

# Changing Hands, Changing Forms: *Dracula* and Intermediation

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## Introduction

Faced with a powerful supernatural foe, the humans in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* employ an array of tools to overcome the vampire. Perhaps more important than their arsenal of earthly weapons or holy deterrents are the various modern communication technologies that they use to transmit information about their enemy. With the help of telegrams, press clippings, phonograph records, and shorthand journals – all ostensibly transcribed on Mina Harker's typewriter into the found text before us – the vampire hunters work tirelessly to first understand and then track the monster that threatens London. As Geoffrey Winthrop-Young has astutely noted, their advantage is not merely technological: Van Helsing and company succeed in their quest because they employ a decentralized nodal communication network whereas Dracula acts inefficiently as a hub, forcing all information to pass through his hands (114). The human network ultimately prevails because information can be collected in a variety of media and dispersed more rapidly, bringing members of the team up to speed when time is of the essence.

It is important to note, however, that it is not only information about the vampire that passes through the network; additionally, knowledge about how to use new media is transmitted, improving the overall effectiveness of the communication system and allowing deployment of diverse technological proficiencies. At its diegetic level, *Dracula* is intimately concerned with the

labor of forming and transforming knowledge, and this labor includes acquiring a set of learned techniques for recording information. In this essay, I will show how Stoker's depiction of the intermedial processing of information plays out in the plot and form of the novel itself, a novel that "narrates its own textual assembly" (Seed 73) – albeit a fictional assembly – and whose heterogeneous structure engages interlacing media conventions and capacities. The novel is not simply a panorama of the *fin-de-siècle* media ecology, but rather an active exploration of the points of contact and tension between those media.

Stoker's fascination with contemporary innovations in communication gives his novel a distinctly modern feel. Indeed, the array of technologies featured in *Dracula* has attracted much scholarly attention, and critics have read this array as characterizing the novel's uneasy place in between the gothic and modern traditions. For instance, Jennifer Wicke has located this tension in how the diverse materiality of the typescript's components supplements (and indeed overtakes) the novel's singular, human voices and creates an uncomfortable parallel with the vampire's own mass reproduction (473-74). Building on Wicke's influential essay, other critics have emphasized how the mechanical reproduction depicted by Stoker raises concerns about the authenticity of the found text and the voices recorded within it (Shah 441; Picker, "Victorian Aura" 776). Alongside issues like authenticity, other readings have focused on the particular social, historical, and technological contexts surrounding the novel. For example, there have been attempts to contextualize the new technologies showcased in *Dracula* within a changing secretarial profession that was increasingly open to women (though not with equal standing or pay) (Keep 405). This particular thread in the scholarship has fruitfully de-emphasized anxiety-based interpretations of the novel and instead revealed complex social discourses about the cultivation of professional skills and dispositions (Daly 183; Price and Thurschwell 2). While some have highlighted the

interdependence of phonography and typewriting in the context of the late nineteenth-century office, few have specifically explored how these intermedial exchanges, as represented at the diegetic level in *Dracula*, are sites at which protocols are tested and revised to form working concepts of those divergent media.

In other words, what deserves further attention is not just the mediality of the novel – its showcasing of distinct technologies – but rather its deep commitment to intermediality. *Dracula* provides a unique perspective on how users navigate new media and the extent to which they draw on previous knowledge and skills to make sense of information flows. At the heart of the matter are the *choices* that individuals make when they transcribe information between media – choices about style, organization, and their disposition towards the overlapping capacities of different communication technologies. Ultimately, the intermediality of the novel is discursive, a kind of *intermediation* where the characters (and, indeed, the reader) negotiate the malleable concepts and permeable boundaries of those emerging media forms. In this light, *Dracula* is more than a mere snapshot of the late-Victorian media ecology; rather, it lays the foundation for a discourse of multimodality that extends into our own century. In its own heterogeneous and hypermediated way (Bolter and Grusin 34), it reveals something about how we talk about the plurality of media: we encounter any given medium through the lens of its contemporaries and forerunners, and we adapt workable conventions at the intersections of new and old media.

Though *Dracula* depicts many interfacing technologies, this essay will focus on how the phonographic diary of Dr. Seward gets accessed, conceptualized, and transcribed into Mina's typescript. This particular chain of transfers highlights a complex knot of agency and authorship at the core of the novel's found-document premise: Seward records himself, Mina interprets and transcribes it, but ultimately, of course, they are composed by Stoker, who must make the words

before his reader plausibly resemble a speech-to-text transcription. At the same time, my purpose here is to interrogate what the story is telling its reader about the flow of information through media, and thus necessitates analyzing how the novel internally constructs its premise that the book is a real artifact documenting a real struggle against the vampire. The phonograph-to-typescript exchange also represents the greatest gulf between two of the novel's featured media, and reworking audio information into text provides the most amount of choice for the curator – Mina – who, within the story, undertakes the organization and standardization of Seward's diary. By imagining a phonograph into his story, Stoker first shows how new users encounter emerging media and then depicts (whether intentionally or not) the struggles associated with establishing a consistent set of protocols for moving information across media. Before turning to the novel, however, I will begin by briefly discussing the logic of intermediation through which I analyze the text. Following this, I will show how Mina, in her role as editor, curator, and archivist, adapts to the phonograph and develops a comparative understanding of its capacities. Finally, I will turn to the textual and typographic forms that capture the tensions and missteps of this process. Moving from the plot's dramatization of intermediation to its expression in the book's formal features, I will demonstrate that the negotiation between media saturates the entire novel, undermining attempts to standardize and homogenize its diverse mediality.

### **Convergence and Intermediation**

In his 2006 book, *Convergence Culture*, Henry Jenkins traces how multi-function digital media platforms engender a more robust participatory culture that “contrasts with older notions of passive media spectatorship” (3). If the old model of mass mediation created a one-way flow of information emanating from a central hub, the newer digital terrain allows for nodal interactions that blur the line between producers and consumers. By focusing on the “work [...] [that]

spectators perform in the new media system,” Jenkins eschews the notion that convergence is just the merging of functions in favor of the argument that “[c]onvergence occurs within the brains of individual consumers and through their social interactions with others” (3). The discourse that surrounds media – how we frame their social functions and our roles in relation to them – is thus of paramount importance. From Jenkins’ point of view, participants in this convergence culture are learning the ropes as those ropes are being braided, playing with (or against) rules that are not fully understood. For such a paradigm shift to occur, Jenkins asserts, the walls between media had to be broken down, allowing content to move between platforms and contexts. In naming the force that broke these barriers, Jenkins does not mince words: “Digitization set the conditions for convergence” (11).

Locating this paradigm shift in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and naming digitization as its harbinger, however, overlooks how another kind of convergence also operated within analog forms. While he briefly teases the notion that convergence might be “an old concept taking on new meanings,” Jenkins remains firmly committed to a framework where the new media in question are *our* new media, rather than the new media of earlier historical periods (6). However, the plot and form of *Dracula* offer the typewriter – which standardizes and merges various media forms into a user-created, amateur, nodally experienced archive (Kittler 72–73) – as a precursor to this breaking down of media divisions. Of course, by rendering everything in silent writing, Stoker’s novel is not engaging the exact same kind of multimodal convergence that Jenkins describes, but it does engage the same kind of logic and labor that finds a workable method for bringing disparate media together. Indeed, the participants in the media convergence dramatized in *Dracula* ironically embody the three messages Jenkins ascribes to the pioneers of the digital paradigm shift a century

later: “1. Convergence is coming and you had better be ready. 2. Convergence is harder than it sounds. 3. Everyone will survive if everyone works together” (10).

As is duly noted in *Convergence Culture*, the fluidity of the media landscape necessitates attention to media protocols (rather than technologies) and how those protocols migrate between media (Jenkins 13-14). What is more important than the merging or interfacing of delivery technologies is the way that experience using an older or adjacent medium can help to set the parameters for understanding and employing new media. The culture and epistemological frameworks that surround a communication technology – its acceptable uses, the regulations applied to it, and the logics of consumption used to market it – circulate through networks of users that collaborate to define what the medium is or could be. This is why Lisa Gitelman, in defining media as “socially realized structures of communication,” emphasizes that they are comprised of both “technological forms and their associated protocols,” that is, behaviors and relationships that “include a vast clutter of normative rules and default conditions, which gather and adhere like a nebulous array around a technological nucleus” (*Always* 7). Protocols are conventions that never truly settle, but that help users to navigate a medium: they are learned, debated, swapped, modified, combined, or abandoned as need be. Most importantly, because they are discursive, they can be imported from one context to another, allowing users to compare the capacities of each medium in the context of a specific task and to develop new ways of using them.

These points of exchange are essential to intermediality. Intermediality is distinct from convergence insofar as users and producers working in various media under the logic of intermediality may not strive to bring those media onto a single platform; likewise, intermediality is not necessarily invested in a logic of supersession that sees newer media as improvements on, or replacements for, older media. Rather, as Debra Rae Cohen points out, those intermedial

connections can be complex, with an older form serving as both a supplement to, and archive for, a newer medium, but also as a kind of training manual for users unfamiliar with the developing protocols of the emerging medium (“Intermediality” 571). She goes on to note elsewhere that those protocols can be mutually inflecting: older forms furnish protocols for newer media, but newer media also cast the protocols of their predecessors into sharp relief (Cohen, “Strange Collisions” 95). Though forms of communication may be abandoned or replaced as more efficient or powerful technologies are invented, the protocols associated with them remain in circulation and are adapted through intermedial exchange. This process becomes evident when those media are compared, put in competition, or given a supplementary relationship, but it is even more striking when information flows between media, causing users to think about what protocols carry over to the new context.

To emphasize this multidirectional exchange and its importance to the gradual emergence of conventions, I here prefer the term *intermediation* to *intermediality*. The former term is not offered as a corrective to the latter or to supersede it, but is rather used to highlight how mediation, in both senses of the word, is an active process of weighing and mixing adjacent protocols. *Coming to an understanding* of a new medium’s uses and possible meanings is an undecided discursive process full of trial, error, and trade-offs. Medium protocols are not born alongside new technologies and, as Gitelman points out,

new media are less points of epistemic rupture than they are socially embedded sites for the ongoing negotiation of meaning as such. Comparing and contrasting new media thus stand to offer a view of negotiability in itself – a view, that is, of the contested relations of force that determine the pathways by which new media may eventually become old hat. (*Always* 6)

This idea of negotiation and negotiability in media – that there is no pre-set historical trajectory for a medium’s development and conceptualization – is important for understanding how users

make choices when interfacing between old and new media. New media do not necessarily tend towards convergence, but through the process of intermediation, they might come to be understood as capable of sharing content and having comparable capacities.

Intermediation in *Dracula* can be seen on two levels. On the one hand, a closer examination of scenes where characters compare and negotiate the relative merits of different media reveals how existing protocols and frames of reference foster a more collaborative and integrated communicative practice. On the other hand, the choices they make regarding modes of communication filter up to the level of the book's form. At this level, the curator of these pre-digital materials must work out what kinds of convergence are possible and how the conventions of typography can communicate diverse forms of information. The phonograph, as the novel's most distinct and unfamiliar technology, demonstrates intermediation most pointedly. The very fact that characters must learn to use phonographs – at that point, still a relatively new and expensive luxury item – highlights that knowledge of media protocols is negotiated socially and that any attempt to merge forms begins with a discourse about what these media are, what advantages they provide, and how they speak.

### **Exchanging Medium Protocols**

When the human protagonists in the novel first encounter Dracula, their experiences and observations are isolated from each other. They each individually follow an inclination to record as much as possible about the vampire, but without the validation offered by outside verification, they fear they are succumbing to irrationality. The first phase of Jonathan Harker's narrative is one characterized by constant disbelief at what he is witnessing and constant doubt that his record reflects a sane mind. It is only when his shorthand diary is reopened and read against other testimonial texts that it becomes usable information, providing essential background in the fight

against the vampire. Realizing this, Mina suggests that they compile the data into a single typewritten document, one that is legible, circulable, and, most importantly, easily updated (Stoker 161, 196). Only information that is up-to-date, reproducible, and indexable can serve the purposes of the group. In this fashion, the process of coming to know the vampire corresponds to a new way of viewing information and the media that carry it.

This choice to compile their records into a single archival text, however, creates a unique problem that must be addressed in order for their work to continue. Each of the story's testimonies belongs to a character with a distinct set of media skills, recording habits, and preferences. Jonathan delights in shorthand, Mina is adept with her typewriter, and Seward keeps his diary in phonograph. Bringing these diverse forms together into a monomedial archive is not a simple process and requires overcoming *intermedial lag*. By this, I do not mean delays in the movement of information, but rather the inertia that an individual must overcome when they transition to using an unfamiliar medium, which can manifest as confusion, resistance, or hesitant steps while working through a learning curve. For all their technological savvy, the humans in *Dracula* must still acclimate to new media while working out protocols for processing the information contained in their colleagues' records.

To represent the difficulty of learning a new medium, Stoker deploys an inventive narrative arrangement that makes use of the novel's composite structure. In a rapid-fire series of interlaced entries alternating between Seward and Mina's points of view – a scene that strives towards a gapless narrative composed of simultaneous perspectives (Seed 73-74) – Stoker layers the meeting of the two characters with a mutual introduction to their respective recording practices. Emphasizing the intimacy and “sensual charge” of these scenes, John M. Picker notes that the phonograph in *Dracula* “acts as a locus of sexual anxiety and symbolism among Seward, Lucy

Westenra, and Mina” demonstrating “the power of hearing and sound in this novel both to consummate and consume” (*Victorian Soundscapes* 135). While the scene undoubtedly contains erotic undertones, it is also significant in how it ties the two characters’ professional identities and purposes to varying sets of media protocols. At both the diegetic level and in the formal arrangement of the story, those protocols are being defined, compared, and exchanged. Mina and Seward get to know each other, and quickly bond, specifically by learning about the other’s relationship to their chosen medium.

The scene begins with Seward’s account of how Jonathan and Mina’s journals came to him by way of Van Helsing as the two await Mina’s arrival in London. With the typed copy in hand, Seward greets Mina and brings her back to his home/asylum. Awaiting her in his study and finishing up a phonographic diary entry with the typed papers open before him, he states that he “must get her interested in something, so that [he] may have an opportunity of reading them” (Stoker 195). Knowing how precious time is, Seward is eager to carve out a chance to get up-to-speed on Jonathan’s side of the story. Drawing together the various fragments of information, at this point of the story, is both urgent and time-consuming, which makes the lag in the transfer of information even more pronounced. Time is of the essence, but it is not entirely clear how to keep all parties occupied as they work individually on processing new information. Luckily, serendipity strikes and Mina is captivated by Seward’s phonograph, a device she has never seen before, knows only by description, and is eager to use; what starts off as a distraction, however, becomes an essential stage in the process of intermediation.

Mina’s fascination with the phonograph is a bit surprising (since the phonograph was not a terribly new invention in the late nineteenth century and she had had opportunities to see one at the Westenra home), but it speaks perhaps to the slowness with which the technology penetrated

the European market (Gelatt 101). Her unfamiliarity with the phonograph manifests as unfamiliarity with some of its associated protocols, such as speaking to it while alone, keeping a diary in it, and using forked metal eartubes to listen to the cylinders (Stoker 195-198). In a short span of time, then, she must become acquainted with how the phonograph works, what its possible uses are, and how to best take “dictation” from it. Seward, for his part, admits that he has never given any thought to how to organize and retrieve specific information from his collection of wax cylinders (Stoker 196), and so it falls to Mina to listen to the entirety of his diary (which is spread out across these cylinders) and transcribe the information into a format that can be more easily subdivided, catalogued, ordered, and indexed against other records. To achieve this, the two characters go over the operation of the device, with Seward setting the playback at a slower pace so that Mina can convert Seward’s stream of thought into type (Stoker 198). In this light, intermediation means not only the passing of information from one medium to the another, but also the process of exchanging protocols, practices, and knowledge about a medium that can streamline the movement of that information.

Before Mina can start using Seward’s phonograph, and before she can fully undertake the project of transcription, she needs to develop a working understanding of that medium. In other words, the exchange of protocols involves learning how to talk about, and conceptualize a relationship to, the phonograph. For instance, before sharing their respective records, Mina and Seward need to navigate the sensitive issue of Seward’s private diary entries, which cover his feelings for Lucy and the gruesome story of her death (Stoker 195). After Mina has listened to his failed courtship, and thereby gotten to know the doctor better, the two reconvene and briefly talk about the phonograph, placing it as a mediator between them. Seward initially takes responsibility

for the diary's effect on Mina, stating "I greatly fear I have distressed you," but Mina complicates things by passing agency to the phonograph itself:

That is a wonderful machine, but it is cruelly true. It told me, in its very tones, the anguish of your heart. It was like a soul crying out to almighty God. No one must hear them spoken ever again! See, I have tried to be useful. I have copied out the words on my typewriter, and none other need now hear your heart beat, as I did. (Stoker 197)

Her oscillation between anthropomorphizing the machine by granting it a voice and saying it captured Seward's soul demonstrates an uncertainty about how to conceptualize the phonograph. Does the talking machine (as it was colloquially known) speak for him or does he speak through it? To reduce the emotional information that might prevent Seward from sharing these records with his male companions, Mina uses her typewriter to mute the traces of Seward's anguish. While the phonograph excels at capturing the texture of the doctor's psyche, to the point of almost coming alive itself, type has its own advantages, making the content shareable and capable of being integrated with the other written texts being amassed. In other words, what is being learned and negotiated here is not just how to use the medium, but also how to approach and understand its capacities.

The content and narrative arrangement of these scenes denotes a heightened awareness among the characters about the media protocols they employ. The reader too, in rapidly oscillating between these two simultaneous points of view on the same scene, is being asked to compare those protocols and consider how they can be subsumed into the typed pages before us. The mobility of information between media is not only evident at the novel's diegetic level, but is also impacting the organization and presentation of those records in the typescript. The challenge that Mina faces in reconceptualizing an audio diary as a written record intensifies as she finds ways to substitute her own transcription protocols for Seward's protocols of recording. Thus, this short scene in the

midst of the action gestures towards a second level of intermediation, one in which the typed page must adapt phonography into the conventions of print as best it can.

### **Writing the Talking Machine**

As Lisa Gitelman has pointed out, *Dracula* is perhaps the first novel to “fictionalize itself as a typescript,” thereby relegating its supposed “diverse materiality” to the background in favor of the printed word (*Scripts* 215-216). The process of transcription dramatized within the story standardizes the various sources of information – converting wax etchings or newsprint clippings into typed ink – and enables the found-text premise of the novel, as that standardization would allow for wider circulation in a way that a collection of diverse forms would not. Because it fictionalizes itself as a typescript and fictionalizes its own creation story, *Dracula* calls both explicit and subtle attention to dynamics of editing and curation that occur at the diegetic level. For instance, the novel proper is preceded by an unsigned and unattributed prefatory note that announces *Dracula*’s status as a found text, assuring the reader that the contents are backed up by contemporary documentation (Stoker 5). Stoker went even further in a authorial preface (signed B.S.) that he attached to the 1901 abridged Icelandic edition, where he claims to merely be a curator assembling the text for the Harkers and Dr. Van Helsing (qtd. in Miller 278-279). These paratextual inclusions blur the boundary between fact and fiction and complicate the issue of who, at the diegetic level, possesses agency in the assembly of the text: a semi-fictional version of Stoker, an unnamed editor, Mina, or Jonathan, who boldly signs his name to the epilogue (Stoker 327). In short, *Dracula* presents itself as a text with many authors and compilers, each of whom leaves a mark on the arrangement and appearance of the final published version. The traces of their agency are made manifest as the story gets inscribed, transcribed, and re-transcribed. While we cannot know what kinds of silent corrections a figure like the unnamed editor might have made at a later

date, we *are* shown how Mina takes Seward's phonograph recordings and transforms them into type. Thus, for the sake of analyzing how editorial agency affects the transcription process, I am assuming that the text we read represents – at least to an extent – Mina's purposeful or inadvertent choices as she puts together the “mass of material” (Stoker 326).

By collecting and collating the various and copious records produced by the band of vampire hunters, Mina hopes that she will reveal patterns and connections that might have been missed otherwise. Upon realizing that Seward's extensive phonographic diary may be a trove of incidental information (Stoker 197), Mina immediately gets to work transcribing it. Meticulously, she sifts through the numerous cylinders and copies out their content. This, however, is a more complex task than it might initially seem. While the transcription of Seward's semantic meaning may be straightforward, Mina still has to make certain choices in how to represent that audio information in written form, both in terms of what typographic features to use and in how to break up and tag his uncatalogued recordings. Though the novel does not include scenes of Mina's decision-making, as it had with her introduction to phonography, the results of her curatorial work can be spotted throughout the novel in the metadata and typographic marks that frame and arrange the typescript's entries. The phonographic diary is not the only document within the archive originating in another medium (newspaper clippings and shorthand being others), but it presents some of the most striking examples of how users transfer protocols between media.

The first hurdle to overcome in transcribing the phonographic diary is to organize Seward's meandering soliloquy into discrete entries that can be dated and arranged. Unlike with a print diary, like the one Mina keeps, one cannot flip through Seward's cylinders to easily pull up a specific moment. As Alison Case has pointed out, phonography lacks the capacity for easy “retroactive self-reflection” that type offers (230), and so transcription into print trades the advantage of quicker

recording time for economy of access and ease of movement across the document (Kittler 73). Mina's first task, then, is to determine where the breaks and headings of the diary might be and how many cylinders constitute one entry. Even with the tight-etching of the wax cylinder's grooves, the recording time of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century phonograph peaked at approximately two minutes, though it grew to four minutes by 1908 (Chew 48); thus we can assume that Seward's rambling and digressive style – which frequently includes verbatim recreations of conversations – necessitated carry-over between cylinders. And yet the typed document contains no traces of breaks or pauses for changing cylinders. At one moment, the doctor notes that he will take a particular cylinder to Lucy's house to finish his entry, but then adds the equivalent of six pages of material to it, without pause (Stoker 130, 133-139). While this might be chalked up to Stoker's own carelessness in representing the new medium's capacities, within the world of the story it gestures towards a particular problem for Mina and the types of invisible labor that go on behind the scenes during intermediation (Fleissner 83). As compiler of this "mass of type-writing" (Stoker 326), Mina must deploy and adjust conventions of writing and diary-keeping to create a point of contact between these two divergent media. Put differently, her work entails subsuming the loose, linear temporal flow of the phonograph to the spatial logic of the page.

In the novel, we see there are a number of strategies to mark a break in time or demarcate distinct sections of the typescript. Chapters, headings, sub-headings, and dates are all metadata that signal a transition of voice, scene, and/or medium. When dealing with the phonograph, whose pauses might be empty recording or a full stop, Mina has some liberty with which to draw on conventions. Thus, while an italicized date, "*later*," or "*midnight*" separated by a *tiret* (Stoker 109) might signal that Seward has stopped recording and begun again, something like the ellipsis following his decision to go without sleep is more ambiguous (Stoker 97). It indicates that there is

some missing or omitted time on the original record that cannot be exactly represented on the page, and yet, at the same time, gives no clear information about how to measure that break. From context, we know that Seward has gone back and listened to the earlier part of the cylinder before returning the needle to the fresh wax, but “rewinding” (to use an anachronistic term) and playback have no direct correspondence in a written medium. The closest comparison might be when Mina scours the archive to draw links between bits of information, a moment of “inscribed reading” (Hustis 27) that she punctuates with a series of ellipses (Stoker 303-304). Similarly, Mina uses a conventional, non-phonetic piece of typographic data as a workable stand-in for representing how the phonographic medium can be used and experienced. While the choice may create inconsistency or confusion, it demonstrates how flexible users can be when navigating multiple sets of incongruous medium conventions.

Parsing the pauses and breaks of Seward’s near-stream-of-consciousness diary is challenging for the transcriber, but so too is finding typographic conventions for the peculiarities of speech. In most of the novel, Mina is transcribing written reports of conversations, but there is an added layer of complexity with Seward’s phonographic diary. While our alphabet is reasonably capable of conveying the sound of speech, “[t]he complicated question of transcription as descriptive vs. prescriptive of sound values allows for much latitude in the interpretation from sound to visual code and back” (Drucker 240). A transcriber does indeed have options when it comes to spelling words, but even more when it comes to representing an absence or pause, the break-down of language, or its non-verbal sounds. At a moment of heightened emotion, for instance, Seward loses control of his voice and Mina must find a way to convey his sobbing collapse in writing: “I–I cannot go on–words and v–voice–f–fail m–me!...” (Stoker 288, ellipsis in original). That Mina transcribes the texture of a stutter using dashes, repeated letters, and ellipsis

is indicative of her increasing proficiency as an interpreter of Seward's recordings. Without a systematic set of guidelines for how to visually represent these noises and gaps, and working within her typewriter's constraints, Mina draws on a mix of existing conventions to approximate what is heard through the eartubes. None of those choices are a given, but are rather the product of a negotiation between what is legible within the destination medium and what can best capture Seward's vocal qualities.

The one break that Seward *does* vocally register is his eventually reversed closure of his diary following Lucy's death. The closing of the diary (a failed speech-act) appears as "FINIS," a conspicuously scriptorial sign-off for an oral record (Stoker 159). If a reader might wonder if this was in fact spoken by Seward (as opposed to being metadata like the added dates), Seward's reinauguration of the diary explicitly states that he spoke the word "finis" into the phonograph; instead of starting afresh, he is "going on with the same record" since "there is no such thing as finality" (Stoker 169). There are a few important points to raise here. The first is the typographic distinction between "FINIS" (capitalized and centered on the page) and "finis": why does Mina set this declaration apart, as though its status is different from Seward's other spoken words? This is especially strange considering that she *knows* this is not the end of the diary as she is listening to all these entries together. Once again, book logic is having an effect on the process of intermediation. Mina has an ironic position with regards to the "finality" of the diary, but types in a manner that fits the conventions and declarative spirit of the utterance. Secondly, there are two ways of understanding what Seward means by "same record": either he is continuing his recording on the remaining space of the cylinder (collapsing the closure and re-opening together) or he is continuing on with a chronicle that is made up of several cylinders. If the former is the case, then Mina's editorial choices come to the forefront, as she chooses to separate what is sonically

sequential in favor of a larger archival structure that includes intervening entries. If the latter is the case, then the entries not only appear more distinct, but the integration of Seward's testimony is a bit easier, as at least two cylinders signal their relative placement. Because the typing process effaces the cylinders from view, however, the novel does not definitively decide between these possibilities and therefore leaves open the question of what exactly constitutes *a* record. By the same token, the process of intermediation that negotiates between the media forms that make up the putative typescript of *Dracula* does not allow the tensions and solutions associated with its compilation to fade from view.

## **Conclusion**

As *Dracula* progresses towards its climax, the humans need to alter their media usage in response to different constraints, making the most of the tools at their disposal. Likewise, Mina's conventions for compiling those records are put to the test, creating more challenging adaptations that begin to stretch the governing logic of standardization and the reader's credulity. For instance, in one of Van Helsing's few contributions to the narration, he records a note to Jonathan in Seward's phonographic diary (duly noted by Mina in the metadata), a note which is "read" (not played) to Mina by Jonathan. Van Helsing's note ends with an all-caps and right-aligned signature, "VAN HELSING," which we can assume he spoke and Mina formatted into writing (Stoker 274). Written epistles may require signed names, but this seems excessive with a phonographic recording, as the voice already identifies the speaker. Van Helsing, Mina, and Johnathan cannot fully shed the form of the written note, whose logic calls for specific protocols of address. These recurring slippages demonstrate the difficulty of describing the place of the phonograph in this multi-media collection. At the same time, the hypermediacy of the novel here reaches its apex. The logic of print might push in the direction of standardization, but the friction produced by the

uncertainty of how much information to include, and how to represent it, ensures that intermediation is on full display.

Whether intentionally or accidentally, Stoker's decision to depict a phonographic diary in *Dracula* gestures towards a logic of mediation that outstrips what the printed page can do. It cannot achieve the convergence enjoyed by digital platforms, but it nevertheless contains early traces of an ethos of multimodality that took root long after it. It is not important, here, that the novel cannot play back Seward's recordings: it is questionable whether that would have served the purposes of the human characters in the story even if it were possible at the time. Rather, what should be emphasized is that *Dracula*'s multimodality is portrayed as intermediation: it is the movement of information between modes, a weighing of their relative merits, and a negotiation between sets of protocols. As a message is relayed between media, users make choices about how to frame and understand that message. What *Dracula*'s media ultimately reveal is that convergence, multimodality, and intermediation – whether in the analog or digital era – are not smooth processes, and that we should account for the invisible labor and invisible assumptions that guide users' choices when they locate points of transfer between media.

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