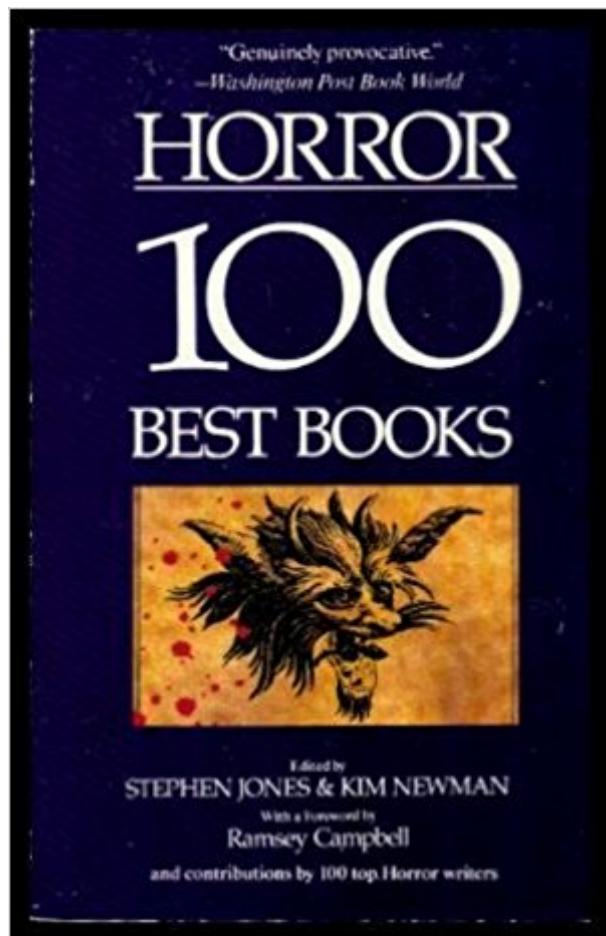


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# Horror: The 100 Best Books



## **Synopsis**

As Ramsey Campbell states in his foreward: "Horror shows us sights we would ordinarily look away from or insights we might prefer not to have." Nowhere is this more evident than in this collection where the editors have invited top horror writers--Clive Barker, Stephen King, Ramsey Campbell, and a host of others--to nominate and write about their choices of best books.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

First published in 1988, Horror: The 100 Best Books has remained the only book of its kind: a solid (and entertaining) annotated reading list spanning the range of horror fiction from the 16th to the 20th century. The device of asking 100 horror, fantasy, and science fiction writers to write about their favorite horror books might seem at first to capture an idiosyncratic sample, but through diplomacy and diligence, editors Stephen Jones and Kim Newman succeeded in obtaining short essays on most (if not all) of the well-known classics, as well as many more lesser-knowns that are well worth discovering. Readers who follow up on these recommendations will find tips about books by writers mostly known for other genres--such as Iain Banks, Robert Holdstock, Lisa Tuttle, and David Morrell. Also valuable are write-ups on literary works not always acknowledged as horror, such as Kingsley Amis's *The Green Man*, Jerzy Kosinski's *The Painted Bird*, and John Gardner's *Grendel*. And the write-ups offer a fascinating peek into the minds of the contributors, who include just about all the top horror writers of the '60s-'80s. This 10th anniversary edition makes no changes in the list of 100 books, but updates the entries and includes a 9-page reading list of titles from 458 B.C. to 1997. --Fiona Webster --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The continuing growth in popularity of speculative fiction (an all-encompassing term for horror, fantasy, and science fiction) has resulted in a recent spate of suggested reading lists. Strangely enough, these two collections, while possessing corresponding publishers, titles, and concepts, utilize vastly different approaches to compile their "best of" lists. Of the two, Jones' and Newman's entry is more interesting, as they have imbued their book with a bit of novelty by garnering the opinions of 100 authors, editors, and others in the genre. Each contributor offers a personal essay on why they made their selection. Contributors include the field's current bestselling authors (such as Stephen King, Clive Barker, and Robert McCammon) as well as deceased luminaries (such as Edgar Allan Poe, Robert Howard, and H.P. Lovecraft). Chronologically, the selections range from *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* (Christopher Marlowe, 1592) to *Dark Feasts* (Ramsey Campbell, 1987). By soliciting the opinions of so many varied voices, Jones and Newman avoid overloading the list with personal bias, and they achieve an eclectic touch that makes the choices extremely interesting. Acknowledging the potential quirky nature of such a selection process, a further recommended reading list is appended, giving the reader enough material to keep him or her busy into the next century. Taking a somewhat converse approach, Cawthorn and Moorcock simply list their personal selections for the 100 best books in the field of fantasy. While the editors' credentials are clearly topnotch, the uniform viewpoint doesn't measure up the variety offered in Jones' and Newman's collection. To their credit, the picks of Cawthorn and Moorcock are wide-ranging, spanning from *Gulliver's Travels* (Jonathan Swift, 1726) to *Expecting Someone Taller* (Tom Holt~1987) chronologically, and encompassing commensurate ground thematically. Indicative of the narrow, sometimes imperceptible boundary between definitions of fantasy and horror is the fact that fourteen works have achieved mention in both of these lists. Regardless of the dissimilar methods used in compiling these two listings, there's no question that both offer plenty of interesting and provocative suggestions for future reading. -- From Independent Publisher --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A decent collection in which even the more widely read horror fan will encounter new and interesting works. The reviews range from the erudite and entertaining to the dopey and dull. Some authors know how to review a book; others do not. Again, every horror fan will have one or more "but-they-didn't-include" objections (mine: Meyrick's the Golem), but unless you're prepared to pay for a thousand-page doorstopper, this is probably as good as it gets. Good enough, in fact that I intend to purchase the companion volume.

Of course this list can't be complete (and now it is twenty years old) but it is still a great place to start for a survey of horror literature. For those of us who take horror literature seriously, this is one of the essential nonfiction books to have - along with *Danse Macabre*, *On Writing Horror*, and Lovecraft's *Supernatural Horror in Literature*. This is a great resource to read the masters themselves talking about their heroes and what makes good literature. Not only do we have essays ABOUT Poe and Lovecraft - we have essays BY Poe and Lovecraft, along with Stephen King, Harlan Ellison, etc. For a genre that produces so much bad writing, it is invaluable to have a guide to point us toward the good stuff. Now, of course, this list isn't exhaustive. There are many titles that are not included (which is why the book has a sequel). Tastes vary, so I'm not necessarily a fan of EVERY title selected. Also, to be original, some contributors select titles that are just NOT horror. (I think that most horror fans agree that the horror of *Johnny Got His Gun* is not the type of horror we are talking about here.) Fortunately, the books are listed chronologically, with no attempt to compare their relative merits.

Great introduction to early horror stories. Great to find out what authors you like to read to see who they enjoy reading or what story inspired them to write. Great refence book...a must for any horror fan!

If your new to horror or just want to find some good recommendation definitely pick this up. Not only does give a list and reviews by authors of their favorites but there's also a list recommendation from way back to just a few years ago. Definitely worth it.

This book is an amazing list of horror books with comments from various horror authors who review/comment on the books in the list. You not only get to find out which books are considered classics and/or noteworthy but gain insights into each book/collection from masters of horror/fantasy/sci-fi. This book is like a key that unlocks a whole other realm of possibilities and I just had to put in a 5 star review upon seeing this on again. Check out the other more lengthy reviews for more details.

crapcrapcrap. i mean come on-ok, this book is sometimes interesting but the books it cites and reviews are not scary. so far at this books suggestion i have read 1. haunting of hill house (decent but not real scary) 2. arabian nightmare-boring as sh%t 3. october country (while this book is the

most interesting of the 3-and i still have not read most of it-but what i have read is not scary) and 4. the cellar-interesting to a point but still not scary and the ending is lame. it also mentions salems lot which i read before and wanted to shoot stephen king for being so unbelievably dull(but tried to overcome this by remembering that i loved the shining and rose madder). anyway, not a fan of this book so far.

This updated version of the 1988 Bram Stoker Award winner is appealing for several reasons. First, it's a modern classic in horror scholarship, a survey of horror literature spanning fifteen centuries, several genres, and a plethora of authors. Second, there's the thrill of reading great writers' thoughts about their favorite authors--Stephen King on Robert Marasco, Peter Straub on King, and Ed Bryant on Dan Simmons among others. Third, it's basically a big list of good books. The 100 entries combined with an extensive list of recommended titles (now updated through 1997) have enriched my reading for years. Plus, I'm always gratified when knowledgeable people reel off their recommendations--their picks send me scurrying to used bookstores in search of new treasures. In their introduction, Messrs. Jones and Newman express their hope that the book is "...informative and fun," also stating that it "should offer a guide for the relative newcomer to the subject, but also some meat for the veteran aficionado. We hope we've succeeded in giving a working overview of an often maligned field of literature." I, for one, think they've achieved their goal--Horror: 100 Best Books is a worthwhile addition to library of any horror maven, a useful, entertaining work that belongs on the shelf next to books like King's Danse Macabre, Winter's Faces of Fear, Skal's The Horror Show and Wiater's Dark Thoughts on Writing.

This is a fantastic resource. I am working on assembling a reading list for a book club themed around the history and evolution of horror. While Supernatural Horror in Literature can do a good job carrying my into the 1930's, this takes me on the same journey but up into the 1980's. I can fill out a list from the last few decades on my own. Several of these essays sold me on whether or not I would find a book compelling, and many convinced me to give some books a chance. Some of these made me downright itchy to read. And some of these books are criminally out of print and unavailable for a reasonable price. My only significant regret is that I will not be able to fit more on the reading list for the book club, while simultaneously my own list has received significant fattening.

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