



Anne Rice: A Critical Companion (Critical Companions to Popular Contemporary Writers)

Jennifer Smith

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Anne Rice's fame rests on her supernatural tales, but she is far more than a horror novelist. She goes beyond the genre by changing the classic horror stories into myths, fairy tales, and nightmares in order to explore philosophical questions of life, death, evil, and the meaning of existence. This is the most up-to-date analysis of her work and includes individual chapters on each of her vampire, witch, and mummy novels, including her most recent, *Memnoch the Devil* (1995). A perfect companion for students and Anne Rice fans, this study also features a biographical chapter and a chapter which discusses her use of the supernatural, horror, and fantasy genres.

Smith shows how Rice's five vampire novels interweave to form a complete mythology, a layered universe with its own history and rules, in which her characters act out the question of what it means to be human in an increasingly inhuman world. In the three Witches Chronicles, Smith shows how Rice explores the meaning of power, sexuality, family, and womanhood in the 20th century. Each novel is examined in a separate chapter with subsections on point of view, plot, character, theme, and literary device. Each novel is also examined from an alternative critical approach, such as psychological, myth, and feminist criticism, which offers the reader an alternative perspective from which to read the novel. A complete bibliography of Rice's work, general criticism and biographical sources, and listings of reviews of each novel complete the work. For fans and students, this is the perfect companion to Anne Rice's fiction and is a necessary purchase by secondary school and public libraries.

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