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Fantasy: Escapism or Nonsense?

by Paul Batkins



Do you enjoy books about dragons, dwarfs, elves, etc.? Or do you like reading fictional historical books or love stories? Maybe you don't like reading at all and prefer to get lost in a film at the cinema or in a DVD?

I have to confess that I myself am an avid *Lord of The Rings* fan. I just love reading stories about made-up lands and different heroic quests that the characters in the books undertake. Now, some people like science fiction—*Star Trek* or *Star Wars* or whatever. Although these are not my cup of tea, I can empathise with those who do like them.

There's nothing quite like losing yourself in a book with a cup of coffee and a *chocolate napolitana*, or on a train while all the (ugly) faces in the background just drift away into space.

And then you're there, helping your favourite characters come to life, whether you are a spectator to a horrendous battle against The

Dark Lord Sauron, Darth Vader, immersed in ancient history with a book by Ken Follett, or trying to solve a murder in an Agatha Christie murder mystery book. It's just fantastic in my opinion.

I think we really need to get away from the humdrum of everyday life, especially with the stressful world we live in today. Even if you prefer to watch films (although that's difficult to do on a train unless you have a portable DVD player), it's still great to escape into a magical fantasy world.

Take Lewis Carroll, who was the author of *Alice in Wonderland*. Now in my opinion, that man was a genius. It's true, the story was composed of complete nonsense, but it also went far beyond the children that the book was written for, and into the realms of politics—the walrus and the carpenter, etc. So Carroll had adults in mind as well.

As a matter of fact, when I was learning to teach English, in one of the tests we had to do we had to decide which figures of speech were used in the poem "Jabberwocky." Imagine having to decide which nonsense words were nouns, adverbs, etc!

Sorry, I'm rambling on a bit. Getting back to this article's main subject, you see a lot of people reading romantic novels on the train, just lost in a world of romance, or maybe they're reading a whodunnit detective novel by Agatha Christie, trying to solve a murder on the Nile.

Whatever your pleasure, even if you like historical books, you'll still be transported back to other eras and cultures and get lost in time, although maybe that isn't as escapist as pure fantasy. What do you think?

So what's your personal preference? Do you like fantasy, history, romance, detective novels, or films? Whichever way you look at it, you're still escaping from the humdrum of everyday life.