

Brull's Example

Thesis: • Bronte employs the vampire archetype described in Foster's guide to exhibit Mr. Rochester's wife, Bertha, as a creepy and aggressive mistake from Rochester's overly passionate past, effectively establishing unbridled passion as a demon with whom women must make peace.

purpose – establish link between Vampire archetype and Bertha (and maybe interactions with Jane)

By fulfilling her role as the creepy and aggressive wife in the attic, Bertha embodies the vampire archetype. In the aftermath of Bertha's attack on her brother, Mr. Mason, Jane describes Mason as having a "pale and seemingly lifeless face" with "one arm, almost soaked in blood" (Bronte 242). Later, Jane describes it as a "pale and bloody spectacle" (Bronte 242). By using violent imagery, Bronte establishes Bertha's link to traditional vampires and their dependency on blood. Further, contrasting adjectives of "pale" and "bloody" emphasize the stereotypical paleness of a vampire and vivid red of the blood they thrive upon. Later in the scene, Mason lifelessly murmurs, "She bit me," and Rochester berates him for not fighting back: "You should not have yielded: you should have grappled with her at once (Bronte 245). Rochester's condescending attitude towards Mason's role as victim in the attack equates to a defense of Bertha's actions. This reaction in Rochester reveals yet another vampire according to literature professor Thomas C. Foster's ideas: "...his victims become like him and begin to seek out their own victims" (Foster 18). By Rochester's actions, specifically his defense of his wife's bloodlust, he reveals that he is growing to be like Bertha. Both the vampire and her husband attack Mason; the former does so physically and the latter does so verbally. Since Bertha is associated with blood and because her attacks inspire her husband to attack, she fits the vampire archetype.

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need one quote of Jane's reaction to Bertha/the attack – to the effect of her acting quite opposite, methodical (passion suppressed)

Next moves:

Feminine force paragraph: use Foster quotes to show vampires are generally talked about as being male, parallel with Bertha's wild, intimidating femininity

Start to talk about Bertha's selfishness with regard to full blown passion, and how that shows Jane that there is power in passion (good thing) but that it is not okay to control others with it (therefore, balance)

Foster purports that archetypical vampires transcend the stereotypical capes and pointy teeth: "it's also about things other than literal vampirism: selfishness, exploitation, a refusal to respect the autonomy of other people, just for starters" (Foster 20).