

The Misrepresentation of Father-Daughter Incest in Neo-Victorianism on Screen: Misogynistic and Victim-Blaming Understandings of Gendered Violence in *Penny Dreadful* (2014-2016)

Dina Pedro¹

Fecha de recepción: 30 de mayo de 2023 / Fecha de aceptación: 27 de octubre de 2023

Abstract. Incest has traditionally been regarded as the universal taboo, despite its convoluted and changeable nature from period to period –both in the social and legal arenas (Tate 2013). As a result, incest has proven to be a fascinating topic for authors across history, particularly in the case of Victorian and neo-Victorian Gothic fiction. We can find copious examples of incestuous relationships in (neo-)Victorian literature and culture, whose representation aims 1) to question idealised conceptualisations of the nuclear family, 2) to denounce sexual and domestic violence against women and 3) to cater to the audience’s morbid fascination for these forbidden relationships (Llewellyn 2010; Cox 2014). *Penny Dreadful* is a neo-Victorian TV series that exploits incest to seemingly denounce patriarchal and sexual violence. However, as I show in this article, the (mis)representation of its female protagonists, Lily and Vanessa –as a misandrist woman and a *femme fatale*, respectively–, might mislead the audience into victim blaming them for their own downfalls, rather than acknowledge their status as survivors of gender-based violence. Therefore, in spite of the series’ apparent feminist drive, *Penny Dreadful* ends up reproducing patriarchal ideologies that blame and silence the victim and side with the perpetrator.

Keywords: father-daughter incest; Neo-Victorianism on screen; sexual violence; Victorian sexuality; victim blaming.

[es] La tergiversación del incesto paterno-filial en el neovictorianismo en pantalla: concepciones misóginas y culpabilización de la víctima de violencia de género en *Penny Dreadful* (2014-2016)

Resumen. El incesto se ha considerado tradicionalmente como el tabú universal, a pesar de su naturaleza compleja y cambiante de una época a otra –tanto en el ámbito social como en el legal (Tate 2013). Por consiguiente, el incesto ha resultado ser un tema fascinante para los autores a lo largo de la historia, especialmente en el caso de la ficción gótica victoriana y neovictoriana. Podemos encontrar abundantes ejemplos de relaciones incestuosas en la literatura y cultura (neo)victorianas, cuya representación tiene como objetivo 1) cuestionar las conceptualizaciones idealizadas de la familia nuclear, 2) denunciar la violencia sexual y doméstica contra las mujeres y 3) satisfacer la fascinación morbosa del público por estas relaciones prohibidas (Llewellyn 2010; Cox 2014). *Penny Dreadful* es una serie de televisión neovictoriana que explota el tropo del incesto para aparentemente denunciar la violencia patriarcal y sexual. Sin embargo, como vemos en este artículo, la (engañosa) representación de sus protagonistas femeninas, Lily y Vanessa –como una mujer misándrica y una *femme fatale*, respectivamente–, podría inducir al público a culpabilizarlas de su propia ruina, en lugar de reconocer su condición como supervivientes de violencia de género. Por lo tanto, a pesar del aparente impulso feminista de la serie, *Penny Dreadful* finalmente reproduce ideologías patriarcales que culpan y silencian a la víctima y se ponen del lado del agresor.

Palabras clave: incesto paterno-filial; Neovictorianismo en la pantalla; violencia sexual; sexualidad victoriana; culpabilización de la víctima.

Contents. 1. Introduction. 2. Neo-Victorianism and the Incest Taboo. 3. Rewriting the Myth of Pygmalion and Galatea in *Penny Dreadful*: The Case of Lily and Dr Frankenstein. 4. The Limits of Consent: Victim Blaming Vanessa Ives in *Penny Dreadful*. 5. Conclusion.

How to cite this article: Pedro, D. (2023). The Misrepresentation of Father-Daughter Incest in Neo-Victorianism on Screen: Misogynistic and Victim-Blaming Understandings of Gendered Violence in *Penny Dreadful* (2014-2016) en *Complutense Journal of English Studies* 31, 1-11.

¹ Departamento de Filología Inglesa y Alemana, Universitat de València
ORCID: 0000-0002-4637-998X
Email: Leopoldina.Pedro@uv.es

1. Introduction

Incest has long been regarded as “a universal and trans-historical taboo” (Tate 2013, 181), even though its definition and the sociocultural reactions to it vary from culture to culture. Incest is not only stigmatised because it might produce a “deformed, insane, or markedly ill” offspring, but especially because of “culturally specific, historically contingent, coercive laws and institutions” (Cheira 2017, 148). Due to its morbid nature and treatment as a social taboo, it has historically been a prolific motif in both literature and popular culture, with examples such as Gabriel García Márquez’s novel *Cien años de soledad* (1967), A. S. Byatt’s *Morpho Eugenia* (1992), the original *Star Wars* trilogy (1977-1983) or the successful TV series *Game of Thrones* (2011-2019).

Our present fascination with incest seems to be rooted in nineteenth-century understandings of the concept, especially in terms of its convoluted ethical, legal and aesthetic theorisations during the period (Llewellyn 2010, 235). Incest was a prominent literary trope, which flourished during the Romantic movement and the Gothic period, with literary referents such as Jane Austen’s oeuvre, Charles Dickens’s *Hard Times* (1854) or Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839). Given that Neo-Victorianism recuperates nineteenth-century tropes, characters and aesthetic elements, it is no surprise that incest is also a prolific plotline in this genre, particularly on screen. This is the case of *Crimson Peak* (2015), *Taboo* (2017-), *Carnival Row* (2019-2022), or *Penny Dreadful* (2014-2016), the TV series that I analyse in this article. The purpose of neo-Victorian representations of incest appears to be threefold: 1) to challenge the idealised views on the nuclear family, 2) to denounce patriarchal violence and 3) to cater to the audience’s morbid and voyeuristic expectations (Llewellyn 2010, Cox 2014). In the case of *Penny Dreadful*, this TV series forefronts domestic and sexual violence against women through the father-daughter incest plotline.

Penny Dreadful (2014-2016) is a neo-Victorian horror TV series created by John Logan for Showtime and Sky. The series is as a collage of nineteenth-century literature translated to the visual realm that invites viewers to spot its Victorian and Gothic literary references. Indeed, *Penny Dreadful* follows the pattern of other neo-Victorian commercial products, most notably Alan Moore’s *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (1999), in “transcend[ing] any division between highbrow and lowbrow” (Thoss 2015, 1) literature. This is so because the series appropriates plots and characters from a wide range of nineteenth-century narratives: from canonical Romantic literature like Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) through Victorian classics such as Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897) or Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) to the penny dreadful *Varney the Vampire; or, the Feast of Blood* (1845-1847).

Unlike other neo-Victorian screen texts, *Penny Dreadful* does not explore sibling incest, but parental-filial relationships. The series focuses on two different ‘couples’: first, it portrays the unbalanced relationship between Dr Frankenstein and his latest creation, Lily. He resurrected her as an immortal woman in order for her to become his first creature’s bride, after asphyxiating her with a pillow. However, he eventually falls in love with her and they become romantically involved. Second, it depicts the complex association between Vanessa Ives and her replacement father, Sir Malcolm Murray –her best friend’s father and her mother’s former lover.

In this article, I first discuss the intimate relationship between (neo-)Victorian literature and the incest trope. Second, I explore how *Penny Dreadful* seemingly exploits the father-daughter incest motif in order to challenge patriarchal ideologies that attempt to ‘domesticate’ women through the character of Lily Frankenstein. Then, I focus on the subversive female protagonist, Vanessa Ives, and her relationship with her replacement father, Sir Malcolm Murray. Finally, I conclude that, despite the series’ attempts to denounce gender-based violence in both Victorian and contemporary societies, both Vanessa and Lily are victim blamed or presented as partially responsible for their own downfalls. As a result, *Penny Dreadful* perpetuates patriarchal ideologies that blame the victim and side with the perpetrator, which makes it more difficult for the audience to empathise with their pain.

2. Neo-Victorianism and the Incest Taboo

The term ‘Neo-Victorianism’ has been the subject of a heated debate, particularly in terms of its scope, characteristics and limitations. According to Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn, neo-Victorian texts should “be *self-consciously engaged with the act of (re)interpretation, (re)discovery and (re)vision concerning the Victorians*” (2010, 4, emphasis in original). Nonetheless, Marie Luise Kohlke offers a more inclusive approach to Neo-Victorianism and argues that it should be understood as an umbrella term that includes all historical fiction related to the long nineteenth century (2014, 27), as long as it presents itself “as socio-political critique, as reinvigorated historical consciousness, as memory work, as critical interface between the present and past” (2008, 1). In this article, I align with Kohlke’s definition of the term, given that *Penny Dreadful* is a product of contemporary popular culture, which appropriates literary characters and plots from the long nineteenth century to offer a socio-political critique of both Victorian and present gender politics through the incest motif.

Incest was a prominent literary trope that flourished during the Romantic movement –focusing especially on brother-sister or sibling relationships– and the Gothic period –mainly exploring parent-child relationships (Richardson 1985, 738). Moreover, nineteenth-century literature reflected the social, legal and aesthetic changes that incest experienced throughout the period, portraying a wide range of relationships, from “licit to illicit” ones (Archimedes

2005, 62). Incest has historically been difficult to define, both as a legal and (im)moral concept. Consequently, its portrayal in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature varied from “forms of close familial alliances and sibling-like marriages” to an uncontested but morbid form of “perversion” (Archimedes 2005, 63).

It was not until the 1880s that incest came to be legally defined as sexual intercourse between close family members. However, the biggest legal change related to this concept occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century, with the passing of the Punishment of Incest Act (1908), which made it a punishable crime. This was so because child abuse within the family came to be acknowledged as a form of incest, particularly when it was perpetrated by a male relative against a young female one (Kuper 2002, 180). Before that, incest –like other crimes of sexual nature, such as bigamy or adultery– had been under the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical authorities from the twelfth to the nineteenth century (Kuper 2002, 158), when it had vaguely been understood “as a form of fornication or adultery, to be punished by a light penalty” (Kuper 2002, 160). However, after the shift from ecclesiastical to civil legislation, incest was still ambiguously defined as sexual intercourse between individuals who were not allowed to marry “by church decree,” including “certain relatives by marriage” (Kuper 2002, 161-162) –as in the case of a wife’s sister.² As a result of these conceptual and legal changes, incest became “a structural, artistic and creative device or trope [that] played with, reinvented and reinterpreted these earlier ethical concerns” (Llewellyn 2010, 134) in both eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature.

In the eighteenth century, both realistic novels –such as Daniel Defoe’s *Moll Flanders* (1722), Henry Fielding’s *Joseph Andrews* (1742) or Fanny Burney’s *Evelina* (1778)– and Gothic ones –e.g., Matthew Lewis’s *The Monk* (1775) or Horace Walpole’s *The Mysterious Mother* (1768)– exploited the incest motif to “titillate, shock or amuse an eager readership” (Archimedes 2005, 62). Throughout the century, these representations of incest presented a wide range of alliances forbidden by law –particularly father-daughter, uncle-niece and guardian-ward relationships– which “appeared as examples of unspeakable horror” (Archimedes 2005, 62) in Gothic literature. Father-daughter incest also featured prominently in Victorian sensation novels (Vance 2003, ii), which exposed the underlying dysfunctions of the nuclear family. Some of these novels include Wilkie Collins’s *The Woman in White* (1859-60), Mary Elizabeth Braddon’s *Lady Audley’s Secret* (1862) and Charles Dickens’s *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870). Likewise, sibling incest flourished during the Romantic period, particularly in poetry, as in Coleridge’s *Osorio* (1797), Southey’s *Thalaba* (1801), Wordsworth’s *White Doe of Rylstone* (1815) or Percy B. Shelley’s *Manfred or Laon and Cythna* (1817) (Richardson 1985).

However, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature not only explored illicit incestuous relationships, but also “bourgeois, socially acceptable models of incest based on supportive sibling alliances” (Archimedes 2005, 63). These relationships stemmed from the period’s tendency towards “familialization,” a term which consisted in expanding social alliances by turning non-family –like friends or neighbours– into family members. Building on this concept, Julie Shaffer coined the term “familialized incest” to designate a “familial feeling between two non-blood related or affinal characters” which “is shown to be capable of gliding into sexual feeling unproblematically” (1999, 68). This would be the case of Vanessa Ives and Sir Malcolm Murray in *Penny Dreadful*, who –despite not being blood related– share such a close bond that he eventually becomes her replacement father. Shaffer uses the term “familialized incest” to discuss fraternal love and marriage between cousins in Jane Austen’s novels, and how they arguably promote marriages based on similar backgrounds to strengthen the alliances between close relations (1999, 68). Nonetheless, she also stresses that “familialized incest” has negative connotations in Gothic literature, where it was portrayed as a “threat” (1999, 67) that brought to the forefront “the horror of incest or incestuously-based betrayal” (1999, 69), so that the audience could empathise with the female victim.

Neo-Victorian fiction has inherited its nineteenth-century predecessor’s fascination for incest, particularly on screen, where sibling relations feature prominently. This is the case of *Crimson Peak*, *Taboo* or *Carnival Row*, where the topic is morbidly exploited to challenge the romanticised myth of the nuclear family. The parent-child incest taboo has also been abundantly explored in literature and the arts throughout history –the most prominent example being Oedipus’s relationship with his mother, Iocasta, in *Oedipus Rex* (Sophocles 429 BC). Nevertheless, instances of father-daughter incest are not as prominent as sibling relations in Neo-Victorianism on screen –with the notable exception of *Penny Dreadful*. According to Jessica Cox, the incest trope in neo-Victorian fiction “may serve to highlight past wrongs, [but] they might also be read as both opportunistic and voyeuristic, indicative of a contemporary fascination with personal narratives of trauma” (2014, 139). This is the case in *Penny Dreadful*, given that the series attempts to denounce patriarchal violence against women, but it does so in such a sensationalistic manner that it sometimes caters to the audience’s morbid fascinations. Likewise, its ambiguous (mis)representation of the female protagonists’ subversive nature and active sexuality might eventually mislead the audience into holding them partially responsible for the patriarchal violence they are subjected to.

Finally, *Penny Dreadful* could also be an illustrative example of how Neo-Victorianism might work as a form of ‘intellectual’ incest. Samantha J. Carroll contends that there is a “nostalgic impulse” in neo-Victorian fiction, where we regard the nineteenth century as “an historical parent to whom the present looks for guidance” (2010, 173). This would explain why we constantly long for narratives that are similar to the ones that were produced in the long ni-

² The Marriage Act of 1835 prohibited any marriage contract between a man and his dead wife’s sister, as it considered it a form of incest (Llewellyn 2010, 139). This topic became the subject of a heated debate from 1842 until 1907, with the passing of Deceased Wife Act that reversed the previous one and allowed men to marry their deceased wife’s sister (Archimedes 2005, 62).

nineteenth century to experience “the reassuring confidences of the familiar within a family setting,” as well as “the connections that run beyond bloodlines to textual encounters, [which] lies as much at the heart of our contemporary desire to see ourselves in the Victorian and the Victorian in us” (Llewellyn 2010, 158). This collapse between self and the Other reflects our quasi incestuous relationship with the long nineteenth century through Neo-Victorianism.

3. Rewriting the Myth of Pygmalion and Galatea in *Penny Dreadful*: The Case of Lily and Dr Frankenstein

Victorian sensational novels brought to the fore parental-filial incest in order to denounce nineteenth-century marriage practices, particularly the considerable age gap between husbands and their wives; the manner in which father-daughter and brother-sister relationships prepared women for marriage from a very early age; or how the latter were still treated as fragile children even after getting married (Vance 2003, 1). By the same token, Madelon Sprengnether regards Freud’s Oedipal complex, discussed in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), as incomplete. Here, he only explored mother-son incest and how it could be prevented by the father figure on account of the castration threat, whereby the father is afraid that his son will overthrow him and assume his role in the family. Nonetheless, Freud did not even contemplate the lack of female protection against father-daughter incest. According to Sprengnether, “the father’s authority over his daughter’s choice of a mate not only assures her subordination to him but also facilitates his use of her as a sexual object,” considering that Freud does not regard the mother “as a blocking figure” (2018, 10).

This appears to be the case of Vanessa Ives in *Penny Dreadful*, as she is at the mercy of her surrogate father, Sir Malcolm, without a mother figure that could act as a blocking mechanism to prevent his sexual advances. Indeed, it was her mother who exposed her to incest, as she awakened Vanessa’s sexual desire through her adulterous relationship with Sir Malcolm himself. Likewise, Lily Frankenstein is also the victim of her father’s lust and patriarchal authority—since she does not have a mother figure to protect her from his advances—until she decides to rebel against him. Lily had been originally created to be the immortal bride of Dr Frankenstein’s first creature, John Clare, but the doctor eventually fell in love with her and they consummated their seemingly mutual attraction. As a consequence, both for Vanessa and Lily, “the (quasi)paternal figure appears central to their identities, and it is the relationship between the male or masculinised parent (real or surrogate) that underscores the key aspects of their narratives” (Llewellyn 2010, 157).

Furthermore, both Lily and Vanessa could be considered *femmes fatales*, a Victorian female archetype that was considered a threat to men. Even though the *femme fatale* has featured in art, poetry and literature throughout history—with examples from the Bible, Shakespeare, or Cleopatra herself—, she is a character that especially dominates nineteenth-century literature, becoming a “popular motif” (Hedgecock 2006, 1) in novels such as W. M. Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair* (1848), sensation fiction by Wilkie Collins, or as a Gothic villain in *Dracula* (1897). The *femme fatale* is a complex character that escapes fixed definitions. However, she usually subverts and rebels against patriarchy and uses her sexuality, as Vanessa and Lily, “to torment and to destroy her male victims” (Hedgecock 2006, 2). However, the *femme fatale* should also be scrutinized alongside her other Victorian counterparts: the angel of the house and the New Woman, as her rebellious behaviour is also representative of women’s “changing roles” in the period. Thus, all these women influenced Victorian “feminist movements,” as well as “later protests against society’s treatment of women” (Hedgecock 2006, 2). This latter aspect is particularly important in the case of Lily, as a feminist activist that attempts to subvert the patriarchal status quo in Season 3.

Father-daughter incest used to be feared in the past, especially in the event of the mother’s death. According to Lisa Hirschman and Judith Lewis Herman, the Cinderella story was first created as a cautionary tale for daughters against the incest taboo, as it “warms little girls that it is dangerous to be left alone with a widowed father” (1981, 1). Lily Frankenstein is the only woman—apart from Vanessa—in the doctor’s life. He resurrected Lily—and his other two male creatures, Protheus and John Clare—on his own, replacing a mother’s womb with science and electricity. As a result, Dr Frankenstein is subverting traditional understandings of the heteronormative nuclear family, which needs a mother and a father. As Llewellyn (2010) contends, the challenge of the ideal nuclear family is one of the common denominators of the trope of incest. Despite the fact that Dr Frankenstein and Lily are not actually blood related, I contend that their relationship is an incestuous one, as the former resurrects the latter, helps her get reacquainted with the outside world and tries to teach her manners and etiquette. In other words, he becomes her surrogate father. However, his possessive and controlling love for Lily—even the fact that he killed her previous human self, Brona Croft, to create a female companion for his first creature—should be understood as patriarchal violence in the family, a dysfunctionality associated to the trope of incest (Llewellyn 2010).

Throughout Season 2 of *Penny Dreadful*, Dr Frankenstein establishes a co-dependent relationship with Lily, in which he strives to be her only provider and mentor. He tries to exert a patriarchal and paternalistic control over her daughter and lover, keeping her caged and dictating how she should behave. Their incestuous relationship starts as a domination game where he first uses her as an immortal doll that he can mould to his own personal taste. He transforms the dead body of Brona Croft, a Northern Irish prostitute, into an angelic Victorian beauty, as he dyes her hair blond and buys her white, virginal clothes and corsets, forcing her to become a ‘proper’ Victorian woman. Consequently, Dr Frankenstein and Lily’s relationship could be interpreted as a neo-Victorian appropriation of the Greek

myth of Pygmalion and Galatea, where a man gives life to a beautiful woman and falls in love with her. This is also a common literary motif defined by Elizabeth Frenzel as the animation of the statue (1980, 22) or the artificial man (1980, 153). According to Frenzel, the idea of creating a human being artificially –without sexual intercourse– is one of humanity’s golden dreams (1980, 153). This literary motif can be traced back to creation myths in several cultures, most notably in Ancient Greece. Artificial women, such as Pandora or Galatea –usually have a romantic function in literature: that of seducing a man (Frenzel 1980, 154).

The most famous retelling of the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea in Ancient times can be found in Book 10 of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (8 AD). Pygmalion was a sculptor in Cyprus that remained a bachelor because he was horrified of the prostitutes’ wickedness and vices (Hung 2003, 146). He carved an ivory sculpture representing his ideal of female beauty –named Galatea in later versions of the myth– and fell in love with it. He then begged Venus, the Roman goddess of love, to transform his sculpture into a flesh-and-blood woman and she granted him that wish (Ovid 8AD, l. 326-51). Thus, Pygmalion and Galatea are involved in an incestuous relationship, given that he is her “fathering maker as well as her husband. To sleep with her is to sleep with his own daughter. [...] a relationship in which there is no otherness, in which the same mates with the same, is, precisely, incest” (Miller 1990, 10-1). By the same token, Lily is Dr Frankenstein’s creation, and he ‘moulded’ her according to his definition of female beauty. He gives her a name of his choice –Lily, the flower of rebirth (Green 2017, 10)–, unlike his other two male creatures, who were allowed to choose their own names from a selection of literary characters. Lilies have also been associated with the Virgin Mary since early Christianity, as legend has it that her grave was decorated with white lilies after her Assumption. As a result, the flower –and, by association, the name– came to represent “purity, virginity” and “innocence” (Husti and Cantor 2015, 74). Therefore, Dr Frankenstein’s choice of name is not casual, but quite revealing, as these are the qualities that he deems ideal for a woman. He longs to have an innocent, pure and virginal female companion –even though Lily will later rebel against this imposition. Thus, Lily is a neo-Victorian appropriation of Galatea, a patriarchal creation that was meant to be obedient to her father and husband, but who eventually rebels against him.

However, the appropriation of the Pygmalion and Galatea myth is not something new. John Logan, the creator of *Penny Dreadful*, arguably drew inspiration from nineteenth-century adaptations of the myth. Mary Shelley learned about Pygmalion’s myth through Mme de Genli’s one-act comedy *Pygmalion et Galatée, ou la statue animée depuis vingt quatre heures* (1790).³ In this text, Pygmalion’s creation, Galatea, reads about “the evils of mankind” (James 1994, 79), just like Frankenstein’s creature learns about human injustice through the books he finds in the De Lacey’s cottage. In the same vein, the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea also merges with Frankenstein’s story in that they both present a “fable of ideal love turning into one of malign possession” (James 1994, 79) –a toxic love story that also applies to Dr Frankenstein and Lily’s relationship. In fact, in Robert Buchanan’s poem “Pygmalion: An Allegory of Art” (1820) –another nineteenth-century appropriation of the myth–, Galatea is turned into a vampire-like creature, a *femme fatale* not unlike Lily Frankenstein:

[...] Then the Dawn
stared in upon her: when I open’d eyes
I saw the gradual Dawn encrimson her
like blood that blush’d within her, –and behold
she trembled –and I shrieked (l. 231-5).

Penny Dreadful’s portrayal of Dr Frankenstein and Lily was also influenced by other nineteenth-century intertexts of Ovid’s *Pygmalion*. Lily’s seemingly duplicitous nature is arguably inspired by George Bernard Shaw’s play, *Pygmalion* (1913), where the “tension between Eliza’s innocence and her artifice must be seen as a departure from Ovid’s one-dimensional Galatea” (Joshua 2001, 119). At first, Lily pretends to be the perfect angel of the house; a coy and ‘empty vessel’ that has no recollection of her previous life and expects Dr Frankenstein to create a new one for her. Nonetheless, she eventually gathers enough confidence and a powerful ally –Dorian Gray–, so she decides to drop her act and show her true self: a former victim of gender-based violence that plans to overthrow patriarchy.

As mentioned above, Dr Frankenstein originally created Lily as an immortal companion for one of his male creatures, John Clare. Thus, he was constructing her as a mere sexual object whose objective was to please a ‘superior’ male creature. Later on, when he engages in an incestuous relationship with her, Dr Frankenstein becomes both her father and partner: the two ultimate masculine and patriarchal authorities in Victorian England. The biological role of mothers in reproductive terms is “related with the social function of knowledge” (Özyol 2016, 79), given that their identity is known and certain, whilst that of the father might be ambiguous or unknown. This reproductive uncertainty arguably poses a threat to the patriarchal status quo, since the father’s authority is challenged, while the mother’s is confirmed. Nevertheless, there is not a mother figure involved in neither Galatea’s nor Lily’s ‘births.’ Thus, the mother’s threat to patriarchal order is removed here, and the ‘father’ figure –Pygmalion and Dr Frankenstein, respectively– retains the traditional traits of masculine authority, but also appropriates the female –or motherly– ones. For Tracy M. Hallstead, in Ancient times masculinity meant “*power over others*. It also means power to define reality, as

³ Mme de Genlis wrote *Pygmalion et Galatée* as a sequel to Jean Jacques Rousseau’s *Pygmalion* (1762), where he mainly explored the sculptor’s emotions. Mme Genlis’s work, on the other hand, focused on Galatea’s “perceptions and reactions after having emerged from her marmoreal state” (Dimauro 2000, 191).

‘might make right’. For Galatea, questioning the patriarch Pygmalion’s rule in Cyprus or over her is strictly forbidden [...] and she must support it behind the scenes, in relative silence” (2013, 51, emphasis in original). However, Lily –as Galatea– finally subverts this traditional female representation and rebels against the patriarchal system.

It is also worth mentioning that incest is not a new motif that *Penny Dreadful* brings into Frankenstein’s narrative, as it was already present in Shelley’s original work. According to Anca Vlasopolos, the novel’s central theme is “the private drama of a man who sees himself as ineluctably driven to incest” (1983, 125). In fact, his “incest-avoidant” actions lead him to give ‘birth’ to his ‘monster’, which ultimately brings about the rejection of his family and friends. Psychoanalytic scholars have long established the novel’s incestuous subtexts “through the monster’s or Frankenstein’s Oedipal obsession, which appears marginal in the context of the brother-sister tensions dominating the various relationships in the novel” (Vlasopolos 1983, 125). In Shelley’s original text, Dr Frankenstein’s mother, Caroline, asks him to marry Elizabeth, his cousin in *Frankenstein*’s 1818 edition, on her deathbed. Perplexed by her request, he breaks off communication with his family for two years to avoid the incestuous marriage. As he is not free to marry another woman, he uses his scientific knowledge to produce an heir on his own, although once the monster is born, it turns out to be Victor’s worst nightmare. It is worth noting that one of the longest emendations that Shelley introduced in the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein* is that Elizabeth Lavenza is no longer Dr Frankenstein’s cousin –that is to say, a blood relative–, but a “foundling” (May 1995, 682) or “an adoptee of the Frankenstein family” (O’Rourke 1999, 379), even though she is described as “more than a sister” to Victor (Shelley 1965, 35). In this version, Elizabeth and the doctor are raised as siblings, although not related by blood, “in a rather feeble attempt to defuse the implications of an incestuous desire between them” (May 1995, 683). Nonetheless, in *Penny Dreadful*’s version of the story, the doctor does not try to avoid incest, as he obsessively tries to chase his daughter Lily throughout Seasons 2 and 3.

When Lily first wakes up after her resurrection, Dr Frankenstein is her only reference point in a world that she seemingly does not remember. She trusts him blindly at first, even though there are some early signs that anticipate her rebellious stance against patriarchy, as in the scene where she is trying on some new clothes that Dr Frankenstein has purchased for her.⁴ When Lily complains about how constraining the corset is, the doctor replies that women wear it because they are not meant to “exert themselves,” otherwise they would “take over the world,” so that men have to keep them “corseted, in theory... and in practice” (Logan, Season 2, Episode 4, 00:35:00-00:35:13). Despite Lily’s initial submission, her reply hints at her critique against patriarchal control over women’s bodies: “All we do is for men, isn’t it? Keep their houses... raise their children, flatter them with our pain” (Logan, Season 2, Episode 4, 00:35:25-00:35:35).

According to Brigitta Berglund, women’s dress etiquette was part of “the so-called ‘Corset Controversy’ of the 1860s,” which was not only concerned with female fashion, but also with “the female body as well as with questions of mobility and freedom from restraint.” Therefore, the corset was actually “part of a larger debate about women’s legal, social and bodily autonomy: in other words, the ‘Woman Question’” (2015, 220). One of the reasons for wearing a corset was aesthetic, as it helped women display a slender figure. Nonetheless, moral aspects were even more important for Victorian women. As Berglund argues, a woman who did not wear a corset was regarded as “lazy, sloppy, indecent; indeed, loose” (2015, 222). Consequently, corsets have now become culturally associated with Victorian women. They are regarded as a fundamental part of the outfit that shaped them, physically and psychologically, as oppressed individuals. Lily finds herself trapped in the golden cage of domesticity and her gender-based oppression is metaphorically represented through the corset in the above-mentioned scene. Nonetheless, this item of clothing has also become a clichéd representation of Victorian women’s fashion over the last century, understood as “a visual shorthand used to metaphorically and metonymically represent embodied Victorian female subjectivity” (Primorac 2018, 99). More specifically, it has come to encapsulate the social constraints imposed on women in terms of behaviour, social rights or female sexuality. Here, the emphasis on both Frankenstein forcing Lily to wear the corset and her fierce critique of it reinforces the former’s patriarchal ideology and his idealisation of Victorian women as coy and submissive, and the latter’s radical feminism.

Radical feminism emerged within second-wave feminism in the 1960s as a women-centred movement, where women’s experiences were at the core of its theoretical and practical tenets. One of their fundamental claims was that women were a social group that had been oppressed by another social group –men– through patriarchy, “the oppressing *structure* of male domination” (Rowland and Klein 1996, 11, emphasis in original). As a result, they targeted motherhood and heterosexual marriage as sites of oppression that needed to be revised. Moreover, radical feminism was also a movement “created by women for women” (Rowland and Klein 1996, 11), where they needed to achieve emancipation without male acceptance, but on their own female terms. For that, “[a] total revolution of the social structures and the elimination of the process of patriarchy are essential” (Rowland and Klein 1996, 12). I contend that Lily’s feminism should be understood along these lines, as her activism is made by *women* to protect and empower *women*. She plans to overthrow patriarchy and establish a female supremacist regime where men are subjugated to women.

⁴ The fact that the doctor is the one that chooses Lily’s clothes seems to be inspired by Ovid’s *Pygmalion* as well, where the sculptor “decks her limbs with robes and on her fingers/ Sets splendid rings, a necklace round her neck/ Pearls in her ears, a pendant on her breast;” (Ovid 8AD, l. 318-20).

Despite the fact that *Penny Dreadful* is a contemporary TV series restaging the Late-Victorian period, Lily's feminism is a radical one, as her values align with those of this second-wave feminist movement. However, I also understand her activism as radical in the manner in which she chooses to fight patriarchy: through violence, male subjugation and women's social supremacy. It is worth noting that these principles *were not* part of second-wave feminist theoretical tenets, as feminism aspires to equality, rather than a gender role reversal between oppressor and oppressed. Neo-Victorianism is a polytemporal genre, which explores, conflates and juxtaposes socio-cultural political and literary aspects from a number of historical periods –most notably the Victorian one. Therefore, in its attempt to explore Lily's feminist fight, *Penny Dreadful* introduced this anachronism –second wave's radical feminism into a nineteenth-century context– to also juxtapose it with other understandings and conceptualisations of feminist activism, as in the case of contemporary feminism.

Indeed, Rosalind Guill contends that the present moment is “seemingly characterized by a multiplicity of (new and old) feminisms,” which, however, also “co-exist with revitalized forms of anti-feminism and popular misogyny” (Guill 2016, 611). These contradictory representations arguably echo post-feminism's “(double) entanglements with feminism” (Guill 2016, 620), where contemporary popular culture appropriates “lexicon and iconography” from activist feminism and intertwines them with pre-feminist, anti-feminist or even misogynist ideas to serve politics that “offer little or no real challenge to gender power relations” (Guill 2016, 622). This manipulation of feminist ideals for antifeminist purposes might eventually lead to the notion that “equality has been achieved –indeed superceded” and no longer needed (Guill 2016, 623).

This double entanglement between feminist and misogynist ideologies can be seen in *Penny Dreadful* through Lily's activist feminism. Her fight is simultaneously portrayed as admirable –since she plans to overthrow patriarchy– and tyrannical –as she wants to subjugate all men. This portrayal actually perpetuates misogynistic understandings of feminism that represent the movement as a man-hating crusade. Likewise, by reinforcing patriarchal oppression and the need to fight it in a nineteenth-century context, neo-Victorian fiction seems to be replicating the post-feminism's hypocritical projection of “the need for feminism not here but ‘there’” (Guill 2016, 616) when comparing the situation of Western and Eastern women. In this case, by contrasting contemporary women's rights and experiences to those of our Victorian ancestors, we might be tempted to conclude that feminism was badly needed then, as opposed to now, where we have achieved gender equality.

After Lily fully recovers her memories, she rejects her father and lover's possessive love and joins forces with the immortal Dorian Gray to recruit an army of prostitutes that target abusive men. As Kohlke contends, Lily's army are portrayed as a group of “man-hating” feminists (2018, 14) who revel in murdering and torturing unsuspecting men. As a result, feminism is being reduced here to “a misguided, misandrist, and megalomaniacal Gothic revenge fantasy” (Kohlke 2018, 9-10), where Lily is presented as the villain rather than the victim of sexual violence. In the last episode of Season 3 Lily is betrayed by Gray and taken to Bedlam Asylum, where Dr Frankenstein and Dr Jekyll plan to inject her with a serum created by the latter that would “split off her monstrous self, restoring the docile ‘Angel of the House’ to perfect obedience” (Kohlke 2018, 10). The serum's purpose is to erase Lily's traumatising memories and her thirst for vengeance.

Nonetheless, Dr Frankenstein decides to spare Lily's memories in the end, after she confesses that she once had a daughter named Sarah, who died one freezing night because she had to leave her alone in the house to work. She feels responsible for that death and begs the doctors not to take the memories of her daughter away. As result, Lily cannot redeem herself as a radical feminist, only as a “suffering mother” (Kohlke 2018, 11). Indeed, Dr Frankenstein cannot empathise with her pain as a victim of sexual violence until she presents herself as a self-sacrificing mother. In other words, as a woman fitting the Victorian precepts of proper womanhood. Therefore, *Penny Dreadful* fails to acknowledge Lily's trauma and to empower her as a feminist activist against patriarchal violence, siding, instead with the male perpetrator. Furthermore, this could be understood as an example of post-feminism's double entanglements. In contrasting Lily's radicalism to her suffering as a mother, and in presenting the latter as an admirable trait which both Dr Frankenstein and the audience can empathise with, the series is presenting feminist activism as dangerous, whereas more traditional understandings of womanhood are favoured and reinforced.

4. The Limits of Consent: Victim Blaming Vanessa Ives in *Penny Dreadful*

Lily Frankenstein is not the only victim of father-daughter incest in *Penny Dreadful*. The female protagonist, Vanessa Ives, also seemingly has a sexual encounter with her replacement father, Sir Malcolm, in Season 1 of the series. As in the case of Lily and Dr Frankenstein, even though Vanessa and Sir Malcolm are not blood related, their relationship throughout the series is constructed as a father-daughter one. The Ives and Murray families used to be next-door neighbours and friends in the English countryside. Vanessa spent most of her childhood in the Murray's residence and she looked up to Sir Malcolm –a famous explorer who had extensively travelled to Africa– as a heroic figure worthy of admiration. The fifth episode of Season 1 is constructed as a flashback where Vanessa replays her childhood memories in the countryside with her best friend, Mina –an appropriation of Bram Stoker's character in *Dracula* (1897)–, and their families. The title of the episode, “Closer than Sisters,” is self-explanatory, as it depicts how the Murray and Ives families shared an intimate bond, almost as if they were related. Vanessa used to spend

most of her days at the Murray's cottage, and the gate that separated their houses was always open, as she reminds Mina in one of her letters: "Were ever two families closer than ours? I don't remember a day that gate between our homes was closed. Until the day it closed forever" (Logan 2014, Season 1, Episode 5, 00:04:59-00:5:09). Moreover, Sir Malcolm adopts Vanessa as his only daughter once he accepts that Mina has become a vampire and she is beyond salvation at the end of Season 1. When she tries to appeal to his paternal instincts by reminding him that "I'm your daughter," he responds, while looking at Vanessa, "I already have a daughter" (Logan, 2014, Season 1, Episode 8, 00:45:02-00:45:13).

As discussed in previous sections, nineteenth-century literature explored the concept of "familialization" to broaden social alliances by transforming non-relatives into family members. The marriages between these individuals could be described as "familialized incest" (Shaffer 1999, 68), which were legal and, to some bourgeois families, even desirable, since they fortified close relations with people sharing common social and economic backgrounds. *Penny Dreadful* appropriates the concept of familialization to explore the quasi parental-filial relationship between Vanessa and Sir Malcolm, but imbuing it with the Gothic's tendency to "unspeakable horror" (Archimedes 2005, 62) and quest for "shock value" (Archimedes 2005, 63).

As mentioned above, Vanessa's sexual awakening was arguably triggered by Sir Malcolm's adulterous relationship with her mother, Mrs. Ives. She discovered them in one of their romantic encounters in the labyrinth that connected the Ives's and Murray's households. This intricate maze represents the strong bond between the two families, but also encapsulates Vanessa's sexual self-discovery. When she was an adolescent, she found her mother having sexual intercourse with Sir Malcolm, and the revelation of this sin –that also linked both families– changed their lives forever. This act awakened a sexual desire in Vanessa, as she later confessed to her friend Mina: "My mother, your father. More than the shock, the sinfulness, the forbidden act, there was this: I enjoyed it. Something whispered, I listened. Perhaps it has always been there, this thing, this demon inside me. Or behind my back, waiting for me to turn around" (Logan 2014, Season 1, Episode 5, 00:11:13-00:11:49). Therefore, the labyrinth embodies the space where Vanessa lays the secret that had been haunting both her and her friends' families, but also the place where she experiences her own sexual awakening. As Barry Curtis points out, "[t]he maze is a metaphor for all haunted places –involving a quest for what lies at its heart, and a need to negotiate its complexity and learn how to return" (2008, 174). Hence, this labyrinth represents Vanessa's loss of innocence and her pursuit of maturity and adulthood, as she strives to assume her role as a sexually active adult woman.

According to Llewellyn, incestuous relationships between a (replacement) father and his daughter tend to bring to the forefront an important social concern, which is "as true of the Victorians and Edwardians as of now, about the nature of age in relationships, about the potentially 'unnatural' or subversive (even perverted?) desires judged so by a society that sees age difference between partners, lovers, spouses, as itself immoral" (2010, 146). Throughout the series, Vanessa feels attracted to parental figures that exert a patriarchal and oppressive control over her. The two suitors that relentlessly pursue her –the fallen angels Lucifer and Dracula– are much older than she is, and they act as tyrannical fathers to their 'adopted' children: The Nightcomers and the vampires, respectively. Lucifer marks his female servants –the satanic witches– with a pentagram on their backs and forces them to perpetrate human sacrifices in exchange for eternal beauty and power. Dracula controls his servants through blood and uses them as spies to monitor Vanessa's every move.

As a young adult, Vanessa follows her mother's pattern of sexual transgressions by seducing her friend Mina's fiancé on the eve of their wedding, an action that unleashes a series of misfortunes for her. Even though Mrs. Ives appears to be ashamed of her daughter's unladylike behaviour, Vanessa's actions are arguably rooted in her own unfaithfulness. After her betrayal to Mina, Vanessa has what seems to be a nervous fit –although she is actually being haunted and possessed by evil forces. She is then confined to her bedroom in her family's cottage and is not allowed to see any member of the Murray family. Eventually, Vanessa is sectioned in a mental institution, where she is diagnosed with female hysteria and subjected to several torturous treatments that were commonplace in Victorian asylums: narcotics, hydrotherapy, restraints and lobotomies (Arnold 2008, 6).

After being released from the asylum, Vanessa returns to her parents' house, where she continues to be haunted by Lucifer and Dracula. On one of these occasions, the former disguises himself as Sir Malcolm and pays her a visit while she is bedridden. Taking advantage of Vanessa's fascination with Sir Malcolm –as his sexual encounter with her mother on the maze arguably awakened her sexual curiosity and desire–, the Devil seduces her. Her mother then enters the bedroom and finds her completely naked, white-eyed and having sexual intercourse with an invisible being, which causes her a seizure and a sudden death. The fact that Vanessa's mother cannot not see the entity that was in the room with her daughter reinforces the idea that Lucifer presented himself as Sir Malcolm only for Vanessa to see him.

Even though it was not Sir Malcolm himself who had sexual intercourse with her replacement daughter, the entity that usurped his identity chose him because of the close relationship that they shared. Thus, I contend that Vanessa perceives this encounter as father-daughter incest, as she is seeing Sir Malcolm and imagining he is there with her. Following Llewellyn's threefold approach to neo-Victorian incest, both the Ives's and the Murray's nuclear families had been fractured, first due to Sir Malcolm's adultery with Vanessa's mother, and later when Vanessa had sexual intercourse with Mina's fiancé on the eve of their wedding. The fact that Vanessa was then seduced by the Devil disguised as Sir Malcolm seems to further prove that she had a fixated obsession with the Murrays, to the point where she wanted to 'infiltrate' their family or be united with them. Moreover, it is also worth mentioning that, according

to Llewellyn's third principle in the analysis of the incest trope, *Penny Dreadful* caters to the audience's voyeuristic expectations, as it graphically portrays the sexual scene between Vanessa and Lucifer-Sir Malcolm. Thus, the series' creators are favouring the audiences' morbid preferences by sexing up an ethically ambiguous scene between two characters that are presented as family in other episodes of the series.

Moreover, it is not clear whether this sexual relation is consensual or not. Amy Montz questions whether Vanessa is a willing participant here or if she is being the victim of a "diabolical sexual assault," since "[w]e as an audience are never quite sure" (2020, 61). Vanessa had been haunted by both Lucifer and Dracula, which could be considered a form of stalking,⁵ and psychological abuse. Throughout the series, the complex relationship between these daemonic brothers and Vanessa is portrayed as an ambiguous one, as she feels simultaneously attracted to and repulsed by them. Moreover, the fact that the Devil adopts Sir Malcolm's physical form further problematises the issue of consent, as Vanessa sees him both as a father figure and the person who triggered her sexual awakening. Upon bearing witness to this sexual encounter, Mrs. Ives drops dead in shock, while Vanessa is trapped in the Devil's claws. For Montz, this seems to prove that "Vanessa's sexuality has destroyed those around her" (2020, 62), which could be one of the reasons why she fiercely tries to abstain from sex in the series. As Primorac contends, Vanessa's "agency is defined first and foremost through her attempts to maintain self-control via abstinence. The fact that her 'possession' is always brought on by attempts at heterosexual coupling is not accidental: the show suggests that by rejecting heterosexual physical contact she maintains a sense of self" (2018, 154). Furthermore, it is at this point that she is regarded as a "sexual Other," an individual in Gothic narratives that "takes on the aura of dangerous power from the supernatural," suggesting that she becomes, "like the ghostly manifestation, preternaturally dangerous" (Rocha 2016, 5).

Nonetheless, both Rocha's and Montz's arguments appear to perpetuate a victim blaming approach to sexual assault, which is embedded in the context of patriarchal oppression. Victim blaming is a concept that has been mostly researched in criminology, "where individuals find instances within the victims' behavior, such as drinking alcohol, to hold the victim at least partially responsible for the incident" (Hayes, Lorenz and Bell 2013, 203). The fact that Vanessa is both haunted and possessed by the Devil makes her arguably comparable to victims of drug-facilitated sexual assault.⁶ Moreover, she is diagnosed with female hysteria and depression in two separate instances in the show—the former in the flashback episode (Season 1, Episode 5) and the latter in Season 3—, which makes her agency and consent in her so-called 'sexual transgressions' unclear and convoluted. Likewise, Vanessa is described by both Rocha and Montz as a "sexual Other," rather than as a victim of sexual assault. The fact that she is sexually active throughout the series seems to prevent her from being considered sexually coerced in this instance.

Moreover, given that victims of sexual abuse are statistically more likely to be female, "victim blaming may disproportionately influence society's views on women. A form of victim blaming more often directed at females is acceptance of rape myths" (Hayes, Lorenz and Bell 2013, 203). In this case, the influence of victim blaming and rape culture arguably aligns both the audience and the series' critics against Vanessa. This is so because they are predisposed to judge her as a seductress and a *femme fatale* that succumbs to her sexual desires, rather than holding Lucifer accountable for sexually assaulting her. As a result, *Penny Dreadful* fails to grant its female protagonists a sense of female emancipation from their patriarchal oppressors and, instead, portrays them as active and willing participants of their own assault. In doing so, the series' apparent feminist drive is curtailed, since patriarchal villains are given a platform where their sexual crimes are presented as instances of sexual consent.

5. Conclusion

Neo-Victorian fiction has inherited the nineteenth-century's obsession with incest, particularly in screen adaptations, as in the case of *Penny Dreadful*. The purpose of exploring the incest trope in Neo-Victorianism seems to be three-fold: 1) to challenge idealised conceptualisations of the nuclear family, 2) to forefront sexual traumas within the family that were silenced and 3) to appeal to the audience's morbid expectations. *Penny Dreadful* follows this same reasoning, as its graphic and morbid foregrounding of the incest motif seemingly aims to denounce patriarchal violence against its female protagonists, Lily and Vanessa.

An appropriation of the Greek character Galatea, Lily is created by Dr Frankenstein to become the immortal partner of his first creature. He models her to his liking and tries to impose his set of beliefs, moral code and gender conventions on her. Lily, a former victim of sexual violence, rebels against his tyrannical love and recruits a female army to overthrow patriarchy. Therefore, she is portrayed as a man-hating and radical feminist, whose thirst for vengeance has clouded her judgement. In the end, her only redeeming qualities are her motherly and self-blaming traits, which allow her conform to the proper woman archetype.

⁵ Stalking could be defined as a "course of conduct directed at a specific person," which includes "repeated visual or physical proximity, non-consensual communication, verbal, written, or implied threats. In some cases, the conduct may be a combination of those behaviors which cause fear in a reasonable person" (Wei-Jung 2020, 1189). According to the American National Institute of Justice, stalking is closely related to the controlling behaviour of violent partners, as well as to physical, psychological and sexual abuse against women (1997, 1).

⁶ Drug-facilitated sexual assault refers to sexual abuse perpetrated on victims while they are incapacitated by "date-rape drugs." Sexual offenders usually spike the drinks of their unsuspecting victims with the purpose of subduing and sexually assaulting them (Negrusz and Gaensslen 2003, 1192).

In the same vein, Vanessa is presented as a sexually active and subversive woman who does not fit into the gender conventions of proper femininity. Given that she is presented as sexually active throughout the series, and that she has no scruples about having sexual intercourse with a man that is practically like family to her –her best friend Mina’s fiancée–, the audience is led to believe that she enjoys –and even agrees to take part in– the incestuous relationship with Sir Malcolm. Nevertheless, considering that she is being haunted, tantalised –and to some extent, even coerced– by the Devil, she is not in full possession of her faculties and is, therefore, not capable of consenting to his sexual advances. As a result, Vanessa is being victim blamed for this sexual assault, as the audience is misled into assuming her consent based on her previous sexual experiences.

In conclusion, both Lily and Vanessa are portrayed as subversive women whose reckless behaviour makes them responsible for their own undoing. In so doing, the series is victim blaming them, rather than empowering them as survivors of gender-based violence. Thus, even though *Penny Dreadful* presents itself as a feminist commercial product, its failure to acknowledge the suffering of its female protagonists and their fight against the patriarchal system perpetuates –rather than challenges– both Victorian and contemporary understandings of proper femininity. Furthermore, this contradictory representation of the female protagonists –on the one hand, highlighting their feminist activism and female empowerment, but on the other hand, presenting these experiences as radical and a threat to the patriarchal status quo– replicate post-feminist entanglements across popular and media culture that serve anti-feminist ideologies. In fact, reinforcing the representation of patriarchal violence and the need to fight it in a Victorian context might lead us to interiorise the post-feminist belief that feminism is no longer necessary.

References

- Archimedes, Sondra M. 2005. *Gendered Pathologies: The Female Body and Biomedical Discourse in the Nineteenth-Century English Novel*. New York: Routledge.
- Arnold, Catherine. 2008. *Bedlam: London and its Mad*. New York: Pocket Books.
- Berglund, Brigitta. 2015. “The Brontës, the Corset and the Condition of England.” *Brontë Studies* 40 (4): 320-327.
- Buchanan, Robert. “Pygmalion the Sculptor.” *Poetry Nook*, <https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/pygmalion-sculptor> Accessed 12 April 2022.
- Carroll, Samantha J. 2010. “Putting the ‘Neo’ Back into Neo-Victorian: The Neo-Victorian Novel as Postmodern Revisionist Fiction.” *Neo-Victorian Studies* 3 (2): 172-205.
- Cheira, Alexandra. 2017. “Neo-Victorian Sexual De[f]iance: Incest, Adultery, Breaking the Virginity Taboo and Female Sexual Agency in A. S. Byatt’s ‘Morpho Eugenia’.” *Neo-Victorian Studies* 9 (2):126-53.
- Cox, Jessica. 2014. “Narratives of Sexual Trauma in Contemporary Adaptations of *The Woman in White*.” *Neo-Victorian Literature and Culture: Immersions and Revisitations*, edited by Nadine Boehm-Schnitker and Susanne Gruss, 137-51. New York, Routledge.
- Curtis, Barry. 2008. *Dark Places: The Haunted House in Film*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Dimauro, Damon. 2000. “‘Ourika’, or Galatea Reverts to Stone.” *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 28 (3/4): 187-211.
- Frenzel, Elizabeth. 1980. *Diccionario de motivos de la literatura universal*. Translated by Manuel Albella Martín. Madrid: Gredos.
- Freud, Sigmund. 2001 (1995). *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume VII (1901-1905): A Case of Hysteria, Three Essays on Sexuality and Other Works*, edited by James Strachey and Anna Freud, 123-246. Translated by Alix Strachey. New York: Vintage.
- Guill, Rosalind. 2016. “Post-postfeminism? New feminist visibilities in postfeminist times.” *Feminist Media Studies* 16 (4): 610-630. DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2016.1193293.
- Green, Stephanie. 2017. “Lily Frankenstein: The Gothic New Woman in Penny Dreadful.” *Refractory: A Journal of Entertainment Media* 28: 1-17.
- Hallstead, Tracy M. 2013. *Pygmalion’s Chisel. For Women Who Are “Never Good Enough.”* Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Hayes, Rebecca M., Katherine Lorenz and Kristin A. Bell. 2013. “Victim Blaming Others: Rape Myth Acceptance and the Just World Belief.” *Feminist Criminology* 8 (3): 202-220.
- Hedgecock, Jennifer. “The Sexual Threat and Danger of the Femme Fatale in Victorian Literature.” Ph.D Thesis, Michigan State University, 2006. <https://d.lib.msu.edu/etd/33367>
- Heilmann, Ann, and Mark Llewellyn. 2010. *Neo-Victorianism: The Victorians in the TwentyFirst Century, 1999-2009*. London: Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Herman, Judith Lewis, and Lisa Hirschman. 1981. *Father-Daughter Incest*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP.
- Hung, Tony T. N. 2003. “Pygmalion: From Greek Legend to My Fair Lady.” *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies* 8: 145-156.
- Husti, Anca, and Maria Cantor. 2015. “Sacred connection of ornamental flowers with religious symbols.” *ProEnvironment Promediu* 8 (21): 73-79.
- James, Louis. 1994. “Frankenstein’s Monster in Two Traditions.” *Frankenstein, Creation and Monstrosity*, edited by Stephen Bann. Reaktion Books, pp. 77-94.
- Joshua, Essaka. 2001. *Pygmalion and Galatea: The History of a Narrative in English Literature*. New York: Routledge.
- Kohlke, Marie-Luise. 2008. “Introduction: Speculations in and on the Neo-Victorian Encounter Neo-Victorian Studies.” *Neo-Victorian Studies* 1 (1): 1-18.

- Kohlke, Marie Luise. 2014. "Mining the Neo-Victorian Vein. Prospecting for Gold, Buried Treasure and Uncertain Metal." *Neo-Victorian Literature and Culture: Immersions and Revisitations*, edited by Nadine Boehm-Schnitker and Susanne Gruss, 21-35. New York: Routledge.
- Kohlke, Marie Luise. 2028. "The lures of neo-Victorianism presentism (with a feminist case study of Penny Dreadful)." *Literature Compass* 15 (7): 1-14.
- Kuper, Adam. 2002. "Incest, Cousin Marriage, and the Origin of the Human Sciences in Nineteenth-Century England." *Past and Present* 174: 158-183. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674054141>
- Llewellyn, Mark. 2010. "'Perfectly Innocent, Natural, Playful': Incest in Neo-Victorian Women's Writing." *Neo-Victorian Tropes of Trauma: the Politics of Bearing After-Witness to Nineteenth-Century Suffering*, edited by Marie-Luise Kohlke and Christian Gutleben, 133-60. Amsterdam: Rodopi/Brill. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789042032316>.
- Logan, John, creator. 2014-2016. *Penny Dreadful*. New York: Showtime Networks.
- May, Leila Silvana. 1995. "Sibling Revelry in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 35 (4): 669-685.
- Miller, James Hillis. *Versions of Pygmalion*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1990.
- Montz, Amy. 2020. "The Dangers of Gothic Sexuality in *Crimson Peak* and *Penny Dreadful*." *Studies in the Fantastic* 10: 46-66.
- National Institute of Justice. 1997. "The Crime of Stalking: How Big Is the Problem?." Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1-4.
- Negrusz, Adam and R. E. Gaensslen. 2003. "Analytical developments in toxicological investigation of drug-facilitated sexual assault." *Anal Bioanal Chem* 376: 1192-1197. DOI 10.1007/s00216-003-1896-z.
- O'Rourke, James. 1999. "The 1831 Introduction and Revisions to 'Frankenstein': Mary Shelley Dictates Her Legacy." *Studies in Romanticism* 38 (3): 365-385
- Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. 1986. Translated by Melville, A. D. Oxford: Oxford UP.
- Özyol, Leyla. 2016. "Pygmalion Myth in Science-Fiction Cinema: *Stepford Wives*, *Blade Runner*, *Ghost in the Shell*." *International Journal of Arts & Sciences* 9 (2): 73-98.
- Primorac, Antonija. 2018. *Neo-Victorianism on Screen: Postfeminism and Contemporary Adaptations of Victorian Women*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Richardson, Alan. 1985. "The Dangers of Sympathy: Sibling Incest in English Romantic Poetry." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 25 (4): 737-754. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/450672>.
- Rocha, Lauren. 2016. "Angel in the House, Devil in the City: Explorations of Gender in *Dracula* and *Penny Dreadful*." *Critical Survey* 28 (1): 30-39.
- Rowland, Robyn, and Renate Klein. 1996. "Radical feminism: History, Politics, Action". *Radically Speaking: Feminism Reclaimed*, 9-36.
- Shaffer, Julie. 1999. "Familial Love, Incest, and Female Desire in Late Eighteenth-and Early Nineteenth-Century British Women's Novels." *Criticism* 41 (1): 67-99.
- Shelley, Mary. 1965. *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. New York: New American Library.
- Sprengnether, Madelon. 2018. *Mourning Freud*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Tate, Carolyn. 2013. "Lesbian Incest as Queer Kinship: Michael Field and the Erotic Middle-Class Victorian Family." *Neo-Victorian Studies* 39 (2): 181-199. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/vcr.2013.0044>.
- Thoss, Jeff. 2015. "From Penny Dreadful to Graphic Novel: Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill's Genealogy of Comics in The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen." *Belphégor. Littérature populaire et culture médiatique* 13 (1): 1-14. DOI: 10.4000/belphegor.624.
- Vance, Holly. 2003. Shifting Roles Blurring Filial Boundaries: Incest in "The Woman in White," "Lady Audley's Secret," and "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." M.A. Thesis, California State University, Long Beach.
- Vlasopolos, Anca. 1983. "Frankenstein's Hidden Skeleton: The Psycho-Politics of Oppression." *Science Fiction Studies* 10 (2):125-136.
- Wei-Jung, Chang. 2020. *Cyberstalking and Law Enforcement*. *Procedia Computer Science* 176: 1188-1194.

