

[PDF] J.R.R. Tolkien: Author Of The Century

Tom Shippey - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the
Author: Tom Shippey
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly In a wonderfully readable study aimed at not just the Tolkien fan but any literate person curious about this fantasy author's extraordinary popularity, British scholar Shippey (*The Road to Middle-earth*) makes an impressive, low-key case for why the creator of Middle-earth is deserving of acclaim. (Recent polls in Britain have consistently put *The Lord of the Rings* at the top of greatest books of the century lists.) Having taught the same Old English syllabus at Oxford that his subject once did, Shippey is especially well qualified to discuss Tolkien's Anglo-Saxon sources, notably *Beowulf*, for the elvish languages and names used in the fiction. The author's theory on the origin of the word hobbit, for example, is as learned as it is free of academic jargon. Even his analyses of the abstruse *Silmarillion*, Tolkien's equivalent of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, avoid getting

too technical. In addition, Shippey shows that Tolkien as a storyteller often improved on his ancient sources, while *The Lord of the Rings* is unmistakably a work of its time. (The Shire chapters, like Orwell's *1984*, evoke the bleakness of late-'40s Britain.) In treating such topics as the nature of evil, religion, allegory, style and genre, the author nimbly answers the objections of Tolkien's more rabid critics. By the end, he has convincingly demonstrated why the much imitated Tolkien remains inimitable and continues to appeal. (May 16)Forecast: With the long-awaited part one of the *Lord of the Rings*, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, due for movie release later this year, this, like all Tolkien-related titles, will benefit from hobbit fever.

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From Library Journal Shippey, an expert on Old English literature and the author of *The Road to Middle Earth*, has written a critical appreciation of the popular creator of *The Hobbit* and "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy. The subtitle refers to Tolkien's ability to write about concerns of the 20th century (evil, religion, etc.) in stories that at first glance seem to be mere fantasy. Shippey examines Tolkien's published and many unfinished works (such as *The Silmarillion*), as well as the shorter poems and stories. He convincingly argues that Tolkien deserves to be ranked as a major literary figure. Shippey also castigates those critics, the so-called literati, for their vituperative and ill-informed attacks on Tolkien's reputation and achievements. This study is definitely not an introduction to the "Rings" books; because of the detailed readings on the major and minor works, it should be read by those who have already enjoyed the titles surveyed. Recommended for all public libraries, especially in the wake of the upcoming film version of "The Lord of the Rings"; undergraduate academic libraries will also want to obtain this fine work of criticism. Morris Hounion, New York City Technical Coll. Lib., CUNY
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