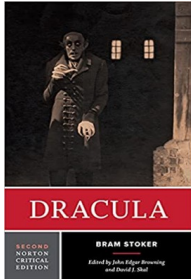




Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians



Dracula
By Bram Stoker
Discussed June 2005

Discussion Questions

1. *Dracula* has never been out of print, and more movies have been derived from it than from any other novel. To what do you attribute this continuous popularity? The story, in one form or another, has been popular in many countries over a long period of time. Does this suggest that it answers some need that is simply human rather than social or historical?
2. If you have not read the book before, how did the novel's story or vision differ from the portrayals you have seen in the movies? How was it similar?
3. Dracula's blood sucking is often described as a disguised form of sexual assault, with the victim unconsciously willing. What do you think of this idea?
4. Lucy seems more susceptible to Dracula than Mina. What is it in Lucy that makes her more susceptible? What in Mina makes her more resistant?
5. In a similar line, a feminist critique of *Dracula* accuses the novel of infantilizing women - making them the helpless Victorian prizes in a battle waged by men against evil. Do you agree with this critique? Can an opposing theory be advanced?
6. Could the end of the novel be fairly described as the triumph of scientific teamwork over superstition; the rational over the irrational; the light of modern Western European civilization over Eastern medieval darkness?
7. Stoker uses a variety of literary forms - diaries, newspapers, memos, letters - to narrate the story. What advantages does he gain from this plural perspective, as opposed to the convention of the single narrator perspective?
8. There has been some speculation that Bram Stoker was gay. The circumstantial evidence cited includes his formal rather than passionate marriage, his friendships with both Oscar Wilde and Walt Whitman, and his lifelong attachment to an actor whose career he helped manage. If one makes this assumption, what in *Dracula* shows a "gay sensibility"? Have any depictions - movies, plays, or novels - of the vampire theme brought out a homo-erotic subtext of Stoker's work?

9. Finally, did you like the novel? Why or why not?