



[the Book of Lists: Horror / Edited by Amy Wallace, Del Howison, & Scott Bradley](#)



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*Reviewed by: Vince A. Liaguno*

Every once in awhile, horror shows us its fun side. In *The Book of Lists: Horror*, a wonderful new compendium that will leave genre enthusiasts glassy eyed and drooling into the wee hours of the night, editors Wallace, Howison, and Bradley ably pull together the vast elements of this classic genre. Straddling a fine line between trivia and contributor opinion, the collection offers up a plethora of lists – spanning movies, television, literature, music, even comic books and video games – compiled by genre royalty (Stephen King, Ray Bradbury, and Robert Block), respected genre editors and critics (*Fangoria*'s Anthony Timpone, Tim Lucas, and Leisure's Don D'Auria), and the genre's next generation (Eli Roth, *Hatchet* director Adam Green, and Neil Marshall).

No surprise that horror's medium du jour – film – kicks off the collection and receives the largest page count. Movie fanatics will be delighted by 217 overstuffed pages that include horror icons and genre friends (Joey Ramone, Cerina Vincent) listing their favorite scary movies, academic discussions and thoughtful dissections (Professor Leo Braudy's "Eleven Favorite Moments of Horror vs. Terror in Film", Alan Beatt's "Five Common Tactical Errors in Horror Films"), and interactive fun ("Match the Horror Film with Its Tagline", Sarah Langan's "Top Ten Stupidest Horror Movie Decisions Quiz"). There's a nice balance between the serious and the silly with cerebral fare like Richard Stanley's critical examination of Italian horror movies and F.X. Feeney's engaging look at horror films featuring children being balanced by decidedly lighthearted fare like Edward Lee's "Ten Best Horror Movies with Gratuitous Nudity", Green's suggestion of ten actresses who should have gotten naked onscreen but didn't (Kathy Bates or Dakota Fanning(!) anyone?), and Vince Churchill's is-it-or-isn't-it politically correct look at racial survival rates in horror movies tellingly titled "Top Ten List of Films in Which, Wow, the Black Guy Lived!". Standout here is Timpone's look back at "Ten Films I Wish I Never Put on the Cover of *Fangoria*," a playful lament that includes King's *Maximum Overdrive*, Gus Van Sant's *Psycho* remake, and the Jamie Lee Curtis sci-fi/horror hybrid *Virus* (I forgive you for including the latter, Tony.) Notable mentions include: Victor Salva's "Ten Things We Have Learned from Horror Movies" (*Always assume the calls are coming from inside the house – wherever you are.*), "The Original Titles of Fifteen Horror Films", and Tim Sullivan's "Thirteen Favorite 'Splatstick' Moments" (Hey, anyone smart enough to give *Motel Hell* its due props gets an honorable mention!).

Dark genre fiction receives some respectable coverage in the book and bibliophiles will delight at appearances by Bentley Little, Jack Ketchum, Ramsey Campbell, Sarah Langan, Edward Lee, Gary Braunbeck, Sarah Pinborough, Poppy Z. Brite, and Michael Marshall Smith. Topics range from the factual (“The Fifty-Six Bestselling Horror Books Since 1900” and “The Original Titles of Twenty Horror Novels”) to pop culture trivia (“Revealed! The Pseudonyms of Seventeen Horror Writers”) to genuinely useful academic reference guides (Thomas Ligotti’s “Ten Classics of Horror Poetry”). The standout of this section is UK dark scribe Pinborough who offers up a brilliant cautionary travelogue of sorts, evaluating famous fictional settings as possible vacation destinations. With tongue planted firmly in cheek, she weighs the pros and cons of staying at the Overlook Hotel, the Bates Motel, and Hill House, in the idyllic towns of Castle Rock and Derry, and even in big cities like London and Paris. Other highlights include Little’s “Ten Horror One-Hit Wonders That Everyone Should Read,” Wallace’s and Bradley’s list of “Nine Horror Writers Who Have Written Children’s or Young Adult Books,” and D’Auria’s “Ten Books That Changed the Horror Genre.”

Music and miscellany split the last 100 pages of *The Book of Lists: Horror*, with fascinating looks at a horror hodgepodge that includes horror movie soundtracks, opera, comic books, board and video games, and even mixology that will gratify audiophiles, gamers, and even those who enjoy the occasional spirit. Noteworthy contributions in these last three chapters include: David T. Wilbanks’ “Ten Favorite Dark Works of Classical Music”; frequent Argento actress Coralina Cataldi-Tassoni’s “Ten Favorite Tragically Romantic Heroine Deaths in Opera”; S.P. Somtow’s “Top Ten Gruesome Operatic Deaths”; novelist Scott Heim’s “Ten Creepiest Made-For-TV Movies (or TV Series Episodes)”; Mitch Brian’s “Nine Amazing Horror Board Games”; Armand Constantine’s “Five Scariest Video Games”; Bradley’s and John Skipp’s compilation of “Ten Horror Cocktails (And How to Make Them)”; and twelve-year old Zoe Brian’s endearing list of “Top Ten Creepy Movies for a Seventh-Grade Slumber Party”. Accolades here are reserved for Michael A. Arnzen, whose “Top Five Horror Colleges” is by far the most ingenious contribution in the book and a useful guide to where some of the most important horror-related literary archives (Lovecraft, King) are located and where students of the genre can find a tailor-made experience in horror higher learning.

*The Book of Lists: Horror* is a fun-filled book that’s jam-packed with enough trivia, insight, and commentary to enthrall, engross, and engage even the most information-overloaded genre buff. It’s the trade paperback version of a coffee-table book without the pictures that you’re likely to revisit time and time again. Editors Wallace, Howison, and Bradley earn deserved props for assembling and somehow organizing the blissful overabundance of eclectic information they present. An absolute “must read” for horror aficionados of all tastes, shapes, and sizes.

**[Purchase](#)** *The Book of Lists: Horror*, edited by Amy Wallace, Del Howison, and Scott Bradley.

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