

## **Revenge is a Dish Best Served Sapphic: The Lesbian Vampire**

### **Film as Revenge Fantasy**

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The lesbian vampire is one of the most controversial celluloid monsters. Scholars have tended to regard her as either an embodiment of anxieties about female sexual empowerment; or as a kind of feminist icon. Puzzlingly, few critics have noted the recurring theme of revenge in lesbian vampire films. The article will focus specifically on three such films: *The Blood Spattered Bride* (1972), *Daughters of Darkness* (1971), and *Vampyres* (1974). All three films feature female protagonists who are intent on avenging their abysmal treatment at the hands of men, and who do so with the aid of lesbian vampires.

In particular, I suggest that it is helpful to theorise these films as being revenge fantasies. The realm of fantasy has been characterised by shifting and unpredictable points of identification. With this in mind, I ask: Who exactly is the viewer asked to identify with in lesbian vampire films—the vampire, her lover, and/or the vampire's male opponents? To what extent does identifying with the lesbian vampire mean identifying with a woman who is retaliating against patriarchy (and identifying with her male opponents

mean identifying with—or at least not challenging—patriarchy)? Teasing out these questions will enable us to understand just how complex the sexual politics of these films are.

### ***Lesbian vampire films as revenge fantasies***

In the cinema, the lesbian vampire became prevalent in a number of films released during the 1960s and 70s.<sup>1</sup> This period saw the rise of “second-wave feminism,” and the ensuing contestation of patriarchal authority. Some second-wave feminists claimed that adopting a lesbian identity constituted a powerful political strategy:

Any woman could be a lesbian. It was a revolutionary political choice which, if adopted by millions of women, would lead to the destabilisation of male supremacy as men lost the foundation of their power in women’s selfless and unpaid, domestic, sexual, reproductive, economic and emotional servicing.<sup>2</sup>

The lesbian vampire film has divided critics. According to Andrea Weiss, this sub-genre is unambiguously sexist and anti-lesbian.<sup>3</sup> For other scholars, however, the lesbian vampire has embodied pro-feminist and pro-lesbian sentiments. According to Barbara Creed, the lesbian vampire “is monstrous—and also attractive—precisely because she does threaten to undermine the formal and highly symbolic relations of men and women essential to the continuation of patriarchal society.”<sup>4</sup> According to David Baker, lesbian vampire films can offer “spectacular pornographic titillation for men and an acknowledgment that women can assert their own desires.”<sup>5</sup>

For critics such as Creed and Baker then, lesbian vampire films can be read as politically subversive, despite the fact that—as well as being mostly directed by men—they do not appear to have been conceived with any discernible feminist intent.<sup>6</sup> This is the kind of reading I will pursue throughout the essay.<sup>7</sup> During the course of my analysis, I take up Creed’s concept of the “monstrous-feminine,” that is, the representation of femininity as monstrous and threatening.<sup>8</sup> The “monstrous-feminine” is specifically invoked in the films under discussion—and, unlike in Creed’s analysis—it is not always aligned with cisgender female bodies.

Furthermore, I focus on the theme of revenge that runs through three 1970s lesbian vampire films. This theme has been overlooked in other critiques of these films (some of which will be cited here). Such an oversight is problematic, because revenge—and its sister term, vengeance—have a long history in feminism: witness Valerie Solanas’ infamous *SCUM Manifesto* (1967) or Andrea Dworkin’s novel *Mercy* (1990), to list two examples.<sup>9</sup>

Revenge has also had a history in popular culture: witness the longevity of the rape-revenge film (a genre which would encompass at least two of the movies that will be discussed below).<sup>10</sup> The vengeful woman has been unsettling because revenge—and violence more generally—has traditionally been understood as a male or masculine domain. In committing an act of revenge, a woman effectively transgresses her socially-assigned femininity.<sup>11</sup>

More specifically, I suggest that the films under discussion can usefully be classified as revenge *fantasies*. Fantasy here is firstly a reference to texts featuring fantastic and surreal characters and events.<sup>12</sup> This term does, however, have a broader application, as Todd McGowan points out when he writes that fantasy “serves as a way for the individual subject to imagine a path out of the dissatisfaction produced by the demands of social existence.”<sup>13</sup> Fantasy offers a way of critiquing and reimagining what counts as “reality,” and imagining how things could be.<sup>14</sup> According to Judith Butler, “identification is distributed amongst the various elements of the (fantasy) scene.”<sup>15</sup> Butler goes on to argue that “although we might wish to think . . . that there is an “I” who has or cultivates its fantasy with some measure of mastery and possession, that “I” is always already undone by precisely that which it claims to master.”<sup>16</sup> Thus, identification will not always be dictated by gender—e.g. women will always identify with the female characters in a fantasy scenario. Nor will identification always be stable, that is, one will identify continuously and unambiguously with a particular person or event.

Identifying with a film character can entail sympathy and empathy, admiration, or it can simply entail viewing the world through their perspective. Cinematic identification can be encouraged by narrative, mise-en-scene, dialogue, camerawork (e.g., point-of-view shots).<sup>17</sup> These points will be borne out in the analysis of the three films, where identification with certain characters shifts wildly. Focusing on this shifting identification will provide us with a clearer insight into the films’ complex and contradictory sexual politics.

### ***“He has spat inside your body”: The Blood Spattered Bride and Daughters of Darkness***

Of the three films mentioned, *The Blood Spattered Bride* and *Daughters of Darkness* are the ones that are most obviously framed as revenge fantasies. These films share striking similarities. Both films feature a newlywed couple in which the wife is being abused—mentally, physically, sexually—by the husband. In both films, the wives are offered sexual and political liberation by female vampires. The vampires are both well-known, or at least

they should be to the audience: in *The Blood Spattered Bride*, it is Carmilla (Alexandra Bastedo),<sup>18</sup> while in *Daughter of Darkness*, it is Countess Elizabeth Bathory (Delphine Seyrig).<sup>19</sup> The vampires seduce the wives and lecture them about misogyny. The women go on to kill misogynist men.

Also, both films are shot largely from the wives' points-of-view. This encourages at least a sense of identification with these women. The wife in *The Blood Spattered Bride* is Susan (Maribel Martin), while in *Daughters of Darkness* it is Valerie (Danielle Quimet). The scene in which Stefan (John Karlen) first hits Valerie jolts viewers, who, like Valerie, would not have foreseen this blow. Susan suffers from "nightmares" about being raped by an unseen man. In her waking life, she is repeatedly raped by her husband (Simon Andreau). These rapes, as well as the ensuing confusion between reality and fantasy, unsettle Susan—and the viewer.

The vampires appear just as this abuse begins. In both films, their first appearance has a dreamlike quality: the vampires are shot in a soft lens, their impassive features partly concealed by veils. This dreamlike quality suggests a fantasy on behalf of the wives. That suggestion is made overt in *The Blood Spattered Bride*, when Susan's initial sightings of Carmilla go unnoticed by others. There is a sense that Susan has willed Carmilla into (her) life.

Indeed, Carmilla and Elizabeth are quick to diagnose the problem facing the two heroines—and that problem is men. Carmilla warns Susan that her husband "has spat inside your body to enslave you." The husband remains nameless, which in itself paints him as an Everyman.<sup>20</sup> The misogyny of his male accomplices (his own groundkeeper and a local doctor) bears this suggestion out. Elizabeth warns Valerie that Stefan wants to "make of you what every man wants of every woman: a slave, a thing, an object of pleasure." Susan and Valerie's rejection of heterosexuality can be read as acts of revenge against their possessive partners. Susan fantasizes about stabbing her husband to death, with Carmilla grasping her knife-wielding hands as the deed is carried out. In waking life, the women kill the doctor and groundkeeper. Elizabeth and Valerie drink Stefan's blood.

Thus, it seems that Carmilla/Susan and Elizabeth/Valerie are feminist avengers. This is doubly so for Carmilla, who is actually the nameless husband's ancestress, and who killed her own husband centuries before when he tried to rape her. The women in this family were subsequently punished for Carmilla's transgression by having their portraits hidden in a cellar; Carmilla's face was also cut out of her portrait. This is crudely symbolic of the erasure of women from history, as well as of the family's disdain towards women. Carmilla (re)appears to balance the ledger.

Nevertheless, the viewer's ability to identify with any of these women

is compromised by their narcissism. Freud writes that the term “narcissism” was coined in 1899 by medic Paul Nacke:

. . . to denote the attitude of a person who treats his [sic] own body in the same way in which the body of a sexual object is ordinarily treated—who looks at it, that is to say, strokes it and fondles it till he receives complete satisfaction through these activities. Developed to this degree, narcissism has the significance of a perversion that has absorbed the whole of the subject’s sexual life, and it will consequently exhibit the characteristics which we expect to meet with in the study of all perversions.<sup>21</sup>

Freud lists homosexuals and women as bearers of the “narcissistic attitude.”<sup>22</sup> As their bonds strengthen, Carmilla/Susan and Elizabeth/Valerie begin to wear similar clothes and develop physical similarities. Indeed, after Elizabeth is killed in a car accident, Valerie seems to *become* her lover: *Daughters of Darkness* fades out with Valerie seducing a young couple using the same pick-up line once used on her by Elizabeth (and with Elizabeth’s eerily dulcet voice). The threat of merging is literalised in a widely-circulated still from *Daughters of Darkness* that depicts Elizabeth and Valerie wrapped in a cloak. It is difficult to see who exactly is wearing this cloak, or whether there is more than one body in the frame (there are two faces, both framed by platinum-blond hair).

One result of the narcissism on display in these films is that the viewer can encounter difficulties in identifying with the female protagonists. There is a lack of clarity as to where one woman ends and the other one begins. In particular, the viewer will likely find it difficult to identify with the vampires. Despite their renunciations of male authority, both women have effectively enslaved their female lovers; they have consumed their lovers’ blood *and* their identities. There is an analogy with rape here, at least to the extent that rape has sometimes been described using “metaphors of . . . trespass and invasion.”<sup>23</sup> Thus, the femininity performed by Elizabeth and Carmilla is particularly monstrous.

Ultimately, in *The Blood Spattered Bride*, the viewer is encouraged to identify—however reluctantly—with the nameless husband. The husband might be misogynistic, abusive and sleazy—but at least he has not robbed his wife’s sense of self to the extent that Carmilla has. His execution of Carmilla and Susan via gunfire is seen as a necessary—albeit gruesome—way of destroying their all-consuming bond.

In *Daughters of Darkness*, it is ultimately difficult to fully identify with either Elizabeth or Valerie—but then, it is also difficult to identify with Stefan. As well as being brutal, it is also revealed that Stefan is possibly homo-

sexual. His unseen “Mother,” —to whom he is reluctant to mention his marriage to Valerie—turns out to be an effeminate man (played by Fons Rademakers). Mother’s clipped voice, haughty air, heavy make-up, and apparent affluence actually make him reminiscent of the Countess herself. Stefan’s misogyny, it is implied, stems from his homosexual bond with an excessively feminine man, and this makes Stefan possibly more unappealing than the unambiguously heterosexual husband in *The Blood Spattered Bride*.

Thus, in both *The Blood Spattered Bride* and *Daughters of Darkness*, monstrous femininity is held responsible for men’s hatred of, and violence towards women. In the first film, this monstrous femininity is performed by Carmilla and Susan; glimpses of it are displayed by the groundskeeper’s pre-pubescent daughter, Carol (Toty Rodriguez), who becomes fixated on Carmilla, and who the husband also kills in his climactic rampage. In *Daughters of Darkness*, monstrous femininity is performed by Elizabeth and the male-bodied Mother. In that film’s end, Elizabeth/Valerie (the two women seem to have merged into one) threatens to continue this monstrosity.

### **“My lucky day”: *Vampyres***

*Vampyres* opens with Fran and Miriam (Marianne Morris and Anulka) being shot to death by an unseen, apparently male intruder while they make love. The women rise from the grave as vampires, and lure unsuspecting male motorists back to their British countryside manor for fornication and exsanguination. The only consort they do not kill is Ted (Murray Brown), who returns for nightly sex sessions. As his body weakens, his obsession with Fran intensifies.

At first glance, *Vampyres* more closely resembles generic porn than a revenge fantasy. *Vampyres* is shot primarily from Ted’s perspective. During the sex scenes, Fran removes her clothes in the slow, stylised manner of a striptease.<sup>24</sup> The camera cuts repeatedly from Ted’s watchful eyes to extreme close-ups of Fran’s exposed legs, breasts, buttocks. Ted adopts a subordinate position in his sex acts with Fran, and while this might initially seem subversive, it is actually rather conventional. Barbara Creed points out: “Phantasies of man’s masochistic desire to take up a feminine position are one of the central topics that the horror film exists to explore.”<sup>25</sup> This feminisation is markedly different from the feminising of male homosexuality (as seen in *Daughters of Darkness*); that is, the male protagonist (in this case, Ted) retains his heterosexuality, and women continue to exist for his sexual pleasure, even if—or partly because—they adopt a powerful stance.

Yet, in making this argument, it should be noted that *Vampyres* is a

much more ambiguous film than the previous two. Many questions are raised and remain unanswered by the final credits. This ambiguity and mysteriousness enables another, more complex and arguably more pro-feminist reading. To elaborate, I suggest that it is difficult—if not impossible—to identify with Ted in any tangible way. His is a thinly-sketched character, and while this may be a script deficiency, it does not work in his favour. Ted seems to be perpetually edgy, though the viewer never learns why. There are suggestions that he was the unseen assassin in the opening, and has returned to the scene of his crime.

Thus, the viewer could be watching Fran and Miriam's fantasy of avenging their murder, of sexualising and then killing their assassin—just as they had been sexualised and killed. Jan Alber argues:

One of the most interesting things about fictional narratives is that they do not only mimetically reproduce the world as we know it. Many narratives confront us with bizarre storyworlds which are governed by principles that have very little to do with the real world around us.<sup>26</sup>

Alber's remarks are particularly true in relation to the films under discussion. These are films that certainly do not strive for realism; they are fantasies. Within these fantasies, stories that are told by dead characters—or characters that rise from the grave (therefore becoming “undead”)—should not come as surprising.<sup>27</sup>

One thing is certain: Ted is an Everyman, and this Everyman is unappealing. The men in *Vampyres* are fixated on sex. Ted's first remarks upon entering the vampires' manor is: “This is my lucky day!” (Fran admonishes him with a firm: “Don't ever say that!”). Similar remarks are made by the vampires' other consorts. The one non-sleazy male is John (Brian Deacon), a happily-married tourist who has parked his campervan on the grounds of the manor, and who shows no interest in Fran and Miriam. Yet even John meets a brutal end at the vampires' hands—he is stabbed to death when he tries to drive a wounded and frail Ted to hospital.

What of the vampires themselves? Fran and Miriam are not spouting feminist platitudes about male domination. They pander to (heterosexual) male fantasies with their flesh-baring and promise of pleasure. The similarity in their appearances—they have matching hairstyles and black gowns—hint at a narcissism that was made overt in the previous two films. Yet, Fran and Miriam are also potentially more subversive than the women in *The Blood Spattered Bride* and *Daughters of Darkness*. Ellis Hanson makes this clear in an amusing and incisive reading of *Vampyres*. Hanson writes:

The vampire lesbians simply say, we've had enough. Go ahead. Take a look. Take a long, long look. All you see is all you get. We'll give you sex. We'll give you wine . . . And when you are done, we shall eat you.<sup>28</sup>

Fran and Miriam's consorts wind up naked and bloodied, dumped by the roadside. Their mangled corpses bring to mind the opening shot of the bullet-ridden lovers. Perhaps exterminating men is a way for the vampires to avenge their execution? Perhaps Ted is that executioner? Or perhaps he's just another unlucky punter?

The vampires provide no answers. They remain enigmatic, as evidenced in the following exchanges:

**Ted:** I don't pretend that you should divulge all your secrets to me . . . Is there a limit to the questions?

**Fran:** There's a limit to the answers.

**Ted:** You're not easy to understand.

**Fran:** That's the way I have to be accepted, with no questions and no explanations.

And elsewhere in the film:

**Ted:** You intrigue me. And you worry me, because I don't understand you.

**Fran:** Don't try to.

To speak, to confess involves a relinquishment of power.<sup>29</sup> To divulge one's secrets could have enabled Ted to "understand" Fran, and perhaps flee before his obsession with her escalated. Though, even the wound on his arm does not seem to be enough to alert Ted that his life is in danger, and that he should escape his lover's clutches.

Ultimately, then, it seems easier for the viewer to identify with Fran and Miriam. They appear to defy death, not only in the film's beginning but also at its end (neither woman is killed in the final moments; compare this with the fates of the vampires in *The Blood Spattered Bride* and *Daughters of Darkness*). In one scene late in *Vampyres*, the identification with the title creatures is made explicit. The scene opens with a close-up of Ted sprawled out on a bed, wan and delirious. His eyes dart frantically around the darkened room. He mutters to himself: "I must get away! I must get away from here!" The camera cuts to Fran, who stands above her victim, outside his line of vision. She is smiling. The viewer realises that they/we have been watching Ted through her eyes. He lies, vulnerable and power-



less, before her/us. We didn't really care about him to start with, and there is no real reason to care now. Fran's satisfaction is our satisfaction.

There is one more character that warrants scrutiny, and this is John's wife, Harriet (Sally Faulkner). This relatively minor character actually complicates the film's discourse on gender, revenge fantasy, and the complexities of identification even further. Harriet becomes obsessed with the vampires when she spies them hitchhiking, and watches them closely thereafter. On several occasions, the viewer watches the vampires through Harriet's eyes. She paints a portrait of the manor, which can itself be read as "a way of keep(ing) the house and its two mysterious occupants under surveillance."<sup>30</sup> Harriet even enters the house uninvited and snoops around. This trespassing horrifies John, but it is an act that the viewer can most likely nod along with. After all, Harriet only seems to be seeking the answers that Fran and Miriam have denied us all. In short, the viewer is encouraged to also identify with Harriet. She gets to try and find out what the viewers want to find out: who are these women, and why are they doing what they are doing?

In his article, Hanson labels Harriet as a "homophobic voyeur."<sup>31</sup> Harriet describes the sight of the vampires walking together as "not normal," and again, viewers are given reason to agree, though not for perhaps the reason Harriet intended; we (unlike Harriet) have witnessed Fran and Miriam's murderous activities. These are activities that Harriet has not been witness to—or has she? To an extent, the film can be read as Harriet's homophobic fantasy about what the two women—women who spend time together, unaccompanied by a man—do behind closed doors.

Then, at one point, Fran confronts Harriet and traces an imaginary mark on her forehead, declaring: "I always knew we'd find each other. By this sign, I remember you." Shortly afterwards, the vampires drag Harriet into their cellar, where she is stripped, beaten and slashed with a knife. There is the possibility that the vampires have "recognised" Harriet as a potential lesbian, as being one of them (the activist slogan "any woman could be a lesbian" springs to mind here), and feel betrayed by her attempts to assist one of their male victims. The viewer's identification with Harriet could thus mean identifying with a potential lesbian—and in *Vampyres* (as in the two films mentioned previously), lesbianism equals monstrosity equals androicide.

Alternately, the viewer is led to wonder whether Harriet was in fact the unseen "male" figure who broke into the manor and shot Fran and Miriam in the opening sequence. Her aforementioned trespassing in the vampires' home is significant, if we think of how trespassing has been used as a metaphor for rape, and how the assassin was never granted access to the

house by his/her victims. Harriet's execution could, then, represent an act of revenge—albeit an act where a woman is the target. I mentioned earlier that violence has traditionally been gendered male. With this in mind, *Vampyres* can be read as a fantasy of identifying with monstrous femininity, whether performed by the vampiric Fran and Miriam, or by the seemingly innocent—but possibly homicidal—Harriet.

I have demonstrated that reading the lesbian vampire films under discussion as revenge fantasies can enrich our understanding of these films' provocative and often wildly contradictory sexual politics. The vampires in these films are angels of vengeance. Viewers are encouraged to identify with these women to the extent that they are retaliating against patriarchy. In *The Blood Spattered Bride* and *Daughters of Darkness*, however, this identification is circumvented by the women's narcissism, and the blaming of femininity itself—monstrous femininity—for men's hatred of women. Indeed, in *The Blood Spattered Bride*, our identification is ultimately—if uneasily—geared towards the misogynist male protagonist. In *Vampyres*, things get more complicated. It is difficult to identify with that film's male characters, who are all sleazy, and who all die horribly. Our identification rests most strongly with the title creatures, and with the potential killer, Harriet. There is the possibility, then, that the viewer is encouraged to identify with monstrous femininity. The film is certainly presenting a revenge fantasy, but who is the target of this revenge—Ted or Harriet? Nobody, least of all the two vampires, is providing any answers.

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## NOTES

- 1 David Baker, "Seduced and Abandoned: Lesbian Vampires on Screen 1968-74," *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 26, no. 4 (2012): 553.

- <sup>2</sup> Sheila Jeffreys, *The Lesbian Heresy: A Feminist Perspective on the Lesbian Sexual Revolution* (Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 1993), ix.
- <sup>3</sup> Andrea Weiss, *Vampires and Violets: Lesbians in Film* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992), 90.
- <sup>4</sup> Barbara Creed, *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 61.
- <sup>5</sup> Baker, "Seduced and Abandoned," 556.
- <sup>6</sup> A possible exception here is *The Velvet Vampire* (1971), which was directed by Stephanie Rothman, and which featured a bisexual female vampire.
- <sup>7</sup> This approach has something in common with the theory of the "resisting reader" that is described by Diane Waldman in her essay "Film Theory and the Gendered Spectator: The Female or the Feminist Reader?" *Camera Obscura* 6, no. 3 (1988): 80. Waldman describes the "resisting reader" as "the spectator who refuses to take up the position offered by the text." Waldman specifically focuses on female and feminist modes of spectatorship.
- <sup>8</sup> Creed, *The Monstrous-Feminine*, 3.
- <sup>9</sup> "SCUM" was an acronym for the Society for Cutting Up Men. In the *SCUM Manifesto*, Solanas planned out revenge against men for their ill treatment of women. In *Mercy*, the heroine sets out to commit androicide after being raped by a number of men over many years. See Valerie Solanas, *SCUM Manifesto* (Matriarchy Study Group, La Trobe University Library: Bundoora, 1988); Andrea Dworkin, *Mercy* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1990).
- <sup>10</sup> Claire Henry provides a useful overview of the rape-revenge film and its various manifestations in her book *Revisionist Rape-Revenge: Redefining a Film Genre* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
- <sup>11</sup> Marguerite A. Tassi, *Women and Revenge in Shakespeare: Gender, Genre, and Ethics* (New Jersey: Rosemont Publishing and Printing Corp., 2011), 13.
- <sup>12</sup> See Guy Austin, "Vampirism, Gender Wars and the 'Final Girl': French Fantasy Film in the Early Seventies," *French Cultural Studies* 7, no. 321 (1996): 321-331.
- <sup>13</sup> Todd McGowan, *The Real Gaze: Film Theory after Lacan* (Albany: State University of New York, 2007), 23.
- <sup>14</sup> Judith Butler, "The Force of Fantasy: Feminism, Mapplethorpe, and Discursive Excess," *differences* 2, no. 2 (1990): 105.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.
- <sup>17</sup> Gilberto Perez, "Toward a Rhetoric of Film: Identification and the Spectator". *Senses of Cinema* 5 (2000): <http://sensesofcinema.com/2000/society-for-cinema-studies-conference-2000/rhetoric2/> (Accessed 1 May 2015).
- <sup>18</sup> The character "Carmilla Karnstein" has been taken from Sheridan Le Fanu's novella *Carmilla* (1872). It should be noted that this film only bears superficial resemblance to that novella. A more faithful adaptation can be found in Hammer Studios' *The Vampire Lovers* (1970).

- <sup>19</sup> Countess Elizabeth (or “Erzsebet”) Bathory was a sixteenth-century Hungarian noblewoman who bathed in the blood of virgins in an attempt to preserve her youth. In *Daughters of Darkness*, the vampire claims to be a descendant of that woman, though she has a suspiciously strong knowledge of her ancestress’ activities.
- <sup>20</sup> In an insightful essay, Andrew Willis argues that the husband embodies a patriarchy that was specific to Spain under Francisco Franco’s political regime. Willis reads *The Blood Spattered Bride* as a “scathing critique” of this patriarchy. See his “Spanish Horror and the Flight from ‘Art’ Cinema, 1967-73,” in *Defining Cult Movies: The Cultural Politics of Oppositional Taste*, eds Mark Jancovich, Antonio Lazaro Reboll, Julian Stringer and Andy Willis (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 77.
- <sup>21</sup> Sigmund Freud, “On Narcissism: An Introduction,” in *The Freud Reader*, ed. Peter Gay (London: Vintage, 1995), 545.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 545 and 555. See also Creed, *The Monstrous-Feminine*, 70.
- <sup>23</sup> Sharon Marcus, “Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention,” in *Gender Struggles: Practical Approaches to Contemporary Feminism*, eds Constance L. Mui and Julien S. Murphy (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Pub., 2002), 180. Marcus is implicitly critical of such metaphors.
- <sup>24</sup> Ellis Hanson, “Lesbians Who Bite”, in *Out Takes: Essays on Queer Theory and Film*, ed. Ellis Hanson (Durham: Durham University Press, 1999), 205. Hanson mistakenly ascribes the stripteases to Miriam.
- <sup>25</sup> Barbara Creed, “Dark Desires: Male Masochism in the Horror Film,” in *Screening the Male: Exploring Masculinities in Hollywood Cinema*, eds Steven Cohan and Ina Rae Hark (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 121.
- <sup>26</sup> Jan Alber, “Impossible Storyworlds—and what to do with them,” *StoryWorlds: A Journal of Narrative Studies* 1 (2009): 79.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 89. Alber discusses Alice Sebold’s novel *The Lovely Bones* (2002), where the narrator (herself the victim of male violence) is dead.
- <sup>28</sup> Hanson, “Lesbians Who Bite,” 207.
- <sup>29</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge. The History of Sexuality: Volume 1*. Trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 17-49.
- <sup>30</sup> Hanson, “Lesbians Who Bite,” 209.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.