



## Rhetorics of Fantasy

By Farah Mendlesohn

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Transcending arguments over the definition of fantasy literature, *Rhetorics of Fantasy* introduces a provocative new system of classification for the genre. Utilizing nearly two hundred examples of modern fantasy, author Farah Mendlesohn uses this system to explore how fiction writers construct their fantastic worlds. Mendlesohn posits four categories of fantasy—portal-quest, immersive, intrusion, and liminal—that arise out of the relationship of the protagonist to the fantasy world. Using these sets, Mendlesohn argues that the author's stylistic decisions are then shaped by the inescapably political demands of the category in which they choose to write. Each chapter covers at least twenty books in detail, ranging from nineteenth-century fantasy and horror to extensive coverage of some of the best books in the contemporary field. Offering a wide-ranging discussion and penetrating comparative analysis, *Rhetorics of Fantasy* will excite fans and provide a wealth of material for scholarly and classroom discussion.

Includes discussion of works by over 100 authors, including Lloyd Alexander, Peter Beagle, Marion Zimmer Bradley, John Crowley, Stephen R. Donaldson, Stephen King, C. S. Lewis, Gregory Maguire, Robin McKinley, China Miéville, Suniti Namjoshi, Philip Pullman, J. K. Rowling, Sheri S. Tepper, J. R. R. Tolkien, Tad Williams

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“Mendlesohn goes well beyond a survey to offer new and often surprising readings of works both familiar and obscure. A fine critical work that offers fresh insights on almost every page.” (Brian Attebery, editor, *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*)

“A useful and deliberately flexible taxonomy, and an intense engagement with the arms race of rhetoric between makers and users of fantasy. For authors and readers as well as academics and commentators.” (M. John Harrison, winner of the Arthur C. Clarke Award)

#### About the Author

FARAH MENDLESOHN teaches at Middlesex University, London. She was editor of *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction* for six years, and is the author of *Diana Wynne Jones and the Children's Fantastical Tradition* (2005) and co-editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* (2006), winner of a Hugo Award. She is the program director for the World Science Fiction Convention in Montreal in 2009.

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