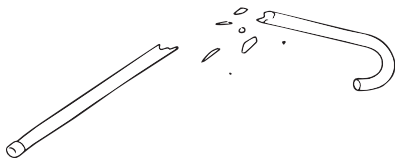


WORLDVIEW GUIDE

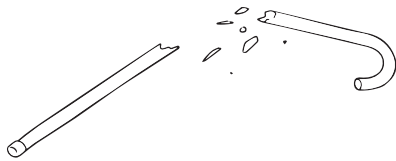
THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL & MR. HYDE



Ben Palpant

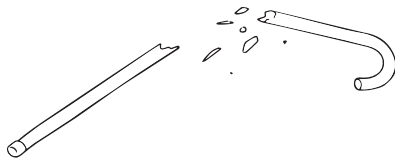
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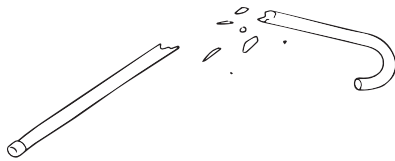
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INTRODUCTION

Robert Louis Stevenson wrote several celebrated stories, including *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped*, but *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is his best-selling work. Forty-thousand copies sold within the first six months of publication. In this novella, London lawyer Gabriel Utterson uncovers a strange and startling connection between his friend, the respectable doctor Henry Jekyll, and the sinister Edward Hyde. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is an arresting portrait of one man's struggle with the human condition.



WORLDVIEW ANALYSIS

I still remember the spreading cultural shock in the late 80s when we learned that a man named Ted (such a harmless, regular, vanilla name) confessed to thirty brutal homicides which he committed in seven states over a four-year period. Ted Bundy was an all-American nice guy; in fact, the Mormon missionary who baptized Bundy said he was the type of guy you would want dating your sister, and while Bundy was on trial, his mother told the media, “He’s my pride and joy. He wouldn’t do anything wrong. We’ve always been proud of him. He’s the kind of a son who never forgot Mother’s Day.”¹⁰ Who would know a son better than his mother? And how could it be possible for a guy who never forgot Mother’s Day to be a serial killer?

10. Stephen C. Smith, “Momma’s Boy to Murderer: Saga of Ted Bundy,” *Lakeland Ledger*, August 19, 1979.

None of us actually wanted to face the fact that we are, like Ted, capable of gross sin, so we wrote him off as a wacko. We decided that he was an outlier—a pedestrian version of Hitler, with a bad circuit breaker in his head. We conveniently leveraged his heinous crimes to defend our own not-so-badness: “I’m not perfect, but I’m no Bundy.” For our present purposes, we might as well have said, “I’m a sinner, but at least I’m no Mr. Hyde.”

Our comments were a convenient ploy to keep the reality of our sinful nature at bay. Ted did not make it easy on us. He said, “well-meaning, decent people will condemn the behavior of a Ted Bundy, while they’re walking past a magazine rack full of the very kinds of things that send young kids down the road to be Ted Bundys.”¹¹ He was convinced, and I think correctly, that a pornographic culture like ours is an incubator for monsters despite its best efforts to hide behind a shiny veneer. Our culture tell us to be pious, dutifully appearing to meet social norms.

With or without a respectable piety, God is unambiguous about the corruption of the human heart: “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). Paul declares in Romans 3:23, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” For this reason, Paul agonized that “in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me,

11 “Psychopath Ted Bundy’s Interview Before Execution,” YouTube video, January 23, 1989, posted by “Zeke Reloaded,” accessed on June 12, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVyhKgd9_No..