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Seven Seasons of Buffy: Science Fiction and Fantasy Authors Discuss Their Favorite Television Show

Glenn Yeffeth, editor
BenBella Books (Sep 10, 2003)
Unknown $15.95 (224pp)
978-1-932100-08-2

Vampires. Demons. Werewolves. None are a match for mighty Buffy, the Vampire Slayer! Beginning while she was a high school cheerleader living in a small town (unfortunately located over the very gateway to Hell), Buffy Summers saved the world for seven seasons, one episode at a time.

In this collection of twenty-two essays, professional writers of fantasy, poetry, science fiction, and romance-who are fans of the television series-elaborate on topics ranging from the best boyfriend for Buffy to her battles to the death with such nefarious villains as the evil Mayor of Sunnydale. The essayists, including Jenny Crusie, best-selling author of What the Lady Wants and Lawrence Watt-Evans, veteran fantasist and author of The Dragon Society, examine the Buffy series in minute detail, postulating on all aspects of “Buffydom.” Such topics as “Dating Death” and “Sex and the Single Slayer” make compelling reading. “There’s only one thing on Earth more powerful than evil, and that’s us,” Buffy says. This verbalizes the essence of the show, according to one of the writers. Another writes, “Buffy the Vampire Slayer isn’t about killing monsters. Buffy is about the search for the meaning in life.”

The editor has previously edited Joss Whedon: The Genius Behind Buffy and Taking the Red Pill: Science, Philosophy and Religion in The Matrix. Like the oft-times tongue-in-cheek show itself, the superbly written essays in this book range from serious to irreverent, but they are always smart fun, even for the casual fan of the show. However, the occasional viewer of the program may have trouble sorting out some of the characters and episodes discussed in the essays (for instance, is Giles the mentor-fellow with glasses, or is that Xander?), and a few photographs of the cast would have been helpful. Of course, the book’s target audience is the viewer who rarely, if ever, missed an episode.

This book is an absolute necessity for those fans who not only know that “the Scoobies” are Buffy’s teammates in world-saving and that Buffy’s one-time lover Angel is more interesting as the vampiric “Angelus” when dispossessed of his soul, but also know that the excellent “Prophecy Girl” is the title of episode twelve in season one. Such ardent fans are sure to have a great time reading the essays and seeing how the series’ events have been “revamped” by these writers.

ALAN J. COUTURE (November / December 2003)

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