

## **Real Men versus Emo Pansies? Music, class and masculinity in supernatural film and television narratives.**

**Dr Janet K. Halfyard**

**Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham City University**

In recent years, the werewolf has moved from being the star of his own films to being, more often than not, the underdog in narratives equally or more focused on vampires, as seen in the films *Underworld* and *Twilight* and in TV shows including *True Blood*, *The Vampire Diaries* and *Hemlock Grove*. Dale Hudson (2013) observes that 'vampires and werewolves serve as a means of acknowledging social difference without directly addressing it' and in this paper, I examine the figure of the male werewolf in comparison to vampires in terms of class and masculinity. The werewolf is regularly positioned as socially disadvantaged in relation to wealthy and quasi-aristocratic vampires; and in the representation of his 'extreme masculinization and sexualization' (Siegel, 2011), the werewolf, with his full-bodied transformation into a powerful and dangerous animal, represents an unreformed, aggressive masculinity in contrast to the chaste, sensitive, New Man-ishness of vampire lovers who are often visually almost indistinguishable from humans even in their fully vampiric state. While Brian McGreevy, creator of *Hemlock Grove*, bemoans the 'emo pansy' that the new vampire has become, the fact remains that they, rather than the werewolves, are the ones who almost always get the girl, and there is, as Arvidsson (2014) points out, no sign of a 'werewolf romance' genre to rival that of vampire romance. As part of this discussion, I look in particular at constructions of class, status and masculinity in the music used for vampires and werewolves in the soundtracks of these shows, and the tendency for vampire men to inspire classically romantic love themes that further promote their suitability as romantic figures compared to the more rock-based music of werewolves that only underlines the problematic aggressiveness of their version of masculinity.

### **References**

Arvidsson, Stefan L. (2014), 'Blood-Suckers! The Concepts Revisionist and Anti-revisionist Mythology Introduced by the Vampire- and Werewolf-tetralogy Underworld (2003-2012)', *Journal of Religion & Film*: 18/2, Article 9.  
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol18/iss2/9>

Hudson, Dale (2013), "'Of Course There Are Werewolves and Vampires": *True Blood* and the Right to Rights for Other Species', *American Quarterly*, 65/3, 661-687.

McGreevy, Brian (2011), 'Why Don Draper Is a Far Better Vampire Than Any of *Twilight's* or *True Blood's*', *Vulture.com*. Available at  
[http://www.vulture.com/2011/07/don\\_draper\\_vampire\\_twilight\\_tr.html](http://www.vulture.com/2011/07/don_draper_vampire_twilight_tr.html)

Siegel, Joanna Luz (2011), 'Vampires, Werewolves, and Other Humans: Learning from Participatory Responses to the Representation of Native Americans in *Twilight*', *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics* 26/2, 79-103.

**Steve Halfyard** is Director of Undergraduate Studies at Birmingham Conservatoire (BCU) in the United Kingdom. She has published widely on film and television music (as Janet K Halfyard), in particular on vampire and superhero genres. Her publications include *Danny Elfman's Batman: a film score guide* (Scarecrow, 2004) and essays on the development of vampire scoring in *Terror Tracks* (Equinox, 2009) and Tim Burton's gothic-horror musical comedies in *Drawn to Sound* (Equinox, 2010). She has written extensively on music and sound in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel*, co-edited a collection on music in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Ashgate, 2010), and has given keynotes on music in *Buffy* (Slayage conference, 2010) and in *True Blood* and *Hemlock Grove* (TV Fangdom conference, 2015). Her current project is a book on Music in Cult TV, due out this autumn.