

MARGOT ADLER

# VAMPIRES ARE US

Understanding   
Our Love Affair with  
the Immortal Dark Side

## Vampires Are Us: Understanding Our Love Affair with the Immortal Dark Side

*Margot Adler*

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# **Vampires Are Us: Understanding Our Love Affair with the Immortal Dark Side**

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## **Vampires Are Us: Understanding Our Love Affair with the Immortal Dark Side** Margot Adler

"Vampires. Why do we care? In these pages you will find what is very simply, the most literate, imaginative, and just plain fascinating answer to that question ever written." ?Whitley Strieber

In a culture that does not do death particularly well, we are obsessed with mortality. Margot Adler writes, "Vampires let us play with death and the issue of mortality. They let us ponder what it would mean to be truly long lived. Would the long view allow us to see the world differently, imagine social structures differently? Would it increase or decrease our reverence for the planet? Vampires allow us to ask questions we usually bury."

As Adler, a longtime NPR correspondent and question asker, sat vigil at her dying husband's bedside, she found herself newly drawn to vampire novels and their explorations of mortality. Over the next four years--by now she has read more than 270 vampire novels, from teen to adult, from gothic to modern, from detective to comic--she began to see just how each era creates the vampires it needs. *Dracula*, an Eastern European monster, was the perfect vehicle for 19th century England's fear of outsiders and of disease seeping in through its large ports. In 1960s America, *Dark Shadows* gave us the morally conflicted vampire struggling against his own predatory nature, who still entralls us today. Think Spike and Angel, Stefan and Damon, Bill and Eric, the Cullens.

*Vampires Are Us* explores the issues of power, politics, morality, identity, and even the fate of the planet that show up in vampire novels today. Perhaps, Adler suggests, our blood is oil, perhaps our prey is the planet. Perhaps vampires are us.

## **Vampires Are Us: Understanding Our Love Affair with the Immortal Dark Side Details**

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## **From Reader Review Vampires Are Us: Understanding Our Love Affair with the Immortal Dark Side for online ebook**

### **Phoebe says**

I liked this book. I just finished it this week. It is a non-fiction book; the first half contains the author's essays on why people seem so interested in vampires and the second half of the book contains lists of many of the vampire/supernatural themed books the author read and her reviews of them. I found the essays to be thoughtful and the reviews of the vampire books to be useful. There were some interesting books that I might like to read.

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### **Beryl Cook says**

I am a vampire genre fan. I read the Encyclopedia of Vampires over a 3 year period from A-Z. As such, I was intrigued by the title of this book, as well as most of part 1 where Adler theorizes on our fascination with vampires, what factors pull us in that direction- both on a large geo political view as well as a personal one. I expected to have this carried throughout the book, to perhaps better understand my own fascination with vampires. Instead, she turns the second part, which begins at page 57 out of 237 pages, into a bibliography and review of the 270 vampire books she had read at the time. Now this is fine, as it provides me with good insight into a future reading list, but from the book's description this was not what I expected.

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### **Jason M. says**

3.5. Adler goes into interesting detail about the various reasons why people are so attracted to the idea of vampires, offering some of her own story, her own addiction, to vampire books -- which is nice...and very relatable (it was for me, anyway). I just wish she'd kept going. It seemed like there was more to explore there.

The last two-thirds of the book are spent instead on listing/categorizing and summarizing the many vampire books she's read. Don't get me wrong, this listing is a good resource for people who want to read more vampire literature but don't wanna have to wade through a bunch of crap. She even separates out her favorites into a "Best" list. Fevre Dream is at the top, which is proof enough for me that Adler knows what she's talking about.

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### **Gary says**

Jeez!!! How do you rate a book like this? I really enjoyed it. But it's a book about vampire books. If you LIKE vampire novels, then you should read this. If you don't, you probably shouldn't.

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## **Chio Duran says**

I want to start this review by saying "thank you very much" and I won this book through First Reads Goodreads (was that redundant?). Now let's get on with it.

The premise of this book falls under the category of vampires. I am going to be honest and say that I was expecting something a bit different. For instance, I was expecting a book in which the term and idea of the *vampire* is examined down to the itty bitty details, but the author focused more on making a book with a lot of book references concerning the literature based on the classic and modern vampire. Hey, I am perfectly fine with this turn of events! As it turns out, I enjoyed the structure of this book as it is. I have always loved vampire stories and now I have a point of reference if I ever want to pick up another one in the future.

Basically, the book is divided in two parts: the first one involves a little bit of information about the factors that make vampires "desirable" and the second one is the bibliography part.

One aspect of the book that I was a little wary about is the part where the author narrates the point at which she started to obsess about vampires (because she lost someone dear to her in life). I felt very bad, and I respect her for adding that experience. However, since the title was leaning on the funny side, I was taken by surprise. Then again, this is just my humble opinion and it did little, if anything, to affect my overall rating. Nice book, nothing serious or too scholarly, but overall very enjoyable! **Plus, MY SCHOOL WAS MENTIONED!!!**

**Read and Imagine! :)**

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## **Jolene Dretzka says**

I received a copy of this book from a Goodreads giveaway.

This was a well written thesis on why vampires appeal to the people of our culture today & through the years. It is probably more suited for the novice who has either read few or no vampire novels at all. Unlike most books which approach the subject from a scientific & or historical view point, Margot Adler attacks the subject from a spiritual & environmental side I've rarely seen. You really only need to read the book until page 64, after that she launches into an overview/ description of the 270 books she read over a 4 year period that lead her to her thesis. After the first 64 pages I would suggest (as does Margot Adler) that you skip around to the categories that interest you. These synopsis's are great for people unsure what vampire novel to read for the first time & or someone wanting help deciding what to read next. Unfortunately, if you want a bit of surprise when picking out your next vampire novel to read than simply pick an author or title from her list & skip the description because some of her synopsis' spoil surprises the authors have hidden in their books. Perhaps my biggest attraction to this book was her story about why she began writing this book & reading vampire novels intensively in the first place, her husbands unexpected disease & death. This is a quick read for those already adept & well schooled in all things vampire & a great intro to those who aren't. This was a smart & intelligent read & even more surprising was the lack of condescension to a group of people the author was unfamiliar to until recently. A very respectful approach from a novice vampire novel reader. Because of my experience with this book I'm actually interested in reading other books the author has written that are non-vampire related.

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### **Lilith Dorsey says**

Okay, I want to be a vampire, who doesn't? They have great clothes, great hair, intimidating power, and they live forever. No wonder people are lining up for films like Twilight, and continuing to worship at the altar of Buffy Summers. I even met a gentlemen at a pagan event who claimed to practice the Vampire religion. Not sure what this entailed except for an albino complexion, a lot of leather, and a propensity for weirdness. I don't know what to make of that, and I'm also not sure what to make of this recent resurgence of Vamp-tastic film and fiction. Luckily, Margot Adler has sunk her teeth into this material and she lays it bare for us. Read more of my review on Vampires are Us on my blog . Voodoo Universe

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### **Rose says**

The first half of this book is a touching essay about the lure of vampires and their eternal life written after the death of Ms. Adler's husband. The second half consists of capsule reviews of over 200 vampire novels. The reviews are great if you are looking to read some good vampire fiction, and will also steer you away from some bad.

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### **Laura says**

I heard about this book a few years ago when Adler discussed it on NPR and have wanted to read it since. Adler's thesis on our modern fascination with vampires - after reading 270 vampire books over the course of four years - is because:

"Vampires are us. We are as guilt ridden and conflicted over our poisoned relationship to the planet and our continued need for fossil fuels as any of the morally struggling and conflicted vampires we see on television or read about in novels are conflicted over their need for blood. Most of our current vampires are conflicted, and this notion of the struggling-to-be-moral, conflicted vampire really got traction in the later 1960s, at the moment we first saw pictures of the Earth from space and realized our vulnerability and moral complicity."

The first quarter of the book is an exploration of this thesis in greater depth, which I found interesting. The second three-quarters is an annotated bibliography of the 270 books that she read, and a final bibliographic listing of them all. I have a handful of books to add to my to-read shelf now!

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### **Bonnie says**

I found the part one really good. I wanted to read more. Unfortunately this section ended and the rest of the book was reviews of all the books she had read to write the first section. It was disappointing. I was hoping for more but alas there wasn't.

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### **Kira says**

This book is a slightly-rewritten and slightly-edited version of Margot Adler's "Out for Blood" which was originally released as a Kindle Single. The major difference between them is that this book has an extensive annotated bibliography of vampire-related works. If you want a list of "geeky, nerdy vampire" or "vampires as science fiction" then get this version.

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