

Mrs. Vampire

ampire expert, Leslie Ormandy, orchestrates series of courses and presentations revolving around the undead

By Jaime Dunkle
Associate News Editor

immortal children of the night. Sucking freaks. Fiction's hopeless ones living in exile that are often revered by those around them. Vampires!

When I saw the flyer for Leslie Ormandy's free presentation on Vampires in Literature, the Goth kid buried inside urged me to go. On Friday, May 12, I headed to Roger Adams Hall at 7 p.m., eager to encounter a perspective of the proverbial night

acceptance of vampires into pop culture was surprising to me. When I was a kid, it was not cool to wear all black.

I was reading Anne Rice, my favorite author, and I could not understand why I had such morbid interests. Ironically, when my mother last she asked me if I read "The Vampire Chronicles" by Anne Rice, that is when I knew the negative connotation vampires had earned was not

entirely. I entered the Literary Arts Center at Clackamas Community College, 15000 SE Hollywood, where the legend Bela Lugosi as Dracula in the 1931 cult classic "Dracula" was projected on the screen.

"He wasn't invited in," Ormandy said to the class. "He just showed up whenever he wants."

Ormandy analyzed several archaic vampire myths to illustrate the varying characteristics of vampires. She explained how the aversion to wolf-bane that was turned into an aversion to silver over the years. The discussion included scenes where the vampire's lack of mirror reflection. The shape shifting into mist, and wolves were some of my favorites.

Ormandy presented the undead feasting on plasmas as a lengthy, quixotic history in literature. During the lecture, Ormandy read stories, plays, novels and poems written from 1800 through 1897. Some of the rarest pieces were "Bride of the Monster" by an anonymous author and "The Vampire" by Elizabeth Grey, the first vampire story written by a woman. Both are available in "The Vampire Chronicles."

Ormandy said she has interviewed the whole pantheon of supernatural beings interests me," Ormandy said during the interview.

Clackamas Community College's vampire expert is working on teaching writing and grammar. She has prepared a full year of courses in Literature study. The final series will focus on Dracula. "From there I was supposed to go to zombies and werewolves," Ormandy said. "Then into ghosts and finally, and end in the apocalypse."

Ormandy said that sounds like my kind of education. In fact, it sounds like everything I learned between high school and college. Ormandy said that sounds like my kind of education. In fact, it sounds like everything I learned between high school and college.

into an accredited curriculum.

"Students are interested in taking it," Ormandy said. "They discover history, literary criticism, life and death and undead; all the same things we talk about in a traditional literature class."

Ormandy's favorite vampire poem is Charles Baudelaire's "Metamorphosis of a Vampire," specifically the Edna St. Vincent Millay translation. I was very excited that Ormandy mentioned one of my favorite writers of all time.

"When she drained me of my very marrow, and cold/And weak, I turned to give her one more kiss-behold/There at my side was nothing but a hideous/Putrescent thing, all faceless and exuding pus," an excerpt from "Metamorphosis of a Vampire" by Baudelaire.

The discussions in Ormandy's classes and presentations are interesting, interactive and thought-provoking. Much to my liking, she actively invites her students to maintain inquisitive minds.

"I want them to get outside of one specific notion of vampires and recognize that vampires really are a product of the culture that's writing about them," Ormandy said.

Ormandy is very interested in the occult and even celebrated the undead at the Open Graves, Open Minds Conference hosted by the University of Hertfordshire in the United Kingdom, April 16 through 17.

"My interests fit in with the interests of everyone there," Ormandy said.

Her favorite aspect of the conference was the presentation on the steampunk subculture. Ormandy even dabbles in fashion designs inspired by steampunks, an underground subculture combining science fiction fantasy and post-apocalyptic cyberpunk where technology relies on steam.

Ormandy will offer her Vampires in Literature class in the fall at Harmony campus, and the classes will have a maximum of 35 students.

Max Dorsey is studying art at CCC. He was at the presentation and he has taken Ormandy's full-length Vampires in Literature class.

"We saw some movies, like 'Mister Vampire,' where the vampires hop," Dorsey said about the previous class he took.

Unbelievably, some people take the whole vampire obsession a little too far. Some people truly believe they are one.

"I've seen a few myself, and it's pretty freaky," Dorsey said. "They actually draw blood, and they drink it."

If you are thinking of taking a class dedicated to vampires, don't forget that those nocturnal blood-suckers are sexy!

"Be prepared. Sometimes she might accidentally get a smut book, accidentally, but she mostly wants to show you the campy stuff," Dorsey said. "Like, 'this is really cute,' or 'this is really dark,' or 'this is really sexual.'"

If you find those who draw blood attractive, check out Ormandy's presentations and classes.

Top 10 reasons why I hate Ke\$ha

By Annemarie Schulte
Arts & Culture Editor



Duty" for hours on end and yell expletives that make no sense when strung together than listen to "Tik Tok" one more time.

3. She doesn't even sing; she "sing-talks" or "sing-song raps" as Rolling Stone more nicely puts it. Watch the video on collegehumor.com titled "Sing Talk (Tik Tok Parody)." I can't stop watching it.

4. She promotes alcoholism and promiscuity and has bad taste in men. During an interview with Ryan Seacrest, Ke\$ha said, "I like guys with preferably a trashy mustache and a mullet ... Joe Dirt is like my fantasy ... I prefer a mullet and/or beard. I kinda like fat guys, and guys who can't see like super well, because then they can't look at other girls."

5. She can't perform live. See her Saturday Night Live performance of "Your Love Is My Drug."

6. She's sang background vocals for Paris Hilton. Yes, you read that right; background ... vocals ... for Paris Hilton. You and I could sing background vocals for Paris Hilton. (It's also rumored that there was an incident in which she puked in Hilton's closet; classy!)

7. She trespassed and was thrown out of Prince's home because she was so desperately trying to get him to produce her record. That's a true story.

8. She has a song (that she's made millions from) titled "Blah, Blah, Blah." If that's not talent and originality, I don't know what is. She also ends one of her songs with "I like your beard." Ke\$ha, as my mom always used to say, "Don't go away mad, just go away."

9. She describes her style as "garbage-chic." Isn't that an oxymoron? Remove "chic" and I'm pretty sure that's what everyone honestly thinks of her "style."

10. She abuses Auto-Tune to the point where no one actually knows what her voice sounds like. Perhaps that's a blessing in disguise though; I'm not sure I could take listening to her voice raw. You're not T-Pain, Ke\$ha.



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