

FROM MONSTROUS TO IDEALIZED: THE EVOLUTION OF VAMPIRE PHYSICAL MASCULINITY IN *DRACULA*, *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*, AND *TWILIGHT*

Dari Sosok Menyeramkan hingga Ideal: Evolusi Maskulinitas Tubuh Vampir dalam Novel *Dracula*, *Interview with the Vampire*, dan *Twilight*

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini membahas evolusi maskulinitas tubuh vampir dalam tiga novel dari periode yang berbeda, yaitu *Dracula* (1897) karya Bram Stoker, *Interview with the Vampire* (1976) karya Anne Rice, dan *Twilight* (2005) karya Stephenie Meyer. Kajian ini menelusuri bagaimana representasi tubuh vampir mengalami transformasi dari sosok yang menyeramkan dan mengintimidasi menjadi sosok yang manusiawi dan ideal, sejalan dengan perubahan budaya dalam konstruksi maskulinitas. Dengan menggunakan kerangka teori feminisme maskulinitas, penelitian ini menganalisis bagaimana perubahan penggambaran vampir laki-laki mencerminkan pergeseran pandangan sosial terhadap kekuatan, keindahan, dan ekspresi emosional pria. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa maskulinitas dalam fiksi vampir berevolusi dari dominasi dan ketakutan dalam *Dracula*, menuju introspeksi dan kepekaan dalam *Interview with the Vampire*, hingga akhirnya mencapai bentuk ideal yang romantis dalam *Twilight*. Transformasi ini menunjukkan bahwa figur vampir terus beradaptasi dengan idealisasi kontemporer terhadap gender, kekuasaan, dan hasrat.

Kata kunci: vampir; maskulinitas fisik; tubuh; evolusi; fiksi gotik

Abstract: This study examines the evolution of vampire physical masculinity in three novels from different periods: *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker, *Interview with the Vampire* (1976) by Anne Rice, and *Twilight* (2005) by Stephenie Meyer. It explores how representations of the vampire body transform from monstrous and intimidating to humanized and idealized, reflecting broader cultural shifts in the construction of masculinity. Using the theoretical framework of feminist masculinity, this research analyzes how changing portrayals of male vampires mirror shifting social attitudes toward male strength, beauty, and emotional expression. The findings reveal that masculinity in vampire fiction evolves from dominance and fear in *Dracula*, to introspection and sensitivity in *Interview with the Vampire*, and ultimately to romanticized perfection in *Twilight*. This transformation demonstrates how the vampire figure continues to adapt to contemporary ideals of gender, power, and desire.

Keywords: vampire; physical masculinity; body; evolution; gothic fiction

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INTRODUCTION

The body is one of the crucial aspects in defining masculinity (Hunt et al., 2013). The representation of masculine bodies in fictional characters has evolved over time, allowing literary works to adapt to societal changes and maintain their relevance (Gürkan, 2022; Martín, 2020). This evolution is evident across various genres, from romantic fiction to supernatural fiction, which has experienced significant transformations (Bignell, 2024). While character traits may change, the fundamental elements that define a genre remain to ensure reader recognition.

One literary genre that has notably evolved over time is gothic fiction, with vampires being one of its most frequently depicted figures. The first significant vampire character appeared in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), published at the end of the Victorian era. This horror novel gained immense popularity, inspiring numerous subsequent vampire narratives. Stoker emphasizes Dracula's powerful presence: "There was one great tomb more lordly than all the rest. Huge it was, and nobly proportioned. On it was but one word, DRACULA" (Stoker, 1897: 530). This quote illustrates his dominance and terror, reinforcing the gothic horror genre.

As gothic fiction evolved, so did the portrayal of its male characters, particularly vampires. While early representations, such as *Dracula*, emphasized fear and monstrosity (Pop Zarijeva & Iliev, 2025; Weinstock, 2017), later depictions began to reflect shifts in audience expectations (Riddle, 2020).

Most readers of romantic fiction are women (Hollows, 2024). Therefore, the male characters in these stories often align with female preferences. Conversely, adventure fiction, predominantly read by men, typically portrays male characters that cater to masculine ideals (Scholz & Dropmann, 2011). However, cross-genre influences may create character innovations that appeal to diverse audiences (Usevičs, 2017).

Similarly, masculinity in fiction evolves alongside character changes, reflecting the audience's shifting tastes (Kreichbergs et al., 2024). If the readers are primarily female, male characters are often depicted as handsome and physically strong. Various factors shape these preferences, including class, social background, age, religion, ethnicity, region, and personality (Adi, 2011). Thus, taste is not universal or fixed but continually adapts to social influences.

To this day, the vampire genre remains widely popular. However, the themes and portrayals of vampire characters have undergone notable changes over the centuries. In the 20th century, vampire fiction saw thematic and character transformations, as exemplified in *Interview with the Vampire* (1991). Unlike *Dracula*, this novel shifted from horror to fantasy while retaining gothic elements. Additionally, the physical depiction of vampires changed, shifting from monstrous to aesthetically appealing. In the 21st century, there was a drastic transformation not only in themes but also in vampire characterization. In *Twilight* (2005) by Stephenie Meyer, the male vampire protagonist, Edward Cullen, is vastly different in appearance from Stoker's *Dracula*. This study employs the theory of feminist masculinity to analyze the physical representations of masculinity in three vampire protagonists: *Dracula*, Louis, and Edward Cullen.

The debate over masculinity has drawn scholarly attention since the 1980s and 1990s, with ongoing discussions about its fluidity and cultural construction. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) argue that masculinity is not a fixed, universal trait but a social construct shaped by cultural and historical contexts. Mass culture often assumes the existence of an absolute masculinity, yet masculinity is dynamic and evolves based on societal norms and expectations.

Research shows that masculinity is influenced by factors such as history, geography, and social structures, emphasizing

traits like dominance, strength, and heterosexuality (Udasromo, 2018). However, representations of masculinity in literature do not always reflect real-life masculinity; instead, they mirror societal desires and fantasies. Media and literature reinforce particular masculine ideals—such as muscularity and power—creating hegemonic models that audiences internalize (R. W. Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Masculinity is thus not an inherent biological attribute but a framework shaped by cultural narratives.

Physical appearance and body structure are central to masculine representation. Typically, male bodies are portrayed as distinct from female ones, featuring traits like muscularity, facial hair, and short haircuts (Begiato, 2020). Gender itself is a social practice embedded within societal structures, influencing behaviors, relationships, and reproductive roles (R. Connell, 2000). The body extends beyond biological determinism, playing a crucial role in shaping masculinity and informing how individuals navigate social interactions (Mankayi, 2008).

Changes in the representation of masculinity involve three primary aspects: the physical appearance of male heroes, their abilities, and their interactions with women (Adi, 2011). This study focuses exclusively on the physical depiction of masculinity in *Dracula*, *Interview with the Vampire*, and *Twilight*. By examining these changes, this research contributes to discussions on the evolution of gender representation in literature and the cultural forces shaping male identity across different literary periods.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the representation of vampire physical masculinity across different literary periods. The primary data source consists of three vampire novels: *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, *Interview with the Vampire* by Anne Rice, and *Twilight* by

Stephenie Meyer. Secondary sources include scholarly articles, books, and critiques on gothic fiction, gender studies, and literary analysis.

Data collection involves a close reading of the primary texts (Moser & Korstjens, 2018), focusing on descriptions of male vampire characters, their physical attributes, and their portrayal of masculinity. The analysis identifies thematic patterns in the depiction of masculinity and examines how these representations evolve across the vampire characters in different periods to show the transformation of masculine traits over time. Additional data is gathered from critical interpretations of the novels and existing literary studies.

The data collection procedure follows three steps: first, selecting textual evidence related to vampire masculinity in the three novels; second, comparing these representations within their respective historical and cultural contexts; and third, interpreting the findings using the theoretical framework of feminist masculinity.

The data analysis method is based on thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), which involves identifying recurring themes related to masculinity and gender representation. The findings are then contextualized within broader discussions on literary masculinity, enabling an understanding of how cultural shifts influence character portrayal in gothic fiction.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzes how the representation of vampire masculinity evolves across *Dracula*, *Interview with the Vampire*, and *Twilight*. The findings reveal a transformation from the monstrous and predatory masculinity of the early vampire figure to a more humanized, emotionally expressive, and aesthetically idealized form in later narratives. This evolution reflects broader cultural shifts in the perception of masculinity, moving from dominance and fear toward vulnerability and emotional depth.

The Masculinity of the Vampire's Body in *Dracula*, *Interview with the Vampire*, and *Twilight* Novels

Masculinity can encompass all aspects related to the male image, including the body (Neagu, 2015). Dracula's physical appearance blends traditional masculinity with a supernatural, monstrous quality. His "strong, aquiline face," "broad chin," and "firm cheeks" reflect conventional male traits of strength and dominance, while his "massive eyebrows" and "heavy moustache" add to his rugged, primal image. However, his "extraordinary pallor" and "pointed ears" distinguish him from an ordinary man, suggesting an unsettling, predatory nature. The contrast between his "astonishing vitality" and deathly pale skin symbolizes his undead existence, where masculinity is linked not just to power and physicality but also to a fearsome, unnatural presence. Dracula's masculinity is thus both commanding and monstrous, creating a figure that is both compelling and terrifying. This is vividly captured in Stoker's description:

His face was a strong, a very strong, aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils, with lofty domed forehead, and hair growing scantily round the temples but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were very massive, almost meeting over the nose, and with bushy hair that seemed to curl in its own profusion. The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy moustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth. These protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. For the rest, his ears were pale, and at the tops extremely pointed. The chin was broad and strong, and the cheeks firm though thin. The general effect was one of extraordinary pallor. (Stoker, 1897)

Moreover, some parts of his body are depicted as resembling a monster. According to Felton (2021), a monster is something extraordinary or unnatural yet

magical, possessing a form that is partly animal and partly human or composed of elements from two or more animals. A monster is described as an inhuman entity with terrifying cruelty or evil (Hassouneh & Al-Khalili, 2025). This description aligns with the portrayal of Dracula, who is depicted as having sharp fangs like an animal. He is also described as having cold skin, similar to that of a deceased person.

The Count smiled, and as his lips ran back over his gums, the long, sharp, canine teeth showed out strangely (Stoker, 1897)

It seemed cold as ice, more like the hand of a dead than a living man. (Stoker, 1897)

Furthermore, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* portrays the vampire as a figure of gothic masculinity, embodying both dominance and monstrosity. His refined yet predatory nature reflects Victorian anxieties about male aggression and self-restraint. Dracula's interactions with Harker, particularly his violent reaction to blood, highlight his duality as both a nobleman and a primal predator. This contrast reinforces the gothic theme of the monstrous 'other,' in which masculinity is intertwined with fear and power.

When the Count saw my face, his eyes blazed with a sort of demoniac fury, and he suddenly made a grab at my throat. I drew away and his hand touched the string of beads which held the crucifix. It made an instant change in him, for the fury passed so quickly that I could hardly believe that it was ever there. (Stoker, 1897)

From the description above, it can be seen that Dracula's reaction to Harker's bleeding reinforces his predatory and monstrous nature, emphasizing his uncontrollable thirst for blood and his violent masculinity. His "blazing" eyes and "demoniac fury" suggest an instinctual, almost animalistic response, aligning with the gothic trope of the vampire as both a

seductive and terrifying figure (Botting, 2013). The sudden, almost involuntary movement toward Harker's throat demonstrates Dracula's struggle to suppress his vampiric urges, highlighting his duality as both a calculated aristocrat and an uncontrollable predator. The crucifix symbolizes purity and divine protection, instantly weakening Dracula and stopping his attack, highlighting the gothic theme of supernatural versus holy power (Bowles, 2013). This moment not only cements Dracula's monstrous identity but also underscores the broader Victorian anxieties surrounding the loss of self-control, particularly in the context of male power and dominance. Through this scene, Stoker amplifies Dracula's fearful masculinity, showing how it hinges on both physical intimidation and an unsettling, supernatural presence.

Masculinity can also be observed not only through muscles or body shape (Gattario et al., 2015; Lei et al., 2019) but also through overall appearance (Kachel et al., 2016). Dracula is depicted as a tall, elderly man dressed entirely in black. This portrayal is highly fitting for a vampire character in the horror genre, as it aims to create a dark and terrifying impression that enhances the eerie atmosphere for readers.

A tall old man, clean shaven save for a long white moustache, and clad in black from head to foot, without a single speck of colour about him anywhere. (Stoker, 1897:23).

Dracula's clothing and overall appearance play a crucial role in reinforcing his masculinity and the horror elements of the novel. His all-black attire, as Stoker describes, creates an image of authority, mystery, and intimidation, characteristics often associated with gothic masculinity (Baldick & Mighall, 2012). The absence of color in his clothing symbolizes death and the supernatural, aligning with Victorian gothic traditions where darkness represents evil and the unknown (Habbe, 2015).

His long white mustache and aged yet imposing stature further emphasize a patriarchal presence, evoking notions of dominance and control (Halberstam & Halberstam, 1995).

As Adi (2011) argues, masculinity is not solely defined by physical strength but also by the way a character presents himself. Dracula's calculated appearance intensifies his eerie aura, making him a figure of both power and fear. Additionally, his tall and lean figure corresponds with traditional depictions of aristocratic masculinity, where appearance reinforces social superiority (Ben & Weiner, 2017). Through Dracula's dark and commanding presence, Stoker crafts a vampire whose masculinity is as unsettling as it is authoritative, reinforcing his role as the ultimate gothic antagonist.

The second vampire character discussed in this study is Louis from Anne Rice's novel *Interview with the Vampire*. In this 20th century novel, the physical appearance and body of the vampire character begin to evolve. Although Louis still possesses the fundamental traits of a vampire one of which is killing humans by drinking their blood, vampires in this novel are no longer depicted as terrifying monsters like those in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

In his youth, Louis was a handsome man, and after transforming into a vampire, his facial beauty and physical elegance became eternal. His attractiveness captivates those around him, not only women but also men. Even the man interviewing him is mesmerized by Louis's striking appearance.

As you can see, my face is very white and has a smooth, highly reflective surface, rather like that of polished marble."

"Yes," the boy nodded, and appeared flustered. "It's very... beautiful, actually," said the boy. "I wonder if... but what happened?"

"You wonder if I was a handsome man when I was alive," said the vampire. The boy nodded. "I was. Nothing structurally is changed in me. Only I never knew that I was handsome. (Rice, 1976: 35)

From the details provided, it is clear that Louis's physical transformation in *Interview with the Vampire* reflects a shift in vampire masculinity from monstrous to alluring. Unlike Dracula, whose appearance induces fear, Louis embodies an androgynous beauty that captivates both men and women, blurring traditional gendered notions of power and desire. His pale, marble-like skin and eternal youth symbolize a romanticized form of masculinity, emphasizing aesthetic perfection over brute strength. The interviewer's admiration highlights how Rice redefines the vampire as an object of attraction rather than horror, aligning with late 20th-century gothic trends that frame the supernatural as seductive rather than monstrous (Gerhards, 2020).

Similar to Bram Stoker's vampire in *Dracula*, Louis is depicted as having pale, almost ghostly white skin. He is described as resembling a statue, devoid of expression, as if frozen in time. However, unlike Dracula, whose pale complexion enhances his eerie and fearsome presence (Baldick & Mighall, 2012), Louis's whiteness is likened to a statue, evoking lifelessness and emotional detachment. The comparison of his face to "bleached bone" and "seemingly inanimate as a statue" suggests an unnatural stillness, emphasizing the curse of immortality rather than the horror of monstrosity. His brilliant green eyes, described as "flames in a skull," highlight a paradox, while his body appears lifeless, his gaze remains intensely alive, reflecting the internal suffering he endures. This melancholic aura, punctuated by his wistful smile, portrays Louis as a tormented figure who struggles with his predatory nature, shifting the vampire archetype toward a more introspective and emotionally complex representation. Rather than instilling fear, his appearance elicits sympathy, aligning with Rice's more humanized and romanticized vision of the vampire.

The vampire was utterly white and smooth, as if he were sculpted from

bleached bone, and his face was as seemingly inanimate as a statue, except for two brilliant green eyes that looked down at the boy intently like flames in a skull. But then the vampire smiled almost wistfully, and the smooth white substance of his face moved with the infinitely flexible but minimal lines of a cartoon. (Rice, 1976: 1)

Louis's depiction in *Interview with the Vampire* represents a nuanced transformation of vampire masculinity, blending traditional strength with emotional vulnerability. His sharp fangs, a hallmark of vampire predation, serve as a symbol of power and danger, reinforcing the association between vampirism and masculinity (Limpár, 2018). However, unlike Dracula, whose monstrous nature aligns with aggressive and dominant masculinity, Louis initially rejects his predatory instincts, mirroring a crisis of masculine identity. His resistance to consuming human blood and reliance on animals reflect a reluctance to fully embrace his violent nature, challenging the notion that masculinity is inherently linked to aggression (Leone & Parrott, 2018). Yet, as the quote illustrates, his eventual surrender to his thirst suggests that this rejection is unsustainable, reinforcing the idea that masculinity, especially in vampire fiction, is often marked by internal conflict. Through Louis, Rice redefines masculine strength as multifaceted, combining physical prowess with deep psychological struggle, ultimately portraying a vampire whose masculinity is both powerful and fragile.

"Do you see?" whispered the vampire, and the long, silky lips drew up over his teeth and two long fangs came down into the boy's flesh (Rice, 1991).

Louis's portrayal in *Interview with the Vampire* represents a departure from the monstrous masculinity of Dracula, instead embodying a more refined and aristocratic presence. His "finely tailored black coat" and

"black silk tie" signify a deliberate emphasis on elegance, aligning with the romanticized image of vampires in modern gothic fiction. Unlike Dracula, whose intimidating physicality enforces dominance through fear, Louis's meticulous appearance, including his "full black hair" and "long folds of the cape," highlights a controlled and sophisticated masculinity (Liu, 2019). Even his "white collar that was as white as the vampire's flesh" serves as a subtle reminder of his supernatural nature without reducing him to a monstrous figure. This transformation in vampire imagery mirrors a broader shift in masculinity, in which power is no longer solely defined by physical intimidation but by an alluring blend of strength and refinement (Nixon, 2024).

His eyes moved slowly over the finely tailored black coat he'd only glimpsed in the bar, the long folds of the cape, the black silk tie knotted at the throat, and the gleam of the white collar that was as white as the vampire's flesh. He stared at the vampire's full black hair, the waves that were combed back over the tips of the ears, the curls that barely touched the edge of the white collar (Rice, 1976: 2).

The third novel discussed in this study is *Twilight* by Stephenie Meyer. In *Twilight*, the portrayal of vampires undergoes a significant transformation, shifting from fearsome creatures to idealized, almost divine figures of beauty. Unlike Dracula's monstrous dominance or Louis's melancholic refinement, *Twilight's* vampires are described as "devastatingly, inhumanly beautiful," reinforcing their status as otherworldly beings whose appeal transcends human standards. Their flawlessness, likened to "airbrushed pages of a fashion magazine" and "the face of an angel," reflects contemporary aesthetic ideals, where physical perfection becomes a form of power (Kukkonen, 2021). This evolution in vampire imagery aligns with shifting notions of masculinity, where strength is no longer tied to intimidation or suffering but

to an almost divine attractiveness that captivates and mesmerizes.

I stared because their faces, so different, so similar, were all devastatingly, inhumanly beautiful. They were faces you never expected to see except perhaps on the airbrushed pages of a fashion magazine. Or painted by an old master as the face of an angel. It was hard to decide who was the most beautiful — maybe the perfect blond girl, or the bronze-haired boy (Meyer, 2005).

Edward Cullen's portrayal in *Twilight* is carefully crafted to appeal to female desire, embodying both idealized beauty and masculine strength (Franck, 2024). His "two long, white hands" are not only elegant but also powerful, capable of stopping a moving van with ease. This combination of grace and superhuman strength presents Edward as the perfect masculine figure, both physically attractive and protective. The phrase "the large hands fitting providentially into a deep dent" emphasizes his effortless heroism, positioning him as Bella's savior in a moment of danger. Unlike the monstrous masculinity of Dracula or the melancholic elegance of Louis, Edward's masculinity is designed to be both captivating and reassuring, aligning with romantic fantasy rather than gothic horror. This shift reflects the evolution of vampires in literature, through which masculinity is no longer defined by fear and dominance but by the ability to protect and enchant (Borras-Guevara et al., 2017).

A low oath made me aware that someone was with me, and the voice was impossible not to recognize. Two long, white hands shot out protectively in front of me, and the van shuddered to a stop a foot from my face, the large hands fitting providentially into a deep dent in the side of the van's body. (Meyer, 2005: 29).

Unlike Dracula and Louis, Edward Cullen lacks the sharp fangs traditionally associated with vampires (Carlisle, 2018;

Kamal, 2020), removing the element of monstrous brutality from his character. However, he retains other vampiric traits, such as "ice-cold" skin (Schneider, 2023), which is described as if he had been "holding them in a snowdrift." Rather than evoking fear, this physical trait enhances his mysterious and otherworldly allure, reinforcing the romantic fantasy of the novel. Bella's reaction "it stung my hand as if an electric current had passed through us" suggests that Edward's touch is not terrifying but thrilling, creating an intense, almost supernatural attraction. Unlike earlier vampire portrayals, where coldness symbolized death and horror, Edward's icy skin serves to heighten the emotional and romantic tension, making him both distant and irresistibly magnetic. This shift in vampire imagery aligns with *Twilight's* redefinition of masculinity, in which power is no longer about dominance and fear but about mystique and romantic desirability (González Cañete, 2024).

His hand caught mine, to stop me, as he asked. His fingers were ice-cold, like he'd been holding them in a snowdrift before class. But that wasn't why I jerked my hand away so quickly. When he touched me, it stung my hand as if an electric current had passed through us (Meyer, 2005).

The Stages of Masculinity Evolution in Vampire Fiction

The transformation of vampire masculinity across *Dracula*, *Interview with the Vampire*, and *Twilight* reveals three distinct evolutionary stages that mirror cultural shifts in the perception of manhood. Each stage reflects a reconfiguration of physical representation, emotional tone, and moral positioning, illustrating how the vampire's body functions as a site of negotiation for changing masculine ideals. These changes not only signify literary innovation but also reflect the ongoing redefinition of power,

beauty, and emotion in relation to male identity within popular culture.

The first stage, represented by Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), can be identified as the monstrous stage. In this period, masculinity is synonymous with physical dominance, aggression, and fear. Dracula's sharp fangs, imposing stature, and dark attire reinforce his role as both predator and patriarch, a figure who embodies the anxieties of Victorian society surrounding male power, sexuality, and moral corruption. His body signifies an uncontrollable and threatening masculinity that reflects cultural unease toward the excesses of male authority.

The second stage, found in Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1976), marks the humanized stage. Here, the vampire is no longer a creature of horror but a figure of introspection and aesthetic allure. Louis's pale, statue-like beauty and emotional sensitivity introduce an androgynous and melancholic masculinity that departs from Stoker's violent imagery. His struggle between predatory instinct and moral reflection mirrors late twentieth-century redefinitions of masculinity, in which emotional vulnerability and self-awareness began to coexist with physical power. In this stage, the vampire becomes not an external threat but an internalized conflict.

The final stage, exemplified by Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* (2005), represents the idealized stage. Edward Cullen's "inhumanly beautiful" appearance and moral restraint construct a model of masculinity rooted in romantic fantasy rather than gothic terror. His flawless body and protective demeanor symbolize the modern ideal of a man who is strong yet gentle, powerful yet controlled. In this depiction, masculinity achieves aesthetic and emotional perfection, transforming the vampire from a symbol of fear into an object of desire.

Across these stages, vampire fiction charts the broader cultural evolution of masculinity, from monstrous dominance to

humanized sensitivity and, ultimately, to idealized restraint. The changing physical depictions of the vampire body reflect how societal expectations reshape the meaning of masculine strength and desirability over time. This evolution demonstrates that the vampire, as a cultural figure, continues to adapt to contemporary ideals of beauty, morality, and gendered identity.

CONCLUSION

The representation of masculinity in vampire fiction demonstrates a continuous evolution that mirrors broader cultural transformations in the understanding of male identity. In *Dracula*, masculinity is embodied through fear and domination, expressed in the vampire's monstrous body and physical superiority. This stage captures the late Victorian fascination with male power, discipline, and the dangers of unrestrained desire.

In *Interview with the Vampire*, the portrayal of masculinity shifts toward introspection and emotional complexity. Louis's aesthetic beauty and inner conflict reflect a more humanized masculinity—one that values vulnerability and moral awareness alongside strength. This transformation marks a turning point in the depiction of the vampire body, emphasizing internal struggle over external aggression.

Finally, *Twilight* represents the culmination of this evolution through the idealized masculinity of Edward Cullen. His perfection, restraint, and devotion redefine the vampire as a romantic hero rather than a monster. Masculinity in this stage becomes aesthetically refined and emotionally safe, resonating with modern ideals of balance between strength and sensitivity.

Overall, the physical and symbolic transformation of the vampire body, from monstrous to humanized to idealized, illustrates how masculinity evolves alongside cultural perceptions of power, morality, and desire. Vampire fiction thus serves as a mirror of its time, continually reshaping the

masculine ideal to align with shifting social expectations and aesthetic sensibilities.

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