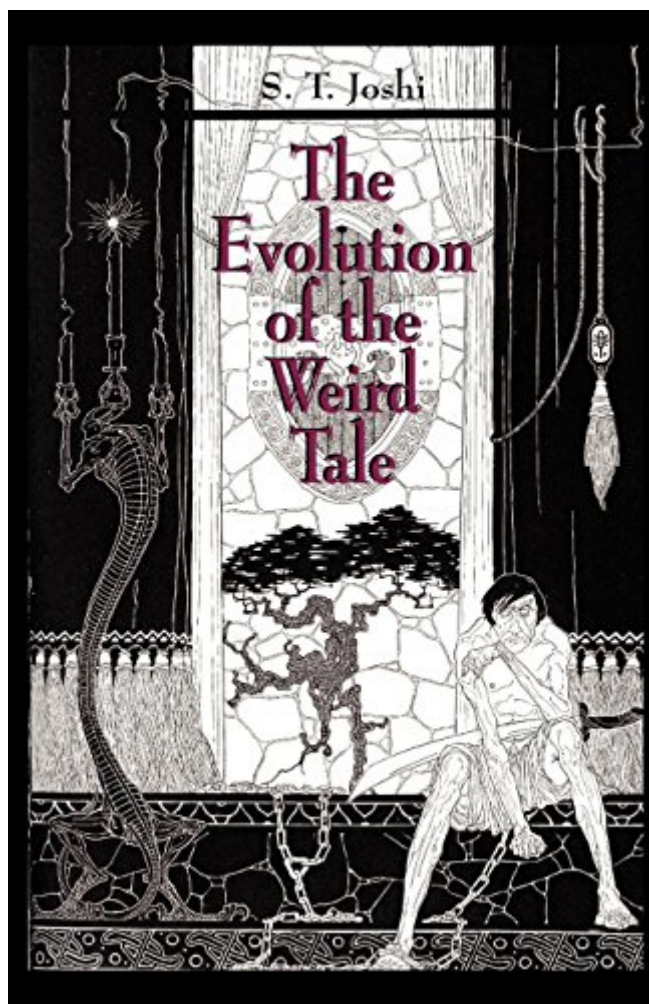


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The Evolution Of The Weird Tale



Synopsis

S. T. Joshi is one of the premier critics of supernatural fiction. His pioneering research on H. P. Lovecraft, Lord Dunsany, Ambrose Bierce, and other writers has set a standard of scholarship that few have equaled. In *The Evolution of the Weird Tale* -- an informal follow-up to his earlier studies, *The Weird Tale* (1990) and *The Modern Weird Tale* (2001)--Joshi assesses a wide array of American and British supernatural writers of the past century or more, meticulously scrutinizing their weird work and gauging their place in the canon of horror fiction. Such American writers from the late 19th and early 20th centuries as W. C. Morrow, F. Marion Crawford, Robert W. Chambers, and Edward Lucas White come under scrutiny, as well as their British counterparts E. F. Benson, Rudyard Kipling, and L. P. Hartley. Joshi includes substantial essays on Lovecraft and his disciples Robert Bloch, Fritz Leiber, and Frank Belknap Long. In a provocative section on contemporary writers, Joshi dissects the vampire novels of Les Daniels, the short stories of "Twilight Zone" creator Rod Serling, David J. Schow and the school of splatterpunk, and the novels and tales of Poppy Z. Brite. All in all, Joshi has provided some of the most in-depth analyses of both classic and modern weird writers ever written.

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Customer Reviews

If for no other reason, I would recommend THE EVOLUTION OF THE WEIRD TALE to readers interested in the genre for its first two sections: 'Some Americans of the Golden Age' and 'Some Englishmen of the Golden Age'. While a few of these names were familiar to me, Mr. Joshi's essays accomplish exactly what he sets out in his introduction as his goal - "I am writing here as an advocate...someone who is convinced of the worth of the writers he is treating and who hopes to convey that worth to others." Before I go any further, here's a list of the writers he 'treats' in these first two sections: W.C. Morrow, Robert W. Chambers, F. Marion Crawford, Edward Lucas White, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Rudyard Kipling, E.F. Benson, L.P. Hartley. Many of these essays began as introductions to collections of tales, or were first published as magazine pieces elsewhere, though Mr. Joshi states that they were all revised for this edition. So, more than just boosterism, he arranges this material to conform to the theme of the evolving form of the weird tale and how these writers built on one another's work. Along with biographical and bibliographic information of each writer, he looks for a philosophy or world view of these authors where it touches on their 'weird' output, in order to show how others who came later might have used their predecessors as springboards. In most of the golden ages he seldom finds any central ideas holding together their weird work, though in the remaining two sections--'H.P. Lovecraft and his Influence' and 'Contemporaries'--he sees more to go on. Mr.

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