

Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality By Paul Barber **Vampires burial and death paul barber** From the tale of a sixteenth-century shoemaker from Breslau whose ghost terrorized everyone in the city to the testimony of a doctor who presided over the exhumation and dissection of a graveyard full of Serbian vampires his book is fascinating reading. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Barber's book is a rational investigation into the claims made by Eastern European folklore -- its witnesses and spectators -- who often observed the processes of decay but did not understand what they were seeing and therefore came up with what seemed like plausible explanations for them. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Many apotropaics were applied to decomposing bodies not properly settled in their graves since the pre-scientific peoples were not familiar with the facts of decomposition (but only with rigor mortis which they expected to last). **Vampire survivors death health** This nonfiction book explores the very roots of the vampire legend and ties it to the unexpected things that dead bodies can do and how the people of yesterday interpreted those things. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** If a body could groan and move and bleed why couldn't it be what was making trouble at night in the village? I'm not going to say that lovers of vampire novels will like this book (I'm not saying they won't either). **Vampire survivors how to kill death** English It's been ages since I read this and I think it would get another star if the main thing I didn't remember so very very clearly was the description of the process of decomposition. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** From this idea we get several things put before the reader: *Bizarre testimonies of vampire outbreaks* An amazing overview of vampire/ghost superstitions over the world *A medical examiner's eye view of the process of decomposition Out of these disparate parts Barber weaves a compelling case. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** While Twilight and other vampire fiction and films currently have once again brought the vampire to the apex of popular culture this book and its author offer both the history of the vampire in actual (mainly Slavic) folklore and the biological basis for after-death processes which gave rise to vampire myths across many cultures. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** The body one must understand takes some odd turns once dead and many of these will surprise even the modern reader—at that even ones like myself with a strong biomedical background—so we can only imagine how our forefathers who lacked the advantage of clear scientific understanding saw what happened to a corpse after death. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Moreover the dead were not buried by professional undertakers nor had the advantages of vaults and other protective measures to ensure they would not be violated by animals or otherwise suffer ignoble fates. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Barber an anthropologist provides a very good if sometimes creepy grounding in how the body changes following death how issues such as weather flooding and animals can expose or otherwise affect the corpse and thus how people in pre-modern societies came to explain some very natural—if gross and scary—processes as the work of vampires or other sinister forces. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** His research is comprehensive—vast I'd even say—and he offers plenty of additional sources to consult and read up on further if a certain aspect of vampire folkways strikes your fancy. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Overall there is little I could fault with this book and it's become a real favorite of mine not only for the topic and entertainment value but as an example of well-organized scholarship for a general readership: Barber is also a master of grouping certain topics to chapters and presenting not only the wealth of data at hand about vampires and corpses but also making the reader aware of how vampire myths speak of greater conventions in folklore—how people found a problem in the natural decay processes of corpses and how they went about trying to remedy that problem and how such pre-modern logic is very telling of faith culture and how history itself has been shaped via belief systems. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** The only small issues I would have with this book would be that as a Slavist well-versed in Serbo-Croatian folklore I would have liked to have seen greater and more-nuanced exploration of various Slavic traditions than provided though what Barber gives us is good and to his credit he didn't set out to write a history of Slavic folklore but a very specific history of how the corpse came in various cultures to be seen as a vampire. **Vampire survivors death health** I do wish he'd write a book on general vampire lore though because despite not being a literary

scholar his work here indicates he'd do far better than many who have tried their hand at this task. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** The observations are correct but without knowledge and understanding of the science behind some of the natural phenomenon taking place the interpretations mingle with imagination and strange things happen as a result. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** All I could think of while reading was this picture even if there wasn't anything like this mentioned in the book:Of course people have always made up their beliefs but the society reached a point where the focus was on sin and the people who sin meaning that everything that was bad could be blamed on that. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** One could argue that it doesn't matter because they were dead anyway but those people mutilating the bodies and killing the revenants all over again actually believed they were somehow still living. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** It surely is difficult to understand some past concepts and belief systems but at least from studying history and the people we are provided with an explanation and a possible cure against them. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** English This book provides overwhelming evidence that practices and beliefs associated with death funerals burial the soul the afterlife and the undead were strongly influenced by facts and misunderstandings about decomposition processes. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** This book shows the reader that bodies rot and decay in a variety of different ways and unless you understand the science of decomposition it is tempting to resort to supernatural explanations for bodies that fail to decompose in the usual or expected way. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Hardcore scientists and atheists may feel validated by reading this book because it succeeds in debunking many (false) supernatural explanations of events and practices related to death and the soul. **Vampire survivors death health** However what such individuals may fail to consider out of laziness or bias is that FALSE beliefs about the supernatural do not disprove or provide evidence against the reality of ACTUAL supernatural entities and processes.

Vampire survivors death health

In this engrossing book Paul Barber surveys centuries of folklore about vampires and offers the first scientific explanation for the origins of the vampire legends: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** **Vampires Burial and Death: Folklore and Reality** Fascinating and unexpected; wholly original research; entirely free of fantasy but sympathetic to the human capacity for creating it, **Vampire survivors death health**) I give it five stars because apart from any other consideration there is no book I know of that is even remotely like this, **Vampire survivors death health** Barber expertly separates fact from folklore but also shows how they intertwine in ways that uneducated locals were unaware of: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Their account of the often bizarre mysteries of death makes sense when you understand as Barber shows us that they believed Nature to have will and personal agency: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** We moderns are still free to examine their accounts for truthful clues about the reality of nature contained within them, **Vampire survivors how to kill death** I always enjoy learning new words and this book taught me 'apotropaic' which means 'methods of turning evil away' -- see chapters 7 & 8, **Vampires burial and death paul barber** English Are no sparkly or sexy vampires here; not even any who wear evening dress and travel with coffins of dirt. **Vampire survivors death health** The average corpse does certain things: the face turns pale and waxy the limbs become rigid the blood coagulates and it lays silent and unmoving. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** But not all corpses follow those rules; depending on how the person died they may have a red face, **Vampires burial and death paul barber** After a certain point rigor leaves and the body becomes limp again. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** A corpse filled with gasses from decay may make sounds when moved or prodded. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** These things are explainable through science today but weren't 500 or more years ago, **Vampire survivors how to kill death** The book reads like a master's or doctoral thesis: Barber makes his points clearly and presents well researched

proof to back them. **Vampire survivors death health** While much of his research was in folklore he has also gone to the experts in dead bodies: coroners and medical examiners: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** He's got the facts down cold: the physical signs of bodies that were declared vampires or revenants could all be explained by science. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** The stories that grew around them of course were all human imagination, **Vampire survivors death health** A warning: the descriptions of dead bodies are very graphic although certainly not sensational. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** It's all presented in a dry just the facts manner but very interesting, **Vampires burial and death paul barber** English Barber presents a rather convincing and interesting theory in this book arguing that vampire legends and folklore developed as a means to explain decomposition: **Vampire survivors how to kill death** The book is worth a read not only for the theory but also because of the amount of translation and sources that Barber looks at: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** If you are a fan of sexy vampires you should skip this book. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** A little dry in places but the author's dry wit especially evident in the footnotes saves it: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** But the book was extremely well sourced and interesting so I'd definitely recommend it. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** English As a writer I can literally flip to any pages of this book and get two story ideas. **Vampire survivors death health** Vampires Burial and Death starts from a single hypothesis: legends of the returned dead come from nonscientific people trying to explain the weird stuff that happens to bodies: **Vampire survivors how to kill death** Here's three paragraphs of Europeans peasants talking about busting into Old Uncle Vlad's tomb and finding his mouth filled with blood, **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Now oh course they thought corpses drank blood in the day: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** The folklore he deals with covers a great variety including chapters on turning away the forces of evil and beliefs about how souls work. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** I was overjoyed to finally discover inside the folkloric reason why Jews cover mirrors in our house when a relative dies; that one had been bugging me, **Vampire survivors death health** Also if you need to know how to kill a vampire this is the book to teach you: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** This is probably the only vampire book with a recommendation in the Journal of the American Medical Association, **Vampire survivors death health** I doubt I could give it bigger praise than that to show how many interests converge in these pages: **Vampire survivors how to kill death** VD&B will always have a place on my writing research shelf; there's always some new tidbit to inspire: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** English Vampires Burial and Death is an older book from the 1980s, **Vampire survivors how to kill death** It is an interesting must read for people who enjoy reading about vampires, **Vampires burial and death paul barber** With historical cases and folklore from across Europe it is interesting to see how the vampire evolved but how much they share common traits. **Vampire survivors death health** There is so much more that just makes this book worthwhile: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** English I recently started re-reading this great book as I'm working on an article on Serbian vampires currently myself, **Vampire survivors death health** Barber's writing is academic but clear and oftentimes very entertaining and engaging: **Vampire survivors how to kill death** The man can certainly write though having such an odd and engrossing topic certainly doesn't hurt matters in the least: **Vampire survivors death health** English The book is based mainly on folkloric resources the newest being the 1980s: **Vampires burial and death paul barber** There are accounts of vampirism and stories told by people European mostly about situations in which the dead affected the living. **Vampires burial and death paul barber** The archaeological resources which are scarce are also quite outdated and there are new theories available that provide a different interpretation at least. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** It's definitely interesting to see where the idea of vampire came from originally but it's not that different from the other myths humans created through time. **Vampire survivors how to kill death** One parallel made for such interpretations are the witch theories and accusations, **Vampires burial and death paul barber** But just like the author said the vampires were lucky enough to be already dead: **Vampire survivors death health** It's almost unthinkable what they were capable of doing to those believed

to become vampires, **Vampires burial and death paul barber** Anyway this book is worth reading and contains many valuable insights and interesting facts about a (somewhat) taboo subject.

Vampire survivors how to kill death My only criticism is that the author tends to repeat himself and makes the same or similar points throughout the book. Nice clear prose without padding. (This edition has a new preface. It is path-breaking and stands by itself. The blood does not always coagulate. Lovers of folklore and human nature will. English The title basically says it all. An interesting look at vampires burial rites and death. Recommended. Specifically the liquifaction of the eyeballs. So three stars because I am so annoyingly squeamish. Barber's written the most fun science/folklore book around. Basically the book runs like this. Here's why red fluid gathers in the mouth after death. Dr. Dr. Thank God for science. English

