

VAMPIRIC DISCOURSE IN EMILY BRONTË'S *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

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Abstract

Although several studies of vampirism in *Wuthering Heights* have appeared over the last decade or so, none have fully recognized that Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship is not necessarily one of love, but of vampirism. Furthermore, few of these articles have acknowledged the existence of the others. This paper attempts to reconcile various, sometimes conflicting, readings of vampiric discourse in the novel by suggesting that different forms of vampirism, symbiotic and monstrous, define Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship at different points in the text. After providing textual evidence for reading Catherine and Heathcliff as vampires, this paper moves in a more theoretical direction, first linking Romanticism to Brontë's use of vampiric discourse, and then using critical theory on the vampire to suggest that there are actually two types of vampirism in the novel; the harmless, symbiotic kind that characterizes Catherine and Heathcliff as children, and their later monstrous vampirism, which has critical implications for the role of patriarchal power structures in the work. Brontë's probable access to vampire literature and folklore is also briefly discussed, and more contemporary theories on vampirism in literature, including those of Franco Moretti and Rosemary Jackson, are brought to bear on the novel. Ultimately, this article suggests that the symbiotic vampirism enjoyed by Heathcliff and Catherine as children threatens established power structures at *Wuthering Heights*; the interruption of that symbiosis, however, establishes a sequence of repression and return that accompanies their depictions as monstrous vampires. Denied the fruitful effects of symbiotic consumption/empowerment, Catherine and Heathcliff turn their consumptive desires outward, ultimately destroying themselves and many others in their drive to re-establish their earlier connection. By the novel's end, this connection has been re-established, suggesting that the empowering potential of symbiotic vampirism cannot be realized in life, so long as the potential of human relationships remains thwarted by social restrictions.

A recent editorial column about Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* (2005) remarks that the series is '*Wuthering Heights* with vampires'.¹ Meyer's frequent allusions to Brontë's novel in her series highlight a vampiric discourse that is clearly present, if often overlooked, in *Wuthering Heights* (1847).² Although several studies of vampirism in *Wuthering Heights* have appeared over the last decade or so, none have recognized that Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship is not one of love, but of symbiotic vampirism.³ James Twitchell, T.L. Stone, and Beth Torgerson, for example, recognize

¹ Nadia Hutton, 'Wuthering Heights With Vampires', *Imprint*, 31.15 (2008), <http://imprint.uwaterloo.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3023&Itemid=56> [accessed 16 November 2008] (para. 4 of 4)

² One on-line message board <<http://twilightseriestheories.com/2008/05/29/question-of-the-week-wuthering-heights/>> explicitly asks contributors to suggest how the two works are similar. Much to my surprise, not one posting (at the time of my access, 11 November 2008) links their most obvious parallel: vampires.

³ Almost all of the critical work on the connection between vampirism and *Wuthering Heights* has been published in the last two decades, likely as a result of an increased critical acceptance of gothic themes and tropes in literary studies. James Twitchell was the first to treat the vampiric themes in

Heathcliff, but not Catherine, as a vampiric figure in the novel; and while Twitchell, Lakshmi Krishnan, and Clifton Snider describe their relationship in terms of vampiric symbiosis, each ultimately ascribes to Heathcliff the dominant position as devourer of Catherine's energy.⁴ However, Catherine and Heathcliff, so long as they are able to continue their symbiotic vampiric relationship uninterrupted, create a balance of energy that both sustains them and defends them from oppressive societal restrictions in a fruitful, non-destructive balance. My interpretation of vampirism in the novel, then, involves a strict definition of *symbiosis*, in which both parties derive mutual benefit from their relationship, and in which both are equally vampiric. It is only when their symbiosis is interrupted that Catherine's and Heathcliff's vampirism become monstrous, turned outward into a whirlwind of consumption that ultimately destroys themselves and many others. In this light, vampirism becomes a useful metaphor for understanding different systems and sources of power at work in the novel, for the two characters that exhibit the most obviously vampiric traits are also the novel's most oppressed/repressed – Catherine because of her gender, and Heathcliff because of his class.

Brontë adapts the folkloric vampire to suggest symbiotic vampirism as an alternative to existing cultural systems of human relationships, a highly unusual use of vampiric discourse that is rooted in Romanticism. After providing textual evidence for reading Catherine and Heathcliff as vampires, this paper therefore moves in a more theoretical direction, first linking Romanticism to Brontë's use of vampiric discourse, and then using critical theory on the vampire to suggest that there are actually two types of vampirism in the novel; the harmless, symbiotic kind that characterizes Catherine and Heathcliff as children, and their later monstrous vampirism, which has critical implications for the role of patriarchal power structures

the novel in 'Heathcliff as Vampire' in *Southern Humanities Review*, 11 (1977), 355-62; and more extensively in *Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1981). Further references to Twitchell come from this latter work and are given after quotations in the text. For more on vampirism in *Wuthering Heights*, see Krishnan, Lakshmi, "'Why Am I So Changed?': Vampiric Selves and Gothic Doubleness in *Wuthering Heights*", *Journal of Dracula Studies*, 9 (2007), 39-52; Carol Senf, *The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century English Literature* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1988); Clifton Snider, 'The "Imp of Satan": The Vampire Archetype in *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*', (2001) <<http://www.csulb.edu/~csnider/brontes.html>> [accessed 17 November 2008]; Stone, T.L., 'Is Heathcliff a Vampire?', *The Kudzu Monthly*, 1.4 (2001); <<http://www.kudzumonthly.com/kudzu/oct01/index.html>> [accessed 17 November 2008]; Beth Torgerson, *Reading the Brontë Body: Disease, Desire, and the Constraints of Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁴ Such arguments are contradictory, since *symbiosis* implies equilibrium. Thus, Heathcliff cannot both devour Catherine and exist in a mutually beneficial relationship with her. Furthermore, not all vampiric relationships are symbiotic, as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) illustrates. In Stoker's work, women and children become victims of vampires, and gain nothing but their own injury and death as victims. Heathcliff and Catherine do empower and sustain each other during their childhoods, but this symbiosis is clearly interrupted at some point in the narrative. It is this shift in the focus of their consumptive energies that this paper attempts to account for, while reconciling some of the inconsistencies and contradictions in previous scholarship on the subject of vampirism in *Wuthering Heights*.

in the work.

Although it is difficult to prove definitively that Emily Brontë had access to vampire folklore, circumstantial evidence suggests that she was familiar with some of the popular vampire folktales and fiction of her time.⁵ Twitchell, for example, believes that Brontë was influenced by John Polidori's novella, *The Vampyre* (1819). Even in this short tale, the vampire works symbolically; the vampire and protagonist exchange energy, seemingly draining each other of life when they are together. Polidori's vampire, the first of the Byronic hero type (the brooding, troubled aristocrat), likely provided the model from which Brontë created Heathcliff.⁶ T.L. Stone, in 'Is Heathcliff a Vampire?', describes some of the popular English, Scottish, and German vampire folktales that Brontë may have had access to, even in her isolated home at Haworth. He explores the likelihood that Brontë intentionally portrayed Heathcliff as a vampire, given that 'several other English writers of Brontë's time touched on vampirism to a greater or lesser degree. Coleridge, Southey, and Keats wrote poems in which characters had vampiric qualities'.⁷ Stone, like Twitchell, assumes that Brontë was familiar with Polidori's novella, especially considering that it was initially believed to be the work of Polidori's companion Byron, and was therefore extremely popular.⁸ Since, as Carol Senf notes in *The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century English Literature* (1988), Brontë 'was certainly familiar with Byron's works and with the German Romantic literature of the previous century', it is likely that she had read, if not Polidori's work specifically, then other vampire works by Romantic writers.⁹ When Nelly Dean recognizes Heathcliff's

⁵ Twitchell is one of several critics, including Carol Senf, T.L. Stone, and Clifton Snider, who address the extent to which Emily Brontë had access to contemporary vampire fiction or folklore.

⁶ Twitchell believes that Heathcliff is the only vampire in the novel, writing that, 'Emily Brontë seems content to let us slide the vampire legend behind Heathcliff, almost as if it were a metaphor to explain his peculiar behavior. Whether or not he actually does suck blood, he acts *as if he were* vampiring other characters' (p. 119, original emphasis). Although he adeptly describes the vampiric possibilities in the novel, Twitchell does not delve into the social, historical, or critical implications of his reading. Instead, his goal is to prove that given the popularity of vampire literature at the time, Emily Brontë's readers undoubtedly would have recognized Heathcliff as a symbolic vampire.

⁷ T.L. Stone, 'Is Heathcliff a Vampire?', *The Kudzu Monthly*, 1.4 (2001)

<<http://www.kudzumonthly.com/kudzu/oct01/index.html>> [accessed 17 November 2008] (para. 5 of 64).

⁸ For the unusual publication history of Polidori's novella, as well as the contentious relationship between Byron and Polidori, see Twitchell. Ironically, the germ for Polidori's tale emerged from the same 1816 horror-tale pact that resulted in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Polidori was a member of Byron's travelling party in Geneva and participated in the challenge. Polidori's contribution was not a vampire tale; however, he later developed Byron's fragment of a story into *The Vampyre*, resulting in charges of plagiarism and a (perhaps intentional) confusion of authors when the novella was published (Twitchell, pp. 102-15).

⁹ Carol Senf, *The Vampire in Nineteenth-Century English Literature* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1988), p. 82. Senf, Twitchell and Snider provide further evidence that Emily Brontë was familiar with the literary vampire by considering Charlotte Brontë's Bertha Rochester, whom Jane Eyre describes as a vampire (Chapter Twenty-Five). Since Charlotte was writing *Jane Eyre* while Emily composed *Wuthering Heights*, the sisters clearly had access to vampire tales, and had the skill to recognize their symbolic possibilities.

behaviour as vampiric, because she ‘had read of such hideous, incarnate, demons’, then, she may be referring to one of these popular works, any one of which Brontë could have been familiar.¹⁰ The housekeeper’s knowledge of vampires through literature attests to the extent to which the Victorian reader was familiar with the signs of vampirism, and suggests that with works like *The Vampyre* and *Varney the Vampire* (serialized in the 1840s), the addition of yet another vampire in literature would have been unsurprising.

Heathcliff evokes more vampire stereotypes than any other character in the novel, and is the focus of most vampiric treatments of the novel (Twitchell, Krishnan, Stone, Torgerson). Mr. Earnshaw admits that the child he brings home is ‘as dark almost as if it came from the devil’ (p. 36), while Heathcliff is elsewhere described as an ‘imp of satan’ (p. 39), and ‘a monster, and not a human being’ (p. 149). The novel makes several references to Heathcliff’s prominent, sharp teeth, one of the primary identifying characteristics of the vampire. They are variously described as “‘closed”, “grinding”, “cannibal”, “tearing”, “visible”, “gnashing”, “sharp”, and “sneering””.¹¹ Heathcliff’s teeth are particularly conspicuous after his death, when his ‘sharp white teeth sneered’ at Nelly (p. 332).

While Heathcliff often behaves in a symbolically vampiric manner during his lifetime (in his treatment of Hindley, slowly draining the depressed man’s money, property, and ultimately, his life; and his brutal abuse of Linton) his decline and death overtly align him with the vampire. He begins walking alone at night; he hungers but is unable to eat or drink and he takes on a ‘bloodless hue’ (p. 325). Nelly’s recollection of discovering Heathcliff’s lifeless body is full of vampiric imagery, from his bloodless wound, his still-lively eyes, and the lack of an obvious cause of death, to the conspicuously open casement window. This final detail suggests that although Heathcliff is vampiric, he is not alone in his vampirism - Catherine, too, might be a vampire. Vampire folklore often stipulates that a vampire cannot enter a home without invitation (Twitchell, p. 10). It is important to note that at his death, Heathcliff is sleeping not in his own bedroom, but in Catherine’s old room, in the same coffin-like bed where Lockwood encountered her. Whereas Lockwood refuses Catherine’s plea to ‘Let me in – let me in!’ Heathcliff throws open the lattice, inviting Catherine to ‘Come in! Come in!’ (pp. 25-29). Chronologically, Heathcliff’s death occurs shortly thereafter. This scene also occurs only a few months after Heathcliff exhumes Catherine’s body, only to find her corpse strangely preserved.

Like Heathcliff, Catherine exhibits vampiric traits before her death.¹² In folklore, rejection of a Christian doctrine is one of the few routes by which a person may spontaneously become a vampire (Twitchell, pp. 8-9). As Carol Senf notes, Catherine often rejects Christian notions of the afterlife, both in the dream she relates

¹⁰ Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (1847; repr. London: Penguin, 1995), p. 327 (Volume II, Chapter 20). Further references to the novel are given after quotations in the text.

¹¹ Stone, para. 63 of 64.

¹² Of existing scholarship, only Senf and Snider consider the possibility that Catherine, too, is a vampire, despite compelling evidence that this is the case. Beth Torgerson offers a compelling feminist argument, however, that all men in the work are vampiric, while all women are their ghostly victims.

to Nelly, in which she is thrust out of heaven, and in her declaration to Heathcliff that ‘they may bury me twelve feet deep [. . .] but I won’t rest till you are with me [. . .] I never will!’.¹³ Catherine also displays vampiric traits in an incident that results from her temporary removal at age fifteen to Thrushcross Grange: the sudden deaths of both Linton parents. After young Heathcliff disappears, Catherine tells Nelly she is ‘starving’, and falls ill. The Lintons *invite* her to recuperate at their home, where both parents ‘took the fever, and died within a few days of each other’ (pp. 86-87).

Catherine, like Heathcliff, appears more and more vampiric as her death nears. On the day of her death, ‘her appearance was altered [. . .] there seemed unearthly beauty in the change’; and she has a ‘white cheek, and a bloodless lip’ (pp. 158-59). Given the similarities between the deaths of Catherine and Heathcliff, it is nearly impossible to determine who victimized whom, and this may not be the right question to ask. Instead, it is more useful to consider *why* the two are depicted as vampires, and how vampirism serves as an appropriate metaphor to describe both their relationship and what happens when they are separated.

Now that the vampiric qualities of both Catherine and Heathcliff have been established, how can this knowledge help us understand their complicated relationship? In *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*, Eve Sedgwick considers them two halves of a sundered whole, while Diane Hoeveler and Lakshmi Krishnan consider them ‘fragmented selves’ in search of completion.¹⁴ Other critics, however, note the extent to which theirs is a mutually beneficial relationship, and it is these readings that are most consistent with considerations of both characters as vampiric. According to Twitchell, for example, ‘these two seem to have established a peculiar kind of symbiosis, living off the metaphorical blood/energy of each other’ (p. 119). So long as they are able to continue their symbiotic vampiric relationship uninterrupted, Catherine and Heathcliff create a balance of energy that both sustains them and defends them from oppressive societal restrictions.

In this way, Brontë rewrites the rules of vampirism, mapping it upon the Romantic desire to be subsumed within another, to create an alternative system in which it is neither monstrous nor destructive. Their bond is based in an extra-social desire that resonates deeply with the Romantic aspiration to transcend the restrictions of rational human experience and focus instead on the relationship of the individual to the unknown, or sublime. When Catherine tells Nelly that ‘surely you and everybody have a notion that there is, or should be, an existence of yours beyond you’ (p. 81), she therefore speaks as a Romantic. Although this statement could be understood as evidence that Catherine considers Heathcliff a missing piece of her fragmented self, I believe she is suggesting something far more transcendent about their relationship – the potential for human relationships outside social and moral prescriptions, or as Terry Eagleton writes in *Myths of Power*, ‘a paradigm of human

¹³ Brontë, p. 80 and p. 125; Senf, pp. 80-81.

¹⁴ Eve Sedgwick, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (1980; repr. New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 118; Diane Long Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), p. 201; Lakshmi Krishnan, “‘Why Am I So Changed?’: Vampiric Selves and Gothic Doubleness in *Wuthering Heights*”, *Journal of Dracula Studies*, 9 (2007), 39-52 (p. 45).

possibilities which reach beyond, and might ideally unlock, the tightly dominative system of the Heights'.¹⁵

Eagleton connects Heathcliff and Catherine's non-romantic attachment to Brontë's use of an 'authentic Romantic impulse which posits its own kind of "transindividual" order of value, its own totality, against the order which forces it into exile' (p. 109). Although he does not use the discourse of vampirism in his discussion of the novel, Eagleton's argument is similar to Rosemary Jackson's discussion of the 'Dracula myth' in *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (1981). Jackson writes that the fear associated with the vampire myth 'is not confined to *one* individual; it tries to replace cultural life with a total, absolute otherness, a completely alternative self-sustaining system'.¹⁶ Catherine and Heathcliff do not *complete* but *sustain* one another, creating a truly alternative system to contemporary ideals that valued individual achievement, and to some extent to the Romantic impulse that pitted the individual against society.¹⁷

Like Terry Eagleton, Diane Hoeveler describes Catherine and Heathcliff's bond in terms that merge seamlessly with vampiric discourse and its connection to Romanticism. She explores their bond in terms of consumption, writing that,

In several ways the urge to metaphorically consume the beloved lies within the gothic and the romantic traditions. This urge originates from the ethos established by Percy Shelley and Byron – a desire to be one with one's spiritual and physical complement.¹⁸

¹⁵ (New York: Harper & Row-Barnes & Noble, 1975), p. 103. Further references to Eagleton are given after quotations in the text. Eagleton is a Marxist critic. In his reading of *Wuthering Heights*, Eagleton argues that Heathcliff is a threat because he is superfluous in the economic and genealogical system in place at the Heights. He aggravates and excites tensions already in place in this closed society. Eagleton, like myself, reads the relationship between Catherine and Heathcliff as something other than love, writing that: 'Heathcliff offers Catherine a friendship which opens fresh possibilities of freedom within the internal system of the Heights; in a situation where social determinants are insistent, freedom can mean only a relative independence of given blood-ties, of the settled, evolving, predictable structures of kinship' (p. 103). Eagleton does not mention vampirism in relation to the novel, but the same argument could be (and has been) made in reference to Stoker's *Dracula*. Franco Moretti, for example, equates the vampire with capitalism in his reading of *Dracula*: 'The vampire, like monopoly, destroys the hope that one's independence can one day be brought back. He threatens the idea of individual liberty' ('Dialectic of Fear', in *Signs Taken for Wonders*, trans. by Susan Fischer, David Forgacs and David Miller [London: Verso, 1997], pp. 83-108 [p. 93]). For Moretti, it is not that the British do not acquire capital for its own sake, but that the vampire does so un-disguisedly that becomes the greatest threat in *Dracula*.

¹⁶ 1981; repr. London: Routledge, 2003, p. 60.

¹⁷ Such ideals were inherent during the Enlightenment, a period beginning in the eighteenth century that was marked by an increased promotion of order, logic, and reason. Romanticism could be considered a counter-movement to the Enlightenment, a reaction to that movement's rationalization, which left little room for artistic experimentation and the experience of strong emotion. Symbiotic vampirism counters both of these movements, as Catherine and Heathcliff function together in resistance to society.

¹⁸ Hoeveler, pp. 197-98.

Although she considers the novel's consumptive desire to work in only one direction, with Heathcliff as a cannibal (rather than a vampire) who consumes and absorbs Catherine, this metaphorical desire to be subsumed by and to consume another is also a quality of vampiric discourse, for 'Vampires share [. . .] a dualistic quality: the ability to be both the self and its counterpart'.¹⁹

Catherine and Heathcliff are not permitted to continue their symbiosis without interruption, though. As children they are so close that Nelly admits, 'the greatest punishment we could invent [. . .] was to keep [them] separate' (p. 42). Together, the children threaten the established patriarchal structure at the Heights. Heathcliff, the orphaned gypsy boy, unseats Hindley in the elder Earnshaw's affections, and thereby 'breaches the boundaries of the existing class structure, penetrating its depths and supplanting its former inhabitants'.²⁰ Hindley therefore attempts not only to separate the two children, but to reinforce Heathcliff's born social position: 'He drove him from [the family's] company to the servants, deprived him of the instructions of the curate, and insisted that he should labour out of doors instead [. . .]' (p. 46). He forces Heathcliff back into the social position from which he came, and foists Catherine upon the gender-normalizing presence of Frances, and later the Lintons: for under Heathcliff's influence she resists their desires to mould her into a proper Victorian woman. Separation is the only recourse for a symbiosis that threatens to disrupt the existing social order.

What happens, then, when this mutually beneficial vampiric symbiosis, founded in response to their repressed and marginalized positions at Wuthering Heights, is finally interrupted? In 'Dialectic of Fear', Franco Moretti suggests that monsters (specifically, vampires) emerge when something that a culture has repressed 'returns [. . .] disguised as a monster'.²¹ Catherine's removal to Thrushcross Grange marks the moment of repression, when 'divided from each other, [. . .] Heathcliff-and-Catherine are now conquered by the concerted forces of patriarchy'.²² Her return from her stay at the Grange marks her development into a monstrous vampire (as opposed to her earlier, relatively harmless symbiotic vampirism, which threatens the social order but not actual human life), which unfolds in her attack on the Lintons, her death, and her eventual taking of Heathcliff's life. Heathcliff, too, is more monstrously vampiric after this separation (and he too enacts a sequence of disappearance and return even more mysterious than Catherine's). Once their symbiosis is interrupted, both are forced to refocus their vampiric desire to consume; while Catherine eventually turns her consumptive drive inward, Heathcliff turns his

¹⁹ Krishnan, p. 41.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²¹ Moretti, p. 103. Although Moretti's argument is specifically grounded in Stoker's *Dracula*, he proceeds to open his model up to include other vampire literature, including Polidori's novella. Although he does not discuss *Wuthering Heights*, I feel that his argument is still applicable to my reading, especially given the disappearances and returns of both Catherine and Heathcliff. Both disappear and later return as monstrous, destructive vampire figures.

²² Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, 'Looking Oppositely: Emily Brontë's Bible of Hell', in *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 248-308 (p. 276).

outward, creating a vortex that consumes and destroys all in its reach.

The creation of this monstrous, rather than symbiotic vampirism, results from cultural interference that prevents the realization of the full potential for human relationships:

Catherine never had the freedom to choose Heathcliff as a mate, and to cling to that idea is a delusion at best. The social and economic facts are such that an intelligent young woman does not choose to marry a nameless, illegitimate pauper as a husband, no matter what the sexual attraction.²³

Whether they would marry or not is less important than the reality of social restrictions that prevent Heathcliff and Catherine from remaining together; the social interruption of a vampiric, yet harmless, connection results in the type of uncontrolled, threatening vampirism most often found in folklore and literature. It is appropriate that the novel's two most repressed characters are also its most vampiric, for along with suicides, witches, and the irreligious, folklore often marks *anyone* who operates outside of social norms as a potential vampire.²⁴ Outsiders, women, foreigners, and those persons generally marginalized by society, like Heathcliff and Catherine, are particularly at risk. Like the folkloric vampire, they are 'removed from conventional sources of power'; finding it in each other, they are fulfilled; but torn apart, they become destructive.²⁵ It is this differentiation between monstrous and symbiotic vampirism that helps reconcile previous scholarship on vampirism in *Wuthering Heights*; by recognizing the childhood relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine as a veiled vampiric symbiosis, the destruction and more overt references to vampire folklore that follow their separation become more coherent and recognizable as monstrous vampirism, the result of the interruption of an unusual relationship (but one that functioned successfully for the parties involved) of resistance, rather than love.

Vampirism thus becomes a useful discourse through which to view Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship, both in its earlier symbiotic stage, and in its later transformation into monstrous vampirism. Both types of vampirism operate outside existing models of social relationships.²⁶ Although Heathcliff's death is attributable to

²³ Hoeveler, pp. 199-200.

²⁴ For more information on those persons most likely to become vampires in folklore, see Clifton Snider, 'The "Imp of Satan": The Vampire Archetype in *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*', (2001) <<http://www.csulb.edu/~csnider/brontes.html>> [accessed 17 November 2008].

²⁵ Senf, p. 90.

²⁶ Monstrous vampirism could be said to be less threatening, though, than symbiotic vampirism, for it more closely mimics patriarchal and capitalist systems. For more on the vampire as capitalist, see Moretti. Although he does not refer to Heathcliff or anyone in the novel as a vampire, Eagleton's description of Heathcliff as an adult resisting the power structure at work in the Heights evokes the vampire: 'In oppressing others the exploiter imprisons himself: the adult Heathcliff's systematic tormenting is fed by his victims' pain but also drains him of blood, impels and possesses him as an external force' (pp. 104-05). In other words, patriarchy is inherently (monstrously) vampiric, for it relies on the death of the patriarch in order to bestow power on the next generation. In taking the

Catherine, it also represents the re-establishment of the symbiotic vampiric relationship he enjoyed with her in his childhood. Thus, although he and Catherine walk the moors at night (p. 333), their vampirism is not attended by the usual folkloric pattern of disappearances, inexplicable illnesses, and deaths in the surrounding countryside. Undeniably vampiric, they do not engage in typical vampire behaviour, and have ceased the destructiveness that marked their returns as monstrous vampires during their lifetimes. Instead, they are content to sustain and consume each other yet again, albeit on a plane of existence altogether alternative to the cultural and social system allowed them during their lifetimes. Ultimately, then, Brontë's vampiric lovers (if they can be said to be lovers at all) suggest both the possibility of extra-social relationships and the impossibility of their attainment so long as the potential of human relationships remains thwarted by social restrictions.

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place of the patriarch, Heathcliff becomes that thing he most wants to destroy: 'His rise to power symbolises at once the triumph of the oppressed over capitalism and the triumph of capitalism over the oppressed' (Eagleton p. 112).

(London: Verso, 1997), pp. 83-108

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