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***Historical Dictionary of Fantasy Literature, 2nd ed.,* edited by Allen Stroud**

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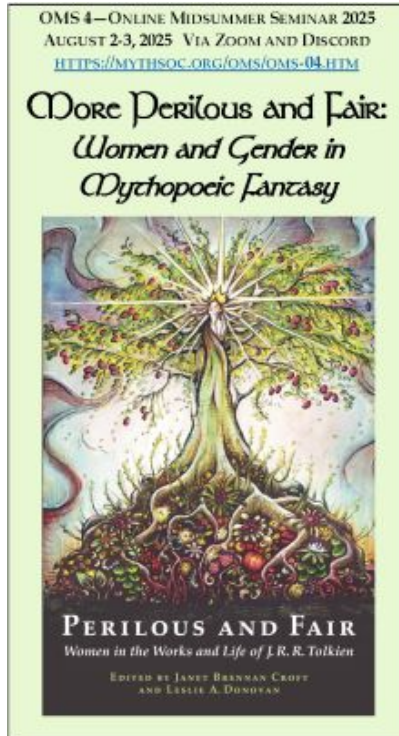
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Historical Dictionary of Fantasy Literature, 2nd ed., edited by Allen Stroud

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everyday people, and also propelling us forward through forces unseen. While some may argue that Tally's book provides only a brief introduction into these topics, one can see this as a meaningful choice on the part of this Tolkien scholar, leaving the door open for others to take up this work and themselves contribute to Tolkien studies and our ever-evolving literary history.

— Bianca Beronio

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HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF FANTASY LITERATURE: SECOND EDITION, Allen Stroud. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2023. xxxiv, 543 pp. Hardcover 9781538166062, \$200. Epub 9781538166079 \$190. Also Kindle.

IN 2004, THE SCARECROW PRESS (a division of Rowman & Littlefield) commenced a series of "Historical Dictionaries of Literature and the Arts." The first volume was a *Historical Dictionary of Science Fiction Literature* (2004) by Brian Stableford, and it was supposed to be followed soon after by one on horror literature by John Clute, and one on fantasy literature, also by Brian Stableford. The *Historical Dictionary of Fantasy Literature* duly appeared in 2005, but the Clute volume on horror literature never appeared (and its non-appearance helps to explain the limited coverage of horror writers in the fantasy volume). Both Stableford volumes are copyrighted to Brian Stableford, and both were reissued by the same publisher as *The A to Z of Science Fiction Literature* (2005) and *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature* (2009).

Now comes a *Historical Dictionary of Fantasy Literature: Second Edition* (2023), from the parent company Rowman & Littlefield, credited to Allen Stroud, with barely a mention of Stableford. I will address the problem of authorial credit below. The series of "Historical Dictionaries of Literature and the Arts" has now grown to around one hundred volumes, some already in

second editions, covering topics such as Russian Literature, Jazz, Surrealism, Lesbian Literature, Holocaust Cinema, and Horror Cinema (already a second edition, while no volume covering Horror Literature has ever appeared).

Both fantasy volumes share the same general shape. There are four essential parts: a lengthy chronology, an introduction, the dictionary itself (with alphabetical entries), and a fairly extensive bibliography, with many subcategories. The 2023 book is in a slightly larger format from the 2005 one, which gives longer line-lengths of text on every page, so the 2023 edition has an increased wordcount but a similar number of pages as found in the 2005 edition.

The chronology occupies about 4% of each edition. It is not an afterthought—but puts some context around the entries. As an example, I quote the entry for 1977 (all citations are to the 2023 edition):

1977. J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Silmarillion* is published four years after the author's death, as the closest contrivable approximation of his "lost epic" of pre-Norman England. Piers Anthony's *A Spell for Chameleon*, Terry Brooks's *The Sword of Shannara*, and Stephen R. Donaldson's *Chronicles of Thomas Covenant* demonstrate the best-selling potential of commodified fantasy. Sylvia Townsend Warner's *The Kingdoms of Elfin* Balkanizes Faerie in a spirit of modernization. Raymon Briggs's *Fungus the Bogeyman* takes adversarial existentialism to a parodic extreme. Diana Wynne Jones's *Charmed Life* introduces a new paradigm of the philosopher-wizard (xxix).

The introduction comprises about 5.6% in the 2005 edition, but is slimmed down to 3.2 % in the 2023 volume. The 2005 introduction is rather more taxonomic, with Stableford following critics John Clute and Farah Mendlesohn, among others. The 2023 is mostly a new work introducing more recent critical approaches, particularly via the study of world-building from Mark J.P. Wolf's impressive monograph, *Building Imaginary Worlds* (2012).

The main core of the book is in the dictionary entries themselves, which make up 81.3% (2005), extended to 83.4% (2023). The entries are mainly of two types, author entries and subject articles.

The author entries are usually at least a few paragraphs long. There are over 710 authors covered in the 2005 edition. These entries are pretty much the same in the 2023 edition, with various death-years added (and occasionally recent award-winning titles). C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams each get about one-half a page as an entry, while Tolkien gets one full page, and Christopher Tolkien gets a half-page. I really must give Stableford credit for the plentitude of forgotten authors that he included, like Max Adeler, whose *Professor Baffin's Island* (1880) is a precursor to Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Stableford is especially good on nineteenth-century French writers, an

area which he made a specialty in translations and critical books. Oddly, the three entries under the letter Q in the 2005 edition are simply omitted from the 2023 edition; perhaps this was an oversight rather than a considered decision.

Stableford's occasional errors of fact are also uncorrected in the new edition: e.g., David Lindsay was born in 1876 not 1878; in the Frank Owen entry, his collaborator Ethel Owen was his sister, not his wife; Dahlov Ipcar died not in 2003 but in 2017, nine months shy of her centenary; the Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series was not "edited by Lin Carter" (53) — it was edited by Betty Ballantine—Lin Carter being, as noted at the end of every one of his introductions to the books in the series, an "Editorial Consultant," while also appearing as its public figurehead). The identity of pseudonymous turn-of-the-20th-century author "Dryasdust" / "M.Y. Halidom" was revealed about fifteen years ago to be one Alexander Huth, but the relevant entry has not been updated.

There are about 120 new author entries in the 2023 edition. Most are very short, and most seem to have been added because one of that author's books won some award. Others are foreign fantasists, not well-known in English. This doesn't mean that every new author is listed. I expected to find Hal Duncan, Graham Joyce, K.J. Parker (revealed years ago as a pseudonym of Tom Holt), and perhaps Matt Ruff, but was disappointed.

The subject articles are not insignificant, as they make up approximately 30% of the dictionary portion of the book. This amounts to nearly 230 entries in 2005 (often two or three pages in length); the 2023 edition adds only 11 new subject entries, but this is misleading, for some of the 2005 entries to do with gaming (e.g., Card Games, Role-Playing Games) have been separated out and given their own entries.

The subject entries come in a great variety, though the main category is doubtless types of fantasy—geographic, as well as thematic. This amounts to over eighty categories, ranging from expected ones (e.g., Animal Fantasy, French Fantasy, Heroic Fantasy, High Fantasy, Jewish Fantasy, Mythopoeic Fantasy, Sword and Sorcery) to less expected entries (like Edenic Fantasy, Instauration Fantasy, Messianic Fantasy, Rosicrucian Fantasy, Theriomorphic Fantasy). There are entries on creatures and things (Dragons, the Grail, Merfolk, Pan, Tam Lin). There are entries on critical terms (Commodified Fantasy, Thinning, Portal Fantasy), and some magazines (Weird Tales, Unknown) and groups (The Inklings). And there are entries on various aspects of the fantasy field, from publishers (Del Rey, the Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series), to Awards, Games and Graphic Novels.

The bibliography is nearly the same size in each edition (9% in 2005, and 9.3% in 2023). Many of the sections of the bibliography follow the subject entries, with general and critical studies followed by thematic studies, so one is

referred to books on Apocalyptic Fantasy, Dragons, Fairy Tales, Metafiction, The Templars, and Vampires; as well as a few Nations and Regions, like Canada, France, Scotland, the United States; and finally a section on Studies of Individual Authors, where C.S. Lewis gets about one page; Tolkien nearly two pages; Charles Williams about one quarter of a page. It is a pity that these items listed (all books, no articles or chapters) are not annotated—some description of just what each item presents would be very useful.

To come back to the question of authorial credit, it seems to me that something around 80% of the 2023 edition is written by Brian Stableford, taken from the earlier 2005 edition. I do not see why a book copyrighted to one author (in two different editions) should now appear under another author's name, with a mere handwaving acknowledgement in the Introduction that notes "[m]uch credit for the assembly of knowledge contained in these pages must go to Professor [sic, he was a lecturer and instructor at a few universities between 1976 and 1996, not a professor] Brian Stableford" (1). That really doesn't represent the fact that Stableford was the primary author of the vast bulk of the book. Doubtless the publisher has some legal reasons (unapparent to a mere book reviewer) for removing Stableford's name from the title and copyright, but it certainly seems a moral failure to this reviewer to so diminish his valuable and lasting input.

The book itself, in both versions, is a useful and handy reference. It gives good definitions to critical language in fantasy scholarship, as well as putting context around many older writers who are now perhaps unfamiliar to modern readers. I see the book as a good starting point for study, a resource whose vectors should send readers and students of fantasy literature off in many various directions to learn more about the history, the past and the present, of our field. In this worthy aspect the book succeeds.

—Douglas A. Anderson

DOUGLAS A. ANDERSON is an independent scholar. His first book was *The Annotated Hobbit* (1988; revised 2002). He co-founded *Tolkien Studies: An Annual Scholarly Review* and co-edited its first nine volumes. With Verlyn Flieger he edited *Tolkien On Fairy Stories* (2008). His anthologies include *Tales Before Tolkien* (2003) and *Tales Before Narnia* (2008), and *More Tales Before Tolkien* is due out in 2024. Currently he is Book Review Editor at *The Journal of Tolkien Research*. His main blog is on *Tolkien and Fantasy* (tolkienandfantasy.blogspot.com), but he also contributes frequently to *Wormwoodiana*, a blog devoted to fantasy, supernatural and decadent literature.

