



The Vampire: A Casebook

Alan Dundes

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Vampires are the most fearsome and fascinating of all creatures of folklore. For the first time, detailed accounts of the vampire and how its tradition developed in different cultures are gathered in one volume by eminent folklorist Alan Dundes. Eleven leading scholars from the fields of Slavic studies, history, anthropology, and psychiatry unearth the true nature of the vampire from its birth in graveyard lore to the modern-day psychiatric patient with a penchant for drinking blood.

The Vampire: A Casebook takes this legend out of the realm of literature and film and back to its dark beginnings in folk traditions. The essays examine the history of the word “vampire;” Romanian vampires; Greek vampires; Serbian vampires; the physical attributes of vampires; the killing of vampires; and the possible psychoanalytic underpinnings of vampires. Much more than simply a scary creature of the human imagination, the vampire has been and continues to haunt the lives of all those who encounter it—in reality or in fiction.

The Vampire: A Casebook Details

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From Reader Review The Vampire: A Casebook for online ebook

Ulrika says

Intressant antologi med vampyrtexter.

Kristen Hutchings says

Vampires are on my brain after taking a summer class devoted to them. This was our class text, and many of these essays were very enlightening. Some were a bit repetitive and ho-hum, but after some yawns and page shuffling, I came across some gold mines. If you're interested at all about how the whole vampire craze began, this would be a fun source to be acquainted with - just be ready to step back in time a few hundred years.

dom ?*?? says

woot woot ya girl has finished!

all the articles/essays were interesting but I found some of them dragged, or had too many in-text references to slog through it and actually read the body. overall though, it was a really interesting collection of articles on vampirism and it definitely taught me some really interesting things from folklore!

Mikael Cerbing says

As a book done by putting together a bunch of articles, you will get a quite mixed bag. To start with, this book is about vampires, not the literary type, the once that are real. At least in what people believe. It has articles about Greek and slavic vampires, psychological cases about people who seems to think that they are vampires and articles about the origin of the word vampire. Some articles are quite old, some quite recent. Its not a great collection, some where (for me) a lot more interesting then others, but when you are done you will know a bit more about the vampire legend then when you started. And as its quite a short book, it wont take you to long. Recomendated for people with a special interest in the vampire.

Nathan Miller says

This book is a compilation of articles, each treating a different aspect of the origins of the Vampire Mythos. As one might expect, there's a bit of overlap, especially in the first few essays. Each writer approaches the subject from a different angle, depending on their areas of expertise. It's quite fascinating and it becomes quickly clear that vampires aren't all about Dracula, Buffy, Lestat, or Edward, but that certain things are, as one might expect, a bit muddy historically. I wished there'd been more material on vampire background in addition to the focus on the Balkans. Fortunately, the editor includes short bibliography following the final essay, listing well over a dozen other books on the history of vampires.

Whittney says

These are some really interesting essays on vampires and their origin. This book can be coupled with Freud's essays on sexuality for some very insightful explanations on how and why we created the vampire figure.

Blair Hodgkinson says

The first thing I should say is that this is emphatically NOT a book for people whose only interest in vampires is from the point of view of paranormal romances and vampire films, but rather it studies the genuine historical folklore, pathology, forensics and science surrounding the vampire mythos. If you are looking for arguments that vampires exist or that they sparkle, this is NOT a book for you.

The essays included in this collection speculate on the origins of the almost-universal vampire mythology, primarily concentrating on the figure as it is presented in Eastern Europe. Much folklore is studied and disseminated and many historical examples of vampire beliefs are presented from across the centuries up to modern times. Parallels and contradictions between Christian rituals and pre-Christian superstitions are studied at length. The relationship between vampire folklore and sexual deviance and incest are explored. The essay by Paul Barber insightfully explains how variations in corpse decomposition as affected by methods of burial, temperature, quality and moisture of soil at place of interment may all have contributed to beliefs in vampires, particularly during periods when plagues and epidemics flourished.

All in all, this is an interesting and varied collection of essays for anyone interested in vampire folklore in particular and the evolution of folklore in general.

Mary Havens says

I could read vampire folklore all day. Maybe all folklore but definitely vampire folklore.

Every essay in here was interesting but a few gave some great perspectives. My favorite was the "Forensic Pathology" and the vampire.

All sources were cited extremely well and the ending bibliography is worth the price of this book alone.

I'm so glad Lyndsee let me keep this book! I've always said that if I went back to get my PhD, it would be about vampires. Well, now I've narrowed that down to vampires and folklore -- or maybe vampires in literature? Comparative lit? I don't know but my interest has been re-kindled :)

Reeny says

This book has some interesting primary essays about vampire history and lore but it can get a bit dry at times.

Theodora says

Some decent essays in this book -- if you're looking for more about vampires in eastern Europe. i'd skip the Freudian stuff though....

Sirensaria says

There's a lot of interesting information in this book, but you sometimes have to wade through a lot to get to it. Some of the essays are rather famous, or should I say infamous? Some of the essays are quoted time and time again by other authors of historical vampire books, so it was nice to finally be able to read the essays in full. I have to say, the author's own essay at the end was horrible. I thought he went off on a rather random tangent that, at least to me, didn't make much sense. I understood what he was saying, but it was like he took the letter A and came up with fish. All in all, though, it was a fascinating read. Definitely for people who are interested in historical vampires.

Johnny says

interesting so far. collection of articles concerning the etymology of vampire, and the origins and folklore concerning vampires.

Jason says

A range of essays (recent and some older) on vampires from a folklore perspective. Alan Dundes ends the book with his universal Freudian interpretation of the vampire. It has a great bibliography and the essays have much food for thought.

Lindsey Duncan says

Another largely academic book, this is a collection of essays, with introductions, discussing various aspects of the vampire. They range in tone, but most are highly readable. They cover aspects from the origin of the word "vampire," to a recounting of collected folklore, to both physical and psychological characteristics that could explain the existence of vampire lore. Valuable for a writer or an enthusiast, though it is a bit of a thin volume - so many aspects left unexplored!

My favorite essay was the forensic one, examining what happens to the body after death and how these complex changes correlate to vampire behavior.
