

**“Love Isn’t Brains,
Children, It’s Blood”:
*The Discourse of
Lacanian Desire
Surrounding Spike in
Buffy the Vampire Slayer***



PRESENTER:

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BACKGROUND:

Within *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (*BtVS*) scholarship, scholars often analyze Spike as a character, but the behind-the-scenes influences on the character remain underexamined.

THEORIES:

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, desire is an unconscious want stemming from an emptiness or lack in oneself for which one desires to compensate.

BtVS aired between 1997 and 2003, after the invention of the internet but before the advent of streaming services, allowing a discourse between viewers and writers between episodes which influenced the series.

FINDINGS:

In fulfilling viewers’ desires, the writers included more of themselves than intended; thus, a psychoanalytic reading of the series also analyzes the writers.

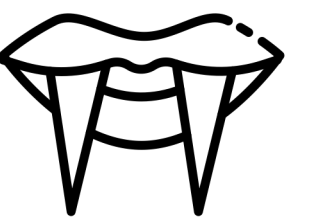
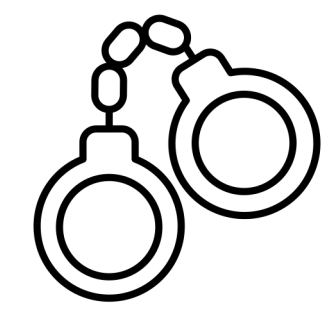
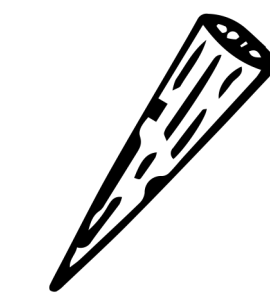
CONCLUSION:

BtVS’s unique television era and its dedicated fan base offer a rich discourse between knowledgeable viewers and passionate writers to examine; an analysis made even more meaningful as this mode of production is becoming extinct.

Spike’s character arc on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* illustrates a cycle of **Lacanian desire.**



Snaevar, “Buffy the Vampire Slayer.” 4 March 2011,
Wikimedia Commons.



EXAMPLE:

Marti Noxon, a *BtVS* writer for four seasons and showrunner for two, exemplifies this argument. Viewers had desired to see Spike and Buffy become a couple for numerous seasons, and in Noxon’s time as showrunner, this relationship came to illustrate her signature darkness. Noxon herself has said that she contributed a “very perverse sense of sexuality” to the show, which is evident in this relationship. Noxon not only gave viewers an engaging story but the opportunity to analyze her through her portrayal of the Spike and Buffy relationship.

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