

The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature (Cambridge Companions to Literature)

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Fantasy is a creation of the Enlightenment, and the recognition that excitement and wonder can be found in imagining impossible things. From the ghost stories of the Gothic to the zombies and vampires of twenty-first-century popular literature, from Mrs Radcliffe to Ms Rowling, the fantastic has been popular with readers. Since Tolkien and his many imitators, however, it has become a major publishing phenomenon. In this volume, critics and authors of fantasy look at its history since the Enlightenment, introduce readers to some of the different codes for the reading and understanding of fantasy, and examine some of the many varieties and subgenres of fantasy; from magical realism at the more literary end of the genre, to paranormal romance at the more popular end. The book is edited by the same pair who produced The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction (winner of a Hugo Award in 2005).

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Editorial Review

Review
'Given that genre is really a construction of critics, librarians and booksellers, designed to place books in a way that they can be more easily found by consumers, and that fantasy literature is less easy to define than, say, crime fiction, this companion has a large field to cover and does an admirable job of presenting a good overview of the many authors who fit into this [particular] niche.' Stuart Bentley, Reference Reviews

About the Author
Edward James is Professor of Medieval History at University College Dublin. He won the University of California's Eaton Prize for his book Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century (1994) and a Hugo Award for (jointly) editing The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction. He co-wrote, with Farah Mendlesohn, A Short History of Fantasy (2009) and he has co-edited a number of other books, all of them essay collections, with Farah Mendlesohn and others. One of these is the first and only academic book on Terry Pratchett, called Terry Pratchett: Guilty of Literature (first edition 2000, shortlisted for a Hugo Award in 2001). He is currently working on book-length studies of Gregory of Tours and Lois McMaster Bujold.

Farah Mendlesohn is Reader in Science Fiction and Fantasy at Middlesex University. She was editor of Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction from 2001 to 2007 and has also edited or co-edited several collections of essays, including Terry Pratchett: Guilty of Literature (with Edward James, first edition 2000, shortlisted for a Hugo Award in 2001). In 2003 she co-edited The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction with Edward James (which won the Hugo Award for Best Related Book at the 2005 World Science Fiction Convention). She has edited two anthologies of original science fiction and fantasy, including Glorifying Terrorism in 2007, and co-wrote A Short History of Fantasy (with Edward James, 2009). She is probably best known for her book Rhetorics of Fantasy (2008), which is recognised as one of the most significant contributions to the study of fantasy and was shortlisted for several awards, winning the British Science Fiction Association award. She is currently working on a book on children's fantasy for Cambridge University Press (with Michael Levey) and on a study of the children's writer Geoffrey Trease.

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