

“We women, if we are to  
be good women..., are not  
fitted to reign”: Female  
Literary Archetypes  
Represented Through  
Victorian Fashion

Jessie Vislay  
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# Introduction

- ❖ Five Victorian novels (1837-1901)
  - ❖ Study of costume
  - ❖ Victorian beauty ideals
  - ❖ Literary critique of archetypes
- ❖ “Doubling”
  - ❖ Comparison
  - ❖ Complicate set archetypes

# Chapter 1- *Wuthering Heights*

## 1847

- ❖ “Hysterical Woman”
  - ❖ Victorian Madwoman
  - ❖ “Womb disease”
  - ❖ Confinement
- ❖ Catherine Earnshaw Linton
  - ❖ Headstrong character
  - ❖ Victorian female domesticity
  - ❖ Edgar (Grange) vs. Heathcliff (Heights)



# *Wuthering Heights* and Clothing

- ❖ Madwoman
  - ❖ White and thin garments
  - ❖ Hair long and loose
  - ❖ Ghostly Gothic



# Chapter 2- *Jane Eyre* 1847

- ❖ Angel/Demon Dichotomy
  - ❖ Jane as angel
    - ❖ Spiritual
    - ❖ Domestic wife
    - ❖ Feminine and modest dress
  - ❖ Bertha as demon
    - ❖ Mixed race
    - ❖ Clothing and body
    - ❖ Animalistic sexuality

# Chapter 2- *Jane Eyre* Complicated

- ❖ Jane complicates “angel”
  - ❖ Idolizes Rochester
  - ❖ Fiery speech
  - ❖ Freedom in nature, over domesticity
  - ❖ *Un*-Victorian



# Chapter 3- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* 1865

- ❖ Three sets of pictures
  - ❖ Dodgson's idyllic Alice
  - ❖ Carroll's independent Alice with agency
  - ❖ Tenniel's Victorian woman-in-training



# Chapter 4- *Daniel Deronda* 1876

- ❖ Gwendolen as “marriageable girl”
  - ❖ Upper-class “marriage market”
  - ❖ Marriage as bondage
  - ❖ Marriage to Mr. Grandcourt
  - ❖ Archetype of “wife”
- ❖ Mirah
  - ❖ Middle-class “Jewess”
  - ❖ “Angel of the House”



# *Daniel Deronda* and Clothing

- ❖ Upper-class clothing
  - ❖ Wife as display of wealth
  - ❖ Fitted, draped clothing
  - ❖ White wedding dress



# Chapter 5- *Dracula* 1897

- ❖ Madonna/Whore dichotomy
  - ❖ Mina as ideal wife and mother
    - ❖ Angelic, religious
    - ❖ “A woman’s heart and a man’s brain”
  - ❖ Lucy as “whore”
    - ❖ Fallen woman
    - ❖ Vampire Lucy as “whore”
    - ❖ Redeemed



# Conclusion

- ❖ The New Woman
  - ❖ Upset traditional gender roles
  - ❖ Women leaving domestic sphere
- ❖ Clothing reform
  - ❖ Undergarments
  - ❖ Physical activity

