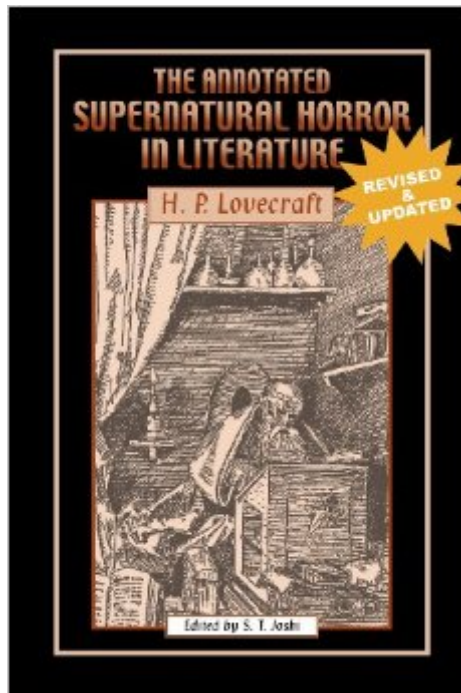


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# The Annotated Supernatural Horror In Literature: Revised And Enlarged



## Synopsis

H. P. Lovecraft's "Supernatural Horror in Literature," first published in 1927, is widely recognized as the finest historical survey of horror literature ever written. The product of both a keen critical analyst and a working practitioner in the field, the essay affords unique insights into the nature, development, and history of the weird tale. Beginning with instances of weirdness in ancient literature, Lovecraft proceeds to discuss horror writing in the Renaissance, the first Gothic novels of the late 18th century, the revolutionary importance of Edgar Allan Poe, the work of such leading figures as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ambrose Bierce, and William Hope Hodgson, and the four "modern masters"-Arthur Machen, Lord Dunsany, Algernon Blackwood and M. R. James. In this annotated edition of Lovecraft's seminal work, acclaimed Lovecraft scholar S. T. Joshi has supplied detailed commentary on many points. In addition, Joshi has supplied a comprehensive bibliography of all the authors and works discussed in the essay, with references to modern editions and critical studies. For this new edition, Joshi has exhaustively revised and updated the bibliography and also revamped the notes to bring the book in line with the most up-to-date scholarship on Lovecraft and weird fiction. The entire volume has also been redesigned for ease of reading and reference. This latest edition will be invaluable both to devotees of Lovecraft and to enthusiasts of the weird tale.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Finally, the long awaited annotated edition of HPL's essential essay of horror/weird fiction is here...The only flaw/drawback to this edition is the decision to keep all annotation notes in the back of the book unlike previous annotated Lovecraft works. Granted, having the annotations at the bottom of the revelant page did slow down a straight reading of only the text in the annotated story

collections. However, an indepth reading was not hampered by having to track down the exact footnote/annotation. Even with this minor design point, your Lovecraft library deserves this new annotated edition of a Lovecraft classic...Once again, S.T. Joshi proves his status as THE Lovecraft scholar with his in-depth research that sheds new light on this classic work for the modern reader.

I studied and taught H. P. Lovecraft's work during my years at the University of Chicago, and I read his long essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature" long before most people had heard of it. The new popularity of Lovecraft's fiction--based in large part, for better or worse, on bad films that borrow his titles but have little or anything to do with his work--makes Joshi's annotated version of this essay timely. In 1925 Lovecraft's friend W. Paul Cook asked Lovecraft to write an article about "terror and weirdness in literature." Realizing that he didn't know enough about the genre, Lovecraft systematically read the Gothic literature that preceded him, and the weird fiction that was more or less contemporary with his own work. His essay remains one of the most thoughtful and insightful discussions of "weird fiction" ever written. Others have used his essay as a springboard for their own work--Joyce Carol Oates' *American Gothic Tales* and David Punter's *The Literature of Terror*, for example. But Lovecraft read, understood, and described these stories as only a writer himself and a master of the macabre could. Joshi's notes are excellent (albeit at times opinionated), and the texts Lovecraft cites in his essay deserve new readers. If you're a Lovecraft fan--or if you're a fan of "weird" tales--read this book.

For those who would like to understand the weird fiction that helped inspire H. P. Lovecraft to write his classic tales of horror, this is the book. But the book is so much more than just an annotated edition of Lovecraft's seminal essay. The contents of the book are: Preface; Introduction by S. T. Joshi; SUPERNATURAL HORROR IN LITERATURE by H. P. Lovecraft I. Introduction II. The Dawn of the Horror-Tale III. The Early Gothic Novel IV. The Apex of Gothic Romance V. The Aftermath of Gothic Fiction VI. Spectral Literature on the Continent VII. Edgar Allan Poe VIII. The Weird Tradition in America IX. The Weird Tradition in the British Isles X. The Modern Masters Appendix The Favourite Weird Stories of H. P. Lovecraft (This is, of course, Joshi's idea of what HPL's favourite tales were, from statements culled from Lovecraft's correspondence &c. And what are HPL's most-beloved weird tales? Algernon Blackwood: "The Willows" Arthur Machen: "The Novel of the White Powder" Arthur Machen: "The Novel of the Black Seal" Arthur Machen: "The White People" Edgar Allan Poe: "The Fall of the House of Usher" M. P. Shiel: "The House of Sounds" Robert W. Chambers: "The Yellow Sign" M. R. James: "Count Magnus" Ambrose Bierce: "The Death of Halpin

Frayser"A. Merritt: "The Moon Pool")NotesBibliography pf Authors and WorksIndexThe bibliography is a real bonus, listing not only the finest tales by these writers but books that critically explore those works of weird fiction. This is a wonderful reference work that one can keep besides one's writing or reading desk, into which one will continually dip. Excellent. And Hippocampus Books are always so well made, sturdy and handsome.

HPL was a strange man- today he appears to be a bigot from reading some of his letters about peoples and races but his friends in their letters say he was the kindest man they knew. But his review of "Weird" Literature here I do not think betrays much bigotry and I found it fascinating and will definitely be looking into some of the more obscure writers he presents.S.T. Joshi has provided another good job. (I found an error in a footnote- see if you can find it!)

I really liked the essay 'Supernatural Horror in Literature' when I first read it and Joshi's notations are pretty good for it. They are a little less thorough than I would have liked but the bibliography near the back was great. I have to admit that I was pretty leery of reading this after reading his 'I Am Providence'. I find Joshi to be very snarky and rude if a certain author does not agree with his very stringent standards, to the point of dismissing certain books and stories if they have a different religious view from his atheistic viewpoint. I thought this was refreshingly free of that but I doubt that I will be buying his 'The Modern Weird Tale' anytime soon.

This book is an excellent addition to any Lovecraft fan's library. The real meat of this essay is in its introduction, where he defines the supernatural horror genre. The other sections deal with the history and evolution of the modern (for his time) weird tale. Throughout these sections he examines and reviews various weird tales or stories that have examples or elements of the weird tale in them. There are some familiar names among them, but readers should discover some other stories that might be worth a read. The essay has been annotated very well by Joshi and he has made it extremely easy to track down many of the stories, tales, and events mentioned in the essay. He has also written a preface that talks about the history of the essay, some of the revisions Lovecraft made to it, and the other events that were going on in Lovecraft's life as he wrote this essay. I highly recommend this book for Lovecraft fans, especially those who might be trying to emulate his work.

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