



SMACK DOWN!

★ ★ ★ **BLAKE VS CAVANAUGH** ★ ★ ★
CLASH OF THE URBAN FANTASY HEROINES

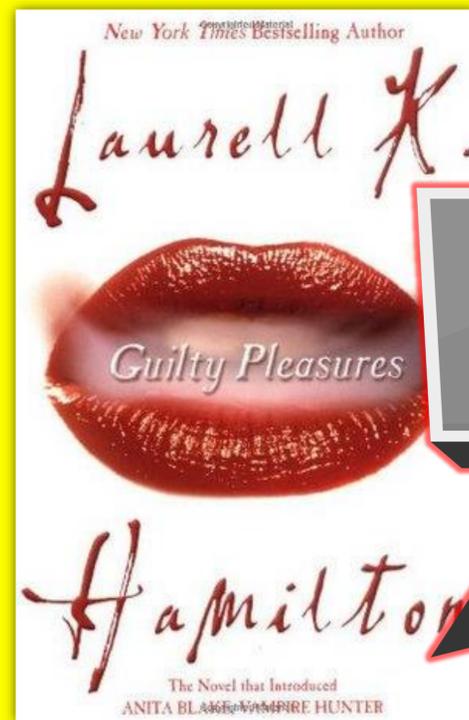
LIVE!

PRE-FIGHT WEIGH-IN

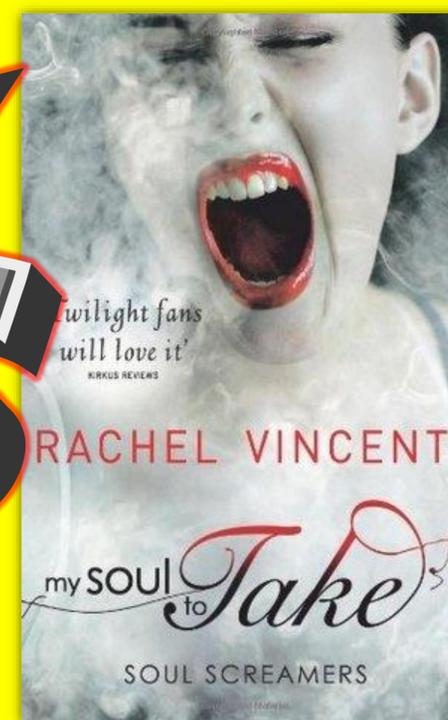
The importance of the heroine in urban fantasy has been discussed by many critics. Nanette Wargo Donohue discusses the 'tough female protagonists' found in urban fantasy. Paula Guran describes the urban fantasy heroine as having 'a certain amount of "kickassitude"'. Stefan Ekman argues that these heroines 'can be traced back at least to the 1980s and independent female protagonists such as Jilly Coppercorn in Charles de Lint's Newford stories and Emma Bull's Eddi McCandry in *War for the Oaks* (1987)'. Most definitions of urban fantasy, however, only focus on adult books and series. The young adult heroine is often discussed in the context of young adult fantasy or young adult paranormal fiction. The adult and young adult heroine have not been discussed together within the context of the genre. I am repositioning the young adult heroine in several texts as a young adult urban fantasy heroine. This allows a space to show how she continues yet also subverts the conventions of the urban fantasy genre. My aims are to compare the two in order to explore how the adult and young adult heroine function differently, and to look at the ways in which female adolescence is portrayed in urban fantasy.

ANITA 'THE EXECUTIONER' BLAKE

- Vampire hunter
- Can reanimate the dead
- Works as an "Animator"
- The power to become a necromancer
- Consultant for the Regional Preternatural Investigation Taskforce
- Empowered as a Federal Marshal
- Trained in judo and kenpo



VVS



KAYLEE 'THE SCREAMER' CAVANAUGH

- 16-year-old high school student
- Discovers she is a *bean sidhe*
- Screams when someone is about to die
- Can travel between our world and the Netherworld
- Fights hellions and rogue reapers
- Dies age 16
- Becomes a "resurrected American"

POST-FIGHT ANALYSIS

The young adult urban fantasy heroine differs from her adult counterpart in important ways.

ROUND 1 - She is around sixteen years old, on the brink of becoming an adult.

ROUND 2 - Unlike the adult urban fantasy heroine, she has not grown up aware of the supernatural world surrounding her. She will either learn about powers she has always had or gain powers for the first time. She is thrust into a world she had no idea existed.

ROUND 3 - Her story plays out in much more confined spaces. She will live in a small town and has often just moved to this town or is starting a new school.

ROUND 4 - She is balanced between childhood and adulthood, caught between two opposing worlds and is juggling the responsibility of both.

ROUND 5 - The supernatural disrupts her everyday life. By others she is considered a freak, always around when something strange happens. Involvement in the supernatural world makes many of these girls outsiders, others, freaks, and pushes them to cross boundaries.

RESULT - She must cope with having the weight of the world on her shoulders. She is just a girl yet more. She too is an urban fantasy heroine.

COACHES

Dr Mark Jones and Dr Aidan Byrne

SECONDS

Donohue, Nanette Wargo, 'The City Fantastic', *Library Journal* 133.10 (2008), 64-67.

Ekman, Stefan, 'Crime Stories and Urban Fantasy', *Clues A Journal of Detection*, 35.2 (2017), 48- 57.

Guran, Paula., 'A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to Urban Fantasy', in *The Urban Fantasy Anthology*, ed. by Peter S. Beagle and Joe R. Lansdale (San Francisco: Tachyon Publications, 2011), pp.137-145.

Hamilton, Laurell K., *Anita Blake* series (1993-)

Vincent, Rachel, *Souls Screamers* series (2009-2013)

