



How to Kill a Vampire: Fangs in Folklore, Film and Fiction

Liisa Ladouceur

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Vampires exist. And in every culture with a legend about bloodsuckers that rise from the grave to prey upon the living, there are rules and rituals for how to destroy them. *How to Kill a Vampire* is the first book to focus specifically on all known ways to prevent vampirism, protect oneself against attacks, and ultimately how to destroy the undead, as documented in folklore as well as horror film, TV, and books.

Covering everything from obscure legends to contemporary blockbusters, Ladouceur's unique approach to vampires traces the evolution of how to kill the fictional creatures and celebrates the most important slayers.

In exploring how and why we create these monsters and the increasingly complex ways in which we destroy them, the book not only serves as a handy guide to the history and modern role of the vampire, it reveals much about the changing nature of human fears.

How to Kill a Vampire: Fangs in Folklore, Film and Fiction Details

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Author : Liisa Ladouceur

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From Reader Review How to Kill a Vampire: Fangs in Folklore, Film and Fiction for online ebook

Jessica says

Fun and Fang-y! No, but seriously a well researched review of the mythos of Vampires on the Silver Screen and TV. Very useful for those who enjoy vampire mythos or for writing research.

Gretchen says

I picked up this book at my library's Halloween display out of curiosity. It's a quick read and had me captivated the entire time. I've always loved the vampire genre in film and literature. The historical information was so interesting and It was fun to read about how popular culture has evolved the vampire over the years. Great fun -- spooky, informative, funny and well written.

Renee says

A Real Bite into Vampire Folklore

Liisa Ladouceur's "How to Kill a Vampire" is the right non-fiction book at the right time. With the increased popularity of "everything vampire," Ladouceur's book is a welcome supplement for all those wanting to know more about the vampire myth without having to read another novel about glittering vampires.

Ladouceur provides anecdotes as well as analysis of the vampire myth that is thorough and engaging. She effectively traces the origins of the vampire myth from historic folklore to contemporary pop culture. Her dedication to detail highlights the evolution of vampires and provides rationale and analysis of the differences of the various vampire folklore in existence. Ladouceur offers insights into the concepts of life and death, and how such heavy issues impacted the evolution of the vampire. In addition, she provides an interesting analysis of the many reoccurring archetypes seen in vampire folklore. However, what vampire enthusiasts will appreciate most is the source information Ladouceur provides throughout her writing. This information is probably one of the biggest assets for individuals looking read more about the intriguing subject of vampires, whether the reader is a casual vampire fan, or one whose primary reading interests fall heavily in the supernatural. Overall, Ladouceur's "How to Kill a Vampire" successfully offers readers a scholarly and engaging treatment of a popular subject matter.

Note: I received a digital advanced reader copy of this text from Netgalley.com

80's says

How to Kill A Vampire: Fangs in Folklore, Film, and Fiction by Liisa Ladouceur is a fascinating read. Liisa Ladouceur does an excellent job of summarizing the evolution of Vampires in Film and Fiction.

Since I've seen most all vampire movies/tv shows every made, I particularly loved the book's references to the various films. I enjoyed her writing style and definitely loved getting caught up on vampire history, just in time for a Halloween vampire movie marathon. Definitely recommend anyone who loves vampires in modern culture.

I received a copy through Goodreads First Reads in exchange for an honest review.

All Things Urban Fantasy says

Review Courtesy of All Things Urban Fantasy

HOW TO KILL A VAMPIRE: FANGS IN FOLKLORE, FILM AND FICTION is an excellent compilation and analysis of the vampire myth and its evolution from historical folklore to present day pop culture. This book had the folklore nerd in me very happy and I loved reading theories on how the present day vampire became what he/she/it is today. There were tons of morbid stories and details on what people did to stop vampires that had me shocked at the creativity and sometimes savageness of some traditions.

While I already knew quite a bit about vampire folkloric origins before I started this book, I was surprised at what I didn't know. For instance, vampires being killed by sunlight was never really a part of any folklore or early vampire fiction. The death by sun part of the myth came from film for a more dramatic death scene in the newly visual medium. What I found even more amazing than the origin of vampire 'death by sun' was the fact that Ladouceur goes on to explain a scientific reason sunlight being harmful to the undead.

Continuing her in depth analysis of the vampire myth Ladouceur also contemplates the meaning of life and death for our ancestors and how our changing approach to death and disease has affected the narrative of the vampire in fiction. Her thoughtful analysis really gave me a new perspective on vampires as they relate to our culture and the stories we pass on to eachother.

HOW TO KILL A VAMPIRE: FANGS IN FOLKLORE, FILM AND FICTION is a thought provoking look at the evolution of the vampire through the ages from folklore to film. After reading this book I found myself adding to the list of older vampire movies and books I should pick up and some I want to revisit.

Kate says

First off, I had an advanced reader copy so I don't know if any of these issues will be fixed in editing.

I was really excited about this book, but it was kind of a mess.

She often referenced stories that were both books and movies/tv - and she'd switch between them without specifying, or just say "The Vampire Diaries" without saying which medium she was talking about. Her tone also bounced between academic and snarky-conversational which just didn't flow. She also bounced between over-explaining some books/movies/tv shows and completely breezing over others with no context.

Also, if you're not already familiar with most vampire movies and books, be warned that this includes a ton of spoilers. As a cultural study of these, I did expect there to be some, but there were several times I was

surprised how much she revealed of plots when it didn't seem necessary.

Andrea Blythe says

Exploring the slaying of vampires in folklore, history, books, and movies, this book takes a pop culture tone to its discussion and tends to focus on the most popular and well known vampire tales, including Dracula, Nosferatu, Lost Boys, and other well known versions. While the book did teach me some new things, such as historical accounts of vampire killings (mostly just the mutilating of corpses) and the fact that sunlight was only introduced as a weapon in the movies, I feel this is an entry level book. I personally would have preferred a more in-depth look at vampire mythology and the weapons used to destroy the creatures.

Tim McGregor says

Vampire authority and expert on things that go bump in the night, Liisa Ladouceur explores the roots of vampire folklore and follows the trail of blood spatter as vampires creep into 21st century pop culture. The book is an entertaining mix of obscure historical accounts of vampire outbreaks with contemporary pop touchstones like Buffy and True Blood. All aspects are given equal weight and consideration by an author who clearly loves her subject matter and that enthusiasm pays off in a very satisfying read.

Like the famous vampire slayers she profiles, such as Van Helsing, Buffy and the Frog Brothers from Lost Boys, Ladoucer is the vampire expert you can turn to about the undead.

Ten bucks says she keeps an ashen stake hidden on her person at all times.

Lynne says

Final Verdict: A great introduction to the lore and popular media representation of vampires, with a nice focus on killing the bloodsuckers!

“I also think the contemporary vampire still has a part to play in our understanding of and acceptance of our own deaths. In an increasingly secular society, where fewer of us believe in an afterlife, the vampire provides escapism from the harsh reality that we will one day, all too soon, be switched off. What if there was another option? Not life. Not death. But undeath. And not that stinking, shuffling, mindless zombie undeath either. A sophisticated undeath. An undeath that includes love.”

How to Kill a Vampire by Liisa Ladouceur

While browsing on NetGalley, I saw the title of this book, and saw who the author was, and I was clicking the request button before I could even fully process my actions fully. I am a huge fan of facts about vampires, and have actually read several books looking into their history in fiction, literature, and even the possible scientific/biological reasons that gave rise to vampires (i.e., why bodies may have looked like they had been feeding). I liked some of these reference books, but others were almost painful to get through. I recognized the author’s unusual first name, Liisa, from Encyclopedia Gothic, a book that has been sitting on my to-read list for a long time! I honestly could not wait to start reading this book!

There is no real way to summarize this book, as it is non-fiction. However, Ladouceur sets out in a sensible progression through the vampire lore. She starts with why she worked on this book and that vampires are part of popular culture. Then she presents some of the science and history, and brings in the popular media progressions. Then we make it to how to actually kill vampires, the weapons, and who the famous slayers were. Then it ends with some thoughts on the prevalence of suicide in vampire legends.

I really loved that the book starts with quotes from Bela Lugosi, and “Bela Lugosi’s Dead” by Bauhaus (song lyrics for those not familiar with this Gothic classic), as it set the stage for a truly gothic experience of vampire history. Also, I really appreciated the note that the book is not exhaustive about the history of the vampire, and that the author focused on where she was more comfortable, and is willing to be contacted about suggestions.

Parts of this book feel very personal, and it almost feels as if one of your really excited friends is relating what they have found out to you, in the hope that you will be just as excited. I appreciated that she did not take the opportunity to lie about what her first real vampire love was, and even comments that if she were one of the cool kids, it would have started with Dracula by Bram Stoker, but it wasn’t! There are also some really beautiful prosaic moments that really make you think about the legends and the implications. These moments really kept my interest, and my favorite quote can be found below!

The strength of this book has to be in the author focusing on her strength areas within the research, but still giving wider background. It was nice to have an unabashed Gothic influence to the novel, and I would be lying if I said I hadn’t been listening to some Bauhaus, Sisters of Mercy, and The Cure. I really enjoyed that the book focused on the films and some novels. Ladouceur also has some really neat ideas about how love relates to the legends, and ultimately to a duty of humans to end a vampire’s life and suffering. However, the most unique part was the focus on famous slayers. This is something that I have not seen in the other reference books.

There were just a couple things I was not a fan of. Overall, the book just feels too short, and even in the brevity of the book some facts are repeated. It felt like she anticipated people reading random sections, with no acknowledgement that she had already touched on some of the topics and novels/movies. The other repetition that really bothered me personally was with Twilight. Now, I acknowledge that it should be in there, and should be talked about as it has had an impact (for better or worse) on vampires. What bothered me though was the phrases used to introduce it every time, such as: “the motherlode of all modern vampire stories” or “beyond-bestselling.” Every single introduction of Twilight went something like that, and as someone who really dislikes the series it really grated on me. I fear that as her target audience seems to be more of the old-school vampire fans rather than the Twilight fans so this may annoy other readers as well. Luckily, I can forgive this, as she does mention how problematic Edward and Bella’s relationship is!

Overall, this was a nice short read, which works great for people who just want a taster for what is out there on vampires. Even in its brevity, I learned new things about vampires. Best of all there are some great lists of movies, novels, and historical sources for further readings, which really helps this book work as a first stepping stone into becoming a vampire expert!

Review originally posted: <http://francesandlynne.wordpress.com/...>

Jennifer says

Look for my review in the Oct/Nov issue of Auxiliary Magazine!

Josh says

An interesting, scholarly-ish work following the rise of vampires from the old folklores of Eastern Europe through modern portrayals in film and on television.

Ladouceur tackles the issue of vampire evolution and the concurrent rise of vampire slayers throughout history / fiction.

I particularly enjoyed the section about the various types of wood used for stakes to kill a vampire along with the origins / mythology associated with each type and its reason for being used.

A fairly solid read, in all.

Bert Edens says

From my book review blog at:

<http://kickinbooks.wordpress.com/2013...>

Via NetGalley, I was furnished a copy of this book by ECW Press for the purposes of reading and reviewing it. Although it was provided at no cost to me, I am under no obligation to provide a positive review.

Let me be completely honest: I love a good vampire story or flick. Yeah, I'm not too keen on the sparkly, angst-filled type, but for the most part I like everything else. Heck, when my twenty year-old was in NICU, I read several of the Fred Saberhagen vampire novels out loud to him.

I have several encyclopedias of vampiric lore, so I wasn't sure what new material this book might present. In reality, it didn't. However, it did do a wonderful job of encapsulating one specific subset of information, as the title suggests: how do you kill a vampire and who has been responsible for the grisly task throughout the centuries?

The author does a great job of listing the various methods of disposing of suspected vampires, as detailed in folklore, then making comparisons and contrasts with literature and film through the years.

She also includes a list of the most famous vampire slayers, noting their preferred method(s) of eliminating the undead, as well as why they are so well-known.

Overall, I really enjoyed this book. The author certainly has done her research, and this comes across as a scholarly offering with just the right amount of humor.

Rating: 5 stars (out of 5)

Iowa City Public Library says

True Blood fans waiting for the final season to start on June 22 have lots of other vampire works they can explore. The recent spate of popular vampire stories has a rich past, and the curious can learn all about it in *How to Kill a Vampire: Fangs in Folklore, Film, and Fiction* by Liisa Ladouceur.

Ladouceur's thorough and detailed research delves into vampire mythology and its key moments. Breaking her study into five sections, Ladouceur shows readers the origins of bloodsuckers in different folklore, how to avoid vampires and how to slay them, a history of the slayers themselves, and the desire by vampires to end their own immortality.

Ladouceur documents the following interesting findings:

F.W. Murnau's 1922 film *Nosferatu* marks the first time we see vampires die from sunlight (p. 109).

Van Helsing, first created by Bram Stoker for his *Dracula*, is the slayer most widely adapted to spin-off stories and movies (p. 144-147).

Anne Rice's *Lestat* may have been the first vampire with feelings. According to Ladouceur, "It's how we get from *Nosferatu* to *Twilight*...Lestat is a cultured, angst-ridden romantic who yearns desperately to be understood, and to be loved" (p. 24).

Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* saga may have met the most financial success, but the vampire-human-werewolf love triangle in Laurell K. Hamilton's *Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter* series predates it by 10 years.

I highly recommend *How to Kill a Vampire* for anyone who's ever wondered how to make the undead the true dead.

--Melody D
123 South Linn

Tabby Shiflett says

A book about vampires and their slayers from history, film, and novels. A good place to start researching vampires in pop culture with a decent selected filmography in the back. Not extensive, but a good start. The book is exactly what it advertises.

Net Galley Feedback
How to Kill a Vampire: Fangs in Folklore, Film and Fiction
Liisa Ladouceur

Izeum says

Book is over all short but feels long, will be repetitive for anyone already well versed on vampire lore and media.

Detailed but also rather basic, with a little bit of humour sprinkled in from time to time.

The book is also pretty clearly on the side of: vampires are monsters and are deserving of death.

Actually PRAISES the Twilight series (why, just why? Everyone knows it was bad not "very good" or "breathtaking")

Honestly there are millions other better vampire studies books out there, whether you're looking for something more in the humour genre or more historical.
