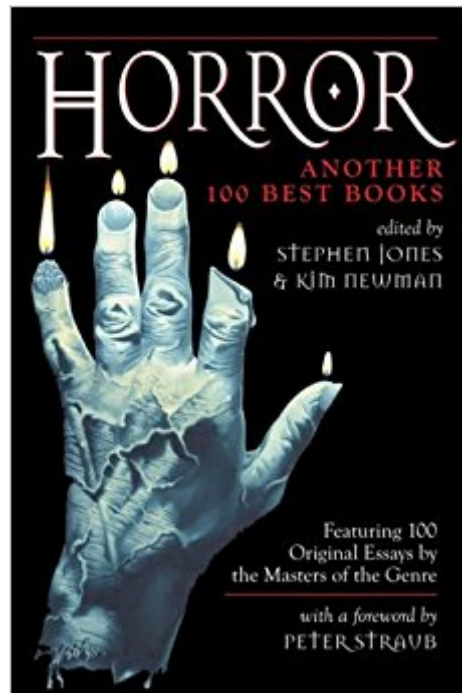




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Horror: Another 100 Best Books



Synopsis

Horror: Another 100 Best Books features one hundred of the top names in the horror field discussing one hundred of the most spine-chilling novels ever written. Each entry includes a synopsis of the work as well as publication history, biographical information about the author of each title, and recommended reading and biographical notes on the contributor. Author Ramsey Campbell also offers a new foreword to the book describing the evolution of horror over the past two decades; from the way it's written by a crop of new and exciting writers to the way it's received by a new market of readers. Horror: Another 100 Best Books will be the definitive guide to the tremendous library of horror fiction available today; a reference that no fan can live without.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this worthy sequel to *Horror: 100 Best Books* (1988), prolific anthologist Jones (*Shadows Over Innsmouth*) and novelist Newman (*Anno Dracula*) have gathered 100 appreciative short essays on landmark horror titles by today's top writers and critics in the genre, from Robert Silverberg on Cyril de Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1607) to Tim Lebbon on Michael Marshall Smith's *More Tomorrow & Other Stories* (2003). Any work that inspires fear was fair game for selection, as evidenced by entries on such classics as Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, George Gissing's *New Grub Street* and George Orwell's *1984*. Like its predecessor, this volume contains plenty of lively and candid commentary, such as British screenwriter Christopher Wicking's insider's view of the

pitiful efforts to adapt H.P. Lovecraft to film in his piece on Lovecraft's *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*. A foreword by Peter Straub, lists of recommended reading and a selected webliography round out a volume every serious horror fan will want to own. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

In his foreword, Peter Straub says this -follow-up to *Horror: 100 Best Books* (1988) arrives when "a sophisticated contemporary reader" is more likely to consider genre fiction than ever before. Of course, horror isn't really a genre but, as Neil Gaiman says, a condiment that can improve any kind of literary dish. That seems to account for this round of 100 horror classics containing several books not thought of as horror (e.g., Highsmith's *Talented Mr. Ripley*, Fowles' *Collector*, Camus' *Stranger*) and by writers not considered horror hands (e.g., Bret Easton Ellis, Patrick McGrath). Still, most choices readily fit into the horror category, though their primary associations are to the detective, sf, crime, gothic, and fantasy genres; to hybrid forms like the musical (*Sweeney Todd*) and graphic novel (*From Hell*); and to the literary mainstream (*American Psycho*). Horror fans seeking what to read next will not only find out here; they'll also have their taste and appreciative capacity refined by the intelligent, passionate commentary of the 100 writers who selected these 100 books. Ray Olson Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I enjoyed the first collection and I'm glad Jones and Newman added another one. As the editors point out, even though the first collection contained a hundred titles it was not an exhaustive list. The editors don't want to give the impression that these were the ONLY books worth reading. Also - especially with horror - it is important to have some sort of guide to help separate the good stuff from the dross. The only problem with this particular compilation is that the contributors are not of the same caliber as the first one. The original *Horror: 100 Best Books* included contributions by Stephen King and Harlan Ellison, as well as snippets of criticism from deceased masters such as Poe, Lovecraft, and James. I think the editors are aware of this, which is why the contributors' bios follow the mini-essays immediately rather than being placed in the back of the book as they were before. Some of the names are familiar to me but most are not. The contributors are not all authors but editors, illustrators, translators, etc. The result is that general quality of the essays is not as good. For instance, I am glad that *The Phantom of the Opera* is included in this volume, but the interpretation provided by Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficier is the worst analysis of that novel that I've ever read.

A must have for any horror fan. I thought I knew a lot of authors, but i have been introduced to many new (older) authors that I never knew. Great to see what other authors enjoy to read or what story inspired them to start writing. There are MORE than 100 recommendations. An invaluable source of information!

I picked up "Horror: 100 Best Books" back in 1988/89 because I wanted to read something exciting. I love horror novels and the 80's saw a boom in the market but 90% of the material coming out was cliché and weak. Here was a book listing 100 horror novels, and not chosen by reviewers but by authors in the field. My first thought on buying the book was to see how many I had read of the 100. I was a savvy teenager (in my mind) and I had read tons of books. I felt I had probably read half the books listed. It turns out I read 9 of the books listed. (Just tape the L to my forehead).I went out to read a fair portion of the books listed but I'm falling off track. This review is about "Horror: Another 100 Best Books".I enjoyed this one leaps and bounds over its predecessor (which is saying something). First off, the original only covers books published from 1987 back. A lot of the titles listed are old or they are major classics (remember, I was looking for new blood; I wanted to try books which slipped under the radar). The essays by the writers are very short and in some cases cold. These authors are discussing the books that influenced them but their essay reads like Joe Friday's "Just the facts, Ma'am".There is none of that in the the new book. The new time frame covers books from 2003 back. The essays feel expanded and are filled with the wide eyed awe you would expect from authors discussing their inspirations. There are some well known books listed but many more "new blood" titles to put me on the hunt. (I had read 17 of the books listed but I've picked up 10 more of the recommended material without a shred of disappointment).Each essay begins with a synopsis of the author whose work is being covered (what else they wrote, a brief bio, and a history of the books publication) and ends with a brief bio on the author covering the book of choice. There were a few cases when the discussion felt more focused on a film version of the selected title or the book covered is questionable as being of the horror genre but they are easily dismissed when moving on to the next installment (though these reasons account for the 4 out of 5 stars).I recommend this book for any fan of horror fiction (even fans of fantasy and suspense). The essays give enough material to let you know what the book is about without giving away spoilers (for the most part anyway).There is even an appendix in the book that lists further reading and it's not a sparse appendix. Basically, if you enjoy reading 's reviews to see if a book sounds good to you then this is required reading. Not everything is for everyone here but it will arouse your curiosity.

This book is a collection of essays, in the majority. There is, of course, given the title, an earlier volume. This I have not gotten around to reading yet, but I probably will now. However, in a really well packaged publication, the editors have listed what was chosen in that volume in the back of this one. Very well done, as this is one of the first things a reader will wonder about, especially as some choices are referenced throughout the text. The project has been constructed by asking a lot of writers and editors to choose a book they would like included to write about, and write a short piece about why. Given the essay part is around 400 pages, these are all quite short. I imagine there might have been the odd grumpy argument about who was chosen for particular selections. A wide range of new and older material, and novels, anthologies and collections all feature, which makes this even better, I think, not just being full of novel after novel. The weakest part of the book is the tendency to have somewhat bloated--given the length of the essays--author bibliographic or career summaries, large chunks of some not being relevant to horror. Given they know what a URL is, for those that had bibliographies, could have given the link. Maybe the promo was part of the deal to get the writing. Also included at the end is a further reading list, in chronological publication order - and for the average type and speed reader of books, this will take a lifetime or two to get through - and also a list of writers, with actual urls to find them on the web. This 'webliography' also includes links to the actual novels, for public domain examples such as William Hope Hodgson, and evinces a very 21st century feel throughout the essays, in general, as far as being aware of what is going on technologically and in the media. Not always the case, it would appear, in books. So, high marks all around for this book. For people looking to start on horror that hadn't read anything, really, this pair of books would be a fantastic find, no doubt.

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