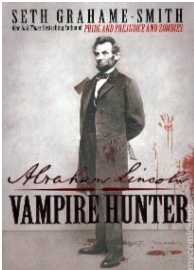




Fr. Michael Goetz Library Learning Commons Teacher's Book Review



Abraham Lincoln – Vampire Hunter, Seth Grahame-Smith Reviewed by Ms. Cosgrove, April 4th, 2013.

The last time I read a good book about vampires was about twenty years ago. The book was called *Interview with a Vampire* and it was by Anne Rice. It terrified me. I thought that was it for me and vampires until I just recently answered the call of the fang one more time. It turns out that the great president of the United States of America, Abraham Lincoln, was not just known for leading his nation to victory in the American Civil war and thereby ending slavery. His famous skill with an ax was not just reserved for splitting wood. No, not at all. It turns out that old Ab was the greatest hunter and killer of vampires in his time. Who knew?

The author of this engaging historical fantasy combines historical documents and digitally altered photographs with bizarre and close to believable folklore, in order to hypothesize that the American Civil war was fought to protect not only the union but slaves, as well, from a growing population of European vampires who chose to resettle in America, drawn by a food source that would not be investigated as it was diminished.

The novel presents the frontier of a new world and its growing cities of New York, Washington and New Orleans in the first half of the nineteenth century. The sights and sounds and historical figures are all there including Jefferson Davis, Ulysses Grant, Robert E. Lee and the great horror writer, Edgar Allan Poe. Present, also, are the mysterious immortal beings who at night are transformed into murderous creatures of superhuman strength and monstrous appetites. Lincoln's motive for devoting his life to the hunting and killing of vampires is explained at the start of the novel and early on he finds himself working, in partnership, with an ancient vampire, who explains what it means to gain one's immortality and pay the highest price of losing one's soul to do so. It makes for many pages of bloody and intense fight scenes, not all of them played out in the battle field. The reader is left with a composite picture – a historically rich and at times very accurate portrait of one of the best loved American presidents combined with that of an almost super heroic avenger, driven by his desire for justice. The ending is simply perfect. It will surprise and delight you and at the same time make you wonder how you could not have predicted the outcome.

I surprisingly and heartily recommend this book. Don't be fooled by the title. It will more than satisfy the reader in the areas of literary merit and the fine art of story-telling.