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Emily Jobe
Kennesaw State University, emily.jobe1@yahoo.com

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Abjection in Fiction: A Study of Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Emily Jobe and Ashley Sheldon (Faculty Advisor)

Kennesaw State University

ABSTRACT

Julia Kristeva’s focus on understanding what the abject is and how it manifests plays a key role in this essay. This essay argues that abjection informs the representation of dual personality and addiction in Robert Louis Stevenson’s Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. By determining what is an abject for Jekyll through an analysis of the characters and plot development, this essay argues that not only is abjection possible for an individual, but it is a necessity of fiction. Using literary and psychoanalytic scholarship and theory, this essay demonstrates key factors in figuring out what, how, and why an abject can affect an individual.

Keywords: dual personality, abjection, other, addiction, Kristeva, and Robert Louis Stevenson

Introduction

Dual personality and addiction are two forms of analysis focused on in Robert Louis Stevenson’s Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (Jekyll and Hyde). Often they are compared side-by-side or linked in one creating the other. As one noted critic has said, “Dr. Jekyll is not so much a man of conflicted personality as a man suffering from the ravages of addiction” (Wright 254). The simplification of dual personality to what addiction does to a tortured mind brings the quest for a deeper understanding of the relationship between Jekyll and his other half, Hyde, to a standstill. The study of and comparison with what an abject is, in Julia Kristeva’s work, will help define, create meaning, and identify one’s true inner self. Fiction holds a great threshold for such in-depth research and conjecture on the subject, especially in Jekyll and Hyde.

In this paper, I will determine the main objects of abjection throughout the novel’s development, the significance they have to the characters and other abjects, and the development of the novel’s plot using other examples of fiction to depict abjection’s necessity in fictional writing. Specifically, I will argue how particular objects of abjection, like the unspecified drug and Hyde, play key roles in the unraveling character development of not only Jekyll but also the narrator and observer Mr. Utterson. Through the development of the novel’s plot, I will evaluate the significance that Hyde not only represents Jekyll’s otherness but the id that every human has and denies at every waking moment in fear of losing themselves completely. As Jekyll and Hyde is a fictional novel, I will also delve into the world of fictional abjection that I find in my research, no matter the genre or time period.

To make this argument, I will frame my discussion with the theories of critics like Patricia Comitini, Julia Kristeva, and Daniel
L. Wright, which focus on not only the study of *Jekyll and Hyde* but abjection and fiction as well. This essay will explore the conversation around Jekyll’s character, who is an individual with mental health issues. Jekyll also suffers from his addiction and spiraling submission to his alter ego, Hyde. With this in mind, I plan to discuss the deep-rooted boundary that slowly disintegrates as well as Jekyll’s loss of control over his attachments to his objects and the fact that while most humans would avoid what frightens them, Jekyll relishes in it till his death. By this I mean I will look at Jekyll, who represents the ego, and Hyde, who is his id. As many avoid what they fear or what has become a deeply root phobia, I will discuss how it is a turning point for Jekyll and Hyde’s dynamic relationship.

Using Kristeva’s text, I will focus on the concept of otherness, the unconscious, *jouissance*, and primal repression. I am suggesting that when Jekyll purposefully relinquished himself to his desires, relishing in the pleasure, something within him was released that allowed Hyde to take over not just once but enough times to slowly eat away at Jekyll. Thus implying that as abjection is truly a part of human nature, it is that which forces us to move forward in search of what keeps those desires at bay, enjoying them to the fullest, or accepting what the abject is to us and moving forward. To consider the far-reaching consequences of my argument, I am looking at Patricia Comitini’s text in a different approach altogether compared to the majority of research done on the novel. She depicts Utterson—the observer—as the main subject and Jekyll as the ‘otherness’ of him. This differing view of the story allows for conjecture on my topic not only from this new angle but from a few others as well. This essay will conclude with a consideration of abjection found in fiction and how it affects all forms of characters and plots just by existing. By this, I mean that without an abject or villain, there would be no need or growth for a hero—though classic, a protagonist and antagonist are essential at least at the very basic level in a novel’s plot.

**Defining One’s Abject**

The abject, the rejected object that humans fear and loathe, is found in many different contexts and in a variety of forms. As some can attest, the abject we create is first formed because of ourselves. Without ‘I’ there would be no personality that is made up of likes or dislikes—what we accept about ourselves or what we reject (abject). Julia Kristeva’s work “Approaching Abjection” thoroughly explains this concept. Kristeva introduces the view of the abject by explaining that while we accept and love moments and things in our lives, there are opposites that upset us to the point we reject them at every possible moment (1-2). The abject to Kristeva is an entity within the self that we don’t want to acknowledge. This idea can be seen as she says, “[w]e may call it a border; abjection is above all ambiguity. Because, while releasing a hold, it does not radically cut off the subject from what threatens it—on the contrary, abjection acknowledges it to be in perpetual danger” (Kristeva 9). This position on the subject can be seen more clearly in Stevenson’s novel *Jekyll and Hyde*.

The story’s basic plot is about a man and his terminal addiction to living out his deepest darkest desires through Hyde, who is created from an unspecified drug. Hyde, in essence, is the abject Jekyll does not want to accept about himself because he is a true representation of how ugly an individual he is. This concept reveals the true nature of the abject that Kristeva is trying to get across; we abject the aspects of ourselves that can threaten our very existence. Hence the meaning behind Kristeva’s next quote, “[t]he phobic has no other object than the abject” (6). Without the phobia of Hyde’s behavioral...
traits, Jekyll would not have such an important abject for him to fear. This idea also means that without an abject—something we reject—there would be no phobias. These ideas on self and other, which is the phobia or mindset created by it, show there is no true personality made up without likes and dislikes, no personality without the abject. The ‘perpetual danger’ touched on above is also seen in Kristeva’s way of clean and unclean in relation to ourselves or ‘I’—the self. This clean form we all prefer over the unclean relates to Kristeva’s definition of why a corpse or even death is frightening to us. It is our way of separating self from other, creating otherness. As Kristeva explains it, “such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit” (3). Here, Kristeva suggests death as we know it is created by the abject, for if we cannot repel the otherness created from us, we feel fragile and closer to death. The things our body drops are waste the body secretes like dead skin so that the new skin underneath can form. Though bodily secretions are potentially disgusting, they are still a natural function of the body that lets us know we are still alive. This phenomenon stops occurring at death because the body stops functioning and growing new skin and cells to take the place of the old dead cells that aged and fell from our bodies. These now detached cells are no longer a part of ‘I’ but that which I reject as a part of me. This concept shows Kristeva’s point that “no longer I who expel, ‘I’ is expelled” from myself (4). By making this point in her work, Kristeva clears any ambiguity on the idea of what abjection means not only in relation to the inner self but those existing outside the mind as well.

This sentiment can also be seen in William Cohen’s “Locating Filth” as he also defines the abject as an object, which we reject about ourselves. For instance, Cohen’s claim, “filth is a term of condemnation, which instantly repudiates a threatening thing, person, or idea by ascribing to it. Ordinarily, that which is filthy is so fundamentally alien that it must be rejected; labeling something filthy is a viscerally powerful means of excluding it” (Cohen ix). Excluding something gross is what humans do best; we keep objects we find revolting far away from us—consider garbage dumps and morgues. They are found out of the way and/or beautified in a way that does not upset us at first glance. Garbage dumps are usually found a few miles outside of a major town, and morgues are found in the basements of hospitals and other out of the way locations, where civilians do not have ready access. These instances of hiding, which makes us uncomfortable, are a part of what defines an abject to ourselves. Human beings prefer to remain clean by removing that which we find dirties us or our surroundings in some way, which defines us as beings that do not like to live in our own filth. By rejecting that which we created, we are acknowledging it as different from ourselves, even though it was not at first.

What we once accepted as a part of us, in Cohen’s work, becomes our abject through our rejection. As he states, “[i]n this account, the low—or what is marked as dirty, disreputable, or excluded from official culture—is itself crucial to culture’s self-constitution” (xvi). This idea is seen as Hyde’s evil deeds that are “dirty, disreputable” when he treats others in horrid ways (xvi). Also, in this instance, Hyde belongs to a group in society that is “excluded from official culture” (xvi). Thus showing the clear difference in his character compared to Jekyll as he would not join a group that practices such extreme behaviors that everyone is aware of but tries their best to believe has no effect on their life (xvi). Jekyll’s life is affected this way as all his actions aren’t reflected on his body like others would have been but instead appear on Hyde. This knowledge gives him time to
inflict as much damage as he likes without receiving the consequences, though the full weight of those consequences is felt at his death. This split of personalities allows room for Jekyll’s unconscious desires to come forth through Hyde. Hyde, at this point, can roam free and do as he pleases. This growth in his personality is seen as the abject, for it goes against what society has defined as right and moral, showing that anything outside it is the abject. In this manner, we can see that an individual will grow as they age. They take on new problems, solve what they can, and develop their own personalities full of quirks along the way. At first, Jekyll was unconsciously enjoying his life through Hyde, ignoring or unaware of the consequences his change from one to the other would have on him. According to Kristeva’s argument, for Jekyll this means that “the unconscious, as is well known, presupposes a repression of contents (affects and presentations) that, thereby, do not have access to consciousness but effect within the subject modifications, either of speech (parapraxes, etc.), or of the body (symptoms), or both (hallucinations, etc.),” all of which Jekyll went through when he morphed into Hyde (7). However, now that Jekyll is well aware of his misgivings, he cannot return to what he once was. When the individual becomes conscious of their failings, they change to either accepting the abject and ignoring it as best they can or rejecting it to the point it becomes a permanent phobia that cannot be taken away. Either way, they are forever affected by the object they created and now reject.

This rejection (if not turned into a phobia), soon grows into what Kristeva calls the alter ego—a space in which “the ego gives up its image in order to contemplate itself in the Other” (9). Kristeva’s idea of the abject or ego concerning the Other, in the case of this novel, would define Jekyll’s behavior as jouissance, a French word meaning enjoyment on a radically destructive scale. Specifically, Kristeva’s point in using the term jouissance to describe abjection is to show how the Other wants to describe in a different way compared to a normal, restricted life tethered by society’s norms. The Other is defined as that which is separate from the main personality—in this case Hyde would the Other while Jekyll is the main personality (Kristeva 9). This contemplation of the Other allows space for one to experience jouissance, as it did for Jekyll. He was able to enjoy himself and ruin others’ lives while having the proper space to exclude himself and watch Hyde at a safe distance. In particular, Jekyll could hide away in Hyde’s subconscious and enjoy the spoils and thrills while Hyde received all the negative views from society. This concept shows that Jekyll’s fascination with Hyde’s unforgiving personality and unbending force allows him enough separation from the consequences to continue down the same road until his demise. The jouissance, in this case, is Jekyll’s enjoyment in watching as Hyde changes becoming stronger. Even though he knows that it is terrible, he cannot stop taking the drug, making his condition worse.

To that end, as the story progresses, we learn from Jekyll’s mistake that the abject is an object that cannot be accepted. Because of human nature, it is impossible to go through life without creating an abject, though logical or illogical as they can be. Kristeva’s views, though more theoretical in nature, are the basis for other researchers on what an abject can mean to individuals. She explains why humans fear death and why mortality is a concept many fear to consider even though it is inevitable. To become that which is foreign to us scares one into either living their life to the fullest—experiencing dangerous adventures—or ignoring the facts and continuing as if it will never reach them if they do not think about it. This concept, in
essence, is referring to primal repression. Jekyll was probably once innocent of the other’s misdeeds and his previous failures; this incident gave him a chance at experiencing the wonders of society. With Jekyll’s mysterious past and hinted mental issues, it is no wonder he had such a difficult time suppressing Hyde when he got out of control. This instance creates a chance for Hyde to grow, as he shows Jekyll his inability to suppress his wants and desires that Hyde explores to every extent. Consequently, pushing Jekyll down a path that revolts against that which he abjects but desperately wishes to experience creates a unique dual personality that belongs solely to him and Hyde.

**Addiction and Otherness of Mind**

Abjection, up to this point, has created many different interpretations for a multitude of works. *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* showcases the abject in a visible format that is evident in other works. Specially, here the main object of abjection is Hyde. His being is created from Jekyll and he is addicted to living purely by his desires. Like many addicts, Jekyll did not at first notice the signs of falling into the trap of substance abuse. As time went on, he became more fearful of Hyde and the power his alter-ego had over him. Addiction as an abject is a dominant topic for articles on *Jekyll and Hyde*. The study of the progression and devolution in the main character revolves around the idea of addiction and its associated psychological problems. As Daniel Wright states, Jekyll “is a man of ‘destructive attachments,’ a man victimized by a chemical dependency that is aggravated both by a pre-existing psychopathology and maladaptive behaviors which follow his repeated consumption of the undisclosed psychoactive substance that turns him into Hyde” (245). The addiction is a part of the human psyche that represents the otherness of abjection. Through Jekyll’s addiction, we can see the part of the human psyche that represents what we define as other from ourselves. While I concede to the argument, I still insist that it is not the whole truth of the matter. The drug is an abject, but it also creates more abjects like Hyde. It is not simply an addiction but a breaking down of the borders between what we should and should not do—the proper way of life (ego) and the unrestrained animalistic way of life (id). Wright’s claim that Stevenson’s novel *Jekyll and Hyde* represent “the etiology of chronic chemical addiction” rests upon the underdeveloped assumption that the most important factor in Jekyll and Hyde’s relationship is based on drug abuse and addiction (263). By focusing on this notion, Wright overlooks the continued evolution and development of not just the characters but other abjects as well.

While most critics focus on addiction as the main abject, others focus elsewhere. For instance, Comitini uses Utterson as a comparison for Jekyll’s behavior. I am of two minds about Comitini’s claim that Utterson provides a better comparison to Jekyll’s character than Hyde. On one hand, I agree that looking from this view does pose an intriguing notion of what the abject can represent and also give a better understanding of the timeline of Jekyll’s deterioration into Hyde. On the other hand, I am not sure that separating and redefining Jekyll’s ‘other-half’ as someone besides Hyde holds much merit. Comitini analyzes this concept and states, “Jekyll plays as Utterson’s other, so that Jekyll’s addiction is revealed in the narrative as the aporia of Victorian society” (113). While this statement holds a bit of truth in comparison to Victorian society, Utterson plays the role of an individual who chronicles Jekyll. However, he does not represent Jekyll’s state of mind. I believe that Utterson is more a third-party character brought into the story to give readers an
outsider’s view of the development. His character adds a certain amount of mystery and intrigue to the tale. The idea of Utterson’s role being anything more significant stretches the interpretation of what a third-person point of view can give the audience.

As many readers can attest, fiction has a multilayered approach to the topic of abjection. It is how we locate, define, and counterbalance the otherness of characters, plots, and personality traits. Though consciously or unconsciously done, every writer has two sides. On the one hand, we have the virtues and traits that make up the character’s personalities. On the other hand, nobody is perfect, which leads to vices and objects we fear. Both sides combine to create a proper and believable character. Without both, the character would come out perfectly good or bad, neither of which is plausible in fiction. Without fears or contradictions, there would be no growth or regression that affects characters. In Stevenson’s book, what appears to be a proper member of Victorian society is a man struggling with his abject. Before ever coming into contact with drugs, Jekyll’s psychological condition was already unstable. His fears and desires push Jekyll to unleash his darker desires and live as Hyde. While the novel follows Jekyll’s decent into his desires, we are able to watch as Hyde literally destroys him mind, body, and soul. He possessed a weak mind against his vices. With this idea in mind, it is easy to see that as a third party, Utterson would not play the role of someone’s other half, but as the bystander recording what the audience gets to see.

**Abjection in Fiction**

The development of any novel is based on very few principles: main characters, plot, and setting. *Jekyll and Hyde* present all three characteristics, but they diverge in a unique and interesting way. The history of the novel dates back to Victorian society in 1886 when it was first published. Since then, the original tale has been read and reread to the point where audiences wanted more, allowing for adaptations to take the forms of movies and rewrites. Victorian society, like any other, had its virtues and vices that people reveled in but at the same time denied doing. We can see where Stevenson was able to delve into the distinct separation of outer and inner appearances as characters would have the pure and virtuous outer appearance and a sinful inner mentality. This idea can be seen in Stephen Arata’s article, *The Sedulous Ape: Atavism, Professionalism, and Stevenson’s Jekyll and Hyde*. A key point this idea refers to is how other social classes can identify a person and what their standing is in that social class they belong to no matter what they choose to do with their spare time. Specifically, if someone of a lower class, brought up in a poorer state than others, were to come into money he would not be able to hide his poorer youth as his mannerisms, behavior, and tastes would differ from those of someone from a higher social class. Arata argued that “[w]hile his impulsiveness and savagery, his violent temper, and his appearance all mark Hyde as lower class and atavistic, his vices are clearly those of a monied gentleman” (3). Arata pointed out that while Jekyll and Hyde are two different creatures, their habits and preferences do not differ completely. We cannot truly separate two people when they are housed in the same mind; sometimes, things rub off on the other. Jekyll’s obsession over wishing to separate the two personalities living within him is not an obtainable goal and one he finds out as Hyde takes over.

Thoughts on pursuing pleasures are, by definition, the abject. As Jekyll sees the boundary between what is his current adult self (ego), he blatantly goes beyond that boundary to temporarily release his deeper darker side that developed over the years (id). The darker and unrestrained side that is
Hyde, in Kristeva’s terms, would be one’s id—a primal state of living a human being begins and possibly ends. However, under normal circumstances, an individual’s id would morph and change with and eventually become the ego through the development and interaction in society. Although, there is the possibility that it could remain repressed until a trigger unleashes the pent-up emotions (e.g., Jekyll’s use of the unidentified drug that allowed Hyde to exist). In layman’s terms, individuals will mature to a state where they can function relatively well within society’s norms and values without disturbing the natural order. The releasing of his inhibitions, the shackles that keep reason at the forefront and desire at a reasonable separation, allows the developed id from childhood to come forward and have free reign. As seen in the novel, the so-called “temptation of the discovery [. . .] overcame the suggestions of alarm,” and he wholeheartedly jumped into the work of changing from Jekyll to Hyde that he did not take a step back and consider the consequences (Stevenson 77). Jekyll thought he could easily transfer between the two, enjoying Victorian society’s higher-class amenities and lower-class desires without penalty of the gallows or societal scorn. Finally, when the chance presented itself, Jekyll pursued the areas of “the mist-like transience, of this seemingly so solid body in which we walk attired” (Stevenson 77). He literally walked around as two individuals sharing the same body and shifting between the two—one a normal citizen and the other a grotesque creature of evil. The want to change the body to be something else entirely from the original was pushed to the forefront for his mind and eclipsed any preconceptions that would have stopped a normal individual.

The boundary between the ego and id is also inferred from observing society. I surmise that society, when threatened, will pinpoint the perceived problems and try to eradicate them along with the individuals involved. The “degenerative tendencies” are those posed by Hyde—his passion for certain hobbies that are looked down upon by Jekyll. Jekyll refuses to give up his happy, safe, standing in ‘proper’ society (Dryden 1). Sometimes separate from the individual, Linda Dryden supports my claim by stating that “the perception that the race itself was succumbing to degenerative tendencies that threatened the very fabric of society” is truly what happened and caused Jekyll to fear being found out (1). Dryden’s argument leads into the degeneration effects that follow, which are found in Dino Franco Felluga’s book, The Encyclopedia of Victorian Literature, Volume I. The degenerative effects of Victorian societal norms is a key trigger that allowed the addictive nature Jekyll had during this time to experience both sides of society. These effects that were common during the Victorian period, though looked down on, were natural for someone to pursue and indulge. Still, in that time period, it was not just a sin to do things outside society’s natural order but a crime.

The natural order of society influences how and why Jekyll chose to turn into Hyde. His actions and access to his inner desires were easily accessible as Hyde without being pinpointed as the man named Jekyll. The natural shift allowed his mind to look past future consequences opening the door for Jekyll to find freedom, and “a solution [to] the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul” (Stevenson 78). This morphing from one individual to another, which is extremely prevalent in fictional works, can be described in another manner by diving into the theory of natural thermodynamic ideas in story structure and decisions made by characters. Allen can attest to this idea in his chapter, “Personal Fantasy, Natural Limits: Robert Louis Stevenson’s Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.” Instead of approaching Jekyll and Hyde
through the study of addiction, the study of thermodynamics shows readers a way that left room for interpretation on the idea of morphing from one form to another (MacDuffie 172). As MacDuffie states, this “novel [is] acutely concerned with questions central to the thermodynamic research program: the transformation of physical form, the continuity of the identity through transformations, the expenditure of resources, and the phenomenon of irreversible change” (172). MacDuffie suggests Jekyll’s primary concern is the transformation from one individual to another. The transference of power between Jekyll and Hyde is a form of thermodynamic change as each individual houses their own unique structure. I agree with MacDuffie’s assertion that Jekyll’s ideas of transformation are pointed out and pursued as it was an “experiment in human engineering, one that unlocks Hyde’s ‘energy of life’” (172). MacDuffie also states that it “prepares us for a work that will draw upon the principles of engineering to structure not only the course of the physical metamorphosis but the shape of the plot” resulting in a story full of opportunities for his object to appear (172). Because of Jekyll’s early abjection in life to some mysterious entity, he became obsessed with living outside his safe confines. He pursued a path that allowed him to morph into another person fully capable of living in the society Jekyll wished to enjoy from time to time. The shift from one “energy of life” to another is just another way of saying Jekyll relishes in living in his object of abjection’s shoes (MacDuffie 172).

A shift or divide of an individual’s personality, like what happened with Jekyll, is also prominent in other works. Considering abjection is an ambiguous term for many interpretations in our lives, the definition also gives that same impression when compared to Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, another Victorian novel. Kristeva explains that abjection is roughly what we truly and deeply reject about ourselves to the point we find it revolting or wrong. Tying in Wilde, Dorian finds the portrait of himself to be revolting because the idea of aging utterly repulses him. This idea is transferred to his portrait, which ages and becomes disfigured, while Dorian does not. The small changes and later large shifts affect Dorian’s view of himself. The same changes in Jekyll’s later disdain of Hyde’s physical looks and behavior are present. As both main characters—Dorian and Jekyll—watch their objects slowly change with their misdeeds, they each, in turn, start to feel disgusted and fear the abject.

The abject of Wilde’s novel, at least to Dorian, was his portrait. The picture is a true physical view of Dorian’s soul that he is rejecting because it is too hideous to recognize in himself. He wants to remain the same as he was while it was being painted—innocent to times constraints. To be more precise, Dorian’s personality and evil deeds revolted him to the point that the painting was too horrid for him to look at or allow others to see. As such, Wilde is saying that even though it is a part of ourselves we abject (reject), we are horrified by the part of ourselves that either we or others cannot accept about us. We see this same sentiment as Jekyll rejects Hyde’s horrific behavior and how he loses control of his desires. Without a trigger like Lord Henry, Dorian may have aged like any other man and remained pleasing to converse with. Because of Henry, Dorian is now aware of his insecurities and limits that time sets on every man. For Jekyll, watching from a safe distance becomes more personal as he experienced great fear at witnessing Hyde’s steadily. To simplify, Wilde’s novel is arguing that when an individual is made aware of their insecurities and limits, they tend to reject them, though not as violently as the characters Dorian or Jekyll did. This idea, in turn, causes the
individual to change in some way because they are forever affected by the object that they reject—the creation of Hyde that eventually destroyed Jekyll and the painting that killed Dorian.

As seen from the comparison of The Picture of Dorian Gray to Jekyll and Hyde, fictional abjection is commonplace, from Dorian’s portrait to Hyde himself. The physical manifestation is what allows the readers to see and witness the transgressions the objects place against the main characters throughout the two novels. The freedom Jekyll desperately searches for is part of his need to explore the world outside his current lifestyle, full of societal obligation. At the basics, a protagonist is first approached by something that will forever change their life like an evil stepmother, a wizard mentor, an old prophecy about themselves revealed, and several other introductions to a story’s plot. These first instances are what allows the abject to form in the mind of the protagonist. Thus, we can conclude that the abject shapes it into another person, a fear of something, and/or a need for something within themselves to be satisfied. All of which points to the same conclusions: Overcoming, enjoying, or acknowledging those faults and desires allows the protagonist to move past the abject and win whatever form of a challenge they were up against.

In conclusion, the abject in a novel is the very basis for the plot and characters. Without it, there would be no story to read. Stevenson’s Jekyll and Hyde is a dynamic look at how an early, unknown incident can affect a character’s later development. As Jekyll became obsessed with finding a way to live as another, he showed us his fear of expressing his true desire in public—not that fear of his desires was just a personal restriction but that they could send him to jail or worse. This fear of Hyde, Jekyll’s abject, allows readers to see the true implications of what identifying an abject in a novel can do.

By placing the role on something or someone in a novel and saying it is the abject of a character, we place a high priority on it as we follow the novel’s development. The development ultimately concludes for the character but not before causing a sort of change in the character’s personality. Most novels shift the narrative’s course to force the character to face the abject. Keeping this in mind, if one were to go deeper into an analysis of this subject, observing other similar works of fiction, what other implications for abjection could be found in writing? We already know that not facing an abject in the story would not move it forward, making it a reoccurring theme in any novel. Without something to trigger the forming of an abject, the abject affecting the character, and the ultimate conclusion to facing it, we would not have such an interesting story to follow. So, what is left for us to find in a story that relates or is an abject? With this question raised, delving deeper into what the study of abjection has to offer, research into other genres could provide new and compelling forms of Kristeva’s view of what an abject is to an individual or a story’s plot.

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