

Abstinence vs. indulgence: How the new ethical vampire reflects our monstrous appetites

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Wherever man is found he imposes restraints on himself; and it seems empirically sound to call man not only a “rational animal” but also a “moral animal.” The two epithets are inseparable. The general concepts which are the characteristic function of reason involve the transcendence of the merely given, including impulses which can thus be criticized reflectively. Such self-criticism—i.e., man’s critical reflection on his own intentions and actions—is the core of morality. (Walter Kaufmann¹)

Near the end of a lecture on biological anthropology, Dr. Barbara King (2002) articulated a question she has pondered for much of her distinguished career: what might it have been like if modern human beings were not the only surviving species of hominid? What if we still shared the planet with another erect, bipedal creature, very similar to us but different? For approximately 30,000 years, since the extinction of the species most like us, *Homo neandertalensis*, we have been the sole surviving hominids. It may serve our vanity or our religious beliefs to think that the exclusive presence of *Homo sapiens* in the hominid line was inevitable as well as natural. As Dr. King and other anthropologists have pointed out, there is a tendency to believe that *Homo sapiens* is the crowning achievement of evolution rather than the very recent blip on the evolutionary radar it actually is.

I think Dr. King’s question is provocative. I also think it has been answered through evidence from the human imagination. We may not physically share the planet with another hominid, but in our art and literature, in dreams and fantasies, we have produced a fascinating array of beings who mirror our aspirations and our anxieties. They are, in a word, our monsters. As exemplars of Jung’s archetype of the shadow, they remind us of the rejected aspects of our wholeness. We do, indeed, cohabit the cosmos with fellow creatures who reflect back to us the values we espouse. We need them because the task of articulating an ethical system has literally grown as we realize the extent to which the unconscious rules our lives. As Erich Neumann pointed out 40 years ago, a partial ethic in which we take responsibility only for our conscious attitudes, beliefs, and behavior is no longer

adequate (1969/1990, pp. 92–93).² We may even say it is no longer ethical. Our monsters show us how and why.

Our vampires, ourselves

One monster who has stalked the human imagination for centuries is the vampire. Myth and literature from widely diverse cultures and throughout history show its persistent archetypal qualities as well as the unique embellishments that captivate contemporary audiences. According to *Newsweek* (Yabroff, J., 2008, p. 74), the vampire is a bit “long in the tooth” but in no danger of being forgotten. The abundance of novels, films, and television rather suggest that the glare of media attention will continue to grow hotter for this icy creature. For example, the third film in the *Twilight* series, *Eclipse*, based on the Stephenie Meyer novels, was the first blockbuster film of the 2010 summer movie season, earning approximately 200 million dollars during the opening weekend. Its fan base, both rabid and rapidly growing, has been dubbed “Twi-hards.” Whereas the *Twilight* Series has been called “abstinence porn,” the second most talked-about vampire saga in the last few years celebrates indulgence: *True Blood*, the highest-rated HBO series since *The Sopranos* (Jensen, J. Amoroso, C. and Yi, D, *Entertainment Weekly*, 2009, p. 48).

Though we may be personally indifferent to vampires or deaf to popular phenomena, Jungian analysts of contemporary culture should take note. As an archetype, the vampire is alive and well in the collective psyche. The questions this paper proposes to address are as follows. What do contemporary representations of the vampire teach us about the shadow? How do they reflect our ethical agon at the beginning of the 21st century? To answer, I use the *Twilight* series and *True Blood* to discuss the tensions between abstinence and indulgence among predators. Both stories are an intriguing mix of traditional heteronormative family values and postmodern multiculturalism. Both fit within the female *Bildungsroman*, a literary genre offering psychologists a fruitful view into ethics and character development since it focuses on “early adolescence to young adulthood, the period when the person works out questions of identity, career, and marriage” (Labovitz, 1986, p. 2). In both sagas, the central love relationship between a human female and a vampire male dramatizes the trickier aspects of relating to the Other in the most intimate manner.

Bildungsroman and ethical development

Let us first turn to *Bildungsroman* as a literary genre and a brief summary of the similarities between *Twilight* and *True Blood*. In *Bildungsroman*, “the learning and growth process of the protagonist can be charted through its most characteristic feature—its ‘elusiveness, alternations of insights, its sense of confusion, and

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inconsequentiality” (Labovitz, 1986, p. 13). The central female characters in *Twilight* and *True Blood*, Bella Cullen and Sookie Stackhouse, exemplify these features. They are not clear-sighted, consistent, and inhumanly heroic, but rather grope their way toward self-understanding in a way that most of us, in our private moments, would recognize. Both young women face clear ethical choices—often against fierce opposition from the people they love and respect—and grow into themselves through those choices. In fact, Bella and Sookie dramatize the developmental conflict at the heart of the female *Bildungsroman*, choosing between conformity and rebellion. Like other fictional heroines, they “seem to be created by their authors to take risks and even hazard being cast out of respectable society and the family circle—leading the life of an exile” (p. 15).

Bella and Sookie risk the condemnation of respectable society by falling in love with a vampire. Bella, who moves to a remote town on the Olympic peninsula in Washington to live with her divorced father, is like many teenage girls: shy, awkward, uncoordinated, and almost wholly without a sense of self-worth. She faces the agony of being the new girl at the high school, an object of fascination and envy. She continues to feel like an exile, rarely asserting herself, as though permanently unsure of her place. The odd world of new town, new home, and new high school becomes even odder when the remote, untouchable, and exquisitely beautiful Edward Cullen seeks her out. Bella is a mystery to Edward for a very prosaic reason. Mindreading is his particular vampire skill, yet he cannot read Bella’s thoughts. Curiosity gives way to love, and soon Bella is introduced to the Cullen family—and their secret.

The key plot point for my theme, predatory ethics, is that the Cullens—unlike the majority of vampires—have made an ethical choice: they do not feed on humans. They are self-described “vegetarians.” living in human communities that also are within easy reach of big game so that they can assuage their biological need for fresh blood without having to kill their natural food source, people. The patriarch of the clan, a medical doctor in his human life, also exemplifies an ethic of service. As the town physician, Dr. Cullen has rigorously trained himself to be indifferent to the sight, smell, and taste of human blood—an indifference that the rest of his clan, including Edward, aspires to but cannot quite emulate. The choice to prey on animals does not eliminate their desire for human blood. Indeed, Bella’s blood is particularly intoxicating for Edward, “my own particular brand of heroin,” he tells her. Loving Bella is, in one sense, a perpetual agony of abstinence.³

The vampires of *True Blood* have a similar ethical opportunity enabled by technology. A new synthetic blood, cleverly marketed as “TruBlood,” is available to them as an alternate food source. As in the *Twilight* saga, some vampires find this an acceptable alternative, whereas others view humans as the only satisfying

meal and refer to them as “blood bags”. Possibly because TruBlood tastes “metallic and vile,” they continue to prey with very little thought to the ethical issues. Theirs is a simple naturalistic syllogism: “Vampires feed on human blood. I am a vampire. Therefore, I drain [kill] humans.” In the first episode of season one of *True Blood*, we are introduced to Vampire Bill, who has refused to prey on humans.⁴ Though the synthetic blood is unappealing, it will keep him alive, allowing him to live alongside the human community he cherishes. Bill’s longing is, in fact, what motivates him to move to Bon Temps, Louisiana. It is his home town, the place he left when he enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1860, and the place he could never return to as a vampire while his wife and children were still living. A century and a half later, after the last of his human relations have died leaving no one to inherit, Bill moves back to his ancestral home. This literal move is also Bill’s symbolic stake in the community, which will test *its* moral tolerance and expose the hypocrisy of *its* ethics. As Bill tells Sookie, he cares deeply about his actions, character, and reputation because he intends to make Bon Temps his home.

Bella and Sookie and the worlds each young woman inhabits are quite dissimilar. As mentioned earlier, the *Twilight* saga clearly promotes traditional heteronormative values. Carlisle Cullen is the strong patriarch, Esme Cullen is the serene emotional center of the family, and Edward Cullen endures decades of abstinence and loneliness to save himself for the one woman he can love for eternity. Much has been made of author Stephenie Meyer’s Mormonism, with critics seeing Bella as an exemplar of the traditional female: meek, submissive, and domesticated. The *Twilight* saga also is melodramatic to the core and plays upon a time-honored theme of impossible love that has been explored in high art (Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*) as well as in low art (James Cameron’s *Titanic*). If the *Twilight* saga can be said to epitomize decorum, then *True Blood*, epitomizing decadence, is its opposite. Unlike Bella, Sookie is sassy, strong, and self-reliant, with a clear ethical stance that guides her actions. For instance, she is quite willing to confront two predatory humans to save a vampire from being drained because it is just not right. This ethical clarity distinguishes Sookie sharply from her brother Jason and his various paramours, as well as from most of the vampire population—the ones who make Fangtasia, the local bar, such an intriguing watering hole for vampire and human alike.

Both Bella and Sookie learn to navigate two worlds, the human and the vampire, making ordinary, daily, ethical decisions that have momentous consequences for their own lives and the lives of their friends and family. They live the central challenge posed by the shadow through loving someone their community finds abhorrent yet strangely alluring—a unique and important feature of the vampire. The choice Bella and Sookie make repeatedly puts them at risk. They must trust the restraint of their vampire lovers because the love relationship places the women within easy reach of other lethal and unethical vampires, making

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them in turn targets for the retribution of hate-filled humans who will not tolerate difference. Bella and Sookie thus express the central feature of women's moral development described by Carol Gilligan in her landmark work *In a different voice* (1993): that women's choices are relational and contextual, reflecting the tension between self-care and self-sacrifice. Gilligan pointed out that a woman

begins to ask whether it is selfish or responsible, moral or immoral, to include her own needs within the compass of her care and concern. This question leads her to reexamine the concept of responsibility, juxtaposing the concern with what other people think with a new inner judgment. (p. 82)

Curiosity, attraction, and ultimately a deep and abiding love lead Bella and Sookie into relationship with a predator, albeit an ethical predator. Neither woman simply forgets what others may think, nor how the relationship will affect them. Instead, crossing not only cultural but species boundaries in choosing a mate is the product of, and produces, a new inner judgment. Bella and Sookie reach adulthood through making an ethical choice.

Natural law ethics, sociality, and human flourishing

Human beings are the only species to have developed and articulated an area of study known as ethics, attempt to situate it within something we call nature, and equate moral choice with maturity. One obvious reason is that we possess highly complex cognitive and language skills that foster social learning—a trait we share with our closest animal kin—which also inspire humans to debate the conscious and unconscious assumptions that structure our historical and contemporary practices of learning. But there is a less obvious reason why ethics is a scholarly discipline with real-world consequences, one that causes some consternation. How do we thoughtfully answer the question, *What is the aim of a fully human life, and how do we live it?* Moreover, *By what standards do we judge if someone is not fully human, or more than human?* Two and a half millennia of philosophical debate that one contemporary scholar has termed “a cacophony of competing voices with no common language or contextual framework” (Boyd, 2007, p. 14) attests to the fact that these are ponderous questions. Answering them within the context of predatory ethics, I will highlight a few points beginning with Aristotle.

Aristotle was the first philosopher in the Western tradition to write a sustained treatment on ethics, in which he developed his idea of the four causes: formal, material, efficient, and final. The final cause establishes the idea of purpose for all living things. What is the purpose, aim, or *telos* of human life? The answer is *eudaimonia*, which has been translated as “happiness.” In an era of nauseating

smiley face icons that reproduce like a virus, *eudaimonia* is more robustly translated as “flourishing.”⁵ Aristotle carefully pointed out that *eudaimonia* is fundamentally communal and is reflected in the second purpose of human life, *eu zên*, or living well. We achieve *eudaimonia* and *eu zên* through the knowledge and practice of *arête*, translated as virtue or excellence, the pursuit of which requires a balance of rational, emotional, and social skills (*Ethica nicomachea*, p. 956 [1105a]). That is, unlike the Platonic notion of *arête*, knowledge is not enough. Aristotle decisively emphasized activity and the progressive acquisition of ethical skill in what biological anthropologists call social learning (King, 2002).

At many different points, Aristotle asserted that if I pursue my desires at the expense of others with whom I have a sustained relationship, short term gains will ultimately create misery for all.⁶ For instance, in the *Rhetoric* he said “there really is, as every one to some extent divines, a natural justice and injustice that is binding on all men, even on those who have no association or covenant with each other” (p. 1370 [1373b]). Decades of anthropological research have decidedly confirmed Aristotle’s observation: sociality is an instinct that transcends history and culture. *Eudaimonia* and *eu zên* are communal “since peaceful communal life is a necessary condition for pursuing other goods” (Boyd, 2007, p. 11). Or to quote Gilligan again, “the most basic questions about human living—how to live and what to do—are fundamentally questions about human relations, because people’s lives are deeply connected, psychologically, economically, and politically” (1993, p. xiv).⁷

Ethics and individuation

How does this illuminate the ethics of the predatory vampire—and, I might add, the ethics of *Homo sapiens*, who has rightly been called earth’s “most capable” predator?⁸ A turn to Aristotle is again instructive. Life, or the animating principle, is common to plants (that grow), mammals (that grow and perceive), and humans (that also grow and perceive). What distinguishes *Homo sapiens* from other members of our biosphere is the rational principle, our unique ability to exercise thought. Indeed, for Aristotle rationality is obligatory. We *can* think; therefore, we *must* think. Anything less is simply not a human life (*Ethica nicomachea*, 1941, p. 942 [1098a]).⁹

Our rational capacities to reflect, differentiate, and choose are embedded in Jung’s notion of individuation, which in its appeal to an Aristotelian telos of wholeness, is classical to the core.¹⁰ Individuation is an ordeal not for the faint of heart because it begins with the distinctively moral challenge to confront the shadow and recognize just how unethical we have the capacity to be. In short, any one of us could be ruthless, self-serving predators.

It is clear in both the *Twilight* saga and *True Blood* that some vampires are instinctual killers who view humans as food. “Nature and being are identical in creatures like them” (May, 1994, p. 14). They have relinquished the human

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aspiration to *arête* in which “people attain worth and dignity by the multitude of decisions they make from day to day” (p. 14).¹¹ What distinguishes the Cullen family and Vampire Bill is their ethical choice to resist feeding on humans. Their choice is an excellent example of Aristotelian ethics: the emotional desire to live peaceably with humans, their natural food, combined with a belief that feeding on humans is wrong, which is upheld by behavior consistent with their belief, preying on animals or subsisting on synthetic human blood.¹² Suppressing their natural instinct arouses the surprise and contempt of their fellow vampires. But what lingers, too, is an element of awe. We see this, for instance, when the Volturi, the aristocratic vampire clan in the *Twilight* saga, witness the strength of the love between Bella and Edward. Their leader Aro exclaims, “*La tua cantante!* ... Most of us would trade much for such a gift” (Meyer, 2006, p. 471). Edward later translates for Bella and his sister Alice: “They have a name for someone who smells the way Bella does for me. They call her my *singer*—because her blood sings for me” (original italics; p. 490). Similarly, in a scene from *True Blood* season one between Sookie and Bill, who must say goodbye (temporarily) under the contemptuous gaze of Pam and Eric, Pam rolls her eyes while Eric looks on, clearly aroused. We discover where Eric’s arousal leads in the second season, when he manipulates Sookie into ingesting some of his blood and begins to infuse her erotic dreams against Sookie’s will. *Il sangue sogna*. The blood dreams, too.

Expedient ethics and the moral community

Those familiar with the history of ethics have no doubt recognized that I have been discussing one perspective, natural law ethics. Its roots sink deep into classical soil because a central concern in Greco-Roman culture was the proper relationship between the human and the divine. Reason, a distinctively human trait, is the divine gift that allows us to navigate between enduring values and ephemeral custom. It is within our power to know what is right regardless of the prevailing customs of the time or culture.¹³ Aristotelian ethics was easily adapted by Christian theologians who capably made the leap between our nature and god’s law. Thus natural law ethics segued into divine command theory and, through the work of Christian philosophers, especially Thomas Aquinas, formed the backbone of Church teaching. Though Aquinas maintained nearly a pure Aristotelian approach, one in which the proper and complete exercise of human reason is sufficient to articulate a coherent ethical framework, he also strived to assert the central role of god in that framework.

As the divine command theory of ethics evolved in the early modern era, the focus shifted from humanity’s essential rationality to its essential sinfulness. Boyd (2007) explained this shift by saying:

human nature is entirely too corrupt to function in a normative role. Humans are thoroughly sinful and their attempts at constructing a moral theory based upon the quicksand of a corrupt and perverse human nature is an exercise in futility. Humans are noetically corrupted by sin and, as a result, morally incapable of knowing the good—to say nothing of *doing* the good. (p. 23).

In the modern and especially the postmodern era, divine command ethics ultimately came under attack for three reasons. First, not everyone agreed with the doctrine of original sin. Second, cultural competency weakened any assertion that a transcendent moral order exists “independently of our social constructions and conventions” (p. 22) And third, the normative claim that privileges *Homo sapiens* subtly underscored the Judeo-Christian tradition of placing man—and I do mean *man*—at the center of god’s concern.

Postmodern philosophers, following Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals* first published in 1887, have rejected a divine command theory of ethics for all three reasons. Morality, according to Nietzsche, is a social construction that reinforces communal boundaries by defining an in group and an out group and ascribes moral worth to each. In short, “we” are good and “they” are evil. Defining the boundaries of the moral community has serious and lasting consequences for any theory of ethics, not to mention for the actual practice of ethics. It has intrapsychic consequences as we sort characteristics into those we accept and those we reject, and it has communal consequences as we welcome some people and revile others. Thus defining the moral community is the crux of Jung’s notion of the shadow, which is why confronting the shadow is a moral problem of the greatest magnitude.

The acceptance of oneself is the essence of the moral problem and the epitome of a whole outlook upon life. That I feed the hungry, that I forgive an insult, that I love my enemy in the name of Christ—all these are undoubtedly great virtues. What I do unto the least of my brethren, that I do unto Christ. But what if I should discover that the least among them all, the poorest of the beggars, the most impudent of all offenders, the very enemy himself—that these are within me, and that I myself stand in the need of the alms of my own kindness—that I myself am the enemy who must be loved—what then? (1933, pp. 271-272)

Defining the moral community is a central tension in both vampire sagas, which is one reason they have archetypal potency in the 21st century. We might profitably ask, of both vampire and human, just who, exactly, are “we”? That vampires are, or were, human—humans who have reverted to a more instinctual predatory lifestyle for reasons Darwin would no doubt understand—complicates the definition of a moral community in these fictional worlds. The vampire’s survival depends on a single food source, blood. This is an ethical dilemma that the Cullens and Vampire

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Bill have resolved by defining their moral community as human and vampire, despite the sometimes lethal opposition by some humans whose ethical stance is, paradoxically, more predatory and less humane.

For example, in season two of *True Blood*, we are introduced to the oldest and most powerful vampire yet, Eric's maker Godric. He is a compelling character for many reasons, including the appearance of youth, innocence, and reserve in such a lethally powerful being. He embodies the classical virtue of moderation and exemplifies the entelechy advocated by philosophers from Aristotle to Jung. Godric reaches the pinnacle of his moral worth in episode 9, appropriately entitled "I will rise up." He is tired of vampire existence and considers it insanity. He tells Eric, his "father, brother, son", to let him die. Standing atop the Hotel Carmilla (an inside joke for vampire fans) just before dawn, Godric is ready to end his own life. He commands Eric to leave him, but the tenderhearted Sookie remains because Godric is suffering, and no one, vampire or human, should be alone in such a moment. The conversation briefly but meaningfully turns to god and the afterlife, punishment and forgiveness. Sookie asks Godric, "Are you very afraid?" and he replies, "No, I'm full of joy." Sookie, with tears in her eyes replies, "But the pain.... I'm afraid for you." The sun has begun to peek over the horizon and the lightly billowing smoke that frames Godric is the aura of his impending death, though his eyes remain serene as he gazes at Sookie. "A human with me at the end," he says. "And human tears. Two thousand years old, and I can still be surprised. In this I see god."

Godric's behavior dramatizes an ethical standard that his human enemies, members of the Fellowship of the Son Church, might aspire to. It is they who are the predators, conveniently rationalizing their choice by narrowly defining the moral community to include only humans and, though this is not made explicit in *True Blood*, only Christians—their kind of Christians. Everyone else is "them"—a moral outsider—toward whom ethical behavior is not required. It appears that the crowning gift of evolution, humanity's imaginative story-telling mind, has helped us populate the world with another species of hominid, one just different enough to reflect our own worst behavior.

In the end, what do we learn from these strangely alluring predators? First, we discover that Nietzsche's ugliest man lives next door—and he is not necessarily the one whom we have named the monster. "The unhappy, the evil and the primitive occupies a far larger part of the ground in the cultural life of our time than we normally realise" (Neumann, 1969/1990, p. 82). Though the vampires have reverted to human predation, they show us the predatory human in ourselves. Second, by highlighting the difficulties of human-vampire relations, the *Twilight* saga and *True Blood* dramatize the flaws and inconsistencies in our ethical theory and practice. Regardless of whether we are human or vampire, we can fall prey to

the shadow and cast our evil onto others whom we do not include in our moral communities and our ethical obligations.¹⁴ To borrow Godric's words, (season two, episode 9) "After thousands of years ... we've only grown more brutal, more predatory."

The question is, can we reject predation over a sustained period of time, when it is difficult, and not just when it is convenient and easy? Can we abstain from ruthlessly feeding on each other, the creatures with whom we share the planet, and the precious and irreplaceable resources of the planet itself? As Earth's most capable predator, the answer is a matter of life and death.

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Notes

¹ Kaufman, W. (1974) *Nietzsche: Philosopher, psychologist, antichrist* (4th ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press (pp. 213-214).

² Erich Neumann's *Depth psychology and a new ethic* (1969/1990) is a profound meditation on how an enlarged definition of mind, one that includes both conscious and unconscious elements, must invariably influence our understanding of ethics. Not only does it change our relationship to our self, but it also requires us to be more mindful of our impact on others. If, as Hillman puts it, psychodynamics is psychodramatics, then our ethical theory and practice must include consideration of all the players in my inner world and the outer world.

³ The taming of the Cullen family has produced a tremendous popular backlash against the series among vampire aficionados. One succinct and hilarious response is a poster featuring the predatory grin of Keifer Sutherland, the main character in the 1980s vampire flick *Lost Boys*, with the caption "Vampires are not emotional sissy boys, do not attend high school, do...not...sparkle."

⁴ Bill makes a very few exceptions to this ethical rule. One occurs at the end of season one, when he tries to rescue Sookie from her attacker in broad daylight. The sunlight burns him, step by step, and he collapses before he can reach her. Sookie and Sam bury him in the earth which is, for a vampire, a form of protection and healing. But Bill's near death is too close, so he feeds to recover. We do not see this, but it is the first thing he tells Sookie when he shows up on her doorstep soon afterwards. It is as though he must admit his transgression to preserve the honesty and love between them.

⁵ *Eudaimonia* literally means being favored by a god but it doesn't say which god. If I am favored by Dionysus, as was one character in the second season of *True Blood*, Marianne the Maenad, I may be completely heedless of the effects of my actions on the *eudaimonia* of others.

⁶ See, for instance, Aristotle's discussion of the benefits of friendship in books eight and nine of the "Nicomachean Ethics".

⁷ The anthropologist William Calvin, in *The history of the mind* (2004), makes an important point about the biological origins of cooperative behavior when he asks, "So what do large animal predators need, compared to great apes in general? Cooperative behaviors are usually important to such predation. Indeed, even if a hunter kills a large antelope, it is too much meat for even a single family. The obvious strategy is to give most of it away and count on reciprocity tomorrow" (p. 39).

⁸ I owe this phrase to Dr. Jay W. Tischendorf who wrote the preface to a fascinating study of the eastern mountain lion entitled *East of never, cat of god* (Butz, 2005). Tischendorf says "large predators like the cougar—powerful, capable, and stealthy—stir our collective imagination, even more so with the added element of uncertainty.... In developing a rational understanding [of] and tolerance for the natural world around us, our greatest challenge will be achieving peaceful coexistence with the planet's most capable predator. No, not the cougar, but rather our own fellow man" (pp. xiii, xv).

⁹ The relevant passage from the "Nicomachean Ethics" is this: "Life seems to be common even to plants, but we are seeking what is peculiar to man. Let us exclude, therefore, the life

of nutrition and growth. Next there would be the life of perception, but it also seems to be common even to the horse, the ox, and every animal. There remains, then, an active life of the element that has a rational principle; of this, one part has such a principle in the sense of being obedient to one, the other in the sense of possessing one and exercising thought.”

¹⁰ For instance, compare Aristotle on the good and wholeness with Jung’s idea of individuation. In the “Nichomachean Ethics” Aristotle says “human good [flourishing] turns out to be activity of the soul in accordance with virtue [excellence], and if there are more than one virtue, in accordance with the best and most complete” (p. 943 [1098a]). Jung says “an innate urge of life is to produce an individual as complete as possible... So the entelechia, the urge of realization, naturally pushes man to be himself” (*The psychology of kundalini yoga*, 1932/1996, p. 4). Elsewhere Jung defines individuation as “an ineluctable psychological necessity” (*Two essays in analytical psychology*, 1953/1966, p. 155 [para. 241]) and “a process of differentiation, having for its goal the development of the individual personality” (*Psychological types*, 1971/1976, p. 448 [para. 757]).

¹¹ May goes on to point out that such decisions require courage. Moreover, the simultaneous presence of courage and doubt is not an untenable contradiction but rather evidence of “a greater respect for truth, an awareness that truth always goes beyond anything that can be said or done at any given moment” (May, p. 21). This is idealized in the scientific method, in which great value is placed on developing a credible hypothesis and testing its truthfulness. I believe it is the elegant crystallization of the necessary relationship between truth and doubt in science that still, in an age of postmodernism, makes other disciplines unable to dismiss it as method of inquiry.

¹² The decision by the Cullens and Vampire Bill to suppress their natural predatory instinct illustrates what has been called Hume’s Guillotine. It refers to the is-ought problem in meta-ethics, articulated by David Hume, which discusses the ethical relationship of what is—that is, descriptive statements—with what ought to be—prescriptive or normative statements. For instance, because vampires do live on fresh human blood they should live on fresh human blood. Hume discusses the problem in Book III, part I, section I of his *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739), where he says “in every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark’d, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary ways of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when all of a sudden I am surpriz’d to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, *is*, and *is not*, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an *ought*, or an *ought not*. This change is imperceptible; but is however, of the last consequence. For as this *ought*, or *ought not*, expresses some new relation or affirmation, ’tis necessary that it shou’d be observ’d and explain’d; and at the same time that a reason should be given; for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it.” Hume’s question—whether the descriptive can be the prescriptive—has become one of the central questions of ethical theory. Severing the two has been poetically named “Hume’s Guillotine.” However, environmental ethicists make an important point. Nature provides an object reality that can and should inform our standard of values. Hume’s Guillotine need not irrevocably sever “is” from “ought.” Rather, it should inspire us to reflect, differentiate, and, as Hume crucially points out in the statement above, provide a reason why, in a particular instance, that the descriptive (is) should in fact become the prescriptive (ought).

¹³ T. J. Hochstrasser (2005) tells us that Aristotle’s idea “is taken up with greater vigor by the Stoics, and by Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–143 B.C.E.) in particular. He regarded human reason as the apex of a rational world order: human nature rather than an innate law outside human beings now provided the ground and basis for distinguishing between positive law and natural law. Moreover, all humans possessed the rational means, when properly exercised, to identify this law unaided by God” (“Natural law,” p. 1607)

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¹⁴ Neumann (1969/1990) makes a lovely point about the shadow and a species-wide ethic when he says that “This living relationship with the shadow brings home to the ego its solidarity with the whole human species and its history known in subjective experience, since it discovers within itself a host of prehistoric psychic structures in the form of drives, instincts, primeval images, symbols, archetypal ideas and primitive behaviour patterns. ... the encounter and reconciliation with the shadow is in very many cases the *sine qua non* for the birth of a genuinely tolerant attitude towards other people, other groups and other forms and levels of culture (pp. 96-97).