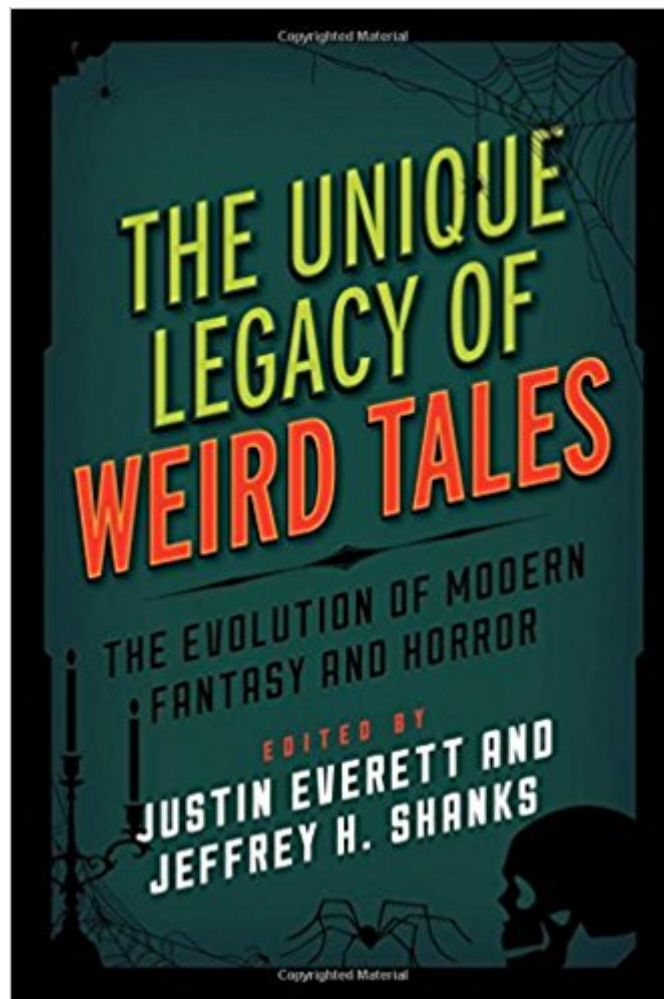


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The Unique Legacy Of Weird Tales: The Evolution Of Modern Fantasy And Horror (Studies In Supernatural Literature)



Synopsis

When the pulp magazine *Weird Tales* appeared on newsstands in 1923, it proved to be a pivotal moment in the evolution of speculative fiction. Living up to its nickname, "The Unique Magazine," *Weird Tales* provided the first real venue for authors writing in the nascent genres of fantasy, horror, and science fiction. Weird fiction pioneers such as H. P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert Bloch, Catherine L. Moore, and many others honed their craft in the pages of *Weird Tales* in the 1920s and 1930s, and their work had a tremendous influence on later generations of genre authors. In *The Unique Legacy of Weird Tales: The Evolution of Modern Fantasy and Horror*, Justin Everett and Jeffrey Shanks have assembled an impressive collection of essays that explore many of the themes critical to understanding the importance of the magazine. This multi-disciplinary collection from a wide array of scholars looks at how *Weird Tales* served as a locus of genre formation and literary discourse community. There are also chapters devoted to individual authors—including Lovecraft, Howard, and Bloch—and their particular contributions to the magazine. As the literary world was undergoing a revolution and mass-produced media began to dwarf high-brow literature in social significance, *Weird Tales* managed to straddle both worlds. This collection of essays explores the important role the magazine played in expanding the literary landscape at a very particular time and place in American culture. *The Unique Legacy of Weird Tales* will appeal to scholars and aficionados of fantasy, horror, and weird fiction and those interested in the early roots of these popular genres.

Book Information

Series: Studies in Supernatural Literature

Hardcover: 266 pages

Publisher: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers (October 1, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1442256214

ISBN-13: 978-1442256217

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 1 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1 customer review)

Best Sellers Rank: #782,472 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Genres & Styles > Horror & Supernatural](#) #441 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Genres & Styles > Science Fiction & Fantasy](#) #496

Customer Reviews

Edited by Justin Everett and Jeffrey H. Shanks (chair and co-chair of the pulp studies for the Popular Culture Association), this volume covers nearly every aspect of *Weird Tales* (the pulp fiction magazine) and some of its most popular writers from the early years. There are chapters devoted to the history of *Weird Tales*, literary reflections, and/or movements within its pages (e.g. weird modernism), collaborations of its writers, genres that stem from it (e.g. sword & sorcery), special attention of H.P. Lovecraft and Robert E. Howard, and other topics. While this review will not be a chapter by chapter review, I will attempt to cull and discuss what I thought were some of the more interesting chapters and briefly describe the others (which are also very interesting and well worth reading). Jason Ray Carney begins the volume with a discussion about the tenuous history of *Weird Tales* magazine, its lower than imagined level of readershipâpeaking at around fifty-thousand readers at the height of its popularity. He also details just how frail the magazineâs financial state throughout its existence. This chapter brings to the forefront some surprising facts and nice information, laying the nice groundwork for the over-all volume. If you are new to *Weird Tales*, then by all means read this chapter. Jonas Pridasâ chapter on modernism within the pages of *Weird Tales* is quite interesting. Declaring that modernist writers were published in pulp magazines, they have, none-the-less been largely ignored. He takes a birds eye view of modernist literature (some weird and some not) inside and outside of the magazine *Weird Tales*. Pridas discusses trends in various Modernist frameworks of weird literature, including science, Darwinism, and devils.

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