

Call for Papers – Vampires and Fashion

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“Another Taste, Another Year, Another Place, Another Tear”: Fashioning the Anti-Social Icon from Orlok to Lestat

Fashion is an ever-evolving academic field. Once ‘relegated to art, anthropology and dress studies’ (Hancock, Johnson Woods and Karaminas, 2013), fashion is now located within a wider cultural framework that includes film and television. It has been identified by scholars as a place for discourse historically, but since the new Millennium, this space has become more engaged in critical analysis (Petrov & Whitehead, 2019). From the interdisciplinary perspective of fashion studies and the literary queer Gothic, this chapter will explore how costume design specifically narrates and emphasises the queerness and exceptionality of the vampire. Analysing the economic metaphors extant in two examples of vampiric nobility which have seen several adaptations over the years and have resurged in popularity once more, we will analyse Count Orlok (Bill Skarsgård) in Robert Eggers’s *Nosferatu* (2024) as contextualising frame to our analysis of Lestat de Lioncourt (Sam Reid) in the recent AMC television adaptation of Annie Rice’s *Interview with a Vampire* (2022-present).

Costume offers a way to explore complexities of narrative structure especially within an increasingly complex and non-linear approach to storytelling (Mulholland, 2020). This chapter will argue that these characters are brought to life in new ways which emphasise their existence as out-of-step with chronological aesthetic trends, fashioned visually, symbolically and materially to express their exceptionality. To do this we will engage with queer theory’s antisocial thesis (Sedgwick, 2002; Edelman, 2004) to unpack how realism and authenticity are articulated to circumnavigate human, heteropatriarchal and essentialist limitations of gender expression and sexual mores. This will develop into a discussion of how the stylised vampire can provide us with both an anticapitalist metaphor for overconsumption and an aspirational image of aesthetics detached from their contemporary zeitgeist.