Bloodscripts
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Published by The Ohio State University Press

Gomel, Elana. 
Bloodscripts: Writing the Violent Subject.
The Ohio State University Press, 2003.
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Notes to Introduction

1. I use “subject” and “subjectivity” to designate the culturally and socially endorsed image of the self. In other words, a subject is a way in which a person is perceived by others and by themselves within a specific social configuration.

2. By narrative representation I mean simply storytelling in the broadest sense of the word. Narrative, as it is widely accepted today, constitutes one of the main ways in which human beings apprehend themselves and their world. We make sense of our experience by telling stories, in other words, by constructing narratives according to the generic rules of our culture.

3. Except for special cases, I use the third-person masculine pronoun in referring to violent subjects. This reflects the simple fact that most violent subjects analyzed in this book are men. However, this does not mean I endorse the often-voiced claim that violence is somehow endemic to male sexuality. Later in the book I argue against this contention, as articulated by Rosalind Miles, Maria Tatar, Cameron and Frazer, and Robin Morgan in The Demon Lover. Violence is a human activity that may be freely chosen by both male and female subjects. Women, despite social and physical limitations, have participated in wars, executions, and genocide. Even with regard to the most extreme and sexualized forms of violence, there have been several widely publicized cases, such as the Moor murders of Brady and Hindley and the activities of Fred and Rose West in which a male and a female murderer worked in tandem, with the female partner being every bit as sadistic as the male. But the social construction of gender makes it very difficult for women to find an appropriate script for their violent behavior. Most cultures, including Western culture, have circumscribed female physical violence by an array of taboos. The indisputable fact that a majority of violent offenders are men testifies to the cultural gendering of self-transcendence as masculine rather than to any innate proclivity of women to pacifism. Aggression, short of actual murder, is written into the narratives of masculine sexual identity in a way that makes it much easier for a male to slide into extreme violence, often directed against women. However, precisely because this intersection between violence and masculinity has been so insistently portrayed and so extensively analyzed, I want to displace it by looking at the dynamics of violence that both underlies and subverts gender.
4. The distinction between narrative and historical truth is made by Donald Spence with regard to the stories told by patients in therapy: the narrative truth is a psychologically satisfactory script that emerges in the process of therapy, while the historical truth is the actual facts of the patient’s life.

5. The American psychologist at Nuremberg G. H. Gilbert described him as “a man who is intellectually normal but with the schizoid apathy, insensitivity and lack of empathy that could hardly be more extreme in a frank psychotic” (Gilbert 239).

6. Again, we might be skeptical about such claims. But in the case of the Holocaust perpetrators, recent historical studies have conclusively shown that the worst mass killers in modern history were, as in the titles of the books by Daniel Goldhagen and Christopher Browning, “ordinary” Germans or “ordinary” men, depending whether the emphasis is on the historical specificity of the Holocaust or on the general human vulnerability to evil. It must be stressed, however, that such “ordinariness” does not equal Hannah Arendt’s “banality of evil,” which, as I will argue in chapter 5, completely distorts the ideal subjectivity the Nazi killers strove to possess. They did not see themselves as bureaucrats of extermination. They were “ordinary” only in the sense of not suffering from any mental disorder.

7. Lingua Tertii Imperii: The Language of the Third Reich, is a book written by Victor Klemperer, a Jewish scholar who survived in Nazi Germany by going underground. The book, published in 1949, describes the Nazi misuse of language.

8. Derrida, Of Grammatology.

9. See Rhodes on the concept of “violent meaning” as the way in which the perpetrator explains his act to himself.

10. The existence of such inherent mechanisms limiting aggression in both animals and humans has been recognized by biologists, anthropologists, and historians. See, for example, O’Connell’s Ride of the Second Horseman.

11. Probably unwittingly, the veteran repeats the words of the terrorist Chen in Malraux’s La Condition Humaine: “A man who has never killed is a virgin” (qtd. in Kott 72).

12. I will occasionally use the Lacanian terminology of the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real but only as useful metaphors for the different phenomenological or cultural registers, or both, that I will discuss. For Lacan’s own definition of these registers, see his Ecrits. Fredric Jameson gives what, in my opinion, is the most lucid exposition of the Lacanian “three orders” in his essay “Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan.” According to Jameson, the Imaginary is a “configuration of space. . . which swarms with bodies and forms . . . whose fundamental property is . . . to be visible . . . to be, as it were, already-seen, to carry their specularity upon themselves like a color they wear or the texture of their surface” (1977, 355). The Imaginary is an archaic region of fluid and unformed subjectivity, of perpetual exchange of places, but also of “struggle, violence, and antagonism” (ibid. 356). The Symbolic is the discursive register, in which a stable and law-abiding self is formed. The Real, the most enigmatic term, is the “remainder” outside language, “that which resists symbolization.” Jameson identifies the Real as “History itself” (ibid. 384). “History itself” is not necessarily a more illuminating term than “the Real,” but Jameson’s analysis makes it clear that the Lacanian terminology is a convenient shorthand that may be used for approaches remote from psychoanalysis, as is the case with Jameson’s own neo-Marxism. My own approach is neither psychoanalytical nor Marxist, but I follow Jameson in making use of the Lacanian terms for my own purposes when it seems appropriate to do so.

13. Dickens knew the power of this scene and always included it in the public readings he gave during the last years of his life, invariably causing some members of the audience to faint.

14. See Friedrich Nietzsche, Human, All Too Human.

15. See Eichmann in Jerusalem, by Hannah Arendt, and Radical Evil, edited by Jean Copjec.
Notes to Chapter 1

1. I am going to use the neutral pronoun for the monster, just as horror texts often do.
   Below, I will consider in greater detail the monster’s subversion of gender identity.

2. The recent film The Hollow Man reduces Wells’s complex exploration of violence and nonconformity to a run-of-the-mill warning against the dangers of science. However, the focus on the body’s interiority and the connection between visibility and pain are preserved in the film’s few good scenes, which use contemporary special effects techniques to stage Dr. Sebastian Caine’s transformations.

3. The precursor of horror fiction is the Gothic novel of the late-eighteenth century (whose popularity was greatest in the period from the 1790s to the 1820s). Born with the publication of H. W. A. P. O. T. O. T. O. (1780) and developed by such writers as Ann Radcliffe, “Monk” Lewis, Charles Maturin, and others, the Gothic novel revolutionized literature by introducing hitherto prohibited themes—supernatural, violence, incest—and employing a variety of startlingly innovative techniques, including multiple and unreliable point of view, embedded narratives, and play with fiction/nonfiction divide. The overall aesthetics of the Gothic novel were influenced by the contemporary discourse of the sublime, resulting in an attempt to find a fictional equivalent to the theories of Longinus and Burke. Contemporary horror has inherited many Gothic narrative techniques and so have “higher” literary genres. But the horror as we know it today originates in the fin de siècle, its generic parameters defined by Robert Louis Stevenson’s The Strange Story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1886), H. G. W. E. T. M. (1896), Bram Stoker’s Dracula (1896), and many others, including novels and short stories of Arthur Machen, M. R. James, and later William Hope Hodgson and Algernon Blackwood.

4. Following Freud’s own lead in his analysis of E. T. A. Hoffmann’s horror tale “The Sandman” in The Uncanny, theories of horror have strip-mined the genre for illustrations of psychoanalytic concepts, dutifully matching its conventions with repressed infantile desires, Oedipal traumas, and toilet-training scars.

5. Like all vampires, Carmilla does not age. She is actually Laura’s distant ancestor. But what is even more significant, Laura remembers Carmilla’s face watching over her cradle in her early childhood. Mothering becomes a prelude to murder.

6. See, for example, Philip Martin’s “The Vampire in the Looking-Glass.”

7. The current fashion of seeing serial killers as victims of childhood abuse (which I will discuss in detail in the next chapter) is a peculiar application of this narrative trope of horror to the enigma of the real-life violent psyche.

8. Benjamin, trying to escape the Nazi persecution of the Jews, killed himself in 1940.

9. In this novel the progeny of Dracula have taken over the Communist bureaucracy of Ceausescu’s Romania. Dracula, appalled by the large-scale excesses of this institutional monstrosity, eventually engineers a coup. In staging this confrontation between an old-fashioned individual monster and a monstrous body politic, Simmons is keenly aware both of the generic tradition of “classic” horror and of its subterranean connection to utopian ideologies. See Dan Simmons’s Children of the Night.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. With regard to serial killers, even more so than with regard to ordinary murderers, the
issue of gender seems to be inevitable. Many (though not all) serial murders contain an explicitly sexual element in the rape or sexual torture of the victim. Most (though not all) serial killers are male. Popular culture underscores the sexual character of serial murder, as in the baroque near-pornography of Kiss the Girls. However, I would be extremely wary of drawing the seemingly obvious conclusion that there is a direct causal link between male sexuality and serial murder, as does Morgan in The Demon Lover. Cameron and Frazer's more nuanced suggestion that serial killers pursue a special kind of transcendence, which Western culture designates as masculine, seems to me much closer to the mark. Though they do not define it as such, this "transcendence" in many ways parallels my concept of the violent sublime. It seems that in the self-scripts of serial killers violence not so much develops out of, as replaces, sexuality, so that initially gay perpetrators, such as Jeffrey Dahmer, choose male victims.

2. Many serial murderers enter into a quasi-symbiotic relationship with the media, becoming enamored of their own notoriety. Moreover, even before being caught, they sometimes attempt to manipulate their own media image, either by writing letters to the police, as did the original Jack the Ripper, or committing more murders, as Ted Bundy claimed to have done. After being captured they often willingly cooperate with psychologists or journalists. Bundy's communication skills were noted by the media and his biographers alike whom he seemed to enjoy manipulating. Nilsen's cooperation with his biographer, on the other hand, suggested an attempt to understand his own behavior. In any case, both of them had no difficulty in speaking the language of their society.

3. Moreover, they are also story characters. Douglas sees himself and his colleagues as direct descendants of the nineteenth-century Great Detectives, stating that "our [criminal profilers'] antecedents actually do go back to crime fiction more than crime fact" and devoting a considerable amount of space to a knowledgeable discussion of Poe, Wilkie Collins, and Arthur Conan Doyle (1996, 32–33).

4. Polygenesis was the belief that different human races had independent evolutionary origins in the transition from hominids to humans and thus were, in effect, different species.

5. In the recent film Red Dragon, Dollarhyde's physical monstrosity is minimized (just a harelip), and he is saddled instead with a slew of traumas, outlandish delusions, and plain meanness, making him into yet another patchwork and incoherent self.

6. This is the Lecter of Silence of the Lambs. The Lecter of the recent Hannibal is quite a different matter. He is furnished with a life story, so muddled and improbable as to make sense only in terms of pop-mythology. In these terms, Lecter, a victim of Nazism (!), is firmly assimilated to the victimization paradigm and made to battle a monster so grotesque that we are supposed to see him as a sort of dark Christ, smiting violence with violence. Instead, however, he becomes ridiculous, his affair with Clarice Starling descending into bathos, and the cannibalistic Eucharist he shares with her more likely to upset the reader's stomach than to provide any metaphysical insights. A part from the failure of the author's imagination, there is a structural reason for the failure of Hannibal the novel and the subsequent film. The attraction of the original Lecter lies precisely in his challenge to narrativity. Any narrative sequel, in trying to "develop" the character, is bound to destroy him.

7. Unlike the unflappable Lecter, Brady became seriously disturbed during his incarceration.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. The ears belong to the spinster's youngest sister, Mrs. Browner, and her lover, both murdered by her husband. The husband blames the middle sister, who was in love with him,
for leading his wife astray and mails her the gruesome package, which by mistake arrives at
the eldest sister’s, the only one not involved with the tragedy.

2. Chesterton’s religious worldview resonates with the theology and worldview of St.
Thomas Aquinas. This Scholasticism (based ultimately on Aristotle) saw the universe and
belief itself as “reasonable.” Every aspect of this theological system revolves around Ratio.
“Supernaturalism” flies in the face of this faith: first, because access to the Divine is through
Christ and the Church; second, because the chaos of the supernatural could be led by the Evil
One. There are, of course, profound mysteries which humans cannot really fathom: the
Incarnation, the Eucharist, the Resurrection. But there are attempts to make them “reasonable”:
it was said, for example, that in Transubstantiation, the form remains the same but the
substance is the Body of Christ. Thus, Father Brown becomes a kind of teleological detective,
discovering the pattern and meaning that was there all the time (I am grateful to Dr. Stephen
A. Weninger for this information and insight).

3. See Stephen Jay Gould, Ontogeny and Phylogeny, for a detailed exposition of this con-
cept and its history.

4. Of course, toward the end of his career, Poirot should have been more than 120 years
old. Reflecting the longevity of his creator, his unchanging age (for he is equally described as
“elderly” in the 1920s and the 1970s) adds to his ghostly aura.

5. Giles Deleuze, a French philosopher, described what he called “a body without
organs,” an imaginary corporeality of pleasure, in his book Anti-Oedipus, co-authored with
Félix Guattari.

6. See Kelves and Proctor on eugenics and Nazi medicine. Also see chapter 5.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. In a 1992 article, Krishan Kumar takes issue with this point of view. He denies that
“the fate of utopia is tied to particular social philosophies and social practices” (1993, 71).
However, later he somewhat contradictorily argues that modern—namely, nineteenth-
and twentieth-century—utopia, is a product of a specific ideology, namely socialism. National
Socialism is not mentioned immediately, but ultimately Kumar concedes that “fascism is a
utopia; so too is Communism in its Soviet form” (65). The question of the violence of these
two regimes and its link to the utopian ideologies is raised implicitly but never explicitly
addressed. See also Moylan’s discussion of the “critical utopia.”

2. See Griffin 202-203. Griffin’s reader on fascism emphasizes the creation of the New
Man as one of the primary goals of fascism in all its varieties. Insofar as fascism (including
National Socialism) was utopian and not simply repressive, its endlessly reiterated goal was
the birth of the new subject of history which Otto Strasser, one of the volkish ideologues, calls
“the new type of human being” (qtd. in Griffin 115).

3. On the place of women and femininity in Nazism see Claudia Koonz’s Mothers in the
Fatherland. This volume argues that while the social politics of Nazism were uniformly reaction-
ary, the symbolic role of femininity in Nazi discourse was very important, split between the
covet disgust I describe in this section and the eugenicist glorification of motherhood,
not that different from Shaw’s. On the development of the argument about the politics of
metaphor, see my “Hard and Wet,” 199–223.

4. This is probably the single most unjustified political accusation ever hurled at Stalin,
who was at this point on the brink of seizing complete control of the party and eradicating
whatever “democratic taint” was still left.

5. His date, of course, turns out to be the criminal. Vadim’s very name is a mark of his
foreignness to his textual universe. Vadim is a first name that cannot be a family name in
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Russian. It is, however, evocative of the French actor Roger Vadim, who was very popular in the Soviet Union, thus indicating the character’s adopted “Frenchness,” reinforced by his occasional musings on existentialist philosophy.

6. E. M. Cioran writes in History and Utopia: “In a perfect city, all conflict would cease; human wills would be throttled, mollified, or rendered miraculously convergent; there would reign only unity, without the ingredient of chance or contradiction” (87).

7. The survival of these mores in the Third Reich, alongside the regime’s utopian attempts to restructure family life and to separate children from parents, is well known. The same dynamics obtained in the Soviet Union under Stalin. The last years of his power were marked by a resurgence of almost-Victorian attitudes, with separate schooling for boys and girls, emphasis on the sacredness of the family, and so on.

8. The “red-brown” is the popular name for the common front of Communists and Neo-Nazis in Russia.

9. Globocnik, Buhler, and several other characters in Fatherland are historical figures who died or were executed after the war. Their presence in the fantastic world of the text, like the mythologizing of Josef Mengele I will discuss in the next chapter, testifies to the centrality of the Third Reich and the murderous utopia it represented in the collective imagination rather than merely collective memory.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Gottfried Benn’s quote is from Der neue Staat und die Intellektuellen (“The New State and the Intellectuals”), published by Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt in 1933. Pierre Drieu La Rochelle’s essay “Renaissance de l’homme européen” is part of Notes pour comprendre le siècle. The last two texts are excerpted in Roger Griffin’s Fascism, 136 and 203 respectively.

2. I refer here to numerous studies of eugenics and its aftermath. See Kelves, Proctor, and Pernick.

3. Hess made this statement at a mass meeting in 1934. See Lifton 31.

4. On the role and scope of eugenics outside Germany, see Daniel Kelves’s In The Name of Eugenics. Proctor, Burleigh, and Whippermann discuss the amalgamation of eugenics and Nazi racial science, while Pernick discusses some of the implications of the similarities between respectable “mainline” eugenics in the English-speaking world and Nazism.

5. W. Duncan McKim, in his eugenicist treatise published in 1900, advocated “a gentle and painless death” by carbonic gas for an amazing variety of deviant types, including tramps and housebreakers.

6. See the essays in The Deputy Reader, Schmidt and Schmidt, eds., that accurately reflect the contemporary debate over Hochhuth’s representation of the Doctor.

7. Lifton and Proctor both consider the validity of the scientific work done in death camps, and both come to the conclusion that, at best, it was puerile, at worst, fake. Mengele’s research on twins was indeed a continuation of an important trend in eugenics and human genetics, but he did not achieve anything that could not have been achieved with more or less orthodox methods. On the nature of his experiments, see his surviving subjects’ testimonies in Lucette Matalon and Sheila Dekel’s Children of the Flames.

8. See, for example, Haynes and McConnell, both deriving the figure of Moreau from Frankenstein, even though McConnell is more aware of the contemporary relevance of Wells’s “mad scientist.”

9. In the debate over vivisection, physiologists’ general argument was pragmatic: infliction of pain on animals might be regrettable, but it was necessary to alleviate human suffering and to obtain knowledge. Claude Bernard’s Experimental Medicine promoted this approach.
10. Twin research was central to racial hygiene and anthropology in the Third Reich. Eugen Fischer, a prominent Nazi eugenicist, called twin studies “the single most important research tool in the field of racial hygiene,” while Otmar von Verschuer, Mengele’s scientific patron to whom the latter submitted all “research material” from Auschwitz, claimed it was “the sovereign method for genetic research in humans.” All multiple births in the Reich were registered expressly “to isolate the effects of nature and nurture in the formation of the human racial constitution” (Proctor 42–43).

11. Despite the unquestionable primacy of social constructionism in the humanities, the trend in biology, psychiatry, psychology, and even anthropology is the opposite, strengthened by the stunning developments in human genetics. To take an example almost at random, the *Herald Tribune* of October 4, 2001 published a small news item announcing the discovery of a gene, *FOXP2*, that is linked to language development. The item nonchalantly announces that the discovery raises hopes “that the genetic revolution is closer to identifying roots of conscious thought and, perhaps, refining what it means to be human” (“Gene Tied to Language is Found,” 4). Although, of course, no such identification is possible on the strength of a single gene, the humanities would do well to pay attention to such developments and expose them as a continuation of the long and unsavory history of bio-ideologies. However, is there a point to building an elaborate edifice of theory on the foundations of de Saussure and Freud, if both language and the structure of the mind are shown to be genetically determined to a much greater extent than was previously believed?

Notes to Chapter 6

1. The recent film *Event Horizon* literalized the metaphor of the black hole as hell, with results remarkable for both spectacular special effects and plot incoherence.

2. The scandalous response of the West to the genocide in Rwanda was marked precisely by the unwillingness to study its historical and ideological roots and thus to see it for what it was not a “tribal war” but a political mass murder. As a result, humanitarian help was offered not to the victims but to the perpetrators, when the latter fled the country and became refugees. Impressed by the killers’ trauma of uprooting and homelessness, humanitarian agencies refused to judge their past deeds and thus became accomplices in one of the twentieth century’s worst ideological slaughters, on a par with the Holocaust and the autogenocide of Cambodia. See Gourevitch’s *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families* . . . *Stories From Rwanda*, and Keane’s *Season of Blood: A Rwandan Journey*.

3. An “upliner” in the novel is a person from the protagonist’s future.

4. The chronoclasm is also known as “the grandfather’s paradox” because of the following illustration: one can travel into the past and kill one’s grandfather, thus preventing oneself from being born, which in turn would make it impossible to kill one’s grandfather.

Note to Conclusion

1. “Anus mundi,” “the anus of the world,” is the way Auschwitz is described in Lifton’s book, based on his interviews with survivors.