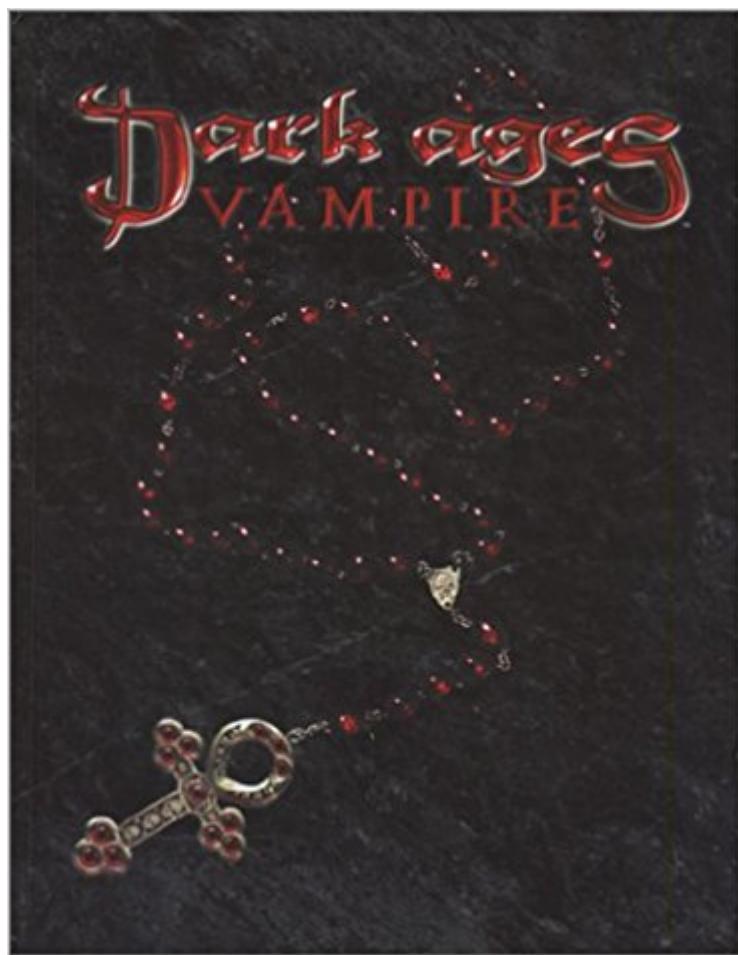


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Dark Ages Vampire (Vampire: The Dark Ages)



Synopsis

Book by White Wolf Staff, Bruce Baugh, Michael Butler, Chris Hartford, Jim Kiley, Adam Tinworth

Book Information

Hardcover: 315 pages

Publisher: White Wolf Publishing (July 15, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1588462765

ISBN-13: 978-1588462763

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 0.9 x 11.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.7 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #938,802 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #31 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Gaming > World of Darkness > Vampire #86 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Gaming > World of Darkness > General #11049 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Puzzles & Games

Customer Reviews

Book by White Wolf Staff, Bruce Baugh, Michael Butler, Chris Hartford, Jim Kiley, Adam Tinworth

This book is a wonderful introduction to the revised Dark Ages line. I approach every single book less like a player and more like an aficionado of the World of Darkness product line. I like the background and "fluff" more than the mechanics and how it applies to the roleplaying. In this regard, the book is rich in information about each of the clans and how they fit into Medieval times. The art work is visually appealing, which is something I cannot say about some of the clanbooks. If you acquire this book and like it, I would recommend collecting the follow-up volumes 'Guide to the Low Clans' & 'Guide to the High Clans', each of which "flesh-out" each clan and their identity during that period of time. If you were looking for a review on the mechanics and how this applies to roleplaying, et cetera ad infinitum ... I apologize because I only look that over for ideas I can use in an entirely different genre of game play ;) But from what I did look over, it is well written and easy enough to understand for someone who isn't a bonafide roleplayer (let alone a diehard gamer).

It is a very style-oriented book that has little or nothing to do with the Dark Ages. Much of the history of the world is ignored in favor of fantasy that would make the world we live in very different.

If you have the old version of this book, you need to invest in this one. Better artwork, rewritten powers that make sense, and continuity! Oh Continuity!

From the get go, White Wolf shows why they are on top of this industry with their initial revamp of the Dark Ages line. DA: Vampire hammers a home run with the artistic layouts and eye catching images found within. New and interesting spins are offered that were either barely touched on in the original incarnation or non-existent to begin with. Some rules are updated and others expanded upon (like Mortis and the Road paths). However, what keeps this book from being a 5 star knock out is its stunning lack of future premonitions that were prevalent in the earlier edition. Leaving some of those key elements up to the previous book to cover was bad form on the writers part and its exclusion kills much of the depth the original DA book had. Ending summary: The good: New information and new spins on the clans, roads, and disciplines. Compelling artwork and layouts. The bad: The way the previous book was largely written off. Key elements from the old book would have enhanced this DA product immensely. It wouldn't have hurt to have some definitive "set in stone" issues resolved like the origins of the Tremere (hinted at being servants to the Tzimisce) and the final fate of the Cappadocians. While White Wolf is known for their contradictory storylines and comments within their own books, at least previous books took a stance. The notable lack thereof in this one is fairly glaring. All in all though, a top notch book. A definite replacement to its predecessor. Just don't throw the old book away as the two can work well together in a main book/companion type of role.

Once again, White Wolf has made its previous output on the Vampire franchise obsolete! Dark Ages: Vampire is that good. It incorporates the best changes from Vampire the Masquerade since that title was re-edited several years ago and expands upon it. The vampires in Dark Ages have much more potential than those in the Gothic Punk setting: you can choose from several viable moral systems rather than be restricted to one. Vampires are more powerful since disciplines can be brought up to six rather than five. The Dark Ages feel is much better represented here than in the previous Vampire: the Dark Ages book, and the artwork is superb. I was a big fan of the latest edition of Vampire: the Masquerade, but I have to admit that I think that title has been topped by the Dark Ages: Vampire core book. It remains to be seen whether the supporting books to follow will be as good.

I must admit that I am a Vampire: The Masquerade fan, at least I was for a long time before White

Wolf started printing all of the Clan Novels that seemed to take the entire setting in a different direction that I preferred. You see, I am the kind of vampire fan that prefers personal horror over nifty powers any day of the week (scary powers... ok, yeah, I love those too). At any rate, back in the day I purchased Vampire: The Dark Ages, the historical counterpoint to their modern game. Now, at long last, not only is the modern game returning to it's horrific roots, but they have restructured the rules to finally oust the whining, power gamers that turned Vampire into a joke, so many nights ago. This game does the same thing, only for the medieval period. While advancing the timeline (to 1230) and stirring up a War of Princes, the game actually sets a real (dark) religious tone with the newly redone look at Roads or the Via of the Dark Medieval. I love this new game. The book does crack when you open it, though I'm not sure if that means the pages will fall out, mine have not. If you like vampires, but don't want to fuss with the modern nights, take a good look at the new Dark Ages: Vampire game. Oh yeah, Dark Ages: Mage comes out soon, as well as Dark Ages: Inquisitor, and a number of other related works that are sure to make this game just as good if not better than The Masquerade.

As I expected, this is another great release from White Wolf. It fleshes out the Dark Ages setting a lot better than the last edition. But that's now what this review is about. Why only three stars for such a great book? The binding is a serious problem. The physical book has obviously been skimped upon. Open it, the binding cracks audibly. I give it a month until I start losing pages, and I take good care of my books. I've asked around, and it's definitely not just my copy. They're all defective in the same way. Very disappointing.

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