

2013

Buffy vs. Dracula: Feminism and its Fanged Foe

Amethyst Hethcoat
Chapman University

Leah Chole
Chapman University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/feminist_zines



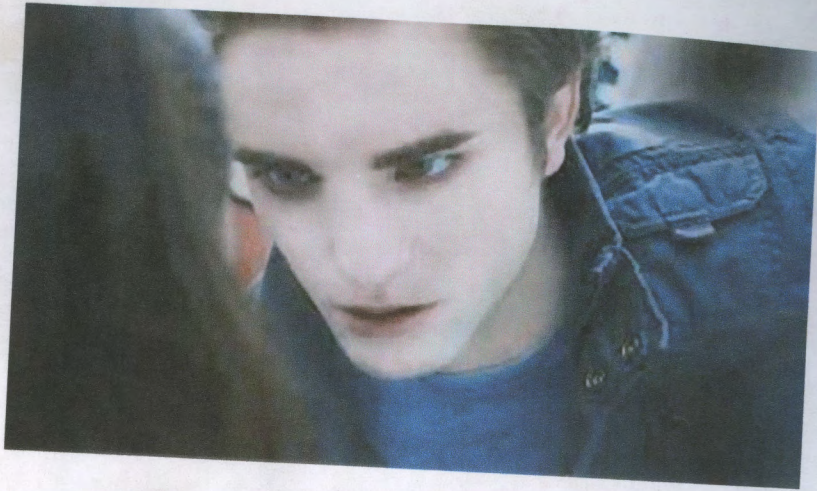
Part of the [Gender and Sexuality Commons](#), and the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hethcoat, Amethyst and Chole, Leah, "Buffy vs. Dracula: Feminism and its Fanged Foe" (2013). *Women's Studies, Feminist Zine Archive*. 12.

https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/feminist_zines/12

This Zine is brought to you for free and open access by the Women's and Gender Studies at Chapman University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Women's Studies, Feminist Zine Archive by an authorized administrator of Chapman University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact laughtin@chapman.edu.



Edward Cullen: Teenage Dream or Abusive Boyfriend?

The Twilight Series has captured the hearts of millions of girls who view Edward and Bella as the "perfect" couple. This is troubling when one realizes that the intensity Edward displays toward Bella may not be a manifestation of his true love for her. Behaviors of this "teenage dream" closely mimic those commonly displayed by men who abuse their partners:

--Stalking-- Abusers develop obsessive infatuations with the object of their lust. Insecure, they often follow their interest physically or technologically in secret to scope out her habits and social groups.

Before he even started dating Bella, Edward crept into her room for weeks to watch her while she slept.

--Attracted to younger, emotionally vulnerable women-- Abusers sniff out socially isolated women who won't resist their advances; they get off on the power imbalance.

As an immortal vampire, Edward is old enough to be Bella's grandfather. He realizes that the socially awkward high school student is new to town with few friends. The child of divorce, Bella has strained parental relationships and likely craves the love that mom and dad have denied her. Edward fills this parental gap with his pseudo-wisdom and "daddy-knows-best" mentality. With suicidal tendencies, Bella is self-loathing: willing to suffer for a connection she deems love.

--Excessive Jealousy-- Abusers want complete control over their partners and feel threatened by others whom their partner holds in high regard.

Edward is extremely aggressive toward Jacob, Bella's BFF, even though it was Jacob who stood by her side, preventing her from committing suicide during Edward's abandonment of her. Edward even disables Bella's car to prevent her from seeing the friend.

--Secrecy-- An abuser encourages his partner to hide ugly truths from friends and family, distancing from her from her support system so that she has no one to turn to but him.

Edward forces Bella to lie to her family about his condition. At one point, he even fabricates a lie to explain the bruises and injuries she suffered when confronted by vampires she met as a result of dating him.

--Demanding-- In an effort to assert power and control, abusers demand—not politely ask—things of their partners.

Edward is extremely controlling of Bella. He even demands that she abort their child. When she refuses, he goes behind her back to Jacob and asks him to manipulate her with promises of a normal life rather than let her potentially die as a result of her pregnancy.

Yes. Edward can be sweet at times, playing lovely melodies on the piano, giving Bella a scenic tour of Forks' finest foliage, and dazzling her with his wealthy family's chic estate. But displays of affection are common abusers, too. They initially make great strides by wooing, before turning off the charm and switching on the heat. People are multifaceted, with shades of light and dark. We must not let a sparkling ray of sunshine blind us to the impending fatal storm that eventually dominates relationships tainted by abuse.

*Emily (the Slut). "Abusive Is the New Sexy: Why Books Like 'Twilight' Are Dangerous." *Feministing.com*. N.p., 6 Apr. 2011. Web. 2 Dec. 2013.*

SOME REAL LIFE HOLLYWOOD

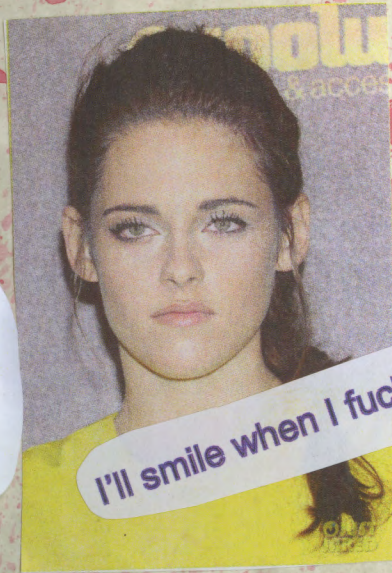
VAMPIRE BULLSHIT

Hollywood's adaptation of the vampire novel has cast actress Kristen Stewart into the limelight. Unless she plasters a fake complacent smile on her beautiful head a camera will snap a picture of it and give a list of the following criticisms of her inability to please the ever glaring male gaze:

- 1) dafuq ain't she smiling
- 2) grl u hella cheated on ur boyfriend i hope your vampire baby that Stephanie Meyer won't let you abort eats u alive
- 3) she can't wear a hoodie outside

Yet when any male celebrity chooses to keep his gosh darn chicklets to himself he is performing his gender role as a perfect specimen of manhood. And actually Bella was written as a boring and unemotional character...so...

And her work is still centralized around her sex life. Yes I guess she cheated on Robby Pattypoop and Hollywood jumped on her and she was even passed over for movie roles because of the situation...because you know...men get passed over for roles when they are sexually promiscuous all the time

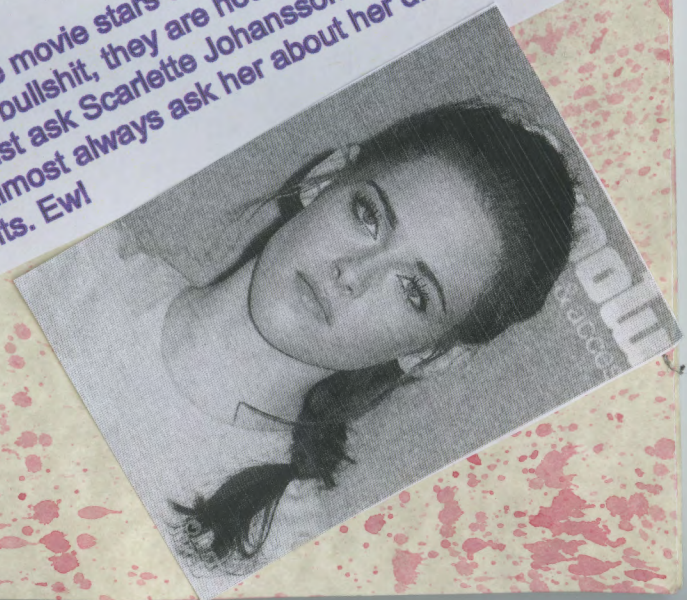


I'll smile when I fucking feel like it—bite me

I'll smile when I fucking feel like it—bite me

Uhm please Bella was written as an unemotional character, and I executed it perfectly.

Even when female movie stars don't conform to this hypersexualized bullshit, they are hounded for their lack of femininity. Just ask Scarlett Johansson—interviewers will basically almost always ask her about her diet and undergarments. Ewl



*BUFFY VS. DRACULA:
FEMINISM & ITS FANGED FOE*



*By
Amethyst Hethcoat & Leah Chole*

FEMINIST ICON OR FIGHTING FUCK-TOY? EVEN WHEN WE'RE "DOMINANT" WE'RE NOT REALLY "DOMINANT"

"Why aren't you complacent with the strong female characters that Hollywood ever so thoughtfully gives you?" they shout from under the patriarchal bridge

"Because they aren't real or human nor do they play to conventions of 'strength' at all! And they are often utilized in a last ditch plan for forced romance so why bother" i scream as my eyes bleed tears

These aren't real representations of strong women. If you switched them to men all the MRAs would cry out—they were just plot devices!

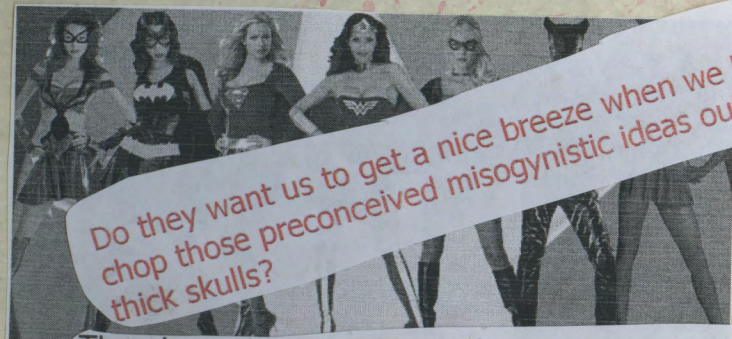


No. fucking. Shit.



What are these skirts for?

WHAT ARE THESE SKIRTS FOR?



Do they want us to get a nice breeze when we karate chop those preconceived misogynistic ideas out of their thick skulls?

There's no time for romance! We've got shit to Avenge!



Scarlette Johansson on lack of romance in The Avengers

*Passion, Punishment, & Martyrdom:
Female Sexuality in Vampirism*

"Forbidden fruit tastes the sweetest," a point made all too clear by the single, vibrant red apple featured on the black cover of the first *Twilight* book. From Eden to Forks, people want what they can't have. Perhaps a subconscious form of resistance to puritanical sexual views peddled by church and state, good girls are drawn to bad boys—boys who, by definition, draw them away from their socially prescribed roles as chaste virgins destined to become dutiful wives. These young women crave liberation from the bondage of femininity which requires them to restrain their sexual selves at all costs.

What happens when girls transgress sexual boundaries by engaging in taboo erotic acts? They are punished and traditional views are upheld—even in the seductive pop culture phenomenon of *Vampirism*.

Twilight. With Edward and Bella, sexuality and danger go hand and hand. Even upon their first kiss, Edward flings himself back against the bedroom wall rather than make intimate contact with the mortal. He warns of his lack of restraint, his physical longing for her blood. On their honeymoon, against his warnings, Bella insists they consummate they love. Though she receives sexual gratification, she is also inflicted with purple bruises and a mutant fetus who begins to eat her from the inside-out.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Buffy is hailed as one of the most kick ass heroines ever—breaking convention time and time again with her sass and strength. But then she lost her virginity to her beloved, Angel. Due to an ancient curse which denied Angel the joys of sex, his consummation with Buffy sucked out his soul, transforming him into Angelus—his former evil self. Angelus became Buffy's cruelest and worst enemy, especially difficult for her to conquer because she loved him.

The message is clear: Love—without physical manifestation—is just dandy; but sex ruins everything; it corrupts one's moral character and ruins relationships. Fans of the show, many feminists, are encouraged to forgo their sexual selves—because if they don't, they'll turn their boyfriends into monsters!

But what about Buffy's gay fans? Buffy punishes homosexual passion as well. Willow, Buffy's best friend and magical ally, is completely shattered when her lesbian lover Tara, a fellow witch, is tragically killed. The couple was completely open about their relationship. Tara's death caused Willow more mental anguish than perhaps any other death on the show. Plagued by anger and crippling depression, Willow even came close to destroying the world—her friends included.

The message, once again, is clear: gay love causes pain; it leads to misery and woe for both lovers who eventually will fall prey to a cruel and menacing society.

In vampire media, women are expected to offer themselves as sacrifices to demonstrate their love for their more worthy immortal partners. Suicide becomes synonymous with passion. The stronger the sacrifice, the more passionate the love.

When Edward abandons Bella in *New Moon* (for her own good, he later claims), she sinks into a deep depression and teeters on the edge of depression for much of the film. At one point, she even jumps off a cliff only to be saved by her Native American BFF. While Edward is fighting Victoria, Bella cuts herself in hopes that the smell of blood will distract the enemy vamp. Edward's bodily well-being is placed on a pedestal while she is made the sacrificial lamb. Ultimately, she must kill her mortal self by not aborting her child in order to become a creature of the night. The sacrifice is endowed with a noble quality because it is depicted not as suicide, but as saving another life—her baby's. But regardless of the pro-life message conveyed by Bella's choice, Meyer's book is pro-death. Bella sacrifices her humanity to be with a man. A romantic relationship takes precedence over career aspirations, family, friends, and even—to the religious minded—eternal salvation. She gives up EVERYTHING. For what? Cold skin, albino eyes and deer blood...and, of course, for the controlling, insecure Edward who is touted to be the "perfect" man.

Bite Me...Please



*Bite me, suck me, bleed me dry!
With you inside me, I cannot die.
Bloody beatings - I want more!
I deserve them to the core.
Master, Savior, Holy Wine,
Your power o'er me
Is divine.
The others—they don't understand
The pleasure that is your backhand.
Without you, I am just a girl;
A nobody in this big, bad world.
So bite me, suck me, bleed me dry.
I have learned to love,
To cry.*

in conclusion

edward is creepy

don't date boys who stalk you all the time

tube tops are not suitable crime fighting attire

if your creepy vampire baby is killing you...have an abortion

ur doing great with your life

don't let any misogynistic asshole tell you to smile

don't cheat on your partner, but also don't let future employers hold it against you for future job opportunities

it's cool whatever/whoever you like to do in the bedroom, but uhm don't let men play to conventional dominance roles if it's hurting you or makes you feel uncomfortable

don't settle for what hollywood "graciously" gives you—always demand more!

FAINT AT THE SIGHT OF BLOOD? HA!

WE BLEED EVERY MONTH
AND IT SURE AS HELL ISN'T FOR ANY
MAN

IT IS THE VAMPIRE WITHIN

LOVE IT
EMBRACE IT

AND IF THEY DON'T LIKE IT

THEY CAN SUCK IT AND

BITE ME!!!!!!