

Strategies of Fantasy

Brian Attebery



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Brian Attebery's "strategy of fantasy" include not only the writer's strategies for inventing believable impossibiltes, but also the reader's strategies for enjoying, challenging, and conspiring with the text. Drawing on a number of current literary theories (but avoiding most of their jargon), Attebery makes a case for fantasy as a significant movement within postmodern literature rather than as a simple exercise of nostalgia. Attebury examines recent and classic fantasies by Ursula K. Le Guin, John Crowley, J.R.R. Tolkien, Diana Wynne Jones, and Gene Wolfe, among others. In both its popular and postmodern incarnations, fantasic fiction exhibits a remarkable capacity for reinventing narrative concentions. Attebery shows how plots, characters, settings, storytelling frameworks, gender divisions, and references to cultural texts such as history and science are all called into question the moment the marvelous is admited into a story.



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