

“So I Wear Pearls:” Depictions of Gender in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Tales*.

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Joss Whedon's landmark television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is often looked at by scholars specifically for its depictions of gender. The eponymous heroine Buffy Summers, who is biologically female, can be seen as acting in what has been a traditionally masculine role. Yet, at the same time, she does not entirely remove herself from the sphere of traditionally feminine structures, making her a rare character who straddles gender norms. Buffy is constantly at odds with her intrinsic yearning to continue doing traditionally feminine activities, while still performing masculine tasks. She is both a beautiful blonde cheerleader and a hunter of vampires and other monsters. I believe the entire world created in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* shows a breakdown of the gender binaries usually found in popular culture. Throughout the series, characters are freed from performing their traditional gender roles; instead, they are allowed to move between the genders, but they also have the option to straddle the binaries, like the title character does. My proposed paper explores the graphic novel *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Tales*. I look at three specific tales in the book and discuss both the masculine and feminine traits that are displayed by the slayers in these stories. I argue that, although these women are acting in traditionally masculine roles, i.e. the superhero, they do not cease to act in ways which would coincide with the feminine gender role.