale cannot bear to reveal his sin, and he is not required to since he remains unmarked by his affair with Hester. While Hester stands upon the public scaffold, Dimmesdale begins his monomaniac quest to secure his righteous position, exercising vampiric characteristics as he preys on Puritan society and Hester in order to satisfy his egocentrism.

As an esteemed reverend in Boston's Puritan society, Dimmesdale's vampirism emerges as he egotistically acts as a foil to the sinful citizens of Boston to ensure his position in the social

hierarchy. In his encounters with Governor Bellingham, Dimmesdale's morality remains unquestioned. Governor Bellingham encourages Dimmesdale to demand Hester Prynne's repentance and confession by explaining that "the responsibility of [her] soul lies greatly with [him]" (73). Ironically, Bellingham is unable to imagine that Dimmesdale may be responsible for Hester's adultery. Even as Dimmesdale demands that Hester "speak out the name of the fellow-sinner and fellow-sufferer," his campaign for the community's respect is too great for him to join Hester on her "pedestal of shame" (73). Dimmesdale's fear of losing his distinguished title again trumps the truth when Hester arrives at the governor's mansion to appeal to the governor regarding her custody of Pearl. When Hester pleads for Dimmesdale to speak on her behalf, he responds that Pearl "was meant…for a retribution too; a torture to be felt at many an unthought-of moment; a pang, a sting, an ever-recurring agony, in the midst of a troubled joy" (114). Even as Dimmesdale acknowledges the agony that Hester suffers, he appears innocent and selfishly chooses his paternal position in the church over his legal role as Pearl's father.

Although Hawthorne gives Roger Chillingworth the label of leech as he "d[igs] into [Dimmesdale's] heart like a miner searching for gold; or rather, like a sexton delving into a grave," Dimmesdale also demonstrates leech-like characteristics as he strives to sustain his position by preying on the Puritan congregation (127). Because Dimmesdale tolerates "the innumerable throbs of anguish that had been so cunningly contrived for [Hester] by the undying, the ever-active sentence of the Puritan tribune," he becomes a hypocrite (88). Erika Kreger notes that "The reverend hiding his secret 'A' beneath his clothing is depicted in the same terms with which nineteenth-century reviewers personified the novels that dressed up subversive characters in virtuous clothes. Dimmesdale is the embodiment of a corrupt and corrupting cultural text" (325).

Butler notes that vampires frequently disguise themselves in order to achieve their ends. By acting as a figurehead of the Puritan church and entering the pulpit on Sunday mornings to preach against immortality, Dimmesdale dresses up his sin in the "virtuous" costume that his congregation expects, and he seduces his congregation into admiring his faith in order to maintain his social position. While Carmine Sarracino justifies Dimmesdale's actions as "quite apart from selfish reasons," arguing that he "hides his guilt, forms a persona, precisely to satisfy 'the requirements of the age,'" his motivation to satisfy Puritan demands fails to benefit anyone other than himself (52). His hypocrisy fails to benefit the Puritan church, Hester, or his daughter, Pearl. While Sarracino believes Dimmesdale offers up "his personal anguish [for] the greater happiness of his flock," his selfish hypocrisy and spineless silence only function to save him from social condemnation and ruin. Dimmesdale justifies his silence, believing that sinners "shrink from displaying themselves black and filthy in the view of men; because, thenceforth, no good can be achieved by them; no evil of the past be redeemed by better service" (130). However, his admission that evil cannot be redeemed speaks to his craven fear that he will lose his rank in the church and blacken his reputation if he chooses the truth over hypocrisy.

In order to maintain his position, Dimmesdale must also exploit Hester to secure his secret, and just as Georgiana promotes Aylmer's scientific ego and selfish love, Hester too allows Dimmesdale's morality to remain unquestioned. William Nolte believes it is Hester's "nobility of character that Hawthorne contrasts with the supine cowardice and hypocrisy of Dimmesdale" (172). Just as Aylmer exploits love to seek scientific accomplishments and patriarchal power, Dimmesdale relies on Hester's noble love to secure his secret sin and promote his prominent status in the Puritan community. Because Dimmesdale shows little remorse for leaving Hester to suffer alone for their mutual sin, Dimmesdale proves that he both needs

Hester's silence and controls her decisions. If vampirism is regarded as "a metaphor for a relationship in which one partner gains life at the expense of another, then Hester willfully serves as vampiric victim by embracing her shame to protect Dimmesdale (Zanger 366). Under the potent spell of manipulation and love, Hester clings to her toxic vampiric relationship with Dimmesdale, allowing herself to become the abused victim so that Dimmesdale can preserve his appearance of purity and nobility. Referencing Hawthorne's chapter title "The Pastor and His Parishioner," set seven years after their shared crime, Dimmesdale remains powerful because of his standing in the church, while Hester submits to the weaker status as his sinful parishioner. She continues to protect his secret and bolster his confidence, convincing him to find peace as she selflessly assures him, "You have deeply and sorely repented. Your sin is left behind you, in the days long past. Your present life is no less holy, in very truth, than it seems in people's eyes" (183).

As Hester's state of mind strengthens because of her admission of sin and acceptance of its social repercussions, Dimmesdale's mind and body weaken under the burden of his prolonged silence – leaving him desperate to appropriate energy from Hester, which she is willing and able to provide. Like Georgiana, Hester allows love the power to mark her as imperfect, and she lacks the resources to challenge male power. Both women enable male dominance in their relationships, and they internalize the role of inferiority. Nolte recognizes this in Hester's love and proposes, "If there were reason in love, one might doubt the realism of [Hester's] continuing respect for the minister. Since there is not, one can only regret her bad taste" (172). As Hester wears her scarlet letter and Georgiana accepts Aylmer's insistence on removing her birthmark, both women magnanimously prefer to suffer in the name of love rather than speak out in the name of protest. Although Dimmesdale does not literally steal away Hester's life as Aylmer

does, his vampiristic figure seduces Hester, and her silence ensures he lives eternally as a devout man of the cloth in the hearts and minds of his congregation.

Dimmesdale's selfish egotism reappears as he interprets natural occurrences as supernatural signs addressed only to him. After Dimmesdale convinces Hester and Pearl to once again climb the condemning scaffold that he ascends only in the shroud of darkness, he discovers "a light gleam[ing] far and wide over all the muffled sky" and in this light, he detects the letter A "marked out in lines of dull red light" (149). As the narrator describes Dimmesdale's reaction, he recognizes Dimmesdale's egotism, explaining:

> But what shall we say when an individual discovers a revelation, addressed to himself alone, on the same vast sheet of record! In such a case, it could only be the symptom of a highly disordered mental state, when a man, rendered morbidly self-contemplative by long, intense, and secret pain, had extended his egotism over the whole expanse of nature, until the firmament itself should appear no more than a fitting page for his soul's history and fate. (150)

Due to Dimmesdale's growing egotism, he reads the sky's sign as his alone; however, even this glowing "A" fails to convince Dimmesdale to discard his hypocritical silence and embrace Hester and Pearl in the glaring daylight. Although Pearl compels Dimmesdale to "stand here with Mother and [her], tomorrow noontide," Dimmesdale maintains control and dismisses her request (148). Awakening Hester and Pearl's hopes for recognition and love, Dimmesdale continues to exploit his victims, and in doing so, he controls their repeated climb up the shameful scaffold.

Just as Dimmesdale misperceives the "A" piercing the night sky as his secret supernatural sign, he also gives the impression that supernatural consequences afflict his chest. Throughout

the novel, Pearl cannily questions why Dimmesdale habitually rests his hand on his chest, and Chillingworth awaits his opportunity to steal a glimpse at Dimmesdale's guarded heart. As Dimmesdale sleeps one afternoon, Chillingworth places "his hand upon [Dimmesdale's] bosom, and thrust[s] aside [Dimmesdale's] vestment, that, hitherto, had always covered it even from the professional eye," responding with "a wild look of wonder, joy, and horror" (134). Although the narrator fails to describe Dimmesdale's exposed bosom, Chillingworth's ecstasy seems to confirm that Dimmesdale's sin has manifested upon his heart in the form of a crimson A. Because Dimmesdale cravenly refuses to accept his sinful past, his plagued chest may serve as a psychosomatic symptom of his emotional and mental disturbance – the damning scar left by his hypocritical silence. However, egotistically, Dimmesdale perceives this marking as a supernatural portent, "as if the universe were gazing at a scarlet token on his naked breast, right over his heart" (145). As Dimmesdale later greets his death in his final scene upon the scaffold, he describes this affliction as a "red stigma…seared [on] his inmost heart," and ripping "away the ministerial band from before his breast," he reveals the pestering burden that represents his immorality – not the universe's judgment (238).

Dimmesdale's selfishness resurfaces in his meetings with Hester as she bows to his paternalistic position and allows his egotism to grow unchecked. When they meet in the forest, Dimmesdale reveals his self-concern, proclaiming that if he were "an atheist – a man devoid of conscience – a wretch with coarse and brutal instincts – [he] might have found peace" (182). Because Dimmesdale takes pride in his religion, he blames his turmoil on his unwavering faith, dismissing the fact that the veiled truth and lack of repentance separates him from peace. Dimmesdale again reveals his selfishness when he makes the claim "Happy are you, Hester, that wear the scarlet letter openly upon your bosom!" (183). Without considering how the Puritan

community and their judgment have affected Hester's life, Dimmesdale dismisses the possibility of Hester's suffering, and in doing so, pities himself and asks Hester to pity him as well. By preying on Hester's weakness for him, Dimmesdale invades Hester's sphere, which "ha[s] the effect of a spell, taking her out of ordinary relations with humanity" (61). He manipulates Hester's vulnerable love for him, and she welcomes his seduction.

In addition to these revealing moments, Dimmesdale also displays his egotism when Hester reveals Chillingworth's torturous plot against Dimmesdale. In reaction, Dimmesdale threatens Hester that he will never forgive her, and even when he is convinced to offer Hester forgiveness, he marks Chillingworth's sin – "the secret poison of his malignity…and his authorized interference as physician, with the minister's physical and spiritual infirmities" – as "blacker than [his own] sin" of adultery and withheld confession (184, 186). Dimmesdale's egotism will not allow him to admit to the blackness of his own sin, and consequently, he shifts blame to Chillingworth. William Nolte echoes this sentiment by asserting that "Hester is left to bear all the weight of public ignominy, Chillingworth is left to make his cruel search, and Dimmesdale is left the masochistic joy of examining his own heart" (173). Dimmesdale thrives on self-pity and deceit as he positions himself in a righteous place, claiming his plight worse than Hester's and his sin not so black as Chillingworth's.

Even in Dimmesdale's final scene, he continues to demonstrate vampiristic characteristics as he once again seduces Hester onto the public scaffold. Refusing to undergo confession and repentance for seven years, Dimmesdale skillfully avoids the social consequences of his sin; however, because he believes that the only assurance of eternal life is through his repentance, he knows he must openly admit to his sin to "pluck an eternal victory from out the hands of earthly Defeat" (Nolte 184). However, as Dimmesdale remains too weak to admit to his

sin and climb the scaffold alone, he enlists Hester, seeking to expropriate her vigor, and pleads, "Think for me, Hester! Thou art strong. Resolve for me" (187). Although Hester has suffered at the hands of Puritans and has alienated herself from society, she breaks the magical sphere that her sin has spun and beneficently joins Dimmesdale on the scaffold. Reiterating Dimmesdale's weakness, Erika Kreger contends that Dimmesdale "does not possess a tendency to be honest, and Hawthorne emphasizes his deceitful nature right up until the end, making Dimmesdale reluctant to confess even when he is dying" (326).

Waiting until his final hour to make confession, Dimmesdale seduces the Puritan community with discourse and dramatics, reinforcing the suggestion that his self-concern outweighs his moral commitments. William Nolte believes that because Dimmesdale's confession "cost[s] him absolutely nothing" and is only "an act designed to win him immortal life," he deserves no credit for his profession of guilt (184). Facing death, Dimmesdale remains selfishly motivated and preys on the Puritan crowd as they watch a "vague confession" that only serves to confuse them (Kreger 325). By dramatizing his confession with the exposure of his bare breast, Dimmesdale paints a scene that upholds his egotism, and "further convince[s] his parishioners of his holiness [and] obscures the truth with all the manipulative skill of a con man" (Kreger 325). As evidence of this, the Puritan community interprets this ambiguous occurrence as a great parable, planned to "impress on [Dimmesdale's] admirers the mighty and mournful lesson that, in view of Infinite Purity, we are sinners all alike" (241). Despite Dimmesdale's hypocrisy, selfishness, and egotism, he remains noble in the Puritan eye – evidence of "that stubborn fidelity with which a man's friends – and especially a clergyman's – will sometimes uphold his character, when proofs, clear as the midday sunshine on the scarlet letter, establish him a false and sin-stained creature of the dust" (241). Because Dimmesdale has deceived the

Puritans and has led them to trust and admire his righteousness, even upon the scaffold Dimmesdale can count on their naïveté to allow him to reign triumphant in their community because the Puritan church has programmed them to attribute virtue with clergy – despite any signs to the contrary.

While Dimmesdale's death contradicts the vampiristic trait of immortality, his seduction and exploitation of Hester and the Puritan community ensure that his reputation will be upheld even after his death. In death he maintains the aura of nobility that continues to separate him from Hester and his community, and Dimmesdale wins immortality through his abuse of his paternalistic position -- both in the church and in his relationship with Pearl. Echoing Butler's assertion that monstrous beings often act as parallels to the evils of our changing world, perhaps Dimmesdale serves as Hawthorne's warning to beware of the figures who pretend to wear their morality on their sleeves. In addition to the morality that must abide in science, Hawthorne seeks morality in the church and reveals how a naïve audience becomes easy prey for those who dress as men of the cloth and act as stealthy invaders of the human heart.

"The Minister's Black Veil" (1836) unveils Reverend Hooper who introduces a new Puritan fashion as he arrives to Sunday worship wearing two folds of black crape that conceal his face. While Dimmesdale refuses to bear a scarlet letter to indicate his adultery, in "The Minister's Black Veil," Reverend Hooper dons a black veil that signifies sin and appears to grant him unlimited access to seduce his community. Under the guise of a token of religious conviction, Hooper's dreadful veil – which ironically is only "a simple black veil, such as any woman might wear on her bonnet" – strips all traces of intimacy as it "entirely conceal[s] his features, except the mouth and chin" (1281). It leaves women shuddering, and his blackened visage transforms his betrothed, Elizabeth, from a forthright woman to a devoted and silent spinster. Within his

congregation, Hooper's veil allows him to distance himself from the members of his church as well as from his God. The black veil grants him control over his religious standing, and the longer Hooper wears the veil, the more he manipulates the reverence he commands. Using the veil to promote fear, Hooper chooses his standing in the community over his commitment to teach both God's law and gospel, and he dispels hope by dramatically flinging his black crape over happiness.

Although many readers view Hooper as a faithful minister of the Puritan church, his mysterious actions merit a closer examination of his purpose and reveal his egotistical hypocrisy. Applying Butler's predicates for vampirism, Hooper's stealthy black veil empowers him to invade the hopeful hearts of his congregation and manipulate his position in the community. Although Hooper fails to meet the criteria of being wholly dead nor entirely alive, his black veil metaphorically suppresses his vitality and removes all traces of intimacy from his life.

As a Puritan minister, Hooper abuses his paternalistic position in the church and exploits his naïve congregation in order to secure his status. As Hooper's relationship with his church transforms and he trades intimacy for distance, the narrator's diction adjusts accordingly, providing Hooper with growing power. Before the sighting of the black crape, the narrator refers to Hooper's congregation as a "throng" streaming into the meeting-house; as the people behold his veil, the diction shifts from "throng" to "parishioners" to "congregation," denoting the shifting status of his religious authority (1280-1281). After Hooper's sermon on "secret sin" and "sad mysteries," his congregation metamorphoses, and he comes forth "in the rear of his flock" (1282). Although his congregation fears Hooper's veil, its mystery and allure attract his gullible victims, and they fall further into his sinister fold.

Although Hooper is engaged to Elizabeth, he vampiristically applies his veil to manipulate his paternal position, and this craving for control drives Elizabeth away and strips her of joy. Trusting in Hooper's honor, Elizabeth naively begs him to "let the sun shine from behind the cloud"; however, Hooper rejects her plea and chooses his brooding black veil and the control it grants him over her and his community (1285). Driven by his monomaniacal obsession, Hooper eliminates intimacy and Elizabeth's hope and instead, preys on her virginal youth. Hooper exploits her love and destroys their intended marriage, producing his sad smile three times while doing so. Testing the power of his threatening veil and embracing the fabric that he declares vital in accepting the sinful nature of humanity, Hooper victimizes Elizabeth and leaves her believing that his choice is one of self-sacrifice.

Just as Hooper feeds on Elizabeth's innocence, his egotistical decision to don the veil also violates his relationship with God. As Hooper reads a psalm, his black veil "[throws] its obscurity between him and the holy page," and his "veil [lies] heavily on his uplifted countenance" (1281). Instead of being uplifted by God's grace, Hooper allows his veil to obstruct his worship rituals, and he trades in blessings for torment. Furthermore, while Hooper "had the reputation of a good preacher, but not an energetic one," his veil transforms his preaching into the "most powerful effort that [his congregation] had ever heard from the pastor's lips" (1282). The ominous nature of his veil boosts the dramatics of his preaching, and similar to the vampire myth, Hooper feeds off of his weaker audience in order to transform himself into a stronger preacher. While this intimidating and puzzling method effectively inspires fear and eliminates affection, Hooper trades in the gospel for the law, leaving his congregation helplessly confounded by his badge of sin – the veil he hides behind.

In order to manipulate his congregation, his betrothed, and his God, Hooper undergoes a vampiristic veiled mutation to invade his traditional Puritan church. W.B. Stein argues that Hooper's story "is one of a man of God turned antichrist, especially in Hooper's failure to follow Paul's II Corinthians injunction to ministers to let love be the principal of the relationship with their congregation" (qtd. in Stibitz 183). Because Hooper's choice binds him to the seductive veil, darkness envelops him "so that love or sympathy could never reach him," and Hooper employs this dark side to "cre[ep] upon [his congregation]…and [discover] their hoarded iniquity of deed and thought" (1282). It is Hooper's hostile creeping that highlights his hypocrisy, and Stibitz agrees that Hooper's creeping "increases rather than lessens the sin, for as a minister he should have been spiritually more sensitive" (186). Hooper's veil allows him to feed heaping spoons of condemnation to his community, and their growing fear invigorates his spirit. Although Hooper fails to literally steal life from his parishioners, the fear he instills and the intimacy he destroys weakens them, feeding his vampiristic course.

As Hooper presides over a funeral and later that day a wedding, his black veil acts as a poignant sign of his vampiristic spirit as he selfishly robs both ceremonies of peace and joy. Hooper's interactions with the two women dramatize the intimidating and consuming power his black veil has on them. As Hooper bends over the coffin to offer a final farewell, his veil shifts revealing his features, and the corpse of the young lady "slightly shudder[s], rustling the shroud and muslin cap" as if the black veil has altered his expression from one of acceptance and kindness to one of mystery and terror (1283). Likewise, as Hooper performs a marriage later that night, the bride's "cold fingers [quiver]," and a "death-like paleness" smoothers her bridal blush (1284). Hooper's haunting effect on both women reveals his ominous nature. Stibitz believes that Hooper's actions during both the wedding and funeral result in "spiritual impoverishment in that

human love has been diminished" (187). Because Hooper chooses these two central events as the backdrop for the unveiling of his black veil, he reveals that his monomania is stronger than both love and death.

As Hooper wraps his ministry and himself in gloom, his hypocritical actions serve to emphasize his monomaniacal character. Although Hooper affirms that his "mortal veil" functions as a "type and a symbol" of his sorrow and secret sin, he refuses to confess these sorrows and sins, and his ambiguous purpose distracts and confuses his parishioners (1286, 1285). Stibitz argues that "the minister's pride…leads him to make the truth of man's hypocrisy the only Truth and brings him to force his idea upon the consciousness and conscience of his congregation" (186). If Hooper's purpose is to model an acceptance of sin and a portrayal of man's mortal anguish, he fails to verbalize his purpose or give his symbolic veil any clear and pointed weight. Because he fails to explain their purpose, Hooper's acts remain manipulative. Instead of respecting his congregation and elevating the Puritan faith through hopeful themes of redemption, Hooper promotes gothic themes masked as virtuous lessons as he seeks empowerment through hypocrisy and monomania.

As Hooper manipulates his community and compels them to fear his black veil (which on a woman's bonnet would be swiftly dismissed), he also convinces himself of the veil's power. As the young lady at the funeral shudders at the sight of Hooper's uncovered features, Hooper also experiences this sensation at the wedding as he catches his reflection in a looking-glass, and "his frame shudder[s] – his lips [grow] white – he [spills] the untasted wine upon the carpet – and rush[es] forth into the darkness" (Hawthorne 1284). As Hooper's repulsion overwhelms him, he experiences the horror in which he wraps his community, and by retreating into the darkness, he appears to fall further into the hostile and hypocritical purpose of his veil – his punishment for

selfish manipulation. Later, the narrator reveals that Hooper's "own antipathy to the veil was known to be so great, that he never willingly passed before a mirror, nor stooped to drink at a still fountain, lest, in its peaceful bosom, he should be affrighted by himself" (1286). In light of Hooper's avoidance of his darkened complexion, Carnochan describes Hooper's veil as a "magic mirror, reversing the world of normal experience in its transfiguring presence" (186). In the course of exploiting his community, Hooper too becomes afflicted by his manipulative ploy for power.

As Hooper nourishes his egotism and escapes intimacy through victimizing others, the dreadful and mysterious characteristics of his veil plague him. Ostrowski describes "Hawthorne's use of the body as a site of punishment for (and a visible sign of) moral failing," and due to Hooper's hubris and duplicity, he embodies the dreadful, threatening characteristics of his veil:

> Thus, from beneath the black veil, there rolled a cloud into the sunshine, an ambiguity of sin or sorrow, which enveloped the poor minister, so that love or sympathy could never reach him. It was said, that ghost and fiend consorted with him there. With self-shudderings and outward terrors, he walked continually in its shadow, groping darkly within his own soul. (1286)

Because Hooper chooses a shocking symbol to represent what he considers his virtuous decision to confront secret sin, the veil attains a power of its own – spinning its ominous and prideful threads into Hooper's life, enveloping him in a dark cloud of terror and shame. Since he has chosen a veiled gimmick to remove intimacy from his relationships and his church, Hooper must suffer the consequences, and stricken by the darkness he promotes, he too is duped by the black veil.

As Elizabeth begs her fiancé to lift his veil and return her gaze, Hooper vehemently denies her request for intimacy and instead, strives to convince her of his veil's powerful hold. Carnochan believes that "the feeling aimed at seems to be that the veil in literal fact *cannot* be removed; it is not, we are made to think, a volitional matter" (187). However, one of Hooper's manipulation tactics involves prompting others to recognize the overwhelming power of his veil. He wants Elizabeth to believe that this is not a personal choice, but a choice controlled by a superior force – a force he cannot control, a supernatural aspect of the veil that has taken hold. As Elizabeth's eyes are "fixed insensibly on the black veil, when, like a sudden twilight in the air, its terrors [fall] around her," Hooper asks "do you feel it then at last?" (1286). Hooper's emphasis on the veil's intensity successfully satisfies Elizabeth's doubts, and deceived by Hooper's discourse, she accepts that the fabric carries a compelling and violent grip that Hooper cannot loosen.

Just as Elizabeth subscribes to the supernatural aspect of Hooper's veil, a young child in the village also demonstrates Hooper's vampiristic manipulation – this time of children. As this "imitative little imp cover[s] his face with an old black handkerchief…the panic seize[s] [him], and he well nigh [loses] his wits by his own waggery" (1284). Stibitz recognizes that this "satiric element….indicates that Hawthorne has a definite point of view" regarding the veil, and this scene appears to censure Hooper's monomaniacal choices, revealing the consequences of purposefully preying on others. This child innocently imitates Hooper, but because he believes Hooper's veil is stitched with powerful forces of terror and gloom, he nearly loses his wits. If this child becomes mad because he believes the supernatural force of Hooper's veil may afflict him, what will be Hooper's penalty for spawning panic on children? What price will Hooper pay

for victimizing his congregation, especially its younger members, in the name of religious conviction?

Training others to cower at the supernatural force fastened to his veiled visage, Hooper continues to intimidate and amaze his community. As Hooper walks the streets of Milford, "even the lawless wind, it was believed, respected his dreadful secret, and never blew aside the veil" (1287). The narrator's passive choice of "it was believed" highlights the passivity in Milford as well as the dramatic role that Hooper's haunting veil continues to play. By accepting that Hooper's veil controls nature and its whims, the Puritan community grants Hooper's blackened figure further authority in his community. If even the wind defers to Hooper, shouldn't they as well? Spellbound by Hooper's black trick, his parishioners naïvely believe that Hooper controls God's world, and their silenced doubts allow Hooper to metaphorically suck the life from his community, as his dreadful black crape manipulates his susceptible congregation.

Hooper's exploitation of the church ensures his vampiristic nourishment as his gothic veil permits him to change shape in his community. Even though his "medium [saddens] the whole world," he remains "good Mr. Hooper" who "sadly smile[s] at the pale visages of the worldly throng" (1287). Although Hooper consumes his community's vigor and joy in his monomaniac ploy, Hooper's name remains modified by "good," and his smile abides despite (or because of) the paled expressions of his people. They attach honor to his name, falling susceptible to his consuming vampiristic spirit. As Hooper's power over his congregation grows, his titles accumulate. The shift from Reverend Hooper to Mr. Hooper to Parson Hooper and finally to Father Hooper emphasizes the metamorphosis that Hooper ensures through his black veil, and the final stage – Father Hooper — calls attention to the respect Hooper garners in Milford in spite of the metaphorical two-prong bite marks he leaves on his community's happiness.

Shrouded in black and cloaked in the community's respect, Hooper's seductive election sermon mirrors Dimmesdale's election sermon in *The Scarlet Letter*. As Hooper stands in front of the vulnerable leaders of his church and sways them with the oppressive weight of sin, his sermon determines that the "legislative measures of that year were characterized by all the gloom and piety" (1287). Hooper relies on his monstrous black veil to perform his spiritual magic. Hooper is a one-trick-pony; however, his one trick works. He compels his society to trust in God, but couples this trust with permanent darkness, detaching love and hope and spinning dread and fear into a powerful potion for religious fervor.

Even on his deathbed, Hooper continues to exploit his company and stitch the destructiveness of his veil to their hearts. Because Hooper aims at righteousness through threatening artifice, his parishioners should condemn him, but instead, even in his last breaths, he continues to shock them with his dark shroud. Interestingly, Hawthorne's narrator also appears shocked, not by Hooper's veil, but by Elizabeth's presence at Hooper's deathbed as he proclaims that beside Hooper there is "…but one whose calm affection ha[s] endured thus long, in secrecy, in solitude, amid the chill of age, and would not perish, even at the dying hour. Who, but Elizabeth!" (1287). Elizabeth's presence at Hooper's death underscores the effectiveness of Hooper's veil and reveals Hooper's growing power over women. Although Hooper leaves his vampiristic mark on Elizabeth's virginal youth, stripping her of innocence and love, his black veil persists in alluring her. Not only does Hooper's veil scrap their engagement and remove hopes of intimacy, but it also keeps Elizabeth single. Hooper's hypnotizing veil binds her to him, and even at his death, his gothic force coerces her to remain by his side.

Hooper's last words assault his companions as he abuses his paternalistic position and pulls his black hypocritical thread through once more, striking their gentleness. Because Hooper,

even in death, draws forth his pointed attack, James Miller recognizes Hooper as a typical Hawthorne sinner who "in [his] attempt to assume the role of God…naturally give[s] [his] allegiance to Satan, and subsequently find[s] [himself] contributing to that very imperfection which [he] had originally wished to eliminate" (qtd. in Stibitz 186). Even in death, Hooper "show[s] an awful solicitude lest the black veil should slip aside," and his obsessive need to continue his monomaniacal show even on his deathbed reveals his ultimate dependency on the manipulative powers of the veil (1288). He does not even know how to die without it, and instead of leaving his companions with comfort, love, or the redeeming nature of the gospel, Hooper uses his last breaths, last words, and last spouts of energy to prey on the few in his company, as he cries, "Why do you tremble at me alone?..Tremble also at each other!..I look around me, and lo! on every visage a Black Veil!" (1289). As his company "[shrinks] from one another," terrified by his ominous pronouncement, Hooper's "faint smile" reemerges as he spends his last moments enjoying the severe effect he has on others, and he dies self-righteous in his ability to plague others with darkness, judgment, and fear (1289). Just as Dimmesdale fails to meet the vampiristic trait of immortality, Hooper also dies at the end of "The Minister's Black Veil." However, even death fails to displace the haunting effect of his black veil, and even as his community continues to refer to him as "good Mr. Hooper," they fear his dust "mouldered beneath the black veil" (1289). Hooper remains a frightening fixture in his community, and even in death, his veiled seduction steals courage and happiness from his parishioners.

The protagonists of "The Birthmark," *The Scarlet Letter, and* "The Minister's Black Veil" employ vampiristic characteristics to feed their pride and to ensure their dominance. Hawthorne's texts warn against egotism, and although Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper are often read as noble characters, a comparative reading of these texts exposes the control these

characters wield over society as they besmirch their fields of science and religion and bring about tragedy and loss.

While many literary critics recognize the malevolent nature of these characters, labeling them as vampiristic figures not only categorizes the three men as evil, but also compels readers to consider their victims. Hester Prynne – victim of Dimmesdale's hypocritical intrigue and selfish hints of love – falls under the weight of her adulterous sin. Elizabeth – victim of Hooper's carefully positioned black veil – loses her hopes of a loving marriage as a piece of black crape defeat's her community's joy. Georgiana – victim of Aylmer's selfish scientific drive – dies, willingly and thankfully to sustain her husband's life so that he may live triumphant in his ambitions, gratified by a cheek free from what he considered its revolting, crushing mark.

Applying the tenants of vampirism to these texts requires readers to remove their veils of naivety and critically analyze the motives and actions of these men. Their motives are not selfless, but instead self-serving. Their actions do not promote achievements in science and religion but instead produce setbacks. Their power cannot cultivate love and communion when it is fueled by egotism and alienation, and these texts can only advance the fields of science and religion by confronting and highlighting the weaknesses found therein.

Interpreting these texts as cautionary tales asks readers not only to examine Hawthorne's male protagonists but also to evaluate the power structures of accepted establishments and the motives of established leaders. His work drives readers to dismiss superficialities and instead consider the identities, experiences, and settings he weaves through his fiction to emphasize the central aspect of power and the ease with which powerful figures can manipulate a weakened and unsuspecting society.

Although Hawthorne's work serves as a precursor to many popular vampiristic protagonists, these texts offer a critique of those who abuse their power and excuse their abuse through the guise of scholarship, religion, love, and leadership. While critics and readers alike may accept Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper as virtuous men, Hawthorne's heavy ambiguity demands that readers pursue these men to uncover their weaknesses and consider the victims they leave fallen, lost, and dead in their quest for power.

Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper are the men Hawthorne warns his audience about, and his texts caution against egotism, censuring those who dress their hate in the guise of transcendent love. While some readers accept Hawthorne's male protagonists as idealists propelled by their devotion to science and religion, the vampiric roles that Aylmer, Dimmesdale, and Hooper play question "whether hatred and love be not the same thing at bottom" (SL 242). The narrator of *The Scarlet Letter* examines both:

> Each, in its utmost development, supposes a high degree of intimacy and heart-knowledge; each renders one individual dependent for the food of his affections and spiritual life upon another; each leaves the passionate lover, or the no less passionate hater, forlorn and desolate by the withdrawal of this subject. Philosophically considered, therefore, the two passions seem essentially the same, except that one happens to be seen in a celestial radiance and the other in a dusky and lurid glow. (242)

Hubris functions as an impetus in all three texts; Aylmer's scientific pride and Hooper and Arthur's religious conceit trigger their vampirism, and once these vampiristic characteristics are initiated, it becomes difficult to discern whether their selfish love is actually only self-serving hate. Hawthorne's texts compel readers to analyze these men as if they were scientific cases to

be studied or biblical verses to be deciphered and to assess whether the vampirism that strikes in these works can still be found lurking in the fields of science and religion today.

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