

FURTHER READING:

GLIMPSES OF THE
EXTRAORDINARY:

A READER'S GUIDE TO

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY

This website was created by Spring Lea Henry to help readers connect with beloved books. The site includes bibliographies, descriptions of the various types of science fiction and fantasy, links to great online resources, book reviews, and a list of some great reasons to read science fiction and fantasy. The titles featured at this site are directly linked to Amazon.com for easy purchase.

WWW.SPRINGLEA.COM/GLIMPSES/

GLIMPSES OF THE
EXTRAORDINARY

A Reader's Guide
to the Fantasy
Theme:

Historical Fantasy



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CHARACTERISTICS OF HISTORICAL FANTASY:

- Large portion of the story takes place in the past of Earth, although the protagonist is usually a modern-day person who has traveled through time. Not so common is the person from the past visiting the modern era.
- Although the plot does not have to be 100% factual, our history and that of the novel should not be as divergent as in an alternate history science fiction novel.
- Light magic may be present, but is used more as a mystical tool or as a means for time travel, although some stories are "what if" explorations of how the past would have been with a little magic thrown in the mix.
- Major events and people are often but not always the focus of the story.
- This sub-genre tends to lend itself well to stories of star-crossed lovers. It is not uncommon to have the plot focus on a couple separated by hundreds, or even thousands, of years.

SOME MAJOR CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS:

- Diane Gabaldon: Her books combine the best of fantasy, time travel, history, and romance for a saga that will sweep the reader away to another world.
- W. Michael Gear: His books of early American life are breathtaking in their splendor and realism.
- Piers Anthony: His Geodyssey cycle tells the story of man's history through the same characters re-incarnated.
- Orson Scott Card: The Alvin Maker books show a more mystical early America than the history books.
- Nora Roberts: The Key Trilogy, in particular, blends history, mystery, and romance in a riveting Celtic tale.
- Leo Frankowski: Magically transported to the past, Conrad Stargard helps the people of Poland advance beyond their years.
- Bernard Cornwell: The Richard Sharpe series follows a soldier as he rises from the ranks of private to colonel at the end of the 18th century into the early 19th century.

RECOMMENDED STARTER BOOKS:

- *Territory* by Emma Bull. A magical retelling of the shootout at the O.K. Coral in 1881.
- *Witchdame* by Kathleen Sky. Medieval English royalty crosses paths with magic and archangels in this view of the past through a slightly different lens.
- *Clan of the Cave Bear* by Jean M. Auel. This series continues to be immensely popular for its well envisioned setting and characters.
- *She Who Remembers* by Linda Lay Shuler. This novel of early America incorporates some magic in the history.
- *Out of Time* by Abbey Lynn. This is the first book in a series that combines history, magic, and librarianship in a fun romp of a read.
- *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* by Mark Twain. This is possibly the first great historical fantasy ever published. The story follows Hank Morgan of the 19th century who travels back to the time of King Arthur.