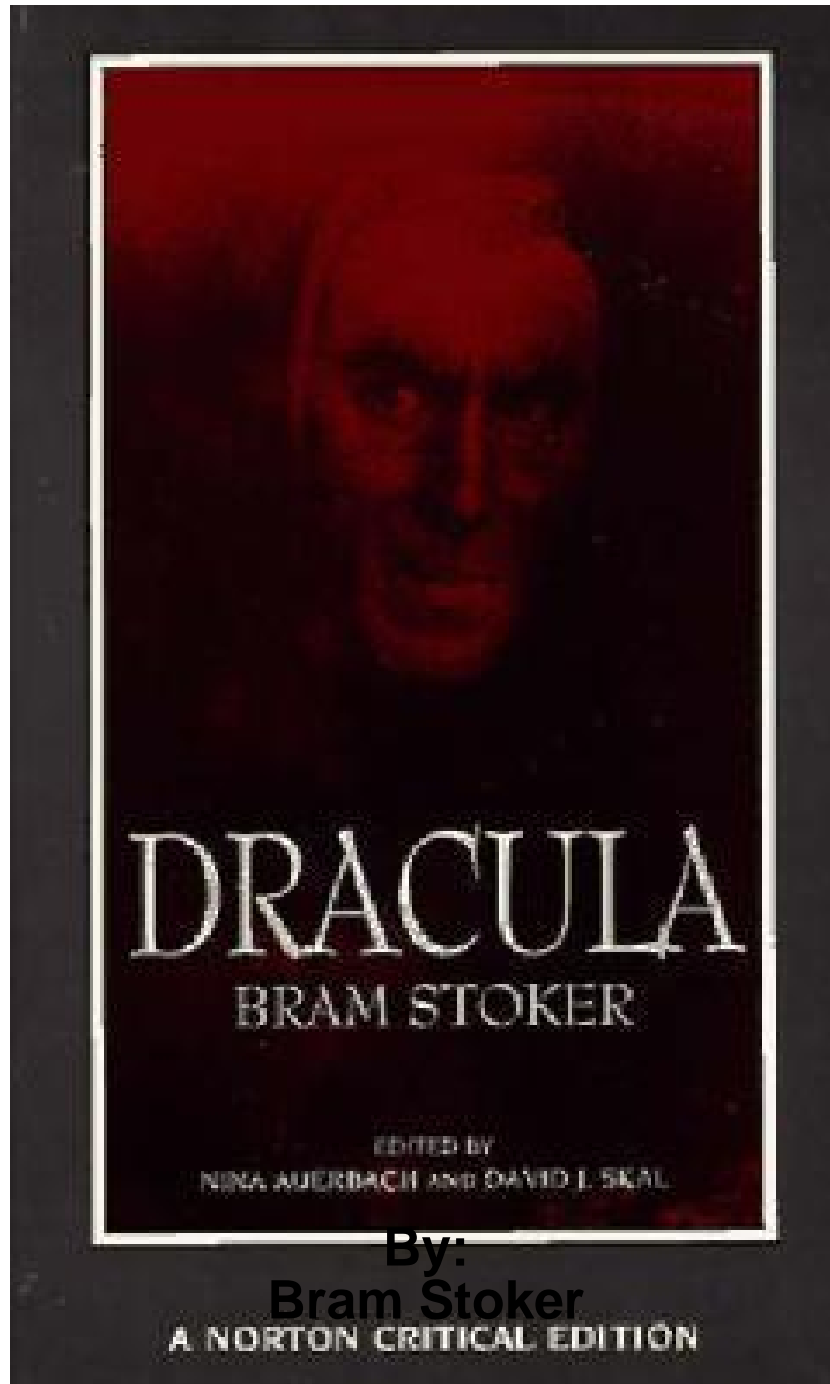


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What people Say:

Catriona (LittleBookOwl)

Managed to finish this :) Second time studying, but first successful read-through.

I enjoyed it more this time around, mainly because I actually read the last quarter or so of the book, which was the most enjoyable in my opinion.

Jonathan

Dracula: the very name instantly brings to mind visions of vampires, stakes, garlic and crucifixes. But when I bothered to read the novel I realised, sadly, how twisted modern vampire fiction has become.

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The very idea of a blood drinker inspires the very image of a villain in my mind. And that is what the titular character of this novel is.

I say novel, but I could also write that this is a collaboration of journals, letters and papers. For that is how Bram Stoker chose to fashion his famous novel (in epistolary form). And the different viewpoints through each journal serve to create suspense which suits the gothic tone of the novel perfectly.

In all it is a macabre novel that serves to make the reader reflect upon good and evil. The vampire to me is nothing more than an indication of man's own cursed nature and that unless he is delivered he must suck life from others around him. Ultimately only the righteous can destroy the darkness that serves to drain life.

The first thought I had upon re-reading this were: oh I see the annotated version's notes show some awesome things! For instance I could see the contradiction in how all along the characters had spoken of how organised their notes were and then Stoker himself made errors in logic and with the dates to indicate that perhaps the narration was not so reliable. Which interestingly is how the book ends: with the narration indicating that it did not matter who believed their convoluted story.

My second thought was that I could see all the references to other texts. Hamlet, Homer and the various poets of the time (there was some reference in an essay attached to the story that perhaps the older version of Dracula - when he has gone without blood - was based on Oscar Wilde much as how Robert Louis Stephenson based his Long John Silver on William Henley)

My third thought was that I could see why I loved this book the first time I read it. The image of a bestial vampire like Dracula sucking the life out of victims to continue his un-dead existence is so metaphoric for the very idea of evil. Evil can be seductive, it can look appealing but ultimately it leads only to a sort of un-dead experience in which you seek to gain satisfaction and purpose through draining others of their vitality. And in this case it is an evil which can only be driven out through holy means (it is interesting that there are many allusions to the Bible in the actual figure of Dracula - is he meant to be represented as a sort of anti-Christ spirit?)

My fourth thought is that this is an incredible classic that has to be read to be understood. The little flaws in it make it more appealing and humanised if anything and the tragic nature of its story causes its readers to be both appalled by the villain (who is unforgettable) and to feel sorrow for the victims. As mentioned above: vampires are not meant to be messianic figures (the true message of Dracula I think) but they instead represent the very opposite of holiness and virtue*. While Dracula is not the first vampire novel it is perhaps the greatest as it shows the vampire as a truly malevolent and brutal figure (not a sparkly heartthrob but a killer). As

Bookdragon Sean

is, of course, one of the most renowned horror stories, and the most well-known vampire novel. Bram Stoker set the ground rules for what a vampire should be, and set the benchmark for all other writers of the vampire afterwards. Indeed, if tyrannical villains are a necessity of Gothic fiction then Count Dracula is the father of all gothic villains, in spite of it being one of the last Gothic fiction novels to be written. It's a work of genius that his presence is felt so strongly in the

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The atmosphere of the novel is unmistakably gothic. It is impossible to talk about

without mentioning the Gothic; the two are one and the same. The decaying castle in which the book begins is testimony to the eeriness that follows. The "damsel in distress" motif appears quite often in Gothic literature, and none so much as

. Mina and Lucy are both damsels at some point, and even Harker himself can be seen as one at the start when he is rescued by his wife that has a "woman's brain". It's quite a subversion of the standard gender roles, at this point, and quite funny really.

On initial inspection the plot of the book can be summed up in a few short sentences: Dracula wishes to create more vampires in Victorian London; his attempts are thwarted and he and his kind are exterminated. But, the novel is so much more than that. It represents Victorian fears and fancies; it is a comment on women's position in society and underpins their sexual desires (and perhaps fears.) It suggests a struggle between modernity and science with religion and superstition. It harbours the effect of Darwinian thought on man as Dracula himself represent the idea of "survival of the fittest". The undertones of sexuality and disease that occur so frequently symbolise the time in which it was written. Each one of these has been a topic for commentaries on Dracula, and academic essays.

Indeed, the extrinsic value of this novel is incredibly high. Bram Stoker also explores the theme of sanity with many of his characters, not just Renfield. At some point, every character wonders whether their dealings with the Count are born from some mental deficiency rather than a paranormal encountering with the villain. This clashes the Victorian realism view with the paranormal events that occur in the novel. There are also issues of identity, and how this is affected by transgression. It can further be seen as an allegory for religious redemption and a comment on colonisation.

I think I've said enough; if I say anything else I will break my "500 words a review" rule. As you can probably tell I'm quite passionate about this book: it is brilliant; at this point, I can honestly say that Dracula is one of my favourite novels of all time: I just love it. I might even write my dissertation on it and Gothic Literature.

Dracula rules!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Ana

4.5 Bloodsucking Stars!

I'm not a big scary book fan, but I have been known to read some spooky stuff. Two books that I found most terrifying were Peter Straub's 'Ghost Story,' which is also one of my all-time favorites, and Stephen King's 'Different Seasons.' Ok the last one isn't that scary but it's my favorite Stephen King

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I can now claim to have finally read Dracula! It has always shamed me that I never read it but called myself a book lover and so I decided I would finally give it a try.

I half expected Count Dracula to sparkle in the sun. But then I remembered this isn't Twilight.

Vampires. They're everywhere, you know. They can be found in the folklore of virtually every culture in the world. There have been countless books, movies, television series and fanfiction on vampire phenomenon, yet we just can't seem to get enough of them.

Bram Stoker's Dracula has some of the darkest characters and plot lines I've ever read. The world he has created is at the same time unique and spell-binding.

I dare you to find me a vampire more badass than this guy-

He is a fascinating character full of contradictions.

Sarah Actually

Here are some thoughts on this book.

1. I would have been all OVER this in 1897.
2. I would like Van Helsing to be quiet.
3. I can suspend disbelief for the vampires but not for the blood transfusions
4. I know it was 1897 and blood types weren't discovered until 1901 (according to my very in depth research) (wikipedia) but I still cannot get past it
5. The Texan would go outside and just randomly shoot things for fun, including things sitting on windowsills of windows in rooms where live people are

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