



From Demons to Dracula: The Creation of the Modern Vampire Myth

Matthew Beresford

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In blood-soaked lore handed down the centuries, the vampire is a monster of endless fascination: from Bram Stoker's *Dracula* to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, this seductive lover of blood haunts popular culture and inhabits our darkest imaginings. The cultural history of the vampire is a rich and varied tale that is now ably documented in *From Demons to Dracula*, a compelling study of the vampire myth that reveals why this creature of the undead fascinates us so.

Beresford's chronicle roams from the mountains of Eastern Europe to the foggy streets of Victorian England to Hollywood, as he investigates the portrayal of the vampire in history, literature, and art. Opening with the original *Dracula*, Vlad the Impaler, and his status as a national hero in Romania, he endeavors to winnow out truths from the complex legend and folklore. *From Demons to Dracula* tracks the evolution of the vampire as an icon and supernatural creature, drawing on classical Greek and Roman myths, witch trials and medieval plagues, Gothic literature, and even contemporary works such as Anne Rice's *Interview with a Vampire* and Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian*. Beresford also looks at the widespread impact of screen vampires from television shows, classic movies starring Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee, and more recent films such as *Underworld* and *Blade*. Whether as a demon of the underworld or a light-fearing hunter of humans, the vampire has endured through the centuries, the book reveals, as powerfully symbolic figure for human concerns with life, death, and the afterlife.

A wide-ranging and engrossing chronicle, *From Demons to Dracula* casts this blood-thirsty nightstalker as a remarkably complex and telling totem of our nightmares, real and imagined.

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