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Politics in Fantasy Media: Essays on Ideology and Gender in Fiction, Film, Television and Games

Gerold Sedlmayr

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Fantasy is often condemned as escapist, unsophisticated and superficial. This collection of new essays puts such easy dismissals to the test by examining the ways in which Fantasy narratives present diverse, politically relevant discourses--gender, race, religion or consumerism--and thereby serve as indicators of their real-world contexts. Through their depiction of other worlds allegedly disconnected from our own, these texts are able to actualize political attitudes. Instead of categorizing Fantasy either as conservative or progressive, the essays suggest that its generic peculiarity allows the emergence of productive forms of oscillation between these extremes. Covered are J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* sequence, J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels, the vampire TV series *True Blood*, and the dystopian computer game *Fallout 3*.

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