After Bram Stoker and Dracula . . . before Charlaine Harris and True Blood, and Stephenie Meyer and Twilight . . . there was Anne Rice, the undisputed Queen of the Vampires.

In 1976, the prestigious New York publishing house, Alfred A. Knopf, brought out Rice’s novel, Interview with the Vampire. Rice was the first writer ever to create vampires who were far more than mere monsters. Her vampires were intensely Romantic beings with unbounded intelligence and an unquenchable thirst for love, art, beauty, knowledge, philosophy, spirituality and, above all else, existential meaning in the savage garden of the world. And thus began the celebrated Vampire Chronicles, a series that, over 40 years later, includes fourteen books with a fifteenth on the way.

The class will operate as a seminar with discussion a key component; so keeping up with the reading will be crucial. Supplemental materials will include some secondary readings as well as the screenings outside of class of director Neil Jordan’s film production of Interview with the Vampire (1994) starring Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt, and Kirsten Dunst, and director Michael Rymer’s film production of Queen of the Damned (2002) starring Stuart Townsend and Aaliyah.

Requirements for the class are: attendance and participation in seminar discussions; reading of assigned novels and secondary materials; two film screenings; and the composition of a critical essay (minimum of 5-/maximum of 8-full pages, double-spaced, MLA format with a Works Cited page expected) on some aspect of The Vampire Chronicles.