THE MORAL UNDEAD: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SOUL IN CONTEMPORARY VAMPIRE FILM AND TELEVISION

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Abstract

The vampire was introduced to the cinema in the early 1920s and has become a popular and prevalent character in both cinematic and televised forms. In film studies, it is widely recognised that the vampire has traditionally been represented as a monster embodying the societal anxieties of particular times—as Auerbach notes, ‘every age embraces the vampire it needs’ (1995, 145). However, at various times in film history, and in its literary, televisual and cinematic forms, the vampire has also been represented as a sympathetic and reluctant creature—as Smith explains, this depiction encourages viewers to align with the vampire character (1995, 83). Since the early 2000s, there has been a marked shift in how the vampire is represented; since the 2008 release of The Twilight Saga films (Hardwicke 2008; Weitz 2009; Slade 2010; Condon 2011, 2012) in particular, numerous films and television shows have portrayed the vampire as a character that exhibits increasingly human-like traits.

Precursors to the post-millennial vampire include the vampires Angel and Spike, the protagonists (and sometimes antagonists) of the television series Buffy the Vampire Slayer (Whedon 1997-2003) and Angel (Whedon and Greenwalt 1999-2004), who were portrayed as having souls, and many plotlines from both series revolved around this notion. In terms of scholarship focused on investigating the representation of the soul in Buffy and Angel, analysis has tended to concentrate on sacred notions of the soul. Since these shows ended, little has been written in scholarly literature about the soul of the vampire or the representation of the soul in Western post-millennial vampire film and television. Consequently, there are few studies that consider the nature of the post-millennial vampire through the lens of metaphysical ontology—that is, soul theories, including both sacred and secular approaches to analysis.

This study is a genre and textual analysis of the post-millennial vampire’s representation in film and television through the lens of predominantly secular soul theories. The research is guided by the primary research question:
• How is the soul represented in post-millennial film and television vampire horror narratives?

The research also addresses three key sub-questions:

• How do representations of the soul in post-millennial vampire horror reflect theoretical understandings of the soul?

• Can the presence of a soul denote the personhood of a being and, if so, can vampires therefore be considered people?

• If a vampire is represented as having a soul, what are the implications of this for horror film and television studies?

This thesis argues that a new cycle of vampire representation exists in the vampire horror sub-genre, which this thesis terms the ‘sensitive cycle’ and that commenced around 2008. The research also argues that within this cycle, the post-millennial vampire is represented as having a soul. In seeking answers to the primary research question, the thesis explores the notion of personhood in relation to representations of the ensouled vampire. Through close textual analysis, the study establishes the marked shift in representation of the vampire as an ensouled being with the status of personhood, thus delineating an identifiable new trope in the sub-genre.
Table of Contents

Keywords ...........................................................................................................................................i
Abstract ...........................................................................................................................................ii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................iv
List of Figures ....................................................................................................................................vii
Statement of Original Authorship .....................................................................................................viii
Acknowledgements ..........................................................................................................................ix

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ...........................................................................................................1
  1.1 Background to the study ............................................................................................................1
  1.2 Research questions ..................................................................................................................4
  1.3 Significance of the research ....................................................................................................5
  1.4 Texts studied ............................................................................................................................6
  1.5 Delimiting the study ................................................................................................................7
    Western vampire film and television .........................................................................................7
    Contextualising the study: Postsecular society ..........................................................................9
  1.6 Methodology and Research Design .........................................................................................11
    Field of research .........................................................................................................................11
    Genre studies ...............................................................................................................................12
    Textual analysis ...........................................................................................................................14
  1.7 Thesis Outline ........................................................................................................................15

CHAPTER 2: EVOLVING THE SYMPATHETIC VAMPIRE ................................................................19
  2.1 From folklore to cinema: monstrosity to sympathy ...............................................................19
    Folkloric and historical beginnings: True monstrosity .............................................................19
    The vampire in early literature .................................................................................................21
    Early cinematic vampires ...........................................................................................................23
    Dark Shadows: A new era in Gothic melodrama ........................................................................26
  2.2 The Postmodern vampire .........................................................................................................27
    Changes in horror cinema: The transition from monstrosity ....................................................27
    Changes in cinematic vampire horror .......................................................................................28
    The debut of vampires with souls: Angel and Spike ...............................................................31
  2.3 The Post-millennial vampire .....................................................................................................32
  2.4 Evolving the vampire through Serialisation ...........................................................................35
    Serialised vampires: from fiction to film ..................................................................................35
    The serialisation of television horror .......................................................................................38
    The serialisation of television vampire horror ..........................................................................40
    Market cycles and their effect on serialised vampire horror ..................................................42
  2.5 Conclusion .............................................................................................................................44

CHAPTER 3: THE NARRATIVE ENVIRONMENT OF THE SYMPATHETIC VAMPIRE ..................................................................45
  3.1 Narrative features of vampire horror .......................................................................................45
    The fantastic and fantasy ...........................................................................................................45
    Dark desires and death ...............................................................................................................47
    Monstrosity .................................................................................................................................49
  3.2 Generic features of post-millennial vampire horror ...............................................................51
    Exploring vampire nature through universal themes ............................................................51
CHAPTER 7: MEANINGFUL IMMORTALITY ................................................................. 147

7.1 The meaningful life of the sympathetic vampire ................................................ 148
   What is a ‘meaningful life’? .................................................................................. 148

7.2 A continuum of vampire Characterisation ....................................................... 150
   The monstrous Other ......................................................................................... 151
   Hybrids ............................................................................................................. 152
   Vigilantes ......................................................................................................... 153
   Mainstreaming monsters .................................................................................. 153
   The accomplished mainstreamer ...................................................................... 155
   The case of Jasper Hale: Making moral choices .............................................. 157

7.3 The conscious experience of the vampire ....................................................... 159
   The vampire is conscious .................................................................................. 159
   A vampire can reason with you ........................................................................ 159
   Self-motivated activity and the sire-bond .......................................................... 160
   Vampire, know thyself ...................................................................................... 161
   Communicating with vampires ......................................................................... 162

7.4 Conclusion ....................................................................................................... 164

CHAPTER 8: THE MORAL UNDEAD—THE ENSOULED VAMPIRE AS A CYCLE IN THE VAMPIRE SUB-GENRE ................................................................. 166

8.1 The ‘sensitive cycle’ ......................................................................................... 166

8.2 Vampires with souls and personhood .............................................................. 170
   The issue of ensoulment and personhood ......................................................... 170
   The issue of locating monstrosity ..................................................................... 172
   The issue of ‘the undead’ .................................................................................. 173
   The importance of the ensouled vampire ......................................................... 174

8.3 Soul theories: a new lens for analysis .............................................................. 175

8.4 Conclusion ....................................................................................................... 178
   Further research ............................................................................................... 181

REFERENCES ........................................................................................................... 183
List of Figures

Figure 7.1 A continuum of vampire characters.................................................................151
Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature: QUT Verified Signature

Date: 19 July 2017
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This study explores representations of the soul in post-millennial vampire horror, and examines how the vampire can be understood within the context of personhood, through the textual analysis of a selection of post-millennial vampire films and television series. The representation of the vampire as a reluctant and/or sympathetic character in film and television programs can be traced back to televisival representations in series such as *Dark Shadows* (Curtis 1966-1971), among other examples. Such characterisations of the vampire stand in contrast to earlier depictions of the eponymous character in Tod Browning’s original interpretation of *Dracula* (1931) or FW Murnau’s *Nosferatu* (1922), which were depicted as fearful, monstrous and even demonic creatures. In the 1990s, the portrayal of the sympathetic vampire became more prevalent on screen and marked an important shift in vampire representation. This was also evident in literature and popular fiction and in popular culture more generally (Kane 2006, 3). Louis, the protagonist in the feature film version of *Interview with the Vampire* (Jordan 1994), is a primary example of a vampire that tried to integrate into society, and that showed a burgeoning capacity for empathy and the ability to love and be loved. *Interview with the Vampire* arguably marked the beginning of the increasing prevalence of the sympathetic vampire in film and television (Kane 2006, 3), and popular films and series followed that also featured conflicted and sympathetic vampire protagonists, including the *Blade* film series (Goyer 2004; Norrington 1998; Toro 2002) and the television series *Angel* (Whedon and Greenwalt 1999-2004).

Representations of the sympathetic vampire have continued into the post-millennial era—in a wide range of texts, vampires are depicted as making the choice to abstain from human blood or finding alternatives to killing humans, living among people, making choices based on rational moral thought and adopting ostensibly human lifestyles. Moreover, the vampire’s physical and psychological characteristics are ‘increasingly humanised’, which, as Botting (2008, 2) notes, makes vampires more alluring. Piatti-Farnell (2014, 12) argues that this increased humanisation has occurred because in stories where romance is the central narrative axis, ‘both the
physicality and psychology of the vampire will be moulded towards attractiveness so as to be appealing to a romance-attuned readership', or viewership in the context of screen texts. As a result of the hybridisation of the vampire sub-genre with generic categories—most prominently romance and the Gothic—and narratives that revolve around vampire characters with human-like characteristics, the characterisation of the vampire ‘creature’ in contemporary film and television has become far more complex than its earliest depictions of the vampire as a demonic monster.

As this suggests, many post-millennial vampire film and television series from Blade (Goyer 2004; Norrington 1998; Toro 2002) to The Vampire Diaries (Grismer, Butler and Siega 2009-2017) revolve around themes, stories and subtext in relation to blurring the boundary between monstrosity and humanity. While this boundary can be examined from a number of different perspectives, including political, social, moral and ethical viewpoints, this study approaches the post-millennial vampire film and television show from the perspective of ensoulment and personhood, as the chosen texts explore themes that speak to, and can be read in terms of, the soul. Contemporary thought and scholarship that explores what defines and constitutes the ‘soul’ reveals that this idea is a complex one that has historically been understood in the sacred tradition as the essence or spirit of a person—an entity separate to, but residing within, the human body (Aristotle 1984c; Aquinas 1905; Augustine 1947; Descartes 1989; Plato 1997a, 1997b). More recently, the notion of the soul has been explained from a secular viewpoint, which suggests that the soul can be defined by the presence of characteristics, capabilities and qualities of personhood (Larkin 2010; Locke 1993; Nozick 2013; Warren 1997, 1973; Whitman 2010). Yet the soul as a core thematic concern in vampire film and television texts is an issue that was rarely explicitly examined as an object of study in scholarship until the release of the television series Buffy the Vampire Slayer (Whedon 1997-2003) and its spin-off Angel (Whedon and Greenwalt 1999-2004): two series where the concept of having a soul became a key narrative component. However, even when ideas pertaining to the soul were explicitly examined or raised in narratives such as Buffy, Angel, and Forever Knight (Borris and Kroeker 1992-1996), the soul was often portrayed in terms of Christian notions of redemption and salvation.

To date, limited research has been conducted into how post-millennial texts reflect, problematise or correlate to contemporary thought on the soul and
personhood. With the screening of ensouled vampires in *Buffy* and *Angel* came scholarship that connected the notions of ‘soul’ and ‘vampire’ (Abbott 2009; Colvin 2005; Forster 2003; Greene and Yuen 2003; Hills and Williams 2005; Jenson and Sarkeesian 2011; Little 2003; McLaren 2005; Sakal 2003; Stevenson 2003; Upstone 2005). The journal *Slayage* also emerged, which specifically analyses the works of Joss Whedon ("Slayage: The Journal of Whedon Studies" 2009 - ), particularly the themes that emerged from *Buffy* and *Angel*. This allowed for a shift in the literature away from dominating discussions around folkloric elements and the prevalent image of the ‘vampire-as-other’ or ‘vampire-as-monster’ (Avdikos 2013; Butler 2013; Creed 1993, 2002; Lecouteux 1999; Perkowski 1989; Sugg 2011; Summers 1929; Wiktorin 2011). The *Buffy* and *Angel* series have narratives that, while not overtly Christian, are underpinned by dichotomies of good and evil bearing similarities to those of the Christian tradition (Stevenson 2003, 62). These underlying dichotomies informed how the soul was represented in these narratives, and thus how the constitution of the soul can be interpreted (see for example Colvin 2005; Hills and Williams 2005; McLaren 2005). These series laid the groundwork for further exploration of soul concepts; this is discussed in Chapter 2.

Current philosophical, psychological and scientific studies of the soul encompass the qualities, capabilities and characteristics of the mind (Descartes 1968; Descartes 1989; Locke 1993), consciousness and personhood, (Berman and Lanza 2010, 2014; Collins 2011; Frixione 2014; Locke 1993; Penrose 1994; Warren 1997; Whitman 2010), and morality (Greene and Yuen 2003; Harris 2010; Kant 2005; Mutch 2013; Silverman 2009; Stevenson 2003)—ideas that are arguably religiously neutral. Thus, contemporary theoretical thought on the soul offers a broader approach to studying the way the soul is represented and reflected in the core texts examined in this research. As cultural anthropologist Pierre Wiktorin (2011) notes, many post-millennial vampire narratives, especially since the release of the series of films in *The Twilight Saga* from 2008, can be characterised in terms of postsecular themes and societal traits. These include the representation of a society where both secular and sacred interests coexist and contribute to narrative tensions, and where there is ‘an open and interactive relationship between modern reason and religion’ (Ungureanu and Thomassen 2015, 104).
Examining the question of how the soul is represented in post-millennial texts solely from traditional or, more specifically, sacred perspectives, is thus arguably too narrow a focus to appreciate the complexity of how the soul is now represented in vampire narratives. More specifically, current studies also do not examine the representation of the soul using a range of varying, complementary and sometimes opposing philosophical and critical positions. An approach that does consider contemporary theoretical understandings of the soul is one that has potential to challenge underlying assumptions about the nature of the vampire, the concept of its ensoulment and personhood, and its requirement for moral accountability. This is the approach undertaken in this study.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research addresses this gap and is guided by the overarching research question:

- How is the soul represented in post-millennial film and television vampire horror narratives?

The research also addresses three key sub-questions:

- How do representations of the soul in post-millennial vampire horror reflect theoretical understandings of the soul?

- Can the presence of a soul denote the personhood of a being and, if so, can vampires therefore be considered people?

- If a vampire is represented as having a soul, what are the implications of this for horror film and television studies?

This study analyses the representation of the vampire in post-millennial vampire horror film and television texts through the lens of philosophical theories of the soul, mind and personhood. This thesis argues that the post-millennial vampire of film and television displays key characteristics of personhood and ensoulment, and that this is evidenced in pivotal post-millennial representations, such as the vampires of *The Twilight Saga* (Hardwicke 2008; Weitz 2009; Slade 2010; Condon 2011, 2012), *The Vampire Diaries* (Grismer, Butler, Siega, Allowitz, et al. 2009–2016) and *True Blood* (Lehmann, Winant et al. 2008–2014). This research claims that these representations are important because the vampire, as an ensouled being, is now accountable for its moral actions in the world.
1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The vampire is a fictional creature often portrayed as inhabiting the human world and living as a person. This study thus suggests that it is possible to examine the vampire using soul concepts that describe qualities, characteristics and criteria that have typically been applied to the analysis and discussion of humans and personhood. As is examined in further chapters, personhood is a status that can be attributed to non-human creatures. This research therefore argues that these criteria can be extended into the imaginary spaces of film and television, and applied to the non-human, fictitious vampire—a species that audiences are increasingly being asked to believe are citizens of contemporary human society.

The significance of this research is threefold. In the first instance, it is the first substantive study to consider the vampire from the perspective of a range of soul theories within the context of non-sacred conceptualisations of personhood and ensoulment. This study allows for the consideration of how secular and postsecular understandings of the soul have influenced themes, characterisation and story in the vampire text, without assuming a religious underpinning to the notion of the soul. This research complements and builds on previous research that has examined the representation of the soul in relation to the sympathetic vampire, which relied primarily on sacred understandings of the soul.

Second, this research identifies a new cycle in the post-millennial vampire horror genre that it terms the ‘sensitive cycle’. This cycle is quite different to its predecessor, the ‘sympathetic cycle’ identified by Kane (2006, 88), and as a consequence, the vampires and narratives present a number of characteristics that have yet to be formally discussed in the literature, including the notion of moral community, the vampire-as-person and the ensouled post-millennial vampire. In exploring the vampire of the sensitive cycle, the study proffers characteristics of the soul of the vampire and its personhood and moral responsibility. Identifying the existence of the sensitive cycle and the nature of the vampire in this cycle extends current knowledge and understanding of the vampire in film studies, and specifically extends understandings and concepts of the soul beyond sacred contexts as they apply to the vampire horror sub-genre.

Third, this research argues that the vampire is represented as having a soul, and can be categorised as a non-human person—that is, qualifying for the status of
personhood. The implications of this are that the vampire, as a prevalent character of film and television, is morally accountable for its actions; as non-human persons, vampires have, as this study shows, the rights and responsibilities of persons. This argument is significant, as it contributes to the body of knowledge around vampires in film and television, extending perceptions of what it means to be undead, and what it means for a vampire to be ensouled.

1.4 TEXTS STUDIED

The focus of this study is the vampire of film and television programs released between 2008 and 2016, following the release of Twilight (Hardwicke 2008). The personhood and ensoulment of the vampire can be evidenced through the core texts selected for this study. Each film or television show presents a different perspective on the notion of the soul, and different perspectives on the importance—or lack thereof—of religion to their vampire mythology. The core texts are all situated in post-millennial societies and have been released contemporaneously, and it could be argued that the texts will provide insight into current thought and belief around soul concepts. Secondly, these texts belong to the sensitive cycle of the post-millennial era identified by this research. Thirdly, they each explore new vampire mythologies and cosmologies. The core texts analysed are The Vampire Diaries seasons one to seven (Grismer, Butler and Siega 2009-2017), True Blood seasons one to seven (Lehmann and Winant 2008-2014) and the five films of The Twilight Saga2 (Hardwicke 2008; Weitz 2009; Slade 2010; Condon 2011, 2012). The Twilight Saga explicitly raises the question of the soul, and the potential loss of Bella’s soul is just one of the storyline’s drivers. However, a longer exchange between Bella and Carlisle on the nature of the vampire soul has been edited out from the theatre cut of New Moon, but is pertinent for this study. The sequence is available as an extra on the DVD release, and will arguably have been viewed by keen audiences.

Other post-millennial film and television vampire texts are drawn upon to exemplify ways in which the vampire character now represents contemporary

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1 Basic information on the texts’ characters, plot, casting, episode details and release dates has been drawn from IMDb, and highly regulated yet fan-based ‘Wiki’ websites.

2 The full title of each movie is prefixed with The Twilight Saga—for example, The Twilight Saga: Twilight—but for the sake of brevity, in this study, each movie is referred to simply by its unique title: Twilight, New Moon, Eclipse, Breaking Dawn Part 1, and Breaking Dawn Part 2.
thinking about the soul and personhood, and ways in which ideas of the monster have evolved in the last decade. These texts include *Only Lovers Left Alive* (Jarmusch 2014) and the UK series *Being Human* (Teague 2008–2013), as their portrayals of the vampire are complementary to the core texts. These texts also present their own mythology of the vampire, and explicitly explore the nature of the vampire, monstrosity and humanity, making them ideal companion pieces in this research.

1.5 **DELIMITING THE STUDY**

*Western vampire film and television*

In its simplest form, the vampire in film and television can be defined as an ‘undead’ creature brought back to the realm of the living, or ‘turned’, by a vampire ‘maker’, requiring the consumption of blood (human, animal or synthetic) to exist. As Weinstock (2012, 129) explains, ‘the vampire is, by definition “undead”—it itself is an entity that subsists beyond its literal death’. Similarly, scholar Nina Auerbach (1995, 5) describes vampires as ‘immortal [and] free to change incessantly’. While the vampire in Western popular culture has been heavily influenced by the iconography of the vampire depicted in early cinematic representations, it is important to note that the conception and representation of the vampire on screen also has origins in mythology, Western and European folklore, and literature. Moreover, in terms of post-millennial representations of the vampire, the origins and explanations of vampires’ existence are diverse, including supernatural conception, scientific origination or creation by viral infection. There are also members of the human community who identify as Vampire/Vampyr (Laycock 2010). To delimit the analysis, however, this study is focused on the supernatural vampire, which is a common representation in the post-millennial narrative.

To narrow the field of research further, the study also focuses on Western vampire film and television. There has been a large number of Western vampire films and television series released internationally since 2000; some of the more popular and influential films the *Underworld* series (Mårlind and Stein 2012; Tatopoulos 2009; Wiseman 2003, 2006), *The Twilight Saga* and *Let the Right One In* (Alfredson 2008), while popular television series include *Being Human* (Teague 2008-2013), with the original UK series also adapted for the United States (US) market (Barzman, Pleszczynski and Kane 2011-2014), *True Blood* (Lehmann and
Winant 2008-2014) and *The Vampire Diaries* (Grismer, Butler and Siega 2009-2017). At the same time, numerous international vampire films produced by ‘national’ production systems worldwide have been released globally and include *Sifu vs. Vampire* (Chan 2014) (Hong Kong), *Thirst* (Park 2009) and *Vampire Cop Ricky* (Lee 2006) (Korea), *Vampire Hunter D* (Ashida 1993) and *Blood: The Last Vampire* (Nahon 2009) (Japan) and, more recently, the Middle-Eastern-style vampire film *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (Amirpour 2015) (a Persian language film that is a US production). Yet as Lim (2007, 113) explains, talking about ‘Hong Kong Cinema’, for example, ‘designates a particular industrial base and cultural and historical specificities’. Therefore, as this study draws uniquely on Western philosophies of the soul, cross-cultural comparison would be complex and is well beyond the scope of this research; further, a cross-cultural comparison could potentially lead to incompatible historical and cultural understandings of the soul.

The study is also limited to film and television representations of the vampire. While many post-millennial vampire films and television series are based on novels, or novel series, their screen adaptations frequently diverge in terms of characterisation, character motivation, basic narrative and even location, and thus cannot be usefully compared in order to answer this study’s research questions. Where the books and series diverge, such as in the *Sookie Stackhouse Southern Vampire Mysteries* (Harris 2001-2013) book series, and the *True Blood* (Lehmann and Winant 2008-2014) television series, televisual and cinematic media have provided the scope to extend storylines, change character arcs and explore concepts such as soul and identity more deeply over the course of many seasons. As Mazdon (2005, xi) explains, television drama can provide ‘complex story arcs, flashbacks’, and the length of television series or serials, alongside televisual techniques, can develop depth for the viewer in terms of depicting metaphysical concepts such as Heaven and Hell, demons and soul, either explicitly or through visual and auditory references, allowing for interpretations that cannot be achieved in the written medium. For example, the literal removal of Angel’s soul in the episode of *Angel* ‘Awakening’ (Contner 2003) provides a visual reference for notions of dualism—that the soul exists apart from the body—that audiences may not have previously considered.
Two important concepts for this study are the ‘post-millennial vampire’ and the ‘sensitive cycle’ of vampire horror. This research focuses on a set of core texts released during what this thesis refers to as the post-millennial era—that is, post-2000: a contemporary period of film and television history that has seen a proliferation of vampires with humane qualities. To distinguish between post-millennial vampires and their predecessors, this study categorises all non-post-millennial vampires as pre-millennial, or pre-2000. To situate the study in this specific moment in time and within the vampire horror sub-genre, this research identifies a cycle within the post-millennial era: the sensitive cycle, which builds on and intensifies the characteristics introduced in the sympathetic cycle, which Kane (2006, 88) identifies as beginning with Louis in *Interview with the Vampire* (Jordan 1994). Unlike the sympathetic cycle, which crosses both pre- and post-millennial timeframes, the sensitive cycle is a post-millennial phenomenon that this research claims began around the time the first *Twilight* movie was released in 2008, and continues with *The Vampire Diaries*, which aired its final season in 2017. The sensitive cycle blurs the boundaries of not just the physical and psychological traits of the vampire to make them, at times, almost indistinguishable from the humans around them, but also extends the reach of vampire horror beyond the traditional male audience and out to the female and the adolescent audience. The cycle of the sensitive vampire explores the vampire nature in a return to Gothic qualities, and characteristics of the Byronic Hero; these are further discussed in Chapter 3. This explorative sensitive cycle explicitly addresses concepts of personhood, soulfulness, remorse and mainstreaming—that is, living among humans. Although the post-millennial vampire still largely retains supernatural capabilities, it is also frequently represented as possessing the qualities of personhood, and reflects not just the anxieties of its human peers, but also of the human culture in which it is fictionally situated—as Auerbach (1995, 145) states, ‘the rapidity with which our Draculas become dated tells us only that every age embraces the vampire it needs’.

**Contextualising the study: Postsecular society**

There has been a marked ‘postsecular turn’ in society (Fessenden 2014; Furani 2015; Kyrlezhev 2008; McClure 1995; Molendijk 2015), which is reflected in current film and literature (Furani 2015, 5). The core texts selected for analysis are all set in the context of post-millennial, Western postsecular society. In this postsecular age, a
number of characteristics have been identified that typify the contemporary context. Kyrleshev (2008, 29) describes postsecularism by explaining that ‘the conditions have been created for the return of religion and religiosity to the spheres of public interest’. This view is echoed by Furani (2015, 5), who explains that postsecularism ‘involves the return of the religious or talk about religions and spirituality with respect, whether in fiction in which this return is a prominent motif … or in the late works of thinkers such as Jacques Derrida … and Michael Foucault …’. A leading contemporary critical theorist, Jürgen Habermas (2001, 2005, 2006a, 2006b), uses the term ‘postsecular turn’ ‘to characterize society in states and communities in which there is a middle road, a coexistence, where presumably the religious and nonreligious forge an ongoing secularization as a complimentary learning process between both constituencies’. This representation of Habermas’ postsecular society was extended by Matuštík (2008, 10), who proposes that postsecularism means ‘the coexistence of various religions and secular phenomena’. A number of authors have similar views around the nature of the postsecular era, essentially concurring that religion endures alongside secular interests in society; religion has endured, and indeed had a resurgence (De Vries and Sullivan 2006; Molendijk 2015; Ungureanu and Thomassen 2015).

The term postsecular may be useful ‘in describing a socio-cultural trend in contemporary democracies: a broad constellation of discourses and practices … that are premised on the search for a complex, open and interactive relationship between modern reason and religion’ (Ungureanu and Thomassen 2015, 104).

With regards to this study, this above description of postsecular society by Ungureanu and Thomassen clearly outlines the current societal context in which the core texts are situated. With this understanding in place, I propose that the post-millennial, postsecular context necessitates the need for exploring how the soul is represented in contemporary vampire texts in terms of soul concepts that embrace both sacred and secular theories. As Fessenden (2014) explains, the protagonist of postsecular fiction can easily move ‘into modes of being that take into account a multiplicity of religious practices, powers, and postures rather than “back toward some kind of easily recognizable institutional religiosity” (McClure 1995, 152)’. 
1.6 METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Field of research

This study is informed by, and contributes to, film and television studies and, more specifically, horror scholarship, with a focus on the vampire sub-genre. The research draws on two fields of knowledge to frame the analysis. The first of these is the philosophy and scholarship of horror—specifically, the scholarship of vampire horror, which sits within the field of film studies. This research draws upon key authors in this field (Auerbach 1995; Carroll 1990, 2002; Jancovich 2002; Jowett and Abbott 2013; Pinedo 1996, 1997; Wood 2002) to discuss the nature of horror, the nature of vampire horror and the appeal of the vampire. This research also draws upon the scholarship surrounding the vampire’s evolution in film and television to examine the ways the vampire has evolved to represent the social anxieties of the time in which a film or television series was created (Butler 2013; Gordon and Hollinger 1997; Greenberg 2010; Kane 2006; Lecouteaux 1999; Skal 1990; and Wilson 2011). The discipline of vampire film and television also supports an analysis of how the sympathetic vampire’s identity, personhood and soul have evolved and been represented since its earliest portrayals in film and television.

The second discipline that informs this study, most notably in relation to framing the soul in a non-sacred context, is a subcategory of metaphysical philosophy: ontology, and specifically, ontology of the soul. In this research, the term ‘ontology’ is used in the sense of the study of existence, within which concepts of the soul are examined. Ontology is a term derived from the Greek ‘ontos’, meaning ‘being; that which is’. This discipline allows for discussion of the soul, the self, identity and personhood, and includes the work of the early philosophies of the soul as an animating life-force (Aristotle 1986; Plato 1974, 1977a, 1977b). It also facilitates exploring the sacred traditions of the soul (Aquinas 1905; Aquinas 2006; Augustine 1947, 1963, 1968), employs some of the contemporary theories of mind and personhood (Hauke 2005; Kant 2005, 2012; Locke 1993; et al.), and branches into new soul theories that sit within the discipline of quantum field theory (Baker and Goetz 2011; Berman and Lanza 2010; Collins 2011; Crick 1994). This study draws on these various branches of knowledge of the soul and mind to analyse the post-millennial vampire.
**Genre studies**

As a study in vampire film and television, this research, broadly speaking, is a genre study. One way in which a genre or sub-genre can be analysed is through the use of specific techniques such as textual analysis, which is used in this study.

The term ‘genre’ has been variously defined in the literature, with no single definition agreed upon by genre scholars. For horror scholar Mark Jancovich (2002, 11), genre can be regarded as ‘an object composed of a collection of films that are related to one another through their common possession of an essentially invariant narrative pattern in which we all know “how it will end”’. Agreeing with the notion that genres have, at their core, a recognisable formula, Rick Altman (1999, 14), a key theorist in the field, posits that four components are fundamental to genre theory: production, generic structures, distribution/exhibition and audience. First, for Altman, production is driven by generic formulas, and he sees this as a *blueprint* for genre film creation. Second, genres also ‘constitute the structures that define individual texts’ (14)—genre films are created around a recognisable framework or *structure*. Third, because of these recognisable components, Altman (14) proposes that ‘programming decisions are based primarily on generic criteria’, which allows for the categorisation, or *labelling*, of films by industry professions such as distributors and production companies. Fourth, Altman (14) also views the audience as a core component of genre, claiming that ‘the interpretation of generic films depends directly on the audience’s generic expectations’; in this way, there is a *contract* between the genre film and the audience, who have come to expect specific features and characteristics of a genre film.

Altman (1993, 23) also proposes the notion that for films to be recognised as a genre, they ‘must have both a common topic and common structure, a common way of configuring that topic’, and suggests that a film that ‘conflates two genres … might well put spectators in a potentially uncontainable quandary’ (18). However, such rigid definitions of genre are a limitation in genre analysis, and are contested by theorists such as Joan Hawkins (2002, 130), who explains that genre overlap and instability are common, citing Wood’s (1992, 478) observation that ‘the tendency to treat genres as discrete has been one of the major obstacles to developing … a synthetic definition of the term [genre]’. Altman (1984, 8) does acknowledge that genres may evolve and constantly change ‘before settling into a familiar pattern’.
However, as film scholar Douglas Pye (1986, 206) notes, there may be ‘common tendencies across a number of genres we often think of as distinct’; he recognises that ‘an intersection of a range of [generic] categories’ exists, and that this interplay facilitates ‘enormous individual variation’ within a genre (203–204).

It is in this interplay where the notion of genre hybridity arises—a notion pertinent to this research, where the core texts are categorised as a variety of genres. For example, the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) categorises the films of The Twilight Saga as drama, fantasy, romance and adventure; True Blood as drama, fantasy and mystery; and The Vampire Diaries as drama, fantasy and horror. While all three texts can be considered part of the vampire horror sub-genre, only one is classified as horror. In discussing horror films, scholar Siegbert Prawer (1980, 37-38) notes that there are four issues with defining genre:

- We are forced to rethink definitions and delimitations of a genre, as ‘every worthwhile work modifies the [horror] genre to some extent [and] brings something new to it’.
- ‘There are borderline cases, works that belong to more than one genre.’
- Within a given genre, it is possible to see wide variations in quality.
- ‘There are works which as a whole clearly do not belong to the genre in question but which embody references to that genre, or contain sequences that derive from, allude to, or influence it’.

With this study’s core texts, the horror genre is modified, and the texts thus belong to more than one genre—arguably with variations in quality—and all embody explicit references to the horror genre. The components linking the core texts are the central figures of the vampire and its various characterisations, and the core theme of romance; as Worland (2007, 9) explains:

A major component of the horror film is its star, the monster. Most genres contain a collection of stock characters that appear in assorted variants and combinations and the horror film is no exception.

While the vampires in the core texts studied here are not always typecast as monsters, the presence of the ‘sympathetic vampire’ variant in each situates these texts within the vampire horror sub-genre.
This study has reduced its corpus to those films and television series that fit within the sensitive cycle of the post-millennial era. Consequently, it does not traverse the entire horror genre, or indeed the entire vampire horror sub-genre, for trends relating to the representation of the soul. Rather, the research focuses on a set point in time, and on specific vampire texts, and employs textual analysis to identify the nature of the soul and personhood of the post-millennial vampire.

**Textual analysis**

To allow for an in-depth reading of the themes, tropes, subtexts, ideologies and assumptions about the soul and existence, this study undertakes a close textual analysis of its core texts. This approach allows for a deconstruction of aspects of these core texts beyond their generic conventions, whereas a traditional genre analysis would rely on adherence to generic conventions, and ‘inflexible laws’ (Kane 2006). For the purposes of this study, where the blurring of boundaries between genres is key to post-millennial vampire horror—for example, the blending of horror and romance, vampires, melodrama and science fiction—employing textual analysis will provide the scope to analyse themes, narratives and interpretations of the soul within the blended genres of the core texts. Fürsich (2009, 241) explains that ‘textual analysis enables the researcher to discover latent meanings in a text, but also its implicit patterns, assumptions and omissions’.

Underlying the textual analysis methodology is the basic assumption that ‘different cultures have different sense-making practices and that they see reality in a variety of different ways’ (McKee 2003, 9), without aiming to identify any one ‘correct’ interpretation—rather, the intention is to ascertain a possible and likely interpretation. ‘When we perform textual analysis on a text, we make an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of that text’ (McKee 2003, 1). Approaching the vampire sub-genre through textual analysis allows for an investigation into how ideas of the soul and personhood are represented without judgement about ‘better’ or ‘more accurate’ portrayals of the vampire.

There are two limitations of textual analysis that need to be addressed. First is the method’s lack of reliability—that is, another researcher analysing the same set of texts to answer the same research questions might not replicate this study’s analysis. However, this limited reliability is compensated for by probable high levels of validity in data produced by textual analysis: ‘Individual researchers may not
produce identical results, but to the extent to which they are familiar with [the elements being analysed in the study], the results they produce will be valid accounts of the likely interpretations that will be made of these texts by consumers’ (McKee and Birnie 2009, 95). The analysis presented in this study may not be replicable, because at another point in time, new vampire texts will be screened with new and different cosmologies and mythologies. Further, series can be extended by further seasons allowing for their themes to be explored and to evolve. Researchers from varying cultures will bring different ideas of the soul and personhood to the same texts. The existing sociocultural, political, religious and ideological milieu in which this study is undertaken will arguably change over time, and different sociocultural influences may come to bear on future analyses.

A second limitation of textual analysis is that ‘it is conducted in isolation—the text is all that matters and it is the central … focus of analysis … [which] neglects the importance of the producer and the reader in the construction of meaning’ (Lockyer 2008, 4). This limitation is reiterated by Fürsich (2009, 238), who states that ‘this method does not integrate the context of production or audience reactions to texts’. However, this research is not affected by this limitation, as it does not include audience interpretation, and relies on the representations of the soul as portrayed in the texts themselves, and the sociocultural environment in which the films and television series are situated.

1.7 THESIS OUTLINE
The notions of the sympathetic vampire and the reluctant vampire are key forerunners to the concept of the post-millennial vampire’s ensoulment. Chapter 2 explores the evolution of the sympathetic vampire by establishing the historical background to vampire character development, from its earliest beginnings in folklore and literature through to the vampire in film and television. The evolution of the sympathetic vampire character has been shaped by changes in narrative structure brought about by the serialisation of film and television formats, as well as the demands of market cycles. Chapter 2 concludes with a discussion of these effects by examining the character arc of the vampire Spike in Buffy the Vampire Slayer.

Chapter 3 explores the characteristics of the narrative environment in which the sympathetic vampire has evolved, and how the concepts of the vampire’s soul and
personhood can be investigated in narratives via the enduring features of vampire horror. These narrative features include persistent themes, character archetypes and metaphors to which audiences have continually been attracted. The chapter discusses this appeal in terms of the Gothic, the Byronic hero and romance, and the cross-age appeal of the vampire.

Core to this study are the key philosophies of the soul. Chapter 4 outlines early understandings of the concept of the soul, including those proposed by Plato and Aristotle, Augustine and Descartes. Scholarship from modern theorists and philosophers has also been consulted, and it becomes evident that a shift has occurred in philosophical thinking: the notion of the soul now embraces the ideas of personhood, self and identity. These are key themes in much post-millennial vampire horror. In an extension of soul theories beyond philosophy and psychology, this study branches briefly into the realms of scientific enquiry, presenting an overview of the notion of the soul from the discipline of quantum field theory. While this may seem like a stretch, the concept is explicitly addressed in a very recent vampire film, *Only Lovers Left Alive* (Jarmusch 2014). It is thus worth addressing, as it also works well as an example of ensoulment in a postsecular environment.

The post-millennial vampire is analysed through the lens of the soul theories presented in Chapter 4, first by applying the notions of the layered soul, dualism and contemporary theories to an analysis of the vampire character. This is undertaken in Chapter 5, which explores the transition to vampire, and questions the states of being alive/dead/undead and the fate of the soul during transition. The later soul theories of personhood, mind and identity, and the notion of continuity of memory, are proffered as measures of personhood and ensoulment in Chapter 6. This chapter also discusses the personhood of the vampire and their rights and dignities. Building upon the concepts of ensoulment and personhood, Chapter 7 examines the idea of the vampire as a person in the moral community. An original continuum of the post-millennial vampire is presented, with an examination of the nature of the vampire soul and personhood for each vampire type on the continuum.

To conclude this study, Chapter 8 synthesises and discusses the research analysis, which finds that the vampire is worthy of personhood, is ensouled and is therefore accountable for its actions. The implications of this for the field of vampire
horror and cinema studies are then explored. The study concludes by suggesting future research directions that arise from the findings offered here.
Chapter 2: Evolving the sympathetic vampire

To analyse the nature of the post-millennial vampire in terms of its ensoulment and personhood, it is vital to understand how the vampire evolved from its monstrous beginnings into a creature with which modern audiences can identify. This chapter outlines key ways in which the vampire evolved from folklore into the sympathetic vampire of early cinematic and televisual representations. Commencing with an overview of the vampire in early cinema, this chapter then presents a review of the creature’s evolution during the *Hammer Horror* era (1950s–1970s). The features of the postmodern era’s sympathetic vampire are examined in terms of ‘cycles’ of vampire representations and their fundamental characteristics. Key texts that explicitly explored the notion of the soul, and paved the way for further examination of the soul in post-millennial vampire narratives, include the television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel*, and this chapter outlines the ways in which the soul is represented in these two series, before discussing the trends occurring in how the post-millennial, sympathetic vampire is now portrayed. The chapter closes with a review of how serialisation of both film and television and the nuances of market cycles have influenced the development of the post-millennial vampire narrative.

### 2.1 FROM FOLKLORE TO CINEMA: MONSTROSITY TO SYMPATHY

**Folkloric and historical beginnings: True monstrosity**

The vampire of folklore was typically demonic in nature and truly monstrous. Tales of spirits and demons have existed in oral tradition in many cultures, including those of Ancient Greece and Rome, India, Hungary and Mesopotamia (Lecouteux 1999; McClelland 2010; Perkowski 1989). The Babylonian myth of Lilith was one of the earliest of these stories, where Lilith is described as a ‘night demon’ who was created as Adam’s wife before Eve. There are a number of variants of the Lilith myth that depict her variously as a demon or an incubus. In the *King James* version of the Bible (*Isaiah* 34:14), she is represented as ‘the screech owl’ — a species ‘associated with the vampiric Strix of Roman legend’ ("Lilith The Demoness" 2015); and in the *Good News Bible* as ‘the night monster’ — a female demon that lives in deserted
places (Good News Bible 1976, 695). The Lilith myth and its variants is one of the earliest precursors of the modern vampire, and Lilith’s mythology is still drawn upon in contemporary vampire narratives (for example in True Blood, "Save Yourself" Lehmann 2012). The Eastern European folkloric vampire tales depict some of the traditions that have survived through to post-millennial vampire narratives, such as methods to deter vampires (garlic, crucifixes) and ways to kill them (decapitation, burning) (McClelland 2010); some of these traditions have religious origins, others secular or folkloric. While some of these elements persist in modern tales, the nature of the vampire itself continues to evolve. Some vampire mythologies were perpetuated out of fear and superstition surrounding the observation of corpses and the dead (McClelland 2010). As Borrini (in Jenkins 2010, 158) explains, it was standard practice to reopen tombs and mass graves during pandemics to bury more victims: ‘In this way it was easier to find bodies that were not completely decomposed, thus increasing dread and superstition among people who were already suffering pestilence and massive deaths’. Superstition and belief systems prevailed, and stories of revenants were propagated.

Two of history’s most notorious mass murderers were pivotal to the development of the vampire narrative. They provided the exotic cultural backdrops and narratives (both real and confabulated) that have fed the vampire myth, and that have been drawn upon for the foundations of early vampire literature and cinema in which the vampire was typically monstrous. Count Vlad Tășepeș (Vlad the Impaler), or Vlad Dracul (Vlad of the House/Order of the Dragon), was the first of these historical figures to influence early vampire narratives. Vlad was a prince of Wallachia from 1431–1476, and while known among his people as a protector of Transylvania (then a Kingdom of Hungary, but now part of Romania), he was notorious for his bloodthirsty and torturous practices in battle. Known to impale his victims and feast among fields of their corpses, Vlad’s repertoire of torture went far beyond impalement—yet there are no reports of Vlad actually drinking the blood of his victims, and no truly vampiric activities on his part have been uncovered (Pirie 1977, 17). Bram Stoker drew on some historical details from Vlad’s life, including his name, culture and nature, to create his fictional character, Dracula. Although Stoker never visited the historical setting of Vlad Dracul’s home in the Carpathian
Mountains, his imagined setting provides the exotic atmosphere for his novel *Dracula* (Stoker 1897).

The second historical figure pivotal to the development of the vampire myth is Countess Elizabeth Báthory, born in Hungary in 1560. Her exploits included the abduction and torture of ‘as many as six hundred girls over a period of … more than fifteen years’ (Pirie 1977, 18). As well as torturing the girls, she is reported to have bathed in their blood, as she ‘believed that the blood of her victims could keep her skin pale and her body healthy’ (Pirie 1977, 18). Certain vampire movies explicitly use the Báthory history, such as *Countess Dracula* (Sasdy 1971) and *Daughters of Darkness* (Kümel 1971) and, as Pirie (18) observes, there is a ‘legion of films that draw heavily on the story’.

**The vampire in early literature**

During the eighteenth century, few literary or artistic portrayals gave ‘life to the monster as a being that could really engage the fantasy of a broad public’ (Butler 2013, 14). Arguably, there were three notable depictions of vampire in poetry that engaged the public’s attention: Ossenfelder’s *The Vampire* (1748), which tells of a vampire draining the blood of his love interest; Goethe’s 1798 poem *The Bride of Corinth*, which tells of a maiden who dies of grief and returns as the undead to drink the blood of her bridegroom to remain immortal and seek vengeance; and the fin-de-siècle poem *Thalaba the Destroyer* by Robert Southey (1801), which also tells the tale of a bride who rises as a vampire. While the poems may elicit sorrow from the reader for the fallen brides, and hence possibly indicate the beginning of the sympathetic vampire traits, the narratives of this era do not directly speak of the notion of the soul.

In the nineteenth century, however, the vampire became a much more popular character in literature. Lecouteux (1999, 8-18) identifies what he calls the ‘founding writers’ of the modern myth of the vampire. One of the earliest of these writers was John William Polidori, who penned *The Vampyre: A Tale* (1819), which tells the story of Lord Ruthven: a gentleman possessing superhuman strength, who can be healed by moonlight and who is outed as a vampire when he consumes the blood of his friend’s sister. Polidori’s vampire is considered an example of the Byronic hero (Abbott 2016, 143), an archetype that has been described as ‘passionate, pessimistic, self-exiled, dark, handsome, melancholic, and mysterious’ (Skarda, P., in McGinley
1996). It was this novella that launched the vampire genre in England, and was translated into French the same year. Lecouteux (9) explains that Polidori’s tale does not provide the reader with a happy ending, nor offer descriptions that would ‘allow readers to establish a vampire typology’. Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu wrote the novella Carmilla in 1872, which depicts a female vampire who is attracted to women. In this story, the central vampire character, Carmilla (who also goes by the name Mircalla), begins to display some of the characteristics of the vampire myth that have lasted until this century. These include never seeming to eat, intolerance of religious artefacts and ceremonies (she does not say her prayers and cannot abide funereal or religious songs), being able to leave her room without opening a door or window, having pointed canine teeth and being able to shapeshift into a monstrous feline.

Along with these novellas, Varney the Vampire (Prest 1845-1847) is considered the text that launched some of the enduring characteristics audiences now recognise as vampiric: fangs, puncture wounds, supernatural abilities such as glamouring (a form of mind control) and supernatural strength. Yet Varney suffers—he displays fleeting glimpses of conscience, acknowledging both grief and pity as he turns his victim, Clara, into a vampire (Jenkins 2010, 82). Despite his proclivity for attacking sleeping women, he also shows remorse:

‘No, no,’ he said, ‘no peace for me; and I cannot sleep, I have never slept what mortals call sleep, the sleep of rest and freedom from care, for many a long year. When I do seem to repose, then what dreadful images awake to my senses! Better, far better, than my glaring eyeballs should crack with weariness, than that I should taste such repose’ (Prest 1845-1847, Chapter CLXX).

The Varney narrative is often considered to have influenced Bram Stoker’s classic, Dracula (1897)—Stoker is another of Lecouteux’s ‘founding writers’. Dracula defined and cemented the supernatural and superhuman characteristics of the vampire, although at this point in the vampire mythology, the vampire could still transform into a lizard, wolf or bat, and would not be burnt by the sun. While Count Dracula could not arguably be categorised as a reluctant vampire, the concept of the sympathetic vampire continued to emerge with his story. His renunciation of God and his love for Mina conceivably arise because of his eternal love for his lost wife, Elisabeta.
The final ‘founding writer’ is Count Alexei Tolstoy (1817–1875). Tolstoy’s story *The Family of the Vourdalak* (1839) recounts a family’s transformation into vampires. Tolstoy’s work is significant, as it embeds constituent elements of the vampire myth. Lecouteux (1999, 17–18) lists these as the victim being paralysed upon the approach of the monster (similar to the ‘languor’ described by other authors of the time); the hypnotic power of the vampire; avoiding talking about a suspected vampire by name (as this would call it from its grave); vampirism being contagious; and the vampire’s inability to tolerate holy relics. Many traits of the literary vampire still exist in some representations of the vampire in post-millennial film and television, and its sympathetic traits continue to become embedded.

**Early cinematic vampires**

The vampire was first screened in the silent era of cinema. The first version of the vampire in film was the 1922 German Expressionist horror *Nosferatu*, directed by FW Murnau (which was closely based on, but not credited to, Bram Stoker’s 1897 novel, *Dracula*). Count Orlok, the central vampire figure of *Nosferatu* (Murnau 1922), is interpreted as fearful, animalistic and physically repugnant, with rat-like fangs, pointy ears, extremely long fingernails, baldness and a withered body; as such, he embodies the monstrous folkloric vampire. Count Orlok is not charming or seductive, unlike Count Dracula of the film *Dracula* (Browning 1931), played by Bela Lugosi. Dracula embodies some of the attributes of the earlier literary and folkloric vampire and expands on them. His character provides a bridge for the viewer from the eighteenth-century vampire of literature to the cinematic vampire. He describes his land as ‘ground fought over for centuries by the Wallachian, the Saxon and the Turk’ (Butler 2013, 21), an assertion Butler (21) states as connecting Dracula to the eighteenth-century events that brought vampires to the Western world. US cultural historian, critic and horror researcher David J Skal (1990, 4) explains that before Dracula kills his female victims, he seduces them, courting them before he ends their lives. Unlike other monsters, Dracula is not always recognisable as a monster—he parodies society and civility, wearing patent-leather shoes and sporting ‘patent-leather hair’ (Skal 1990, 4). Dracula is a seductive predator looking to feed, but beyond trying to look the part of a gentleman of the era, he makes arguably little attempt to integrate into standard society.
Although Count Dracula often fits into his surrounds, his choices of residence (castle ownership in Transylvania and Carfax Abbey in England), contribute to his Otherness and exotic status, stereotypical traits of the early vampire. Abbott (2013, 108) explains that the vampires of the 1920s and 1930s serve as a transition point between the traditions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These vampires amalgamate conventions from folklore and Gothic literature while implanting new vampiric representations and characteristics. Some of these have been drawn from the media’s technological origins, such as Count Orlok fading away in the sun, or the vampire dissolving into skeletal remains. Features and conventions of the Gothic, which are further discussed in Chapter 3, continue to exist in the post-millennial vampire narrative. Tibbets (2011, 4) explains the Gothic as ‘a mode of speculation that shares critical themes and questions with fairy tales, Romanticism, and science fiction’. A feature of Gothic tales is that they obey ‘the transgressive imperative of the Gothic imagination to resist the social, political, and gender roles within the conventions of our science and culture’ (5), thus blurring the boundaries between the everyday and the imaginary, which is also a feature of the post-millennial vampire narrative. Tibbets (5) states that

the blurring of the lines between the terror sublime and the uncanny, the rational and the irrational, science and art—indeed, between the living and dead—is central to the workings and effects of Gothic horror and science fiction, past and present.

Vampire horror from 1931–1948 can be grouped into what Kane (2006, 21) calls the ‘malignant cycle’. Typically, in this era, the vampire played the villain, set in opposition to humans. In Browning’s Dracula (1931), the vampire is elegant, aristocratic and finely dressed, as are the heroes of the film, which hints at the vampire aiming to blend in with contemporary society. The vampire’s backstory is where the viewer might find the rudimentary beginnings of the sympathetic vampire—for example, in Dracula’s Daughter (Hillyer 1936), Countess Zaleska wants to be rid of her vampirism, and consults a psychiatrist to help her overcome her condition. Similarly, in Son of Dracula (Siodmak 1943), the heroine Katherine marries Dracula to become immortal so that she can, in turn, make her true love Frank an immortal too. In terms of the development of vampire traits that have emerged throughout this cycle, Kane (21) notes that the vampire will bite its victim
when they are in a state of helplessness—either asleep or entranced—and these bites occur off-camera; the viewer infers the vampire’s fangs from the puncture wounds shown, or from the description of bite marks. Remnants of these features persist in the post-millennial vampire narrative, yet there has been a shift away from these traits as the norm.

The Hammer films of the 1950s launched actor Christopher Lee as the quintessential vampire figure—one defined by excesses and appetite, physical intimidation and predation, but still a figure in perpetual exile, condemned to wander the earth, never at peace, unable and unwilling—as Byron described it in Childe Harold—to ‘herd with Man; with whom he held/Little in common’ (Canto III, verse 12, 1812–1818), a witness to rather than a participant in national struggles, and above all, suffering (Gelder 1994, 29).

In other words, this is a vampire capable of a depth of feeling. The idea of the reluctant vampire can also be identified in this era, such as in the 1945 film House of Dracula (Kenton), where Count Dracula searches for a cure for his vampirism. A key feature of horror films produced in the 1940s and 1950s is their narrative location within a recognisably modern world—the horror no longer has to occur in exotic lands (such as Transylvania), but can occur as part of normal, everyday life (Jancovich 2002, 3) and in settings such as Paris, France (Lust of the Vampire (I Vampiri), Freda 1957). Similarly, the monster moves into town in The Return of Dracula (Landres 1958) when Dracula assumes the identity of a Czech artist, and moves to America to reside with his deceased victim’s cousins.

The vampires of the 1960s consolidated the move of horror being placed ‘firmly within the context of modern American society, and locating the horror origins within the context of the modern American family’ (Wood, 1986 in Jancovich, 2002). Wood (2002, 29) also explains that until the sixties and seventies, horror films were largely confined to the cinema screen—horror on television in this period was less common—and was a genre considered only of serious interest to ‘adolescents and developmentally arrested adult males’ (Magistrale 2005, 1). Wood (2002, 29-30) observes that horror films have consistently been popular, yet also one of the most disreputable of film genres, traditionally restricted to viewing by horror film aficionados and ‘dismissed with contempt by the majority of reviewer-critics’.
Horror became a mainstream genre as critics began to take horror films seriously as cultural forms (Worland 2007, 5).

However, in the 1960s, the Hammer tradition continued to present and reaffirm the monstrous Eastern European vampire trope in films such as *The Brides of Dracula* (Fisher 1960), *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* (Fisher 1966) and *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* (Francis 1968), each set in small villages in Eastern Europe approximating a Transylvanian atmosphere, and endorsing the stereotype of the exotic and charming yet predatory nobleman. In the 1970s, the vampire represented not only monstrous Otherness, but also social Otherness, and as Weinstock (2012, 94) explains, the vampire offers ‘a convenient catch-all figuration for social otherness’. The vampire consolidates the social anxieties of its time, whatever the contemporary social anxiety may be—racial: *Blacula* (Crain 1972), sexual: *Vampyros Lesbos* (Franco 1971), economic: *Blood for Dracula* (Morrissey 1974) or religious: *Salem’s Lot* (Hooper 1979). While the shift from the monster in its homeland to the monster in our backyards can be traced to the decades from the 1950s to the 1970s, the vampire, although it remained threatening to humans and society, ‘could not successfully pose a challenge where it really matters: their [humans’] ideology, their sense of moral-religious-ethnic superiority, their faith in civilisation remained intact, and won out eventually’ (Greenberg 2010, 164). Thus, the vampiric threat to humanity could easily be contained and eliminated.

**Dark Shadows: A new era in Gothic melodrama**

In the late 1960s, the vampire tale made its way to television and marked the beginning of a shift from true monstrosity of the early cinematic vampire to the sympathetic vampire of post-millennial narratives. The US television series *Dark Shadows* (Curtis 1966-1971) was a pivotal text in this shift, while introducing the vampire into mainstream television. The show began as a Gothic daytime soap opera that, to boost flagging ratings, introduced the vampire Barnabas Collins in 1967. Barnabas was a sympathetic, reluctant vampire (Abbott 2016, 147) who was originally cast as villainous. Noting his rise in popularity in the series, the writers of *Dark Shadows* keep his character alive and introduced a backstory that spoke of his reluctance at becoming a vampire (147). Vampire scholar Stacy Abbott (147) also notes that Barnabas’ perspective becomes the focus of the show’s narrative, which explores his motivations and actions ‘through flashbacks and journeys through time.
to uncover his tortured past’. Barnabas tries to cure his vampirism, and displays episodes of self-loathing that, for Abbott, are what make him fall into the category of the sympathetic and reluctant vampire. Renowned scholar and author Milly Williamson (2005, 43) agrees that the notion of reluctance is now one of the conventions of the sympathetic vampire sub-genre, and is ‘symbolic of the vampire’s misrecognised innocence’.

Dark Shadows is not just important for introducing the first sympathetic vampire to the small screen; it also represents the first example of televised Gothic melodrama. Williamson (2005, 44) explains that the sympathetic vampire’s nature or ‘ontology’, as she puts it, ‘pushes towards what is considered to be the fundamental concern of melodrama: significance’. In other words, the sympathetic vampire is on a quest to discover ‘how to be meaningful in a post-sacred world’ (44)—a quest that we find echoed a decade later in the novel Interview with the Vampire (Rice 1976), and its ensuing 1994 film adaptation. While the vampire of Gothic melodrama seeks this level of meaning, Williamson (47) claims that the vampire cannot ‘come to signify the transcendental—even of evil—because what the vampire learns, and we learn, is that they do not signify the cosmic category of evil, in fact they do not signify at all’. The question then arises that if the purpose of modern Gothic melodrama is to complicate the moral categories of good and evil, then, as Williamson (48) asks, ‘what is the transcendental category which fills the void of meaning?’ The answer, according to Williamson, is the category of the ‘self’. This notion of the self is central to this study, and is explored in Chapter 4 and beyond, where mind, soul, self and identity blur to become indicators of ensoulment and personhood.

2.2 THE POSTMODERN VAMPIRE

Changes in horror cinema: The transition from monstrosity
Postmodern film and television horror further blurs and problematises the boundaries between the human and the monstrous, and explores this transgression and violation of boundaries where the signifying systems of human/non-human, me/not me and life/death are dissolved (Pinedo 1996, 21). According to Pinedo, five key characteristics epitomise postmodern horror (21). First, the everyday world is violently disrupted. This can refer to the world of the human encountering a vampiric
entity, but is also applicable to the vampire being turned, or the ancient vampire adapting to twentieth-century culture. This disruption is often accompanied by explicit violence or the act of ‘showing the ruined body’ in an emotionally detached manner (21). Second, boundaries are transgressed and violated (21-22). The cinematic vampire blurs the boundaries between alive/dead, human/non-human, sacred/secular and good/evil, among other dualities. In later vampire cinema, dualities split further into spectrums of characteristics, where the creature can embody and explore all aspects of, for example, morality, sexuality and individuality. The postmodern vampire is no longer bound by the stereotypes found in folkloric representations of the unholy monster.

A third characteristic of postmodern horror is that the limits of rationality are exposed (22-24). The early vampire films present a narrative where the universe in which the story takes place is ordered, predictable and controllable. Van Helsing the vampire hunter, scientists, doctors, the law and religious figures could be relied upon to extinguish the threat to self, society and humankind. However, in the postmodern tale, it may not be just the vampire who is the violent enemy; now the protagonist may be female, and science or authority figures cannot always be relied upon to defeat the vampiric threat. Fourth, uncertainty becomes a key characteristic in this era, when ‘we only know that we do not know’ (24). There may also be a lack of narrative closure—the postmodern vampire horror film may conclude with an ambiguous ending (24–25). The film ends, but the story may not—again leaving the audience uncertain about the fate of an individual vampire (who may triumph to return again), the broader vampiric threat or the fate of the characters in the story. Fifth, the postmodern horror film provides the viewer with a bounded experience of fear (25-26). This characteristic relates to all horror, and from the postmodern perspective, exposes viewers to ‘the terrors implicit in everyday life: the pain of loss, the enigma of death, the unpredictability of events, and the inadequacy of intentions’ (26). The vampire film capitalises on these terrors, exploring one or more of these postmodern characteristics of horror film.

Changes in cinematic vampire horror

There is no definitive date to mark the commencement of a postmodern ‘era’ of cinematic vampire horror. Greenberg (2010, 164), however, posits that ‘postmodern vampire fiction can be dated from 1976’, when Anne Rice’s novel Interview with the
Vampire was first published. The cinematic version of this novel (Jordan 1994) was in part responsible for shifting the image of the vampire from a predator to a being with a conscience. In the film’s interpretation, Louis is mocked by his creator, Lestat, for choosing to drink the blood of animals rather than taking a human life. This was the first time audiences explicitly saw the vampire grapple with moral choices and ‘a vampire’s inner struggles with humanity and morality’ (Gordon 1988). As Gelder (1994, 112) observes, the film also posits the concept of vampirism as an act. The interviewer in the film is told by Louis that vampire lore (crosses, garlic, etc.) is ‘bullshit’. Gelder (112) states, ‘there is no reality or meaning behind vampirism … but one can still “be” a vampire because—since there is no reality behind it—acting and being collapse into each other’. The newly turned Louis is told by the vampire Armand that vampires are not ‘children of Satan’ and have ‘no discourse with either God or the Devil’. Armand explains that ‘if God doesn’t exist then vampires have the “highest consciousness” of any being in the world because they have the perspective to understand the passage of time and the value of human life’ (Nelson 2012, 124-125). Interview with the Vampire asks the viewer to consider ‘how the vampire, or the monster, is like us, and how we are like monsters’ (Greenberg 2010, 165).

Vampire cinema and television between 1957–1985 can be described as the ‘erotic cycle’ (Kane 2006, 43). The features of this era began around 1958 with The Horror of Dracula (Fisher 1958). While the vampire was still portrayed as cold and distant and with an aristocratic heritage, some human qualities were starting to be displayed. A new syntax therefore emerged, where the vampire’s motivation for their ‘continual pursuit of a certain victim centres on the search for a lost love reincarnated in the film’s heroine’ (Kane 2006, 44). The vampire was often seen switching between tender or erotic moments (with the victim being willing to accept the bite with a mix of fear and erotic expectation), and extreme physical action (85). An example of this is the 1971 film Daughters of Darkness (Kümel 1971) in which the Countess Báthory appears as an alluring yet lonely figure preying on a young honeymooning couple, especially the young bride. In the era of The Erotic Cycle, Kane observes that the character of the ‘Expert’ was developed from being a ‘tool of exposition to an active screen character’ (Kane 2006, 44). Thus, the vampire hunter became a significant component of vampire horror, often depicted as the lone slayer of the vampire. Vampire cinema at this time ‘capitalised on subjects and characters
that were pre-sold to the public either through radio and television or via myth and legend’ (Pirie in Cook and Bernink 1999, 85).

Kane (2006, 88) posits that the ‘sympathetic cycle’ of vampire horror began in 1987. However, as has become evident in the discussion thus far, the sympathetic vampire had been emerging in literature and film throughout the twentieth century, with traces of personhood and humanity beginning to develop in vampire narratives. Kane notes that the vampires of 1980s–1990s seem to emerge from every walk of life. This cinematic vampire embodies a shift in characterisation to appeal directly to ‘youth culture’ (Gelder 1994). A key film, *The Hunger* (Scott 1983), was released in 1983, and shows the vampire in contemporary New York. The male vampire, played by David Bowie, finds himself ageing quickly as his maker, Miriam, grows tired of him. Bowie epitomises the sympathetic vampire as he quickly becomes decrepit and, despite his attempts to find help, is soon relegated to a coffin—still alive, but forever ageing. *The Lost Boys* (Schumacher 1987) presents audiences with a young, attractive vampire gang whose appeal lies in their physical appearance and rebellious subculture (Gelder 1994, 103). In *The Lost Boys*, Michael, who has been tricked into drinking vampire blood, resists killing and drinking human blood to complete his transformation, thus perpetuating the trope of the reluctant vampire.

Other such reluctant vampire and sympathetic vampire narratives continued to evolve in both television and cinema media into the 1990s. For example, *Forever Knight* (Borris and Kroeker 1992-1996) was a television series that aired for three seasons featuring an 800-year-old vampire, Nicholas Knight, who has become a police officer to seek redemption for his evil deeds. He is also intent on finding a cure for vampirism, and is aided by a coroner with whom he falls in love. In a similar vein, the feature film adaptation of *Interview with the Vampire* was released in 1994, and brought the representation of the quintessential sympathetic vampire to a worldwide audience. As another depiction of the Byronic vampire, Louis ‘celebrates his humanity while loathing his own cursed vampire existence’ (Abbott 2016, 158). The narrative is presented from Louis’ point of view, and his moral ambiguity is established early in the story when he is seen drinking from the child, Claudia. As Abbott (2016, 146) observes, moral ambiguity ‘is a key factor of the sympathetic vampire that is enhanced when the narrative is told primarily from the vampire’s point of view’. An essential development in a narrative’s ability to explore concepts
of morality, identity, self and soul was the continued evolution of serialised vampire horror. This is explored more deeply in section 2.4 of this chapter.

**The debut of vampires with souls: Angel and Spike**

The notion that a vampire can have a soul was firmly established by Joss Whedon in the television show *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and its spin-off *Angel*. These series bridged the postmodern and post-millennial eras and broke with many entrenched vampire genre traditions. As Stevenson (2003, 2) notes, Whedon’s original idea was to subvert the ‘standard conventions of the genre’. This was achieved by blurring the boundaries of horror, comedy, drama and satire, while ‘unexpectedly killing off major characters’ (3), turning ‘good’ characters evil and providing a path for the ‘bad’ characters to achieve redemption.

One of the biggest effects that *Buffy* and *Angel* had on the vampire horror genre was the introduction of the vampire-with-a-soul; as Stevenson (61) puts it, ‘the soul is central to the conception of humanity in *Buffy*’. Angel (or Angelus as he is known in the episodes where he has lost his soul) is a vampire under a gypsy curse that has restored his soul. His soul is ‘good’, and he has no desire to harm people (Greene and Yuen 2003, 271). Further, the curse makes Angel able to feel guilt for the evil he has previously committed and the people he has killed. A second vampire character in *Buffy*, Spike, also regains his soul. First, he is experimented on by the US Military, which implants a chip in his brain to stop him from hurting humans (273). This brings a moral facet to the narrative, as Buffy’s team operates ‘on the general moral principle that defenceless people and animals should not be harmed’ (273). Second, Spike goes on a quest to regain his soul. This happens after Spike attempts to rape Buffy, and ‘his horror at his actions drives [him] to submit himself to Demon trials to earn the return of his soul’ (Overstreet 2006, 116). As Stevenson (2003, 85) explains, vampire characters in both *Buffy* and *Angel* keep the connection between the vampire and the person they were when their soul is returned to their vampire body. Buffy’s watcher, Giles, clarifies to Buffy that without a soul, a vampire cannot be a good person, although their memories and personality might remain intact ("Angel" Brazil 1997).

*Buffy* and *Angel* aired over seven and five seasons, respectively. What these series instigated in the vampire horror genre was to forgo ‘a Christian worldview to guide our understanding of the narrative’s moral structure’ (Forster 2003, 7). In fact,
the character Giles goes so far as to refer to the Bible chapter Genesis as ‘popular mythology’ ("The Harvest". Kretchmer 1997). Instead, the shows present a world where ‘the war between good and evil does not correspond to a strict metaphysical distinction between good creatures and evil creatures’ (Forster 2003, 9). Stevenson (2003, 62) also posits that there is no ‘straightforward identification of demon with evil and human with good’, and that moral choices are deciding whose side one is on in the battle of good versus evil. In the ‘Buffyverse’, the soul functions as a moral compass (Stevenson 2003, 88), and this concept appears consistently throughout both series.

2.3 THE POST-MILLENNIAL VAMPIRE

Marked shifts have continued to occur in the representation of the vampire, alongside changes in generic conventions at the turn of the millennium. As previously mentioned, post-millennial vampire films and television series (that is, films released after 2000) are increasingly hybridised in terms of their generic identity in order to appeal to a variety of audiences (Jancovich 2002, 5). Nelson (2012) explains the continuing evolution and hybridisation of the vampire as an escalating trend to ‘graft the special powers of these creatures onto human characters’ (130), and recognises that the turn of the twenty-first century has seen the vampire genre begin to generate its own fictional theologies and cosmologies.

The cosmology in Buffy and Angel laid the foundations for post-millennial narratives to embrace the facets of the postsecular era, thus enabling the exploration and exploitation of hybrid creatures and hybrid social spaces. Stevenson (2003, 16) explains that while Buffy and Angel’s cosmologies are Godless, they are also set in a reality where the ‘spiritual realm is never doubted and the impact of that spiritual realm upon the physical is a given’. The spiritual world of the ‘Buffyverse’ is, as Stevenson (64–65) observes, pluralistic, yet the different dimensions explored in the shows are ‘categorized in terms of hell dimensions as places of torment, versus heavenly dimensions as places of peace’. While themes of redemption and sacrifice are evident in both narratives, these themes ‘have lost their Christian connection through a process of secularisation’ (69).
The lack of overt acknowledgement of God results in a world in which the protagonists rely on themselves and each other in their battles against the forces of evil rather than on divine aid. (Stevenson 2003, 14)

Arguably, as a result of society’s postsecular turn, the vampires of the post-millennial era are creatures no longer typically cast as demonic or anti-Christ. They are not necessarily supernatural, and not always Other. Gordon and Hollinger (1997, 22) explain that Dracula was presented as ‘the earthly embodiment of supernatural Evil’, the anti-Christ. The new vampire, however, is less likely to be presented as demonic, with its ‘evil acts being expressions of individual personality and condition, not of any cosmic conflict between God and Satan’ (22). Because of this change in the core motivation to perform evil deeds, there is now room for the existence of ‘good’ vampires. Accompanying this change is the loss of many folkloric attributes. Although many post-millennial vampires still possess exceptional strength and may shun sunlight, many are not presented as necessarily magical, and are unable to change ‘into bats, wolves, or puffs of smoke, may not need to wait to be invited into a house, and mirrors and crucifixes have little or no effect on them’ (18). In fact, as Gordon and Hollinger (19) put it, the vampire no longer embodies a metaphysical evil—‘the new vampire has become, in our concerned awareness for multiculturalism, merely ethnic, a victim of heredity’.

In this era, vampires are often portrayed as communal, rather than solitary creatures like Murnau’s Nosferatu. Exploring vampires in the community enables narratives to investigate rivalries, betrayals, tensions, love affairs—not just between vampires, but also between vampires and humans. Gordon and Hollinger (22) describe this process as one that mimics human relationships in an environment where ‘the new vampire has become socialised and humanised, as well as secularised’. Audiences are presented with the idea of nests of vampires (for example, in True Blood) living as communities, or familial vampires living together as either true families, such as the Salvatore brothers in The Vampire Diaries, or as sired families, such as the Cullen clan in The Twilight Saga.

The post-millennial vampire narrative explores relationships such as vampire–vampire, vampire–werewolf or vampire–faerie, and does not necessarily focus on the human as the victim, as was often the case in pre-millennial vampire narratives. The human as a victim becomes trivialised and marginal and the vampire–human
relationship becomes decentred and diminished (21). Gordon and Hollinger discuss the effect of this diminished role of the human victim, explaining that the viewer is now denied a human character with whom to identify, a slayer to root for (such as Buffy or Van Helsing) or a human victim for whom to fear. The audience of the post-millennial vampire narrative must now find the lesser of the evils with which to identify—‘the “good” vampire, the reluctant killer, the self-doubting murderer’ (21).

Despite the vampire’s transformations in literature and on screen, a number of defining characteristics have remained. As Butler (2010) observes, the vampire is not completely dead nor alive, and does not respect the boundaries of either state of being. It ‘goes about its work by expropriating and redistributing energy’ (11), the drinking of blood being the key feature in vampire texts that represents strength and life—the creature draws out life and infuses victims with death, ‘and makes the living resemble them’, defying boundaries of space and time, and actively trying to instigate terror (11). However, this last point is changing in the post-millennial vampire narrative: creatures that were traditionally driven by instinct and bloodlust are now evolving into more complex beings, demonstrating humane characteristics including empathy and kindness. Butler (2013) also notes that although authors such as Anne Rice (Interview with the Vampire) and Stephenie Meyer (The Twilight Saga) have transferred the country of the vampire from Europe to the US, the ‘borders of the lands that the vampires haunt are fluid and changing’ (23). He explains that even in their new land, vampires still ‘appear to suggestible youths open to bad influences’ and promise ‘dangerous excitement’ (23). Although Rice and Meyer have both proffered very new mythologies, their vampires still retain some definitive characteristics—they ‘make the creatures outsiders who dwell between cultures and confound the sensibilities of ordinary mortals’ (24).

Vampire narratives have typically used the vampire figure to represent ‘beings that are not abject outsiders or abhorred others, but rather accepted, desired and respected individuals with the agency to act as viable subjects’ (Butler 1993, 16). However, it is now a trait of the post-millennial vampire to reject its status as Other, and to try to fit into social norms such as marrying, or having children (as is possible in The Twilight Saga mythology, and recently explored in season seven of The Vampire Diaries). Storylines such as these aim to validate social formations such as marriage, family, monogamy and/or heterosexual reproduction (Wilson 2011, 17)—a
validating function that, according to horror researcher James B Twitchell (1985, 85), makes the vampire mythos enduring. Twitchell (85) explains that for a vampire myth to endure it must ‘do more than inform or validate some social order; it must suggest specific behaviour that maintains both the social order and bolsters the individual’s sense of worth’. This modern myth is perpetuated in The Twilight Saga, which portrays vampires as having the ‘dream bodies for the 21st century’ (Wilson, 35). They are slim, beautiful, youthful and difficult to kill. While the vampire body of the postmodern era was representative of ‘the site upon which our concerns and anxieties about the body were projected’, the post-millennial Cullen vampires could be read as embodying contemporary corporeal concerns (Abbott 2007, 124 in Wilson, 35). As a human, Bella fears ageing, is clumsy, experiences serious bodily harm and is circled as prey by Victoria and the Volturi. Abbott (in Wilson, 35) claims that this speaks not only to our ‘cultural obsession with young, strong bodies, but also to our cultural fears surrounding terrorist attacks and the global shadow of … wars and escalating natural disasters’. Becoming a sparkling, living yet unbreathing statue is one way to beat bodily harm, ageing and weight gain: contemporary cultural obsessions in a post-millennial context where bodily improvement and perfection are touted as ideals. These ideals reflect current preoccupations with identity and self—both qualities of personhood that are explored in Chapter 4.

2.4 EVOLVING THE VAMPIRE THROUGH SERIALISATION

Film cycles are formed by contiguous events and activities inside and outside the institutions of filmmaking (Stanfield 2013, 215).

Serialised vampires: from fiction to film

The serialisation of film and television grew out of the literary tradition (Jess-Cooke 2009). Many readers of the nineteenth century may not have been able to afford to purchase novels, but most could afford to buy newspapers or magazines in which the literary serial was published and popularised, and could therefore be discussed widely with friends, family and community. In the early eighteenth century, serial fiction existed in the form of weekly or monthly instalments and was ‘a common commodity in the publishing business’ (Law 2000, 3). Despite some works being of low quality, fiction and non-fiction were readily available to the public. What came to be known as the ‘penny blood’, which was popular from the 1830s, was largely ‘a
miniaturised, plagiarized, parodic version of the bourgeois monthly serial’ (20). English studies Professor Graham Law (20) explains that ‘the weekly melodramatic serial had become increasingly associated with the lower depths of the proletarian market during the 1840s’. The sub-genres at this time included Gothic romance and domestic melodrama, and one of the earliest written vampire tales, *Varney the Vampire, or the Feast of Blood* by Prest, published between 1845–1847, was a typical title of the ‘penny blood’ serialised novel. From the 1860s, there was a shift from the ‘penny blood’ titles that, as Law (23) describes, were ‘sold in the slums’ to the ‘penny dreadful’, which was ‘aimed at the emerging juvenile market’.

The serialised fiction market expanded in the second half of the eighteenth century, with the emergence of fiction that appealed to a less discriminating audience (Law 2000, 4). At this time, little attention was paid to the art of serialisation, and the works were typically unillustrated, belonged ‘to the general genre of narrative (histories) rather than the novel’ (7), and largely created by unknown or amateur authors.

Law (2000, 14) notes that in the early stages of the Victorian era, the ‘dominant modes of serial transmission of bourgeois fiction’ were published ‘in monthly literary magazines and miscellanies, or in independent monthly parts’. Sheridan Le Fanu, author of the vampire novella *Carmilla*, was one of the key serialists writing for *The Dublin University Magazine* from the 1860s onwards (14). At this time, higher-quality publications such as *The Sunday Times* and *The Illustrated London News* had begun publishing serialised fiction that was illustrated and of good quality. However, the price of these journals was too high for the masses (20). In the later stage of the Victorian era, serialisation moved from single publications to ‘syndication in groups of provincial weekly papers with complementary circulation’ (Law 2000, 33), which began to reach nationwide audiences. These metropolitan weekly newspapers started to publish novel instalments; the publications were varied, and aimed at both the ‘classes’ and the ‘masses’ (33). These serial fictions ‘capitalised upon particular ideologies of the modern era’, and evolved from popular entertainment into a ‘cultural force that generated contemporary ideas of episodic storytelling’ (Jess-Cooke 2009, 17). This literary serial tradition could be regarded as the forerunner of the interactive fan-base (17), with poor reception of a literary series signifying poor sales for the serial publisher.
At the end of the nineteenth century, the cinematic serial emerged. Serialised films have conventionally fallen into two categories: the trilogy structure, which presents the same set of core characters, but a story arc that may or may not continue across the three films; and the sequel structure, which presents an original film and a follow-up featuring the same characters and a related or continued story arc. Forrest (2010, 33) observes that the film series were made for ‘popular audiences of second-run theatres’. However, the trend that has emerged in the late twentieth century is for the distribution of a set of three or more films with the same source texts, such as the *Harry Potter* series (Columbus 2001, 2002; Cuaron 2004; Newell 2005; Yates 2009, 2010, 2011), *The Maze Runner* series (Ball 2014-2018), *The Hunger Games* (Ross 2012; Lawrence 2013, 2014, 2015) and *The Twilight Saga*. These sets of films are now being labelled as franchises—a term that for Forrest (2010, 33), ‘clearly emphasises the commercial over the artistic values of the films’. Franchising a set of texts such as *The Twilight Saga* and *Vampire Academy*, and converting them to cinematic or television series, provides a way for Hollywood to generate ‘merchandise, endorsements, media intertexts, cultural events, gaming tie-ins, and websites’ (Jess-Cooke 2009, 73), and allows the audience to collaborate and participate in their reception of the film. The effect of this is that the marketing, promotion and production of the films can be directly affected by the audience and fan-base. Conrich (2010, 3) explains that the horror community, which has usually relied on print culture for fanzines and specialist magazines, has been transformed by the digital age. Audiences are now able to engage with their vampire hero/romantic obsession long after the curtain has come down, extending the audience relationship with the vampire beyond simply a cinematic experience and bringing the vampire figure into quotidian life through social media (fan blogs, Wikis, Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

A further characteristic of film serialisation is the chance for an extended narrative arc and character development across more than a traditional trilogy. The five movies in *The Twilight Saga*, for example, take the viewer through the evolution of Bella from human to vampire, and through the escalation and resolution of altercations with rogue vampires and ensuing political tensions with the Volturi. The narrative arc is represented by the textual markers of the language of the earth’s phases, rotation and celestial events: twilight, new moon, eclipse and dawn.
Movement through these phases indicates a progressive change for Bella from human (the twilight of her human existence), through depression (the darkness of the new moon), to an eclipse (her aspirations of becoming a vampire being eclipsed and sidelined by the hurdle of having to kill Victoria and her army before she can get married and be turned) and the (breaking) dawn of her new life as a wife and mother, and her death and rebirth into vampire.

Vampire book series that have been turned into film franchises are influenced by the demands of the pre-existing fan-base. The novels have established the characters and their motivations, which are then interpreted on the screen by the directors and actors. However, serialised television vampire narratives, even when based on existing novels or series of novels, can provide the viewer with a vastly different experience of the narrative, and do not necessarily limit themselves to following the narratives as penned by the author.

**The serialisation of television horror**

Serial: A continuous story set over a number of episodes that usually comes to a conclusion in the final instalment (even if a sequel follows) (Creeber 2004, 8).

Horror narratives proliferated on television screens between the 1960s and the 1990s in an effort by networks to provide something different for the average household viewer. Some of the more prominent horror series of the time include *Dark Shadows* (Curtis 1966-1971), *The Twilight Zone* (Brahm, Heyes and Kulik 1959-1964), *Tales From the Crypt* (Mulcahy and Silverstein 1989-1996) and *Forever Knight* (Borris and Kroeker 1992-1996), among many others. Certain characteristics of serialised horror emerged from these series, in particular the hybridisation of genres and the blurring of the lines between soap opera narratives, horror, action and romance. Horror researchers and scholars Lorna Jowett and Stacey Abbott (2013, 54) claim that the television horror monster would have little resonance without the inclusion of soap-style relationship arcs that draw the viewer into the intimate emotional lives of the show’s protagonists. Indeed, relationships that seem ill-fated from the outset lend themselves well to serial narratives; thus accounting for the proliferation of the vampire–human love triangles seen in many post-millennial vampire television narratives. The viewer’s engagement with the love story, as much as the horror story, is pivotal to the success or otherwise of television horror.
Audiences tune in to watch the unfolding romance in concert with the danger of dating monsters. Newcomb (in Creeber 2004, 9) claims that the serial nature of the genre enables ‘a far greater audience involvement, a sense of becoming a part of the lives and actions of the characters they see’. Serial narrative allows for greater exploration of character, and character growth over a number of series. As Creeber (121) notes, ‘identity itself is now a matter of continual renewal rather than compulsory inheritance’.

In addition to allowing for complex characterisation, serialisation also allows for, and has increasingly led to, the construction of complex and diversified narrative structures. As renowned film critic AO Scott (2010) explains, ‘American movies have become more conservative and cautious, while scripted series, on both broadcast and cable, are often daring, topical and willing to risk offense’. A flexible narrative structure facilitates the exploration of thematic ambiguity, narrative indeterminacy and lack of closure—qualities that, some authors may claim, typify the condition of contemporary society (Nelson, 2004 in Creeber 2004, 5). Nelson terms this structure the ‘flexi-narrative’. The opportunity for a lack of resolution enables the exploration of a feature of postmodern horror: ‘the monstrous continues and normality is not restored’ (Jowett and Abbott 2013, 35). The episodic nature of horror series allows for breaks within and between episodes, thanks to commercial breaks. Television horror is paced such that unease is built up both within and between each episode, bringing both episode and season to a horrific climax; ‘the episodic structure is fundamental to the audience’s emotional response’ (37).

The success of serialised television horror can be ascribed in part to the use and adaptation of existing material, such as Charlaine Harris’ *Southern Vampire Mysteries* book series on which *True Blood* is based, and LJ Smith’s *The Vampire Diaries* on which the television series of the same name is based. Networks can market the product to their target audience—an audience with prior knowledge of the adapted materials. Wheatley (2006, 96 in Jowett and Abbott, 59) explains that ‘gothic classics trade on both the genre and the book’s reputation to gain viewers; this type of pre-sold audience makes gothic fiction a safe bet for domestic and international success’. While films such as *The Twilight Saga* stay true to the novel’s narrative, a television serial creates space for further development of known characters and plot lines, providing extra material to satisfy the reader. However, this
can also be a source of frustration for diehard fans of particular novels when the television series diverges drastically from the books (for example, *True Blood*) by introducing new characters, killing off favourites or not introducing characters that are pivotal in the novels.

**The serialisation of television vampire horror**

Television, in particular, has become a space that allows for a slow and complicated exploration of identity through the popularity of the serialised narrative that allows for identity to be developed over time and for audiences to become increasingly involved and implicated within the vampire’s story (Abbott 2016, 149).

The proliferation of the television vampire has played a part in reshaping the nature of the vampire figure. The serialisation of vampire stories means that a depth of vampire traits that cannot be fully mined in film can be explored. Joss Whedon’s work on *Buffy* and *Angel* provided the opportunity to more deeply investigate the reluctant vampire, and the blurred boundaries between human and monster. *Angel* finished in 2004, but Whedon’s ground-breaking work paved the way for other television series to explore the humanity of the vampire. Hills and Williams discuss the serialisation of *Angel*, explaining that the serial narrative is used to ‘complicate theories of abjection by semiotically layering levels of the abject over one another: the vampire-with-a-soul as the head of a demonic law firm; or, in the case of Spike, the vampire who regains his soul, who dies only to be returned as ghost’ (2005, 152).

The series *Buffy* and *Angel* differed from previous iterations of televised Gothic narrative in that they expanded the story’s world ‘week after week, year after year, with incremental layers of complexity’ (Karlyn 2011, 118). The story arc followed the characters from adolescence to adulthood, and openly addressed themes of morality, the soul and the boundaries between good and evil, human and demon. Through Whedon’s deliberate blurring of genre boundaries, the way was paved for future television series to extend and explore vampire mythologies in a televised format. For example, the series *The Vampire Diaries* explores transitions from human to vampire and back to human, as well as human to werewolf and human to witch and back again. As Abbott (2016, 152) notes, this ‘allows for an unfolding mosaic of representation of the modern vampire, neither good nor evil but perilously flawed’.
Similarly, the question of whether having a soul makes you good is explored across all seven seasons of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, especially through the vampire character of Spike. Through seasons one to three, Spike operates as a morally ambiguous vampire. In flashback, he is represented as reckless and violent (Sakal 2003, 243). However, he seems to have a nurturing and caring side, demonstrating ‘a kind of selfless love for his mate Drusilla’, which sees him put her needs ahead of his own (245). When she leaves him in season two, Spike demonstrates all the signs and symptoms of being heartbroken. This carries through to season three, where he seems to be seeking friendship and solace in the companionship of Joyce (Buffy’s mother); but at the same time, he is holding Willow and Xander hostage (245). The series continues delving into Spike’s moral development in season four, when he is rendered incapable of harming humans through having a chip inserted into his brain by the military, which essentially means he is ‘defanged’ (246). Throughout season five, Spike’s character arc has him becoming increasingly humanised, and it is established that having the chip embedded in his brain is not the same as having a soul: there are no real choices being made. Rather, this is an enforced or artificial goodness (Stevenson 2003, 87). In season six, the chip stops working and the viewers see Spike attack Buffy, which becomes the catalyst for him wanting to regain his soul (“Seeing Red”. Gershman 2002). Spike recognises that there must still be evil within him, and the viewer sees that Spike is beginning to understand his dual nature (Stevenson 2003, 88). As Stevenson (225) explains, when Spike does have his soul returned to him at the end of season six, ‘the restlessness of a guilty conscience comes with it’. Spike’s narrative arc culminates in his ability to seek redemption—he sacrifices his own life to save the world while overcoming his erstwhile evil nature. Stevenson (85) observes that having a soul makes Spike ‘if not fully human, a person’. The complexity of Spike’s moral and redemptive journey required seven seasons to examine, the serialised televisual format being the ideal medium in which to develop the narrative of a pivotal character.

The serialisation of television vampire horror enables not just the vampire figure to be reshaped, but also the nature of monstrosity to be explored more deeply, and in a more comprehensive way. As Halberstam (2006, 27) explains, ‘in postmodern gothic we no longer attempt to identify the monster and fix the terms of his/her deformity, rather postmodern gothic wants us to be suspicious of monster
hunters, monster makers, and above all, discourages investment in purity and innocence’. Television has taken this further by making the monster/alien hunters monsters themselves, a feature also evident in the cinematic narrative, as seen in the vigilante vampire trope and in characters such as Blade in *The Blade Trilogy* (Norrington 1998; Toro 2002; Goyer 2004) and Selene in the *Underworld* series (Wiseman 2003, 2006; Tatopoulos 2009; Mårlind and Stein 2012). This confirms Halberstam’s (27) argument that ‘we need monsters and we need to recognize and celebrate our own monstrosities’. Television horror not only brings the monster into the viewer’s living room, but also makes them think twice about the nature of monstrosity. Vampire narratives are now frequently set in small towns with what Jowett and Abbott (2013, 109) term a ‘down-home atmosphere’, which is ‘at once traditional and “othered” in a contemporary, rational world’. Regardless of whether we are human, vampire or werewolf, the ‘proximity of monsters to humans—to us—means that familiar conventions from melodrama are used to negotiate the all-too-human areas of family, sexuality, friendship and work’ (Jowett and Abbott, 111), and gives audiences the chance to consider the nature of personhood and a personal definition of the soul.

**Market cycles and their effect on serialised vampire horror**

A film cycle, or market cycle, is an important consideration in the context of this study, as it recognises that the core texts are situated in a specific time and cultural context within the broader context of the film and television industry. The conventions, themes and tropes of a genre ensure an ‘overarching continuity’ for audiences that, in turn, provides a ‘historically proven formula’ for production companies (Harbord 2002, 79). As media researcher Professor Sean Cubitt (2005, 194) notes, production ‘is largely determined by the success of previous products in distribution: what hasn’t found a market in the past will not get distributed in the future’. The distributor is also responsible for advising production companies on what products are most likely to succeed in future based on their experience of ‘what has succeeded in the past’ (204). Informing this advice is the distributor’s decision whether to deliver ‘an established product to a new market … or a new product in an established market’ (204). Although a distributor is responsible for the market research, marketing strategy and advertising, they also wield significant ‘power and involvement in the manufacturing process’ (Wasko 2003, 84), possessing the ability
to influence not only the scripting and film or television title, but also the ‘casting decisions, final edits, marketing strategies, and financing’ (84). Further, the distributor can delay film releases to ‘boost the prestige and prices of a premiere’ (Cubitt 2005, 201), and can promote and deny circulation, ‘introducing disjunctures, deferrals, omissions and selections that restructure and reorganize both content and audience activity’ (200).

Another consideration affecting the choice of product to be created and distributed is the requirement for productions to respond to, or indeed exploit, ‘contemporary events such as wars and moral panics’ (Stanfield 2013, 224). As Stanfield (218) further explains, ‘film cycles are intimately tied to the moments of their production, distribution, exhibition, and reception … [and] are defined by their place within a historical continuum’. In this way, as Altman (1998, 15) puts it, studios are provided with ‘successful, easily exploitable models’, and film producers and exhibitors then use these cycles as a way to predict and manage change (Stanfield 2013, 218).

An example of the way in which market cycles have affected production, distribution and content of a television series is The Vampire Diaries. As with The Twilight Saga (Meyer 2005–2010), The Vampire Diaries began as a book series (written by LJ Smith). Because of the huge success of The Twilight Saga novels, The Vampire Diaries’ readership encountered a resurgence and further books were commissioned by Alloy Entertainment (Bridgeman 2013, 3). The books were recreated into a television series by the CW Network and, like the television series True Blood, it departs significantly from the novels and draws instead on what Bridgeman (4) terms the ‘story world’ of the books, rather than reflecting the novels’ original narrative. In fact, further books were commissioned ‘to tie in with the plot of the television series’ (4). The books and television episodes are brought together for the fans via the television series’ website, which allows the television show to be marketed to fans of the novels, and vice versa. In this way, Alloy Entertainment aims to profit from fans of the original novels, fans of the television series and fans of the new tie-in novels, thus controlling, to a large extent, the content of both the books and television seasons (4). The show was refashioned to appeal to, and draw on, the existing Twilight Saga audience, and has attempted to create a similar level of brand identity (5). The Vampire Diaries aims to generate ‘multi-faceted streams of income
[such as] merchandise, site tourism, entertainment parks and more’ (5). However, while *The Twilight Saga* films were developed to directly convert the popular books into film, therefore retaining its narrative arc, *The Vampire Diaries*’ divergence from its source books has meant that there are many alternate narrative arcs that could be explored (5). Whereas *The Twilight Saga* works as a complete narrative franchise, Alloy Entertainment recognises that it needs to work on bringing together stories from ghost-writers and freelance authors to work within the ‘story world’ from the original *Vampire Diaries*’ texts. *The Vampire Diaries*’ fan-base is one ‘based on strong identification with the “story world” and a “team” style support between the heroine and one of the heroes’ (6).

### 2.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has traced the progression of the vampire character’s evolution from folklore through to post-millennial representations on screen and the emergence of the sympathetic and reluctant vampire tropes. The early cinematic vampire was explored, revealing that beyond early literature, the sympathetic vampire had its beginnings in Browning’s *Dracula* (1931). The development of the vampire of film and television was traced through the twentieth century, with an examination of the changing characteristics of the vampire, vampire narrative and vampire mythology. This revealed an increasing trend towards the blending of religious elements with secular components in shows such as *Buffy* and *Angel*, a trend which is now commonplace in the postsecular environment. The characteristics of the postmodern vampire were discussed in terms of further representation of the sympathetic vampire, and the importance of making moral choices. The chapter then explored the literature around the post-millennial vampire, outlining the characteristics and changes that have led to the vampire characters seen in film and television shows today—characters written to demonstrate the importance of being a good person with moral integrity. These concepts are further examined in the analysis chapters. Finally, the chapter concluded with a brief discussion of the effects of horror film and television serialisation, and the influence of market cycles and distribution decisions on the vampire sub-genre’s development. The following chapter investigates the characteristics of the post-millennial vampire narrative.
Chapter 3: The narrative environment of the sympathetic vampire

By the early 2000s, the vampire in popular films and television programs was represented as becoming increasingly humanised and socialised and, as discussed in Chapter 2, in a number of quintessential examples, the principal vampire protagonist was depicted as being more than a demonic monster. Although vampire films and television shows continued to revolve around creatures that existed on the consumption of blood, as previously shown, the vampire sub-genre was becoming increasingly hybridised with the inclusion of generic tropes from the romance, fantasy and drama genres. To understand how the soul is represented in the post-millennial vampire film and television texts analysed, it is first necessary to understand central themes, tropes, narrative devices and frameworks that are fundamental to the post-millennial vampire in film and television programs.

This chapter is structured as follows. It begins by synthesising primary narrative features of the vampire horror sub-genre, specifically exploring narrative and thematic tropes, including the fantastic and fantasy, death and monstrosity. The chapter then reviews key literature that addresses the universal themes, metaphors and archetypal characters crucial to understanding the ensouled vampire character in this study’s core texts, although these narrative elements are not unique to the vampire sub-genre or the horror genre more generally. The chapter then examines fundamental narrative constructs, including the appeal of immortality, youth and beauty, and the idealisation of the vampire; the resurgence of Gothic themes; and the construction of vampire sub-genre narratives addressing the concerns of the young-adult audience, particularly romance and rites of passage. The chapter concludes by recognising that a shift has occurred in the essential nature of the vampire and questioning the emerging nature of the post-millennial vampire.

3.1 NARRATIVE FEATURES OF VAMPIRE HORROR

The fantastic and fantasy

The vampire sub-genre can be understood as a fantastic genre and perhaps, unsurprisingly, fantasy and the fantastic are crucial elements of post-millennial
vampire film, as they underpin the supernatural narratives in which the sympathetic vampire character has evolved. For researcher and fantasy-fiction scholar Professor Kathryn Hume (1984, 55), the fantastic consists of four categories: illusion, vision, revision and disillusion. These are evident in literary fiction, but also prevalent in film and television narratives, as Hume (90, 152, 164) explains, including the vampire sub-genre. Illusion occurs when a text disengages the viewer from the ‘grey unpleasantness of reality and everyday life’, enfolding them in ‘comforting illusions’ and ‘the delicious pleasure of freedom from responsibility’ (55)—arguably, ‘illusion’ is another word for what may be recognised as ‘escapism’. Many post-millennial vampire horror narratives allow the audience to imagine becoming a vampire and living in luxury. However, the illusion is invariably broken as the audience is drawn deeper into the narratives, sees the façades crumble and recognises the vampire’s constant battles with moral decision-making. While the breaking of illusion is, in fact, disillusion, Hume (56) describes this category as one that takes place when a writer ‘insists that reality is unknowable and strives to dismantle our comforting myth and offers us no replacements’. The use of fantasy disillusion occurs in, for example, True Blood season seven, episode one, where the vampire population is threatened with true death in the form of a deadly vampire strain of Hepatitis. This narrative turn means that the vampire character can be explored through their impending mortality; they have a choice to become one of the marauding, zombie-like vampires ravaging towns and feeding off humans, or to exercise restraint.

Hume (55–56) proposes that the second fantastic category, ‘vision’, offers ‘a new sense of reality, a new interpretation that often seems more varied and intense than our own’. In Gothic text, the vision is traditionally represented as a disturbing or dark version of reality. In The Twilight Saga, for example, Jacob (a werewolf) reveals his true nature to Bella’s father (Charlie), thus changing Charlie’s view of reality, and making him aware that reality is, as Hume describes it (55-56) ‘more varied and intense’ than he knew. In vampire narratives such as True Blood, the ‘vision’ fantasy occurs in dark and intense environments such as Fangtasia, graveyards and a dark version of Fairyland. However, this is also problematised in True Blood, where Sookie Stackhouse’s version of reality revolves around the mundane locations of her workplace (a bar) and her house (childhood home), which gradually become the settings for intense scenes and disturbing narratives. This is a
trend in many post-millennial vampire narratives: the vampire’s home shifts from the traditional castles or palaces of many pre-millennial representations to houses within mainstream society where the vampire lives alongside humans. This has enabled filmmakers to create storylines where the vampire can react to, and interact with, humans, potentially changing the reality of other characters. The ‘new sense of reality’, which seems to be more intense than the audience’s version, occurs in locations to which the viewer can relate: vampires frequent Sookie’s bar, and storylines involving faeries, werewolves and vampires occur within Sookie’s home.

For Hume (56), ‘revision’ is a device used in fantasy when the narrative’s current reality requires reshaping or, literally, re-visioning. Literary fiction writers and screenwriters alike can use revision to ‘suggest remedies to the disturbing issues raised in their fiction’ (56). These could include survival mechanisms, ways to preserve humanity, humankind and community—themes explored in post-millennial vampire film and television, and that serve to investigate the nature of the vampire. For example, in True Blood, the uninfected vampires and the humans in the remaining communities work together to devise a plan to defend themselves against bands of infected vampires, thus doing what they can to protect the community against a very real threat of massacre. Similarly, vampires Eric and Pam work together to exploit the human, Noomi, who is the sole cure for the vampire strain of Hepatitis; for a fee, the vampires offer the cure (Noomi’s blood) to the vampire community, thus ensuring continuance of their species. These four categories of the fantastic are prevalent in the post-millennial vampire narrative, and are important for developing an understanding of the vampire’s morality, and the themes that relate to the representation of the vampire’s soul.

Dark desires and death

The horror genre’s primary concern is ‘with the fear of death and the multiple ways in which it can occur, and the untimely nature of its occurrence’ (Wells 2000, 10) and, most importantly, the ‘things which threaten the maintenance of life and its defining practices’ (10). The horror movie has traditionally exploited people’s fear of death, particularly what author Stephen King (in Worland 2007, 8) has referred to as a ‘bad death’: a grotesque and painful end. Humans fear death and the unknown, but they also fear disfigurement. A key reason for this, as King (in Barker 1986, 97) explains, is that humans place ‘such a premium on being handsome and young’. For
Oakes (2000, 12), Gothic narratives ‘tap into specific sources of apprehension identified as phobic pressure points’. In a similar vein to the horror genre, one of these phobic pressure points is the universal fear of death and dying, the one experience that ‘strikes fear into the largest number of people’ and that unites humanity (King 1984, 13). According to King (13), death is an event that can occur at any time, and an event that can only ever be delayed (by science and technology), but never avoided. The vampire horror sub-genre is grounded in this very premise, and offers the viewer the alternative to death: immortality, as a vampire.

Horror movies also provide a canvas onto which political or social anxieties can be projected: ‘monstrous forces are spawned either to be destroyed, serving conservative political ends, or to survive and embody indirect social critiques’ (Shaw 2001, 1). Audiences engage readily with horror through this ‘ideological approach’, and as Oakes puts it, Gothic narratives serve as cultural artefacts, focusing on ‘the darker aspects of the self, society or the universe’ (2000, 4). Another approach that explains the attraction of monsters is based on the Freudian claim that monsters embody ‘the return of the repressed’, serving to gratify viewers’ dark desires and allowing them to attain ‘a healthy catharsis of surplus repression’ (Shaw 2001, 1). In the post-millennial context, vampire narratives explore the darker side of humanity and personhood through setting up and working through moral dilemmas from the vampire’s point of view. This is achieved in The Vampire Diaries, for example, through the frequent debriefings that occur in the narratives when a vampire has regained their humanity after having switched it off for a time.

In terms of audience engagement with vampire film and television and the horror genre more generally, the paradox of audiences watching their worst nightmares on screen has been described by Pinedo (1997) through the concept of ‘recreational terror’, where life-threatening situations are simulated, thus providing the viewer with ‘a bounded experience of fear’. A core requirement of the horror film is that it can evoke a spectrum of negative emotions in the viewer. Audiences are arguably drawn into the narrative, and are exposed to concepts, symbolism and subtext that revolve around death and dying. However, Shaw (2001) extends this concept as a desire for the continuance of life. He quotes Nietzsche (in Hollingdale 1973, 7), who claims that ‘only by living dangerously will individuals face the challenges that stretch their capacities to the utmost’, and proposes that men, women
and animals all desire ‘something’ more than they desire the simple continuance of life, and for which they are willing to risk their lives. Nietzsche’s claim suggests that this ‘something’ is enhanced power, and he ‘ventures the generalisation that it is the drive to attain this feeling which lies behind all activity’ (Hollingdale 1973, 69). In terms of current vampire cinema and television, the attainment of the power promised through becoming a vampire is a driving force for many plots and subplots of the vampire narrative, and provides the environment for moral issues to be explored.

I would argue, however, that while the pre-millennial vampire narrative focused largely on the theme of attaining power, the post-millennial narrative goes beyond power as a motivation for seeking immortality, and embraces narratives around existing for the sake of family, or existing for the attainment of true love. For example, in *The Twilight Saga*, the Cullen clan members are motivated by the desire to protect their family; and in *The Vampire Diaries*, the narrative is advanced by the core theme of loving and protecting the main love interest of the Salvatore brothers, Elena Gilbert. These motivations are more aligned with the desire for vampire characters to cling to their humanity and traits of personhood than solely to anxieties around death and dark desires such as power and control.

**Monstrosity**

Monstrosity has been a prevalent theme in both cinematic and televisual vampire horror. Traditionally, as Carroll (1990, 142) explains, horror fictions do not spend much time establishing a monster’s evilness, as viewers will simply assume this. Therefore, narratives have tended to ‘spend more time establishing the improbability of the success of humanity’s efficacy *vis-a-vis* the monster’. However, in post-millennial vampire narratives, especially film franchises and television series, the nature of the vampire is not so easily identified—indeed, their character arc may change dramatically over the course of a single narrative, and more often over the course of a series, as in the case of Spike in *Buffy*, or Angel, who becomes a vigilante vampire ("Buffy Wikia: Angel Investigations" 2017). Carroll (1990, 41) states that ‘monsters need not be ugly or grotesque’, but may pose a threat morally, socially or psychologically, or ‘seek to destroy the moral order’. However, Jancovich (2002, 50) explains that ‘monstrosity can be made pleasurable in diverse ways … In different social circumstances and in different eras’, the same monster can be interpreted by
the audience as ‘frightening, repulsive, ludicrous, pitiful or laughable’. The literature suggests that over time, the narratives, characters and settings that audiences find scary, repulsive or monstrous will change; as Jancovich (50) points out, ‘who now is terrified by Bela Lugosi?’

As a creature that blurs the boundaries between the human and the monstrous and the living and the dead, the vampire has always been the in-between and the ambiguous, an amalgam of humanity and death; ‘the corpse is utterly abject. It signifies one of the most basic forms of pollution—the body without a soul. As a form of waste it represents the opposite of the spiritual’ (Creed 1993, 10). Several of the most popular horror film monsters are ‘bodies without souls’ (21), and include vampires, zombies, werewolves (when transformed), and some of the most prominent slashers, from Freddy Krueger in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (Craven 1984) to Michael Myers in *Halloween* (Carpenter 1978). A number of authors discuss how vampires have traditionally been represented on screen as the Other in society, embodying the monstrous, the anxieties of the time or the thing that must be dealt with to restore normality in society (Auerbach 1995; King 2004; Magistrale 2005; Pinedo 1996; Upstone 2005; Weinstock 2012; Wood 2002). For example, in *Nosferatu* (Murnau 1922), the character Nosferatu represents the threat of disease. He is a creature surrounded by rats, carriers of the plague who, like himself, are scavengers who live off other beings. This juxtaposition of the vampire with the rats establishes the vampire’s Otherness, and its status as a bringer of pollution and contamination (King 2004, 24-25). Nosferatu is also represented as an embodiment of the abject because of the creature’s transgression of the borders between human and non-human. For King (24–25), Nosferatu also embodies the Other, and is depicted as a being that does not respect national or cultural borders, poses a threat to the people of Bremen and is an outsider from a foreign land. Count Dracula (Browning 1931; Coppola 1992) is similarly represented as an outsider from distant lands. He is portrayed as dangerous, yet also the unknown and, therefore, appealing. Getting to know Count Dracula, the exotic, handsome foreigner, also means toying with fear and possible death. Wood (2002, 27) suggests that ‘the other’ is usually dealt with in one of two ways: it is rejected and, if possible, annihilated; or it is rendered safe and assimilated.
However, in the post-millennial vampire narrative, the notion of monstrosity is more fluid; the vampire is not necessarily the monster. As Edward explains to Bella in *Twilight*, he does not kill people because he does not want to be a monster (Hardwicke 2008). He recognises, however, that monstrosity may be his true nature. When dancing with Bella at her high-school prom at the end of the same film, Bella begs to be turned into a vampire, to which Edward replies, ‘is that what you dream of? Becoming a monster?’ It is, perhaps, the idea of choice, and an underlying moral character, which stops him from killing others, and from turning Bella into a vampire at that point in the narrative. This concept is examined further in Chapter 7, which presents a continuum of vampire characteristics that highlights the fluid nature of monstrosity.

### 3.2 GENERIC FEATURES OF POST-MILLENNIAL VAMPIRE HORROR

**Exploring vampire nature through universal themes**

Although they are not exclusive to vampire film or television series, there are five core themes that are evident in pre-millennial vampire horror, but are pervasive and problematised in post-millennial vampire horror. As Bucciferro (2014, 18) summarises, these themes are sensuality and choice, the impossible relationship, unconditional love, commitment and restraint, and taming the monster.

First, *sensuality and choice* largely focuses on the sexual tension between characters, particularly in *The Twilight Saga*, where the idea of old-fashioned romance, chastity and the building of sensuality provide appeal for a young female audience in an environment where many other teen media discourses ‘offer highly sexualized characters and overtly erotic plotlines’ (Thornham 2007, in Bucciferro 2014, 19). However, this theme is complicated by the fact that the romance and tension-building occurs between a human and a vampire, and it is the vampire—a creature not traditionally known for its restraint—that exercises the choice of abstinence. The theme of choice is also explored via the vampire characters who must decide whether or not to consume human blood to survive. This is a central theme in *The Twilight Saga*, but is also at the core of *True Blood*, and examined in depth in *The Vampire Diaries*. Choice is also addressed in storylines where moral decisions must be made by vampires choosing whether to give in to the monstrous side of their nature; however, humans must also decide whether to become vampires.
or, in the case of *The Vampire Diaries*, whether to stay vampires when a cure becomes available. Broader social debates around choice are raised in vampire narratives, such as choosing to ‘continue a dangerous pregnancy’ (Bucciferro 2014, 19), and the right to agency or self-determination, such as Bella’s desire to become both a mother and a vampire.

Secondly, the theme of the impossible relationship in post-millennial vampire horror is often explored through the introduction of love triangles between combinations of human, vampire, werewolf, faerie or shapeshifter. The love triangle is both enriched and complicated by the fantastic and the magical, offering the audience the allure of the unknown and the extraordinary. As Bucciferro (2014, 19) explains in discussing *The Twilight Saga*, ‘the impossible relationship is inherently dangerous’. For humans, the impossible relationship is frequently difficult to navigate in terms of power, boundaries, maintaining sense of self and ultimately making morally appropriate decisions (19), issues that arguably become enhanced when one member of a partnership is a vampire. A definitive example of this is the relationship between vampire slayer Buffy and the vampire Angel. In this narrative, Buffy and Angel cannot consummate their love, as it triggers the gypsy curse, which states ‘that if Angel experiences one true moment of happiness, he will once again lose his soul’ (Little 2003, 291).

Thirdly, closely related to the theme of the impossible relationship is the theme of unconditional love. This is an enduring theme of a love that ‘goes beyond measure and pardons all faults’ (19), and is exploited in post-millennial vampire stories. Unlike conventional romance, the characters in these stories can indeed aspire to a love that literally lasts forever. This theme is echoed through each of the movies in *The Twilight Saga* and encapsulated in Edward’s wedding speech: ‘no measure of time with you will be long enough, but let’s start with forever’ (*Breaking Dawn Part 1*, Condon 2011). As Bucciferro (20) puts it, ‘there is appeal in the story of an all-consuming, passionate, and enduring love—especially within the context of a fragmented social realm, where relationships are sometimes disposable’.

Commitment and restraint is the fourth theme commonly explored in conjunction with those of relationships and love. It is core to *The Twilight Saga*, which explores commitment to family, to a chosen lifestyle and to loved ones to reveal a personality evolution of the vampire. In this way, this particular narrative is
unlike other teen fiction that depicts ‘youthful romance as casual and exploratory’ (21). Rather, *The Twilight Saga* explores the intense bond between the protagonists, ‘validating the depth of their experiences’ (21). Restraint is also a prevalent theme, used as a marker of humanity in both *The Twilight Saga* and *The Vampire Diaries* narratives. In the latter storylines, there is juxtaposition between the restrained consumption of blood from animals or humans, and the ‘ripper’ style of feeding that occurs when a vampire turns off their humanity at will. Moral choices are thus able to be explored via this universal theme, and the nature of the vampire can be evolved as the narrative requires.

As discussed in the previous section of this chapter, the monster has been an audience drawcard for horror film and television generally, and to vampire horror specifically, making the *taming the monster*, the fifth of Bucciferro’s themes, an obvious inclusion here. However, with the monster becoming less identifiable in the post-millennial vampire story, the audience is asked to view monstrous behaviours within themselves, not just in the vampire, where the traditional locus of the monster has resided: ‘Everyone has to deal with their demons in order to grow’ (Bucciferro, 21).

### Archetypal characters: Devices for character growth

In conjunction with these universal themes, there are three archetypal characters that appear across literature, film and television narratives and form the basis for narrative development and character evolution in the core texts. These are ‘patterns of instinctual behaviour’ (Jung 1976, 61), which encompass ‘characteristics that are associated with certain states of being and that relate to fundamental human experiences’ (Bucciferro 2014, 23); these archetypes can thus arguably be understood by most people. I posit that in the post-millennial vampire narrative, these archetypes now relate to the vampire character, which is increasingly used to explore states of being and behaviours that were previously typically ascribed to a human protagonist.

*The troubled hero* is an archetype that the viewer can readily identify in many current vampire films and television series (23). This archetype may once have been played by characters such as the human, Jonathan, in *Dracula* (Browning 1931; Coppola 1992). Now, however, the archetype can be played by the vampire character. In *The Twilight Saga*, it is played by Edward, who battles with his inner
monster and strives to be the ‘good’ vampire. In *The Vampire Diaries*, the troubled hero shifts between the two Salvatore brothers, Damon and Stefan, who alternate in playing the hero, frequently rescuing each other from both physical and psychological danger (such as when their ‘humanity switch’ has been turned off, and turned back on again). The serialised narrative structure of this television series allows for the constant fall and redemption of the troubled hero archetype.

In post-millennial vampire horror, *the redeeming maiden and the selfless mother* archetype is also played by the sympathetic vampire. Bucciferro (2014, 24) describes the maiden as being ‘associated with purity and desire, the mother, with nurturance, selflessness, and life’. This idea of a transformative love is one that Bucciferro (24) explains appears across cultures and in folklore, and to which a global female audience can relate, as motherhood is a fundamental experience for many women. *The Twilight Saga*, however, extends the boundary of the traditional maternal role, presenting storylines where the archetype is explored through the vampire mother, the vampire as nurturer and the vampire as selfless. Bella is presented as this archetype. Although conflicted, she is depicted as nurturing: cooking for her bachelor father in *Twilight*, protecting her mother from the evil vampire James in *Twilight* and protecting Edward from being killed by the Volturi in *New Moon*. Through her choice to continue with her dangerous pregnancy, the ‘selfless mother’ archetype is played out. While pregnant but still human, she resorts to drinking blood to keep her baby alive, which in turn keeps her alive. At the end of *Breaking Dawn Part 1*, she makes the ultimate sacrifice and dies while giving birth to Renesmée, to be reborn as a vampire. As a vampire, not only is Bella is prepared to fight the Volturi to protect her child, but her vampire ‘gift’ is her ability to shield not only herself, but also others, from harm.

*The restless youth* archetype is usually depicted as being ‘spontaneous, young, hot-headed with a witty sense of humour and a sharp tongue’ (Bucciferro 2014, 24). The restless youth archetype can also take the form of a hero or a rescuer. Typically, the character can be warm and loyal (like Jacob in *The Twilight Saga*) (24), or an aloof wanderer. This archetype is not necessarily represented by the vampire character—indeed, in *The Twilight Saga*, the restless youth archetype is problematised, as it portrayed by both the werewolf and Bella (in both her human and vampire forms). Weaving these three archetypes into post-millennial vampire
narratives facilitates the exploration and development of person-like traits in the vampire, and reveals the characteristics and qualities they may present that would indicate their possession of a soul.

**Metaphors: contextualising the narrative**

The use of deep metaphors in post-millennial vampire narratives provides a fundamental context for the story arc and character development. Harvard Business School Emeritus Professor Gerard Zaltman and his marketing colleague Lindsay Zaltman (2008, xxi) claim that metaphors have a widespread, cross-cultural use and, because of this, ‘may be connected to deep levels of the psyche.’ The pair propose seven deep metaphors, of which five are key to the examination of this study’s core texts, and are explained here to later frame important themes that arise regarding the issues and questions around depictions of the soul, and the sensitive cycle of vampire horror, which are discussed in detail in the analysis chapters of this thesis.

Transformation as a metaphor is significant in much vampire horror. Storylines may deal with the obvious transitions from, for example, human to vampire (*The Twilight Saga, The Vampire Diaries, True Blood*), human to shapeshifter (*True Blood, Being Human*), vampire to human (*The Vampire Diaries, Forever Knight*) or human to ghost (*Being Human*), but this metaphor also explores the nature of transition and ‘the looming danger of injury and death’ (Bucciferro 27). The process of transformation is often presented as, or embedded in, a character’s journey, making the journey another common horror metaphor. This allows the narrative to explore the vampire’s journey of change. Stevenson (2003, 4) explains that Joss Whedon has acknowledged a reliance on the mythological ‘hero’s journey’ to aid character and narrative development in *Buffy* and *Angel*. The character may literally travel through physical countries and change along the way, such as in the *Dracula* narrative (Browning 1931; Coppola 1992), where the vampire’s final journey ends with his death and redemption. The vampire physically changes in its transformation from human to vampire, and this journey is one explicitly examined in *True Blood*, which features some very specific rites of passage in the transition and mentoring of ‘baby’ vampires. The vampire may go on ‘a journey of self-discovery and atonement’ (Bucciferro 2014, 27), which is common in the post-millennial narrative, and can be seen in the television shows *Being Human*, where the vampire Mitchell atones for his massacre, and also achieves redemption; in *The Vampire Diaries,*
where vampire Stefan Salvatore becomes human, cannot live with the guilt of his massacres and sacrifices himself to save the town of Mystic Falls. These examples show that the metaphors of journey and transformation are closely linked in the vampire narrative, and allow for vampire character arcs to explore questions of their humanity, monstrosity and moral accountability.

The container as a metaphor ‘relates to inclusion, exclusion and other boundaries’ (Zaltman and Zaltman, 2008, 99). In the post-millennial vampire narrative, this metaphor typically manifests as an exploration of boundaries. In vampire film and television, these boundaries are frequently blurred or problematised so that the narrative can proffer challenges that test the vampire’s moral compass. One of these boundaries includes the limits of the human body—its resilience as a container for the unborn child (Breaking Dawn Part 1, The Vampire Diaries) and its ability to repair itself during transition (Breaking Dawn Part 1, True Blood, The Vampire Diaries).

Another boundary explored in vampire horror is the limits of the mind. The idea that the vampire can read, manipulate and exploit the thoughts and feelings of others is raised in The Twilight Saga—Bella’s mind is very closed or ‘shielded’, and she strives to overcome that boundary by learning to drop her shield to enable Edward to read her thoughts, and to expand her shield to protect others. Bella as vampire is able to connect with her new family not just by being Edward’s mate, having brought new life into the family, but also by evolving her shielding power to become a protector.

The concept and metaphor of connection is also exemplified by The Twilight Saga, among other current texts, and can take the form of emotional, mental, physical and psychic connections (Bucciferro, 28). An example of all of these connections occurring simultaneously is the sire-bond or maker/progeny bond evident in The Vampire Diaries and True Blood. This bond is an intense connection between maker and newborn vampire that can cause emotional ties to be confused with real love (for example, Damon and Elena in The Vampire Diaries). The bond also provides mental, psychic and physical connections between maker and progeny. For example, in the True Blood mythology, the progeny cannot ignore the call of their maker—when Bill Compton psychically calls to his progeny Jessica, who tries to resist him, she physically manifests bruising over her heart and experiences great
pain. This also suggests the metaphor of control, which manifests variously as storylines exploring control over ‘self, others, or the environment’ (29), and is exemplified by the maker/progeny relationship. In terms of analysing the vampire’s personhood and ensoulment, these metaphors can be used to explore the vampire’s morality in terms of personhood, but also in terms of their humanity.

Post-millennial vampire horror continues to probe and problematise these fundamental metaphors, archetypal characters and universal themes. Bucciferro claims that these metaphors, characters and themes are cross-cultural, and represent ‘the universality of fundamental aspects of human cognition and experience’ (29). I suggest that these are now, in post-millennial vampire horror, aspects of the vampire’s evolution that test the boundaries between person and vampire.

3.3 VAMPIRES AND THE ROMANTIC IDEAL

This chapter has examined key literature around the narrative features of vampire horror generally, and some of the generic features of post-millennial vampire horror specifically, which provide context for the emergence of the ensouled vampire. Further, constructs evident in pre-millennial vampire horror texts that have become more prevalent and ubiquitous in post-millennial narratives include the appeal of immortality, youth and beauty, and the idealisation of the vampire; the resurgence of Gothic themes; and the construction of vampire sub-genre narratives that address the concerns of the young-adult audience, especially romance and rites of passage. These narrative constructs, discussed in this section, explain how the sympathetic and ensouled vampire has become positioned in recent narratives as a catalyst for, or object of, romance.

Immortality, youth and beauty: Idealising the vampire

Vampire narratives provide ‘an enabling structure for people to indulge fantasies they most often refuse to recognise in everyday, waking life’ (Butler 2013, 133). The vampire film allows viewers to engage in ‘an alternate vision of reality where inhibitions are suspended, at least for a while’ (133). However, Butler (26) also explains that the fantasy is unrealistic. The post-millennial vampire appears to have the ability to ‘disregard the rules governing the lives of everyone else. Being undead promises freedom’ (26). The vampire is subject to other unusual restrictions: ‘the limits placed on vampires’ autonomy vary from case to case, but they’re always
there. Vampires don’t enjoy unfettered liberty any more than the rest of us’ (26). Gelder (2012, 26-27) also makes this observation, and writes that becoming a vampire often comes with a ‘set of often incapacitating restrictions and restraints’, and no guarantee of freedom or even immortality. Butler (26) writes that the vampire relies ‘on the very people and societies whose laws they break’, and although vampirism seems to offer the audience an escape from mundane human life, the perceived escape route can be simply an illusion—the idea of immortality seems like an ‘impossible but very desirable dream’ (Wilson 2011, 15). With the opportunity to avoid death and possess super powers such as strength and speed, or the ability to amass great wealth, viewers can conveniently shut out the cruel reality of the vampire’s existence: drinking blood, killing, avoiding sunlight, watching loved ones grow old and die. As Wilson (15) puts it, instead of focussing on the unpleasant factors, ‘we focus on defying aging and the promise of eternal, undying love’. The post-millennial narrative now presents a more balanced approach to the realities of immortality through the eyes of the vampire as a person.

While the vampire was once the ‘epitome of corruptible death’ (Jenkins 2010, 10), now, as Jenkins argues, it has become a symbol of life—one ‘lived more intensely, more glamorously, and more wantonly, with bites having become kisses, than what passes for life on this side of the curtain’ (10). This exciting and glamorous portrayal of immortality has become part of the enduring appeal of the vampire, who is now frequently depicted as leading an extraordinarily luxurious lifestyle—one that most people can only dream about. Excessive or extreme forms of capitalism are tropes frequently seen in vampire fiction (Gelder 1994, 22), across both pre- and post-millennial texts. Gelder (141) explains that the vampire may be a highly adaptable creature in terms of its culture—that is, ‘it can be made to appeal to or generate fundamental urges located somehow “beyond” culture (desire, anxiety, fear), while simultaneously it can stand for a range of meanings and positions in culture’. The vampire, Weinstock (2010, 4-5) argues, ‘is more interesting than those who pursue it; the undead are more alive than the humans—the vampire lives for pleasure alone and is a figure of excess’.

The Twilight Saga, as a vampire narrative geared towards a youth audience, validates the message that youth culture is both desirable and obtainable (Wilson 2011, 188), and that the vampire represents the best of human physical traits. Bella
takes issue with her own aging’ (Lucas 2014, 173), while Edward remains eternally youthful. In an era where youth and beauty are marketed through products promising ‘youth, prowess, togetherness and unfulfilled dreams’ (Gossage 1967, 367 in Lucas, 173), the transition to vampire depicts the attainment of these goals, and perpetuates the message that a better life and eternal youth are enviable. In The Twilight Saga, True Blood and The Vampire Diaries, wealthy and materialistic lifestyles are depicted as attainable, and representative of how the viewers can, or should ideally, live their lives. Like Bella, consumers are driven to ‘get bearings and make sense of [their] lives in a time when the meaning of it all is not obvious’ (Morris 1997, 7). Bella is shown as searching for meaning, which she finds by embracing material culture when she becomes part of the Cullen family. Lucas (2014, 174) discusses the notion that from Bella’s perspective, she is unable to function well as a human, and was ‘born to be a vampire’ (Breaking Dawn, Part 2, Condon 2012). By making the ‘right’ marriage, she lives the fairytale ‘that elevates one out of the dark cabin in the woods to the sunlit castle on the hill’ (Buttsworth 2010, 50).

The young-adult audiences now engaging with vampire horror are catered to through the prevalence of these themes of youth and beauty; topics pertinent to a young-adult, particularly female, audience. Once, the vampire lifestyle was synonymous with death and decay; now, it is presented as wealthy, powerful and luxurious. The vampire is now the person that the vulnerable, ordinary and fragile human aims to become. A further focus of the post-millennial vampire narrative is the storyline of eternal love—a focus that has garnered a large audience comprising teenagers and young adults, and that the following section addresses.

The Gothic, Byronic heroes, romance and women

A key trend in post-millennial vampire horror has been the resurgence of Gothic themes, Byronic-style heroes and romantic plots and subplots. More generally, horror narratives have been expanded to appeal to a wider audience, and now cater to the teenage females as well as the traditional male audience. Pinedo (1997, 56) observes that the target audience for horror has traditionally been largely male because, culturally, males have been expected ‘to display bravado and unflinching vision’, and ‘females are expected to look away’. Historically, though, the Gothic tradition in the nineteenth century was seen as a woman’s genre. Williamson (2014, 79) explains that the Gothic literature of this era was ‘downgraded in the cultural hierarchy of the
day because of the association with femininity, the irrational and the supernatural’. The themes of the passions at the core of the Romantic Movement influenced Gothic fiction, and it is from this genre that the vampire narrative emerged, along with the characterisation of the sympathetic and reluctant vampire. Polidori’s *The Vampyre: A Tale* (1819) was instantly successful because of ‘the tale’s association with the Romantic poet, Byron’ (Williamson, 2014, 79). Polidori, who was Byron’s personal physician, is reputed ‘to have based his vampire on Byron, including his outrageous lifestyle and sexual antics and his magnetism, which lent a force to a pre-Dracula vampiric imagery which was attractive and dangerous’ (79).

Although Gothic tales were highly popular in the nineteenth century, their critical reception meant they were regarded as having low cultural status, which was partly due to their immense popularity, and partly because they emerged at the same time as an increase in the literate population (80), and were therefore read by the masses rather than the educated elite. As described in Chapter 2, some early vampire tales and early Gothic narratives were circulated in the ‘penny dreadfuls’—the abridged versions of the Gothic novel, which were more affordable to the lower classes (81). Botting (1996, 6, in Williamson, 2014, 80) suggests that the Gothic depended on the ‘women readers and writers who were excluded from the male dominated “high arts” of poetry and politics’, and states that there was a ‘feminisation of reading practices and markets which in a patriarchal age helped ensure Gothic’s low status in the eyes of the critical establishment’ (4). Although, as Jancovich (2003, in Williamson, 2014, 81) states, ‘real’ horror is still perceived as a man’s domain, ‘no longer associated with the feminine irrational, it is “extreme” and associated with the savvy male cult reader who shares many aesthetic dispositions as the art house and cultural elite’. Therefore, although women have been engaging with the Gothic and horror themes since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, derision is still poured not just on the tale of the sympathetic vampire, which began with Polidori, but also on the female fans who engage with the sympathetic vampires of *The Twilight Saga*, and the love triangles in *True Blood* and *The Vampire Diaries*. As Williamson (2014, 81) puts it, the media ‘heaps derision’ on female fans, and ‘invokes the language of the cynical and in-the-know cultural commentator’, blaming *The Twilight Saga* for transforming vampires from ‘things that used to scare the hell out of people’ to ‘little more than sensitive glittery emo types who enjoy poetry’, as
the *Twilight* vampires were described by a film and television reviewer for *The Guardian*, Stuart Heritage (2012).

Film critics can shape an audience’s reception of a movie (Bode 2010, 708), influencing ‘ideas of what is worthy of being seen, what is unworthy, and the right way to see it’ (Bordieu 1984, 28). If works such as *The Twilight Saga* were evaluated and reviewed as teen romance, rather than vampire horror, the reviews would ‘produce a very different set of cultural and cinematic reference points’ (Bode, 713). Some of the more positive reviews of *The Twilight Saga* films reference ‘nineteenth-century romance novels and romantic heroes’ (713), with Edward variously described as ‘a Heathcliff for adolescents’ (Sandhu 2008) and a ‘Lord Byron for our times’ (Lawrence 2008, 713). Lisa Bode, researcher of film history and reception, analyses the reviews of the cinematic release of *Twilight*, and observes that the negative reviews tend to be written by male reviewers or bloggers with specific and pre-conceived ideas about what vampire horror should be. These reviewers approach the film expecting it to conform to established conventions of the vampire sub-genre. They then blame the apparently ruined and diluted vampire film on ‘the mass teen female audience, whose … taste for the “emo” vampire is pandered to by a cynical economically motivated entertainment industry’ (Bode, 711). Bode (712) cites a 2008 review by Ken Hanke, who responds to ‘unnamed critics who have defended the books with the claim that “at least teens are reading something”, by saying that the books are “not likely to be a gateway to works of ‘substance’, but will lead them instead to Barbara Cartland”, that is, to simple old-fashioned romance’.

**The passions, young adults, and vampires**

While reporters and cinematic reviewers such as Heritage (2012) continue to perpetuate the divide between what could be termed ‘hard’ horror and ‘soft’ horror, it remains that notions of the passions that arose from the Gothic and Romantic movements and works of Byron and Shelley continue to be recycled in post-millennial vampire horror, which has a significant global audience. *Breaking Dawn Part 2* (Condon 2012), for example, earned over US$141 million in its opening weekend in the US alone. Williamson (2014, 82) discusses Hume’s assertion that passions drive our reason, and that reason has ‘a significant role in selecting a reasonable course of action for our feelings; and morality drives our passion towards appropriate and reasonable conduct; social man acts both in and for the gaze of
others’. However, the Romantic period saw a shift from social man acting for the gaze of others, to romantic man acting true to the self. Williamson (82) explains that the meaning of passion has shifted from ‘reciprocal moral conduct to centre on the self and on spontaneity’. The concept of ‘true love’ as we know it was born in the Romantic era; the passions becoming ‘close to the meaning of life, for it is what gives life meaning’ (83). These themes are reflected in current vampire horror—for example, Bella’s derives her life’s meaning through her passionate love for Edward, which justifies any actions she takes, including her death (83).

Romantic passion in the sympathetic vampire tale offers the pleasures of individual significance, then, by validating the importance of the individual as being in possession of her feelings (Williamson 2014, 85).

A young-adult audience, at a time in their lives where they may be experiencing their first relationships and exploring their individuality and the consequences of their moral actions, may find themselves emotionally identifying with the same themes in the post-millennial vampire narrative. As Laine (2001) explains, it is not necessary for an audience to be able to identify with a character’s visual experience for emotional engagement, claiming that to imagine an emotion requires more than just recognising the emotion, but identifying with it via the character. This notion of identification ‘provides a principal basis for thinking about what connects the spectator to the film on the emotional level’ (76). However, the process of ‘identifying’ with a character is more complex than Laine’s explanation suggests, and does in fact encompass ‘distinct levels of engagement’, which goes beyond the blanket term of ‘identification’ (Smith 1995, 5).

For Smith (82), developing an audience’s sympathetic reaction requires the viewers to engage with characters: this begins with the audience initially recognising the way a character is constructed. Smith (82) also claims that audiences understand that a character possessing traits such as fangs, a penetrating stare, speed and great strength is likely to be the vampire. Similarly, a character that looks like a regular human and displays human emotions is likely to be recognised by the audience as the human victim. At the ‘recognition’ stage of audience engagement, the viewer has not yet begun to form an alliance with a particular character. They will begin to ‘align’ themselves with a character when they can relate to a character’s actions and understand their inner states and feelings (83). If we apply Smith’s ‘alignment’ stage
to vampire horror such as *The Twilight Saga* and *The Vampire Diaries*, the viewer would arguably begin to notice similarities between themselves and these texts’ human protagonists; yet this is problematised by the humanised characterisation of some key vampire characters in these texts. In the ‘allegiance’ stage of engaging with character, the viewer is morally evaluating the characters and making judgements about with whom they are best allied (84): the fragile human who wants to be a vampire, or the vampire who is strong, wealthy and powerful, yet presents with moral and humane characteristics.

Cherry (Cherry 2002, 172) explains that the vampire film is often viewed in a similar way to romance films: the female horror fan will derive a major ‘source of pleasure’ from identifying with the relationships between the vampires or between the vampire and its victim, and will judge the quality of a film based on the relationships developed between the characters. At the time of writing, for Cherry (172), ‘the vampire film is the closest the horror genre comes to the traditional romantic film’—that is, key themes centre on problematic relationships and their resolution, unrequited—or indeed undying—love, problematic love triangles or complex relationship situations. This is now being challenged by the zombie movie, itself an evolving sub-genre that has introduced archetypes of the restless youth and the redeeming maiden. The zombie sub-genre has also begun to explore themes such as the impossible relationship, unconditional love and taming the monster—for example, *Warm Bodies* (Levine 2013) and *In The Flesh* (Campbell et al. 2013).

Films created for the teenage market generally revolve around experiences and themes ‘envisaged as key transition points along the border which separates childhood from adulthood’ (Stephens 2003, 124). Some of these points include the transition from a lower to a higher educational institution, first sexual experiences, leaving home, death of a loved one, and sometimes pregnancy and parenthood. All of these themes in teen films involve progression through these rites of passage, and completing the journey or challenge. Of *The Twilight Saga*, Housel (Housel 2009 in Jameson and Dane 2014, 244) suggests that although the literature has argued that the films produce ‘a dangerously romanticized fantasy for a primarily young female audience’, vampire horror aimed at a teen audience provides a ‘fantasy resolution for the negotiation of some of the problems and pressures that young women face today’. Vampire film and television aimed at a young-adult audience provides a
canvas on which the transitions of adolescence can be investigated, and also provides contexts within which this audience can explore their burgeoning ideas on morality, humanity, self and identity. In the post-millennial vampire horror film or television series, these ideas are often examined through the character of the vampire.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the tropes, narrative devices and themes at the core of much post-millennial vampire film and television, especially the core texts of this research. The overarching horror concepts of monstrosity, death and dying, and youth and beauty were also shown to be central to a narrative environment in which the vampire can be represented as having qualities and characteristics similar to those of a person. While enduring traits of the vampire and vampire horror prevail, they are also problematised by the post-millennial vampire narrative. The boundaries of vampire tradition and folklore are blurred and extended by the introduction of new mythologies and cosmologies. The limits traditionally imposed on the vampire, such as aversion to sunlight and garlic, have been challenged, overcome and reimagined, and the nature of the vampire as well as the nature of the undead is in question—if the vampire is no longer truly monstrous, then what is its essential nature? If it is kind, empathetic and, indeed, husband material, can it be said that it is represented as having a soul and is therefore a person with moral accountability? The research, thus far, has explored the evolution of the representation of the vampire in film and television historically, characteristics of the sympathetic vampire and the narrative elements (themes, archetypes and metaphors) prevalent in post-millennial narratives in which the vampire is now represented as ensouled. Chapters 1, 2 and 3 raised the notions of the qualities of personhood, morality, ethical behaviours and the concept of ‘soul’, discussing these concepts in their broadest sense. In Chapter 4, the nature of the soul and the way it is, and has been, understood are explored at length to proffer understandings appropriate to analysing representations of the post-millennial vampire’s soul.
Chapter 4: The Nature of the Soul

Bella Swan: You don't know a thing about his soul.
— The Twilight Saga: New Moon (Weitz 2009)

Chapter 3 explored a shift in the representation of the film and television vampire, and suggested that post-millennial vampires are increasingly depicted as having a propensity for humane action, kindness and qualities of humanity and personhood. As this thesis argues, such a shift raises questions around the essential nature of the vampire, and whether or not it could be ensouled, given its person-like behaviours. Yet before this study can examine how the concept of the soul can be understood in post-millennial texts within the current postsecular context, it must first frame how the concept of the soul has historically been understood in both classical and modern Western philosophy. Moreover, it is important to establish how the notion of the soul has expanded beyond sacred thought in recent decades. A range of key theories most relevant to understanding the texts at the core of this study have been selected, and are applied in the following chapters.

This chapter presents selected key theories in the philosophical, theological, psychological and scientific evolution of the concept of the soul. It commences with a discussion of theories of the soul proffered by the early Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle. The study then moves on to examining early Christian ideas of the soul, looking at Aquinas’ and Augustine’s theories, before discussing the effect of Descartes’ dualist, and conflated, ideas of mind and soul. The chapter then considers contemporary soul theories which encompass the concepts of personhood and identity, including notions of memory and self, and provides an overview of the characteristics, capabilities and qualities of a person. These traits frame the analysis of the post-millennial vampire in the chapters that follow.

4.1 SHIFTS IN DEPICTIONS OF THE VAMPIRE SOUL

As previously mentioned, the nature of the vampire’s soul is a concept that has not been a key area of research for horror scholars since the demise of the television
series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel* in the early 2000s. Many researchers have analysed these shows in terms of how they represent the dichotomies of the Christian notions of good/evil, demon/angel and heaven/hell (Erickson 2002; LaPerriere 2008; McLaren 2005; Playden 2004; Sakal 2003; Stevenson 2003). However, questions of the soul, morals and ethics have been the source of character angst and story complexity in many vampire narratives, such as *The Vampire Diaries*, *The Twilight Saga* and *True Blood*, among others. In early vampire narratives, the soul was often depicted as an animating life-force bestowed by a Christian God, with implications that are both biblical and religious. Contemporary interpretations of the term ‘soul’ can encompass notions of both mind and consciousness, which are examined in this chapter. Current usage of the term ‘soul’ is now philosophically and religiously neutral, makes no references to ‘another world’ and focuses more on the psychological and moral aspects of a person’s existence (Wierzbicka 1989, 44-45). This change can be attributed to ‘the decline of organised religion and the origins of consumer society’, and with a general change in attitude towards ‘superhuman beings in Western culture’ comes differences in descriptions of the vampire that go beyond the influence of any one individual author or genre (Wiktorin 2011, 280). Because a belief in vampires is not, as Collins (2011, 280) puts it, ‘just a literary phenomenon but also a religious phenomenon’, and is therefore ‘subject to the changes in society that affect most religious beliefs’.

Contemporary Western societies have entered what can be understood as a postsecular era (Fessenden 2014; Furani 2015; Kyrlezh 2008; McClure 1995; Molendijk 2015), and with this have come representations of monstrosity as either sacred or secular—both can exist in the postsecular context. It is no longer a loss of soul or a loss of entry into a Heaven that viewers should fear—a concept that was conveyed in early vampire narratives. The postsecular context is reflected in post-millennial texts such as *The Vampire Diaries* and *True Blood*, where the narrative focus is on retaining ties to human morals and personal identity to exist harmoniously in society. Many narratives now share the search for identity as their central trope—the protagonist ‘acts as a detective to uncover the mystery of his or her identity’ (Ostry 2004, 224). The concepts often explored in the vampire narrative include ‘decision making, free will and agency’ (239). It will become clear that key
concepts such as identity, choice and free will are central to the notion of personhood and, therefore, ensoulment.

The concept of the soul had its philosophical beginnings with the early Greek philosophers, and has been expanded and evolved over millennia to encompass the notions of self, personhood and identity. The following section outlines some of the early theories that have persisted into modern thought. The discussion of key theories is derived from a close reading of the primary texts (in translation) on the notion of the soul, including those of early philosophers through to contemporary philosophers and quantum theorists. Key secondary texts that examine the original theories have also been consulted. These theories of the soul and self are used as a basis to examine representations of the vampire soul in further chapters.

4.2 EARLY UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE SOUL

The soul was supposed to escape by the mouth, which as it is an exit from the body is also an entrance to the body, and naturally it is by this path that the soul, if it were to return, would re-enter, or by which an evil spirit or demon would make its way into the body (Summers 1929, 106).

Early Greek thought on the soul

The term ‘soul’ is translated from the Greek word ‘psyche’, from the verb ‘psychein’, which originally meant ‘to breathe’. This term, for the early Greek philosophers, became synonymous with the ‘life of a being or for that which generates and constitutes the essential life of a being’ (Goetz and Taliaferro 2011, 7). Two notable early philosophers, Plato (who lived ca 428–348 BCE) and Aristotle (384–322 BCE), were interested in the concept of the soul not as a religious life-giving force, but as a scientific endeavour to account for the way the body can set itself in motion and move about in the world.

Early conceptualisation of the nature of the soul began with the idea that the soul exists in parts and is located throughout the body. Plato (1997c, Timaeus 70e) asserted that the soul had three parts, the lowest part being non-rational, or ‘appetitive’ in nature, and having ‘appetites for food and drink and whatever else it feels a need for’. The appetitive soul is ‘devoid of opinion, reasoning or understanding’, although it feels ‘sensation, pleasant and painful desires’ (77b). At the top end of the soul is the rational part, or the part responsible for reasoning (Plato
1974, *The Republic*, 439d). In the middle lies the part of the soul, named by Plato in *The Republic* (439e) as the ‘spirited part’, which is ‘the seat of courage, passion and ambition’ (1977b, *Timaeus* 70a), the function of which is to act as a balance between the rational and appetitive souls, listening to ‘the commands of reason … forcibly restraining the appetites’ (70b). Plato (*Timaeus* 69d–70e) placed ‘the parts of the soul within different areas of the body, the rational part of immortal origin is situated in the head, the appetitive part is situated in the area between the midriff and the boundary toward the navel’; the high-spirited part is located between the midriff and the neck. In Plato’s *Phaedo* (80a), he explained that the soul ‘resembles the divine and the body resembles the mortal’ (1997a).

Aristotle’s work features two key concepts that can be drawn upon in an analysis of the post-millennial vampire soul. First, he believed that the soul gave life to its body, claiming ‘the ensouled is distinguished from the unsouled by its being alive’ (Aristotle 1986, *De Anima*, 413a). However, he made a distinction between kinds of souls. The souls of plants and trees he labelled the ‘nutritive’ soul—anything that is alive has a nutritive soul, the functions of which are ‘to reproduce and to handle nourishment’ (415a). The ‘next step up from the nutritive soul is the perceptive or sensitive soul which accounts for the ability to perceive and touch’ (413b); possession of ‘the sensitive soul distinguishes animals from plants’. Aristotle (Aristotle 1984c, *On The Soul*, 414.15-30) did not, however, claim that there are multiple souls or parts of the soul, as described by Plato—rather, he explained that the lower, or nutritive, soul is subsumed by the animal possessing the sensitive soul—the higher being naturally ‘contains its predecessor’. A human being, although animal, is different to non-human animals, and therefore possesses the rational soul, which is one step higher than the sensitive soul and thus makes us rational animals, able to think, suppose, know and engage in abstract thought (1986, 429a–430a).

Second, Aristotle (1984b, Metaphysics Book V.2) conjectured that the reasons for which a thing, or a person, exists can be called its *cause*, or *final cause*. Aristotle (1984b, 1600) broadly identified four senses, or ways, in which ‘causes’ can be discussed, the fourth explained as, ‘the end, i.e. that for the sake of which a thing is’. In his *Dialogues* (1984a), he further explained, ‘for we should assume that everything that comes into being rightly comes into being for the sake of something’ (*Iamblichus*, Protrepticus 49.3–51.6 *Pistelli*, 2405), and
everything that comes into being does so for the sake of its end ... The bodily parts of man are completed first, the parts concerned with the soul later ... now soul is later than body, and understanding is what emerges last in soul ... therefore, some form of understanding is by nature our end and the exercise of it the final activity for the sake of which we have come into being. Now if we have come into being, clearly we also exist to understand and to learn. (Iamblichus, Protrepticus 51.16–52.5 Pistelli, 2405).

Thus, by Aristotle’s explanation, all beings that exist are here for a reason. Ultimately and ideally, an ensouled being exists to understand and learn. This concept is an important one for this research, which considers the vampire to be ensouled—therefore, it must have a final cause, or reasons for existence.

**Early Christianity**

Much pre-millennial Western vampire horror has been situated within a Christian context. This section explains the ideas of three key thinkers of the early Christian era, which are represented in the core texts.

The spread of Christianity and the circulation of the Bible greatly influenced thinking on the nature of the soul. The Bible affirms to its readers that there is an afterlife, and that ‘at death and prior to the resurrection the soul (or the person) is with God’ (Goetz and Taliaferro 2011, 31); while Ecclesiastes (12: 6,7) reminds us that ‘our bodies will return to the dust of the earth, and the breath of life will go back to God, who gave it to us’ (Good News Bible 1976, 658). St Augustine of Hippo (1947, 19, III.III), a philosopher and scholar of theology of the early Christian era who lived from 354‒430 AD, maintained the Aristotelian argument and affirmed that ‘all that does not live is without a soul, and no action occurs without a soul’. This argument made an important contribution to the development of Western theological thought and Christianity. Augustine (1963, 464-465, XV.VII.XI) continued his argument by claiming that a human being is

> a rational substance consisting of soul and body; there is no doubt that man has a soul which is not a body, and a body which is not a soul; and, therefore, these three are not man, but belong to man or are in man.

Augustine (1968, 218, III.21.59) also addressed the question of where the soul originates by presenting four views of the soul’s origins: first, souls come into existence through sexual procreation; secondly, a
new soul is created for each child born; third, each soul exists elsewhere and is sent by God into a body of a human being at birth; or fourth, each soul exists elsewhere and enters the body of a human being at birth, of its own free will.

This notion is certainly reflected in the narratives of Buffy and Angel, which reinforce this idea of ensoulment, and see the soul as an entity that can be removed or replaced within the container of the body.

The examination of the soul in the Christian tradition was continued by St Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274 AD), an influential Italian priest, philosopher and theologian. Aquinas agreed with Aristotle’s notions of the nutritive, sensitive and rational or intellectual souls. In describing a human being, Aquinas (2006 1a. Q75. Art.4), in Summa Theologica, claimed, ‘it is clear that man is not a soul only, but something composed of soul and body’. Aquinas (1905, 108, II.XLV.7) suggested that for the Universe to acquire perfection, it requires the existence of every possible type of being, including ‘a diversity and inequality between creatures, not by chance … but by the special intention of God, wishing to give the creature such perfection as it was capable of having’.

**The influence of Descartes**

In the years between Aquinas’ death in 1274AD and the emergence of Descartes’ work (1596–1650), few philosophers wrote notably on the subject of the soul, and as a philosophical concept, it was not significantly advanced in the three centuries before Descartes’ philosophies emerged. Philosophers in this period were typically referred to as ‘Thomist’ (proponents of St Thomas Aquinas’ theories), or ‘Augustinian’ (proponents of Augustine’s theories of the soul, which were similar to Aristotle’s arguments). Descartes (1968, Discourse 5, 65) had a notable influence on the development of the philosophies of mind and soul, and considered the mind and soul to be synonymous, using them interchangeably:

> For, examining the functions which could, consequentially, be in this body, I found precisely all those which can be in us without our thinking of them, and therefore, without our soul, that is to say, that part distinct from the body about which it has been said above that its nature is only to think.
> [emphasis added]
Like Augustine and Aquinas, Descartes (1968, Sixth Meditation, 156) believed that the soul is immortal and created by God. Similar to Augustine, he posits that I have a distinct idea of the body in so far as it is only an extended thing but which does not think, it is certain that I, that is to say my mind, by which I am what I am, is entirely and truly distinct from my body, and may exist without it.

Although he maintained this dualist approach—soul/mind and body as their own substances—he did not agree with the idea that ‘the soul gives life to the body’ (Goetz 2011). Rather, Descartes (1968, Sixth Meditation, 163) explained that the human body is a machine ‘formed by God to have in it all the movements which it is customary for the body to have’. Because the body is a machine or mechanism, he claimed that people have erroneously believed that the ‘absence of the soul made the movements and the heat cease’; rather, ‘the soul departs when someone dies only because that heat ceases and the organs used to move the body disintegrate’ (1989, I, Art. 7 330, 21). One of the main arguments Descartes (1970, 157) provided in support of dualism is that first that the ‘body is a divisible substance’—that is, it can be dissected into parts; secondly, that the soul is an indivisible substance—that is, it cannot be dissected into parts; and therefore thirdly, ‘the soul and body are distinct substances’; so, gruesomely, if a limb is amputated, ‘we do not think that a man who has lost an arm or leg is less a man than any other’. One of the concepts Descartes raised is the consistency of the body and mind over time. He maintained that although the body may change shape as the years pass, ‘provided that a body is united with the same rational soul, we always take it as the body of the same man whatever matter it may be and whatever quantity or shape it may have’ (1970, 157). Descartes’ conflation of the mind and the soul is key to this thesis, as it becomes apparent later in this chapter that contemporary ideas of the soul also encompass the notion of the mind. Henceforth, the mind/soul conflation is used to embody the concept of ‘soul’.

The concept of dualism is further explained by contemporary philosopher Robert Arp (2010, 144), who says that in the philosophical discipline of mind, ‘metaphysical dualism’ describes a person as being ‘made up of a material body and an immaterial mind’. He describes two versions of metaphysical dualism: Substance dualism and property dualism. A ‘substance dualist’ will believe that a person
comprises two ‘wholly distinct substances: mind and body that can exist apart from one another’; they will ‘believe in the immortality of the soul, and that the death of the body does not mean the death of the soul’, which can live on after bodily death (145). Conversely, a ‘property dualist’ will assert that ‘a person is one substance made up of two wholly distinct properties: an immaterial mental property (the mind and mental states) and a material bodily property (the brain and neurophysiological states)’ (145). Upon death, both ‘the body and the mind will cease to exist’ (145). One could argue from the philosophical viewpoint of the substance dualist that the vampire, although it has been reanimated, can still retain its soul or mind. This concept is further examined in later chapters in relation to the human’s transition to vampire.

The shifts in thinking initiated by Descartes propelled the study of the soul, mind and body into an examination of the self, identity and personhood from multiple perspectives, including religious ones, but also from the realms of psychology, psychiatry and the sciences, including quantum field theory. In the case of vampire literature, specifically, Hallab (2009, 62) observes that many contemporary writers of vampire narratives are choosing to omit the notion of the soul completely, and that character complications now ‘turn on the problem of identity’.

4.3 SIGNIFIERS OF THE SOUL: IDENTITY AND PERSONHOOD

Personhood is a psychological concept, not a biological one. It is a being’s mental and behavioural capacities that make it a person, not the shape of its body, the microstructure of its chromosomes, or any other strictly physiological characteristic (Warren 1997, 93-94).

It has been fairly straightforward to trace how the examination of the soul progressed from early scientific and philosophical discussions of an animating life-force, to a religious God-imbued animating force, to Descartes’ idea of the soul as being synonymous with mind. By the end of the eighteenth century, the idea of the self (rather than the soul) had become synonymous with the mind: ‘a dynamic natural system subject to general laws of growth and development’ (Martin and Barresi 2000, 1). There is no one definition of ‘personhood’ used in this study. A number of qualities, characteristics and criteria to ascertain the personhood of a being have been proposed by thinkers in the field such as Locke (1993), Harris, (2010), Whitman
(2010), Nozick (2013), Warren (1973, 1997) and Nussbaum (1993; 1999), among others. As the point of this study is to ascertain how the ensoulment and personhood of the vampire are represented, I intend to use a breadth of criteria proffered by the literature, rather than measure the personhood of the vampire according to one strict definition. The remainder of this section highlights the key thinking in the area of personhood.

**Memory theory and personal identity**

It was in the eighteenth century that John Locke (1632–1704) put forward his theories of mind, which were the precursors to today’s conceptions of identity and self. Locke (1993, II.XXVII.8) described the *soul* as an immaterial substance, and a *rational being* as a person. According to Locke (1993, II.XXVII.9), a person is not just a soul because of its consciousness—a person is a thinking intelligent being that has reason and reflection and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places.

It is in the ideas presented by Locke around memory and identity that an argument can be found for the vampire existing as a person, not as an unsouled, undead creature. Locke (II.XXVII.9) described consciousness and identity as extending beyond the present moment, claiming that

> consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that that makes everyone to be what he calls *self*, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things: in this alone consists *personal identity*, i.e. the sameness of a rational being. And as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that *person*: it is the same *self* now it was then. [emphasis in original]

So long as a person retains their memories from the past and recognises themselves in their past actions and experiences, they retain their personal identity. Briefly applying Locke’s memory theory to an analysis of the post-millennial vampire Bill Compton (*True Blood*), it can be claimed that Bill is the same person now (as a vampire) as he was before he was turned. His personal identity has endured because of the retention of his memories (Grubb 2010, 219-220). This concept is further investigated in the following chapters. As Hauke (2005, 149) explains, ‘being a person means remembering who you are, who you are not ... Memory helps us make the narratives of ourselves coherent and consistent... Memory is far from being
auxiliary to our human being, it is central to being human’. Remembering events is intimately connected to a person remembering them, which ‘forms a narrative of that person’s sense of self and of their own motivations’; the issue becomes one of ‘coherence in terms of identity and self-knowledge’ rather than whether one’s memories of an event are true (145). I would argue, however, that a person who has lost their memory and self-knowledge because of an accident, for example, may not retain their identity, but still retain their personhood. This can be explained by Larkin’s (2010) approaches to personal identity.

Larkin (2010, 15) poses two questions: ‘What exactly is a person?’ and ‘Under what conditions exactly does a person continue to exist?’ To answer these and ascertain the nature of personhood, it is possible to employ two approaches to considering a being’s personal identity. These include the ‘psychological approach’, which has similarities to Locke’s memory theory, and the ‘bodily approach’. According to the psychological approach, a person will continue to exist while their ‘thoughts, memories, and character traits continue to exist’ (16). There must be a sense of psychological continuity that is both ‘necessary and sufficient for personal identity’ (16). According to the bodily approach, the person is viewed fundamentally as a ‘certain type of material object’—so a person will continue to exist if some critical mass of their material composition exists—there must be a clear sense of bodily continuity. This means that all the physical traits a person had will remain at a later stage in life. Even if a person was in a permanent vegetative state, they would still be classed as a ‘person’. Larkin (19) identifies that ‘a problem with this approach is that people do not continue to exist as corpses’. According to the bodily approach, ‘I am identical to my corpse. In the psychological approach I am not identical to my corpse’ (19, emphasis added). In terms of the vampire, one could argue that both approaches make a case for the vampire being a person—in most contemporary mythologies, the vampire retains their psychological continuity as well as their corporeal identity, as they do, in fact, continue to exist as corpses. While Locke (1993) and Larkin’s (2010) theories begin to build a picture of personhood, there are other characteristics that constitute identity—notions of self and personhood—that indicate a being has a mind/soul.
Establishing personhood and ensoulment

To ascertain whether a vampire is being represented as a person from a moral perspective, and therefore worthy of moral consideration, a set of five characteristics that may indicate whether a being possesses ‘morally relevant interests’ (2010, 173)—that is, personhood—are proposed by Professor of Economics, Douglas Glen Whitman. These characteristics are based on those initially summarised in 1974 by notable US philosopher Professor Robert Nozick (2013, 99), who discussed the moral constraints on how people may treat each other, or be treated. Renowned philosopher and neuroscientist Sam Harris (2010, 53) reminds us, however, not to use the term ‘morality’ as many do: ‘as a synonym for religious dogmatism, racism, sexism or other failures of insight and compassion’ Rather, morality or ‘goodness’ can be defined as ‘the set of attitudes, choices and behaviours that potentially affect the well-being of ourselves and others’ (12). These characteristics are used to analyse the post-millennial vampire in terms of its soul, personhood and identity in Chapter 6, which also reveals how the post-millennial vampire character blurs the boundaries of personhood and identity—traits traditionally associated with the human species.

Vampire narratives rely on their vampire figures to be able to perceive the world around them, and show a capacity for feeling both pleasure and pain, regardless of the mythology from which the vampire figure comes. This is Whitman’s first characteristic, which asks us to consider if a person is both sentient and self-conscious. Whitman (2010, 173) asks if the creature (human or vampire) is a rational being, that is, can it use ‘abstract concepts to impose order on the world around it, allowing it to observe relationships and patterns, to think about the future and to create plans and execute them’. The post-millennial vampire is represented as having a mind ‘capable of weighing the benefits of alternative courses of action’ (173), and can show resistance to immediate pleasures for longer-term rewards, therefore indicating that they meet Whitman’s second criteria. His third characteristic of personhood is free will, a concept difficult to define for either human or vampire. There is no direct evidence of free will, yet if we could have indirect evidence of free will, it might include characteristics such as sentience, self-awareness and rationality (173). One could argue that some post-millennial vampire characters (and indeed werewolves, faeries, and hybrids) display these characteristics and could meet this criterion for personhood. Personhood also encompasses the notion of being ‘a moral
agent capable of guiding its behaviour by moral principles and capable of engaging in mutual limitation of conduct’ (Whitman 2010, 175; Nozick 2013). This includes the ability to engage in moral arguments and stand a chance of affecting choices. Whitman (175) claims that vampires can be indifferent or even hostile to moral constraints on their behaviour. However, this characteristic is problematised in the current vampire narrative, with mythologies broadening to include the vampire that chooses, or can be induced, to behave in a moral manner.

The fifth characteristic posited by Whitman and Nozick that indicates personhood is having a soul. Given that there is no direct evidence of souls, other signifiers must be relied upon (176). As with the characteristic of free will, the same qualities of ‘sentience, self-awareness, rationality of moral personality’ are also proposed as possible signifiers of the soul, despite the fact that it is not possible to verify the existence of souls within humans, let alone vampires—as Whitman (176) observes, ‘we simply assert that humans have them and vampires do not’. This is a key point in this study, and supports Descartes’ mind/soul conflation. Sentience, self-awareness and rationality of moral personality are also indicators of having a mind; and as we have seen with Descartes’ conflation, mind and soul are synonymous.

Immanuel Kant (2012, 106) asserts that ‘rational beings … are called persons’; however, being rational is not the sole qualification for being a person. Because of a person’s rational existence, they are worthy of rights, respect and dignity. The notion of personhood does not necessarily apply just to the human species. A case went before the New York Supreme Court in October 2014 to determine if chimpanzees ‘should be declared “persons” … so the animals can be free from … inhumane imprisonment’ (The Times - Picayune "NY court is asked to give chimp 'legal personhood" 2014). The attorney in the case, Steven Wise, defines personhood as non-human animals who are intelligent, self-aware and autonomous—a definition that has previously legally included great apes, elephants and dolphins. Indeed, humans share behaviours with animals, which could extend our definition of personhood both legally and morally. For example, human actions as defined by neuroscientists Moll, de Oliveira-Souza and Zahn (2008, 162) are divided into four categories: the first is ‘self-serving actions that do not affect others’; the second is ‘self-serving actions that negatively affect others’; the third is ‘actions that are beneficial to others, with a high probability of reciprocation’; and the fourth is
‘action that is beneficial to others, with no direct personal benefits (material or reputational gains) and no expected reciprocation (genuine altruism)’. Harris (2010, 91) explains that behaviours one to three are shared across all mammals, yet only the actions in category four are unique to human beings.

For an individual to ‘fulfil their own unique creative potential’, they must also have ‘equal fulfilment of their communal being as members of shared cultures’ (Hauke 2005, 12). Being a person means being fully engaged with others. As Graves (2008) puts it, our ‘family, tribe, culture and transcendent experience also define and inform our soul’. He explains that the ‘larger systems’ in which we participate give our existence meaning, definition and purpose (206). Graves (206) also goes so far as to state that ‘one defines oneself through decision-making, and those decisions affect the definition of one’s community, which then in turn helps define one’s soul’. It is possible, then, to ascribe personhood to many representations of the post-millennial vampire who are portrayed as rational and active participants within their own vampire community, and also in their larger non-vampire community. Based on Whitman’s five characteristics alone, it could similarly be claimed that many post-millennial vampires deserve respect and dignity. As Ostry (2004, 236) states, traditional views of humanity are ‘based on a sense of empathy, morality, free will and dignity’. If we tell someone that they are ‘inhuman’, we usually mean that they lack the milk of human kindness, are being cruel and are not adhering to the moral norms for which human beings pride themselves; this implies that the person is ‘unable to connect with others and lack a heart’ (224). To empathise with others is generally considered a basic human, moral trait.

It now seems much more likely that a relationship with others—for its own sake—is an embedded activity of humans through which they have their being. ... To an important extent, the idea of each individual living to fulfil their own unique creative potential must include an equal fulfilment of their communal being as members of shared cultures. Differences between human cultural groups in language, concepts and meanings found across the world can seem vast … For human beings, being fully oneself means being fully human, which means being fully engaged with others. Individual life and cultural life are two sides of the same coin (Hauke 2005, 12).

This principle of engagement with one’s community is echoed in Harris’ (2010, 55) work, which explains that meaningful human lives and viable societies are founded
on the idea of cooperation. Given humans’ relatively short lifespan, and consequent limits on a person’s time and resources, Harris (55) claims that ‘the problem of human cooperation seems almost the only problem worth thinking about’. Examples abound of cooperation failures: violence, wars, famine and, on a smaller scale, deceptions and theft.

Discussion around the qualities and characteristics of personhood, and the ensuing acceptance into the moral community, has resulted in the identification and presentation of sets of characteristics and qualities by which an entity can be considered a person. Twentieth-century philosopher Mary Anne Warren (1973, 54-57) presents a set of characteristics that a being should have to be treated as a person, and to be worthy of respect and dignity. Warren’s (1973; 1997) works have been widely cited, and remain valid both academically and philosophically, and hence are highly applicable criteria to use for analysing the personhood of the vampire. In developing these criteria, Warren (19973, 54) explains that ‘we have no right to assume that genetic humanity is necessary for personhood’. Similarly, Michaud (2010, 41) reminds us that we should place little importance on the biological differences between vampires and humans: ‘to say that they are not persons simply because they are physically different from us amounts to arbitrary speciesism’. Warren (55) suggests that an entity that ‘has consciousness, displays reasoning skills, displays self-motivated activity, has the capacity to communicate, and can display the presence of self-concepts’ is one that can be considered a person. While Warren’s criteria are similar to Whitman’s, she posits that the most necessary conditions for personhood are most likely consciousness and self-motivated activity. This thinking is reminiscent of Aquinas’ (2006, Summa Theologica I, Q75, Art.1) claim that ‘life is shown principally by two actions, knowledge and movement’. The post-millennial vampire is examined in Chapter 7 according to these characteristics to ascertain whether the vampire is worthy of being part of the moral community. This analysis also reveals how the vampire blurs the boundaries between vampire society and human society.

**The capabilities of a person**

Alongside the approach to identifying personhood based on characteristics and qualities lies the ‘capability approach’, which holds that ‘we should focus … what are the people of the group or country in question actually able to do and be?’
Nussbaum (1999, 34). Nussbaum (1999, 41-42) suggests ten central capabilities of a person. These include the fundamentals of existence, such as ‘the ability to live to the end of a life of normal length’ (41–42), and the ability to have good bodily health. I would argue this point, however, that persons with a disability or chronic illness are no less a person than someone who has the better fortune of good health and longevity. Nussbaum also proffers the capabilities of the ‘senses, imagination and thought, with the ability to be able to use these senses’ (41-42) for the purposes of imagining, thinking and reasoning; capabilities reminiscent of Aristotle’s (1986, 429a–430a) indicator of the rational soul able to think, suppose and know, as well as to have the ability to engage in abstract thought. Nussbaum (41–42) also captures this idea in her capabilities set, articulating that having ‘practical reason, or the capability to engage in critical reflection’ is an indicator of personhood. Further to this, a person will have the capacity to secure themselves from violence with freedom of movement, and the ability to assert a measure of control over their environment, which includes the freedoms of participating in politics if desired, and owning property—land or material goods. Being a person who is part of a moral community means having the ability to engage constructively with people and things outside of oneself, which Nussbaum (41–42) identifies as emotional capabilities: ‘the ability to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves’, and affiliation, which means being able to live with others and considerate of others while also having self-respect. Closely related to these is the capability of showing concern for plants, animals and nature. The ability to enjoy recreational activities, or play, is Nussbaum’s final identified capability of a person.

It is evident that these capabilities do not just apply to people. Michaud (2010, 43) points out that Nussbaum’s list could be used to determine the ‘rights and dignities that should be granted to those who have these central capabilities’. Many of these apply to animals, and indeed most apply to many of the representations of the post-millennial vampire; this is further explored in Chapter 7. Kant (2012, 106, 66) suggests a formula known as ‘the formula of respect for persons’, which states: ‘Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end’. This supreme moral principle is one from which Kant (in Robichaud 2010, 8-9) believes we can ‘derive all of the more specific moral obligations that we have’. Kant
(in Robichaud 2010, 8-9) claims that what makes us distinct are our rational capacities, which ultimately ‘ground the demands of morality’.

Thus far, we have seen that an ensouled being is one that possesses a mind. Having a mind means having memory and an identity that has been created over time. That identity reflects a being’s nature, its personhood, which can be ascertained through identifying or locating a number of characteristics, qualities and capabilities within that being. It is not necessary to display all of the signifiers of personhood, as in the case of the bodily health / disability disparity, to be considered a person. Further, it is not necessary for the being classified as a person to only be of the human species.

**Sentience, well-being and death**

A further characteristic of personhood is the concept of sentience, that is, the capacity for feeling. Sentience is different from possessing ‘rationality, a moral sense, or a deep and rich experience of the world’ (Blayde and Dunn 2010, 45)—rather, sentience is a ‘point of vulnerability, our exposure to the possibility of suffering’ and

to make sentience the criterion for moral consideration amounts to replacing the question ‘What can you do that might warrant my respect?’ with the question ‘How might you be harmed by my actions or neglect?’ Or as the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham put it, referring to our duties to nonhuman animals, ‘[The] question is not, Can they reason? Nor, Can they talk? But, Can they suffer?’ If they can suffer, then what I do to them matters. It matters to them, obviously, but it should also matter to me.

For example, a vampire may recognise that the human from whom they feed may suffer. A sentient vampire will care. Archer (2000, 10) explains that ‘we are who we are because of what we care about: in delineating our ultimate concerns and accommodating our subordinate ones we also define ourselves. We give a shape to our lives, which constitutes our internal personal integrity’. If a vampire is represented as caring about its progeny, its victims, its community, its friends, then we may claim that it is a sentient being, which renders it worthy of consideration and personhood.

Another characteristic of a sentient creature is ‘well-being’, for self and others. In *The Moral Landscape*, Harris (2010, 12) describes the notion of ‘goodness’ as one
anchored to the experience of sentient beings, and that which is ‘good’ supports well-being. He explains that when we are deciding whether or not a ‘certain state of pleasure is “good”’, we are ascertaining whether it is ‘conducive to, or obstructive to well-being’. Defining goodness in this way can highlight what our actual values are. As defined above, goodness and morality encompass the attitudes, behaviours or choices that could affect our own and others’ well-being (12). Values such as ‘fairness, justice, compassion and a general awareness of terrestrial reality’ are, Harris (33) claims, ‘integral to the development of a flourishing global community, and therefore benefit the ultimate well-being’ of humankind. Indeed, many post-millennial vampire narratives follow the consequences of erroneous choices on behalf of the vampire, which compromise the well-being of themselves and of vampire and human communities.

One of the fundamental features of being human is that we die, and have an awareness of our own mortality. The fact that we die gives meaning to life, and ‘without death, we could understand ourselves only as existing forever in a succession of empty moments’ (Barrows 2010, 72). With the prospect of death looming, we have a ‘temporal arc—an experience of being thrown forward towards an indisputable end’ (73), and with this our lives are a bordered whole ‘with death making it a complete entity’ (74). This is what makes us, as Barrows (74) terms it, ‘authentic’ beings. An inauthentic being, however, will live forever in an ‘endless succession of moments’ (74). By this definition, the vampire is an inauthentic being, unbound by the border provided by death; a being that can promise eternal life in a more tangible and comprehensible way than most religions (Hallab 2009, 6). Being neither dead nor authentically alive, the vampire represents the transgression of the boundaries of death. Fear of death, and the loss of loved ones, are fundamental concerns to people, and Hallab (49) claims that vampire folklore and literature could function to assuage our fears. To do this, the narrative must appeal to our own ideas about the soul and self, and their relationship to the body (and possible survival after the death of the body). ‘Whatever else it may do, most vampire literature affirms the Romantic ideal that individuality and a sense of self are the very meaning of being human’ (63).

This study now turns from psychological and philosophical discussion of the soul and personhood to scientific approaches to the existence and nature of the
soul/mind and consciousness. This has been included for a couple of reasons: first, because the idea that consciousness might have a quantum-related origin has consistently and recurrently arisen in over the last 50 years (Frixione 2014; Smith 2006; 2009); secondly, because there is a direct reference to quantum theory in the recent movie Only Lovers Left Alive, which prompts the viewer to consider Einstein’s theory of entanglement (Einstein, Podolsky and Rosen 1935).

### 4.4 THE QUANTUM SOUL

Anthropological studies into belief in souls have revealed the existence of a near-worldwide acceptance of the soul–body distinction. Sir Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917), an English anthropologist, was considered a founding figure in the area of social anthropology. One of his early studies found that all primitive human societies held a basic belief in the soul that underpinned both their social and religious practices (Baker and Goetz 2011, 2). In the mid-twentieth century, US anthropologist George Murdock (1945) put together a list of ‘The Common Denominator of Cultures’, which was drawn from his extensive ethnographic studies and compilation of data from over 500 cultures. This list included ‘soul concepts’ as one of the universal features of human culture, a feature listed just after ‘religious ritual and sexual restrictions’ and just before ‘status differentiation and surgery’. Further to this, psychological studies into dualism (as described earlier in this chapter in terms of soul/consciousness and body) in children have revealed that although young children (aged 4–6) understand that if a mouse dies, it no longer has any biological functions, most also believed that its ‘psychological properties’ would continue—that is, it would still have thoughts and could ‘still experience hunger’ (Bering and Bjorklund 2004, 219). This indicated to the researchers that ‘human individuals have been dualists at least in their childhoods’ (Baker and Goetz 2011, 3), meaning that in our early years, we believe that we have a soul encased in a human body.

The human mind has evolved, and evolution ‘has no direct interest in what is true, only in what is useful for the purposes of survival and reproduction’ (Baker and Goetz 2011, 3). While belief in souls has been ubiquitous, this may be because that belief was somehow useful to our ancestors, and does not mean that the belief was true (Baker and Goetz 2011, 4). A common belief in the soul is receding, particularly ‘among the intellectual elite of scientifically informed people in Europe and North America’ (Hockett 1973, 133)—regardless of whether this statement is true, there are
certainly some theories arising from studies into the neurosciences and the physical sciences, including quantum field theory, which are useful for considering the phenomena of personhood and consciousness—both indicators of ensoulment. The role of scientific inquiry ‘can and should be used to explain the nature of our embodiment, not to explain it away’ (Taliaferro 2011, 40).

Quantum theories and the movement of consciousness

Quantum field theory initially arose from the discipline of quantum mechanics, and was primarily developed as a way to study the interaction of radiation and matter in the 1920s (Kuhlmann 2015). Ward explains Bohm’s interpretation of quantum states, which claims that ‘reality consists of quantum type wave functions and a classical world of particles and fields embedded in a “quantum field”’ (Bohm 1952, 1990; in Ward 2014, 284). The theory was expanded in the 1930s to include the study of photons and the light field, which led to studies of beta radiation and the creation and destruction of electrons and neutrinos (Kuhlmann 2015). Most recently, the discovery of the Higgs boson, or ‘The God Particle’, which is a quanta of what has been named the ‘Higgs field’, has provided validation for physicists of quantum field theory, and led to Higgs and Englert being awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics (Brooks 2010). Distinguished Professor of Philosophy Robin Collins is a contemporary theological philosopher who explores the philosophical issues around the relationship between religion, science and philosophical theology. Collins (2011, 244-245), who also has expertise in physics and maths, explains that quantum field theory asserts that there are various ‘fields’ in the quantum state, and each field is made up of different particles called quanta—for example, ‘electrons are the quanta of the electron field, photons are quanta of the light field’, and so on. Collins (244) posits that a soul is a quanta of an overarching ‘soul field’. If this is considered true, then it could also be considered possible ‘that only certain kinds of neurological structures are capable of pumping enough energy of the right frequencies and of sufficient coherence into the soul field to create a soul quanta’ (245). This could mean that a soul may ‘only come into existence when a brain reaches sufficient size and complexity during the evolutionary process’. Collins (245) proposes that a larger (and appropriately structured) brain may be able to create a soul, but may also be able ‘to activate higher level modes of vibration of the soul-string such as those required for abstract thought’.
A feature of the fields, according to quantum field theory, is its associated theory of entanglement, is that particles within the fields become unidentifiable as separate entities. Buhrman, Cleve and van Dam (Buhrman, Cleve and van Dam 2001, 1829) explain it thus:

If two particles are in an entangled state, then, even if the particles are physically separated by a great distance, they behave in some respects as a single entity. The entangled particles exhibit what physicists call nonlocal effects. Informally, these are effects that cannot occur in a world governed by the laws of ‘classical’ physics unless communication occurs between the particles. Moreover, if the physical separation between the particles is large and the time between the observations is small, then this entailed communication may exceed the speed of light!

Einstein (1830) later referred to this as spukhafte Fernwirkungen: spooky actions at a distance. This concept is important to this study first because it allows for the notion of synchronicity that can appear in vampire narratives, such as in True Blood when both Eric and Bill instantly recognise the moment Sookie returns from Faerieland ("She's Not There". Lehmann 2011a). Sookie has exchanged blood with both vampires, and is bound to both. Second, this concept enables the link between souls, such as the vampires Adam and Eve in Only Lovers Left Alive. This aspect of quantum field theory is explored further in Chapter 5.

To account for differences in soul, and perhaps in personality, Collins (2011, 245) proposes three possible views. In version one, ‘all souls would be the same type of entity, but with different modes of their souls being activated depending on brain structure and function’. In version two, ‘just as there are distinct types of quanta in material fields’, there may be distinct types of quanta in the soul field, and perhaps some of these ‘can only be created by sufficiently complex brains’. In the third view, Collins (2011, 245) suggests that we could hypothesise ‘that the soul field obeys a rule that implies that normal brains have at most one soul quantum’—that is, all animals and humans will have a soul or consciousness at some level. Any of these views, Collins (245) observes, can provide ‘a non-arbitrary dividing line between animals that have souls and those that do not (for example, possibly worms which do not have a sufficiently complex brain), along with non-arbitrarily accounting for the different levels of thought that various types of animals can achieve’. Collins (244)
explains that the major groups of animals (‘families, orders or genera’) may ‘have their own type of soul with lower level groupings (such as species within a genus) displaying variations as a result of the ability of their brains to activate and send appropriate signals’. Bohm and Hiley (1995, 386) assert that a ‘mind-like quality’ exists at the level of particle physics that ‘becomes stronger and more developed as we go to subtler levels’. Similarly, Dyson (1979, 250-251) posits that it is scientifically evident that ‘atoms and humans and a “world soul” may have minds that differ in degree but not in kind’. Of note here also is that scientists in this field have, like Descartes, conflated the concepts of the soul and mind, and also consciousness.

Within the nervous system resides quantum information that ‘leaves the body and dissipates into the universe at death’ (Berman and Lanza 2010, 2014). British physicist Sir Roger Penrose (in Berman and Lanza 2010, 2014) claims that ‘consciousness resides in the microtubules of the brain cells which are the primary sites of quantum processing’, and when a person dies, this information is released from the body; therefore, their consciousness is also released. Penrose (2014) argues that ‘that our experience of consciousness is the result of quantum gravity effects in these microtubules’. He further states that consciousness is theorised to be a ‘fundamental property of the universe’ that is present during the ‘Big Bang’ theory of evolution. This means that our souls are constructed from ‘the very fabric of the universe’, and ‘our brains are simply the receivers and amplifiers for consciousness which is intrinsic to the fabric of space-time’ (Berman and Lanza 2010). Therefore, at death, ‘the microtubules lose their quantum state, yet the quantum information within the microtubules is not, and cannot be, destroyed’ (2010). It does, in fact, dissipate into the universe at large. The authors explain that if a person is resuscitated, the quantum information can simply return into the microtubules; if a person is not revived, ‘the quantum information can exist outside of the body, as a soul’. As Frixione (2014, 313) explains, ‘the filigree-like architecture of microtubules is supposed to undergird … a non-robotic and immensely … powerful kind of information processing, i.e., quantum computing, that allegedly can account for true consciousness’. The implications of this theory for the arguments of vampire-as-person and vampire-with-a-soul are considerable: as a mythical creature, it is possible now to attribute the vampire’s reanimation not just to the possibilities of
magical or supernatural and unknowable powers but, perhaps, to science and quantum theories of consciousness.

Quantum theories of soul/mind/consciousness may seem complex. However, they are useful when considering the conscious state of the post-millennial vampire and the nature of its soul. The vampire was once human, with a brain capacity for creating a soul and activating vibrations required for abstract thought. Reanimation implies that the *anima* or life-force of the vampire has been restored. Whether contemporary mythology requires that a vampire ‘dies’ at night and must then ‘sleep’ (such as the vampires in *True Blood*), or can stay awake during the day (such as those in *The Twilight Saga* or *The Vampire Diaries*), when conscious, the vampires in the core texts certainly keep their brain power at full human capacity, and could therefore be considered ensouled.

**4.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter examined how the vampire of film and television has evolved, and showed that vampires are capable of ‘normal’, humane behaviours and actions, including kindness, while also demonstrating how the boundaries between vampires and humans have become blurred in many post-millennial narratives. This shift in representation raises questions around the essential nature of the vampire, and whether it could be ensouled. To uncover the nature of ‘soul’ and ‘ensoulment’ so that the vampire can be further analysed in chapters 5–7, Chapter 4 identified a number of key theories of the soul, and the measures by which one can judge the personhood of a being. Early Greek philosophy considered that the soul may be a resident of, and life-giving force to, the body. The early Christians echoed the soul-within-a-body theory, but the question of the soul’s origin was more firmly attributed to God. Descartes (1968; 1970, 1989) posited the formal notion of dualism, agreeing that the soul is resident in the body, but that the body cannot exist without a soul. At this point, the notions of the soul and mind became conflated and interchangeable. In this thesis, the term ‘soul’ henceforth encompasses the notions of mind and consciousness. The differences between substance dualism and property dualism were presented, with substance dualism flagged as a useful philosophical and ontological viewpoint through which to examine the post-millennial vampire. From here, the chapter explored the literature around concepts of identity and personhood as components of the soul. Locke’s (1993) memory theory offers a robust premise
that is used in later chapters to analyse the notions of identity and personhood of the post-millennial vampire. The chapter then presented the qualities, capabilities and characteristics that can be used as measures to determine personhood. These are applied to the analysis of the post-millennial vampire in the following chapters. Finally, quantum field theory was presented as a new lens through which to consider the vampire soul. These theories are applied in the analysis chapters to ascertain how the personhood and ensoulment of the vampire are represented in the post-millennial narrative.
Chapter 5: The vampire soul—analysis through the lens of soul theories

Death is nothing to us; for the body, when it has been resolved into its elements, has no feeling, and that which has no feeling is nothing to us.

_Epicurus_ (n.d.).

This study has thus far provided an overview of the way the soul has been conceptualised and theorised by philosophers and scientists over the last millennium, and presented the key theories that have shaped humans’ concept of the soul and its relationship to, or receipt from, a higher being or God (in the Christian tradition), as well as the shift in thinking to perceiving the soul as a non-religious construct in Western societies. At the core of this chapter is the development of understanding how the soul is represented in the core texts through an analysis of _The Twilight Saga, The Vampire Diaries_ and _True Blood_, which are all central to what this research terms the sensitive cycle of the vampire genre. A range of other post-millennial vampire films, drawing on the theories presented in the research field of the soul, are also used to compare, contrast and interpret the way the soul is now portrayed. These complementary texts include _Only Lovers Left Alive_ and the UK version of the television series _Being Human_, as they reflect similar themes to the core texts and present depictions of the vampire struggling with its moral choices, thus strengthening the position of the sensitive cycle as a pertinent construct in the post-millennial vampire horror genre.

This chapter’s purpose is to examine the ensoulment of the vampire by applying the soul theories introduced in Chapter 4. It commences with an analysis of the vampire in light of Plato’s (1997c, 70e) three-part soul theory and the soul’s existence before the body, as articulated in _Timaeus_, and Aristotle’s (1986, 415a, 413b) version of the three-part soul theory, described in _De Anima_. Bella’s transition to vampire is examined using Augustine’s (1947, 19 III.III) distinction of ‘alive’ and ‘dead’, and the ensoulment of living creatures. The representation of post-millennial vampires is further explored in light of the concepts of Cartesian dualism, particularly substance dualism (1989 I Art. 7 330, 21) to ascertain if there is an obvious application of this soul theory to the vampire. Aristotle’s (_Iamblichus_,...
The layered soul and superpowers

To recap, Plato (Timaeus 69d–70e), one of the early philosophers who pondered the subject of the soul, proposed that the soul consisted of three parts: the lowest being the non-rational or appetitive soul, the middle being the spirited soul, which exists to support the rational soul, and the rational soul, which rules over the other two parts. In the chosen vampire narratives (The Vampire Diaries, The Twilight Saga, True Blood), there is no explicit mention of a soul structure similar to Plato’s proposal. However, there are examples in the texts that demonstrate levels of existence that drive choices. In The Vampire Diaries, this is clearly evident in the vampiric ability to ‘flip the humanity switch’. In this mythology, a vampire’s emotions are heightened and magnified, particularly after transition. At any time when these emotions are overwhelming, a vampire can choose to turn off their humanity, thus...
dulling the pain of their emotions. This can, however, make them ‘carefree and remorseless about their actions and impervious to guilt and conscience turning them into remorseless calculating killers’ (*The Vampire Diaries* "The Vampire Diaries and Originals Wiki" 2015).

It is possible to align the action of ‘flipping the humanity switch’ with choosing to shut down the spirited soul. An example of this can be found in *The Vampire Diaries* season 6, episode 16, ‘The Downward Spiral’. Vampire Caroline Forbes has flipped her humanity switch to cope with the grief of losing her mother to cancer. In an elaborate plan to get vampire Stefan Salvatore to flip his humanity switch and join her, she compels a medical student at her college to perform surgery, without anaesthetic, on Stefan’s human relative, Sarah Salvatore. While Caroline’s actions reflect the desires of the appetitive soul and cater to her own selfish wants, her actions are deliberate and show logical planning, indicating that her rational soul is still available to her. When Stefan has previously flipped his humanity switch ("As I Lay Dying". Behring 2011), he has become a ‘ripper’, a vampire unable and unwilling to control his bloodlust, feeding on humans and leaving a trail of bodies. In this ‘ripper’ state, it appears that not just the spirited soul is switched off, but perhaps part of the rational soul, leaving the appetitive soul to go unchecked. In either case, one could equate the spirited soul with humanity, thus indicating that Plato’s levels are reflected in this narrative.

A further example of the notion of Plato’s layered soul can be found in the movie *Only Lovers Left Alive*, a recent key film subsequent to *The Twilight Saga, Vampire Diaries* and *True Blood* phenomena. Vampires Adam and Eve have residences across the globe. Both find themselves in a derelict area of Detroit after Eve flies from Tangiers to Detroit to be with Adam, who is experiencing depression. When the story introduces Eve’s unpredictable young sister, Ava, also a vampire, Eve and Adam are equally mortified, yet unsurprised, when Ava ‘drinks’ Adam’s friend Ian. Adam and Eve have been surviving on human blood, but have not been killing humans to do so—Eve procures her blood supply from Kit Marlowe in Tangiers, Adam purchases blood from a doctor at a local hospital. These choices reveal a respect for human life, a morality that has tempered their predatory desires to kill, and an initial near-human reaction to Ian’s death—Adam feels some sadness at the loss of his friend. As Adam and Eve exist in their worlds of music, books and
cultural artefacts, they continue to feed on human blood, which does not just sustain them, but that seems to give them a drugged high. The audience witnesses this ‘high’ throughout the film, seeing the vampires sip and savour blood from wine glasses or silver flasks. When Eve, berating Ava for drinking Ian, tells her, ‘this is the bloody twenty-first century’, it could be argued that Eve is expressing a desire and ability to rise above her predatory nature—unlike Ava, who seems incapable of nurturing the higher-soul levels. This scene demonstrates the layered soul notion: Ava responding purely to her appetitive desires; Eve showing both spirited and rational soul development by suggesting to Ava that her behaviour is not appropriate for this century; and Adam showing spirited and rational soul development by expressing person-like grief at the death of his friend.

Plato also proposed two more concepts about both the soul and excessive power, both of which apply to the post-millennial vampire narrative and representation of the soul. First, Plato (in Avdikos 2013, 321) discussed the idea that the soul exists before the body and, because of this, attempts to escape the body to attain its earlier state—this can only be achieved at death, when the soul is liberated. An example of this concept can be found in *Angel*, when Angel explains to Buffy:

> When you become a vampire the demon takes your body, but it doesn’t get your soul. That's gone! No conscience, no remorse ... It’s an easy way to live. You have no idea what it’s like to have done the things I’ve done ... and to care. ("Angel". Brazil 1997)

In the *Angel* mythology, the soul concept is steeped in the traditions of God/Demon, evil/good, Christian/other. So when Angel’s soul is returned to him via a gypsy curse, and later removed, it is evident that his soul has been residing in another place whence it can be retrieved. In post-millennial vampire television, such as *The Vampire Diaries*, Plato’s notion is problematised by storylines that allow not just for souls to pass between dimensions and worlds, but for beings to be physically taken—body and soul—to these other worlds and dimensions. In season 5, episode 22 ("Home". Grismer 2014), an explosion at The Grill eatery kills vampires Damon, Elena and Stefan, along with a number of their friends. The witch, Bonnie, who acts as a conduit between dimensions, tells their spirits to return to the living side, find their bodies and come back to the world via her. In the confusion of the spell being cast to open the pathway between the dimensions, the witch casting the spell is
interrupted before all members of the group can return, leaving Bonnie and Damon spiritually and bodily stranded on the other side. As Elena grieves for Damon, the witch Liv is able to see and hear Damon, whose spirit comes to say goodbye. Liv lets Elena know Damon is there, and a tearful departure ensues. To the other characters, Damon and Bonnie are dead. To the viewer, Damon and Bonnie are still alive, initially on the other side; in season six, it transpires they leave the other side and become trapped in a prison world. However, to the viewer, it is evident that they are not dead. This exploration of where the soul may lie could indicate that death is a subjective notion. Ultimately, the narrative suggests that because Damon and Bonnie did not truly die, their souls were returned to their bodies later in the narrative.

Plato (1997b, *The Republic II* 359d-361d, 1000-1002) also discussed the ‘moral implications of possessing powers so great that they allow one to do absolutely anything’—in the *Ring of Gyges* story, he described how acquired power affects persons of different moral judgement, explaining that one’s truest character is revealed when one is given great power. In the case of Bella in *Breaking Dawn 2* (Condon 2012), it becomes apparent that her supernatural power is the ability to shield, a power she intuitively knows she possesses. Even before she turns, Bella remarks to Edward, ‘I can protect you, if you change me’ (*New Moon*, Weitz 2009). As well as this, Bella is immune to all other vampire supernatural powers, such as the vampire Jane’s gaze, which can inflict great pain, and Edward’s mind-reading abilities. With her shielding power, Bella can fulfil her true nature as protector of her new, extended family. However, supernatural powers can also bring out the very worst in vampires, which is a common convention in the vampire horror sub-genre. Unlike *Twilight*’s Cullen family members, who use their powers for good, *True Blood*’s mythology explores the darker nature of the vampire, such as the likes of Russell Edgington.

**The case of Russell Edgington: The true face of vampires**

Russell Edgington, an antagonistic vampire in HBO’s *True Blood* series, is over 3,000 years old. Russell’s characterisation problematises the notion of the vampire’s nature, as he shows capacity for both true love and true monstrosity. Cast as one of the nastier, less predictable vampires on *True Blood*, his outburst on national television in season three, episode nine ("Everything Is Broken". Winant 2010) exemplifies the revelation of how great power can reveal one’s truest character, as
described by Plato (1997b, 1000-1002). In this episode, the American Vampire League (AVL) is aiming to pass a bill through government allowing equal rights for vampires called the Vampire Rights Amendment (VRA). The scene commences where Russell, bereaved at the loss of his husband and consort of over 700 years, storms the television station during a news story about the VRA. With his enhanced strength and speed, he plunges his hand through the newsreader’s chest and rips out his spine. Holding the bloodied bones in one hand, he dismissively pushes aside the body of the newsreader while commanding the camera operators to keep rolling. Introducing himself, Russell sits and explains he has been a vampire for nearly 3,000 years. In an intensifying rant, he draws comparisons between the ‘few small ways’ vampires and humans are alike. He argues that both species are narcissists, caring only about getting what we want despite the costs. However, he claims that issues such as ‘global warming, perpetual war, toxic waste, child labour, torture and genocide’ are a small price to pay for the luxuries we take for granted, such as our ‘SUVs and flat-screen TVs, blood diamonds, designer jeans, absurd garish McMansions’. Waggling the newsreader’s spine, still in his right hand, Russell tells us that these things are just ‘futile symbols of permanence to quell your quivering, spineless souls’.

At this point, Russell tosses the spinal column over his shoulder, leans forward and interlaces his fingers, one hand bright with dripping blood and pieces of viscera, the other hand and cuff white and pristine. Looking closely into the camera, Russell reveals how he truly feels about equality between humans and vampires:

But no, in the end. We are nothing like you. We are immortal. Because we drink the true blood, blood that is living, organic and human. And that is the truth the AVL wishes to conceal from you. Because let’s face it, eating people is a tough sell these days. So they put on their friendly faces to pass their beloved VRA but make no mistake, mine is the true face of vampires! Why would we seek equal rights? You are not our equals. We will eat you. After we eat your children. Now time for the weather. Tiffany?

(Winant 2010)

It is easy to identify characteristics of the appetitive nature of Russell’s soul: his swift kill, lack of mercy, taunting nature (licking the blood off his hand) and blatant claim that vampires are vicious and have no qualms about eating humans. Plato’s
spirited and rational souls do not seem evident here. Although Russell is articulate, which leads us to initially think him rational, his true nature—killer and speciesist—is revealed. Yet one question that arises is whether this means he lacks a soul. An interesting yet contrasting take on vampire morals is offered by Hallab (2009, 63), who explains that it is pointless to make a distinction between the post-millennial ‘nice’ vampire, who is socialised, morally responsible and possibly even spiritual, and a vampire with a ‘vague concept of a soul’. The vampire can be a superhero (like Angel), who represents the fantasy side of immortality. In fact, Hallab (63) observes that our idea of a successful person is one who is self-assertively individual, aggressive and even ruthless—traits often represented by both the traditional and contemporary vampire. The following chapter argues that vampires even as aggressive and cold-blooded as Russell do, in fact, have a soul, as they meet the characteristics, qualities and capabilities associated with personhood.

The layered soul of vampires

According to Aristotle’s (1986, De Anima 429a) soul theory, the soul gives life to the body and has three different kinds: the nutritive soul, the perceptive soul and the rational soul, which is the part that lets humans think, suppose and know. By this definition, all post-millennial vampires of film and television would meet the criteria for having a soul, being creatures with perception (and indeed, in many cases, extra-sensory perception, such as the gifts that many of the vampires in The Twilight Saga possess) and the ability to think, suppose and know. The conclusion can thus be drawn that in the post-millennial vampire narrative, the vampire character is represented as having a soul, and therefore personhood.

This notion, however, appears to be complicated in True Blood, particularly in season 5, episode 1 (“Turn! Turn! Turn! ” Minahan 2012), where the series mythology allows for the creation of vampires who may not undergo complete transformation. While they may display signs of the sensitive and nutritive levels of the soul, it is indicated that a vampire may transition without the rational soul. In this episode, Tara, a human friend of Sookie’s, is killed by a gunshot wound to the head, a close-up shot of Sookie cradling Tara clearly showing brain matter oozing from Tara’s head. When the vampire Pam is begged to turn Tara, Pam remarks: ‘I can’t be the only one noticing that she’s missing half her head, can I? Even if I tried, what’s to say she won’t rise up out of the ground tomorrow night completely fucktarded’.
Similarly, in the current television series *The Strain* (Abraham and Weller 2014 -) the Strigoi vampire—although created through the spread of a viral infection passed on by worm-like creatures—emerges after transition without a full rational soul. It displays evidence of the nutritive soul, being able to seek nourishment, and a new host if its human host begins to decay. It also displays evidence of the sensitive soul, as it possesses all senses required for survival, and even develops heightened senses such as night vision and enhanced hearing. However, the Strigoi vampire’s abilities to think, suppose and know are questionable, with its communication confined to hive-mind telepathy with the Master vampire, and the ability to influence humans via thought control.

Plato’s and Aristotle’s early soul theories, discussed in Chapter 4, aimed to find ways to explain and justify the merging of physicality and consciousness, while trying to locate the origin of these in parts of the body. The layered soul idea can first account for baser, animal instincts, which in the vampire can be equated to the hunting, predatory instinct to consume human blood. The layered soul can also account for sensation and movement and ‘being’ in the world, a layer common to both vampire and human, and can also account for the rational layer being the one that tempers the other layers or souls, and the one most often used as the source of a character’s or narrative conflict in vampire horror. One of the issues that complicates an understanding of the nature of the vampire soul is fathoming what happens to the body during the transition from human to vampire.

**Alive or dead? The soul in transition**

The notion of the soul most prevalent in contemporary Western thought is arguably the one presented by the Christian Bible, which affirms that there is an afterlife; Ecclesiastes 1(2:6.7) expressly states that ‘our bodies will return to the dust of the earth, and the breath of life will go back to God, who gave it to us’ (*Good News Bible* 1976, 658). As discussed in Chapter 4, Augustine of Hippo (1947, 19, III.III) maintained that ‘all that does not live is without a soul, and no action occurs without a soul’. To ascertain whether a vampire is being represented as having a soul and personhood, in Christian or Augustinian terms, means to ask whether the vampire character is alive, and whether being ‘undead’ is the same as being alive. In *New Moon*, Edward Cullen declares to Bella, ‘You are my only reason to stay alive. If that’s what I am’, indicating that in the *Twilight* mythology, it is not clear to the
vampires, or indeed the viewer, exactly what nature of being they are, including whether they have a soul. The vampires of *The Twilight Saga* and *The Vampire Diaries* do not die during the day—they are not required to go into a sleep or death-state. The vampires of *True Blood*, however, do enter a death-state during daylight hours, and bleed if woken during the day. As vampire Eric Northman says to human abductee Willa while they spend the day in a coffin and Willa tries to engage him in small talk, ‘I’m a vampire. I’m meant to be dead during the day’—at which point Willa marvels at the blood dripping from Eric’s ears ("You're No Good". Deutch 2013).

Augustine (1963, 464-465, XV.VII.XI) also argued that a human being is ‘a rational substance consisting of soul and body’. An examination of the transitioning vampire provides an argument for the post-millennial vampire as having a soul. The vampires of *The Twilight Saga*, *True Blood* and *The Vampire Diaries* are all presented as having once been human, even if that was a thousand years ago. (The exception to this is Lilith in *True Blood*, who was created by God as a vampire, and who is considered separately in this study.) If all vampires in these mythologies were turned after being born, then by the Augustinian rationale, they were all born with a soul. The question then becomes, did they lose their soul during their transition into the vampire state? While the Cullens believe they do not have souls, there is no evidence shown to the viewer in the texts to justify that belief. In fact, the Cullens exhibit the qualities, capabilities and characteristics of personhood, plus retain their human memories, indicating that they are ensouled. This raises a further question about the transition process: does the body actually die during transition?

**The case of Bella: Transitioning to vampire—death of body and soul?**

In the *Twilight* mythology, the audience is led to assume that Bella dies at the end of *Breaking Dawn Part 1*, during childbirth. Edward is seen providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation before he plunges a syringe of his venom into Bella’s heart. The mise-en-scène of Bella’s deathbed/delivery table presents the viewer with what would ordinarily be assumed as a death scene: blood covers the lower half of Bella’s hospital gown and the delivery table, and bloodied operating instruments such as scalpels and the instrument tray are in shot. The lighting changes from a warm yellow—Bella’s point of view—to a bright fluorescent, jarring and impersonal light, as the point of view switches to a high camera angle. This shot shows a distraught
Edward over Bella’s lifeless, emaciated body. Although she was heavily sedated with morphine, and therefore outwardly unmoving during her transition, the audience sees snatches of her writhing in pain and screaming as the vampire venom courses through her body, and the horror of her physical anguish during the transformation. However, as her transformation progresses, the viewer also sees the vampire poison working its way through her veins as white icy shards, repairing her broken bones and finally shimmering over her heart, crystallising and turning her once-human body to marble. The audience then sees the outward transformation of Bella’s body healing: bones re-knitting, hair growing long and lustrous, and Bella becoming beautiful, transcending the skeletal, broken body caused by childbirth.

Bella’s transition to vampire is intercut into three discernible strands: her external body becoming supernaturally beautiful, her internal body crystallising and healing, and her physical pain from the searing vampire venom. The scene is overwritten by Carter Burwell’s music ‘Love, Death, Birth’, which Bode (2010, 708) describes as a ‘wistful, melancholic score’ that signifies a human death. The music becomes transitionary as Bella’s blood stops pumping, her body heals and her heart is stilled by the last crystallising drop of venom. Bella’s transformation is complete and she awakes to the sight of her husband in a warm, softly lit room, no longer the cold and clinical makeshift hospital space marred by her physical death.

What the audience is not shown is whether Bella’s heart restarts after Edward’s resuscitation attempts or whether she is technically alive and in transition. After Edward has injected Bella with his venom, he continues trying to resuscitate Bella, and we see an animation of the venom moving through Bella’s body and over her still-beating heart. After the Cullens’ return from their hunting trip, Edward discusses Bella’s condition with Carlisle:

    Edward Cullen: She shouldn't be this still.
    Dr Carlisle Cullen: It's the morphine.
    Edward: Maybe I was too late.
    Carlisle: No, Edward. Listen to her heart.

    (Breaking Dawn Part I, Condon 2011)

As Bella transitions, beneath the swelling music is the sound of a heartbeat, slowing and arrhythmic. I propose that the viewer assumes that Edward’s initial resuscitation attempts work, that Bella’s heart keeps beating up to and including the
point at which Edward injects his venom into Bella, which means she was still technically alive at the time. When Bella’s heart stops and her transformation is complete, the Cullens all look to each other, recognising the silence, and acknowledging that Bella is now an immortal. The argument could be made that while Bella’s heart was still beating, she was still human and therefore still ensouled, in Augustinian terms. When Bella ‘awakes’ as a vampire, not enough time has passed between the last heartbeat and her eyes opening for Bella to technically have died, and no time for her soul to have left her body. Indeed, when her eyes open and she sees Edward, her first instinct is to tell him she loves him, and then to ask about her daughter—not to hunt and kill. It is not until Edward mentions that Bella needs to get her thirst under control that the pair goes hunting, where Bella turns away from the scent of fresh human blood, instead killing a mountain lion.

The mythologies of True Blood and The Vampire Diaries are a little more ambiguous when it comes to the transition process. In both mythologies, a dead or dying person can be turned by feeding vampire blood to the victim. While it is obvious in some transitions that the human victim is truly dead—such the case of Tara in True Blood ("Turn! Turn! Turn!" Minahan 2012), who is shot in the head—some deaths and transitions are less transparent, such as Bill Compton turning Jessica Hamby in season 1, episode 10 ("I Don't Wanna Know". Winant 2008) where the audience assumes that Jessica has been drained to the point of death. In this instance, the audience is not provided with a sense of the internal process of transition as they are in Breaking Dawn 1, so it is easier to assume that a new vampire in True Blood could be soulless. The transition to vampire in True Blood requires the maker to first take the victim’s life by draining them of their blood. The maker then replaces the blood lost with some of their own blood. The victim and the maker then sleep together under the ground, and the new vampire arises the next night ("True Blood Wiki: Vampire" 2015). The True Blood mythology explains that vampires are reanimated corpses, requiring blood to stay alive and maintain their powers ("True Blood Wiki: Vampire" 2015). The vampire is technically deceased, and lacks ‘a heartbeat, body heat, brainwaves, electrical impulses, need to breathe, and other bodily functions’ ("True Blood Wiki: Vampire" 2015). The audience could assume that vampire blood possesses some magical property that keeps the victim in a state of near-death, but not true death. Only then could the Augustinian rationale be
applied to these transitions, and one could state that newborn vampires are ensouled. As Bill explains to Sookie:

Just because you understand the mechanics of how something works, does not make it any less of a miracle ... which is just another word for magic. We're all kept alive by magic, Sookie. My magic’s just a little different from yours, that’s all ("Mine". Dahl 2008).

While in Augustinian terms, the vampire of True Blood may not appear ensouled, according to Locke’s memory theory, this study posits that Tara and Jessica can be classified as persons, as they display the signifiers of personhood.

A spectrum of being

God made man in His own image. What if that included His rage? And His spite. And His indifference. And His cruelty. What if God made us too? We're all his children, you see. God's a bit of a bastard.

– John Mitchell, vampire
("All God's Children". Being Human. Martin 2010a)

As discussed in Chapter 4, key Thomist ideas of the soul first extended the Aristotelian theory of the nutritive, sensitive/perceptive and rational souls, and differed by claiming that ‘it is clear that man is not a soul only, but something composed of soul and body’ (Aquinas 2006a Q.75 Art 4). Second, Aquinas (1905, 108, II.XLV.7) also put forth the idea that a perfect universe must require the existence of every type of being, including some that are non-embodied and some embodied. This theory allows for the range of vampiric beings in post-millennial vampire horror, and to extend Aquinas’ idea, I propose that all beings exist on a spectrum from non-embodied beings, or souls, to fully embodied beings. At one end of this spectrum lie Angels, whom Aquinas (172, II.91.3) described as ‘purely immaterial rational being’, and at the other end of the spectrum lie brutes who are ‘non-rational souls in material bodies’ (Goetz and Taliaferro 2011, 63). Somewhere in the middle of this spectrum lie humans.

It is possible to position the vampires of contemporary mythologies on this same spectrum. In True Blood, the very first vampire, Lilith, appears to Bill Compton in a vision as an immaterial yet rational being. Lilith, the vampire created by God at the time of Adam and Eve, could be initially placed on the spectrum with Aquinas’ Angels; later in the series, she moves to the place of an embodied being when she
possesses Bill. At the other end of this spectrum lie the *True Blood* vampires, who have been infected with the fatal ‘Hepatitis V’. When groups of infected vampires mob together to attack Bon Temps in season 7, episode 1 ("Jesus Gonna Be Here". Moyer 2014), they appear to be little more than brutes, acting as purely predatory creatures. The episodes concerning the ‘Hep V’ vampires do not, however, provide evidence that these infected vampires have lost their souls, merely that they are desperately unwell and acting according to their baser instincts, or appetitive souls. Although Aquinas’ (1905, 108,II.XLV.7) distinction between embodied and non-embodied souls at first seems to provide a convenient way to ascertain the type of soul a vampire is represented as possessing, the distinction or boundary between embodied and non-embodied is blurred by the fluid storylines of the contemporary vampire narrative, and its ability to grow and change both mythology and characterisation, particularly within the serialised television narrative structure. Indeed, it seems possible that the vampire can choose to overcome its baser nature, to fulfil its inherent, best, potential and to achieve what Aristotle explained as being a creature’s final cause.

*Final cause: Overcoming bloodlust*

There is evidence in many post-millennial vampire narratives of the vampire fulfilling a final cause linked to regaining their humanity. One example is the vampire Carlisle in *The Twilight Saga*. As the patriarch of his created family, Carlisle sets the standard of living for them. He has chosen to forgo the consumption of human blood, living only on animals, and his family embraces this lifestyle, although this is difficult for the newer vampire, Jasper. Jasper’s fight to control himself not to attack Bella when she gets a paper cut demonstrates his struggle with his final cause: learning to overcome his predatory nature (*New Moon*, Weitz 2009). Carlisle has chosen to become a doctor, despite the fact that he would have to be around humans and blood all day. In the *Twilight* mythology, it is claimed that when a vampire tastes human blood, ‘a kind of frenzy begins, and it is almost impossible to stop’ (Edward to Bella in *Twilight*, Hardwicke 2008). When Bella asks Carlisle if he has thought about ‘doing it the easy way’ (drinking human blood as his nature dictates), he replies, ‘No. I knew who I wanted to be’ (*New Moon* 2009). These exchanges clearly show that just because the vampire has the ability—and predatory instinct—to bite and consume blood from humans, they are working in accordance with their final
cause by learning to overcome the urge to predate and kill. As Edward explains to Bella:

Bella: So is Carlisle the real reason you don’t kill people?
Edward: No, he’s not the only reason. I don’t want to be a monster. My family, we think of ourselves as vegetarians, ’cause we only survive on the blood of animals. But it’s like a human only living on tofu—
keeps you strong but you’re never … fully satisfied.

(*Twilight* Hardwicke 2008)

Another vampire working towards achieving his final cause—learning to overcome the ‘bad’ in his nature—is Stefan Salvatore from *The Vampire Diaries*. In his early vampire life, Stefan was never taught to control his thirst for human blood ("The Vampire Diaries Wiki: Stefan Salvatore" 2015). When he consumes human blood, he becomes volatile and bloodthirsty, while alienating family and friends. He becomes what *The Vampire Diaries*’ mythology calls a ‘ripper’: a violent and bloodthirsty vampire, acting purely on the dictates of his appetitive soul. Throughout the series, Stefan strives to maintain his humanity, keeping his humanity switch ‘on’ as his default state, and either refusing, or limiting his intake of, human blood. In this way, *The Vampire Diaries* problematises the notion of final cause by questioning where the vampire sits on the continuum of beings, and exploring the vampire’s struggle with its inherent predatory nature. This problematising of the vampire’s nature pushes and extends the boundaries of vampire mythology.

*Final cause: Finding cause*

Longshadow, *True Blood*’s vampire bartender, summarises the nature of the genre’s conventional vampire: ‘That’s what we are. Death’ ("Escape From Dragon House". Lehmann 2008). However, many post-millennial vampires take a broader view of their existence, choosing, as Aristotle (1984a, 2405) explained, ‘to understand and to learn’. For some characters, this means learning to rise above their baser predatory instincts and participate in mainstream society.

Many examples of this type of transcendence can be found in film and television vampire horror narratives. In *The Twilight Saga*, Carlisle overcomes the predatory vampiric nature to create a new function for himself in the universe—being a doctor, serving humans by giving back as a healer rather than acting as a predator—and thus learning and understanding how to contribute to society in a
meaningful way. While the audience is not privy to the career choices of the other Cullen vampires, Bella explains to her mother that she wants to go to college in Alaska after graduation, as ‘they have a really great science program’ (Eclipse, Slade 2010), which indicates that Bella wishes to pursue goals that allow her to function as part of society, and contribute in some way. Similarly, in The Vampire Diaries, Elena chooses to find her place in the bigger picture by becoming a medical student. While still a vampire, Elena saves people over the course of her medical internship by using her vampire blood. After she takes the cure in season 6, episode 20 ("I'd Leave My Happy Home For You". Warn 2015), she is no longer able to use her supernatural abilities to save lives, instead relying on human medicine.

In True Blood, vampires Eric Northman and Pamela Swynford de Beaufort find their place in society by choosing to capitalise on being vampires, and entering into a business arrangement as partners in the nightclub/bar Fangtasia. This establishment services the community of human ‘fangbangers’—humans who prefer to sleep with vampires—but also acts as a safe hangout for vampires after The Great Revelation (vampires revealing their existence to humans). In this way, Eric and Pam have access to willing blood donors, provide a service to humans and offer a safe place for vampires. While they do not necessarily overcome their predatory nature, they find a way to use their nature for the benefit of more than just themselves. Similarly, vampire Bill Compton aims to find a place in human society and serve the local community. In season 1, episode 5 ("Sparks Fly Out". Minahan 2008), Bill speaks to The Descendants of the Glorious Dead—a community of locals with ancestors who were in the Civil War. Bill, as an actual veteran of the Civil War, tells his audience,

We vampires are not minions of the devil. We can stand before a cross or a Bible or in a church just as readily as any other creature of God.

In this example, the narrative suggests that part of Bill’s cause is to further the acceptance of vampires in the human community of Bon Temps, and to find the human commonalities between its residents, both human and vampire.

As the post-millennial vampire continues to emerge into mainstream society and participate in communal life, it becomes necessary for the vampire to transcend its appetites, learn to live in and with communities, but also to understand and learn how to transcend the mundane, the potential tedium of immortality. In Only Lovers Left Alive, the narrative explores the concept of overcoming the potential for
disillusion, depression and the tedium of living for centuries. Adam, a centuries-old vampire, periodically lives apart from his wife Eve (also a vampire, much older than Adam), and when she calls him one evening, she recognises in their conversation that he is going through another depressive stage.

Eve: Can you tell your wife what your problem is?
Adam: It’s these zombies and the way they treat the world. I just feel like all the sand’s at the bottom of the hourglass, or something.
Eve: Time to turn it over, then.
(Jarmusch 2014)

When Eve arrives in Detroit from Tangiers to be with Adam, she finds a gun under his bed loaded with a wooden bullet he had especially commissioned with the intention of ending his life. Eve, who has no such struggles with finding meaning and purpose, counsels her husband:

Adam: It’s the zombies I’m sick of. And their fear of their own fucking imaginations.
Eve: My darling, that’s true. Meanwhile ... just tell me what’s so not frightened about that [points to gun lying on the table]. How can you have lived for so long and still not get it? This self-obsession, it’s a waste of living that could be spent on surviving things, appreciating nature, nurturing kindness and friendship. And dancing. You’ve been pretty lucky in love, though, if I may say so.
(Jarmusch 2014)

Eve, an ancient vampire, has learnt to find the joy in life, evidenced by her passion for books, dancing, music and nature. It is this passion she aims to rekindle in Adam, who begins to respond to his wife’s nature—before the narrative takes a dark turn.

These examples provide evidence that the vampire of post-millennial film and television narrative works towards reinventing itself, overcoming its predatory nature, finding a place in human society and therefore not resigning itself to the darker appetites inherent in the traditional vampire character. The final cause of the post-millennial vampire is to understand and learn—to exist for its highest and best purpose. In providing reasons for the post-millennial vampire to exist, narratives are now allowing for the vampire soul and identity to be explored through blurring and extending the boundaries of existing mythologies and soul theories.
It was possible in this section to analyse the post-millennial vampire narrative through applying the soul theories of the early Greeks and Christians, and to finding examples of where the theories could match the narratives. Plato’s concept of the appetitive, spirited and rational soul was explored in relation to post-millennial vampire horror, and the analysis suggests that in *The Vampire Diaries*’ mythology, this theory can be mapped to the way the soul is being presented—particularly in relation to the ‘humanity switch’. Plato’s idea of the soul existing before the body can also be found in *The Vampire Diaries*, evidenced by the vampires’ abilities to cross between dimensions, and to appear to the witches. A third soul concept of Plato’s is the idea that possessing great power reveals a person’s truest nature. An examination of Bella coming into her power, and a closer examination of Russell Edgington, revealed that this theory, too, is reflected in post-millennial vampire horror. Similarly, Aristotle’s notion of the three-level soul—nutritive, sensitive and rational—is evident in vampire television such as *True Blood*. The notion of final cause was also explored, and it was found that post-millennial mythologies are pushing the boundaries of this soul theory—the vampire is deliberately moving beyond their innate nature to explore a better life for themselves. As Edward Cullen states in his wedding speech:

> I’ve been waiting, what seems like a very long time, to get beyond what I am. And with Bella, I feel like I can finally begin.  
>  

In the sensitive cycle of post-millennial vampire narratives, the vampire is learning to overcome its predatory nature, and to function as a person within human society.

Early Christian soul theories were also explored, with the aim of uncovering which of them may be reflected in post-millennial vampire horror. Augustine’s (1947, 19, III.III) assertion that ‘all that does not live is without a soul, and no action occurs without a soul’ is problematic when applied to current vampire horror. This led to the question of whether a vampire is alive, and therefore ensouled, by Augustine’s definition. Bella’s transition to vampire was examined, along with the transition process in other contemporary mythologies. This study suggests that although we are not shown an actual soul leaving the body, the signifiers of ensoulment are evident. After transition, human traits, qualities and capabilities are still identifiable in the vampire character. A soul theory reflected in the vampire...
narrative is Aquinas’ (1905, 108, II.XLV.7) concept that a perfect Universe must require the existence of every type of being, including some non-embodied and some embodied. It follows that a spectrum of beings can be visualised on which the vampire can be placed, regardless of its soul level (nutritive, sensitive, rational or appetitive, spirited, rational), its supernatural powers or its desire and ability to live its final cause. Later theories of the soul were influenced by Descartes, and the following section explores how these theories can be applied to an analysis of the post-millennial vampire to reveal its nature, and its potential embodiment of a soul.

5.2 UNDEATH AND TRUE DEATH: THE FATE OF THE SOUL

The substance dualist theory proposed by Descartes (1968) is pertinent to answering the research question around discovering the theories of the soul that are represented in post-millennial vampire horror. There are two versions of dualism: the first is substance dualism (or Cartesian dualism), where a person is said to comprise two wholly distinct substances—the mind and the body. A substance dualist believes the soul is immortal—when the body dies, the soul does not die. The second version of dualism is property dualism, where a person is essentially one substance with two distinct properties: the brain and neurophysiological states, and the mind and mental states. At death, ‘both body and mind will cease to exist’ (Arp 2010, 145).

Vampire narratives and substance dualism

Numerous examples of Descartes’ theory of substance dualism can be identified in post-millennial vampire narratives. In True Blood season 4, episode 11, (“Soul of Fire”. Lehmann 2011b), there are several storylines where substance dualism theory can be applied to the humans, witches, faeries and werewolves of the mythology, and to the vampire Godric. For example, when the witch Marnie is killed, her spirit, or soul, possesses Lafayette (a human medium) and takes control of him, forcing him to kill his partner, Jesus. In the following episode, Antonia (a powerful witch who had possessed Marnie) and other spirits appear to Marnie, escorting her to the afterlife, and the storyline is resolved. In another example of ghostly visitation, the human cook, Terry, is visited by an old friend, a marine named Patrick. Terry’s wife, Arlene, is then visited by the spirit of her ex-husband, Rene, who warns Arlene that Patrick is not what he appears to be and cannot be trusted. The narrative of True Blood allows for the existence of spirits (ghosts, souls), so that when the audience is
presented with the spirits of vampires, less suspension of disbelief is required of the viewer.

In the *True Blood* mythology, vampires consider themselves to be in two states: undead and having met the ‘true death’. The audience can surmise that Eric’s 2,000-year-old maker, Godric, has ascended after he meets the true death. As he waits on a rooftop to meet the sun, he asks Sookie if she believes in God, and she replies that she does. Godric then asks if God will punish him. Sookie replies, ‘God doesn't punish, God forgives’. Godric replies that he does not deserve it, but hopes for it. He turns to face the dawn, removes his white tunic, and with acceptance on his face, vanishes in a blue-white flame that appears to stream towards the sun ("I Will Rise Up". Winant 2009). Godric reappears to Eric, his progeny, in spirit in seasons three, four and five. In season five, he appears in a vision to Eric and Eric’s sister, Nora, after they have taken a drop of Lilith’s blood. Lilith proceeds to rip open Godric’s throat, suggesting that this is most likely a hallucination rather than a true reappearance of Godric’s spirit ("Gone, Gone, Gone". Winant 2012). It appears, then, that vampires’ spirits seem able to return in the *True Blood* mythology.

*The Vampire Diaries* narrative extensively explores the idea of ‘the other side’ and the afterlife, from which vampires are not excluded. The afterlife is explained as a multidimensional realm where souls go before either ‘finding peace’ (Heaven), or ‘being sucked into oblivion’ (Hell). ‘The other side’ is explained as dimension of the afterlife to which supernatural creatures go once they have died. It is a dimension originally created by a spell for the entrapment of the first immortal, Silas, by his wronged lover ("The Vampire Diaries Wiki: Afterlife" 2015). The vampire Damon Salvatore finds himself trapped in a prison dimension of the afterlife with witch Bonnie in seasons five and six. Before he passes over, he visits his grieving girlfriend, Elena, as a spirit that Elena cannot hear or see in season 5, episode 22 ("Home". Grismer 2014). Her friend Liv tells her Damon is there with her, and she has the chance to say goodbye before he leaves. Through the beginning of season six, Damon exists in the afterlife before escaping the prison world and returning to Mystic Falls in episode 5, still as a vampire ("The World Has Turned and Left Me Here". Libman 2014).

In a further possible move away from the notion of the vampire as a soulless creature, *Being Human* ("The Wolf-Shaped Bullet". O'Hara 2011) teases the
audience with the notion that vampire John Mitchell has achieved entry into the afterlife. When his love interest and flatmate, Annie—herself a ghost—finally has the opportunity to ‘pass over’, the ghost Eve, who meets her before she passes, says, ‘go on, they’re expecting you’. The audience is not told who is waiting for her, and they do not see Mitchell on the ‘other side’, but when Annie asks, ‘Who?’ Eve’s response is, ‘Who do you think?’ The audience is left to assume that a reunion will take place between Mitchell and Annie as she passes over. Perhaps the fact that Mitchell begged to be staked, and had already started atoning for his massacre, permitted him entry into an afterlife with the ‘good’ characters: the ghost Annie, the werewolves Nina and George, and their innocent baby, Eve. True Blood, The Vampire Diaries and Being Human thus all provide evidence for substance dualism in their mythologies, which lends weight to the argument that the vampire is an ensouled person.

**The case of Carlisle: A damned soul**

Further evidence of substance dualism theory in vampire narratives can be found in New Moon. In an extended scene where Carlisle Cullen is stitching a bleeding injury on Bella’s arm, the conversation between the two explores the issue of the vampire soul, and reveals to Bella the real reason why Edward refuses to turn her into a vampire. Although this scene was shortened for cinema release, the extended version is available both online and as an extra feature on the New Moon DVD. Consequently, this piece of footage is widely available, and will arguably have been consumed by fans as avidly as they consumed the cinema release version of the movie.

The scene commences with shots of three pictures on the office wall. The viewer sees a drawing of a woman being tortured by demons, a painting of a man on his deathbed with an image of hell behind him where demons lurk, with a priest in front of him holding out a cross, and a close-up of a drawing depicting what could be a primitive surgery or torture scene. Carlisle is calmly removing shards of glass from Bella’s upper arm and dropping them into a bowl containing a clear liquid, some bloodied gauze and Bella’s blood. Bella asks Carlisle if he ever thought of ‘just doing it the easy way’, meaning had he ever considered feeding on blood, which would be easier for the vampire. Carlisle insists that he ‘wanted to help people’, claiming, ‘it brings me happiness even if I am damned regardless’. Bella’s curiosity
is piqued at this, and when she asks, ‘Damned. Like … like … Hell?’ Carlisle assents with a look and a slight nod. Bella does not believe this, claiming ‘he simply couldn’t be damned’. Carlisle takes the compliment, but adds:

Thank you, Bella. You’ve always been very … gracious about us. By all other accounts though, we are damned. But I hope, maybe foolishly, that we get some measure of credit for trying.


Carlisle does not expand upon his own beliefs about an afterlife, but if he considers that he may ‘get some measure of credit for trying’, it may be that he holds some hope of entering Heaven for having performed good deeds in his life as a vampire. This reflects a belief in a Christian dichotomy, where good deeds are judged favourably and result in entry to Heaven.

When Bella asks if all the Cullen vampires think the same way, Carlisle explains:

Edward doesn’t believe there is an afterlife for our kind. He believes this is our afterlife, and in exchange for this … limited immortality, we’ve lost our Souls. (New Moon: Extended Edition. Carlisle stitches Bella. 2009)

Bella realises that this is the reason Edward will not turn her into a vampire. Carlisle tries to get Bella to imagine the situation in reverse, saying, ‘If you believed as Edward does, could you take away his soul?’

There are two perspectives presented in this scene. The first is Carlisle’s essentially substance dualist perspective, where he believes that once he truly dies, his soul will be sent to hell; but he hopes that he can go to Heaven for trying to live a moral life. The second perspective is Edward’s—he believes the vampire used to have a soul, but has traded it, and any chance of an afterlife in Heaven, for immortality. Both perspectives could be considered to align with substance dualism, and both also are essentially Christian—a perspective reinforced by the choice of demonic and Christian imagery on the office wall.

The examples in the mythologies of True Blood, The Vampire Diaries, New Moon (extended) and Being Human would suggest that substance dualism—the soul or spirit being embodied and released upon death—is in fact a theory reflected in major post-millennial vampire narratives.
5.3 **THE QUANTUM SOUL AND THE VAMPIRE**

As previously discussed, quantum field theory is still being researched by scientists and quantum physics experts (Berman and Lanza 2010, 2014; Crick 1994; Collins 2011). Applying ideas of the soul or consciousness existing after physical death in a quantum field is new and essentially unchartered waters for analysing the vampire narrative. As a contemporary theory, it blurs and extends the boundaries of metaphysical concepts (soul), psychological (self) and neurological (mind), thus further problematising the notion and nature of the soul. As a soul theory, quantum field theory problematises Descartes’ notions of substance dualism without necessarily negating them. In fact, it supports one angle of Cartesian dualism—specifically, that of substance dualism—by theorising that the soul is a quantum component, existing with or without a body. While the discipline of quantum field theory is expansive, this section concerns itself with applying a fundamental concept of quantum field theory: that the body is a receiver and amplifier of soul or consciousness energy that enters from the Universe, resides in the brain’s microtubules and can be returned to the quantum soul field from whence it came (Berman and Lanza 2014). Applying this theory also recognises that Einstein’s theory of entanglement (Einstein, Podolsky and Rosen 1935; Buhrman, Cleve and van Dam 2001) means that the particles within that soul field are entangled. While this is a complex concept, it can be exemplified by its use as a narrative device in the 2014 film *Only Lovers Left Alive*.

**The case of Adam and Eve: Spooky action at a distance**

A central theme in *Only Lovers Left Alive* is connection. The narrative, script and cinematography all work together to reinforce and explore this theme. The idea of connection is overtly discussed between the two lead vampire characters, Adam and Eve, and they specifically reference the quantum notion of entanglement—Einstein’s ‘spooky action at a distance’ (Einstein, Podolsky and Rosen 1935; Buhrman, Cleve and van Dam 2001). This concept is key to the story, and reinforces the metaphysical link between souls, and also between events.

The soul link between Adam and Eve is established in the film’s opening frames. An image of starts on an inky background slowly begins to spin clockwise, and the resulting blurred star field becomes reminiscent of a time warp. The star field then dissolves into a close-up of an old record turntable, which also spins in a
clockwise direction. Set to a background of hypnotic music, two shots are interspersed that mirror each other: the camera moving above the vampires in a circular motion to mimic the record player. First we see Eve from above, lying among her books, eyes closed, right hand palm upwards and left hand palm down in a meditative pose. Then the camera cuts to Adam, who is similarly reposed on his couch amid his musical instruments and paraphernalia. The camera cuts between both vampires moving closer and more slowly, finally stopping at a medium close-up, at which point both vampires open their eyes. To the viewer, it is as if the two have both been listening to the same music in the same trance.

The narrative proper begins by cutting between Adam and Eve as they each leave their respective homes to procure their blood supply. When they return home, the same technique is used as in the opening music. The scenes mirror each other as we see Adam and Eve, and also their long-time vampire friend Christopher ‘Kit’ Marlowe, ritualistically pour and consume a small amount of blood. Visually and thematically, the viewer is invited to draw strong links between Adam and Eve, which can be interpreted as a soul connection across time and space/place.

The first explicit mention of spooky action at a distance comes when Eve is with Adam in Detroit, and they are having a cosy chat on Adam’s lounge. To entice Eve into staying up longer, Adam asks: ‘shall I tell you again about spooky action at a distance; Einstein’s theory of entanglement?’ Clearly, the pair has previously discussed the theory, but at this point, Eve notes that the sun is rising, so they retire for the day. In the first quarter of the narrative, Kit Marlowe, Eve and Adam all mention that they have had a dream about Ava, Eve’s troublesome younger ‘sister’. Ava arrives in Detroit and the first few lines of dialogue reveal the interesting nature of this dream communication:

Ava: Did you get my message?
Eve: I might have. I had a dream.
Ava: Oh how cool! It worked!
Eve: (to Adam) There’s your spooky action at a distance.
Adam: Yeah, well spooky action anyway.
(Jarmusch 2014)
Through dreams, Ava has been able to connect with Adam, Eve and Kit. This can readily be interpreted as a connection of mind and consciousness, explained by the quantum theory of entanglement.

The third example of quantum field theory and entanglement in the film occurs at the end of the narrative. Adam and Eve have fled to Tangiers just in time to be with Kit Marlowe as he passes away, poisoned from drinking contaminated blood. As he was Eve’s supplier of pure blood, the vampire couple is now out of supply. They wander through town, depleted of energy, with the sun about to rise, and as they realise how dire their situation is, they utter together, ‘What are we going to do?’ They come to rest in a small courtyard, barely able to move or speak as the first glimmer of dawn appears. Adam says to Eve, ‘We’re finished aren’t we’. As he says this, a young, amorous couple appear, completely oblivious to the vampires. Adam and Eve are transfixed.

Eve: Tell me about entanglement, Einstein’s spooky action at a distance. Is it related to quantum theory?
Adam: Mm. No, I mean, it’s not a theory, it’s proven.
Eve: How does it go again?
Adam: When you separate an entwined particle, and you move both parts away from each other, even at opposite ends of the universe, if you alter or affect one, the other will be identically altered or affected.
Spooky.
Eve: Even at opposite ends of the universe?
Adam: Yeah.

(Jarmusch 2014)

At this point, the vampires agree that they are ‘only going to turn them’—they will not kill the young lovers, who seem to have appeared as an answer to Adam and Eve’s earlier question, ‘What are we going to do?’

It could be interpreted from these examples that the souls of the vampire characters are connected, or entangled, through time and space. As Abbott (2016, 158) observes, ‘Adam and Eve are emotionally and spiritually intertwined’. This vampire narrative does not rely on religious constructs. Instead, the film fits perfectly into the postsecular environment, allowing for science and metaphysics to exist contemporaneously within the construct of the narrative.
Chapter 5: The vampire soul—analysis through the lens of soul theories

‘The fabric of the Universe’

Berman and Lanza (2014) posit the notion that quantum information resides within a person’s nervous system. This information ‘leaves the body and dissipates into the universe’ when the body dies. Penrose (1994 in Berman and Lanza, 2014) explains that our ‘consciousness resides in the microtubules of brain cells which are the primary sites of quantum processing’, claiming ‘that our experience of consciousness then is the result of quantum gravity effects in these microtubules’. If, as Penrose (1994) claims, consciousness is ‘a fundamental property of the universe’ that was present during the ‘Big Bang’ theory of the universe’s origin, this would mean that our souls are ‘constructed from the “very fabric of the universe”’, with our brains ‘just the receivers and amplifiers for this consciousness which is intrinsic to the fabric of space-time’. The human brain, and therefore the vampire brain, has reached ‘sufficient size and complexity’ (19) during the evolutionary—or in the case of vampires, transitionary—process. This theory thus allows for the vampire of film and television to have a soul.

Quantum field theory can assist in making sense of the vampire’s transition, existence and nature. The theory explains that if a person is resuscitated, quantum information can simply return into the microtubules, and if a person is not revived, their quantum information exists outside their body as a soul (Penrose, 1994). The True Blood mythology retains the notion that the vampire must enter an alternate state at night. Although the vampires still call this ‘sleeping’, if they are woken, they begin to bleed from the ears, nose and mouth, signifying that they are unnaturally awake. Because they are revived or reanimated at dawn, this theory can account for the vampires reawakening, as their soul can exist outside their body in the quantum soul field, returning as its receiver or amplifier when the creature awakens at dawn.

A similar process may occur during transition. In the True Blood transition process, vampire blood is fed to the victim regardless of whether they are conscious, as blood must be in their system for the transition to take place. If the brain’s microtubules are not destroyed, the quantum soul information can return to the body when the newborn awakes. In the case of Tara, despite having an obvious and fatal head wound, the qualities of vampire blood allow her to overcome her wound, heal and transition without incident (“Turn! Turn! Turn!” Minahan 2012). With her body and nervous system repaired, her soul can return from the quantum soul field, where
it fled on her physical death. In Bella’s transition in *Breaking Dawn Part 1*, Edward’s venom is injected into Bella’s heart shortly after she falls unconscious after giving birth. In a similar vein to the vampire blood in the *True Blood* mythology, the vampire venom in the *Twilight* mythology has the ability to repair extensive physical damage. As previously described, Bella’s transition may not have involved actual physical death, thanks to Edward’s attempts to resuscitate her; although her body lay stilled by morphine, she remained aware and in pain during her transition, and her heart still beat (*Breaking Dawn Part 1*, Condon 2011). If her soul did leave her body at any point during her transition, her nervous system and brain were repaired and revived enough by the venom to allow her soul to return from the quantum soul field.

The case of Lilith and Billith

*True Blood* explores the concept of a soul or consciousness returning via a type of possession. According to the *True Blood* mythology, Lilith was created by God as a vampire before he created Adam and Eve. When Lilith was killed by sunlight, her progeny gathered her remaining blood, the remnants of which ended up in a crystal vial watched over by a group of guardians who became known as The Authority ("True Blood Wiki: Lilith" 2015). A drop of Lilith’s blood is potent enough to cause vampires to hallucinate even days after they have consumed it; these hallucinations are often of Lilith. At one point in the narrative, vampire Bill Compton consumes the entire vial of Lilith’s remaining blood after being encouraged to do so by a vision of Lilith ("Save Yourself". Lehmann 2012). Bill is then seen exploding into a pool of blood and viscera from which he rises, covered in blood, the same way Lilith appears in her visions.

Quantum field theory may explain Lilith’s ability to return. Lilith’s consciousness, or soul, stayed together in the soul field, waiting for the opportunity to return via the consumption of her blood left on earth. Once that part of her existed within Bill, she then had a conduit to return, her soul able to co-inhabit Bill Compton’s microtubules and nervous system. The theory does not explain the magic of Bill’s demise and resurrection—something only the *True Blood* mythology could justify in terms of its transition myths—but does provide a possible justification for Lilith’s return via Bill if her soul quanta did not dissipate after death.

Because of Lilith’s return via Bill (or ‘Billith’, as fans call him), Bill obtains not only Lilith’s powers, but also her motivation: to save the vampire race, in this
instance, from Hepatitis V. Bill is able to ‘talk’ with Lilith via a kind of telepathy and visualisation. In one such episode, Lilith appears to Bill in a sunlit green field, with sunlight shining behind her in a halo effect; the camera angle is a low shot pointing up at her, giving her the appearance of godliness. She explains to Bill that neither he, nor she, is God: ‘God made me as vampire, and Adam and Eve as human. I am worshipped as a god as some may come to worship you as a god. There is no god but God’ (“The Sun". Attias 2013). It can be argued that according to Aquinas’ assertion that all manner of beings are required to exist in a complete Universe, Lilith can be located at a number of points on the spectrum, having been an embodied vampire, an ‘angelic’ vampire (by which I mean a disembodied vampire soul) and a re-embodied vampire via Bill Compton. Although it is possible to apply quantum field theory to the case of Lilith/Billith, the text itself problematises this soul theory through the characters’ direct references to God, and by the shot construction itself depicting a holy or godly interaction.

Lilith departs Bill Compton’s body in season 6, episode 9 ("Life Matters". Tirone 2013). Bill, having consumed faerie blood, lets group of captured vampires feed on him. Faerie blood allows vampires to walk in the sunlight. As the group are feeding, the captors open the sunroof with the intent of burning the group, but Bill’s blood protects them. Over the course of saving numerous vampires, Bill is nearly completely drained of blood, and is visited by one last vision of Lilith’s three Sirens, who advise him his time has come; at this point, he tells them to leave, because he has fulfilled his mission. He summons his progeny, Jessica, who arrives with another vampire, James, who feeds Bill his blood—this works, and Bill is restored. He finds, however, that being almost drained of blood, having completed his mission and having been restored by vampire blood, Lilith’s possession of his body has ended. At what point Lilith departs is unclear, but it is evident that Lilith’s soul has once again returned to the quantum soul field, and is unable to return now that her conduit to earth—her blood—has been drained from Bill.

Quantum field theory is a new and essentially unapplied theory in the examination of vampire narrative. Its importance is due to the completely secular lens it provides through which to examine whether a vampire is represented as having a soul in the post-millennial narrative, and to where that soul may depart upon true death, during transition or during the night, when some mythologies require that
vampires ‘die’ (for example, *True Blood*). As Collins (2011, 245) suggests, some beings can ‘activate higher level modes of vibration of the soul-string such as those required for abstract thought’. The supernatural powers possessed by some vampires, such as enhanced senses and speed, may mean their brains are more highly developed than those of humans, and that the catalysts for the change in their brains may range from the ingestion of vampire blood, to vampire venom, to the transition process itself. Collins (245) also proposes that major groups of animals, such as ‘families, orders, or genera—may have their own type of soul with groupings such as species within a genus displaying variations in the ability of their brains to activate and send appropriate signals’, meaning that it is possible the vampire species has developed their own type of soul, with variations and abilities unique to their species.

### 5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined core texts released in the sensitive cycle of the vampire horror genre. A common theory represented in these texts is substance dualism, where the soul is embodied in a creature—human, vampire or other. This theory persists either as a deliberate choice by the writers/producers, or by their defaulting to a loosely Christian ideology, where the belief remains that the soul comes from God and will return there upon bodily death. Through a number of case studies, the chapter examined the nature of the vampire in light of key soul theories, and revealed that the post-millennial vampire, although an undead creature, is not one devoid of soul. The chapter found evidence of Plato’s layered soul, and revealed that the vampire is represented as having a choice to engage with different layers of their soul via various plot devices such as ‘the humanity switch’. The chapter also discussed the notion of substance dualism, positing that the soul does not necessarily leave the body during transition. The concept of final cause was explored in relation to the vampire’s existence, and it was found that the final cause of understanding and learning, and overcoming bloodlust, are core to the vampire narratives of the sensitive cycle. Quantum field theory supports the substance dualist notion that the soul can leave or return to the body. Case studies from *Only Lovers Left Alive* and *True Blood* showed how this soul theory can be usefully applied to an analysis of the vampire to ascertain how its nature is represented.

Taking the position that the soul exists as a separate entity to the body, that it is evidenced in post-millennial vampire horror film and television, and that the concept
of the soul and mind are interchangeable, it is possible to blur the lines between the rigid categorisations of the soul, self and mind, and propose an extension to the concept of the soul and personhood—a concept that may allow for the vampire to be considered a person, and for a broader examination of the vampire as a soulful being. The following chapter continues by examining the personhood, and therefore the soul, of the post-millennial vampire.
Chapter 6: Personhood of the vampire

Humanity is a vampire’s greatest weakness. No matter how easy it is to turn it off, it just keeps trying to fight its way back in.

– Katerina Petrova, vampire
("Homecoming". Butler 2011)

Chapter 5 analysed the study’s primary texts through the lens of different soul theories to understand how the soul, and the concept of ensoulment, have been represented, and how they can be interpreted from a range of ontological theoretical perspectives. Based on analysis of the texts, from the perspective of the theories applied, Chapter 5 suggested that the vampire character in these films and television programs could be understood as having a mind, and therefore a soul. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, contemporary philosophical literature argues that for a being to have a soul and a mind raises the question of whether that being also has personhood. Therefore, it is necessary to consider whether the post-millennial vampire is more than an undead creature, and to assess it within the context of personhood. Current vampire horror scholarship has largely avoided discussing the vampire-as-person, with a few exceptions, such as scholar Nicolas Michaud’s (2010) introduction to the idea in his article ‘Can a Vampire be a Person?’ These considerations build on the previous chapter’s argument that the vampire is represented as ensouled, and enables this chapter to address the research question: can the presence of a soul denote the personhood of a being and, if so, can vampires therefore be considered people?

This chapter is structured as follows. I begin by analysing the post-millennial vampire in terms of Whitman’s (2010, 176) characteristics of personhood, including ‘sentience, self-awareness, and rationality of moral personality’. Larkin’s (2010) approaches to personal identity are also used to examine the personhood of the vampire, in conjunction with Locke’s (1993) memory theory. A case study is presented that analyses vampire Eric Northman of True Blood in light of Whitman, Larkin and Locke’s theories. Next, the chapter explores whether the sympathetic vampire of the sensitive cycle is due the rights and dignities of a person, based on
Nussbaum’s (1999) ten ‘central capabilities of a person’\(^3\), and where the narratives problematise these capabilities. The vampire is discussed in terms of its personhood and responsibilities as part of a moral community, with associated moral accountabilities: this is exemplified by a case study analysing the Cullen family’s sense of community in *The Twilight Saga*. The chapter finishes with an analysis of how the pre-millennial and post-millennial vampires diverge in terms of representations of personhood, illustrated via a case study of Coppola’s Count Dracula in *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* (1992).

### 6.1 PERSONHOOD AND CONTINUITY

What we once were will inform all that we have become.

– Darla, vampire

("The Prodigal". Green 2000)

*The characteristics of personhood*

One of the fundamental characteristics that Whitman (2010) puts forward, as previously mentioned in Chapter 4, of a being considered a person is that they must be both sentient and self-conscious—they can perceive the world around them and show capacity for feeling pleasure and pain. For example, Edward Cullen in *New Moon* feels emotionally distraught when he believes Bella to be dead, and plans to reveal himself to humans so that the Volturi might kill him for exposing the existence of vampires. Knowing that the bright sunlight would hit his diamond-like skin and reveal his other-worldliness to the humans, he steps into the sun at midday, just as Bella races up in time to push him back into the shadows. Edward clearly feels pleasure at Bella’s presence, burying himself in her hair, and uttering, ‘heaven’. Edward, Bella and Alice are then taken in to see the Volturi, and Aro initially decides to kill Bella because she now knows that vampires exist. Stepping up to defend Bella, Edward is struck by Jane’s gaze—a gaze capable of inflicting great pain. Edward doubles up in agony, evidently feeling the full force of Jane’s gift. Similarly, the vampires in *True Blood* demonstrate their capacity to feel pleasure and pain—the latter particularly when they have been either ‘silvered’ (bound in silver chain, which

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\(^3\) It must be noted that the characteristics, qualities and capabilities of a person are being applied here to a non-human, imaginary creature, and there is no implication intended that should a human person be found lacking in any of these qualities, that they should not be considered a person. Such an assumption is beyond the scope and intention of this study, which focuses on the fictional species of vampire.
burns their skin), or when they are exposed to sunlight. The vampires in both these mythologies thus meet Whitman’s first characteristic of being human in their ability to feel both physical and emotional pain.

A further characteristic of a sentient creature is a desire for ‘well-being’ for oneself and others, and can be seen as a ‘point of vulnerability, and an exposure to the possibility of suffering’ (Blayde and Dunn 2010, 45). This quality is evident in, but also problematised by, the vampires in The Strain (Abraham and Weller 2014 -), as it is not clear in that mythology whether the possessed vampire can take pleasure in the same way that humans do. A strong example of the desire for well-being for self and family is portrayed by the Cullen family members, who display a strong protective bond. For example, in Breaking Dawn Part 2, after Renesmée’s birth and Bella’s death, the werewolves descend on the Cullen house. Jasper observes that they are outnumbered, to which Edward replies, ‘I won’t let them hurt my family’ (Condon 2012). Similarly, in the same film, Bella quickly learns to grow her gift of being a shield, learning how to project it beyond herself to protect one other person, or her whole family. During the confrontation with the Volturi at the film’s climax, Bella projects her shield to protect the whole gathering of witnesses, effectively safeguarding them all against Jane, who can inflict pain with her gaze.

The vampire of the sensitive cycle in the post-millennial era displays the characteristics of rationality—there is evidence of the character using abstract concepts to impose order on the world around them, allowing them to observe relationships and patterns, think about the future, create plans and execute them (Whitman 2010, 173). Examples of these characteristics include vampires in Eclipse and Breaking Dawn Part 2, where the family, the werewolves and the vampire community are planning for potential upcoming battles. A person can weigh up the benefits of alternative courses of action (Whitman 2010, 173), and can show resistance to immediate pleasures for longer-term rewards. In Breaking Dawn Part 2, the Cullens discuss various courses of action and weigh up potential outcomes to protect themselves and Renesmée from the Volturi. They consider existing relationships and how Renesmée could best be saved, and decide that the werewolf Jacob should carry her away if a battle with the Volturi looks likely. Vampires Garrett, Vladimir and Stefan all observe existing patterns of behaviour of the Volturi, noting that over the centuries, Aro has demonstrated a predisposition to ‘collect’
vampires with supernatural gifts, and would therefore not be above going into battle to ‘collect’ Alice and Edward, who both possess supernatural powers. Weighing up the alternative courses of action available to them, Carlisle reasons that going in to battle would be futile, as no one could stand up against Jane or her brother’s power, and Edward proposes a course of action to gather witnesses who can attest to Renesmée not being an immortal child. These plans are created and executed with success, including Alice and Jasper’s secret plan to go to South America and locate another hybrid child as an additional witness.

There are also examples of the post-millennial vampire showing resistance to immediate pleasures for longer-term rewards. One such instance is evident in New Moon when Aro meets Bella in Italy. Having tested whether Bella is immune to all their powers—that she is unaffected by Jane’s gaze, and cannot have her thoughts read by Aro—he lets her go, saying, ‘your gifts will make for an intriguing immortal, Isabella. Go now, and make your preparations’ (Weitz 2009). In this way, despite his proclivity to kill easily, Aro has held off knowing that once Bella is an immortal, her gift of shielding may be of use to him. Indeed, at the end of the confrontation scene in Breaking Dawn Part 2, as Aro is turning to leave, he looks between Alice and Bella, his gaze lingering on Bella, and says, ‘such a prize’, before fleeing with the rest of the Volturi (Condon 2012).

Having the ability to engage in moral arguments and to stand a chance of affecting choices is a characteristic typical of personhood, since a person is ‘a moral agent’ capable of guiding its behaviour by moral principles (Whitman 2010, 175; Nozick 2013). Harris (2010, 12) discusses morality in terms of it representing the notion of goodness—that which is good supports well-being, so in deciding whether or not a ‘certain state of pleasure is “good”’, we are ascertaining whether it is ‘conducive to, or obstructive to well-being’. Defined thus, goodness can highlight what one’s values actually are. Goodness and morality ‘encompass the attitudes, behaviours or choices that could affect our own and others’ well-being’ (12). Battles with morality are used to complicate narratives and enable characters to test the boundaries between their humanity and monstrosity. As previously discussed, many of the vampires in The Vampire Diaries choose to practise moral judgement unless they turn off their ‘humanity switch’, and in the cases where this happens, friends rally around to help them switch their humanity back on. This occurs, for example,
when Elena switches off her humanity after her brother dies, and when Caroline does the same after the death of her mother. Carlisle Cullen is presented as the epitome of moral judgement, particularly in *Twilight*, when the family rallies to protect Bella from James, whom they conclude needs to be killed. Carlisle’s age, his choice to be ‘vegetarian’ and his career as a doctor all converge to make him morally opposed to the taking of life. As a vampire determined to feed solely on animal blood, he helps his vampire family overcome their bloodlust and live by his moral code (Pollack 2011, 273). Instead of draining life, Carlisle works to save lives in his profession as a doctor, healing others rather than destroying (273). As the family readies themselves to leave Forks, Carlisle states, ‘I don’t relish the thought of killing another creature, even a sadistic one like James’ (*Twilight*, Hardwicke 2008). As Archer (2000, 10) states:

> We are who we are because of what we care about: in delineating our ultimate concerns and accommodating our subordinate ones we also define ourselves. We give a shape to our lives, which constitutes our internal personal integrity.

As the analysis shows, the post-millennial vampire displays the indicators of the soul—the qualities of ‘sentience, self-awareness, and rationality of moral personality’ (Whitman 2010, 176). Having a soul, according to Whitman, is a characteristic of personhood. These qualities of sentience, self-awareness and rationality of moral personality have already been discussed in relation to the vampire, and according to Whitman’s five fundamental characteristics of personhood, it is possible to conclude that the vampire, which exhibits all five characteristics, can be considered a person. As a person, participating in and contributing to human society, this study suggests that the vampire should therefore also be accountable for its moral actions.

**Approaches to personal identity**

It can be argued that the vampire continues to be a person, with a personal identity, long after transition, because their thoughts, memories and character traits continue to exist—that is, there is a psychological continuity after transition. When Larkin (2010, 15) asks the questions, ‘What exactly is a person?’ and ‘Under what conditions exactly does a person continue to exist?’, two approaches to personal identity are offered in an attempt to define a person and identity. The first is the
psychological approach, in which Larkin (16) explains that while a person’s ‘thoughts, memories, and character traits continue to exist’, they, as a person, will exist; for this to occur, there must be a sense of psychological continuity, which is both ‘necessary and sufficient for personal identity’ (16). In an example of the psychological approach, the narrative presents Elena as having a sense of psychological continuity that, according to Larkin, meets the requirements for personhood and identity. This is evident in Elena’s journey in The Vampire Diaries, as she transitions to vampire and then back to human. Elena continues to be the same person after both transitions in terms of her kindness and her loyalty to friends and loved ones. She is able to reflect upon herself as a newly transitioned vampire, and the continuation of her human identity, as exemplified by the following interaction with Damon after she is turned and expresses a dislike of killing:

    Damon: Everyone is someone’s uncle or father or camp counsellor or Bible study teacher, Elena. You don’t know these people. Why do you care?
    Elena: I care because I’m still me. I still have the same feelings. I’m sorry if that spoils your master plan to turn me into a super vampire.
    (“The Five”. Butler 2012b)

The bodily approach views a person as being fundamentally a ‘certain type of material object’, and they will continue to exist if some critical mass of their material composition exists—that is, there is bodily continuity, and all a person’s physical characteristics continue to exist (2005, 19). Larkin explains that even if a person is in a permanent vegetative state, they would still be classed as a ‘person’—although Larkin identifies the problem with the bodily approach as being that ‘people do not continue to exist as corpses’ (19). Arguably, the vampire does exist, in some mythologies, as a corpse without a heartbeat (The Twilight Saga, True Blood), and in others, the vampire has a heartbeat (The Vampire Diaries). Examples from the core texts that support the bodily approach include, first, the vampire Eddie in True Blood. Eddie is a corpulent vampire who has been captured by humans and is syphoned for his vampire blood to be sold on the streets as the drug ‘V’. As Jason (human police officer) remarks as he rescues Eddie:

    Jason Stackhouse: What’s with the weight, dude? I thought all you vampires were supposed to be in shape.
    Eddie: We are what we were when we were turned.
Secondly, in *Breaking Dawn Part 2*, when Bella has undergone transition and returns from her first hunt, she encounters Jacob on her way back to the house. His first words to her as a newborn vampire are, ‘I didn’t expect you to seem so … you. Except for the creepy eyes’ (Condon 2012). In all ways, Bella’s human physical characteristics have been retained through transition.

A third example of the bodily approach in the core texts is the case of *The Vampire Diaries*, where the vampire has a beating heart. In this mythology, a vampire retains its physical traits after transition, which we see in the narrative’s flashbacks. The Original family of vampires in this mythology can be staked with an enchanted silver dagger, which will send them into a death-like sleep. Once the dagger is removed, the Original vampire will return to life, retaining its bodily form and features. Similarly, a regular vampire can choose to go to sleep and begin to desiccate, but can be brought back to its substantive form through being fed vampire blood. Damon Salvatore chooses to go into such a sleep in season seven, with the aim of sleeping through the next six or seven decades until his true love Elena wakes up from her cursed sleep. His plans are foiled when his brother, Stefan, wakes him up after only three years ("I Would For You". Karasick 2016), and Damon is restored to his original bodily health.

These interactions and plot points are examples of the vampire demonstrating bodily continuity, with their physical characteristics continuing to exist after transition. It is clear, therefore, that the vampire continues to exist as a person with a unique personal identity. Locke’s memory theory supports Larkin’s psychological approach in ascertaining personhood, and extends the ideas of maintaining thoughts, memories and character traits over time.

*Mind and memory*

After transition, the vampire remembers its early, human life, and can contemplate the differences between its human and vampire states, knowing that it is still the same person. This concept can be examined using the memory theory. Locke (1993) presented a way of ascertaining the personhood of a being. He discussed the concept of the soul, and claimed that although the soul is an immaterial substance, it has consciousness and is therefore ‘a thinking intelligent being that has reason and
reflection and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places’ (1993, II.XXXVII.9). I would argue that based on Locke’s memory theory, vampires not only have souls, but can also be considered persons. For example, in *Eclipse*, Rosalie describes her human life to Bella: how perfect she believed it was, how her life ended and how her early days as a vampire began with revenge and theatrics. This scene is an extended version of the one shown in the theatrical release, and explains why Bella and Rosalie were able to bond once Bella became pregnant—because one of Rosalie’s greatest human wishes was to have children:

Rosalie [to Bella]: Go blather to someone else about the joys of becoming a newborn.
Bella: OK ... Rosalie, I don’t understand what I did to make you hate me so much.
Rosalie: I don’t hate you. I don't particularly like you, but ... Bella, I envy you.
Rosalie: No, it’s not. You have a choice, I didn't. None of us did, but you do and you’re choosing wrong. I don’t care how miserable your human life is.
Bella: My life is not miserable. It’s not perfect, but then nobody’s life is perfect.
Rosalie: Mine was. Absolutely perfect. There were things I still wanted—to be married with a nice house and a husband to kiss me when I came home. But mostly I wanted a baby. So much. Royce King was the most eligible bachelor in town. I barely knew him. We were never alone. But I was young. I was in love with the idea of love.

[FLASHBACK: Rosalie heads down the empty lamp-lit streets. She pulls her coat close in the chill of the night air.]
Rosalie (VO): On the last night of my life, I left a friend’s house late. I wasn’t far from home. [She slows as she sees a GROUP OF FIVE MEN, gathered under a streetlight. They laugh drunkenly, passing a bottle. Rosalie veers away to avoid them but hears—]
Royce: Here she is. Hey, Rose. Come over here. Hey, come over here.
We’ve been waiting for you.
Rosalie: You’re drunk.
Royce: Isn’t she lovely, John? I told you she was a looker.
John: It’s hard to say with all those clothes on.
Royce: What do you say, Rose? Why don’t we take off a few layers?
Rosalie: Stop it … I’ll see you tomorrow. Sober. *(She starts off, but Royce abruptly YANKS her hat off—she CRIES OUT in pain as the pins wrench her hair out. Royce grins. The men laugh.)*
Royce: Hey, where do you think you’re going?
Rosalie: Stop it. Just stop it. Let go. Stop it.
Rosalie (VO): I didn’t see who he was until that night. Who they all were.
*Cullens’ porch, present* They left me in the street, thinking I was dead. Believe me, I wanted to be. Carlisle found me; he smelled all the blood ... Thought he was helping me.
Bella: I’m sorry.
Rosalie: I got my revenge on them. One at a time. I saved Royce for last, so he'd know I was coming. *(FLASH TO: INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR— NIGHT (1933) TWO LARGE MEN guard the doorway to a room. They look up as a spectre in white appears at the other end of the hall. As it nears we realise it’s Rosalie, in her wedding dress)*
*(INT. HOTEL ROOM—NIGHT (1933)*) *(Royce is terrified as he HEARS the sound of the two guards’ bodies falling heavily to the ground. He backs into a corner—the door SPLINTERS open and Rosalie enters. Royce’s face in horror as she approaches him.)*
*Cullens’ porch, present.*
Rosalie: I was a little theatrical back then. Things got better after I found Emmett. But we’ll always be this. Frozen, never moving forward. That’s what I miss the most, the possibilities. Sitting on a front porch somewhere, Emmett grey-haired by my side, surrounded by our grandchildren, their laughter.
Bella: I understand, that’s what you want. But there’s nothing I’m ever going to want, more … than Edward.
Rosalie: You’re wrong again. After you’ve been changed, there’s one thing you’ll want more ... One thing you’ll kill for ... Blood.
*(Eclipse. Extended scene. Slade 2010)*

Not only does Rosalie still recognise herself in her actions as a human and vampire, she expresses sorrow at the loss of her human life, and mostly at the loss of potential. She vividly remembers the last night of her life, and the betrayal of her fiancé,
evidence that her human memory and feelings were not erased during her transition; envy, grief, sadness—Rosalie still manifests these arguably human emotions as a vampire. She also presents as a reluctant vampire, saying in *New Moon* that ‘this is a life I never would have chosen for myself, and I wish there had been someone to vote no for me’ (Weitz 2009). Her regret at not having children and the impossibility of having grandchildren continues to cause her grief, and exemplifies the retention of her human desire to have a family.

In retaining memories from the past, and recognising oneself in past actions and experiences, it is possible to retain personal identity. Locke (1993, II.XXVII.9) explained that ‘consciousness extends beyond the present moment’, stating, ‘as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person: it is the same self now it was then’. In describing his early vampire life to Bella, Edward explains that he rebelled against Carlisle’s lifestyle and wanted to know what it was like to taste human blood, a key turning point for his character:

Edward: I haven’t told you everything about myself.
Bella: What? You’re not a virgin? Look, you can’t scare me away now.
Edward: Look, a few years after Carlisle created me, I rebelled against him. I resented him for curbing my appetite. And so for a while, I went off on my own. I wanted to know how it felt to hunt. To taste human blood.

[FLASHBACK] (In a movie theatre. Edward is sitting watching a movie. A lady walks past him. Edward looks at her. A man follows her and Edward sees that the man plans on attacking the woman. Edward follows the man and the camera makes it seem like Edward wants to hunt the lady. Edward catches up with man and drinks his blood.)

[END OF FLASHBACK]
Edward: All the men I killed were monsters. And so was I.
Bella: Edward, they were all murderers. You probably saved more lives than you took.
Edward: Bella, that’s what I told myself. But they were all human beings. I looked into their eyes as they died and I saw who I was, and what I was capable of.
Bella: And what I’ll be capable of. Why are you telling me this tonight? Did you really think this was going to change my mind about you?
Edward: I just wondered if it would change your mind about yourself, and who you want to see when you look in the mirror a year from now.

Bella: I know I can do this. Let me tell you why. Because you did. You should give yourself some credit for that. Now, hopefully, a year from now, I'm going to look in the mirror and see someone like you. I mean, someone capable of courage and sacrifice and love.

(Breaking Dawn Part 1, Condon 2011)

Edward’s early memories have shaped who he has become as a vampire. He recognised then, and now, that drinking human blood was monstrous, and knows that this monstrosity lies latent within him. He tells Bella this part of his personal history to sway her decision to become a vampire. His story shows that Edward has evolved as a person over his 100 years, and developed a keen sense of identity and self-awareness.

As beings with memories that can span millennia—memories not just of their vampire life, but their human life before transition—the vampire’s narrative of self is arguably as coherent and consistent as that of most humans. Hauke (2005, 149) explains that ‘being a person means remembering who you are, who you are not ... memory helps us make the narratives of ourselves coherent and consistent … memory is far from being auxiliary to our human being, it is central to being human’. I would argue that this is true of the both the pre- and post-millennial vampire. It is demonstrated by the pre-millennial narrative of Dracula (Coppola 1992), where the vampire’s lost love causes him to renounce God, and where he has ‘crossed oceans of time’ to be reunited with his reincarnated wife Elisabeta/Mina. The post-millennial narrative of Eric Northman in True Blood is also evidence of the vampire whose memory has endured across time—Eric’s memory of his family’s slaughter has not faded over time, and his personal identity remains consistent throughout the millennium that he has been a vampire.

The case of Eric Northman: A millennium for revenge

Eric Northman, True Blood’s Viking vampire, was born in 900 AD. In his early human life, he lived in Sweden with his parents and siblings. As the eldest son, Eric was due to become king upon his father’s death. In season three, the viewer sees Eric’s backstory as a Viking prince whose family was slain by werewolves under the command of a vampire. The viewers are not shown the vampire’s face—only a dark,
mysterious, cloaked figure against a cold, blue and hazy backdrop, in stark contrast to the cozy, warm light of the interior of Eric’s family home. The vampire commands a wolf to bring him the king’s crown, which he hides in a flourish of his cloak. The vampire’s only words to Eric, who makes for him with a sword, are ‘Don’t be a hero, Viking’, at which point he swirls off into the night, with Eric none the wiser about the nature of this murderous being ("Trouble". Petrarca 2010). The only clue Eric has about the murderers is a small insignia burnt into a wolf’s flesh, which he sees when the creature returns to human form after being slain. In Eric’s flashback to the slaughter, he remembers his grief at his mother’s death, and his pain as his father tells him with his dying breath that Eric must seek vengeance, to which Eric fervently agrees.

In 930 AD, Eric is turned vampire by Godric on the battlefield. Over a millennium later, Eric gets the first lead he has had on the werewolf and vampire who killed his family and stole the crown. In another flashback, the viewer sees Eric and Godric as SS officers tracking a werewolf pack, and confronting a werewolf who admits its master is a vampire. Eric notices that the werewolf bears the same insignia as the wolf that killed his family. At this point, Eric and Godric fail to track down the master vampire, so their search continues. It is clear to the viewer that the passage of a millennium has not dampened Eric’s grief or need for revenge, and that Eric’s basic identity and motivation remain unchanged.

Eric and his progeny, Pam, move to Shreveport, Louisiana in 1986. In 2012, for political reasons, Eric finds himself in the home of the vampire Russell Edgington, King of Mississippi. While there, he discusses the various artefacts adorning Russell’s house with Russell’s consort of 700 years, Talbot. When Talbot gets up to place a scroll inside a glass cabinet, Eric follows him and sees a crown displayed in the cabinet. He recognises it as his father's, stolen the night of the attack. The viewer sees the emotions cross Eric’s face as his mind flashes back over the events of that night; his emotions range from surprise and anger to grief and disbelief. In that one flashback, the audience is shown the motivation for, and narrative of, Eric’s life. His memories cement who he was then with who he is centuries later, and affirm his reason for existing now that he has found his nemesis.

Although Eric realises that Russell is the vampire he has sought for a millennium, he keeps up the façade of loyalty to Russell to avoid suspicion, and to
keep his enemy close. However, in a calculating move, while Russell is otherwise occupied attacking Bill and Sookie, Eric lures Talbot to his death. Russell is driven insane with anger and grief, and hunts down Eric, who manages to stop him by promising him the ability to daywalk. Eric’s narrative does not allow him to kill Russell outright—he plans to exact a longer, more tortuous revenge. Eric and Russell consume Sookie’s blood, as faerie blood allows vampires to walk in sunlight. Both vampires walk into the sun, cuffed at the wrist, with Eric’s intention being for them both to burn as the effects of the faerie blood wear off. Sookie rescues them both. Eric, not wishing to show Russell any mercy, buries his badly burnt form by binding him in silver chains and covering him with wet concrete. Russell is eventually rescued from this entombment, and does not meet his death until season five, when Eric stakes him from behind as Russell attempts to seek sanctuary with the Fae ("Save Yourself". Lehmann 2012).

Eric’s actions may not meet the criteria of humanity according to Harris (2010), or Whitman’s (2010) criteria of moral agency. However, in the Viking tradition, Eric remains true to his culture by exacting vengeance for his father’s death. As Icelandic historians and translators Magnusson and Pálsson (Njal’s Saga 1960, 16) explain, ‘any slight, real or imagined, to one’s honour or to the honour of one’s family had to be revenged, with either blood or money’. However, Eric does meet Larkin’s (2010) approaches to personal identity, having retained both his bodily and psychological features over the millennium of his existence. Coupled with this, Eric has displayed the faculties of mind and thought, and can be considered ensouled based on Descartes’ mind/soul synonymy. Eric meets the requirements for personhood, according to Locke’s memory theory (1993), having retained his ancient memories and being able to recognise himself in his past actions and experiences—actions and experiences that inform who he is and what he does in the present. This case suggests, therefore, that the vampire character can still be considered a person, despite their proclivity for choosing paths such as exacting revenge.

This section explored the concept of personhood and identity to ascertain whether the post-millennial vampire is represented as being a person. Whitman’s five fundamental characteristics of personhood were applied to the post-millennial vampire, and textual evidence was found and discussed to show that these
characteristics are represented by the post-millennial vampire. While the concept of morality problematises the status of the vampire’s personhood, it was stated that this characteristic is at the heart of many storylines, and is used as a tool for the vampire to grow within the available story arcs of contemporary film and television series.

Accepting the evidence that the vampire is a person, this section moved on to discuss Larkin’s (2010) approaches to personal identity, and examined the continuity of body and psychology of the vampire over time and through transition. It was found that the vampire not only maintains bodily continuity over time, with their physical identity remaining constant and being recognisable as the same person after transition and over millennia; psychologically, the vampire retains also their identity after transition, and is recognisable as the same person, with the same psychological identity, over time.

Having met the criteria for personhood (Whitman, 2010), and identity (Larkin, 2010), this section then investigated the vampire’s personhood via Locke’s (1993) memory theory: retaining the concept of self over time, and recognising the self in past actions. This theory was explored through the example of Eric Northman, a vampire over 1,000 years old. Eric not only still possessed memories from a millennium ago—those memories and actions drove his narrative in the present. Evidence for Locke’s memory theory can also be found in the narratives of The Vampire Diaries and The Twilight Saga, thus making a case for the claim that the vampire has personhood based on the fundamental characteristic of memory. With evidence for the vampire’s personhood and ensoulment in place, it is then possible to analyse whether the vampire is due the rights and dignities of a person, which contribute to a character’s moral accountability in terms of their actions and decisions in the narratives.

6.2 THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITIES OF A PERSON

True Blood’s Reverend Steve Newlin of the ‘Fellowship of the Sun’ church says of vampires:

We never should have given them the vote and legitimized their unholy existence! The American people need to know these are creatures of Satan! Demons! —literally! They have no soul!

("Strange Love". Ball 2008)
Newlin’s assumption is that if the vampire lacks a soul, it should be ‘denied the basic rights of human beings’ (Foy 2010, 55). However, evidence exists for the vampire having a soul, and being a person. Nussbaum’s (1999, 41–42) ten central capabilities of being a person can be used to ‘determine the “rights and dignities” that should be granted to beings which have these central capabilities’ (Michaud, 2010, 43). The following section examines the post-millennial vampire in light of Nussbaum’s ‘central capabilities’ introduced in Chapter 4.

First, Nussbaum (41–42) states that having ‘the ability to live to the end of a life of normal length’ is a fundamental capability of personhood. The post-millennial vampire problematises this essential capability, as they have the potential for immortality, unless they meet with some misfortune or choose to end their own lives, as Godric in True Blood chooses to do ("I Will Rise Up". Winant 2009). If the vampire can live a longer than normal life, one could then argue they have not only met, but exceeded, this capability. The issue lies with the definition of Nussbaum’s ‘life of a normal length’—what is normal for the human and for the vampire differs. As beings who have been alive longer than humans, one could also argue that vampires’ depth and breadth of experience in the world affords them the ‘rights and dignities’ that humans, who live for a much briefer time, take for granted.

A common characteristic of the post-millennial vampire is the creature’s accelerated healing abilities. While the vampire may possess healing powers due to their supernatural nature, the vampires in the texts analysed here can be understood in terms of Nussbaum’s (41-42) characteristic of ‘bodily health’: the ability to have and maintain good health, which is another defining capability of personhood. Many narratives exploit this idea—silvering, for example (tying up a vampire in silver chains), may circumvent the vampire’s supernatural power to heal until the silver is removed. The vampire’s transformation does not mean they lose their ‘bodily health’ capability of personhood, as evidenced by Bella’s ability to heal her shattered bones during transition (Breaking Dawn Part 1, Condon 2011), and her reassurance to her father after transition that she is ‘more than alright’ (Breaking Dawn Part 2, Condon 2012). The Vampire Diaries also explores the vampire’s accelerated healing abilities with a storyline concerning the capture of, and experimentation on, vampires to find a way to wipe out the species. In True Blood season 5, episode 9 ("The Cell". Grismer 2013), the viewer sees a flashback of Damon’s time as a prisoner of the
Augustines—a group of human doctors dedicated to unveiling the secrets of the vampire physiology. The viewer sees Damon strapped to a gurney, and Dr Whitmore slashes at Damon’s eyeball, which bleeds profusely; but the act does not leave any lasting damage. As the doctor says to Damon when examining him:

This isn’t a personal matter. It’s for the advancement of science … you’re a vampire. Your blood heals others, your body heals itself. You’ll regenerate parts of internal organs after I remove them. (Grismer 2013)

The only things that a vampire is unable to recover from in The Vampire Diaries mythology are werewolf bites (although the vampire/werewolf hybrid, Klaus, can heal bites for others if they ingest his blood), sunlight and a stake through the heart (or having the heart torn from the body). This series also introduces the notion of a ‘cure’ for vampirism, which is created by the witch Qetsiyah. Over the eight seasons of The Vampire Diaries, the cure is used in seasons four, five, six and eight as a key complication in the narrative. True Blood breaks new ground in vampire narratives by introducing the Hepatitis V virus, from which vampires cannot recover unless they take the cure: the blood of the human, Noomi. It is clear from these examples that the post-millennial vampire exceeds the ability to maintain good health—Nussbaum’s second capability of personhood.

Vampires are, like humans, subject to the politics, wars, territorial issues and prejudices inherent in local communities and society more broadly. Having the freedom to be secure from violence and move about in the world as we please is a further characteristic of personhood (Nussbaum 1999, 41–42). A human resident of a war-torn, impoverished, developing country may not be able to escape cycles of poverty and persecution, yet this does not deny them their personhood, or their ‘rights and dignities’. By this reasoning, I disagree with this capability being a criterion on which to determine someone’s ‘rights and dignities’. However, the vampire of post-millennial mythology has, in fact, freedom to remove themselves from violence, as finances rarely seem to be a problem—the post-millennial vampire is frequently represented as affluent, having had the time to benefit from compound interest over decades or centuries. This shows that many vampires in the core texts meet and exceed this capability of personhood.

The vampire’s ability ‘to think and reason’ is evident in most post-millennial vampire narratives, as the creature is presented as being able to function in society in
the same ways as people. The post-millennial vampire surpasses most humans in this capability, as transitioning to vampire form heightens all the human senses, and in many cases bestows more, such as mind-reading or being able to see the future—a gift possessed by Alice Cullen in The Twilight Saga. In the core texts, the vampires are depicted as generally making choices and reasoned decisions on a daily basis, including establishing and maintaining employment (Carlisle is a medical doctor in The Twilight Saga), attending school (the Cullen progeny in The Twilight Saga; Stefan, Elena and Caroline in The Vampire Diaries) and making choices that allow them to be part of mainstream society. In a display of person-like thinking and reasoning, for example, Edward Cullen deduces that Irina thought Renesmée was an immortal child, and had informed the Volturi (Breaking Dawn Part 2, Condon 2012). Similarly, the ability ‘to use the senses, to imagine’ (Nussbaum 1999, 41–42) is another capability of personhood demonstrated by the vampires of post-millennial narratives. The transition from human to vampire does not strip a vampire of its imagination—Edward Cullen writes music and plays the piano for Bella (Twilight, Hardwicke 2008), and in The Vampire Diaries, the werewolf/vampire hybrid Klaus is depicted as a talented painter and illustrator, presenting his love interest, Caroline, with her portrait ("Dangerous Liaisons". Grismer 2012).

Extending this idea, Nussbaum (1999, 41-42) also posits the capacity for critical reflection as a further capability of personhood. While this capability is not overly addressed in many post-millennial vampire narratives, it is evident in The Twilight Saga. As an example, when Bella asks Carlisle if he ever ‘considered doing it the easy way’ (New Moon, Weitz 2009) and drinking human blood, Carlisle responds that he knew who he wanted to be. He has had the ability to reflect on his options over time, and to forge a life based on moral choices. Another example of the vampire’s ability to critically reflect is when Jasper tells Bella his backstory in Eclipse (2010). He explains that during the time he spent training newborns, he was asked to kill the new vampires after one year. He knew he had to stop working for Maria, the vampire who turned him, because he ‘could feel everything they felt’, which became too difficult to bear. This capability is directly addressed in a number of vampire narratives, from the Varney literature through to post-millennial narratives, and I thus claim that this criterion can be met.
Decisions based on emotional choices often drive vampire horror storylines. Nussbaum (41–42) suggests that emotional capability, or having ‘the ability to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves’, is another of the capabilities of personhood. Examples of this capability abound throughout pre-and post-millennial vampire narratives. Early narratives, however, are less about love triangles—for example, the cinematic version of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (Coppola, 1992) focused primarily on the relationship between Dracula and his wife reincarnate, Mina, whose fiancé Jonathan Harker is easily removed from the picture. But the central storylines of *True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries* and *The Twilight Saga* revolve around love triangles between combinations of vampires, humans, werewolves and faeries. The emotional choices made by Edward in *Twilight* trigger the events that unfold throughout the saga—Edward inviting a human, Bella, into his family and their activities, such as playing baseball, sets up the elements for the saga’s narrative. As Edward states to Carlisle in *Breaking Dawn Part 2*: ‘I can’t help thinking, all these people are putting themselves in danger because I fell in love with a human’ (Condon 2012). In *The Vampire Diaries*’ mythology, the vampire’s emotions are heightened and felt more strongly than those of humans—a characteristic used as a plot device allowing the vampire to ‘switch off’ their humanity to cope with emotions such as overwhelming grief. It is apparent that the post-millennial vampire also meets this criteria of being worthy of ‘respect and dignity’. The Cullens choosing to play a game of baseball is also evidence of Nussbaum’s (41–42) seventh capability of personhood: the ability to enjoy recreational activities. The post-millennial vampire displays a propensity for enjoying life, be it baseball, collecting cars or playing music (*The Twilight Saga*), partying, cars and drinking (*The Vampire Diaries*), or Yahtzee and collecting antiques (*True Blood*). In this regard, vampires differ little from humans in terms of their desire for play and recreation.

Another central theme of many narratives is the idea of mainstreaming: living with other vampires and with humans. The ability ‘to live with and toward others and have self-respect’ is what Nussbaum (41–42) terms the capability of ‘affiliation’. The very premise of *True Blood* is that an artificial blood substitute has been created so that vampires can come out of hiding and integrate in mainstream society. To live ‘toward others’ is to be mindful of their needs—vampire or human—and to provide support and assistance where required. For example, in *The Vampire Diaries*, Damon
and Stefan open their home to Jeremy Gilbert, Elena’s brother, who is also a vampire hunter, thus demonstrating that their concern for Elena’s family outweighs their personal risk of being slain by the hunter. In Eclipse, Carlisle Cullen works to overcome the boundaries and ancient feuds between werewolves and vampires to offer medical aid to Jacob after the battle between the newborn vampires and the Cullens and werewolves. In a significant scene, Carlisle is seen leaving the werewolves’ house after treating Jacob, and shaking the proffered hand of the vampire’s natural enemy, werewolf Billy Black. These interactions and decisions are arguably human-like, and exemplify the trait of personhood in some post-millennial vampires.

A person, according to the capability approach proffered by Nussbaum (41–42), has the ability to live in harmony with plants, animals and nature. This is not a capability largely touched on by the core texts in this research, but it cannot be assumed that the post-millennial vampire does not have concern for other living things, or for nature more generally. This is further problematised by the existence of evidence for the opposite—for example, the Cullens ‘only survive on the blood of animals’ (Twilight), and Stefan Salvatore in The Vampire Diaries also prefers to drink animal blood, as he turns into a ‘ripper’ when he consumes human blood. One notable exception, where the vampire does express a love of nature, occurs in Only Lovers Left Alive. In this narrative, the ancient vampire, Eve, demonstrates knowledge of the Latin names for both animals and plants, and has a concerned conversation with her partner, Adam, about the early appearance of mushrooms in Adam’s garden area:

Adam?
Adam: Yeah?
Eve: Have you noticed these?
Adam: Yeah. Fly agaric.
Eve: They’re behaving rather strangely. You know, this is not their season.
Adam: I know. They kind of appear and then disappear and then reappear, those caps. I guess they’re receiving information from the atmosphere like my antennae. Just goes to show, we don’t know shit about fungi.
Even though life on this planet couldn’t exist without them.
Eve: [talking to mushrooms] You know, you guys shouldn’t really be here.
Not until the autumn.
(Jarmusch 2014)

Of all Nussbaum’s criteria, this ability to live in harmony with nature is the only one that cannot definitively be attributed to either the pre-millennial or post-millennial vampire. Perhaps this suggests that the vampire as a species is not natural—rather, it is ‘super’-natural, and inherently disinclined towards concern for the earth and nature. Yet this does not exclude the vampire from being considered a person.

Finally, having ‘control over one’s environment, or the ability to participate in politics and hold property’, is considered a criterion attributable to personhood (Nussbaum 1999, 41–42). The post-millennial vampire meets and exceeds this criterion. Most notably, True Blood explores vampire politics in depth, from vampire–human politics involving the VRA and the feudal system involving Areas, Sheriffs, Kings and Queens, through to vampire-only politics and religion involving The Authority, a law-making group who protect the last vial of Lilith’s blood. In terms of holding property, True Blood also offers extensive examples of this, with Bill owning his mansion in Bon Temps, a property that has remained in his family since the Civil War, and Eric and Pam owning and managing the bar ‘Fangtasia’.

Similarly, the Cullen vampires in The Twilight Saga are depicted as owning multiple properties, not just in the US, but also on an island off Brazil: Isle Esmée, which Carlisle bought for Esmée as a gift. To a lesser degree, even the vampire of early literature and cinema showed control over their environment—for example Count Dracula holds properties not just in Transylvania, but purchases properties through Jonathan Harker in London, and procuring Carfax Abbey. However, this capability is problematised in some post-millennial vampire narratives such as Only Lovers Left Alive, Afflicted (Lee and Prowse 2013), A Girl Walks Home Alone At Night (Amirpour 2015) and Thirst (Park 2009). None of these films focus on the attainment of property, wealth or politics, either vampire or human. I would argue, however, that attainment of material wealth is a lesser indicator of personhood than the core capabilities of having sentience, self-awareness and rationality of moral action.

The above analysis suggests that the post-millennial vampire meets or exceeds at least nine of Nussbaum’s ten capabilities of personhood—capabilities that can determine the “‘rights and dignities’ that should be granted to beings which have
these central capabilities’ (Nussbaum and Sen 1993). Many of these capabilities rely on the entity’s ability to think, reason and know—criteria also put forward as evidence of the soul (Aristotle 1986). The vampire also exhibits these capabilities, and it can therefore be deduced that the vampire has a mind and an intellect, and also a soul.

**Vampires in the moral community**

Personhood, as explained by Kant (2012, 28), requires the ability to exhibit rationality, or rational thought. As Nussbaum’s (1999, 41-42) capabilities reveal, the vampire demonstrates the faculties of rationality and thinking, and can therefore be considered a person. However, as described in Chapter 4, the mantle of personhood also comes with the requirement to take moral action. Similarly, Hauke (2005, 12) argues that a person needs fulfillment as a communal being—to be a member of a shared community or culture. This idea is echoed by Graves (2008, 206), who explains that a person’s life is given meaning, definition and purpose by participation in larger systems, such as a social and moral community. To be ‘fully ourselves’, Hauke (12) argues, ‘means being fully human, which means being fully engaged with others’. Harris’ viewpoint (2010, 55) concurs with those of Hauke and Kant—he states that ‘cooperation is the stuff of which meaningful human lives and viable societies are made’. I would argue that being part of the moral community, being fully engaged with others and cooperating to sustain a viable society, are also all features of the post-millennial vampire, and vampire narrative, as evidenced by the following exploration of the storyline in *Breaking Dawn Part 2*.

**The case of the Cullens: A gathering of witnesses**

Bella and Edward’s child, Renesmée, is born to Bella while Bella is still human; she is thus not an immortal child, although she will have a long lifespan and display some of the enhanced senses and skills of the vampire. The Cullens are visited by one of their cousins, Irina, from Denali. However, as Irina approaches the Cullens’ house, she sees Bella, Renesmée and Jacob (in wolf form) walking in the woods. Seeing Renesmée, Irina automatically assumes that she is an immortal child who has been bitten and turned into a vampire. Irina flees, and the Cullens assume this is because she saw the werewolf. Alice has a vision of the future showing that the Volturi are coming to Forks to bring down the Cullens. Discussion ensues, and Edward realises the impending danger is because Irina has assumed Renesmée is an
immortal, and has gone to report the crime to the Volturi. Creating an immortal child is against vampire law, punishable by death—a punishment imposed on Irina’s mother for just such a crime. Jacob asks if they can just explain to the Volturi what has happened, but Edward explains that Aro, head of the Volturi, ‘has enough proof in Irina’s thoughts’. Jacob, keen to fight, is advised by Jasper that ‘their offensive weapons are too powerful; no one can stand against Jane’. Bella is keen to convince the Volturi, but Emmett reminds her that ‘they’re coming to kill us, not to talk’.

Drawing on the strong networks of the vampire community, and knowing that cooperation would be available to them, Edward answers Emmett:

Edward: No, you’re right. They won’t listen to us. But maybe others can convince them. Carlisle you have friends all around the world.

Carlisle: I won’t ask them to fight.

Edward: Not fight, witness. If enough people knew the truth, maybe we could convince the Volturi to listen.

Esmée: We can ask this of our friends.

Carlisle: *nods in agreement.* *(Breaking Dawn Part 2, Condon 2012)*

The Cullens travel around the world to talk to their friends in the vampire community and ask them to bear witness. Many are convinced to go to Forks, where Renesmée shows them, through her gift of transferring memories and thoughts with a touch, that she was ‘born not bitten’. Not all of the vampires who arrive share the Cullens’ ‘vegetarian’ lifestyle. Out of a sense of respect for the moral community and the wishes of their hosts, the visiting vampires agree not to hunt in the area.

However, the arrival of two uninvited, ancient vampires from Romania, Stefan and Vladimir, disrupts the harmonious community environment. Carlisle confronts them as they arrive on the Cullens’ property:

Carlisle: Vladimir. Stefan. You’re a long way from home.

Kate: What are they doing here?

Vladimir: We heard the Volturi were moving against you, but that you would not stand alone.

Carlisle: We didn’t do what we were accused of.

Vladimir: We do not care what you did, Carlisle.

Stefan: We have been waiting a millennium for the Italian scum to be challenged.

Carlisle: It’s not our plan to fight the Volturi.
Vladimir: Shame. Aro’s witnesses will be so disappointed.
Stefan: They enjoy a good fight.
Eleazar: Aro’s witnesses?
Vladimir: Aw. Still hoping they’ll listen?

(Breaking Dawn Part 2, Condon 2012)

Surprised that the Volturi are gathering together their own ‘witnesses’, Garrett
explains to the gathered vampires that Aro has a pattern of selecting the gifted
vampires he wants to join the Volturi, and culling the covens to which they belong.
The group become convinced that the Volturi will not listen, and Edward tells the
gathered vampires:

Edward: What makes you think they’ll be satisfied with Alice? What’s to
stop them from going after Benjamin next? Or Zafrina, or Kate, or
anyone else here. Anyone they want. Their goal isn’t punishment. It’s
power, it’s acquisition. Carlisle might not ask you to fight, but I will.
For the sake of my family, but also for yours. For the way you want to
live.

Jacob Black: [stands up] The packs will fight. They’ve never been afraid of
vampires.

Tanya: [the Denali Coven stands] We will fight.

Garrett: [steps forward] This wouldn’t be the first time I’ve fought a king’s
rule.

Benjamin: [Benjamin stands] We will join you.

Amun: [glances at Benjamin] No!

Benjamin: [glances back at Amun] I will do the right thing, Amun. You may
do as you please.

Senna: [as Bella stands] We will stand with you.

Siobhan: [the Irish Coven stands] So will we.

Peter and Charlotte step forward and nod in support

Vladimir: That didn’t take much.

(Breaking Dawn Part 2, Condon 2012)

In the spirit of cooperation, community and a shared desire to preserve the ‘way they
want to live’, the members of the group band together and agree that if a fight
ensues, they will all participate. While waiting for the Volturi to arrive, the
community spend the time bonding: sharing and discussing their own unique gifts,
and helping Bella grow her gift of being a shield.
The witnesses gather against the Volturi. When the Volturi kill Irina for bearing false information, her sisters leap forward to attack, but are physically restrained back by Garrett and Emmett. Edward yells, ‘Tanya this is what they want. If you attack now we’ll all die’, and then directs Senna and Zafrina to use their gifts to ‘blind’ the Denali girls and thus stop them from rushing forward and initiating the fight, together using their gifts to achieve the best outcome for the group. Aro then tries to shift the reason for a battle onto the unknown outcomes of a hybrid child. Although Carlisle tells Aro, ‘you see there’s no law broken here’ and Aro agrees, he then starts to justify a fight based on the fact that humans and their technology are a threat, that times are perilous and hybridity is an unknown quantity in their world. Aro claims that although no law was broken, ‘does it then follow that there is no danger?’ (Breaking Dawn Part 2, Condon 2012). At the point when it looks as though a battle will take place after all, Alice arrives. Alice envisions a possible future that she shares with Aro, in which the assembled vampires are drawn into a fight with the Volturi. Bella tries to protect as many of their group as she can with her shield, Jacob takes Renesmée away to protect her and Benjamin creates an earthquake to try to stop the fight. In reality, for the good of not just the Cullens, but the vampire community as a whole, Alice and Jasper have travelled to South America and found the vampire/human hybrid, Nahuel, whose existence was previously unknown. They present Nahuel as evidence that Renesmée will not be a threat to vampires. Marcus remarks, ‘these children are much like us’, Aro agrees that there is no danger and the Volturi depart.

The analysis suggests that the vampires work together not only as part of a shared community, but a shared culture, and because of a common understanding of the ‘right’ thing to do. This is in accordance with Harris’ (2010, 55) assertion that meaningful lives and viable societies work best through cooperation. The Cullens and their witnesses display rational actions and a sense of moral community, evidence that they are therefore worthy of the rights attributable to a person—to be treated with respect and dignity.

6.3 A DIVERGENCE: EARLY AND POST-MILLENNIAL VAMPIRES

The twenty-first century has seen the rise of the vampire as ‘an assimilative monster’—one once represented as a ‘sympathetic outsider’, but who now attempts to live as a person (Spooner 2013, 148). Spooner (150) observes that in the post-
millennial vampire narrative, ‘rules are not just limited to the vampire community or dedicated to maintaining its continuation but go above and beyond’, appealing to ‘a moral imperative and a sense of decorum that are not just about preserving the social contract but also a kind of self-fashioning—even, perhaps, soul-making’. Landers (2011) explains that a feature of the post-millennial vampire is that it makes conscious choices, overriding its fundamental bloodlust, and this helps to dissolve boundaries between the monsters and humans. This, as Landers (36) posits, demonstrates that somewhere inside the vampire exists a level of humanity with which they can choose ‘to act and live in a morally acceptable manner’. While the blurring of boundaries between human and monster, vampire and person is pronounced in the post-millennial narrative, early representations of the vampire do display some of the characteristics, capabilities and qualities of a person. Count Dracula (Browning 1931) and Count Orlok (Murnau 1922), from whom many filmic and televisual representations have been derived, arguably show rational thought, the ability for abstract thought (conceiving of the reincarnation of a loved one) and the presence of a mind (and therefore soul), and can conceive of their identity over time (Dracula’s loss of Elisabeta centuries earlier informs his future infatuation with Mina Murray). Where the pre-millennial and post-millennial mythologies conspicuously diverge, and where the personhood of the pre-millennial undead vampire can be questioned, is that pre-millennial vampire falls short of fulfilling its requirement for moral action (Hauke 2005), or fulfilling its role as a member of a moral community. Count Dracula in *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* (Coppola 1992), for example, tries to pass as a person by playing the role of a human to assuage his appetitive needs: blood, power and lust. He uses his supernatural abilities—shapeshifting and glamouring—to maintain his ruse of personhood; yet the true desire for personhood and living among humans in a quotidian existence, is not at the narrative’s core, as evidenced by the following case study of the film.

*The case of Count Dracula: ‘Does not play well with others’*

Vlad Dracul, ruler of Romania in 1497, is deceived by the defeated Turks, who send a message to Vlad’s true love, Elisabeta, advising her that Vlad was killed in battle. In her despair, the princess leaps to her death from the castle into the river below. Upon his return to his castle, Prince Vlad, in his grief and despair, renounces God:
I shall rise from my own death to avenge hers with all the powers of darkness. The blood is the life and it shall be mine! (Coppola 1992)

Through the ensuing four centuries, Dracula exists, surviving on blood and grieving for Elisabeta. During this time, he becomes feared by the local Transylvanian community, living only with the ‘sisters’—vampires that he has created, beautiful and seductive, and who are sustained by the blood of human children.

Dracula, in many ways, presents as a person—being conscious and able to communicate, and in possession of reasoning skills (Warren 1973). Indeed, Dracula is a sentient being insofar as he is capable of great depth of feeling—he freely expresses both love and anger. His love for Mina/Elisabeta, and his sense of betrayal, still fire his anger and wrath, as shown in the scene where he is caught turning Mina:

[Enter Harker, Van Helsing, Morris, Holmwood and Seward.]
Jonathan: Mina!

[Van Helsing holds up a crucifix and begins an exorcism. The crucifix catches fire and he drops it.]
Dracula [as large vampire bat/demon]: You think you can destroy me with your idols?
Van Helsing: Sacred blood of Christ!
Dracula: I, who served the cross. I, who commanded nations hundreds of years before you were born.
Van Helsing: Your armies were defeated. You tortured and impaled thousands of people.
Dracula: I … was … betrayed. Look what your God has done to me.
Van Helsing: No, your war with God is over. You must pay for your crimes. Christ compels you!

[Van Helsing sprinkles Dracula with holy water and continues the exorcism.]
Jonathan moves to Mina’s side.]
Dracula: She is now my bride!
Van Helsing: No!

[Jonathan attempts to shoot Dracula but Mina grabs his arm.]
Mina: No!

[Jonathan’s shot hits Dracula in the chest. Dracula backs into a dark corner.]
Van Helsing: More light! Light! More light!

[Dracula transposes into hundreds of rats, which scurry across the floor.]
Mina: Unclean. Unclean.
Van Helsing: Get them! Get them! They must be found.
Mina: Unclean.

( *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, Coppola 1992.)

This scene clearly shows that Dracula has renounced God and, in Van Helsing’s terms, is at war with God. Van Helsing also reminds Dracula that in his human life, he ‘tortured and impaled thousands of people’, even though Dracula believed that in doing so he was serving ‘the cross’. It can thus be inferred that Dracula’s morals were dubious before he was betrayed, and before he renounced God. This is a key difference between a person and a vampire such as Dracula. A person, by Kant’s (2012, 28) definition, is part of the moral community. Dracula displays no moral judgement in deciding whether to kill, a trait that he has carried with him from his time as a human. Similarly, when Jonathan Harker travels to Transylvania to secure a real estate deal with Dracula, he is manipulated by the count into staying at the castle for a further month. Dracula engineers this to keep Jonathan away from Mina, whom he intends to pursue. Jonathan is left to his fate as the victim of the sisters, who feed on him nightly, keeping him in a stupor that verges on death.

On arriving in England, Dracula continues his immoral disregard for life by luring and seducing Mina’s friend, Lucy—he turns her into a vampire, which ultimately results in her untimely death. The metaphysical doctor Van Helsing, Jonathan Harker and Lucy’s trio of suitors all form part of a moral community with a common goal of destroying Dracula. Dracula, however, neither belongs nor contributes to such a moral community, although in life, his justification for his bloodthirsty ways is that the Order of the Dragon defended the church from its enemies. As the last remaining Dracul, and having renounced God, he is no longer part of an identifiable community. While Dracula procures a number of properties around London, his rationale to Jonathan is not that he wishes to participate in modern society; rather, he has found a love of England through reading about it:

I long to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London, to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity, to share its life, its change, its death. (*Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, Coppola 1992)

Dracula’s arrival in London is not about becoming part of, or contributing to, life and the London community. After realising that Mina is his reincarnated
Elisabeta, Dracula’s sole purpose is to find and claim her. Dracula’s local Transylvanian villagers came to fear him, and as he does not live in, or work for, the greater good in his homeland, and there is nothing to suggest this will change when he moves to London. If being a person means being fully engaged with others (Hauke 2005, 12), then the only true engagement Dracula has is with Mina, who can bring out his latent personhood. As Dracula is about to turn Mina, he recognises yet forgoes a poignant opportunity for moral action:

Dracula: There is no life in this body.
Mina: But you live! You live! What are you? I must know! You must tell me!
Dracula: I am … nothing. Lifeless, soulless, hated and feared. I am dead to all the world … hear me! I am the monster the breathing men would kill. I am Dracula.
Mina: No! You murdered Lucy! [She collapses in his arms] I … love you.
Oh, God forgive me, I do. I want to be what you are, see what you see, love what you love …
Dracula: Mina, to walk with me, you must die to your breathing life and be reborn to mine.
Mina: You are my love and my life, always.
Dracula: Then I give you life eternal, everlasting love, the power over the storm and the beasts of the earth. Walk with me to be my loving wife forever.
Mina: I will. Yes, yes.
Dracula: Mina! Mina, drink and join me in eternal life.
[Mina begins to drink Dracula’s blood, but suddenly Dracula pushes her away]
Dracula: No, I cannot let this be!
Mina: Please, I don’t care. Make me yours.
Dracula: You’ll be cursed as I am and walk through the shadow of death for all eternity. I love you too much to condemn you …
Mina: Then take me away from all this death! [Mina drinks, Dracula embraces her]
(Bram Stoker’s Dracula, Coppola 1992)

In this scene, Dracula vacillates between wanting to keep Mina with him forever by turning her into a vampire, and loving her too much to ‘condemn’ her. He has the
opportunity, despite Mina imploring him to turn her, to stay strong and not curse her. In the end, his vampire nature wins and he allows Mina to drink his blood, thus sealing her fate of turning vampire. With the opportunity to choose the moral path of saving Mina’s mortal life, Dracula chooses to kill.

The analysis suggests that Dracula, while tormented by love, grief and rage, is incapable of the key principles of personhood: being guided by moral principles, contributing to the moral community or being a member of a shared culture. While Dracula is indeed sentient and self-aware, he shows no capacity for moral judgement, and does not care for the physical or emotional well-being of others. This, coupled with his predatory nature and inability to show concern for others, indicates that Count Dracula’s nature falls short of personhood.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The starting point for this chapter was the assumption that the post-millennial vampire is represented as having a soul. The chapter then questioned whether the post-millennial vampire is also therefore represented as a person. To interrogate this idea, the chapter examined the vampire in terms of Nussbaum’s (1999, 41–42) central capabilities of a person. These capabilities were used to determine the rights and dignities of a person, and evidence was found in the core texts to show that the vampire-as-person was worthy of being bestowed the rights and dignities of a person. Many of Nussbaum’s capabilities centre on the ability to think, reason and know—capabilities also evident in a being with a rational soul, according to Aristotle (1984c). Kant’s (2012) notion of the person requiring participation in the moral community was also explored, and it was found, via a case study of the Cullens’ witnesses, that the post-millennial vampire exists as part of, and contributor to, the moral community. This chapter then assessed whether personhood could be attributed to the pre-millennial vampire via a case study of Coppola’s 1992 representation of Count Dracula, which shows that the quintessential pre-millennial vampire from which many vampire representations are derived lacks the requirement for moral action, and does not fulfil a person’s role as a communal being. The following chapter more deeply investigates the vampire-as-person as part of the moral community, with moral accountability, to further determine the nature of its soul.
Chapter 7: Meaningful immortality

A human with me at the end, and human tears. Two thousand years and I can still be surprised. In this, I see God.

– Godric, Vampire.

("I Will Rise up". Winant 2009)

Chapter 6 argued that the ensouled vampire of the sensitive cycle is represented as having the status of personhood. As such, the vampire could be considered responsible for being part of the moral community and taking moral accountability for their actions. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, the notions of personhood and morality are multi-faceted, and are complicated by the emerging personalities and characteristics of the post-millennial vampire. This chapter continues to address the research question—can the presence of a soul denote the personhood of a being and, if so, can vampires therefore be considered people?—by further analysing representations of the contemporary vampire through the lens of contemporary philosophies of morality.

The chapter commences by investigating what it means to live a moral and meaningful life by considering the way the sympathetic vampire in post-millennial narrative seeks meaning and purpose, and contributes to the moral community (Graves 2008, 206; Harris 2010, 55; Hauke 2005, 12). Next, the chapter considers how the nature of the ensouled vampire-as-person is represented via a continuum of vampire characteristics. This continuum is explained by analysing the core and supporting texts, which reinforce the notion that the post-millennial vampire blurs the continuum boundaries, and that post-millennial narratives allow for a fluidity of character to explore the nature of the ensouled vampire and vampire-as-person. The idea of ‘accomplished mainstreaming’ is examined as a way for the post-millennial vampire to achieve a level of moral accountability and make a contribution to the moral community. This is exemplified through a case study of Jasper Hale, who is analysed in terms of his choice and ability to mainstream. Finally, Warren’s (1973) five qualities are applied to an analysis of the contemporary vampire, which leads to the finding that many vampires, particularly those of the sensitive cycle, are
represented as persons—an important discovery, as along with personhood and living as a human comes the societal expectation of moral accountability for one’s actions.

7.1 THE MEANINGFUL LIFE OF THE SYMPATHETIC VAMPIRE

There are many post-millennial portrayals of the sympathetic vampire wanting to live a meaningful existence by contributing to society (True Blood, The Vampire Diaries, The Twilight Saga, Being Human, Only Lovers Left Alive, among others). Warren (1973; 1997) questions the qualities an entity might possess that would make it a part of the moral community, and proposes five criteria that a being should meet to be treated as a person and be worthy of respect and dignity. These criteria are important for determining how the post-millennial vampire-as-person exploits them to create a meaningful immortal life that enables them to transcend the nature of their appetitive soul. However, two concepts must be initially examined to apply Warren’s criteria to the vampire: first, what a ‘meaningful’ life entails, and second, the personhood of the post-millennial sympathetic vampire of the sensitive cycle.

What is a ‘meaningful life’?

Living a meaningful life ‘is associated with positive functioning’ (Stillman et al. 2009, 686). This can include a ‘satisfaction with life, enjoyment of work, happiness, having a positive disposition, and hope’ (Stillman et al. 2009, 686). Examples of positive functioning abound within the core texts. In conversation with Bella, Carlisle Cullen of The Twilight Saga not only expresses the belief that his work brings him happiness because he is helping people, but also his hope that although he is damned, he will receive ‘some measure of credit for trying’ (New Moon: Extended Edition. Carlisle stitches Bella. 2009). In The Vampire Diaries, one of the characters with the most positive disposition—and one who has learnt how to live happily and successfully as a vampire—is Caroline Forbes. In season eight, episode nine ("The Simple Intimacy of the Near Touch". Shotz 2017), Caroline counsels a young girl, Violet Fell, who has just been turned by Stefan Salvatore (who has once again become a ‘ripper’ with his humanity switch off). Violet is upset that she has been killed, and is horrified at the thought of becoming a vampire and having to drink blood. In Caroline’s conversation with Violet, she offers encouragement, reassuring Violet that becoming a vampire isn’t all bad: ‘You wanna know what I did after I became a vampire? I graduated. I went to college. I became a news anchor’. The
examples of Carlisle and Caroline reveal that the post-millennial vampire can live a meaningful life through choosing to have a positive disposition, continuing to pursue their life goals and retaining a sense of hope.

The notion that pursuing goals and having a purpose can ensure a meaningful life is also proffered by psychologists and scholars Roy Baumeister and Brenda Wilson (1996). First, the authors claim that to lead a meaningful life, one needs purpose, as ‘people seek to interpret actions and events as leading toward certain desirable ends and outcomes’ (322). These outcomes can include goals (for example, graduating from college, or accumulating material wealth) or fulfilment (for example, finding romantic happiness or religious salvation). In *The Twilight Saga*, the narrative works towards resolving obstacles for the character to achieve both goals and fulfilment. Edward, in particular, first achieves his goal of marrying Bella, is fulfilled by having a child, Renesmée, and then works with his family to overcome the threat of the Volturi, who come to attack the Cullen clan. In fighting to overcome these obstacles to his happiness, the Cullen clan have a purpose, and thus give meaning to their existence.

Second, there is a need for value and justification—a person needs ‘a reliable criteria of right and wrong that can be used to make moral choices, and to define one’s own actions as good’ (322). As previously discussed, there are many examples of the post-millennial vampire being sentient, self-aware and able to make sound moral judgements. One example is the scene in *Twilight* when Carlisle stops Edward from killing the monstrous vampire, James. Edward has just torn out part of James’ throat and is getting ready to kill him. Carlisle intervenes by putting his hand on Edward’s arm and saying, ‘Remember who you are’ (Hardwicke 2008). Edward looks guilty, and turns back to Bella, who is lying injured on the floor. Carlisle’s intervention reminds Edward that he is not a monster, and possesses the moral fibre to refrain from killing James; instead, he saves Bella’s life.

Third, there is a need for efficacy, which is ‘an essential belief that we can make a difference in external events … with a view to bringing about desired outcomes’ (322). An example of this occurs in the final season of *The Vampire Diaries*, where the Devil (Cade) has come to earth and is manipulating the residents of Mystic Falls. Damon, Stefan and the human Bonnie plot together to use a special knife to stab the Devil and end his life, consequently destroying hell. The vampires
and humans thus work together to make a difference not just to their lives, but to the lives of Mystic Falls’ residents.

The fourth fundamental human need is self-worth. This is usually actualised by finding a way ‘of regarding oneself as superior to others’, perhaps based on individual accomplishments or ‘membership of an elite group’ (322). This fourth need is prevalent in the core texts. For example, the vampire, as a creature with enhanced senses and abilities, already expresses its superiority through being a member of the vampire species; as Edward says to Bella about turning into a vampire, ‘you’ll always be my Bella … my Bella just less fragile’ (Eclipse, Slade 2010). Similarly, in The Vampire Diaries, when Stefan becomes human in season eight, episode 12 ("What Are You?") Genet 2017, his brother Damon asks, ‘how does it feel to be a mere mortal?’, to which Stefan replies, ‘it hurts. It definitely hurts’.

Applying this set of needs to an analysis of the pre-millennial vampire shows that it rarely requires a purpose beyond seduction and/or consumption of blood, as exemplified by the vampires of The Lost Boys (Schumacher 1987), The Hunger (Scott 1983), Daughters of Darkness (Kümel 1971) and Blood of Dracula (Strock 1957), among many others. However, applying this same set of needs to the post-millennial vampire, one typical of the late 2000s – 2017 sensitive cycle, yields evidence of these four needs being met in a number of creatures’ narratives, thus making Baumeister and Wilson’s theory and Stillman’s theory of creating a meaningful life applicable to discussion of the post-millennial vampire. While there is a propensity for the sympathetic vampire in the sensitive cycle to express human-like traits and to be ensouled, there still exists a range of vampire characters or types, each making meaning in different ways according to their innate characteristics. These types of vampires are now further explored in terms of their characteristics and meaning-making predispositions.

7.2 A CONTINUUM OF VAMPIRE CHARACTERISATION

To ascertain how the nature of the Western post-millennial screened vampire is represented, I propose a continuum as a way to view the variety of character types that emerge from analysing this study’s core texts. The continuum presents five general types of vampire character that can be described according to the ways in
which they choose to present themselves to, and interact within, society. It is important to note that a defining feature of the post-millennial vampire narrative is the blurring of boundaries between the pre- and post-millennial vampire representations, and the blurring of the lines between good and evil, moral and immoral and, indeed, alive and dead. This means that while the continuum provides for a set of general characteristics at each point, it also allows for the fluidity of change in characterisation, mythology and narratives; it is not definitive, and does not ‘box’ the vampire into a rigid category.

At one end of the continuum is the monstrous Other. The vampires occupying this category retain the original characteristics of folkloric and pre-millennial vampire. These creatures may walk and live among humans, but usually only to further their own nefarious purposes, such as to feed or to subjugate. Many iterations of the Dracula character of the pre-millennial era fall at this end of the continuum, including the Draculas and vampires of the Hammer Horror era (1950s–1970s). Characters in The Twilight Saga such as James, Victoria, Laurent and the Volturi represent the monstrous Other: their moral choices are based on their vampiric, appetitive needs—although Laurent shows some stirrings of conscience in Twilight, as he warns the Cullen clan of James’ hunting prowess and intentions to track down and kill Bella. Russell Edgington in True Blood is also a key example of the
‘monstrous Other’ vampire—one who does not think twice about ripping out a television presenter’s spine on live television to make his point to humankind that vampires are rising and are the dominant species. Russell does not display remorse, kindness or even much fondness for the humans he encounters, and his ethical choices are based on advancing his own ambitions, and those of vampire superiority. One could, however, claim that the vampires at this end of the continuum have some sense of meaning in their life: to protect and maintain the vampire species and vampire culture, which in turn gives them a sense of self-worth. One such example is the ‘Vampire Authority’ in True Blood, a group claiming to be the ultimate leaders over all vampires across the world, and created to protect the blood of Lilith; its members thus consider themselves to be part of an elite group. Nonetheless, the question remains as to whether the vampires at this end of the continuum are classifiable as persons with a soul. Arguably, the vampires Russell, Laurent, the Volturi and the Authority all display sentience, self-awareness and rationality. Their moral choices are questionable, but just as humans who act immorally are still considered persons, I would argue that it is viable to extend the categorisation of personhood to the vampire at this end of the continuum.

**Hybrids**

At the next point on the continuum is the *hybrid* vampire. Hybridity is a feature that began to emerge with the *Blade* trilogy in 1998. Blade is half vampire, half human, with his vampiric urges and sun sensitivity kept in check by medication. The role that makes Blade’s life meaningful is to protect humans from the threat of rising evil vampires, and to rid the world of the monstrous vampire. There is also a human-vampire hybrid in The Twilight Saga: Renesmée Cullen, conceived by her vampire father Edward while her mother Bella was still human. Her birth is the trigger for confrontation between the Cullens and their allies, and the ‘monstrous Other’ vampires, the Volturi, who forbid turning children into vampires. The immediate role of the hybrid Renesmée is to convince the Volturi that her hybridity poses no threat to vampire or humankind. The *Vampire Academy* (Waters 2014) series also provides examples of the human–vampire hybrid, the Dhampir. These creatures’ immortality is made meaningful by their having been bred to serve the pure vampires, the Moroi, and to fight the evil vampires, the Strigoi. Humans in the *Vampire Academy* series
are available to the Moroi as food, but the races are kept quite separate, and interactions between the vampire and hybrid species and humans are rare.

Another hybrid popular in post-millennial film and television is the werewolf–vampire hybrid. This is explored in *The Vampire Diaries* and *The Originals*, with Klaus, one of the Original vampires, being half vampire and half werewolf. Klaus, who mainstreams with humans, blurs the boundaries between hybrid and monstrous Other. His motivation in *The Vampire Diaries* is to create a race of hybrids to dominate the vampire community and to gain power for himself. While his motives may be questionable by human standards, his immortality is meaningful to him because of his power, and his need to procreate his species. These fulfil his sense of self-worth. Although many of the hybrids may walk among humans, they are often conflicted by their dual nature. This affects their decisions and the nature of the morals and ethics to which they ascribe. This cross-breeding of characters is part of a trend to blend the vampire and its special powers with human characters ‘in the same way that comic book writers had previously created superheroes who were ordinary humans possessing a second hidden supernatural identity’ (Nelson 2012, 130).

**Vigilantes**

There have been fewer true vigilante vampires on the screen since *Blade*, which ended in 2004, Selene (the *Underworld* series) and vampires Angel and Spike. In 2014, the first of *The Vampire Academy* series was released. In this mythology, one could argue that the Dhampir (half human, half vampire) are technically vigilantes, as their role in the cosmology is to protect the royal vampire families (the Moroi) and to kill the ‘bad’ vampires, the Strigoi, who periodically aim to kill Moroi. The choices made by the vigilante vampire can be regarded as morally and ethically aligned with human interests. The fundamental needs of the vigilantes are efficacy (making a difference to the larger society); value justification (using their moral judgement to make a difference); and being a member of two elite groups: vampires, and protectors of the elite vampire community and of humans.

**Mainstreaming monsters**

The *mainstreaming monster* is a term that describes many post-millennial vampires. Some vampires choose to exist within the constructs of human society, limiting their killing and consumption of human blood and trying, where possible, to exist alongside humans. *True Blood*’s Bill Compton and Eric Northman are mainstreaming
monsters, with Bill declaring, ‘I’ve had to work extremely hard to find my way back to humanity’ ("I Will Rise Up". Winant 2009). The Salvatore brothers in The Vampire Diaries and Elena, once she is turned in season four, aim to live among humans, as humans. However, their struggle with bloodlust is still strong, and they kill humans if it serves their purposes. These mainstreamers are likely to drink human blood from donors, procure blood from hospitals (such as in Being Human) or, when it is available, consume synthetic substitutes (such as in True Blood). The desire to consume human blood can be seen as an addiction—something to be controlled—and as a thirst that can bring out ‘the ripper’ in characters such as Stefan and Damon of The Vampire Diaries. The addiction support model is even reinforced in this series:

Stefan [to vampire Caroline]: You’re so good at it. Being a vampire.
Caroline: Because of you, Stefan. I’m good at it because of you … Come to me, whenever you want and I won’t let you lose control.

("The Rager". Anderson 2012)

Stefan realises that he has to abstain from human blood in much the same way as a human addict must abstain from their drug of choice. Similarly, in Being Human, Mitchell establishes a blood addicts support group based on the Alcoholics Anonymous model, and supports fellow vampires in their abstinence from human blood. The mainstreamer makes meaning by working through issues using moral judgements and overcoming the baser qualities of their vampire nature. They also find meaning through integrating into human society and contributing to the greater good where possible.

The question of whether vampires can naturally mainstream is now beginning to be scrutinised in the literature (Culver 2010; Blayde and Dunn 2010; Curtis 2010). For vampires to be accepted by humans, Culver (20) claims that Bill Compton (True Blood) must depend on an act of play—that is, he is playing at being human. The post-millennial vampire, to ‘create a more even playground’ (20), may go so far as to perpetuate the traditional myths such as being affected by sunlight, crucifixes and garlic, to appear weak to their human counterparts. To mainstream successfully, the post-millennial vampire must convincingly play the game of being human, and must act as if they are still human. As Culver (25) says:
To be human … requires participation in a way of life shaped by the rules of human society. Vampires are expected to mimic the customs, manners, emotions and behaviours of the human beings around them. As human culture changes over time, vampires must adjust.

However, Bill Compton explains that the longer he remains a vampire, the harder it is for him to remember what it was like to be human (24–25).

Vampirism now represents the struggle that the ‘thoroughly humanised supernatural character’ experiences to resist the impulse to commit evil and to stay a moral person (Nelson 2012, 134). Vampires, while retaining their vampiric identity and the desires that accompany that identity (killing humans, for example), are now represented as being ‘able to rise above their instincts by an act of will that must be tested again and again’ (134). Indeed, the viewer sees this struggle in Twilight, where Edward must rise above his nature and desire to kill Bella, even as he drinks her blood to save her from turning into a vampire after she is bitten by James. Similarly, the audience follows Stefan’s struggle in The Vampire Diaries for most of season three as he works to overcome his ‘ripper’ nature—a battle he has fought since being turned over a century ago. In True Blood, though, taking human blood is initially represented as an act of donation, either through humans volunteering their services as donors or as part of the sexual experience—for example, Sookie offering her neck to Bill during their first sexual encounters together (“Cold Ground”. Gomez 2008). The idea and practice of restraint is a feature of the mainstreaming vampire as they struggle to make meaning of their lives that transcends blood and feeding.

The accomplished mainstreamer

At the fifth and arguably most evolved point on the continuum is the accomplished mainstreaming vampire, a being who is fully integrated into society. The accomplished mainstreaming vampires in post-millennial narratives occur within the sensitive cycle, identified as beginning around 2008 with the Cullen vampires in The Twilight Saga, and with Adam and Eve in Only Lovers Left Alive. These vampires live peacefully among humans, successfully mimicking a human existence. They choose not to kill humans and either survive on donations of human blood or the blood of animals. The accomplished mainstreaming vampire chooses to make morally sound choices and embraces a human identity in the regular world. They
make their immortal lives meaningful through choosing to override their vampiric nature, and establishing ways of working with and/or for humankind.

Carlisle’s choice to mainstream, to ‘save’ his family from their fragile human condition by turning them (or in the case of Jasper, who was already turned, saving him from being a monstrous vampire), establishes the conditions for a community of vampires to live in peace among humans. For Carlisle, the choice to become an accomplished mainstreamer came from knowing who he was, and although he never claims it was an easy path, for him, it was an obvious one (New Moon, Weitz 2009). Core to the narrative of The Twilight Saga is the belief that vampires have a choice to regain or retain their humanity. The stage is thus set for a confrontation between the accomplished mainstreamers (the Cullens) and the monstrous vampires (Victoria, James and Laurent) largely because of the Cullens’ acceptance of Bella as a family member, and their inviting her to play baseball with them (Twilight, Hardwicke 2008). This confrontation lays the foundations for the entire saga.

Post-millennial vampire narratives blur the boundaries between these categories on the proposed continuum, allowing the story arc of television and film series to explore facets of the vampire character, personality, personhood and ensoulment, and the ways in which the vampire makes their existence meaningful. An example of this can be seen in the British version of Being Human. The vampire John Mitchell seems, for the first one-and-a-half series, to have mastered the art of assimilating into human society, living in a flat in Bristol with a werewolf and a ghost and intending to exist under the radar as a person. Mitchell’s human-world identity is as a janitor at the local hospital. The meaning he derives from his efforts at mainstreaming is to control his bloodlust and succeed at simply being human and living the life of a regular person. The viewer knows that this is bound to be problematic, as audiences have decades of prior knowledge about the nature of the vampire—and indeed, by the end of season two, Mitchell has regressed from the accomplished mainstreaming vampire to monstrous Other after committing the ‘Box Tunnel 20’ massacre ("Damage". Martin 2010b).

Another example of the fluidity of the vampire character continuum is Jasper Hale in The Twilight Saga, whose journey from monstrous other to mainstreaming monster (with the goal of becoming a fully assimilated mainstreamer) is played out across the narrative arc of the five films.
The case of Jasper Hale: Making moral choices

Jasper Hale of the Cullen coven in The Twilight Saga was a soldier in the Confederate Army during the American Civil War. He was turned by a vampire named Maria in 1863, who used him to help her create vampire armies in the south by training new vampire recruits. Maria drew on Jasper’s extensive knowledge as a major in the army to develop her bloodthirsty and vicious vampire army. As Jasper explains in Eclipse (Slade 2010), ‘a newborn army doesn’t need thousands like a human army. But no human army can stand against them’. During his time with Maria, Jasper fed on human blood, not seeking to find another way of being. However, Jasper has a supernatural gift: pathokinesis, the ability to sense and manipulate the feelings of those around him. This ability made it difficult for Jasper to continue his work with Maria, as she never let the newborn vampires live longer than a year, and it was Jasper’s task to kill them when their time was up. His pathokinesis meant that he could feel their pain; ‘I could feel everything they felt’ (Eclipse, Slade 2010). Eventually, displaying some insight into his own mind/soul, critically reflecting on his lifestyle and displaying the ability to self-conceptualise—recognising that he no longer wanted to kill vampires or hunt and kill humans because of their pain and his remorse—Jasper left Maria.

Jasper did not come to deny his vampiric nature and successfully mainstream until meeting Alice in 1948, who showed him how to become a ‘vegetarian’ vampire, living off animal blood. Jasper’s story and character is still evolving—he fluctuates between mainstreaming monster and accomplished mainstreaming vampire, continuing to struggle with the bloodlust and moral choices that come more easily to his adopted father, Carlisle. The narrative suggests that Jasper finds it difficult to be around humans, even after over 50 years of practice.

Jasper’s school peers notice his awkwardness. In the first cafeteria scene in Twilight, Jessica is explaining to Bella who all the Cullens are as they enter: ‘the little dark-haired girl’s Alice she’s really weird and um, she’s with Jasper, the blonde one who looks like he’s in pain’. Jasper walks through the cafeteria with Alice on his arm, looking at him with amusement—the Cullens can hear everything that Jessica is saying thanks to their heightened sense of hearing—and Jasper walks past the group, stony-faced, staring ahead of him. When Bella is invited to the Cullens’ for lunch, she is introduced to the family, with Alice and Jasper arriving shortly after the first
introductions have been made. Jasper stands, staring at Bella, wearing the same pained, stony-faced expression he had in the cafeteria, leading the viewers to suspect he is having an inner battle with himself not to lunge at Bella. Noticing his discomfort, Carlisle explains, ‘Jasper’s our newest vegetarian, it’s a little difficult for him’. After Jasper very formally says to Bella, ‘it’s a pleasure to meet you’, Alice says to Jasper, ‘it’s ok, you won’t hurt her’. This exchange indicates that Jasper still battles to make morally sound choices and thus overcome his predatory nature. But he has support from his family, including his mate Alice, who works with him to help break his blood addiction in a similar way to Caroline and Stefan in The Vampire Diaries. After the incident in New Moon where Jasper attempts to attack Bella after she gets a paper cut, Carlisle explains to Edward that Jasper was probably feeling very bad after the almost-attack, and that Edward should go and see how he is. This event, coupled with Bella’s decision to be turned, is a catalyst for Jasper to preserve and regain some of his humanity and to move along the continuum from mainstreaming monster to his goal of accomplished mainstreaming vampire. In New Moon (Weitz 2009), Bella asks the Cullen family to vote on whether or not she should become a vampire. Jasper’s response indicates self-awareness of his inner battle: ‘I vote yes. It would be nice not to want to kill you all the time’. In the series, the audience sees some development in Jasper’s ability to restrain himself—in the third movie, Eclipse (Slade 2010), he is alone with Bella for an extended time, explaining how he came to be with the Cullen family. Neither character shows fear or apprehension at their being alone together, despite Jasper’s latent bloodlust.

Having suggested that the vampire is represented as having a soul and personhood, this study moved on to examine the nature and morality of the vampire by identifying and proposing five broad descriptions of the post-millennial vampire that can exist on a continuum based on the choices they make and the way they conduct themselves in society and among humans. At different points, the vampires make meaning in their lives in various ways, and these may depend on how much self-awareness, sentience, rationality and morality they possess. It may also depend on whether they are willing to find their cause for existing—learning and understanding how to exist as an ensouled person in contemporary, mainstream society.
7.3 THE CONSCIOUS EXPERIENCE OF THE VAMPIRE

A person is necessarily a being, i.e. an entity that has conscious experiences.
(Warren 1997, 94)

For the vampires at each point on the continuum to make meaning of their immortal lives, I propose that Warren’s (1973) set of five qualities must exist. These qualities are innate to people and demonstrate the existence of mind, and therefore, by Descartes’ (1968) definition, a soul. The vampire can be examined by applying these qualities to ascertain how their personhood and ability to forge a meaningful life are represented in the contemporary narrative.

**The vampire is conscious**

For a being to be considered worthy of dignity and respect, and the ability to ascribe meaning to their lives, they should, simply, have consciousness. Aside from trance and sleep, most vampires are conscious, and lucidly so. This criterion is the prerequisite for all the others, and is posed, one surmises, to differentiate between beings that may exist in a trance-like state, controlled by an external force or entity, not dissimilar to the creatures portrayed in *The Strain* (Abraham and Weller 2014 -).

Many post-millennial vampire mythologies do not require vampires to sleep; states of complete unconsciousness are thus rare. However, *True Blood* vampires do require sleep, but retain enough conscious connection with their progeny and immediate surrounds that they can be awoken from their slumber, but not without consequences, such as bleeding from the ears.

**A vampire can reason with you**

The ability to reason is considered a trait unique to personhood and fundamental to the ability to create meaning in life. Being able to justify one’s decisions, choices and actions does not, however, necessarily make someone a *good* being if those choices and actions would generally be considered unkind, selfish or cruel. Pre-millennial vampires such as Count Dracula (*Bram Stoker’s Dracula*), Miriam Blaylock (*The Hunger*) and the vampire gang in *The Lost Boys* (among many others) all display sentience, self-awareness and the ability to reason. Post-millennial sympathetic vampires are also capable of reasoning and justifying their actions, although their rationality is used to help guide them towards sound moral choices. Carlisle Cullen reasons that he wanted to be a doctor because ‘it brings me happiness. I knew who I wanted to be’ (*Twilight*, Hardwicke 2008). Similarly, Bill Compton or *True Blood*
chooses to present as an upstanding citizen, and an integral part of the Bon Temps community. In each of these examples, our post-millennial vampire can justify their actions while sounding quite reasonable.

In an interesting exploration of moral obligation and reasoning ability, Robichaud (2010, 15) discusses Kant’s assertion that ‘we have an overriding duty to respect the autonomy of others’. Robichaud (15) states that ‘we have a moral obligation to make people better off’, but not that we make them better off ‘no matter what’—because in some cases, it is not morally correct to make someone better off if it overrides their autonomy. One example of this can be found in True Blood, when Jessica is turned, against her will, by Bill Compton ("To Love Is To Bury". Oliver 2008). The viewer can see that Jessica—whose life is governed by strict Christian parents, who beat her—would be better off as a vampire, with the freedoms and power that entails. However, as Robichaud (15) explains, Jessica expresses her desire not to become a vampire—a desire that should be respected, along with ‘her right as a rational agent to make her own decisions even if they are bad ones’. Bill’s ability to reason, in this case, leads him to commit a morally dubious act in order to save his own life.

Conversely, when Godric turns Eric Northman into a vampire, he makes a choice between death and undeath. Godric watches Eric for a long time before Eric goes into battle; Eric is then mortally wounded on the battlefield. At the time of his dying, however, Eric is unable to give ‘adequate consent to being turned into a vampire’ (Robichaud 2010, 16). Godric reasons that Eric would be better off as a vampire than he would be dying in battle, but Robichaud (16) remarks that ‘you haven’t failed to treat a person with the appropriate moral respect by acting as if consent were given … Godric must reasonably believe that Eric would have given the appropriate sort of consent had he been able to do so’. In comparison with Bill’s actions when turning Jessica, Godric’s knowledge of Eric through having observed him over time, and his deliberations in turning him, make his reasoning and mindfulness more morally sound than Bill’s.

Self-motivated activity and the sire-bond

For a being to be treated as a person, they should display self-motivated activity (Warren 1973). This criterion, which seems simple enough at first, is more complex than it appears. In many of the major contemporary vampire narratives, the trope of
the sire-bond and being vampire progeny forms the basis of many plots and subplots, particularly in series such as True Blood and The Vampire Diaries. The vampire seems willing and able to forge a life for itself, to have free will, to make choices about where and how to live, whether to kill and on what they should feed. The post-millennial core texts in this study exploit the sire-bond trope to complicate and problematise these narratives.

In The Vampire Diaries, the question of the sire-bond is at the core of the narrative after Elena is turned in season four (2009). She is in a relationship with Damon Salvatore, but this raises the question of whether the relationship is based on the fact that she is sire-bonded (bound by blood) to her sire Damon, or if the two are truly in love. If the sire-bond is the reason for the relationship, then the narrative prompts the viewer to ask just how self-motivated Elena’s actions are in being in a relationship with Damon. The narrative unveils that even after the sire-bond is broken, Elena remains in love with Damon, indicating that self-motivated activity is still at the core of her actions.

Similarly, the vampires of True Blood lose their free will when their maker commands them or calls to them. Under their maker’s command, the vampire literally has no choice but to obey. The maker also has the ability to release their progeny if it suits them. With a maker who can command their progeny to do their bidding, the vampire in the True Blood mythology may not always be able to engage in self-motivated activity. If a maker’s command goes against the choices the vampire might make for themselves, then I would argue their life’s meaning and authenticity may be dubious if it can be overridden at their maker’s will. The analysis of the core texts in this study indicates that in some mythologies, the post-millennial vampire is not able to engage in self-motivated activity all the time. I would argue, however, that a lack of agency of this nature does not make a being devoid of personhood or ensoulment; rather, the calling to carry out a master’s bidding is a consequence of the vampire character’s supernatural nature.

Vampire, know thyself

A being worthy of personhood should display the presence of self-concepts: displaying an understanding of self, who you are in the world, your reason for being and how you relate to others—in short, self-identity (Warren 1973). A person learns to identify themselves by race, gender, culture, age, education and any other number
of variables. The post-millennial vampire continues to do this, but also adds ‘vampire’ to their identity. Whether they choose to elevate this element of their identity above the rest is what can set them apart from the accomplished mainstreaming vampire. Vampires such as Russell Edgington strongly identify as a vampire; vampires such as Edward Cullen strive to identify as a person. In either case, displaying the presence of self-concepts is part of the process of making an immortal life meaningful—choose to identify as a vampire, and according to the True Blood mythology, you may find yourself fighting on the VRA council; choose to identify as a person, and according to the Twilight mythology, you may find yourself repeating high school in perpetuity to fulfil a meaningful life, where peace and the status quo are maintained.

Communicating with vampires

A being considered a person should have the capacity to communicate in order to be afforded respect and dignity (Warren 1973). Most vampires are represented as possessing this ability. However, the methods by which some communicate could be seen as either elevating or denigrating their respectability. Many post-millennial vampire narratives depict the vampire as having mind-reading or thought-sharing abilities. In The Vampire Diaries, this skill is demonstrated when the vampire is aiming to connect with the mind of someone who is in the process of dying, or to alleviate the suffering of someone who has lost a relative or friend, showing them peaceful and happy images or memories. This skill is also used by Stefan on Damon to ‘show’ him what life might be like in the future with Elena if they are both human. To do this, Stefan has to touch Damon’s temple and mentally share images and scenarios with him ("I'll Wed You In The Golden Summertime". Allowitz 2015). Such an exchange represents a propensity towards a capacity for caring and respect—both desirable traits of a person.

The vampire is frequently portrayed as having supernatural skills, including enhanced communication abilities. This occurs in both pre- and post-millennial narratives. For example, in The Twilight Saga, Edward is a mind-reader, and can communicate telepathically with his ‘sister’, Alice who can see the future. Aro, a member of the Volturi, can also mind-read, and is able to read every thought anyone has ever had just through a touch. Although the narrative invites the audience to see Edward as using his mind-reading ability for the benefit of others, the ethics behind
his choices are sometimes dubious. For example, when Bella leaves the bookshop in Port Angeles at dusk and is accosted by a group of youths, Edward can ‘hear’ what they are thinking, and drives in to save Bella—but he is only in Port Angeles because he cannot hear Bella’s thoughts, and has followed her to try to protect her (*Twilight* 2008). The moral dilemma here is that his lack of ability to communicate using his supernatural power leads him to do what most humans would consider to be stalking. Consultant forensic psychiatrist and scholar Seán Whyte and colleagues (Whyte et al. 2008, 33) conducted a study in 2008 that identified the actions of loitering, following, surveillance and trespassing to all constitute ‘stalking behaviours’. Edward is clearly in morally suspect territory—but the audience is charmed into thinking that this is acceptable, because he has rescued his damsel-in-distress from a terrible fate at the hands of the young gang.

Where enhanced communication abilities exist in post-millennial vampire narratives, it again comes down to choice of how the gift is used as to whether respect and dignity are owed to the vampire and whether it is worthy of personhood. Along with their mind-reading abilities, some vampires can compel others to forget certain situations, or to do the vampire’s bidding. Again, where this particular communication skill is used to benefit others, one could forgive the manipulation it also involves. For example, in *True Blood*, Hoyt (a human) asks vampire Jessica to compel him to forget about her and his life in Bon Temps. She agrees, and Hoyt moves to Alaska, happy without the knowledge of the heartbreak and difficult life he led in Bon Temps ("Gone, Gone, Gone". Winant 2012). However, there are plenty of instances in *The Vampire Diaries* where compulsion is used for selfish purposes, including the ‘snatch, eat, erase’ method of taking blood favoured by Damon and newly turned vampires such as Elena and Caroline ("The Five". Butler 2012a). Having enhanced communication abilities may provide the post-millennial vampire the opportunity to more easily pursue a life with meaning. These skills do not seem to be a fundamental requirement to living a meaningful vampire life, considering the vampires who are not gifted in this way, such as Esmée, Rosalie and Emmett Cullen, and yet who continue to make meaning in their lives.

Regardless of where the vampire sits on the continuum, the post-millennial vampire has been freed in contemporary narratives to move along the continuum and explore facets of personhood and vampire, and their own identity. Many vampires in
contemporary narratives, particularly in the sensitive cycle, possess the qualities proposed by Warren (1973) that can be used to ascertain whether a being exists as part of the moral community—the one exception being the consistent possession of self-motivated activity, which is complicated by the sire-bond. In addition, it is clear that the vampire, despite possessing these qualities, does not necessarily choose to use them in morally sound or dignified ways. I would argue, however, that this choice does not deny a being the status of personhood.

By demonstrating the ability to explore their own nature, choosing to identify as person or vampire, having enhanced abilities and presenting with most of Warren’s (1973) characteristics, the post-millennial, ensouled vampire-as-person is well situated to create a life meaningful to them in the ways set forth by Baumeister and Wilson (1996) and Stillman (2009), and to reinvent that meaning over time. As immortals who display evidence of Warren’s (1973) five qualities, the vampire is able to make meaning out of their lives, a trait conducive to living as an ensouled person.

7.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter elucidates how some contemporary, sympathetic vampires seek meaning and purpose to live a meaningful and morally sound life; that is, the life of an ensouled person. This chapter examined how the vampire-as-person participates in the moral community. The notion was proposed that each post-millennial vampire can be loosely placed on a continuum of vampire characters based on their underlying traits and proclivities. These traits were examined in terms of how a vampire at each point on the continuum might make a meaningful life. The analysis found that the post-millennial vampire narrative offers fluidity of movement along the continuum to investigate the concepts of personhood, identity and ensoulment. Warren’s (1973, 55) five characteristics of a person that make a being part of the moral community were then applied to the vampire, revealing that post-millennial vampires are represented as possessing at least four of Warren’s five characteristics—the exception being self-motivated activity, which was shown to be complicated in the narratives by the sire-bond or maker/progeny relationship. This analysis found that the vampire character of the sensitive cycle has a mind, meets the characteristics, capabilities and qualities of personhood, and therefore is represented as ensouled and can be considered a person. This is important, because it
demonstrates that a character that is drawn to exist as part of the moral community now needs to consciously take accountable for its moral actions.
Chapter 8: The moral undead—the ensouled vampire as a cycle in the vampire sub-genre

Damon: Are you seriously gonna sit here and argue with me about who needs this redemption more?! You’re not responsible for Enzo, Stefan!

Stefan: You keep saying that, but you’re wrong. We’re all responsible for our own actions. Every drop of blood that I’ve spilled, I am accountable for.

Damon: Then I’m accountable, too, and I’ve spilled even more.

("I Was Feeling Epic", The Vampire Diaries. Plec 2017)

This thesis sought to examine the representation of the soul in post-millennial vampire film and television horror. Most importantly, it aimed to examine and understand representations of the soul in the core texts, predominantly from the perspective of secular theories of the soul and personhood that align with the secular contexts in which many post-millennial vampire horror series are set. This chapter discusses key issues that have arisen from the research questions presented in Chapter 1, and particular addresses the third research sub-question: if a vampire is represented as having a soul, what are the implications of this for horror film and television studies?

8.1 THE ‘SENSITIVE CYCLE’

This research explored the vampire horror sub-genre in the post-2000 era, and identified a new film cycle that it termed the ‘sensitive cycle’. This cycle of vampire films and television shows revolves around narratives that, through symbolism, themes and new vampire characterisations, explicitly address concepts of ensoulment, personhood and mainstreaming. The vampire characterisation of this cycle builds on and intensifies the characteristics introduced in the ‘sympathetic cycle’ identified by Kane (2006, 88). Physically, some of these sensitive cycle vampires demonstrate the ability to walk in sunlight, either with magical assistance (such as the daylight rings used in The Vampire Diaries) or via an evolved vampire...
mythology, where the narrative does not adhere to the traditional trope of vampires burning in sunlight (such as the vampires of *The Twilight Saga*). Physically, the vampires of this cycle can also pass as human, and may be outwardly unchanged by their transition to vampire form—meaning that a human may not be able to distinguish the vampire from a human. In the sensitive cycle, many vampire films and television shows represent vampire mythologies where the boundaries between humans and vampires are blurred—not just physically, as previously described, but also in terms of personality and fundamental character traits. This is depicted in narratives where the vampire fights to retain its humanity and make moral choices, such as in *The Vampire Diaries*. In this cycle, the vampire is also represented as having the qualities of ‘self-awareness, sentience, and rationality’ (Whitman 2010, 173)—the indicators of being ensouled—and these are evident in the core texts, which present key vampire characters as altruistic, family-oriented and community-spirited, traits traditionally associated with a being an ensouled person. These depictions of the sensitive cycle vampire introduce new tropes to the sub-genre, and challenge the way the vampire and monstrosity have traditionally been interpreted.

With the introduction of the sensitive cycle’s ensouled vampire, a number of questions arise concerning the importance and longevity of this characterisation. First, will the sensitive cycle become a more substantive generic characteristic or trope in future vampire film and television shows or, like any film or television cycle, will it (or indeed, has it) already become less prevalent in the marketplace since the finale of *The Vampire Diaries* series in 2017? This prompts a second question: if the sensitive cycle has been completed, can this cycle then be understood as a reaction to market-driven trends, based on the resurgence of young-adult literature in the early 2000s, which was then optioned by film and television production houses? As discussed in Chapter 2, *The Vampire Diaries, The Twilight Saga* and *True Blood*, arguably three of the most popular vampire horror series of the post-millennial era and all based on highly popular novels, transcended their literary beginnings and were successfully translated to the large and small screens. Few young-adult, or adult, vampire-themed horror or horror/romance hybrid novels have been as successful as this study’s core texts, despite attempts to capitalise on the successful series *Vampire Academy* (Mead 2007) and *The Mortal Instruments* (Clare 2008 - 2015). The first books of both series were made into feature films: *Vampire
Chapter 8: The moral undead—the ensouled vampire as a cycle in the vampire sub-genre

The movie version of *Interview with the Vampire* is situated in the era that Kane (2006, 43) terms the ‘erotic cycle’, and that infamously introduced the character Louis, arguably one of the first explicit cinematic representations of the sympathetic vampire. Will the new series herald a return to the era of sympathetic vampire, or will filmmakers and directors introduce traits of the sensitive cycle vampire?

As discussed in Chapter 2, the movie version of *Interview with the Vampire* is situated in the era that Kane (2006, 43) terms the ‘erotic cycle’, and that infamously introduced the character Louis, arguably one of the first explicit cinematic representations of the sympathetic vampire. Will the new series herald a return to the era of sympathetic vampire, or will filmmakers and directors introduce traits of the sensitive cycle vampire?
Also under development is a television series based on the cult 1987 vampire movie *The Lost Boys* (Schumacher 1987), which may bring back some of the monstrous traits of the vampire and relocate the vampire characters’ monstrosity, if the writers and producers choose to thematically align with the original narrative. The CW television network, which aired *The Vampire Diaries*, has optioned *The Lost Boys* series, which will be produced by Rob Thomas, producer of the television series *iZombie* (Thomas and Ruggiero 2015- ). Of the new series, Thomas says:

I felt like the vampires in a new television version were not simply the bad guys. In *The Lost Boys* movie, the vampires are bad … The story that I’m trying to tell in Season 1 of *The Lost Boys* is a story about two brothers and how tempted they are to fall in with these vampires and how tempted they are to want to be 22 forever. I am leaning into the Peter Pan notion of, if you join these vampires, you never have to grow up. Your life can be fun and you can attack life each day you’re immortal, and how appealing is that? I read a bit about what the original writer’s intentions were, and how a lot of that Peter Pan imagery got pulled away from what they ended up doing. I’m pushing it back in there (Cabin 2017).

Upcoming vampire horror cinema titles further indicate a possible return to the vampire-as-monster and traditional representations of vampiricism, such as aversions to holy artefacts, looking physically abhorrent and having a predilection for violence and a predatory nature. Slated for release in 2017 are the films *The Transfiguration* (O’Shea 2017), classified by IMDb as drama/horror; *Eat Local* (Flemyng 2017), classified by IMDb as action/horror (although the trailer also hints at comedic elements); and *Bloodrunners* (Lantz 2017), which is set in the 1930s and classified by IMDb as action/crime/horror. Clearly, monstrous portrayals of the vampire were, to an extent, less popular between 2008–2017. While it is not possible at this juncture to predict whether this strand of vampire horror will return to its pre-millennial popularity, as the horror genre—like any film genre—is cyclical, and the success of key films creates precedents for future production, it therefore seems likely that vampire narratives may return to more monstrous and demonic representations, or that filmmakers and the representations they construct will oscillate between the two approaches in response to market trends and audience demands.
8.2 VAMPIRES WITH SOULS AND PERSONHOOD

Chapter 1 proposed that vampire films, particularly those analysed in this study, are becoming increasingly hybridised, blurring genre boundaries with romance, drama and adventure. *The Twilight Saga, True Blood* and *The Vampire Diaries* franchises have arguably played a significant role in bringing new generic elements to the vampire horror sub-genre and representing the vampire on screen in new ways by proffering alternatives to its fundamental nature; new environments in which the narratives play out, such as small-town US; and finding alternative loci for the placement of monstrosity. As Prawer (1980, 37–38) notes, there can be variations in quality within a genre, and as this study identified, critical reception to *The Twilight Saga* and *The Vampire Diaries* has sometimes been less than complementary, with accusations of ‘de-fanging’ the vampire (Lindgren Leavenworth and Isaksson 2013; Nakagawa 2011), and ‘sanitising’ the genre (Veldman-Genz 2011). However, while some vampire texts of the sensitive cycle could arguably be categorised as romance or fantasy rather than horror based on narrative alone, the texts ‘embody references to the [horror] genre, or contain sequences that derive from, allude to, or influence it’ (Prawer 1980, 37–38). The following section discusses how the introduction of popular and prevalent new tropes into the vampire horror sub-genre contributes to and extends our understanding of vampire characterisation.

The issue of ensoulment and personhood

This research was grounded in the significant theoretical links between theories of the soul, the mind and the person, with characteristics of personhood posited as evidence of the soul’s existence (Whitman 2010, 176). These characteristics can be found in some pre-millennial vampire representations, and in many vampires of the post-millennial’s sensitive cycle. This is significant, as it challenges traditional vampire film conventions that depict the creature as a demon or undead monster. Framing a study of the sensitive cycle’s vampires in relation to the soul raised the question of whether or not the vampire can retain their soul even if their human body has died. It was thus necessary to examine post-millennial sensitive cycle vampires in terms of concepts of personhood to determine whether their status as persons also means that they have a soul—that is, if they are persons then they have a soul, and if they transition to vampire, their soul could be maintained or returned. As the findings of this research suggest, personhood can apply not just to humans—beings can be
identified as having personhood by applying sets of qualities, characteristics and criteria, such as those identified by Michaud (2010). This study refrained from classifying the vampire as human, claiming instead that the vampire is a separate species. This is supported by the core texts, with characters in *True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries* and *The Twilight Saga* explicitly categorising themselves as vampires rather than humans. In this study, the term ‘humanity’ was used to describe a quality usually possessed by people, and indicating a set of traits encompassing goodness, kindness, empathy and compassion—traits also found to be characteristics of many vampire representations in the sensitive cycle.

However, classifying the vampire as an ensouled being with personhood opens up a range of considerations for future scholarly examinations of the vampire’s representation. First, the sensitive cycle vampire is portrayed as cognisant of moral and ethical behaviour, with some vampires choosing to make decisions based on morally sound judgement: the ability to ‘guide one’s behaviour by moral principles’ is one of Whitman (2013, 173) and Nozick’s (Whitman 2010, 175; Nozick 2013) five characteristics of personhood. Traditionally, the vampire has been represented as free from the constraints of human morals, ethics and laws, and as Williams (2013, 173) observes, in *The Twilight Saga* mythology, ‘a monster is not what one is, but rather what one does’. An analysis of post-millennial vampires in forthcoming series may continue to reveal that the creatures meet the conditions for personhood based on Whitman’s (2013, 173) characteristics, including the ‘signifiers of soul’, namely demonstrating ‘sentience, self-awareness, and rationality of moral personality’. Similarly, vampires in forthcoming film and television shows may also meet Kant’s (2012, 106) criteria for personhood if they are depicted as thinking, rational beings. If this comes to pass, it remains to be seen whether scholarly discussion will continue to consider the vampire as a person, and analyse the characters’ moral choices based on human benchmarks for moral action. The concept of the ensouled vampire calls into question the new nature of vampirism, its role in storytelling and its contribution to the way we understand and examine humanity, personhood and monstrosity through the vampire horror sub-genre.

Secondly, the ensouled vampire-as-person is, in the sensitive cycle, able to choose to make a positive contribution to society. As previously stated, upcoming representations of the vampire in film and television may depict vampires that
embody the antithesis of the sensitive cycle vampires, and if this is the case, will it still be advantageous to storylines for the vampire character to live a life with ‘meaning, definition and purpose’ (Graves 2008, 206)? Michaud (2010, 40) explains that a person who is ‘being part of the moral community’ deserves to be treated as if they have rights, and deserves respect and dignity—a concept echoed in the set of qualities proffered by Warren (1973). Applying these qualities to an analysis of the post-millennial vampire indicates that the sensitive cycle vampire meets or exceeds these criteria for personhood, and shows that participation in the moral community is a common trope in post-millennial vampire mythologies, thus allowing for the exploration of relationships, moral obligations and moral accountability. However, this may be problematised in the new series of The Vampire Chronicles and The Lost Boys, which might represent the vampires in accordance with the original texts on which these new incarnations are based: in these original versions, vampires kept to vampire communities in ‘nests’ and emerged into society only to feed and/or be entertained. Although useful for this study of the core texts, the trope of the ensouled vampire may not be applicable to upcoming film and television programs, as we begin to emerge from the sensitive cycle of the vampire horror sub-genre.

Finally, while this research focused solely on the supernatural vampire, highly popular vampire characters of the post-human and trans-human variety continue to appear—that is, those affected or created by scientific alteration or experiment or biological interference, such as the vampires in the Blade trilogy (Goyer 2004; Norrington 1998; Toro 2002) or I am Legend (Lawrence 2007). An opportunity therefore exists for an analysis of the non-supernatural vampire of the post-human or trans-human vampire sub-genre through the lens of soul theories and notions of personhood, thus continuing to interrogate the nature of humanity, and what it means to be a person.

The issue of locating monstrosity

Post-millennial vampire horror challenges the idea of the monster and where monstrosity is located. This is not a new concept for the horror genre, and classic films such as Psycho (Hitchcock 1960), Frankenstein (Whale 1931) and Carrie (De Palma 1976), all revolve around human monsters. As Carroll (1990, 41) states, the monster is whatever ‘poses a threat morally, socially, or psychologically, or seeks to destroy the moral order’, and therefore the vampire is not required by default to be
Chapter 8: The moral undead—the ensouled vampire as a cycle in the vampire sub-genre

the monstrous Other in post-millennial horror narratives. However, for the vampire horror sub-genre, situating monstrosity away from the vampire is an important new trend. As Asma (2009, 6) asserts, ‘the concept of the monster has evolved to become a moral term in addition to a biological and theological term’, thus providing more flexibility in where monstrosity is placed in the narrative. The True Blood television series, for example, alternates the locus of monstrosity between vampires, hybrid, mythical creatures and humans. As Asma (8) claims, humans who have ‘by their own horrific actions abdicated their humanity’ can ‘sink to the level of an animal, or worse’, and every person ‘has the potential to become monstrous’. It may then be a useful step for the spotlight to be removed from the vampire’s inherent monstrosity, thus allowing for additional facets of monstrosity represented by other characters, including humans, to be examined. This research called into question how the vampire has been previously been understood—as monstrous and demonic—which in turn may challenge how we begin to theorise and debate monstrosity in further post-millennial vampire horror films and television shows.

The issue of ‘the undead’

In the post-millennial horror genre, new trends have emerged in representations of the undead in both the vampire and zombie sub-genres. Greene and Mohammed (2010, 4) define the undead as

that class of beings who at some point were living creatures, have died, and have come back such that they are not presently ‘at rest’. On this account, all vampires, mummies, and ghosts, most zombies, some skeletons, and miscellaneous other animated corpses … would count as being undead.

Vargas (2010, 39) adds that there is ‘a requirement that there be some death involved prior to undeath’. This notion has become problematised in the core texts. In Chapter 5, a discussion of Bella’s vampire transformation shows that it can be unclear where human life ends and undeath begins. Two crucial criteria usually employed to distinguish between a human being and the undead include the presence of a heartbeat, and breathing. However, the breath and the heartbeat, in the context of fictional, supernatural beings, become arbitrary to defining alive, dead and undead, and to the status of personhood, as this study shows, and I would argue that the criteria of being ‘animated’—regardless of whether that animation be natural or supernatural/magical—that blurs the boundary between what was traditionally
deemed to be undead or alive. Now, the undead are represented as beings with minds, memories and moral—for example, the zombies of Warm Bodies (Levine 2013) can be brought back to their human state by attaining true love, and the zombies of In the Flesh (Campbell et al. 2013) are returned to their families, medicated and ready to reassimilate into society.

With the undead now cast as assimilated people, potential human victims are now theoretically dealing with one of the most monstrous creatures on the planet: humans. The blurring of the boundary between the vampire characters’ monstrosity and personhood may ‘imply that humans may have a level of monstrosity inside them’ (Landers 2011, 36) and also, arguably, that the vampire has a level of humanity left within them, thus bringing humans and the undead closer in nature. Therefore, it can be posited that through new vampire characterisations and shifts in narrative themes, traditional notions and theoretical conceptualisations of the undead are challenged. As demonstrated in this study, what separates the post-millennial ensouled undead from the traditional monstrous undead is the choice to embrace moral rationality and moral accountability—a choice that must therefore also include the undead constraining their appetitive nature, and keeping their ‘humanity switch’ firmly set to ‘on’.

The importance of the ensouled vampire

A key final question arising from this research is the bigger question of whether it matters if contemporary vampires are represented as, or can be read as, having a soul and personhood. I argue, based on the findings of this research, that it does matter that there are now representations of the vampire where the creature is now primarily used as a vehicle to explore humanity, morality, ethics, and moral accountability as the narrative’s protagonist rather than the antagonist. Whether this representation of the ensouled vampire remains exploratory as part of the sensitive cycle—which I contend ended with the final season of The Vampire Diaries in 2017—remains to be seen. However, the new trends, tropes and characterisations discussed here create space for a conceptual shift in how the vampire character can be further debated and analysed. The ensouled vampire can facilitate narrative perspectives that human characters cannot: memory across millennia, historical understanding, inner battles with morality, conscience and supernatural monstrosity, for example; and
contemporary representations now challenge the traditional underlying assumptions that the vampire is inherently evil.

It matters that the sub-genre now includes the sensitive cycle, which can be referred to, compared with and contrasted against, and further analysed through a range of theoretical lenses. But is there longevity to the ensouled vampire trope? As noted in Chapter 3, the roles of the horror movie include, but are no means limited to, the following:

- providing a canvas on which political or social anxieties can be projected (Shaw 2000, 1)
- serving as a way for viewers to explore the darker side of humanity (Shaw 2000, 4)
- providing a way to explore and exploit people’s fear of death—especially a bad death (Worland 2007, 8)
- showing the audience their worst nightmares on screen in a ‘recreational terror’ situation (Pinedo 1997).

Vampire horror has, and will continue, to serve a social, cultural and psychological purpose for the viewing public and, arguably, audiences will continue to seek out representations of the traditionally demonic vampire. Hybridisation of genres will continue to enable the expansion, exploration and evolution of characters such as the vampire, while the ensouled vampire of the sensitive cycle has served its own purpose in examining ensoulment, morality and personhood. I argue, therefore, that while the ensouled vampire may not continue to be the predominant representation, many of the new tropes that have emerged during the sensitive cycle will continue to recur in future vampire film and television narratives.

8.3 SOUL THEORIES: A NEW LENS FOR ANALYSIS

As this thesis has argued, few studies have analysed the post-millennial vampire in terms of the soul. However, as post-millennial representations of the vampire become more humanised, issues of morality and ensoulment become increasingly important. To explore the representation of the soul in post-millennial vampire narratives, this research applied a select range of soul theories to the analysis of key texts. The different soul theories applied in the primary analysis drew on some sacred
understandings of the soul, but more predominantly used secular theories of the soul, mind and consciousness to analyse the representation of the soul in the core texts. A number of areas for consideration emerged as a result of analysing the vampire through soul theories; these are discussed below.

An issue arising from this approach is the multiplicity of theories of the soul and personhood on which to draw. Themes of the soul and personhood in the vampire film can be read through classical philosophical ideas of the soul, sacred notions of the soul (including the Christian dichotomies of concepts such as human/demon, good/bad, and heaven and hell), psychological interpretations of the soul and mind, and scientific theories of the soul, mind and consciousness, including the burgeoning area of quantum field theories and the soul field. The implications of this, especially for horror film studies, are that a breadth and depth of theories exist in the discipline of metaphysical ontology that can be applied to an analysis of representations of the soul, mind, consciousness and personhood. Using soul theories provides new ways in which we can understand, debate and theorise not just the vampire, but any monster of past and future film and television representations. This arguably allows for a more nuanced reading of monsters, including the vampire, and permits scholars to analyse the vampire’s (or other monsters’) motives, moral accountabilities and evolution in light of the chosen theoretical framework. Further, while this research aimed to examine the vampire of film and television through a spectrum of soul theories, which was advantageous for this specific study, it may not be a sustainable approach for studies focused primarily on analysing specific sacred or secular detail in a text; in this case, specific soul theories would need to be selected based on their religious or secular foundations, rather than applying a spectrum of theories, as per this research.

Two further key issues arose from applying the selected soul theories in an analysis of the core texts. First is the issue of implicit belief systems embedded in some theories. For example, Augustine’s (1947, III.III, 19) ‘soul levels’—nutritive, sensitive and rational—were used to analyse the core texts, thus making it possible to justify the vampire as being shown to have a soul based on Augustine’s assertions that anything alive has a soul. However, this is problematised by the fact that Augustine attributes this ensoulment to God. In narratives where the soul is referred to directly, it is not always within a sacred or Christian context. In addition, the
concept of whether the vampire is ‘alive’ is called into question when Augustine’s (1947, III.III, 19) definitions are applied. If the vampire is ‘alive’, then by definition, it must have a soul; if it is ‘dead’, it does not. As discussed in section 5.2 of Chapter 5, there is no consistent contemporary mythology around the transition from human to vampire; some narratives require the human body to die, whereas in others, it remains unclear whether the human body truly dies or simply remains unconscious while the transition occurs. This indeterminate state presents a challenge in analysing whether the vampire is technically alive or dead during transition, and whether the vampire retains its soul in transition. As such, this indeterminate state of alive/dead/undead lends itself to further scholarly research. Second, there is the issue of translation and interpretation. Over the course of this study, it became evident that theories and philosophies read in translation are subject to the translator’s interpretation. The implications of this include the potential for misrepresentation of core ideas and theoretical constructs, and possible limitations regarding how a theory may assist our understanding of, or theorising about, the soul of the monster.

A key starting point for the further analysis of characters and/or narratives in horror film and television could be to identify one or a number of complementary soul theories. As this study observed, vampire horror analysis has traditionally been approached with a set of assumptions about the vampire (that it is demonic), and about the context in which the character exists and can be destroyed (by religious artefacts, sunlight or staking). However, these assumptions can be challenged by applying key characteristics of specific soul theories to an analysis of vampire horror texts. For example, this study argued that Descartes’ (1968) ‘substance dualism’ is evident in vampire narratives where soul matters are addressed. Substance dualism explains that the soul can exist apart from the body, and the ‘death of the body does not mean the death of the soul’ (Arp 2010, 144). In two of the three key texts examined in this study (The Vampire Diaries and True Blood), examples of substance dualism are evident. However, The Twilight Saga does not address the notion of the soul as a separate entity living on after death, although the dialogue and mise-en-scène uses Christian and religious representations of life and the afterlife. While the narrative presents a traditional view of the vampire, its soul and destruction, plot points offer the opportunity for a secular reading of the vampire’s nature. Thus, the analysis benefits from a greater breadth and depth of theoretical
frameworks from which to draw to develop a nuanced and deep reading of the vampire. Applying soul theories to key texts proved valuable to answering the primary research question about how the soul is represented in post-millennial film and television vampire horror narratives.

8.4 CONCLUSION

This study set out to uncover key ways in which the concept of the soul is interpreted and represented in contemporary vampire narratives, and answered the research questions proposed in Chapter 1:

- How is the soul represented in post-millennial film and television vampire horror narratives?
  - How do representations of the soul in post-millennial vampire horror reflect theoretical understandings of the soul?
  - Can the presence of a soul denote the personhood of a being and, if so, can vampires therefore be considered people?
  - If a vampire is represented as having a soul, what are the implications of this for horror film and television studies?

This research argued that through the lens of selected soul theories, the vampire of the sensitive cycle is represented as, and can be understood as, an ensouled person; although a separate species from humans, the ensouled vampire character exhibits the characteristics of personhood. The study concluded that examining the vampire in light of soul theories and personhood reveals a shift in the sub-genre in terms of extending the vampire character and what it means to be ‘undead’. What this suggests for vampire horror film and television studies is that new insights can be gained into the ways in which vampires (or other undead characters), with their new status of ensouled person, work within a narrative to explore and interpret larger societal themes, anxieties and issues, including the associated moral accountability expected of non-human persons.

The study reached these conclusions through first presenting an overview of the vampire’s evolution, and tracing the development of the sympathetic and reluctant vampire from its folkloric origins through to its literary beginnings and on-screen debuts in Chapter 2. This chapter then outlined the emergence of the sympathetic and reluctant vampire—foreshadowers to the vampires of the sensitive
cycle, whose sympathetic traits continue to be developed. The evolution of the vampire was highlighted in terms of the burgeoning serialisation of vampire film and television, and it was found that these formats allow for greater exploration and extension of vampire nature and vampire narrative, while responding to the demands of the market cycle of the late 2000s.

Chapter 3 identified the features of vampire narratives that are essential to the development of the sympathetic and reluctant vampire, and include the prevalence and importance of universal themes, deep metaphors and archetypal characters that have continued to contribute to the shift in the vampire horror sub-genre. In Chapter 4, seminal theories of the soul, mind and personhood were presented, ranging from early Greek philosophy of the soul through to quantum field theory. This chapter explored the literature that extends the idea of the nature of the soul and mind into concepts of personhood and the rights and responsibilities of a person to behave with moral rationality, contribute to the moral community and have moral accountability—key attributes for the status of personhood.

In an original approach to vampire horror textual analysis, the lens of soul theories, including quantum field theory, was used to analyse key vampire horror texts of the sensitive cycle to answer research question one and ascertain the way the soul is represented in post-millennial film and television vampire narratives. This was the primary focus of Chapter 5. The analysis found that at the core of soul representations lay substance dualist thinking, and an adherence to the soul as a Christian construct. Whether or not the core narratives studied considered vampires to have a soul, it is clear that soul concepts still inform narrative and characterisation.

Chapters 6 and 7 extended Chapter 5’s findings by arguing that not only does the vampire of the sensitive cycle have a soul, it also has personhood. In the core and supporting texts, the soul is typically represented as existing separately from the body, in the substance dualist tradition of soul theories. Delving further into the nature of the soul, the analysis found that certain qualities denote the presence of the soul, and are also indicators of being a person. These chapters thus addressed research questions two and three, which asked how representations of the soul in post-millennial vampire horror reflect theoretical understandings of the soul, whether the soul is an indicator of personhood and if a vampire can be considered a person. The post-millennial vampire of the sensitive cycle was found to both have a soul—by
The crucial outcome of this research is that in the sensitive cycle of post-millennial vampire film and television, the vampire is frequently represented as a person with a soul: a finding that has not previously been drawn nor extensively examined in the literature, based on studies of the vampire through the lens of soul theories. While the vampire characters themselves are used to investigate the concepts of personhood and soul, the underlying assumptions in many narratives do not yet align with contemporary thought about the soul, personhood and identity. Studies were uncovered that discuss the nature of the vampire as a person (Blayde and Dunn 2010; Culver 2010; Foy 2010; Larkin 2010; Michaud 2010; Nelson 2012; Smith 2013; Sugg 2011; Thompson 2010), but these refrain from using soul theories to analyse the vampire narrative, and do not establish the vampire’s personhood and ensoulment. This gap in the literature allowed this research to explore the concept of the vampire soul, and significantly extend and apply the key ideas of Michaud (2010), who, also drawing on the theories of Kant, Nussbaum and Warren, questions whether a vampire can be a person. The soul theories key to this research were drawn from the significant disciplines of philosophy, neuroscience and psychoanalysis, which provided a broad approach to the analysis, yet also offered striking overlaps and agreement with the fundamental qualities of personhood.

This identified shift in the nature of the sensitive cycle vampire prompts the question of the vampire’s role in future vampire narratives, beyond its battle with bloodthirstiness and its baser vampire nature. Research question four asks what the implications of the ensouled vampire would be for horror film and television studies—the shift in vampire characterisation and introduction of secular tropes already identified in this chapter can arguably broaden the field of what is known and understood about the soul, personhood and the undead in the context of horror film scholarship, while opening up the dialogue to examine the purpose and nature of the ensouled vampire in future texts in the vampire horror sub-genre of film and
television. Some of the ways this research can be extended are outlined in the following section.

**Further research**

This study has only just begun to explore the foundations of a potentially rich dialogue on the nature of the soul and how it is represented in post-millennial film and television vampire horror. The study focused on three key vampire series within a set cultural and historical timeframe, which this research termed the sensitive cycle. There remain numerous other examples of post-millennial vampire horror worthy of study in relation to representation of the soul. A fertile area for additional research could include a comparative analysis of pre- and post-millennial vampire texts, looking at how the boundaries are blurred between the tales of both eras in terms of the vampire type (as per the continuum suggested in Chapter 7) and the levels of ensoulment and personhood they display. Similarly, a study that questions how widely the ideas of ensoulment and personhood apply outside the sensitive cycle would extend the conclusions of this research and contribute to the broader field of vampire film and television studies. Further contributions to this field could include a study into how the notion of the undead is being challenged in other subgenres. This could include an application of soul theories more broadly across film and television horror, and could be extended to the zombie sub-genre which is already beginning to examine similar concepts of personhood and soul and which provides further insight into the way the concept of the undead is being reimagined in the post-millennial era.

This research suggests that the concept of the ensouled vampire can be used to explore ideas of the soul and a secular afterlife in the postsecular era, as well as broader societal concerns and anxieties that will continue to incorporate the perennial dichotomies of good and evil, moral and immoral. Taking a critical posthumanist perspective, studies could further investigate the ways in which the ensouled vampire exhibits the status of personhood and continues to blur the boundaries between human/inhuman, alive/dead. This would contribute to the field of horror film and television studies by elucidating how the undead is being reimagined within the horror genre. In addition, this approach could address the issues of human desire for immortality and overcoming death and bodily decay, and the fear of ageing. Similarly, further research could adopt a transhumanist perspective—considering the vampire created by virus, by alien intervention, scientific or other human
intervention—and examine the nature of its soul and its potential for personhood. Significantly, how will the state of being ‘undead’ be defined and recognised as the post-millennial era progresses? This study has found that the ensouled vampire-as-person complicates the notion of ‘undead’, and strongly blurs the boundaries between being alive, being dead and being ‘undead’. Thus, this research raises the need for more philosophical enquiry into the ‘undead’, the nature of the continually evolving vampire and its ongoing role as a conduit for exploring moral accountability.


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