This week, Tim Burton’s take on DARK SHADOWS hit DVD/Blu-ray in North America. Since the day of its theatrical release this past May, a sharply divided public has argued the film’s merits. Some felt that Burton offered the perfect balance between homage and spoof of the classic TV series, while others stated they would have preferred a more serious work.

Then there were the naysayers who trashed the film simply because it was called DARK SHADOWS. This was nothing new, as any SHADOWS fan can attest to.

In 1969, when I was in the 8th grade, I was called a “faggot.” “Ha ha,” laughed my tormenters. “He’s such a queer, he even watches DARK SHADOWS!” Three decades later, at a horror con I attended, I was branded a “loser” by a fellow fan. Because I like—*love*—DARK SHADOWS.

DARK SHADOWS was, in 1967, my introduction to the Gothic horror genre. This odd, ambitious daytime soap opera, with its alluring, non-soap tales of vampires, witches, werewolves and ghosts, inspired me to start attending showings of the latest Hammer films in Brooklyn, New York, where I grew up. Then I discovered *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine. CREATURE FEATURES on Channel 5 soon caught my eye, and the Universal monster movies it showcased gave me nightmares.

I would never have sought these things out had I not first seen Barnabas Collins (Jonathan Frid) get out of his coffin and bite Josette (Kathryn Leigh Scott) on her neck. By the time I first saw James Whale’s FRANKENSTEIN in 1968, I had already witnessed Dr. Julia Hoffman (Grayson Hall) and Dr. Eric Lang (Addison Powell) create Adam (Robert Rodan) on DARK SHADOWS.

DARK SHADOWS
THE CREEPING FOG
AN ORIGINAL DRAMATIC READING

DARK SHADOWS
VAMPIRELLA