

Cheyenne Foster and Melanie-Angela Neuilly: 'You Wear That Come-Bite-Me Outfit': Vampires as a Rape Metaphor in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Life on the Hellmouth means the constant threat of death from evil of all sorts. In addition to death, vampires present the threat of sexual violence. Indeed, they are portrayed as sexual deviants and predators. Through a critical examination of all seven televised seasons, we argue that vampires as a threat are framed as a women's (Slayer's) issue. Season Three's 'The Wish' can be conceived as an analytical prism for the series making evident how such rhetoric mirrors the victim-blaming attached to rape. Although vampires and their victims span the genders, the responsibility to eradicate the problem initially falls upon one girl, the Slayer. Throughout the series, Buffy struggles against the patriarchal pressure from the Watcher's Council for her to conform to traditionally masculine hero archetypes favoring reaction instead of prevention, individualism, violence, and isolation. It is ultimately through the acceptance and adoption of feminist collaborative values that she reshapes and redefines a women's issue (Slaying vampires/avoiding rape) as a societal one.