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Winter Is Coming: The Medieval World Of Game Of Thrones (20151021)



Synopsis

Game of Thrones is a phenomenon. As Carolynne Larrington reveals in this essential companion to George R R Martin's fantasy novels and the HBO mega-hit series based on them the show is the epitome of water-cooler TV. It is the subject of intense debate in national newspapers; by PhD students asking why Westeros has yet to see an industrial revolution, or whether astronomy explains the continent's climatic problems and unpredictable solstices (Winter is coming); and by bloggers and cultural commentators contesting the series' startling portrayals of power, sex and gender. Yet no book has divulged how George R R Martin constructed his remarkable universe out of the Middle Ages. Discussing novels and TV series alike, Larrington explores among other topics: sigils, giants, dragons and direwolves in medieval texts; ravens, old gods and the Weirwood in Norse myth; and a gothic, exotic orient in the eastern continent, Essos. From the White Walkers to the Red Woman, from Casterley Rock to the Shivering Sea, this is an indispensable guide to the twenty-first century's most important fantasy creation.

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Customer Reviews

A medieval scholar writes her comparisons of life and customs in the Middle Ages to life and customs in The Game of Thrones - and makes it very interesting. Easy reading, she draws you into the Medieval world without making you feel you're a 101 student in a 501 class. Highly recommended.

This book is just ok...there are several reasons why I would not buy it again, though. The first thing I check before I buy any kindle book is number of pages. Because if the book is good but has few pages (less than a hundred) then it ends just when I want to read more. And if the book is not good, it's a waste of time regardless of the pages. So this book seemed long enough, and I like the subject matter. And the short section of the preview I read, seemed interesting enough. But the rest of the book often isn't compelling though. The author frequently jumps back and forth between citing the book and the show, often without distinction between them. That's a minor quibble, but the author attempts to draw analogies between historical mythology and history, and the books I just start zoning out while reading because these parts just aren't written in an interesting way. This book offers nothing that hasn't already been written about the subject matter, the historical analogies while plentiful are not done well, no new insight into the characters. Despite the number of pages (a really shoddy way to pick a book, to be fair) this book is just another drive-by review of GRR Martin's book series and the show. .

Informative book about locations and storyline of Game of Thrones. Not myths, but some truth about beliefs of years ago. Love the pictures too.

Ties world history to Martin's books in a great manner

Great book for GOT readers or viewers.

kool read and perspectives on the show

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN WATCHING "GAME OF THRONES" BUT I WAS INTERESTED IN THE

HOOPLA SURROUNDING IT. THIS BOOK GIVES ME A QUICK AND EASY TO READ OVERVIEW AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF IT'S APPEAL TO SO MANY VIEWERS. I LIKE THE HISTORICAL REFERENCES TO ACTUAL EVENTS.

George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* series and its immensely popular HBO miniseries adaptation *Game of Thrones* is a different kind of fantasy narrative. The uncanny interweaving of the magical with complex geopolitics, religion, economics, and race relations underscores the rich scenery, imaginative imagery, and controversial portrayals of violence and sexuality -- aspects of our own history that no one has come close to describing in an organized, comprehensive fashion... until now. Scholar Carolyn Larrington has provided us with a supplement to the books and the series that will appeal to both diehard fans and the merely curious. It will especially reward those students of medieval and early-renaissance history and literature. This is not a mere juxtaposition of existing mythology/documented history with George Martin's ASOIAF universe, but thoughtfully narrated journey through the world of *Game of Thrones*, examining Martin's carefully crafted cultures and their possible historical or mythological inspirations. Larrington effectively hypothesizes Martin's medieval blueprint, and with Martin being such a student of history, Larrington's hypotheses are convincing. Apart from the obvious and well-known comparisons of the Lannister and Stark feuds to the Lancasters and Yorks during the Wars of the Roses, or the twins in the Tower of London to the murder to the two farm boys under Theon Greyjoy, Larrington draws parallels to Viking and Norse histories and sagas, the Catholic Church, Zoroastrianism, the Crusades, and more. Her discussion on the medieval and early renaissance economics is especially helpful to contextualizing Martin's portrayal of the financial situation in the Known World. Lovers of literature will appreciate the attention given to old and middle English texts such as *Beowulf*, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and *The Death of Arthur*. Many of these parallels have already been widely recognized, yet many may seem quite obscure. Whatever your familiarity with the source material, Larrington will have you view the show and/or read the books in a new, thoroughly enlightening perspective. This book is rather short, and seems meant to as a brief survey rather than an in-depth work of pure academia. Larrington's impeccable credentials are ever-present in her text, however, and rather than drawing strict parallels, she offers clear and concise theories regarding as many possible historic or mythological influences on Martin's story. The book is best consumed by someone who is up-to-date on the show (through Season 5) and preferably the books (through *A Dance with Dragons*), though this edition conveniently identifies any spoilers with coded brackets. While I believe there are more historic parallels that can be drawn, this book is thorough and will be difficult to surpass, both in

content and structure. It's definitely a worthy way to pass the time while we await Season 6 and/or The Winds of Winter. Highly recommended.

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