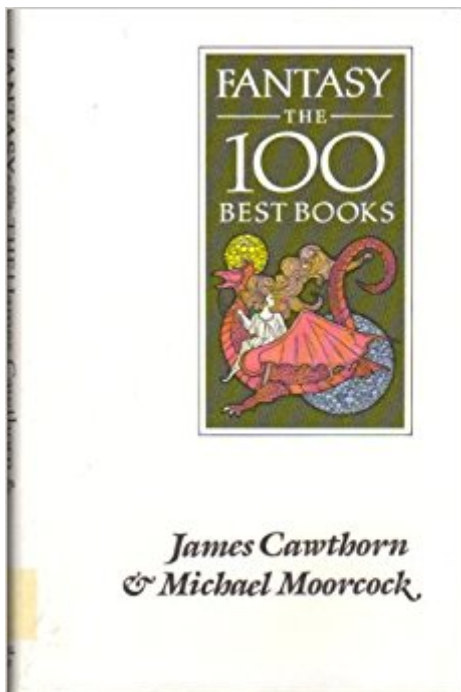


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Fantasy: The 100 Best Books



Synopsis

Fantasy books by authors from classic literature includes works of Johnathan Swift, Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Dickens, Emily Bronte, Robert Louis Stevenson, Oscar Wilde, and Franz Kafka.

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Hardcover: 216 pages

Publisher: Carroll & Graf Pub; First Edition edition (December 1988)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0881843350

ISBN-13: 978-0881843354

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 5.8 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #837,210 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #142 in [Books > Reference >](#)

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Customer Reviews

This book gives an excellent and well written overview of Fantasy, spanning stories from the inception of Fantasy thru recent entries. The notes and reviews of individual books and authors are concise, interesting and informative. Anyone with an interest in Fantasy and/or classic period science fiction would almost certainly find this to be a highly enjoyable volume---like a good roadmap guide on a long trip, it helps show the way and gives valuable insight into the various attractions one might wish to visit!

The 1980s saw a profusion of works both scholarly and populist on the history and literature of fantasy and science fiction; this work came out at about the same time as David Pringle's similar [Modern Fantasy: The Hundred Best Novels : An English Language Selection](#), 1946-1987 which I've also reviewed. The Pringle book restricts itself to the post-World War II era and as such is more concentrated and the author seems to feel less need to try to come across as "definitive"; it's also, I think, better-written with some valuable introductory material that gives the

project more weight and a more "intellectual" feel. This volume begins with Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" (1726) and finishes with Tom Holt's "Expecting Someone Taller" (1987); both books are restricted to English-language works. That's not to say that this volume, co-edited as it is by one of the leading figures in the field, Michael Moorcock (who admits in his modest intro to leaving most of the writing up to James Cawthorn), doesn't have value. It's a reasonably interesting guide to another 100 works in the field, offering little overlap with the Pringle book even over the 40 years of publishing history that the two books share. I like that the authors highlight quite a few fairly obscure books (Richard Garnett's "Twilight of the Gods", William Sloane's "To Walk the Night", two books by Henry Treece, etc) and focus quite a bit on the more "literary" sort of fantasy, though pulp and genre stuff is more in evidence here than in the Pringle book. I do think less space in the short (1-2 page) descriptions needed to be devoted to the plots of the works, and more on the literary qualities; but you can't have it all in such a short representative survey. Still worth hunting down if you can get it cheap and used; between the Pringle book and this one you'd be missing precious little of importance in the English-language fantasy world dating before the mid-1980s.

Fantasy is much older than Science Fiction and is also much closer to classic literature. The 100 books reviewed here make this quite clear. Fantasy books by authors from classic literature includes works of Johnathan Swift, Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Dickens, Emily Bronte, Robert Louis Stevenson, Oscar Wilde, and Franz Kafka. Fantasy books from familiar Fantasy authors include works of Tolkien, Mary Shelley, Lord Dunsany, William Morris, E.R. Burroughs, Fritz Lieber, Ursula K. LeGuin, and many others. Each review tells about the author, the book, and its significance in Fantasy literature. This book is really an indispensable guide for Fantasy fans looking to find significant Fantasy literature from the earliest works to the contemporary. The only major flaw in the book is the under-emphasis of Michael Moorcock's works. Because Michael Moorcock is a co-author, the authors felt that his works should be de-emphasized as a matter of journalistic integrity. Too bad. I think you will find this book much more helpful than Pringle's "Modern Fantasy" guide as Pringle's review only covers works since 1946--after so much of the world's innocence and romanticism had been lost.

Moorcock and Cawthorn take a look at a list of books. The book itself is around 200 pages, which is basically a couple of pages of trivia, info, book summary and information for each of the 100 titles listed. He starts with Jonathan Swift, and ends in De Camp Land, and others, by way of Merritt, Lovecraft, Howard, Poe, etc. A reasonably flexible definition of fantasy, from Flatland to Black Magic.

Mr. Cawthorn and Mr. Moorcock do an excellent job of providing something of a running narrative of fantasy, highlighting books which jump-started notable genres such as Gothic, High Fantasy, Sword & Sorcery, and Urban Fantasy. That said, I think this book might have done better to not imitate its Newman/Jones horror counterpart, and be titled 'A History of Fantasy' or some such. There are a number of books which the two admit are absolutely dreadful reading (like the infamous Castle of Otranto) but have been included because of their importance to the genre. Enjoy the reading, but don't take an inclusion as necessarily a sign of a book's quality.

I thought this was a list of the books, and contained the books themselves, but it is just a list of reviews of the books, not the books themselves.

This book is indeed the book with everything. I was impressed with both the style and the plush storyline. The orgasmic pictures included were both cyntillating and stimulating.

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