

Fairy tales of London: British urban fantasy, 1840 to the present

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This book is basically a study of urban fantasy/fantasy writings/literature from London that comes from the Victorian era to the 21st Century. It discusses different works of multiple notable historical authors, such as Dickens, Wells, Orwell, and Peake. It also discusses how the authors' different methods influenced what they wrote, such as with Wells having an imagination that is based more on science and preferring to state things in a more matter of fact way. While someone like Dickens would prefer a more metaphorical, imagination-based approach, as seen with *The Time Machine* and *A Christmas Carol* being used as examples for their commentary on the class structures at the time. The book also comments on how Orwell and Peake were both 'committed to an ideal of progress' and believed that humanity's future was in the city. Orwell even continued to preach how science and technology had improved the lives of the people in Britain, especially for the working class, during the Blitz (p. 105). However, it also details what they were more drawn to as well. Orwell preferred the rougher haunts of north London while Peake preferred Soho's 'artistic bohemia' (p. 104). Michael Moorcock, editor of *New Worlds* between 1964 and 1973, is also discussed in the book, along with his dislike of *The Lord of the Rings* since he viewed it as being anti industrialization and basically promoted the idea that a more rural way of life would be ideal. He also apparently held the works of Dickens in high esteem. This book would be useful and interesting to people who might be interested in English urban fantasy and how it has evolved and changed over the years, especially around London. It also helps to showcase how different authors effects on the genre, along with their different styles of writing, and how different people would have different opinions on not only this genre, but also the fantasy genre.