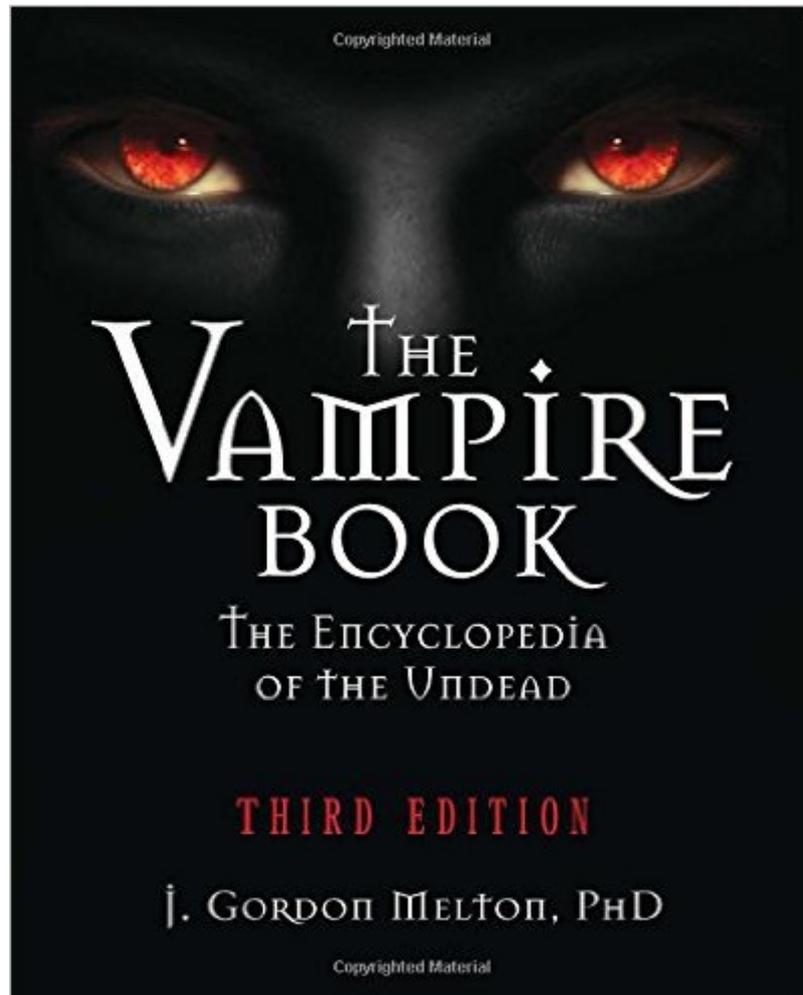


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The Vampire Book: The Encyclopedia Of The Undead



Synopsis

The Ultimate Collection of Vampire Facts and Fiction Death and immortality, sexual prowess and surrender, intimacy and alienation, rebellion and temptation. The allure of the vampire is eternal. The Vampire Book: The Encyclopedia of the Undead, Third edition, explores the historical, literary, mythological, biographical, and popular aspects of one of the world's most mesmerizing paranormal subject. This vast reference is an alphabetical tour of the psychosexual, macabre world of the soul-sucking undead. In the first fully revised and updated edition in a decade, Dr. J. Gordon Melton (president of the American chapter of the Transylvania Society of Dracula) bites even deeper into vampire lore, myths, reported realities, and legends that come from all around the world. From Vlad the Impaler to Dracula and from modern literature to movies and TV series like Buffy the Vampire Slayer, True Blood, Twilight, and The Vampire Lestat, this exhaustive guide furnishes more than 400 essays to quench your thirst for facts, biographies, definitions, and more.

Book Information

Paperback: 944 pages

Publisher: Visible Ink Press; 3 edition (September 1, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 157859281X

ISBN-13: 978-1578592814

Product Dimensions: 7.1 x 1.9 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (72 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #291,519 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #143 in [Books > Reference > Encyclopedias & Subject Guides > Mythology & Folklore](#) #294 in [Books > Textbooks > Reference > Encyclopedias](#) #382 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Occult & Paranormal > Supernatural](#)

Customer Reviews

Written by religious scholar and head of the Transylvania Society of Dracula's American chapter, J. Gordon Melton, "The Vampire Book" is an impressive attempt at a comprehensive reference work on vampire lore, from the emergence of documented vampire folklore in the 11th century to the present fascination with vampires in literature, film, and our popular culture. This mammoth volume (919 pages) begins with an forward by Martin V. Riccardo of the Vampire Studies network in which he presents an informative overview of the history of vampires in world cultures. Author J. Gordon Melton's preface addresses the important and sometimes perplexing question: What is a vampire?

And there is a chronology of important events in vampire history from the year 1047 to 1997. The bulk of "The Vampire Book" is 802 pages of encyclopedia that addresses a wide variety of subjects, in alphabetical order, relevant to vampire culture in literature, film, theater, folklore, history, and gaming. Entries for people include writers, actors, directors, and vampire scholars. As an example, the long entry for "Blood" recounts the significance of blood in ancient Biblical and secular traditions and vampire mythology. "Greece, Vampires in" presents the history of vampire legend in Greece. Each entry is followed by a list of sources. Among novels, films, and authors, only works that are considered significant or pivotal are given a separate entry. For example, the "Blade" comic book serial has its own entry. The 1998 film "Blade" does not, although it is alluded to under some other subjects. There are some black-and-white photographs scattered throughout the book, and there is a 16-page color insert in the center. For those who own the first edition of "The Vampire Book", this "revamped" edition has 100 additional topics and updates on other entries. The vampire filmography that was included in the first edition became too unwieldy. It has been expanded and is now published as a separate book: "VideoHound's Vampires on Video". Vampire fanatics and casual fans alike will find the "Vampire Resources" section in the back of the book useful. There are lists of vampire organizations, periodicals, and websites in North America and Europe, including separate lists for "Dark Shadows" fans. Vampire dramas on stage and all "significant" vampire novels from 1897 to 1997 are listed. There is a bibliography of vampire non-fiction and literary criticism. And if the subject you seek isn't where you thought it would be in the encyclopedia, there is a 50-page index to assist you. I'm sure that there will be disagreements on what should or should not have been included in "The Vampire Book", but this is about as comprehensive as we can expect a reference work covering 1,000 years of vampires in popular culture to be. J. Gordon Melton's research is impressive. His writing is fluid and not as dry as might be expected. I'm only a casual fan of vampire film and literature, so I thought that I would use this book to learn about the particular vampire topics that appeal to me. But I found it so interesting that I read the whole thing. "The Vampire Book" is a scholarly resource for all aspects of vampire lore and a highly readable reference for the casual fan as well. If vampires fascinate you, "The Vampire Book" will too.

This book provides an A to Z, completely thorough guide to all things relating to vampires. From aconite, to Dark Shadows, to the Vampire Lestat Fan Club, to vampire characteristics. This book also seems to talk about two aspects of vampirism. The Hollywood side, and the real side - including myths, legends, historical accounts, authors of fiction novels, vampirologists, vampire researchers, poets, etc. The Hollywood side of this book covers television shows (Buffy the Vampire

Slayer, Dark Shadows), movies (Interview with the Vampire, Blade, those old 70s porn flicks, Bela Lugosi, etc. even stuff I've never heard of), famous vampire actors and actresses, film directors. While it does seem that the book is dominated by the Hollywood aspect of the vampire, it does talk about everything you can think of relating to the vampire in every culture and legend. Vampires in Africa, Australia, Russia, China, Spain, Bulgaria... The book discusses in length about fangs, blood, skin, methods of killing the vampire, immortality, flying, so many to list. It's quite a heavy book, too. It contains a timeline of real vampire events, when books were published, when historical vampire figures (Vlad, Bathory, to name the obvious) were around, when vampire criminals did their crimes and were punished, all this dating back to the 1400s at least. It's about 2.5 to 3 inches tall, and has a giant reference in the back, including websites to visit, theatrical plays to see, works of fiction to read, businesses that sell vampire memorabilia or occult items, magazines to subscribe to, or who to write to. It is definitely worth the price. This book is my best vampire book on my shelf. Anyone who has ever loved the vampire needs to get this book!

Mr. Melton's 852-page book is truly encyclopedic. It is well-indexed. It includes brief discussions of vampiric cultural history, "What is a Vampire?", and vampiric chronology. It provides individual detailed discussions of worldwide vampire-related topics. The book's Appendices provide comprehensive listings of vampire "resources", filmography, drama, and novels. The book's encyclopedic organization *does* present a problem to the "front-to-back" reader. Identical material is repeated in related entries because each entry is meant to stand alone. This repetition is quite evident to the front-to-back reader. One criticism: the sexual aspects and psychology of vampirism were not discussed in the detail they merit. Vampires control their (usually opposite gender) victims magically, and vampires have (usually recurring) physical relationships with their victims. In some cases vampires kidnap and imprison their victims. These sexually dominant aspects of vampirism are emphasized in vampiric literature, drama, and cinema. Furthermore, vampires draw blood, a concern in today's environment of sexually-transmitted diseases. A more complete discussion of vampire sexuality and today's vampire cult practices would have been welcome. This book is difficult to read, but will assist you in your next Trivial Pursuit game!

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