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The Vampire Dandy
Reconceptualising Masculine Identities in Fashion, Cinema, and Literature

Mᴇɴ's ꜰᴀsʜɪᴏɴ ᴘʜᴏᴛᴏɢʀᴀᴘʜʏ and its allied industries such as clothing production and consumption, retail branding, marketing and advertising, participate in constructing an all-viewing subject; a subject which 'desires to be desired' by both men and women. These eroticised images, often found in magazines that target women and male consumers, pose its male models as sexually appealing subjects and invite the viewer to consume the 'product' by either (over) identifying with the image as in the case of a heterosexual male gaze, or as an object of desire for appreciation and consumption by a spectatorial heterosexual female and/or homosexual male spectator. These representations of men, often in sexually provocative poses, produce a space, which encourages women and men to *desire* and *consume* the male image. This space allows heterosexual men to indulge and participate in homosocial/homoerotic behaviour in culturally acceptable ways. At the same time, these images reveal something about the way that representations of masculinities are being constructed and circulated.

The New Man and the Vampire

The emergence of the *new man* in the 1980s witnessed a break in traditional notions of masculinity and produced more sexualised representations of the male body. Whereas traditional masculinity tended to locate it in the field of production (i.e., work), the new man was now seen as indulging in pleasures of consumption previously only associated with femininity (Mort, 1996, Entwistle and Wilson, 2000). The rise of style magazines for men such as GQ and *Arena* and the focus on the consumption of men's fashion and male buying power by marketers and retailers led to a shift in the way that cultural conceptions of masculinity began to be represented and acknowledged. Sean Nixon (1996) points to key areas for the circulation of the new man: television and press advertising, menswear retail shops and the magazine press. Male subjectivity was now being constructed through advertising and marketing discourses, which, combined with the consumption of imagery, fashion and cosmetic products, produced a range of idealised and eroticised masculine identities.

Wider social movements of the 1970s such as feminism, the sexual liberation and a range of identity-based political pressure groups, such as gay and civil rights, have also influenced images of contemporary masculinity. These social movements have disrupted traditionally held views of race, sexuality, class and identity and have promoted a model of democratic gender equality. The outcomes of these movements challenged hegemonic models of masculinity, articulated as a crisis in masculinity (see Mort, 1996; Chapman and Rutherford, 1988; Simpson, 1994; Edwards, 2006) and created new ways of conceptualizing and articulating masculine identity. Since the emergence of the 'new man', a proliferation of masculinities has challenged conventional categories of male subjectivity including

the 'emotionally sensitive new lad' of the nineties and the narcissistic twenty-first century gender bending metrosexual who is in constant flux with his 'feminine side'.

As members of the 'cult of the self', the metrosexual has much in common with the Victorian dandy. Whilst dandyism existed in the realm of the elite and aristocratic and metrosexuality is a "mainstream, mass-consumer phenomenon" (Simpson, 2002) both subjectivities embody the 'spirit of the times', namely decadence, excess, artifice, beauty and aestheticism and both, most importantly, problematise and blur the sexual and gendered binaries of homo/hetero and masculine/feminine opting for a more hybrid or queer identity.

The recent resurgence of the vampire narrative in popular culture, from cinema to the fashion catwalk and male fashion photography, signals a fundamental shift that is occurring in the deployment of concepts of masculinity. Male models with powdered hair and pallid maquillage for example strutted candidly down the catwalk styled as vampires to emulate the romantic dandies of nineteenth-century Vienna for Robert Geller's Fall 2009 collection (New York). Again, male vampires were depicted for the short film *The Golden Mirror* (2009) directed by Luca Guadagnino for Fendi. Vampires are hybrid identities existing on the borders between life and death, human and animal, masculinity and femininity and heterosexuality and homosexuality, transgressing and disturbing boundaries. Similarly, the vampire is a consuming body; 'insatiable' in its own appetites and desires. A romantic dandy *par excellence*.

This article will explore the representation of the vampire via cinematic and literary case studies as well as men's fashion editorial images. It will argue that the blurring of gender and sexuality inherent to the depiction of the vampire can be seen in the appeal of the

twenty first century modern dandy. By examining the work of Charles Baudelaire and other key cultural theorists this paper proposes that the vampire represents a polymorphic identity that emerges at times of political crises and economic excess, one that opens up a space for wider conceptualisations of masculinity.

Consuming Bodies

The description of a vampire who attacks people and sucks their life blood easily lends itself to various metaphorical extensions and appears in popular literature at times of political and economic turmoil. Karl Marx in *Capital* (1889) used the vampire as a metaphor to depict the way that human life is turned into dead labour to feed the insatiable machine of capitalist production. Marx borrowed the image from Friedrich Engels, who had made a passing reference to the 'vampire property-holding' class in *The condition of the working class in England* (1845). Marx commandeered the image and turned it into an integral element of his condemnation of the bourgeoisie (middle class). Marx spoke of British industry as vampire-like, living by sucking blood, or the French middle class stealing the life of the peasant. In France the system had "become a vampire that sucks out the peasant's blood and brains and throws them to the alchemist's cauldron of capital" (1889:816).

As Chris Baldick (1987:207) noted, for Marx, the essential vampiric relationship was between capital and labour. Capital sucks the life out of living labour and changed it into things of value, such as commodities. He contrasted living labour (the working class) with dead labour (raw products and machinery). Living labour was sentenced to be ruled by the 'dead' products of its past work. These products did not serve living labour, but living labour served the pro-

ducts it had created. Its service provided the means to obtain the products (which made up the wealth of the middle and upper class). In chapter ten of Capital, Marx stated, "Capital is dead labour which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks" (Marx, cited by Gelder, 1994:20).

In her essay, "Dandies and elitist consumption", Rosalind Williams locates the beginnings of the mass consumption of the elitist style to the Napoleonic era. Williams four ideal types of consumer behaviour – bourgeois, mass, elitist and democratic – that ultimately characterises modern society. According to Williams, the dandies described by Baudelaire as the "last spark of heroism amongst decadence" were responding to what they considered to be "encroachments of bourgeois and even mass vulgarity by reasserting traditional virtues of daring, élan and poise" (Williams, 1982:111). "These last courtiers, the dandies", writes Williams, "were rebelling against the future, and yet in redefining aristocracy they became social prophets" (1992:111). Notably the metrosexual arrived at a time of mass consumption and excess that characterised the economic boom of the early twenty-first century. In comparison, the appearance of the vampire seems to come at a time of financial insecurity and economic crisis. Evolving over time, the vampire has adapted to fulfil the shifting desires of audiences from different social, cultural and historical zeitgeists, whilst the metrosexual, through fashion, remains embedded as a precursor to vampire/gothic sentiment.

Vampire Narratives of Queer Desire

> [H]e sensed with an infallible instinct what was happening… the powerful instinct of a vampire to whom even the slightest change in a human's facial expression is as apparent as a gesture. Lestat had preternatural timing… I

refused to look at him, to be spellbound by the sheer beauty of his appearance… he lay down beside me now on the steps, his movement so graceful and so personal that at once it made me think of a lover. (Rice, 1976:463–465)

The description of the character Lestat by Louis in Anne Rice's *Interview with the vampire* (1994) exemplifies the seductive sovereignty of the vampire. Louis describes Lestat's supernatural instinct, which enables him to exude charisma, love and sex at once. As Richard Dyer states, in his essay "Children of the night: vampirism as homosexuality, homosexuality as vampirism", "Only the vampire could produce such an intensely erotic panegyric: certainly, it is the most seductive of all the fictionalised monsters. Its proximity always, at some level at least, involves a sexual charge…" (cited in Radstone, 1988:62). Dyer proposes that even in cases when the writing is not overtly sexual, there is an inevitable sensual undercurrent that pervades all vampire fiction. Similarly, Ursini and Silver state that "the character of the vampire itself, whether described as a vortex of malevolence, lust, and savagery or, alternately, as the unwilling victim who becomes a tormented, driven, even tragic figure… [is] seductive, erotic, possessing a hypnotic power which makes its questionable charms seem irresistible to its victims…" (Ursini & Silver, 1975:54).

Vampires are a construct of many binary definitions, including good and bad, light and darkness. Belonging to an undefined category outside of these polarizations, vampires enable the questioning of these barriers, and they represent a polymorphic and mobile sexuality that eludes the restrictions encoded in traditional gendered roles. Dracula, for example, appears in both Bram Stoker's novel from 1897 and various cinema adaptations as a bat, a wolf and floating dust. So powerfully decadent is Dracula's energy that it cannot be contained in any solid form and is depicted as a shape shifter that eludes definition.

That the vampire is 'queer' is implied in Stoker's novel by Dracula's homoerotic desire for Jonathan Harker as the young lawyer cuts himself shaving, and also when Harker awaits the bite of Dracula's three vampiric former lovers. The bite is interrupted by Dracula who drives the women away from Harker's embrace: "How dare you touch him, any of you. How dare you cast eyes on him when I had forbidden it? Back, I tell you all! This man belongs to me" (Stoker, cited by Craft, 1986:110).

Queer desire is also described by Anne Rice in her first novel in *The vampire chronicles, Interview with the vampire* (1976). Set in New Orleans in 1791, the book tells the story of queer vampires Louis, Lestat and Armand and invites the reader to share Louis' experience:

> Never had I felt this, never had I experienced it, this yielding of a conscious mortal. But before I could push him away for his own sake, I saw the bluish bruise on his tender neck. He was offering it to me. He was pressing the length of his body against me now, and I felt the hard strength of his sex beneath his clothes pressing against my leg. A wretched gasp escaped my lips, but he bent close, his lips on what must have been so cold, so lifeless for him; and I sank my teeth into his skin, my body rigid, that hard sex driving against me, and I lifted him in passion off the floor. Wave after wave of his beating heart passed into me as, weightless, I rocked with him, devouring him, his ecstasy, his conscious pleasure. (Rice, 1976:248)

Finally Louis is converted into vampirism and queerness. "It was as if I had only just been able to see colours and shapes for the first time," he says, " I was so enthralled with the buttons on Lestat's black coat that I looked at nothing else for a long time" (Rice, 1976:467) and the two become immortal companions.

The erotic perversity of Anne Rice's tale is comparable with

Poppy Z Brite's, *Lost souls* (1992) where queer interactions between vampires and mortals are celebrated sexually:

> Christian nipped the boy's throat gently, not breaking the skin this time. He ran his hands along the length of the boy's body under the jacket, caressed his smooth bare chest, slipped one hand beneath the belt of the boy's jeans and found molten trembling heat. The boy's back arched; he made a low gasping sound. Christian's tongue found the tender spot under the jaw, and he sank his teeth in…. He clasped the boy more tightly, and their bodies locked together in a final wash of ecstasy. (Brite, 1992:67)

The mixed nature of the vampire genre that causes it to blur defined categories relates to the concept of the queer that characterises the post-modern age. Broadly speaking, queer describes those gestures or analytical models that dramatise incoherencies in the allegedly stable relations between sex, gender and sexual desire. Resisting that model of stability, which claims heterosexuality as its origin, when it is more properly its effect, queer focuses on mismatches between sex, gender and desire. Institutionally, queer has been associated most prominently with lesbian and gay subjects, but its analytic framework also includes such topics as cross-dressing, gender ambiguity and in this case, the vampire. Queer locates and exploits the incoherencies in the terms that stabilise heterosexuality. Demonstrating the impossibility of any 'natural' sexuality, it calls into question even such apparently unproblematic terms as 'man' and 'woman' and homosexual and heterosexual. The vampire dandy is a concept that can be used to challenge hegemonic masculinity and open up a space for non-normative masculinities and desires to be explored.

Sue Ellen Case notes in her essay "Tracking the vampire" (1991) that "the term 'queer'… challenges the very notion of being-in-the-

world". The queer is the "taboo-breaker, the monstrous, the uncanny. It is not the *Other* in this arrangement; it gains its effect by continually collapsing the conventional polarity of 'life' and 'death', normality and the unnatural, regeneration and sterility – what is familiar and what is unfamiliar…" (Case, 1991:61-62). Blurring conventional notions of biological reproduction, the vampire disrupts gender roles. "Some post-Freudian theorists have suggested that the vampire signals an end to gender distinctions… the vampire is a subversive borderline figure which problematises representation and destabilises the boundaries of gender… the vampire 'disrupts' because it exists between the boundaries through which we conceive of 'being' (Williamson, 2005:157).

Take for instance, Louis, Lestat and Claudia in Rice's *Interview with the vampire* who represent a queer family. Louis and Lestat are simultaneously Claudia's queer male parents and her lovers, "the queerness of their relationship lies partly in the folding together of gay love with heterosexual incest/paedophilia." (Gelder, 1994:113). In *Twilight* (2009), a film based on the novel by Stephenie Meyer, the Cullens are a queer family where siblings are also lovers. Similarly, in *Let the right one in* (2008), a Swedish vampire film directed by Thomas Alfredson and based on the highly successful novel by John Ajvide Lindqvist, the main characters Håkan and Eli are also queer. Set in Blackeberg, a suburb of Stockholm, Eli is a two hundred year-old vampire in the body of a twelve year old girl. Håkan is in his mid-thirties and together they share a pederastic relationship, but to outsiders they pass as father and daughter. Yet again, traditional family roles are replaced by non-heteronormative relationships. Placing the vampire within a family invests the character with vulnerability and pathos. Here, the syntax of the lone vampire has been replaced with one belonging to a group or family. In today's social climate, where

the definition of the family unit connotes different interpretations, this issue is particularly relevant and has resounding implications for increasing presence of the queer in contemporary society, affecting ideas about what it means to parent children or to be part of a family.

As well as being socially transgressive, vampires are sexually defined as queer. Ernest Jones in his essay *On the nightmare* provides a psychoanalytical reading that the vampire is an indicator for "most kinds of sexual perversions… a fantasy that returns to infantile sexual anxieties… where the more perverse forms of sexuality manifest themselves" (Jones, 1931:67). The vampire is shrouded in the tempting taboo of forbidden pleasures. In empathising with them, "[s]ome critics remind us that the vampire can infect us with their otherness, beguile us with their depraved intimacy" (Williamson, 2005:1). The vampire is without innocence, commited to partiality, irony, intimacy, and ultimately perversity.

Situated in a post-gender world, the vampire also mediates between male and female. In his essay, "Kiss me with those red lips: gender and inversion in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*", Christopher Craft analyses the character Jonathan Harker's feminine passivity as he "awaits a delicious penetration from a woman whose demonism is figured as the power to penetrate" (Craft, 1990:89). Whilst displacing Harker's homoeroticism, this scene goes further to invert biological gender roles and traditional notions of dominance and submission. "The female vampire… perverts even biological sex… she breaks the ultimate taboo by taking on a male prerogative: the power to penetrate" (Hamilton and Sonser Breen, 2004:3). It follows that Stoker's Dracula was written in a time of sexual ambiguity and anxiety present in Victorian society where conflicting discourses circulated about proper gender conduct (sexual and otherwise). Combining pathos and a seductive pose, the vampire, writes Williamson,

"resonates with many experiences of the self in Western modernity for those who do not occupy the normative identity" (Williamson, 2005:2).

The Vampire Dandy

In "The Painter of modern life" (1863) Charles Baudelaire wrote of the modern phenomenon of the dandy in nineteenth-century Paris. He described the dandy as an aesthete, who was "wealthy", "blasé" and "elegant" and is defined by luxury and "the perpetual pursuit of elegance" (Baudelaire 1987:26–27). He wrote that "these beings have no other calling but to cultivate the idea of beauty in their person, to satisfy their passions, to feel and to think" (1987:27). For Baudelaire, dandyism contained a discrete set of rules that required self discipline: "Dandyism, an institution beyond the laws, itself has rigorous laws which all its subjects must obey, whatever their natural impetuosity and independence of character" (1987:26–27). Such laws went beyond the "excessive delight in clothes and material elegance" and were more about cultivating "distinction", "aristocratic superiority" and "simplicity in the habit of command" (1987:26–27). The dandy belonged to a "brotherhood" and is "a high priest" of "the cult of the ego". For Baudelaire, dandyism was "a kind of religion" (1987:26–27).

When Baudelaire penned his seminal essay in 1863, the spirit of dandyism was flourishing not only in Paris but also in London, where dandysim originated in the form of the aristocratic socialite Beau Brummell (George Bryan Brummell, 1778–1840). By the time dandyism reached French shores in 1830, the aristocratic elite had lost its political dominance to the newly emerging middle class.

"In a society where bourgeois loudly proclaimed the virtues of

thrift, utility and work", writes Rosalind H. Williams, "the dandy rejected all these values as vulgar and sordid, and increasingly as irrelevant" (Williams, 1982:117). Many worthy successors followed in the footsteps of Beau Brummell; the Comte d'Orsay (1801–1852) with his extravagant love of perfumed gloves, furs, velvets and silks and Jules Barbey d' Aurevilly (1808-1889) who elevated dandyism to a spiritual level, a "holy man" who "carries within himself something superior to the visible world" (d' Aurevilly, cited by Williams, 1982:116). Likewise, Lord Byron, who Baudelaire hailed (along with Sheridan and Brummell) as a dandy became synonymous to the bohemian. He was a figure that was ambivalent, flouting social conventions and vacillating between political radicalism and aristocratic elitism. Living the role of an outcast, the bourgeois public remained fascinated with him, despite his social alienation. "Byron's image", writes Williams (1982:118), "was fused with an aura and doom and this too is merged with vampirism". This was partly due to John Polidori's novel, *The vampyre*, whose vampire Lord Ruthven was based on Byron, and Byron's already soiled reputation in London social circles as a homosexual and sexual deviant. Despite this, "the bourgeois public", writes Williamson (2005:36), "remained fascinated by Byron, for he seemed to live the role of glamorous outcast" and the romantic bohemian.

The dandy embodied a new elite and a spiritual aristocracy at a time of mass urban growth, industrialisation and mechanisation. It was a period marked by great change, a time of historical transition and economic and cultural upheavals in major metropolises like London and Paris. The European economy was in the midst of the industrial revolution as advancements in technology began to change daily lives. The speed at which daily life progressed increased, creating a bourgeoisie, known also as the leisure class. It was the beginning of

modernity and Baudelaire's vision of the dandy was as a modern hero, a political, spiritual and social revolutionary in his refusal to play by society's rules of banality and conformity. "Dandyism", he wrote, "is the last splendour of heroism amid decadence" (1982:27).

Dandy-like in their glamorous rebellion, vampires refuse to conform to societal conventions. Ostracised outsiders and refined hedonists who are governed only by their own manifesto of decadent aestheticism, Rice's vampires for instance are very much the image of the dandy and carry over the bohemian themes of intellectual, artistic and creative superiority. According to Rob Latham, Rice's novels "are disturbingly ideological in their celebration of the headless arrogance of the new consumption classes, …their affirmative portrayal of a self confident urban subculture organised around alternative form of erotic bonding converged with the assertive consolidation of gay rights/pride movement" (2002:98). Adopting a cultured and rebellious pose, writes Williamson, "Lestat and Louis express this in the two modes common to modernity: Lestat's conspicuous consumption and addiction to luxury and Louis' bookish asceticism. Both vampires spend much of their time in philosophical contemplation (of the meaning of their existence), hold an appreciation of the arts, travel and adventure" (Williamson 2005:38) and display a preference for collecting objets d' art. In fact, writes Ken Gelder in *Reading the vampire* (1994:119), "Rice's fiction flaunts its high cultural orientations, drawing in particular on Italian Renaissance and Baroque iconography- where high culture is at its most sensual". "To be a vampire", he continues, "is to be 'cultured' – that is to have 'aristocratic' tastes – and also to be idle. Louis, Lestat and other vampires do not work… their job is, instead, to find out who they are and were they come from" (1994:119). David Punter writes of *The vampire chronicles*: "[H]ere Paris is certainly the capital of

the nineteenth century, and the vampires who stroll its night-time, gas-lit streets are nothing but the very image of the flâneur" (cited by Williamson, 2005:38).

Interestingly, *Interview with the vampire* and Poppy Z. Brite's novel *Lost souls* are both set in New Orleans, the setting for much of Brite's and Rice's horror fiction. Set in the south of the U.S. on the Bayou St John, a short distance from the Mississippi River, New Orleans was an important French and Spanish colonial trading port since 1718 and acted as gateway to the 'exotic' New World. Because much of the population in the early days of settlement consisted of deported galley-slaves, fur trappers, gold hunters and wealthy plantation owners, the city has come to be represented in travel journals and literature as more decadent and aristocratic than Europe; "simultaneously 'primitive' and sophisticated", with a "mixture of all kinds of people", what Gelder terms the "global exotic" (1994:110–111). Vampire fiction overrides class, gender, age, sexual and ethnic differences emphasising mobility and movement. "The vampire", writes Gelder, "was consciously constructed as a 'citizen of the world', a figure to whom boundaries (national boundaries in particular) meant very little" (1994:111).

It is not surprising then, that *The tale of the body thief* (1992) Rice's fourth volume in *The vampire chronicles*, is not set in New Orleans, but in another decadent Southern American metropolis, Miami, where Lestat is a vigilante pursuing serial killers. His solitary dandy-like posture and sense of style sets him apart from the other characters in the novel, "Lestat is essentially *different*", writes Gelder, "he has style; he breaks the rules… with his Parisian background and his refined sensibilities, he might in fact be viewed as a kind of flâneur… a Parisian dandy [who] puts his idleness to good use" (1994:120).

Baudelaire's vision of the dandy is one who retreats from social and cultural life into the twin cults of beauty and aestheticism and away from the harsh realities of politics and history. The vampire, like the dandy is also an asocial and apolitical figure who exists on the outside of history and corresponds to the desire to transcend destiny; never to grow old, but to remain eternally youthful, to never die, but to live forever. "Dandyism", writes Baudelaire, "appears above all in periods of transition, when democracy is not yet all-powerful, and aristocracy is only just beginning to totter and fall" (1987:28). Like the dandies, who responded to what they considered to be the encroachments of bourgeois by reasserting traditional aristocratic virtues of daring and poise, the vampire also appears in periods of social and political change. Since the beginning of the global economic crises in 2009, cosmetic companies have reported an increase of up to 133 percent in sales of pale foundation and illuminating powder (Elwood, 2009). *Vampire couture* is also being reported on the fashion runway with Alexander McQueen's and John Galliano's Men's Fall/Winter 2009 collections bearing a deeply sombre tone and stylistic interventions influenced by the vampire personae.

According to Rob Latham, the vampire acts as a privileged metaphor that evokes the psychological and social experience – the relationships of desire and power – that are characteristic of postmodernist culture. The vampire, he writes, is literally an insatiable consumer driven by a hunger for perpetual youth (Latham 2002:11).

Consuming the Dandy Vampire

During the 1970s and 1980s, advertisers and marketers began to actively solicit affluent young gay male consumers via strategies that mobilised homoerotic imagery and latent homosexual messages.

"The basic approach of these ads", says Latham, "involved appealing to consumerist narcissism by fetishising images of sleek young bodies living a dream of glamorous affluence and perpetual adolescence" (2002:99). In the process, argues Latham, the advertisements blurred the distinction between heterosexual and queer consumers, "since all were linked in their common narcissism: the consumers' desire to be young and beautiful, was conflated with the desire to possess youth and beauty as incarnated in the beguiling models" (2002:99). It was at about this time in the Eighties, that new discourses began circulating in Britain about masculinity with one motif occurring repeatedly, the image of the 'new man'. "A hybrid character", writes Frank Mort, the new man "could not be attributed to one single source. He was rather the condensation of multiple concerns which were temporarily run together" (2009:454). For the advertising and marketing industries, the appearance of the new man signalled the growing cultural and commercial confusion around gender privilege and masculinity as well as subjectivity and sexuality. In the 1988 Spring issue, *Arena* magazine posed the question "How new is our New Man?" According to journalist Jon Savage, the image of the New Man was initially circulated through style magazines such as *ID* and *The Face*. "The image is up to date yet aspirant", he writes, "recognisably male yet admitting a certain vulnerability, still able to be interested, obsessed even, with clothes, male toiletries and new gadgets" (Savage 1988:34). The style press argues "has effectively helped to fuel a new type of consumption and have codified a fresh marketplace: the 19–45 year old male" (1988:34). According to Savage, gay milieu informs male representation and images of males bodies on display have been exacerbated by renewed social sanctions on homosexuality (1988:34).

The influence of gay pornography in the nineties, through the

work of photographers Bruce Weber and Herb Ritts, also attribu-
ted to key developments in the representation of masculinities in
fashion iconography. This homoerotic style of photography, where
men were depicted as narcissists also found expression in the work
of fashion photographers and stylists and including Nick Knight
and Ray Petri. Men were depicted before the camera as actively mas-
culine or passive, inviting men not only to consume the products,
but to look at themselves and other men as objects of desire to be
purchased and consumed, which Latham calls "'consumer vampi-
rism"'.: "The capitalist market, in its ceaseless hunger for profit",
argues Latham, "infects the consumer with its own vampiric appeti-
tes, in the process of conflating relations based on voyeurism, narcis-
sism, and homoeroticism with specifically consumerist desires and
pleasures" (Latham, 2002:100). This raises a very important issue
concerning the representation and spectatorship of masculinities as
a site for scopophilic pleasure. To whose spectatorial delight is the
male body offered to for instance? Heterosexual or queer men or
heterosexual women, or both heterosexual men *and* women?

Since the emergence of the narcissist metrosexual, a term coi-
ned by British journalist Mark Simpson in 1994, heterosexual men
have been encouraged to be a 'little more feminine' and not 'so
rough around the edges'. They are taught to be active consumers
and purchase high end luxury goods and styling products, live in a
hip urban area and aspire to drive a sports car or a Vespa. Most im-
portantly, the metrosexual is described as spending his time shaping
his body at the gym and reading (and looking at) magazines such as
GQ, *Arena* and *Men's Health* for wellbeing and fashion advice. In
short, whether heterosexual or queer, the metrosexual's *sexuality* is
irrelevant, for as a category, the metrosexual effectively queries the
normative binaries and establishes fluid notions of sexuality. Today's

men look at men and today's men like *to be looked at*. Not only do these representations of men appear in men's magazines, they also appear on fashion catwalks and in magazines targeting women as consumers. It is too simple to say that heterosexual women are enticed by these representations in order to purchase goods for their male sexual partners though this is partly so. To accept this as the sole reason why these images circulate would be to ignore the key political and social shifts that have occurred and influenced the codification of masculinity in the last thirty years; namely identity-based political movements such as feminism and gay and civil rights. Furthermore, it regulates male subjectivities, although commodified as in the case of the new man and the metrosexual, as passive agents duped by the twin arms of marketing and advertising. To accept to believe this, is to continue to regulate fashion to the domain of the feminine. Given that the terms of fashion have been framed within a modernist, patriarchal framework, this poses a serious question of agency.

In 2007, issue two of the British biannual men's fashion magazine *Fashion Inc*, subheaded "The Thinking Man's Bible", was dedicated to "the Dark Side" (fig. 1). It featured fashion editorials on Alexander McQueen titled "Prince of Darkness" photographed by Kyoko Homma (fig. 2 and fig. 3) and Hedi Slimane, appropriately titled "L'Homme Fatal" and photographed by Carlotta Manaigo. Both editorials made explicit reference to the vampire, McQueen to the Prince of Darkness and Slimane to darkness and fatality via black leather blousons, satin trenches and dramatic capes. Editor Adrian Clark wrote of Slimane's Autumn/Winter collection as "darker and more eerie" than his previous shows. "Models were thinner and paler than before…. From out of the shadows they sauntered: gaunt, haunted and partially illuminated by a column of fire at the end of the runway" (Clark, 2007:139).

The magazine cover's subtext states "276 pages of fearless fashion for men… take a bite from Autumn's forbidden pleasures" and targets both heterosexual and queer male consumers. It contains a dark and gloomy edge with the cover model dressed in black leather pants and an unbuttoned black velvet shirt revealing a pale and hairless chest. The model is seated on a black leather sofa gazing at the viewers and inviting them to join him "on the dark side" and "take a bite". Interestingly, the model bears an uncanny resemblance to actor Brandon Lee from the film *The Crow* (1994), directed by Alex Proyas. The film adaptation of the 1989 comic book of the same name by James O'Barr tells the story of a gothic rock musician who returns from the dead to avenge his own murder, as well as that of his fiancée. While filming in the closing weeks of production, Lee was killed when a dummy bullet, which had become lodged in one of the guns, was fired into his abdomen. The shaping of the magazine texts' meanings by borrowing and referencing from the film is used to provide depth to the magazine via the fictional reality portrayed in *The Crow* (1994). The use of intertextuality ensures that that the magazine-cover will propel the reader in a particular direction by citing and connoting the action-thriller.

In April 2008, *Fashion Trend Australia* ran a fashion editorial titled "*The Lost Boys*", photographed by Cameron Grayson and styled by Mike Adler (fig. 4 and fig. 5). The editorials title made reference to the popular film of the same name released in 1987 starring Keifer Sutherland and directed by Joel Schumacher for Warner Bros. The films tagline, "Sleep all day. Party all night. Never grow old. Never die. It's fun to be a vampire", follows the lives of two young Arizonans who move to California and encounter a gang of teenage vampires. The central setting for *The Lost Boys* (1987) is the fictitious Santa Carla boardwalk, a combination open air shopping mall, gaming arcade and amusement park, where teenagers are seen shopping and brow-

sing (adolescent *flâneurs*), playing videogames and riding the roller coaster. The intertextual device of linking the fashion images with the film via the film's title, serves to create a consumer relationship based on an already existing utopian narrative of youth, freedom and consumption. The fashion editorial, along with the film, highlights young men as lost souls; vampires wandering along the fringe of mainstream society (fig. 6). However, a very clear connection via styling and lighting techniques is also made between the male models featured in the editorial, the vampire and the dandy (fig.7), with explicit visual referencing to Tom Cruise from the film *Interview with the Vampire* (1994) (fig. 8). The model, dressed in a blue silk shirt, unbuttoned to reveal a muscular chest in the style of the romantic dandy, lies passively on a bed of plastic sheeting, setting a subversive tone to the image and producing a series of oppositions between hard and soft masculinities and straight and gay sexualities. The image disrupts conventional notions of masculinity and constructs an all-viewing subject that posits pleasure and power.

Conclusion

The emergence of the figure of the vampire dandy in cinema and male fashion photography in recent times, on the one hand, indicates a relationship between consumption, desire (and spectatorship) as well as power. On the other hand, it raises questions about the relationship between masculine identity, as a social subject, and the types of identities that are being constructed via visual codes. The vampire and the dandy are seen as metaphorically or conceptually connected. Both figures are men of leisure, who pride themselves in aesthetic superiority, seeking distinction through exquisite taste. Yet the vampire and the dandy are also historically connected, first appearing at the turn of the

nineteenth century amid social and political turmoil and reappearing in the last few years amid the current global economic crisis of the twenty first century. But what is most interesting, is that the vampire and the dandy also share a genealogy that transcends their historical convergence: blurring gender binaries of homo/hetero and masculine/feminine and encompassing a more hybrid and queer identity. As constructed social identities, the vampire and the dandy can act as a valuable framework for understanding, analysing and critiquing postmodern masculine subjectivities. Indeed, the appearance of the vampire dandy indicates that masculinities are once again on the move.

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ABSTRACT

Vampyrdandyn: skapandet av nya föreställningar om maskulina identiteter i mode, film och litteratur

Herrmodefotografering och dess nära förbundna näringar såsom klädestillverkning och -konsumtion, varumärkeslansering, marknadsföring och reklam, deltar i konstruktionen av ett allbetraktande subjekt; ett subjekt som "begär att bli begärt" av både män och kvinnor. Dessa erotiserade bilder, som ofta förekommer i tidningar som riktar sig till både kvinnliga och manliga konsumenter, framställer sina manliga modeller som sexuellt lockande subjekt och inbjuder betraktaren att konsumera "produkten" genom att antingen (över)identifiera sig med bilden som i fallet med en heterosexuell manlig blick, eller som ett begärsobjekt att uppskattas och konsumeras av en åskådande heterosexuell kvinnlig och/eller homosexuell manlig åskådare. Dessa återgivningar av män, ofta i sexuellt provokativa poser, skapar en sfär där kvinnor och män uppmuntras att *begära* och *konsumera* den manliga bilden. Denna sfär tillåter heterosexuella män att ägna sig åt och delta i ho-

mosocialt/homoerotiskt beteende på kulturellt acceptabla sätt. Samtidigt avslöjar dessa bilder en del om det sätt som återgivningar av maskulinitet konstrueras och cirkuleras på.

Den *nye mannens* framträdande på 1980-talet visade en brytning med traditionella föreställningar om maskulinitet och skapade sexualiserade återgivningar av den manliga kroppen. Medan traditionell maskulinitet tenderade att lokalisera denna inom det produktiva arbetslivet, sågs nu den *nye mannen* hänge sig åt sådana konsumtionsnjutningar som tidigare enbart förknippats med femininitet (Mort 1988, 1996; Enwistle 2000). Tillkomsten av stilmagasin för män som *GQ* och *Arena* tillsammans med marknadsförares och återförsäljares inriktning på konsumtion av herrmode och på manlig köpkraft ledde till en förändring i hur kulturella maskulinitetsbegrepp återgavs och bekräftades. Sean Nixon (1996) pekar på vissa nyckelområden där den nya mannen lanserades: tv- och tidningsreklam, herrklädesaffärer och tidskriftspressen. Manlig subjektivitet konstruerades nu genom reklam- och marknadsföringsdiskurser, vilka, tillsammans med konsumtionen av imagerelaterade mode- och kosmetikaprodukter, skapade en rad idealiserade och erotiserade maskulina identiteter.

1970-talets bredare sociala rörelser såsom feminism, den sexuella frigörelsen samt en rad identitetsbaserade politiska påtryckningsgrupper för exempelvis homosexuella och medborgerliga rättigheter, har också influerat bilderna av samtida maskulinitet. Dessa sociala rörelser har förändrat traditionella uppfattningar om ras, sexualitet, klass och identitet, och har skapat en modell av demokratisk genusjämlikhet. Resultaten av dessa rörelser utmanade hegemoniska maskulinitetsmodeller, artikulerat som en kris i maskuliniteten (se Mort 1986; Chapman och Rutherford 1988; Simpson 1994; Edwards 1997) och nya sätt att konceptualisera och artikulera maskulin identitet skapades. Ända sedan den "nye mannen" framträdde har en uppsjö maskuliniteter utmanat konventionella kategorier av manlig subjektivitet, däribland den "emotionellt känslige nye grabben" på nittitalet och den narcissistiske tjugohundratalets genustänjande metrosexuelle som befinner sig i ständigt flöde med sin "feminina sida".

Som medlemmar av "jag-kulten" har den metrosexuelle och den viktorianske

dandyn mycket gemensamt. Trots att dandyismen hörde hemma i elitens och aristokratins värld och metrosexualitet är ett "allmänt, masskonsumtionsfenomen" (Simpson 2004) förkroppsligar bägge subjektiviteterna "tidsandan", det vill säga dekandens, excesser, förkonstling, skönhet och esteticism samt, och allra viktigast, bägge problematiserar och utsuddar genusbinariteterna homo/hetero och maskulin/feminin, och väljer en mer hybridartad eller queer identitet.

Vampyrberättelsens återkomst inom populärkulturen på senare tid, från film till modevärldens catwalk och herrmodefotografier, visar på en djupgående förändring som håller på att ske i utnyttjandet av maskulinitetsbegrepp. Manliga modeller med pudrat hår och blek sminkning svassade exempelvis öppet nerför catwalken stylade som vampyrer för att efterlikna artonhundratalets Wiens romantiska dandyer till Robert Gellers höstkollektion 2009 (New York). Vidare avbildades manliga vampyrer i kortfilmen *The golden mirror* (2006) i regi av Luca Guadagnino för Fendi. Vampyrer är hybrididentiteter som existerar på gränsen mellan liv och död, människa och djur, maskulinitet och femininitet, heterosexualitet och homosexualitet, de överskrider och rubbar gränser. På liknade sätt är vampyren en konsumerande kropp; "omättlig" i sin aptit och sina begär; en romantisk dandy par excellence.

Artikeln undersöker skildringar av vampyren genom såväl filmatiska och litterära fallstudier som herrmode i redaktionella bilder. Den argumenterar att det utsuddande av genus och sexualitet, som är en väsentlig del av vampyrskildringen, kan återfinnas i lockelsen hos tjugohundratalets moderna dandy. Genom att studera Charles Baudelaires och andra centrala kulturteoretikers arbeten hävdar denna artikel att vampyren står för en polymorf identitet som framträder i tider av politiska kriser och ekonomisk excess, och som öppnar upp ett utrymme för bredare konceptualiseringar av maskulinitet.