

'Discuss why Lucy is so susceptible to Dracula's powers'

Plan

- Lucy's immorality (vanity/sexual nature).
- Women in Gothic Literature (Fall from Grace, vulnerable) possible link to religious imagery.
- Weak Subconscious/Childlike state (sleepwalking)

Lucy throughout the novel symbolises the early, very stereotypically Gothic interpretation of a female figure. Being portrayed as such, bearing traits of permiscuity and fragility, allows her character to become vulnerable to dominant males which in this novel appears as Count Dracula.

Lucy's character first and foremost, is overtly sexual in it's nature which at the time during the Victorian age of sexual suppression and prudery, was a sharp deviation from traditional 'womanly' values and in this way somewhat foreshadows her eventual domination by Dracula. The focus on her natural good looks are what fuels men's desire for her, however instead of rejecting these men and remaining humble, as a Victorian society may wish her to, she embraces the concept of polygamy, questioning as to they can "*let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble?*". Dracula, already established as a desire driven being, is naturally attracted to Lucy's traits and so she is in this way left vulnerable to his power. Lucy's pure sexual energy is outlined in her post-transformation, described as "*[she] flung to the ground, callous as a devil, the child that up to now she had clutched strenuously to her breast*", her undead form allowing her inner most desires to surface. If her inclination toward the sexual in a Victorian society wasn't enough, her subversion of 'ladylike' characteristics; making romantic advances on men opposed to men playing the dominant role in the relationship, makes her ever more tempting to the Count, her exclamation of, "*Arthur! Oh, my love, I am so glad you have come! Kiss me!*" outlining her new found sexual-physical freedom which leaves her open to Dracula's will.

Lucy's gender arguably also has a large part to play in her inherent vulnerability. The aforementioned female archetype that embodies fragility and frailty makes up her character, and so in this way she is destined from the start of the book to play not a motherly role such as Mina, but one that concludes in her transformation into a femme fatale, similar to that of the Dracula's maidens. Furthermore, her physical inferiority to a man in a more literal sense makes her more vulnerable, a point we are reminded of when her mother removes the "*strong smelling flowers ... [from] around her neck*", Van Helsing's immediate concern evident in his face turning "*ashen grey*", although the garlic is a deterrent, no mention is made on her reliance on her own strength to defend herself, thus we assume that her safety is reliant upon an inanimate flower which further outlines her true vulnerability to Dracula. The theme of Lucy's reliance