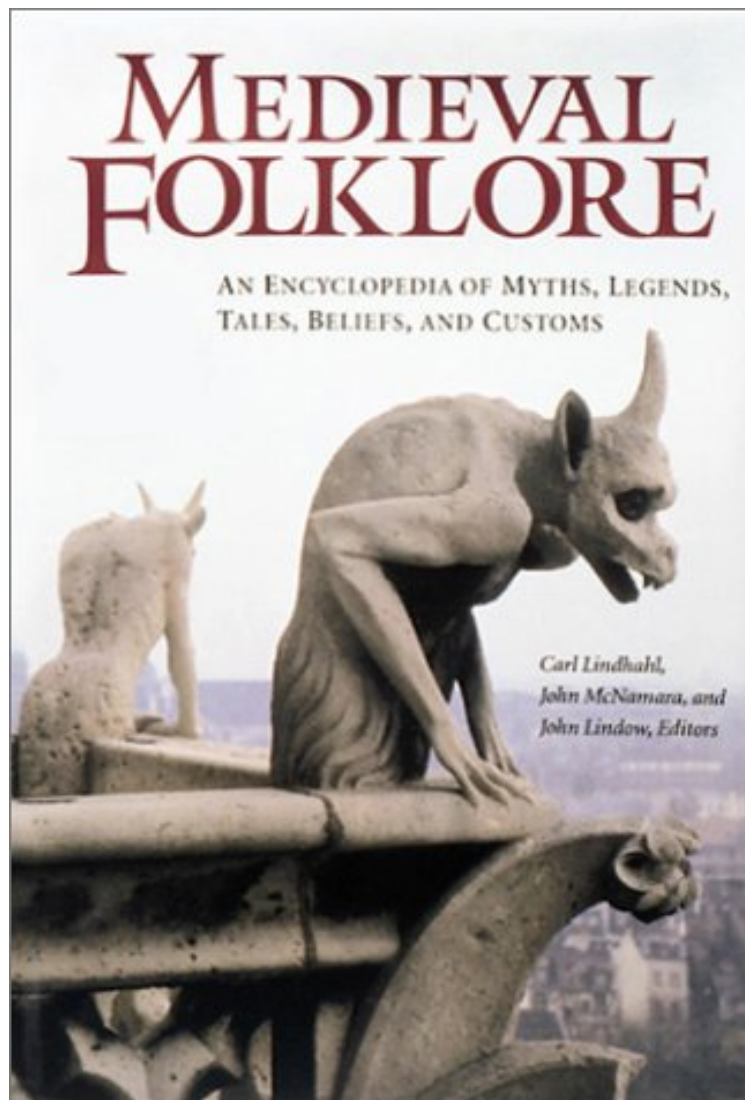


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Medieval Folklore [2 volumes]: An Encyclopedia of Myths, Legends, Tales, Beliefs, and Customs

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themes and similarities in medieval folklore throughout Europe. This is a great springboard for many topics in this field. Sometime I just read a few segments for fun, but I know it will be valuable for my research purposes as well. Scholars and Enthusiasts alike will enjoy this book.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Articles reveal the myths of peoples around the worldBy Midwest Book ReviewThis outstanding, two volume, A-Z guide to the folk and supernatural lore of the Middle Ages is a 'must' reference for any college-level library where folkloric or history studies is a central part of the curriculum. Articles reveal the myths of peoples around the world, with over a hundred contributors from the U.S. and Europe providing entries and illustrations. These provide either quick reference or source material serving as a foundation for further research.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Must for Medievalists!By Michael J SkupinMedieval Folklore is an enormously stimulating collection. The articles are well-written, and summarize their subjects well; they also guide the reader to further research. The variety of subjects is especially good: topics off the beaten path are included as well as more common subjects.

This award winning, definitive work is an AZ guide to the mundane and supernatural lore of the Middle Ages. Includes over 300 AZ entries Exhaustive bibliographic guides with each entry Over 150 illustrations Extensive indexes of motifs and tale types

From Library JournalEditors Lindahl (English, Univ. of Houston), John Namara (English, Univ. of Houston), and John Lindow (Scandinavian studies, Berkeley) are convinced that "no matter how exciting our [modern] fantasies about the Middle Ages may be, the real thing was even more engaging." Attempting to define the folk cultures of the medieval world "in their own light and on their own terms," the encyclopedia makes no claims to comprehensiveness. Rather, it covers representative areas thoroughly, adding See also references and substantial recommendations for further reading and study. The book concentrates primarily on the British Isles, from 500 to 1500 C.E., but other active cultures of the time also receive significant treatment, especially insofar as they interacted with Western Europe. The editors use traditional tools of folklore study, reflected by the indexing of more than 300 entries by motif and tale type. This is the first work that treats medieval folklore exclusively rather than as an adjunct to another topic, and it is an excellent source for both amateurs and more serious scholars.DKatherine Kaigler-Koenig, Ellis Sch., Pittsburgh Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistABC-CLIO has recently published two other encyclopedias of folklore, Mary Ellen Brown and Bruce A. Rosenberg's *Encyclopedia of Folklore and Literature* (1998) and Thomas A. Green's *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art* (1997). What distinguishes *Medieval Folklore* from these others is the editors' strong belief that folklore can be known only through the culture of the time in which it existed. In this set, which covers 500 to 1500 C.E., the stress is on information that is actually available on medieval folklore; earlier and later versions of legends, tales, and so on are related only where necessary to provide background. Readers may want to consult the two encyclopedias mentioned above for earlier or more recent accounts. Another refreshing precept is that folklore is not a product of "poor folks" but may represent other cultural groups, such as royalty and clergy. The 306 entries are written mostly by scholars from leading universities in the U.S and Great Britain. Length ranges from just under a page to more than 10 pages for in-depth articles with subentries, such as Ballad and Folktale . The encyclopedia's geographic range is Europe, with main focus on England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales as well as the largest cultural areas defined by language, history, and traits. There are entries on Arabic Islamic, Finno-Ugric, French, German, Hungarian, Welsh, and other traditions; however, medieval Africa, East Asia, and South Asia are excluded. Theories and methods are not stressed. Entries show how tales change over time and in different centuries. For example, British stories of outlaw heroes "spanned a period of centuries" and included Anglo-Saxon Hereward (eleventh century), Scottish William Wallace (thirteenth century), and English Robin Hood (fourteenth century). They combined "long lived patterns with the needs and nuances of immediate context." Each of these heroes is pitted against an authority representative of the time in which he lived and should be studied in that context.References to other entries follow each essay, along with sometimes extensive suggestions for further reading that include descriptions and evaluations of the sources, helpful for experts and most useful for beginners. A-Z entries are followed by a general index as well as an "Index of Tale Types," based on Antti Arne and Stith Thompson's *Tale Types* , (3d ed., 1961), and an "Index of Motifs," based on Thompson's *Index of Motifs* (1955-58). These are helpful but not comprehensive, because the Arne and Thompson systems are not used consistently by the contributors. *Medieval Folklore* distinguishes itself from the earlier folklore encyclopedias by its emphasis on strict medieval interpretations. Brown and Rosenberg, for example, cover literary figures from many eras, including medieval. The set under review does not treat biographies, with the exception of a few writers and saints and four historical rulers. However, it is strong on terminology. For example, flyting , a form of verbal combat, is mentioned only briefly in one of the other works and not at all in the other one but has a two-page entry here. Green's work is strong in its own right in methods of inquiry and topics such as ethnomusicology and ethnopoetics. *Medieval Folklore* is strongest in determining how words, tales, and customs were used at the time and over time. For example, we have all come to know the narrative of Red Riding Hood as fiction, but it may have been told as a true story in Latin in the eleventh century!The editors claim there has never before been an encyclopedia of medieval folklore. At

the very least, the work under consideration appears to be the only one readily available and accessible to the average reader. It is recommended for libraries serving beginning and moderately advanced students of the folklore of the Middle Ages in Europe. REVWRCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Recommended as a model topical encyclopedia for all levels, beginning folklorist or medievalist to expert." - Choice "This is the first work that treats medieval folklore exclusively rather than an adjunct to another topic, and it is an excellent source for both amateurs and more serious scholars." - Library Journal "A one-of-a-kind resource." - School Library Journal "The work under consideration appears to be the only one readily available and accessible to the average reader. It is recommended for libraries serving beginning and moderately advanced students of the folklore of the Middle Ages in Europe." - Booklist, Starred "The work is for any audience, from those new to medieval folklore to specialists in the subject. . . . The entries are clearly written and thoroughly researched, not only providing information but also sparking further interest in the subject. . . . It is unique in its specific focus on medieval folklore and is well worth the price for most libraries." - VOYA "School libraries serving upper grades and public and academic libraries will welcome this unique and important work. Highly recommended." - The Book Report "This outstanding, two volume, AZ guide to the folk and supernatural lore of the Middle Ages is a 'must' reference for any college-level library where folkloric or history studies is a central part of the curriculum." - The Bookwatch "Will enhance any library's folklore collection. . . . Highly recommended for the reference collections of public and academic libraries." - American Reference Books Annual "This encyclopedia is an impressive and fascinating compilation of the cultural traditions of the medieval world of considerable interest to medievalists and nonmedievalists alike. . . . An essential reference tool for all students of folklore, literature, and history." - The Medieval "It will appeal to both general and scholarly audiences seeking background and explanations of this important aspect of medieval life. . . . Some 306 entries cover a rich variety of topics including burial mounds, courtly love, dreams and dream poetry, festivals, games and play, oral theory, punishments, and styles of food preparation. . . . Medieval Folklore . . . is a fascinating and well done reference that will find a home in many academic and public libraries." - Against the Grain