

Living with the Living Dead: The Wisdom of the Zombie Apocalypse

Greg Garrett

Oxford University Press (Jun 1, 2017)

Hardcover \$24.95 (272pp)

978-0-19-026045-3

With its voracious appetite for pop culture, Garrett's book is a great reminder that there's more to life than just being alive.

Gut-wrenching, stomach-churning, and mind-boggling, zombies are a perfect metaphor for many aspects of modern life. Don't agree? Author Greg Garrett makes a compelling argument for the undead in his new book *Living With The Living Dead: The Wisdom of the Zombie Apocalypse*.

Garrett's tone is both academic and playful. He's personable, and frequently funny, even when discussing flesh-eating monsters. *Living With The Living Dead* is essentially an extended conversation with a favorite, nerdy friend that ranges all over pop culture.

Omnivorously researched, Garrett's book includes references to Cormac McCarthy, *Dawn of the Dead* and its remake, *Game of Thrones*, and the New Testament, among others. Zombies, it seems, are everywhere, and the "zombie apocalypse" narrative is the perfect metaphor for life as we know it today: transitioning "from one state to the other, a movement so shocking that we often stand ... mouths wide open, simultaneously marveling and horrified at the changes taking place." Garrett's writing is as mesmerizing, and as he fleshes out his case, drawing new connections, *Living With The Living Dead* becomes impossible to put down.

Living With The Living Dead straddles the line between academic and popular nonfiction writing. Although the book draws natural comparisons to Mary Roach's nonfiction, or even Michael Pollan's, Garrett's tone is at times too formal, even when he's writing in the first person. Weaving in personal stories about his time as a hospital chaplain and his initial impressions of the novels, films, and shows he references softens this somewhat and makes the book more approachable. Garrett harvests evidence from everywhere, creating a golem of a book that both captivates and delights.

Living With The Living Dead is a great reminder that there's more to life than just being alive. With a voracious appetite for pop culture, Garrett establishes himself as a bold new voice in the nonfiction genre.

CLAIRE FOSTER (May/June 2017)

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