

## **Dr Jekyll and/or Mr Hyde: The two versions of David Edgar's stage adaptation**

In 1991, the Royal Shakespeare Company staged David Edgar's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, an adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's 1885 novella, directed by Peter Wood, to a generally negative critical and commercial response. Five years later, the Birmingham Repertory Theatre produced Edgar's revised version of the play, using the shorter title *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, to much more positive reviews, often from the same people. The striking thing about this radically different response is that, apart from a single element, the two scripts are very similar. They can therefore serve almost as a real-life scientific experiment, demonstrating the difference that a single change will make. This paper will consider the various choices that an adaptor must make with this story, and look at what the different responses to the two versions can tell us about the nature of this story, and possibly about horror and fantasy in general.

### **The Tradition of Adaptation**

Stevenson's novella has always been a popular book for adaptors, in both theatre and cinema. The central premise is one that adapts easily to different eras, allowing adaptations to play to their times' anxieties, whether these are biological, social, political, psychological, generational, sexual (in both senses of the word), geographical, racial, national, or even professional - Roger Luckhurst, in a talk at Guy's Chapel, 20/3/22, 'Dissecting the Past - Medicine and the Gothic imagination', argued that the book, like Stevenson's earlier short story *The Body-Snatcher*, was informed by the changing status of the medical profession in the late nineteenth century. The IMDB lists eighty screen versions since 1908, including at least seven pornographic ones. It's hard to do a similar count for stage versions, but the British Library manuscript collection holds fourteen versions since the first one in 1886, a musical parody entitled *The Strange Case of Hyde and Seekyl*. (a title which suggests, incidentally, that at least some of the original readers pronounced 'Jekyll' the Scottish way, with the first syllable as 'Jeek' rather than 'Jeck'). This was followed two years later by two rival versions originating from the United States; the authorised version (1887), written by T.R Sullivan for the actor Richard Mansfield, and a pirated version written by John McKinney and the American actor/manager Daniel E. Bandmann (1888).

The novella has three features which make it simultaneously attractive and challenging to adaptors. The issues which these throw up, and the solutions that writers have created, mean that adaptations for other media have developed their own set of conventions, so that any audience will go in with a certain list of expectations and desires, some taken from the novella, or their idea of it. some from previous adaptations – what the Shakespearean critic Barbra Hodgdon has called an 'expectational text' (Hodgdon, 1983).

### **Structure**

Firstly, any adaptor has to rethink the novella's narrative structure, and more specifically its release of information. The revelation that Jekyll and Hyde are one person - I don't think that really counts as a spoiler by now – is saved by Stevenson till almost the end of the story. In this respect, the effect for the original readers must have been similar to that of those novels and films which depend on a reveal that what we had thought to be two discrete characters are actually the same person, such as *Psycho* (novel 1959, film 1960), *Homicidal* (1961), the 'Lucy Comes to Stay' episode of *Asylum* (1970) *Who Is Harry*

*Kellerman and Why Is He Saying Those Terrible Things About Me?* (1971) *Sisters* (1972), *The Usual Suspects* (1995), and *Fight Club* (novel 1996, film 1999).

With *Dr Jekyll*, by contrast, it's more or less impossible for a modern reader or audience to go into the story without knowing the identity of the title characters. Part of the project of Valerie Martin's novel *Mary Reilly* (1990), which retells Stevenson's plot from the perspective of Jekyll's Irish maidservant, is to enable to a reader to imagine, if not exactly to recapture, that state of innocence.

The restructuring that this knowledge makes necessary starts with the earliest stage versions, soon after the novella's publication. The Sullivan and McKinney/Bandmann adaptations both use a structure similar to that of the novella, starting with Utterson's point of view, and gradually shifting to those of Lanyon and Jekyll. Sullivan puts the first transformation (from Hyde to Jekyll) at the end of the Third Act, and the second, going the other way, just before the final Fourth Act curtain. By contrast, McKinney and Bandmann add an earlier transformation from Jekyll to Hyde, in the First Act. By 1897, and the publication of Luella Forepaugh and George F. Fish's adaptation (which is otherwise virtually identical with McKinney/Bandmann's and may have been plagiarised from it) this transformation has become the First Act climax, complete with a detailed description of how this is to be achieved:

At commencement of change the footlights are half lowered, making stage partially dark. Dr. Jekyll writhes as though in physical pain; assumes crouching position; during this with one hand he pulls portion [*sic*] of the wig which is brought forward and falls in a tangled mass over his forehead and eyes, at the same time with other hand he releases button or hook which releases pleat and causes coat to hang like loose gown, thus concealing the fact that the character is standing in crouching position. (Forepaugh, 1897, p. 4)

The transformation scene quickly became an important set piece, to the extent that it even made it onto record – Len Spencer, described by Bob Stanley as 'possibly the world's first million-selling recording artist' had a hit with it in 1905. (Stanley, 2022, pp. 32/33).

Most adaptations since the turn of the twentieth century have maintained this moment as a central plot point – what, in Stevenson, is a Final Act reveal becomes the First Act climax. Along with this has gone a switch in point of view, so that Jekyll is the protagonist from the beginning. This is made very literal in the 1931 film *Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* directed by Rouben Mamoulian, where the film starts with a subjective camera shot as Jekyll plays the organ before going to deliver a lecture on the dual nature of humanity – the first time we see him is in a mirror.

### **Expansion**

The second feature of the novella that has challenged adaptors is a very simple one. It's very short – about eighty pages in the edition that I have. This means that there is both an opportunity and a necessity to embellish – all adaptations add incidents, characters and sub-plots, to different effect. In particular, where the original takes place in a firmly homosocial world, and has no named female characters, most adaptations add several, typically creating a romantic/sexual interest for one or both personae. This is set up as early as the Sullivan and McKinney/Bandmann versions, which both create a fiancée for Jekyll, with a father (Danvers Carew, adapting a character from the novella, in Sullivan, the Reverend Howell in McKinney/Bandmann) who is killed by Hyde at the close of the First Act.

Later versions add to Jekyll's middle-class Madonna, pairing Hyde with a working-class Magdalen, often borrowing some of the atmosphere of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* - David J. Skal has written on the cross-pollination that has occurred between adaptations of Stevenson's and Wilde's novellas (Skal, 1993, p.140). The 1931 film, made before the Hays Code, is very explicit about the moral contrast between the two central women – Miriam Hopkins' Ivy is clearly a prostitute, and has a brief nude scene getting into bed, after which Mamoulian's camera practically leers at her swinging leg. The 1941 film, directed by Victor Fleming, is less sexual, but emphasises the (as it were) four-sided triangle of the central characters, with the three star names – Spencer Tracy, Lana Turner and Ingrid Bergman – introduced on the same title card. Often, an increased interest in sex is shown as either an effect or a cause of the transformation. John Barrymore's Jekyll, in the 1920 version, is inspired to create the potion after watching Nita Naldi dance at a music hall – an inter-title informs us that 'For the first time in his life, Jekyll had wakened to a sense of his baser nature.' Jonathan Rigby notes drily that this 'Jekyll seems to conceive his high-minded scheme in traumatised response to getting his first erection.' (Rigby, 2007, p.25.)

### **What does Hyde look like?**

The final difficulty for adaptors is that it's a novella with little physical description of its title character, or at least one of them. Like his near contemporary Dorian Gray, Edward Hyde is a character described almost entirely in terms of other people's reactions to him, with very little idea as to what he actually looks like. We're told that 'he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. He's an extraordinary looking man and yet I really can name nothing out of the way' that 'he gave an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation' and that he has a 'haunting sense of unexpressed deformity' (Stevenson, 1885/2002, pp. 10, 16 and 25)

The only objective facts that we are told is that he is both smaller and younger than Jekyll, who explains towards the end of the novella that '[t]he evil side of my nature, to which I had now transferred the stamping efficacy, was less robust and less developed than the good which I had just deposed'. (Stevenson, 1885/2002, p. 58). He later observes that, after a few transformations, it 'seemed to me as though the body of Edward Hyde had gained in stature, as though (when I wore that form) I were conscious of a more generous tide of blood' (Stevenson, 1885/2002, p. 62), suggesting that a truly faithful adaptation would show Hyde gradually getting both larger and older in his successive appearances. In Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill's comic series *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* and its 2003 film version, both set in a world in which Jekyll survives the events of the novella by faking suicide, Hyde is considerably larger than Jekyll, implying a gradual shift in the balance of power (Moore and O'Neill, 2000, p.134).

Hyde's youthfulness carries the suggestions of both homosexuality and illicit heterosexuality – before we know who he is, Hyde could be either Jekyll's bit of rough trade (the fact that he appears to be blackmailing Jekyll would have suggested this to at least some of the original readership) or his illegitimate son. An early version of Stevenson's story (the so-called 'Printers' copy') included a passage in which Utterson speculated on the latter idea (Veeder, 1986, p.23), which is echoed in the film of *Mary Reilly*. As Kim Newman points out, it would explain their physical resemblance, something that no one in most adaptations ever seems to notice. (Newman, 2011, p.368)

At least two screen versions – *The Two Faces of Dr Jekyll* (1960) and a 1980 BBC television version directed by Alistair Reid – pick up on Hyde's youthful appearance by making him not just younger but

more attractive than Hyde, so that it's the actor's pre-transformation appearance (bearded and jowly, in both cases) that requires the make-up job. It's telling that these two adaptations were released at opposite ends of the youth culture explosion of the '60s and '70s – the 1980 version manages to evoke two generations of British teenage culture by casting '60s icon David Hemmings as Jekyll/Hyde and punk bandwagon-jumper Toyah Wilcox as his maid.

These two are exceptional – if anything, most theatrical and cinematic Hydes look older than their Jekylls, as if aged by their dissipations like Dorian Gray's portrait. The Sullivan adaptation adds some lines about Jekyll's youth (Sullivan 1888, p. 5), possibly to account for the matinee-idol star Mansfield, who was thirty at the time. David Edgar writes that 'almost all the dramatisations have lopped 20 years off Jekyll's age' (Edgar, 1996, p. viii) which is a slight exaggeration – apart from Mansfield and the outlier of Paul Massie in *Two Faces*, who was 28, most stage and screen Jekylls have been aged between their mid-thirties (Fredric March) and mid-forties (David Schofield on stage, John Malkovich in *Mary Reilly*), with only Daniel Bandmann the fifty year-old described in the novella. (Stevenson, 1885/2002, p.19)

The one detailed physical description of Hyde, or part of him, comes towards the end, and is narrated by Jekyll himself:

[I]n one of my more wakeful moments, my eye fell upon my hand. Now the hand of Henry Jekyll (as you have often remarked) was professional in shape and size; it was large, firm, white and comely. But the hand which I saw, clearly enough, in the yellow light of a mid-morning London morning, lying half shut on the bed clothes, was lean, corded, knuckly, of a dusky pallor and thickly shaded with a smart growth of hair. It was the hand of Edward Hyde. (Stevenson, 1885/2002, p. 61)

John Sutherland, quoting this passage, writes that 'special-effects have gone straight for the box marked "werewolf"' (Sutherland, 1996, p. 187). which is slightly misleading. While it's certainly true that most stage and screen Hydes (apart from the two young ones mentioned above) are hairier, or at least more dishevelled, than their pre-transformation equivalents, the hairiest of them all – Fredric March in 1931 – is at least as simian as he is lupine, with a loping walk that evokes the idea of the missing link, while John Barrymore's elongated fingers and pointed head in 1920 suggest either a spider (emphasised in a scene, late in the film, in which an oversized, spectral, and possibly hallucinatory arachnid crawls over, and into, the body of the helpless Jekyll) or Richard III, a character the actor played both onstage and, for a single scene, on film, in an extract shown as part of the Paramount compilation film *Show of Shows* (1929) (Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is an overlap, particularly in the theatre, between Richard III and Edward Hyde – John Barrymore, Richard Mansfield, Daniel Bandmann, and Simon Russell Beale all played both parts.). It should also be mentioned that both of these portrayals carry a racial (arguably, racist) subtext – March looks like a white supremacist's idea of a black American, while Barrymore resembles an antisemitic caricature.

### **David Edgar's 1991 adaptation**

In 1991, the Royal Shakespeare Company staged David Edgar's adaptation of the novella, using its full original title. Edgar has associations both with the company and with adaptation, most obviously through his two-part adaptation of Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby* in 1980. As he acknowledged, in a piece written to accompany his 1996 revision of the script, adapting a text like *Jekyll and Hyde* involves looking beyond the original:

For in adapting something like Jekyll and Hyde one must deal not only with the original, but also with what has been subsequently done to it. [...] I thus found myself not only adapting Stevenson but also Mansfield (the 1887 play), Mamoulian (the 1931 movie), Fleming (the 1941 Spencer Tracy version) and indeed a clutch of contemporary re-readings, from Valerie Martin's chilling novel *Mary Reilly* [...] via at least one other current British stage version (by Robin Brooks for Empty Space) to – rumour had it – no fewer than three American musicals. (Edgar, 1996, p.ix)

In most respects, Edgar follows in the traditions established by the adaptations he refers to (and many others). After a brief opening scene with the characters of Utterson and Enfield using narration from the original text in a way that inevitably invoked *Nicholas Nickleby*, he made Jekyll into the protagonist, with the first transformation occurring roughly a quarter of the way into the story, a little earlier than where most adaptors place it.

Edgar stated that he wanted to return to 'Stevenson's original world of crusty, aging masculinity', (Edgar, 1996, p. ix) though he did add some female characters, breaking a little from tradition in giving Jekyll a sister, Katherine, rather than a love interest (for a self-proclaimed child of the '60s, Edgar writes surprisingly little about sexuality). This character was a Shavian 'new woman', characterised by the disapproving Utterson as 'free love, rational dress and neurasthenia' (Edgar, 1992, p.19), locating the story in late nineteenth (and indeed, late twentieth) anxieties around masculinity. An act of childhood cruelty by Henry to his sister served as this character's Rosebud, contributing to the self-hatred which created Edward Hyde.

Edgar also gives the Jekyll siblings an overbearing father, whose portrait stands over much of the action, like that of Hedda's father, the General, in Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* – Hyde slashes it, again echoing Dorian Gray, in the final scene (Edgar, 1992, p. 74). This moment, and indeed the whole device of the portrait, seems to have been inspired by a single line in the original novella, in which Jekyll refers to Hyde 'destroying the portrait of my father' (Stevenson, 1885/2002, p. 69). The production's poster, and the cover of the published text, show a photograph of Stevenson and his father, and the play suggests that Henry Jekyll, like Robert Louis Stevenson, was somewhat in awe of his father, who is given the significant first name of Edward, which is also made Henry's first name.

Edward Jekyll Snr. was also the character who originated his son's experiments in identity – this Jekyll was carrying on the work of his father. This feature – unique in adaptations that I know of – puts Jekyll in two literary/theatrical traditions – one of characters in early twentieth century plays burdened by the transgressions of their parents, like Vivien Warren in Bernard Shaw's *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1902) and Edward Voysey in Harley Granville Barker's *The Voysey Inheritance* (1905), who are working through their family histories of brothel-keeping and financial irregularity respectively, and also of those horror protagonists obsessed with the work of an ancestor, like the eponymous hero of H. P Lovecraft's *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* (written 1927, published 1941), who is similarly inspired by a painting and diary, (Lovecraft, (1927/2001, p. 133), and Wolf Frankenstein, played by Basil Rathbone, in *Son of Frankenstein* (1939). Versions of Mary Shelley's short novel lurked behind this play in other ways – Jekyll at one point tells Hyde 'You know, I thought that you'd be beautiful' (Edgar, 1992, p.37) a paraphrase of Frankenstein's words on first seeing his creation (Shelley, 1818/1969, p.57)

The second additional female creation was closer to precedent; Annie, a maid who, like Mary Reilly, comes to his house after ill-treatment from a brutal father. Raped and impregnated by Hyde, she is

thrown out by Jekyll – Edgar makes the point that both Hyde’s lack of morality, and Jekyll’s excess of it, contribute to the character’s downfall.

This philosophical debate is framed within a political one – Edgar picks up on another theme that unites the two *fins de siècle*, a concern with the underclass, or what in Stevenson’s era was called ‘the remnant’. Jekyll’s psychological solutions were positioned between those of two other characters, the social reformism of Lanyon, and the apocalyptic conservatism of Utterson:

We need not look as far as Africa for the evolutionary road may run down as well as up. We may find it too in Stepney and Shoreditch. And it strikes me, gentlemen, that if indeed the cause of the debilitation of these places is a matter of dispute, then till it’s settled, then we’d be best advised to set up barriers against its denizens and man ‘em. (Edgar, 1992, p.21)

Utterson’s language here is very similar to that of the right-wing commentators quoted by Edgar in his Thatcher-era essays ‘The Free or the Good’ (1985) and ‘Why Live Aid Came Alive’ (1985), such as Christopher Booker, and Auberon Waugh, who said, in the context of Heysel football stadium disaster, where 39 Italian fans were killed by a collapsing wall, after a clash with a group of Liverpool fans, that from now on the working-class ‘Calibans’ should be kept ‘locked up in their caves’. (Edgar, 1988, p.186, quoting the *Sunday Telegraph*, 2/6/85).

Apart from the addition of the father, Edgar’s decisions so far place him in, or at least not too far from, the mainstream of adaptors. His most controversial decision, ironically, was the one which was closest to Stevenson - he divided the title role, or roles, between two actors; Roger Allam and Simon Russell Beale respectively. This isn’t unprecedented – for instance, the gender-shift premise of *Doctor Jekyll and Sister Hyde* (1971) makes separation of the roles almost an inevitability, with Ralph Bates and Martine Beswick respectively. (This concept of this film allows for certain aspects of the original novella which are rarely seen on screen – Bates is one of the few screen Jekylls who is suspected of having an affair with his alter ego.) David Thomson once suggested, with his tongue only a little bit in his cheek, that a ‘thirties version could have cast Fred Astaire and James Cagney (Thomson, 1975, p.16).

The device allowed the feature, that stage and film adaptations generally lose, of Hyde’s relative youth and smallness – at the time the play was staged, Allam was 38, Beale 30. The disparity in their sizes was also used to comic effect – after one transformation, Jekyll awoke in Hyde’s clothes, which were too small for him, a reversal of a moment from the novella (Edgar, 1992, p.46)

The transformations, which in most adaptations since Sullivan and Bandmann have served as an opportunity for an actor’s *tour de force*, here took place through onstage illusions devised by Paul Kieve, such as Hyde’s first appearance, coming out of a mirror, or a moment late in the play, when Jekyll, who by now is losing control of his transformations, is riding on a train, disappears behind a newspaper, and reappears as Hyde. He then addresses the other passenger, a parson:

HYDE: Sir.

*The PARSON’S throat is dry.*

PARSON: Yes, sir.

HYDE: Sir. I beg of you one service.

PARSON: Name it, sir.

HYDE: Describe me.

(Edgar, 1992, p.66. I should mention at this point that I saw this production, and that this is the only moment I remember clearly, thirty years down the line.)

The device also allowed the two characters to converse, which they did, at some length. The play's climax was a dialogue scene between the two characters, played out as a clock counts down the final hour before their death, like the final scene of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*. Edgar emphasised the connection by writing the scene partly in blank verse – both Marlowe's and Goethe's versions of the story were also mentioned explicitly in the play (Edgar, 1992, p.20). Jekyll sets out what might be the central theme of the play in a carefully-wrought quadruple antithesis: 'I mean, that if I was the brake on your extremities of vice, you were the check on the excesses of my virtue.' (Edgar, 1992, pp. 79/80)

Reviewers tended to focus on the two-actor device more than any other aspect of the adaptation. Not all critics reacted negatively: Maureen Paton wrote in the *Daily Express* that the adaptation 'wisely uses two actors' (Paton, 1991) while James Christopher in *Time Out* called it 'a promising conceit' (Christopher, 1991)

However, there were more negatives: Charles Spencer in the *Daily Telegraph* called it 'a fatal error' (Spencer, 1991), Clive Hirschorn in the *Sunday Express* wrote that it 'diffuses much of the melodrama' (Hirschorn, 1991). A number of critics, including David Nathan in the *Jewish Chronicle*, made a joke about being 'in two minds' about the production (Nathan, 1991). Michael Billington in the *Guardian* made this literal, framing his review as a duologue between two sides of the same critic, one (Jekyll) seeking psychological depth, one (Hyde) blood-and-thunder melodrama. The published text of this version rather mischievously quotes one of this Jekyll's lines - 'I went expecting cheap thrills. I found instead a serious play about a divided soul.' – on its back cover. In context, the line isn't entirely a compliment.

Billington's duologue device was borrowed from Kenneth Tynan, whose 1954 review of Terence Rattigan's *Separate Tables* was framed as a duologue between a Young Perfectionist and Rattigan's hypothetical audience member Aunt Edna (Tynan, 1964, pp. 28-30). Billington's two voices end their duologue with an almost direct quote of Tynan's closing lines:

Dr J: I protest. Is there not something here for both of us?

Mr H: Yes, but not enough for either of us.

(Billington, 1991.)

### **David Edgar's 1996 adaptation**

In 1996, Edgar revised the play for the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, at the invitation of that theatre's Artistic Director, Bill Alexander. This had the shorter title of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and used a single actor, David Schofield, to play both title parts. Schofield was already associated with onstage physical transformation – his most celebrated performance was as John Merrick in Bernard Pomerance's *The Elephant Man*, at the start of which the naked actor 'contorts himself to approximate slides of the real Merrick (Pomerance, p.5)

In discussing the differences between the two versions, it's worth noting that, apart from the central device, there aren't that many – Jekyll's sister and family history remain present, as does the maid

Annie. This new version is described in its published text as ‘partially rewritten and completely revised’ (Edgar, 1996, p. xii) – the only significant differences are in the scenes of transformation, and those which are affected by changing to a single actor.

Most obviously, this means that the dialogue scenes between the two personae are lost, making the play considerably shorter, though Edgar creates a sort of dialogue between the two in an early scene, where he has Hyde discovering Jekyll’s diary, and reading some of the contents (taken directly from the original) ‘as a schoolmaster might read a schoolchild’s essay [...] for sarcastic rhetorical effect’ (Edgar, 1996, p. 35).

More significantly, the change in convention necessitated a rewrite of the final, climactic scene. In the 1991 version, Jekyll’s childhood story of assaulting his sister, which had led to his continuation of his father’s experiments, had come out in a scene between Jekyll and Hyde. In the 1996 script, Hyde (who, in both of Edgar’s adaptations, has a Glaswegian accent) encounters Annie, who becomes a version of the slasher film trope of the ‘final girl’ (Clover, 1992, *passim*, but especially pp. 35-41) wielding a mirror as van Helsing does his crucifix:

[HYDE] Now come on, Annie. There’s nae way out. There’s no one by.

*HYDE closes in on her with the knife.*

So why no – just –

*Suddenly ANNIE holds the silver tray up in front of her face.*

Uh – what –

*He’s taken aback.*

What’s this?

ANNIE: What do it look like, sir?

HYDE: What, you’re trying to fright me with my ain – ain face?

(Edgar, 1996, p.79)

This leads to the revelation of Jekyll’s first name, and his memory of his assault of his sister, and thus to his suicide.

A number of critics who reviewed this production had also written about the 1991 production, and used the opportunity to compare the two. Michael Coveney, in the *Observer*, described it as ‘an even greater recovery than [Andrew Lloyd Webber’s] *By Jeeves*’ and described it as ‘an urgent, superbly wrought and well-structured play; the exact opposite, in fact, of the impression it made five years ago.’ (Coveney, 1996). Paul Taylor in the *Independent* described one moment in fittingly purple prose:

Instead of the conjuring trick that swapped Allam for Beale in the railway carriage scene, we now see the excellent David Schofield sink into his seat and mutate into spasms, as if some alien is gouging its way out from within. Features contorting horribly, limbs twisting, he graduates from the prim Jekyll to a contemptuous, combative Glaswegian troll of a Hyde. [...] ‘Describe me!’ orders Hyde, his indescribable malignity of demeanour achieved by Schofield without any cosmetic aids.

(Taylor, 1996)



## Conclusion

The difference in critical reception between the two versions is striking, given that, as already mentioned, they aren't that different. In the Introduction to the 1996 version, Edgar wrote of what he considered to be the reasons for the first version's comparative failure:

[I]n addition to denying the audience the pleasure of seeing one man turn himself into another before their eyes, we discovered that the theatre's relentless corporeality prevented the audience making the essential leap of belief. Try as we might to convince them that they were seeing a battle inside a single soul, what was actually in front of them were two men in Victorian clothes having an argument in a laboratory.

(Edgar, 1996, p.ix)

It appears that these two factors – the transformation scenes and the more externalised climax – are central to the telling of this story. The interesting question is; why?

One simple answer to this is the question of audience expectation – an audience seeing a version of this story expects transformation scenes and a final confrontation scene, and the later version was giving them what they wanted. Edgar once wrote an essay about the changes that *Look Back in Anger* had wrought on the British drama, one of which was a greater willingness on the part of writers to go against audience expectations – he describes arguing to an American director that the dissatisfaction that preview audiences felt with the ending of one of his plays was exactly the effect he was going for. 'It was literally impossible for the American theatrical mind to conceive that the customer might be wrong. (Edgar, 1988, p.141). He goes on to describe the great shift of the 'eighties as a realisation that the place of the theatre is to celebrate as much as to criticise, and that there is a value in choosing 'to comfort rather than to agitate, to confirm rather than to disturb' (Edgar, 1988, p.142); in short, to give the audience what they want. The revisions show Edgar following his own advice, a few years later.

I'd also like to suggest a deeper reason for the importance of the transformation scenes, and of special effect scenes in general, which is that they act, for the audience, as an objective correlative for the supernatural or scientific impossibility at the centre of the narrative. We may not literally believe that Dr Jekyll has been able to split his personality in two, but if we see an actor doing something similar, or a special effect, that gives us enough for the purpose of the story. In the case of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, we need to see this transformation in order to experience the central metaphor of the story, what Stephen King refers to as the 'pagan conflict between man's Apollonian potential and his Dionysiac desires' (King, 1981, p. 95) and it has to be from Jekyll to Hyde, to include the suggestion that the latter might be the more powerful.

*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* has historically worked as an opportunity for this kind of display, either of special effects, as in the 1931 film, or of an actor's transformation, from Mansfield onwards. The latter is more associated with the stage than screen, although even there, actors have taken the opportunity to show their technique – Barrymore and Tracy both perform at least the initial parts of their transformation in a single take, without camera trickery or any of what Paul Taylor calls 'cosmetic aids'.

This connects to a larger point about the value of special effects, whether on stage or screen, and one very appropriate to the theme of this issue. Special effects have the greatest effect, and affect, when they act as a metaphor for what is in the story. The cinema of mad science, from George Melies,

through *The Invisible Man* (1993) to *Jurassic Park* (1993) and beyond, has worked in this dual way – the ingenuity of the actor, and the special effects team, acts as a symbol of that of the scientist, and vice versa, and makes it easier for us, as an audience, to enjoy both. Form and content, unlike Jekyll and Hyde, aren't two warring sides – used properly, they are two aspects of the same thing.

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