The Modern Vampire as Romantic Hero: Acceptance, Love and Self-Control

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Abstract
The vampire has existed since the beginning of civilization as a metaphor for societal issues and beliefs concerning life and death. Throughout the centuries, the vampire has evolved to suit societal trends, transforming from the bloodthirsty monster of early mythology to an alluring and complex creature of modern times. The thesis explores the popularity of the vampire in twenty-first century literature and film by evaluating two of the most popular vampire series of the time, L.J Smith's Vampire Diaries series (1991, 2009) and Stephanie Meyer's Twilight series (2005 - 2008); these texts characterize the vampire as a romantic superhero whose driven to protect those he loves. The modern vampire has rejoined society by becoming more human than ever in his ability to give and receive love. Smith and Meyer challenge traditional vampire mythology even further by making once helpless female victims into strong, driven heroines. The romance between vampire and mortal proves profound and redeems the protagonist into a champion of Christian virtue, embodying complete selflessness and self-control in their relationships. The modern vampire is an evolved form of the aristocratic vampire who is at once superhero, ideal lover and Christ-like, rather than monster.

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