Annotated Bibliography


Theresa Bane writes reference-type pop culture books on vampires. She uses a light, humorous tone in this article and does not back up any of her statements with sources, so it’s hard to know if she is telling the truth. She does bring up some interesting points, such as that vampires “only prey on what is culturally important to a people,” so for example in a cold climate they might prey on body heat, not blood (para. 6). She also emphasizes that vampires have existed in myths and literature since before Greek and Roman times. Lord Byron was first to write a dapper vampire novel, but Bram Stoker was the first to create vampires with all the characteristics we’re familiar with. She discusses how there is no real myth writers have to adhere to and also comments on sexiness being new and strange. It didn’t illuminate anything new, but I might read her books for more information.


This entry described the several folk myths surrounding vampires in their earliest origins. There were several surprising pieces of information. For example, in Eastern Europe, vampires were originally only the spirits of the dead, not the moving bodies of the dead. Vampires were staked or beheaded with a shovel so that when they were killed, their blood couldn’t splash out and tough those still living. There appears to be no fascination with vampires as objects of desire in the original folklore—this gives me more reason to find out what changed once the myths got turned into literature and movies.

This article examines the science fiction author Octavia Butler’s use of the vampire myth in her book *Fledgling*. Butler uses the vampire myth in several new ways, exemplifying how the myth is constantly rewritten to serve a culture’s needs; in our society, it is used not just to scare audiences but to challenge ideas from racism to capitalism. Butler’s novel explores ideas of interracial marriage, genetic engineering, and two kinds of female power (brute force and human endurance). In addition, it shifts the evil from the vampires to society itself and creates a kind of utopia not where there are no problems but where problems are dealt with in a satisfying way. This article helped illuminate my topic by going beyond our culture’s fascination with vampires and showing how that fascination can be used to challenge our mindsets.


This news article garnered quotes from several types of people about why vampires are popular—a professor who teaches a course on vampires to high school girls who love the *Twilight* books. Most of the answers focused on the sex appeal vampires have acquired through characters such as Edward and actors such as Tom Cruise and the sexual overtones of the act of drinking blood. The article also covered some of the history of the vampire myths and included something I hadn’t read before about the blood-drinking orgies in France, Hungary, and the Carpathian mountains. A bonus is that at the end of the article, the author lists the names of pop culture vampires and gives a brief description.
drawback is that this is from 2007, so there is no mention of recent shows such as *True Blood* and *Vampire Diaries* or the *Twilight* movies.


There aren’t many relevant government or statistical sources on vampires, but this article is still insightful. It proves the enduring popularity of our vampires in our culture/our culture’s enduring fascination with vampires. It does this by the number of children reporting to dress as a vampire for Halloween in 2000: 4%. The only thing more popular was a witch, at 5%. The devil was equal to vampires at 4%. Implications can be taken from this that vampires are still seen as evil and scary—they are right up there with witches and the devil—yet our culture is still able to see them as sexy at the same time. It would be nice to have a more recent poll, since many more vampires have entered popular culture since 2000.


This chapter does a good job of connecting our culture’s fascination with vampires to our need to find eternal life and to understand what we would then avoid—death. The author shows this with many examples from TV shows, books, and movies. She also spends a considerable amount of time showing how the TV writer Joss Whedon does not seek after this. She also touches on the appeal of vampires once they began to be portrayed as the Byronic hero. Finally, she shows how American tend to simplify and romanticize everything, and this would explain how the scary folk origins were divorced from the enticing immortal qualities of vampires. Two books she mentioned sound like good fits for my topic: *Omens of Millennium: The Gnosis of Angels, Dreams and Resurrection* by Harold Bloom and *Vampire Books: The Encyclopedia of the Undead*, by J. Gordon Melton.

*Psychology Today, 23,* 31-5.

This article gave many reasons for the culture’s obsession with vampires. Although it is 20 years old, it was written because vampires in entertainment were hot stuff—just like they are these days. The reasons can be applied to things today such as *True Blood* and *Twilight.* These reasons are the sexual overtones of and oral desire, the need to fill a bleak post-modern outlook with something marvelous, the psychological idea that the vampire is an embodiment or our neglected psyches, the sexy portrayals of vampires (their style and beauty), they way they are so close to humans (can’t tell the difference in the dark), and of course their immortality. It also described something I hadn’t heard of before, which is that some people have actual addictions to blood and that famous murderers, such as Ted Bundy, sometimes identified with vampires.