

The Vampire Defanged

✖ Susanna Clements | Brazos Press

Author Susanna Clements studies how Christianity figures into vampire fiction in *The Vampire Defanged: How the Embodiment of Evil Became a Romantic Hero*. In chronological order, she explores Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Anne Rice's *The Vampire Chronicles*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Charlaine Harris' *Southern Vampire Mysteries* (aka *True Blood*) and Stephenie Meyer's *The Twilight Saga*.

Defanged might be a simple compare-and-contrast if not for a clear progression toward the secular in the genre as Clements examines each work. *Dracula* is sin personified, recoiling at anything holy and drinking blood in a perversion of the Last Supper. With each successive interpretation, vampires have more free will—the foundation of a soul—and Christian theology matters less in the vampire universe.

Buffy holds paganism and Christianity equally valid, and Harris openly ridicules fundamentalist Christians. With *Twilight*, faith is almost nonexistent. Vampires can seemingly have it all: romance, family, physical perfection and cannibalism-free immortality. Appropriately, Meyer's vampires have no fangs.

For Christian fans of vampire fiction, *Defanged* makes a useful reference point. Understanding the ideas behind the

mythology helps

the reader to separate theology from simple entertainment.

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