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Religion and Rationality in *Dracula*

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Abstract

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* has been called the most religiously saturated novel of its time, yet treatments of religion in the novel remain lamentably sparse. Christopher Herbert argues that the vampire is a manifestation of the grotesque and taboo aspects of Wesleyan belief, while Noelle Bowles reads the novel as a commentary on the contemporary rift between Broad and High Anglicanism. Rosemary Jann and Elizabeth Sanders treat the novel in terms of the growing gulf between science and religion. Drawing on the work of these scholars and consulting contemporary theologians of Stoker's time, I argue that *Dracula* attempts a reconciliation between scientific discovery and the High Anglican Church, and calls for rationality in religious exercise with particular emphasis on Wesleyan ideas of grace, social religion, and the Eucharist. Stoker's utilization of crucifixes and communion wafers sympathizes with High Anglican belief in ritual and superstition, while the deductive, empirical methodology with which these symbols are used suggests an appeal to scientific reason, creating a harmony between religion and rationality heretofore unrecognized in the novel's critical history.