

# Wolves in the Wolds: Late Capitalism, the English Eerie, and the Wyrd Case of ‘Old Stinker’ the Hull Werewolf

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In 1865, Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924) argued that ‘English folklore is singularly barren of werewolf stories, the reason being that wolves had been extirpated from England under the Anglo Saxon Kings, and therefore ceased to be objects of dread to the people’.<sup>1</sup> The *Dictionary of English Folklore* similarly informs us that ‘there are no werewolf tales in English folklore, presumably because wolves have been extinct here for centuries’.<sup>2</sup> These longstanding assumptions make the present day sightings of the English werewolf known as ‘Old Stinker’ all the more unusual. What is most pertinent about this latest folk panic is that ‘Old Stinker’ inhabits a landscape which is thought to have accommodated some of the last wolves in England. These sightings coincide with a phase of severe environmental damage. This has not taken the form of sudden catastrophe, but rather a slow grinding away of species. The result is a contemporary landscape constituted more actively by what is missing than by what is present, a spectred, rather than ‘a scepter’d isle’.

The Victorian novelist Emily Gerard (1849-1905) explained the Romanian belief in the werewolf by associating it with a continuing fear of the wolf: ‘it is safe to prophesy that as long as the flesh-and-blood wolf continues to haunt the Transylvanian forests, so long will his spectre brother survive in the minds of the people’.<sup>3</sup> The emergence of an English werewolf (‘Old Stinker’) in Hull in the present day has reopened debates about the spectre werewolf’s relationship to the ‘flesh-and-blood’ wolf. In this article, I depart from the earlier opinions of Emily Gerard, Sabine Baring-Gould, and others, who explained the disappearance of the werewolf in folklore as following the extinction of the wolf. I argue instead that British literature is distinctive in representing a history of werewolf sightings in

places in Britain where there were once wolves. I draw on the idea of absence, manifestations of the English eerie, and the turbulence of England in the era of late capitalism to illuminate my analysis of the representation of contemporary werewolf sightings.

In literature, accounts of werewolfism or lycanthropy can be traced back to the epic of *Gilgamesh* in approximately 2000 BC, whereas early fables warning of the wolf are exemplified by Aesop's 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf' in 620-520 BC. Virgil's *Eclogues* are thought to be the first account of voluntary werewolfism (around 42-39 BC).<sup>4</sup> 1589, the year that saw the rise of werewolf trials in France, appears to have been the werewolf's *annus mirabilis*.<sup>5</sup> Jean Grenier, the 'Werewolf of Chalons', and the Gandillon family, all of whom were executed as werewolves at this time, were murderers who had a taste for human flesh. The story of Grenier, a werewolf boy who supposedly fell upon and devoured several children, is recounted in Sabine Baring-Gould's book on *Werewolves* (1865).<sup>6</sup> The boy claimed to be under the control of the 'Lord of the Forest' and was said to have appeared to his victims in wolf form.<sup>7</sup>

Sorcery is the key to understanding such happenings, according to Baring-Gould's explanation of werewolfism. Such notions endured into the early twentieth century. Montagu Summers (1880-1948) posited a shared history of witches and werewolves, shown through his use of demonologies in *The Werewolf in Lore and Legend* (1933). We are reminded that James I's *Daemonologie* (1597), used widely in witchcraft trials, acknowledges the existence of 'Men-Woolfes'.<sup>8</sup> British witchcraft trials focussed on the witch's metamorphosis into hare or cat, paralleling the preoccupation with shapeshifting in European werewolf trials. Summers perpetuates this association between witches and werewolves in the twentieth century by documenting the historical sources and the authorities on shapeshifting witches in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland and by appending material on 'witch ointments' to his study of the werewolf.

Ointments or salves, and enchanted girdles, prominent in mediaeval accounts, are still in evidence as magical explanations for voluntary human to wolf transformations in Sabine Baring Gould's and Montague Summer's writing.<sup>9</sup> This notion of sorcery co-exists with beliefs in lycanthropy as a punishment, a judgement of the gods, a curse; a sign of bestiality, or at worst, of cannibalism.<sup>10</sup> Sabine Baring-Gould defines lycanthropy in 1865 in both magical and cannibalistic terms before turning to the notion of insanity: 'Truly it consists in a form of madness, such as may be found in most asylums' (p. 14). Summers further medicalises the condition, defining lycanthropy in 1933 as 'that mania or disease when the patient imagines himself to be a wolf, and under that savage delusion betrays all the bestial propensities of the wolf' (p. 2).

Lycanthropy, then, supposedly existed in the mind, and undergoes a further dissociation from magic following the rise of psychoanalysis. The condition more commonly comes to represent the 'beast within' or everything animal that we have repressed in terms of our human nature.<sup>11</sup> Freud was instrumental in rejecting sorcery as a cause, though he remained fascinated by early demonologies.<sup>12</sup> He went on to write about the latent symbolism of wolves, associating them with a 'primal scene' of psychosexual development in his case history of the 'Wolf-Man' in 1914.<sup>13</sup>

I depart from this focus on the individual psyche and argue instead that the history of werewolfism is inextricably bound up with humankind's treatment of wolves. Thus the popularity of the pamphlet, *A Discourse Declaring the Damnable Life and Death of One Stubbe Peeter, A Most Wicked Sorcerer, who in the Likeness of a Wolf Committed Many Murders* (1590) corresponds with campaigns that brought about the extinction of the wolf in England in the 1500s.<sup>14</sup> Peter Stubbe (variously spelled Stump, Stumpf, or Stube), the werewolf of Bedburg, whose story is retold here is a seminal case.<sup>15</sup> He was executed as a werewolf in Cologne in 1589. Following Stubbe's execution a likeness of a wolf was framed

in wood and set above a pole which contained his severed head. The pole was placed through the wheel on which he had been tortured as a permanent monument to both the killing of the werewolf and the destruction of the wolf.<sup>16</sup>

The eradication of the British wolf is largely due to the campaigns of English monarchs. King Edgar, who reigned from 959 to 975, was the first monarch to set about cleansing and ridding the country of these ravenous creatures. It was thought that within four years of his campaigns no wolves would remain in Wales and England.<sup>17</sup> Dead wolves were coveted as trophies in Anglo Saxon Britain and Edgar demanded that his Welsh subjects pay him 300 wolf skins a year; some criminals were encouraged to pay their debts in wolf tongues.<sup>18</sup> English wolves were almost totally eradicated under the reign of Henry VII (1457–1509). Wolves held out in Ireland until the 1700s (though they were extinct in Scotland by the late 1600s).<sup>19</sup> British and Irish wolves were exterminated much earlier than wolves across Europe the total extinction of which did not occur until the 1800s.

There are a number of accounts of the last UK wolf by Mrs Jerome Mercier, Michael Morpurgo, Jim Crumley, and others, but history suggests that there has been little sympathy around the persecution, slaughter, and extinction of British wolves.<sup>20</sup> Garry Marvin documents a history of humankind's hatred and fear of the wolf (which he names 'lupophobia').<sup>21</sup> In eighteenth-century Britain, in translating the work of the natural historian Buffon, Goldsmith wrote that wolves 'are in every way offensive, a savage aspect, a frightful howl, an insupportable odour, a perverse disposition, fierce habits [. . .] hateful while living and useless when dead.'<sup>22</sup> Even in the twentieth century, wolves had few defenders and continued to be much maligned. Montague Summers, for example, is notably devoid of sympathy for the wolf, arguing for the creature's

Unbridled cruelty, bestial ferocity, and ravaging hunger. His strength, his cunning, his speed were regarded as abnormal, almost eerie qualities, he

had something of the demon, of hell. His is the symbol of Night and

Winter, of Stress and Storm, the dark and mysterious Harbinger of Death.<sup>23</sup>

Despite this demonising of the wolf, Summers reminds us that ‘of all British animals that have become extinct within historic memory the wolf was the last to disappear’.<sup>24</sup> This is significant because very few accounts of werewolfism in England and Scotland have survived since that eradication but what I have uncovered instead is a history of literature on hauntings or spectres in landscapes where there were once wolves. In 1912, Elliott O’Donnell described wolf phantoms in remote parts of Britain.<sup>25</sup> The first is in North Wales where a Miss St Denis witnesses ‘a nude grey thing, not unlike a man in body, but with a wolf’s head’ in lonely farmland in Merionethshire.<sup>26</sup> She subsequently learns that ‘in one of the quarries, close to the place where the phantasm had vanished, some curious bones, partly human and partly animal had been unearthed’.<sup>27</sup> O’Donnell concludes that what she had seen ‘might very well have been the earth-bound spirit of a werewolf’.<sup>28</sup> Similar incidents occur in Cumbria and in the Valley of Doones in Exmoor, where the tall grey figure of a man with a wolf’s head is believed by the observer to be ‘the spirit of one of those werwolves [sic] referred to by Gervase of Tilbury and Richard Verstagen – werewolves who were still earthbound owing to their incorrigible ferocity’.<sup>29</sup> Elsewhere in the Hebrides, a human skeleton with a wolf’s head is allegedly unearthed in a tarn by a geologist. This causes the monster to appear in spirit form at the window later in the evening, before the bones are reinterred and the werewolf laid to rest.<sup>30</sup> Summers recounts a similar story, only this time it is an Oxford Professor in Merionethshire who discovers the ancient skull of a large dog in a lake and takes it to his abode, wherein the hideous face of a wolf with the eyes of a man appears to his wife at the window. The creature is eventually chased back to the lake and the skull is returned to the water.<sup>31</sup> Summers argues that this is evidence of ‘the phantom werewolf [...] whose power for evil and ability to materialise in some degree were seemingly energised by the recovery of

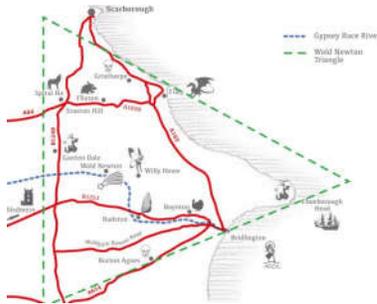
the skull'.<sup>32</sup> I will return to these watery hauntings, to the idea of absence and phantoms, in my analysis of the English eerie. These features are notably repeated in descriptions of 'Old Stinker', the Hull werewolf to which I now turn.

In 2015, newspapers reported that the Hull Werewolf 'Old Stinker' or 'The Beast of Barmston Drain' was terrorising women with his human face and very, very, bad breath (hence his name).<sup>33</sup> The two most recent sightings were reported in the popular press in 2016 ('Women Says She Ran from Hull Werewolf Old Stinker', *Hull Daily Mail*, August 29th, 2016) and 'Woman Met Eight foot Werewolf Old Stinker With Human Face and Extremely Bad Breath', *Metro*, Wednesday 31 Aug 2016).<sup>34</sup> There has been something of a folk panic in Yorkshire following the sightings of this eight-foot werewolf living in the Wolds.<sup>35</sup> 'Old Stinker' inhabits a landscape that is thought to have seen some of the last UK wolves; newspapers have since reported a full-scale werewolf hunt. 'Old Stinker' has apparently eaten a German Shepherd dog and has been seen leaping over fences like a modern day Spring-Heeled Jack.<sup>36</sup>

This very English werewolf is curiously absent from universal accounts of the werewolf but he can be found in descriptions of Yorkshire's Wyrld Wolds (existing as local or particularised knowledge). Travelogues or tourist accounts describe the Yorkshire Wolds as 'a relatively small crescent of rolling chalky countryside, arcing from glorious Filey with its miles of golden beaches in the north to bustling Hessle, home of the world-famous Humber Bridge, in the south'.<sup>37</sup> The Yorkshire Wolds Way is a seventy-nine-mile National Trail and extends through the East Riding of Yorkshire into Ryedale. Featuring the widest of wide open spaces; the Yorkshire Wolds is apparently 'the perfect place for anyone looking to escape the rat race' (or a dog eat dog world perhaps!).<sup>38</sup>

The Wold's many myths and legends are unmatched. According to Charles Christian, the author of *A Travel Guide to Yorkshire's Weird Wolds* (2016), they include 'vampires,

green-skinned fairy folk, headless ghosts, screaming skulls [...] a black skeleton, a Parkin-eating dragon, sea serpents, turkeys galore, England's oldest buildings, enchanted wells and of course werewolves'.<sup>39</sup> He has identified what he terms as 'The Wold-Newton Triangle', an uncanny region where most of these beasts and sightings can be located (as seen on fig. 1 below).<sup>40</sup>



Speaking of the landscape that inspired his work, he informs us that

Part of the country was once infested with wolves [...] up until the eighteenth century there was still a wolf bounty for anyone killing them. It was known for the wolves to dig up the corpses from graveyards. From that sprung the idea that they were supernatural beings, who took the form of werewolves. There is the legend of a werewolf called Old Stinker – a great hairy beast with red eyes, who was so called because he had bad breath [...]

When I was a child, I remember someone saying they would not drive along the road from Flixton to Bridlington after dark because of those fears.<sup>41</sup>

What Christian presents as personal memoir is, of course, a type of Gothic tourism. Emma McEvoy argues that such 'edutainment' 'relies on a community of taste [...] it plays to those already in the know, those who are possessed of knowledge – of a specific body of texts, their conventions, narratives and tropes'.<sup>42</sup> The knowledge or body of texts that inform Christian's

writing make up what I would term, following the definitions of Robert Macfarlane and others, the English eerie. He succeeds in drawing attention to the dark side of the landscape, ‘a place where Kings built hospices to protect weary travellers from wolves’ (p. 2), and reinventing the werewolf myth. The wolves, we are told, ‘were regarded with particular loathing because they scavenged in graveyards for freshly buried corpses’.<sup>43</sup> And this is not all: ‘their habit of suddenly descending in large packs on areas where they’d previously been unknown, gave rise to the belief they were not ordinary wolves but human beings who adopted a wolf-like shape by night’.<sup>44</sup>

The key to understanding this myth is a place called Spital Ho which Christian claims is associated with an ancient charter dating back to 939 AD. This declared that a hostel be built to protect wayfarers from the Wold’s ravenous wolves. The wolf shelter was supposedly restored in 1447 so that people would continue to be safe from being devoured by wolves.<sup>45</sup> The Yorkshire Wolds were seemingly infested with wolves, which would come down from the hills to attack not only flocks of sheep but the shepherds who protected them. In fact, Christian argues that ‘the Yorkshire Wolds were one of the last strongholds for wolves and there were reports that some parishes were still offering wolf bounties up to the eighteenth century’ (14).

Thus ‘Old Stinker’ is associated with one of the last strongholds of British wolves through the landscape he inhabits; he is originally found near Flixton and not in Hull:

One of the few historical exceptions to the No Werewolves Please, We’re British rule is to be found haunting the roads around Flixton. This creature, sometimes called ‘Old Stinker’ because of the terrible stench of its breath, is described as having large red eyes that glow in the dark that are sometimes mistaken by passing motorists for being the rear lights of another car.<sup>46</sup>

‘Old Stinker’ last made an appearance in the 1960s and is identified with ‘an ancient wolf-like creature ‘walking upright and having a particularly long and powerful tail, almost as long as its body, that it used to knock its victims to the floor’.<sup>47</sup> After this, sightings of the English werewolf disappear only for him to reappear again in the present day. Hull is only thirty-five miles from Flixton, and the myth of Old Stinker was subsequently transferred to Hull when Christian informed journalists of the story following newspaper coverage of the ‘Beast of Barnston Drain’. This eventually led to a full-scale werewolf hunt on 21 May 2016 when Christian, his animal behaviourist wife Jane, the journalist Mark Branagan, and the local historian Mike Covell went in search of ‘Old Stinker’. Their journey, at the time of the full moon, led them to Saint Mary’s Graveyard in the Sculcoats area of Hull and on to Barnston Drain, the scene of the recent sightings. The crew did not come face to face with ‘Old Stinker’ but they did find animal tracks and encounter what they thought was a large dog (Alsatian or Husky). Christian began to link the werewolf to Black Shuck, a ghostly dog that is thought to haunt Eastern England.<sup>48</sup> The myth of Old Stinker endures, however, and has continued to enjoy unprecedented attention in the British media.

The story of ‘Old Stinker’, the spectre werewolf in the *wyrd wolds*, is a powerful example of English eerie. In a phrase alluding to T. S. Eliot’s ‘Whispers of Immortality’, Robert Macfarlane has defined English eerie as ‘the skull beneath the skin of the countryside’.<sup>49</sup> This has elements of supernaturalism – but it is also a cultural and political response to contemporary crises and fears. Writers such as M. R. James (1862–1936) exemplify the English eerie because of their understanding of landscape as constituted by uncanny forces, part-buried memories and contested knowledge.<sup>50</sup> Landscape in James is never there to offer picturesque consolations. Rather it is a realm that troubles. He repeatedly invokes the pastoral only to traumatise it. James’s influence has rarely been more strongly with us than now. For, as Christian’s text shows, there is, across what might broadly be called

‘landscape culture’, a fascination with these Jamesian ideas of unsettlement and displacement:

When I was a teenager growing up in nearby Scarborough, the local legend was Old Stinker returned at dawn to sleep in a tomb in the churchyard of St John the Evangelist in the neighbouring village of Folkton. (Fans of supernatural fiction will recognise that the M. R. James ghost story ‘An Episode of Cathedral History’ has a similar theme. And, coincidentally, the first short story I ever sold – to the now long extinct Argosy magazine – was based around the legend of Old Stinker).<sup>51</sup>

Such descriptions of Old Stinker exemplify the English eerie for me (a movement defined in the critical writings of Mark Fisher and Robert Macfarlane).<sup>52</sup> The eerie is located, like the story of Old Stinker himself, within a spectred rather than a ‘sceptred isle’. For landscape theorists writing on the English countryside

Such concerns are not new, but there is a distinctive intensity and variety to their contemporary address. This eerie counter-culture – this occulture – is drawing in experimental film-makers, folk singers, folklorists, academics, avant-garde antiquaries, landscape historians, utopians, collectives, mainstreamers and Arch-Droods alike, in a magnificent mash-up of hauntology, geological sentience and political activism. In music, literature, art, film and photography, as well as in new and hybrid forms and media, the English eerie is on the rise. A loose but substantial body of work is emerging that explores the English landscape in terms of its anomalies rather than its continuities, that is sceptical of comfortable notions of ‘dwelling and ‘belonging’, and of the packaging of the past as ‘heritage’.<sup>53</sup>

The contemporary eerie feeds off its earlier counterparts; a renewed interest in classics of the

tradition is in evidence: the director Robin Hardy's 2013 print of *The Wicker Man* (1973), for instance; or *Witchfinder General* (dir. Michael Reeves, 1968), a film whose landscapes reveal an underlying sense of psychotic breakdown and brutal violence rather than invoking an English idyll. The eerie has grown to incorporate a huge variety of genres (silent Scandinavian cinema, public information films and the music of Ghost Box records; the writings of M. R. James, Susan Cooper, and Arthur Machen).<sup>54</sup> Adam Scovell defines such genres in relation to (mostly British) landscape as 'the evil under the soil, the terror in the backwoods of a forgotten lane, and the ghosts that haunt stones and patches of dark, lonely water; a sub-genre that is growing with newer examples summoned almost yearly'.<sup>55</sup>

There is an element of 'folk horror' here too, a term first used by Mark Gatiss in 2010.<sup>56</sup> Also influential is the 2014 reissue of Alfred Watkins's cult book of landscape mysticism, *The Old Straight Track* (1925).<sup>57</sup> It is this work which popularised the idea of 'ley lines', the supposed alignment of many places of historical and geographical interest, such as ancient monuments, megaliths, ridges, and so on, which mark very old trackways, often believed to be used for ceremonial or mystical purposes. The central thesis is discredited and eccentric but it still has the ability to re-enchant the landscape for writers such as Christian.<sup>58</sup> He draws on this work in his study of the wonderfully weird Yorkshire Wolds and in locating among other uncanny things what he terms the 'Wold-NewtonTriangle'.

It would be easy to dismiss such writing as an excess of dark mysticism or an unnecessary eruption of gothic tourism. But engaging with the eerie emphatically doesn't mean believing in ghosts or spectres. What is under way, across a broad spectrum of culture, is an attempt to account for the turbulence of England in the era of late capitalism.

The supernatural and paranormal have always been a means of figuring powers that cannot otherwise find visible expression. Contemporary anxieties and dissents are here being reassembled and re-presented as hauntings, shadows or phantoms, there is a nod to Marx,

perhaps, who appropriated the discourse of spectrality in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848).<sup>59</sup> What is clear is that we are certainly very far from the polite norms of conventional nature writing, and we have entered into a mutated cultural terrain that includes the weird and the punk. Among the shared landmarks of this terrain are ruins, fields, pits, drains, fringes, relics, buried objects, hilltops, demons, and deep pasts. In much of this work in the eerie, suppressed forces (capital, violence, state power) pulse and flicker beneath the ground and within the air or water, waiting to erupt or to condense. The werewolf hauntings I described earlier in Elliot O'Donnell have strikingly similar landscapes 'full of seams and fissures' and gloomy slate quarries 'half full of foul water'.<sup>60</sup> 'Old Stinker' is famously associated with the ill-smelling Barnston Drain.<sup>61</sup> This drain runs through derelict factory and industrial sites, as well as along the edge of two graveyards. It also has a macabre reputation because of supposed accidental drownings in the heavily polluted water, and as the site of murders and suicides (though this is unproven).<sup>62</sup> This werewolf is firmly situated within the English eerie and as such he represents suppressed forces in an era of late capitalism. Taken together, in all its variety, this movement suggests what the writer and archaeologist Eddie Procter recently called a 'new landscape aesthetic' and there are increasing numbers of writers, artists and film-makers who are reinvesting the landscape with esoteric and mythic imagery which I think articulates pressing contemporary concerns.<sup>63</sup> So what are the sources of this unsettlement? Clearly, the recent rise of the eerie coincides with the era of late capitalism and a phase of severe environmental damage. In England, this has not taken the form of sudden catastrophe, but rather a slow grinding away of species (such as the native wolf). The result, is as I said earlier, a landscape constituted more actively by what is missing than by what is present. This is the climate in which the spectre of the Hull werewolf has re-emerged (rising from the grave of the flesh and blood wolf).

In truth, wolves have long been the archetypal enemy of human company, preying on

the unguarded boundaries of civilisation, threatening the pastoral of ideal sociality and figuring as sexual predators. Yet, in their way, with their complex pack interactions, they have also served as a model for society. Lately, this ancient enemy has been rehabilitated and reappraised, and re-wilding projects have attempted to admit them more closely into our lives.<sup>64</sup> It is in this climate that new sightings of the Hull werewolf began to appear in 2015. The reappearance of this very English werewolf coincided with new debates about the re-wilding of the wolf in the UK and elsewhere.<sup>65</sup> At the Company of Wolves conference our collaborations with Garry Marvin and the UK Wolf Trust generated further discussions around the myth of the last wolf and the possibility of re-wilding large species in Britain including wolves and lynx. Journalists who reported on the project allowed us to openly question what would happen if wolves returned to our forests.<sup>66</sup> Interestingly, the reintroduction of wolves elsewhere has been seen as a symbolic process of atonement for the sins of the destruction of wild environments and the eradication of species due to human wrongdoing.<sup>67</sup> This acknowledgement of guilt is linked to the rise of Old Stinker, to which I again turn

I began by stating that in the 1880s the British traveller Emily Gerard accounted for the Romanian belief in werewolves by associating it with fear of the wolf. The emergence of the Hull werewolf 'Old Stinker' has reopened debates about the werewolf's relationship to the 'flesh and blood wolf', inhabiting as he does a landscape which saw some of the last wolves in England. Local historians, such as Charles Christian and Mike Covell, claim that 'Old Stinker' was first reported on in the eighteenth century and is not a recent phenomenon.<sup>68</sup> However, the reappearance of Old Stinker in Hull in the present day could not be more significant or serendipitous.<sup>69</sup> He represents not our belief in him as a supernatural shapeshifter, but our collective guilt at the extinction of an entire indigenous species of wolf. Far from dismissing the myth, my instincts are to embrace it and see it as a manifestation of

our cultural memory around wolves. There exists a tension between what is recorded by historians and what subsists within a culture's collective memory. The collective memory is supposedly stored in the literary-cultural.<sup>70</sup> I have argued, then, that the violence of the English countryside, the English eerie, the era of late capitalism, and our cultural memory around what humans did to wolves have combined to create the myth of Old Stinker. And to cite Kathryn Hughes, speaking of late capitalism and alluding to our 2015 werewolf conference in *The Guardian*, 'in our dog-eat-dog world, it's time for werewolves'.<sup>71</sup>

Contrary to the assertions of earlier writers such as Gerard, the 'Old Stinker' story tells us that belief in werewolves lives on beyond the actual lives of the wolves that were thought to inspire them. Rather than being dismissed as a rather fishy tale, the 'Old Stinker' myth can allow us to lament the last wolves to run free in English forests. As a werewolf, Old Stinker is far from being a curse; in fact, he is a gift who can reawaken the memory of what humans did to wolves, initiate re-wilding debates, and redeem the big bad wolf that filled our childhood nightmares, reminding us that it is often humans, not wolves or the supernatural, that we should fear.

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<sup>1</sup> Sabine Baring-Gould, *The Book of Werewolves* (1865; Dublin, Nonsuch, 2007), p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Jacqueline Simpson and Steve Roud, *A Dictionary of English Folklore* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 386.

<sup>3</sup> Emily Gerard, *The Land Beyond the Forest: Facts, Figures and Fancies from Transylvania*, 2 vols. (William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1888; rpt. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010), I, p. 324. Emily Gerard went with her husband, an officer in the Austrian army, to Transylvania for two years in 1883. In the years following, she wrote a full length account of her travels there (published in 1888), together with several articles

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which Bram Stoker drew on when researching his novel *Dracula*. Chapter XXV of volume 1 of Gerard's book is entitled 'The Roumanians: Death and Burial – Vampires and Werewolves' and is an account of the widespread belief in werewolves in amongst the people she encountered in the villages of Transylvania. For a summary of her life and works, see 'Emily Gerard', *Orlando: Women's Writing in the British Isles from the Beginnings to the Present*, [http://orlando.cambridge.org/public/svPeople?person\\_id=geraem](http://orlando.cambridge.org/public/svPeople?person_id=geraem).

Kaja Franck has documented Gerard's influence on the literary werewolf, particularly in relation to Bram Stoker's work. See 'Dracula: The Wolf in Vampire's Clothing', in 'The Development of the Literary Werewolf: Language, Subjectivity and Animal/Human boundaries', PhD thesis, University of Hertfordshire, 2016, pp. 38-78.

<sup>4</sup> Such key texts and facts are widely cited within werewolf scholarship, though the early dates vary and are only approximate. Adam Douglas and Garry Marvin are amongst those who have published chronologies or timelines of wolves, werewolves, and wolf children. See, for example, Adam Douglas, 'A Werewolf Chronology', in *The Beast Within: A History of the Werewolf* (London, Chapman's, 1992), pp. 264-67, and Garry Marvin's 'Timeline of the Wolf', *Wolf* (London, Reaktion Press, 2012), pp. 182-83. Kaja Franck has also compiled an extensive table of werewolves in 'The Development of the Literary Werewolf', pp. 315-58.

<sup>5</sup> Werewolf trials in 1589 in France include those of Roulet (1598), the Werewolf of Chalens (1598), the Gandillon family (1598), and Jean Grenier (1603). Peter Stubb was executed as a werewolf in Cologne in Germany in the 1589. These trials are listed by Douglas in his 'Werewolf Chronology', p. 266. He also has a chapter on the werewolf trials but this is descriptive rather than analytical (*The Beast Within*, pp. 127-50). The seminal study of werewolfism in the period of these trials is Leslie A. Scondoto, *Metamorphosis of the Werewolf: A Literary Study From Antiquity Through the Renaissance* (Jefferson, NC,

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McFarland, 2008). Trial records, historical accounts, and sightings can be found in Charlotte F. Otten (ed.), *A Lycanthropy Reader: Werewolves in Western Culture* (Syracuse, NY, Syracuse University Press, 1986; rpt. Dorset Press, 1989), pp. 49-91. This gives in full Sabine Baring-Gould's account of the trial of Jean Grenier (pp. 62-68), and the original trial transcript of Peter Stubb in 1590 (69-76). Baring-Gould also documents the trial of Gilles de Retz earlier in the 1440s for the bloody murder of hundreds of children, detailing the charges and his sentence and execution (*Werewolves*, pp. 132-63). More recently, Garry Marvin has commented on the relationship between wolf attacks and the trial of werewolves (*Wolf*, pp. 53-60).

<sup>6</sup> See Baring-Gould, 'Jean Grenier', in *Werewolves*, pp. 67-77. Baring-Gould relates that Grenier was not executed, due to his perceived neglect and imbecility. He was imprisoned in a monastery at Bordeaux and instructed in Christianity until the time of his death aged of twenty (p. 75).

<sup>7</sup> See Baring-Gould, *Werewolves*, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> The entry for 'Men-Woolfes' in *Daemonologie*, is anthologised by Otten in *A Lycanthropy Reader*, pp. 127-29. Leslie Sconduto makes this relationship explicit through her chapter on the church's response to the werewolf and the Renaissance werewolf (*Metamorphosis*, pp. 15-26, 127-80). Montagu Summers claims that British Witchcraft trials detail metamorphosis into hares or cats (*The Werewolf in Lore and Legend* (1933; rpt; New York, Dover, 2003), p. 195). His book contains detailed accounts of shapeshifting witches (pp. 191-204) and the historical sources and authorities on them in Britain (p. 193). He also appends material on 'witch ointments' to the book (pp. 279-81). This further cements the relationship between witches and werewolves in the popular imagination.

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<sup>9</sup> ‘The were-wolves are certain sorcerers, who hauing annoynted their bodyes, with ointment [...] and putting on a certaine girdel [...] seeme as wolues, but to their own thinking haue both the shape and nature of wolues so long as they weare the said girdle’ From Richard Verstagen, *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence* (1605), cited in Summers, *The Werewolf*, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Baring-Gould, *Werewolves*, p. 14; Summers, *The Werewolf*, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> The psychoanalytical approach has prevailed and is still prevalent in contemporary critical works on the werewolf, though some studies now approach it with a sense of irony. See Brent A. Styczynski, ‘Its all in your head’, *The Modern Literary Werewolf* (Jefferson, NC, McFarland, 2013), pp. 17-37; Chantal Bourgault du Coudray, ‘I used to be a werewolf but I am alright nowoooo’, *The Curse of the Werewolf: Fantasy Horror and the Beast Within* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), pp. 65-90. Adam Douglas’s study in 1992 is primarily a history of this approach as the title suggests (*The Beast Within: A History of the Werewolf*). Brian J. Frost has anthologised ‘beast within’ stories in his *Essential Guide to Werewolf Literature* (Madison, WI, University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), pp. 144-87. For a summary of medical explanations of the werewolf myth, see Matt Beresford, *The White Devil: The Werewolf in European Culture* (London: Reaktion, 2003), pp. 165-94.

<sup>12</sup> He is reputed to have read extensively on western witch trials and to be an avid reader of Johann Weyer whose *De praestigiis daemonum* (1563) was reprinted in Paris in 1885 (see Douglas, *The Beast Within*, p. 169).

<sup>13</sup> Sergei Pankejeff (1886-1979), known as the ‘Wolf-Man’, was the subject of one of Freud’s most famous case histories. The case was published as ‘The History of An Infantile Neurosis’ in 1918. See *The Complete Psychological Works Of Sigmund Freud*, Vol 17 (London: Vintage, 2001), pp. 22-48. For a brief discussion of the case, see ‘Freud, the Wolf-Man and

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the Werewolves’, in Carlo Ginzburg, *Myths, Emblems* (London, Hutchinson, 1990), pp. 145-55. I recently commented on the wolf paintings of the famous Wolf-Man on display in the Wellcome Institute: ‘Wolves in the Asylum at the Wellcome’, *Open Graves, Open Minds*, 17 September 2016, <http://www.opengravesopenminds.com/exhibitions/wolves-in-the-asylum-at-the-wellcome/>.

<sup>14</sup> ‘A Discourse’, pp. 69-76.

<sup>15</sup> Otten gives in full the original trial transcript of Peter Stubbe in English, translated from the Dutch in 1590 and supposedly based on eye-witness accounts by Tyse Artyne, William Brewar, Adolf Staedt, and George Bores. See ‘A Discourse Declaring the Damnable Life and Death of One Stubbe Peeter’, in *A Lycanthropy Reader*, pp. 69-76.

<sup>16</sup> See ‘A Discourse’, p. 76.

<sup>17</sup> Edgar’s boast to rid the land of wolves is immortalised in poetry and plays from the period which are well documented in Summers, *The Werewolf*, p 181.

<sup>18</sup> Marvin, *Wolf*, p. 82. Summers is very detailed in his account of the extermination of British wolves in his chapter ‘England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland’ (*The Werewolf*, pp. 178-216). For a classic contemporary study of how wolves have figured in human cultures, see Barry Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men* (London, Simon and Schuster, 1978).

<sup>19</sup> These dates are well documented by Garry Marvin and others. There is not a complete consensus on this but the dates roughly correspond in most accounts. I am using Garry Marvin’s ‘Timeline of the Wolf’ (*Wolf*, pp. 182-83) for my evidence here.

<sup>20</sup> See Mrs Jerome Mercier, *The Last Wolf* (Grange Over Sands: H. T. Mason, 1906); Michael Morpurgo, *The Last Wolf* (London, Doubleday, 2002); Jim Crumley, *The Last Wolf* (Edinburgh, Birlinn, 2010); Adam Weymouth, ‘Was this the Last Wild Wolf in Britain?’,

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*Guardian*, 21 July 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/science/animal-magic/2014/jul/21/last-wolf> [accessed October 3rd, 2015]

<sup>21</sup> Marvin, 'Lupophobia', in *Wolf*, pp. 35-81.

<sup>22</sup> Oliver Goldsmith, cited in 'Wolf Children', from the *Chambers Edinburgh Journal*, no. 446 (1852), anthologised in Alexis Easley and Shannon Scott, eds., *Terrifying Transformations: An Anthology of Victorian Werewolf Fiction* (Kansas, Valancourt Books, 2013), pp. 310-11 (p. 311).

<sup>23</sup> Summers, *The Werewolf*, p. 65. Garry Marvin cites this as evidence of lupophobia in *Wolf*, p. 49.

<sup>24</sup> Summers, *The Werewolf*, p. 179.

<sup>25</sup> Elliott O'Donnell, *Werwolves* [sic] (London, Methuen, 1912).

<sup>26</sup> O'Donnell, *Werwolves*, p. 94.

<sup>27</sup> O'Donnell, *Werwolves*, p. 94.

<sup>28</sup> O'Donnell, *Werwolves*, p. 94.

<sup>29</sup> O'Donnell, *Werwolves*, p. 98. Richard Verstagen (c. 1550–1640) was the author of *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence* (1605), cited in Summers, *The Werewolf*, p. 3. Gervase of Tilbury (c. 1150–1228), is mentioned the *Dictionary of English Folklore*'s entry on werewolves: 'Tilbury wrote in 1211 that werewolves are common in England but the examples he gave are all French' (*Dictionary of English Folklore*, p. 386).

<sup>30</sup> O'Donnell, *Werwolves*, pp. 106-7

<sup>31</sup> Interestingly, accounts of the Lincolnshire 'Dogdyke' werewolf seems to draw directly on this story. I have outlined the return of this myth on the *Open Graves, Open Minds* blog: 'Dogdyke: The Lincolnshire Werewolf Returns', *Open Graves, Open Minds*, 2 November

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2016 <http://www.opengravesopenminds.com/ogom-the-company-of-wolves/dogdyke-the-lincolnshire-werewolf-returns/>.

<sup>32</sup> Summers, *The Werewolf*, p. 191

<sup>33</sup> The frequent sightings of the werewolf, dating back to December 2015, along the banks of the drain have resulted in the creature also earning the nickname of the ‘Beast of Barmston Drain’.

<sup>34</sup> The Hull werewolf has even caught the attention of the dark rocker Alice Cooper, who posted about him on his Facebook page and asked for further information. This story has been widely shared in the tabloid press in the UK; see, for example, Felicity Cross, ‘Monster of Rock Alice Cooper VS Hull's Old Stinker’, *The Daily Star*, 1 June 2016.

<sup>35</sup> ‘Townsppeople Gather to Hunt Werewolf in Hull Known as Old Stinker’, *Metro*, 15 May 2015]; ‘Haunted – Old Stinker Werewolf – Yorkshire’s Bermuda Triangle’, *Hull Daily Mail*, 21 October 2015; ‘Sightings of Eight Foot Werewolf Known as Old Stinker Sparks Panic Across City’, *Yorkshire and Humber News, Brief Report, HDM*, 31 October 2015; ‘Eight Foot Tall Werewolf Old Sinker Prowling in Hull Industrial Estate’, *Huffington Post*, 16 May 2016; ‘Residents Tremble in Terror After Seeing Eight Foot Werewolf in British City’, *Daily Express*, 15 May 2016

<sup>36</sup> Spring-Heeled Jack was a folk devil who terrorised Victorian London and was also sighted in the Midlands and Scotland (first seen in 1837). He was often depicted jumping over fences and transgressing spatial boundaries. A full length study of the folklore and literature relating to him has been carried out by Dr Karl Bell, *The Legend of Spring-Heeled Jack: Victorian Urban Folklore and Popular Cultures* (Rochester, NY, Boydell Press, 2012).

<sup>37</sup> ‘Visit Hull and East Yorkshire’, <http://www.visithullandeastyorkshire.com/yorkshire-wolds/> [accessed 1 October, 2016]

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<sup>38</sup> See ‘Escape the World, Explore the Wolds’,

<http://www.visithullandeastyorkshire.com/yorkshire-wolds/> [accessed 1 October, 2016]

<sup>39</sup> Charles Christian, *A Travel Guide to Yorkshire's Weird Wolds: The Mysterious Wold Newton Triangle* (Urban Fantastist, 2015), Kindle Edition, n. p.

<sup>40</sup> Christian takes this name from the Bermuda Triangle and the ‘Wold Newton Universe’, a literary invention of the science fiction writer Philip Jose Farmer (1918-2009). See ‘Haunted by Old Stinker the Werewolf: Yorkshire’s Bermuda Triangle’, *Hull Daily Mail*, 31 October 2015,

<http://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/haunted-old-stinker-werewolf-yorkshire-s-bermuda/story-28085904-detail/story.html#1HW67GrDlzzsVflJ.99> [accessed 5 September 2016].

<sup>41</sup> ‘Haunted by Old Stinker’.

<sup>42</sup> Emma McEvoy, *Gothic Tourism* (London, Palgrave, 2015), p. 201.

<sup>43</sup> Christian, *Travel Guide*.

<sup>44</sup> Christian, *Travel Guide*.

<sup>45</sup> Christian, *Travel Guide*.

<sup>46</sup> Christian, *Travel Guide*.

<sup>47</sup> Christian, *Travel Guide*.

<sup>48</sup> For such myths, see S. J. Sherwood and W. E. Cousins, ‘The Black Dog of Whitby and Kettleness’, *Anomaly*, 42 (2008), 2-9.

<sup>49</sup> Robert Macfarlane, ‘The Eeriness of the English Countryside’, *Guardian*, 10 April 2015. I am indebted to this article for its exploration of the eerie.

<sup>50</sup> The *Collected Ghost Stories* of M. R. James (London, Edward Arnold, 1931) have been hugely influential and a school of James criticism has grown up. See, for example, David Punter, *The Literature of Terror*, 2 vols (Harlow, Longman, 1996); Julia Briggs, *The Rise and*

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*Fall of the English Ghost Story* (London, Faber, 1977); Jack Sullivan, *Elegant Nightmares: The English Ghost Story from Le Fanu to Blackwood* (Athens, OH, Ohio University Press, 1978), pp. 69-90; Julian Wolfrey, *Victorian Hauntings, Spectrality, Gothic and the Uncanny* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2001). James has lately been enjoying a revival and is widely celebrated in Andrew Smith, *The Ghost Story 1840-1920: A Cultural History* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 168-86.

<sup>51</sup> Christian, *Travel Guide*, n. p.

<sup>52</sup> See Macfarlane, 'Eeriness'; Mark Fisher, *The Weird and the Eerie* (London, Repeater Books, 2016).

<sup>53</sup> Macfarlane, 'Eeriness'.

<sup>54</sup> For information on Ghost Box records, see their site at <http://ghostbox.co.uk/>. Mark Fisher, the author of *The Weird and the Eerie*, was instrumental in promoting this label.

<sup>55</sup> Adam Scovell, 'Where to Begin with Folk Horror', BFI, 10 June 2016, <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/where-begin-folk-horror> [accessed 10 July 2016].

<sup>56</sup> Mark Gatiss used it as an umbrella term to describe a number of films in his *A History of Horror* documentary for BBC4 in 2010.

<sup>57</sup> The influential and eerie novels of Alan Garner and Susan Cooper are vital to the contemporary movement, too,, especially Garner's *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen* (1960) and *The Owl Service* (1967), and Cooper's dazzling *The Dark Is Rising* sequence, published between 1965 and 1977.

<sup>58</sup> Christian writes that 'Rudston, at the heart of the Wold-Newton Triangle, occupies a significant place in the country's network of ley lines'. He sees them as folkloric, comparing them to Irish 'fairy paths' or aboriginal 'songlines' (*Travel Guide*).

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<sup>59</sup> Marx famously begins *The Communist Manifesto* with an image of a gothic phantom ('A spectre is haunting Europe'). For an analysis of such tropes in his writing, see Chris Baldick, 'Karl Marx's Vampires and Grave-diggers', in *In Frankenstein's Shadow: Myth, Monstrosity and Nineteenth-Century Writing* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 121-40.

<sup>60</sup> From Elliott O'Donnell, 'British Werewolves', in *A Lycanthropy Reader*, p. 91

<sup>61</sup> A 200-year-old drainage channel that flows across 25 miles of open countryside and through Hull, emptying into the River Humber.

<sup>62</sup> Christian claims that there are even newspaper reports, dating back to the early 1830s, of young children having been bitten by vicious dogs seen prowling close to the drain but there are no sources given (*Travel Guide*).

<sup>63</sup> Eddie Proctor, 'Towards a New Landscape Aesthetic', [https://www.academia.edu/12129019/Towards\\_a\\_New\\_Landscape\\_Aesthetic](https://www.academia.edu/12129019/Towards_a_New_Landscape_Aesthetic) [accessed 1 January 2017]

<sup>64</sup> The Guardian newspaper group had picked up on the rising interest in these debates, publishing a number of articles in late 2014 on the topic. See, for example, Adam Weymouth, 'Was this the Last Wolf in Britain', *Guardian*, 21 July 2014; Adam Vaughan, 'Re-wilding Britain: Bringing Wolves, Bears and Beavers back to the Land', *Observer*, 19 September 2014; Lucy Siegel, 'Why Bring Wolves and Lynx Back to the UK?', *Guardian*, 26 October 2014.

<sup>65</sup> 'The Company of Wolves: sociality, animality and subjectivity in literary and cultural narratives - werewolves, shapeshifters and feral humans', University of Hertfordshire, 3-5 September 2015.

<sup>66</sup> There was national, international and global coverage of the Company of Wolves conference in 2015 and all the coverage made reference to the debates around re-wilding

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wolves. I was a leading spokesperson for this debate during this time. I was interviewed by *Laurence Cawley* on the BBC, ‘University to Host International Werewolf Conference’, 22 August 2015 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-33971546> and the BBC broadcast live coverage on 4 September 2015 ‘Werewolf Conference: The People Seeking ‘The Company of Wolves’ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-34144752>.

Kathryn Hughes, responded to coverage of the ‘Company of Wolves’ conference in *The Guardian*, 30 August 2015, In our dog-eat-dog world, it’s time for werewolves’ <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/30/werewolves-scarcity-fear-vampires-sexual-anxiety>. I was interviewed in *The Independent* for a feature on the ‘Company of Wolves’ conference, 4 September 2015 ‘Werewolf conference will see academics shine a light on folkloric shapeshifter’ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/werewolf-conference-will-see-academics-shine-a-light-on-folkloric-shapeshifters-10477155.htm>. *The Guardian* featured news of the ‘Company of Wolves’ conference, 21 August 2015, ‘The howl truth: scholars get packing for UK werewolf conference’ <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2015/aug/21/werewolf-conference-university-hertfordshire-transform-opinion-mythical-shapeshifters>. I was interviewed in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* about the OGOM project and conference, ‘Werewolf conference billed as first for UK Academy’ 31 August 2015 <https://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/werewolf-conference-billed-first-uk-academy>. Marissa Fessenden also interviewed me for the *Smithsonian Magazine* 24 August 2015, ‘There’s a Conference in the U.K. All About Werewolves’ <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/theres-conference-uk-all-about-werewolves->

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180956370/#mJfTj9Gx8ICBShv.99 (the feature has had over 4, 000 shares); *South China Morning Post* reported on the ‘Company of Wolves’ conference, 24 August, 2015, ‘Werewolf conference aims to transform opinion on mythical shapeshifters’ <http://www.scmp.com/news/world/article/1851839/itll-be-howler-werewolf-conference-aims-transform-opinion-mythical>; *Russia Today* reported on the research that had led to the conference, 21 August 2015, ‘Werewolf conference to debate ‘complex’ history of mythical creature’ <http://www.rt.com/uk/313054-werewolf-conference-scholars-history/>

Global coverage of the project’s research appeared in *University World News*, 5 September 2015, Issue No380, ‘Scholars get packing for UK Werewolf Conference’ <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20150905072219991>

<sup>67</sup> Garry Marvin has discussed this notion of ‘atonement’ in relation to re-wilding wolves. It is particularly prevalent in Japan (see *Wolf*, pp. 179-81). He argues that ‘for those in favour of the reintroduction of wolves to wild places this is part of a process of righting a previous wrong done to both the species and to the wild. For opponents of such processes however, it signifies the return of an unwanted killer, aided and supported by those who do not know or do not care, what they are unleashing back into the world’ (*Wolf*, p. 174).

<sup>68</sup> ‘During the closing years of the eighteenth century [...] a huge wolf-like creature attacked a coach travelling along the York road near Flixton. The wolf fled after being shot by one of the occupants (although not with silver bullets) and was not heard of again until encountered by our lorry driver in the 1960s’ (Christian, *Travel Guide*).

<sup>69</sup> Given that 2015 marked our international Company of Wolves conference and saw our collaboration with the UK Wolf Trust

<sup>70</sup> I am in agreement with Maurice Halbwachs’s definition of collective memory. For an explanation of his version of ‘collective memory’ and how it differs from ‘history’, see

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Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. Francis Ditter Jr (New York, Harper, 1980). Avishai Margalit has made a distinction between ‘shared’ memory and ‘common’ memory. ‘Shared memory’ closely approximates Halbwachs’s ‘collective memory’. A ‘shared memory’, Margalit observes, ‘integrates and calibrates the different perspectives of those who remember an episode [...] into one version (*The Ethics of Memory* (Cambridge, MA and London, Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 51-2)

<sup>71</sup> Kathryn Hughes, ‘In our dog-eat-dog world, it’s time for werewolves’, *Guardian*, 30 August 2015