



The New Annotated H. P. Lovecraft (The Annotated Books)

H. P. Lovecraft

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A Slate, and *San Francisco Chronicle* Best Book of 2014

From across strange aeons comes the long-awaited annotated edition of “the twentieth century’s greatest practitioner of the classic horror tale” (Stephen King).

"With an increasing distance from the twentieth century...the New England poet, author, essayist, and stunningly profuse epistolary Howard Phillips Lovecraft is beginning to emerge as one of that tumultuous period's most critically fascinating and yet enigmatic figures," writes Alan Moore in his introduction to *The New Annotated H. P. Lovecraft*. Despite this nearly unprecedented posthumous trajectory, at the time of his death at the age of forty-six, Lovecraft's work had appeared only in dime-store magazines, ignored by the public and maligned by critics. Now well over a century after his birth, Lovecraft is increasingly being recognized as the foundation for American horror and science fiction, the source of "incalculable influence on succeeding generations of writers of horror fiction" (Joyce Carol Oates).

In this volume, Leslie S. Klinger reanimates Lovecraft with clarity and historical insight, charting the rise of the erstwhile pulp writer, whose rediscovery and reclamation into the literary canon can be compared only to that of Poe or Melville. Weaving together a broad base of existing scholarship with his own original insights, Klinger appends Lovecraft's uncanny oeuvre and Kafkaesque life story in a way that provides context and unlocks many of the secrets of his often cryptic body of work.

Over the course of his career, Lovecraft—"the Copernicus of the horror story" (Fritz Leiber)—made a marked departure from the gothic style of his predecessors that focused mostly on ghosts, ghouls, and witches, instead crafting a vast mythos in which humanity is but a blissfully unaware speck in a cosmos shared by vast and ancient alien beings. One of the progenitors of "weird fiction," Lovecraft wrote stories suggesting that we share not just our reality but our planet, and even a common ancestry, with unspeakable, godlike creatures just one accidental revelation away from emerging from their epoch of hibernation and extinguishing both our individual sanity and entire civilization.

Following his best-selling *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*, Leslie S. Klinger collects here twenty-two of Lovecraft's best, most chilling "Arkham" tales, including "The Call of Cthulhu," *At the Mountains of Madness*, "The Whisperer in Darkness," "The Shadow Over Innsmouth," "The Colour Out of Space," and others. With nearly 300 illustrations, including full-color reproductions of the original artwork and covers from *Weird Tales* and *Astounding Stories*, and more than 1,000 annotations, this volume illuminates every dimension of H. P. Lovecraft and stirs the Great Old Ones in their millennia of sleep.

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