

Full Moon Masculinities: The Werewolf in Recent Young Adult Fantasy Texts

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Despite the clear relationship between werewolves and masculinity and the overwhelming number of male werewolves that currently feature in young adult popular cultural texts, few scholars have similarly engaged with the relationship between men, masculinity, and lycanthropy. This paper aims to contribute to this line of inquiry by textually analysing how the werewolf, as a post-human Gothic monster, can be seen to reflect Western constructs of hegemonic masculinity in a corpus of young adult fantasy texts, including Cassandra Clare's *The Mortal Instruments* (2007-2014), Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* saga (2005-2010), and the television program 'Teen Wolf' (2011-forthcoming). This paper argues that lycanthropy has become a metaphor for male identity, particularly those practices that are constructed as hegemonic within the world of the text and our real Western society.

While men and masculinities are by no means Other in Western culture, the rise in school shootings in the United States, high level of violence and suicide among men, and the so called 'crisis of masculinity' have arguably had a powerful influence on the cultural representations of men and masculinity in popular culture. This paper seeks to identify the ways in which young readers are invited to perceive dominant constructs of male identity as they are realised through werewolf characters, behaviours, and socio-cultural practices. In doing so, this paper argues that lycanthropy in young adult fantasy fiction reflects hegemonic models of male identity in ways that reinforce violence and domestic abuse as normative, but also invites young readers to critically engage with these dominant, and often destructive, constructs of Western masculinity.

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fantasy series *A Song of Ice and Fire* ('Game of Thrones'). Her main research areas include masculinities, fantasy fiction, disability, embodiment, young adult fiction, and popular culture studies.