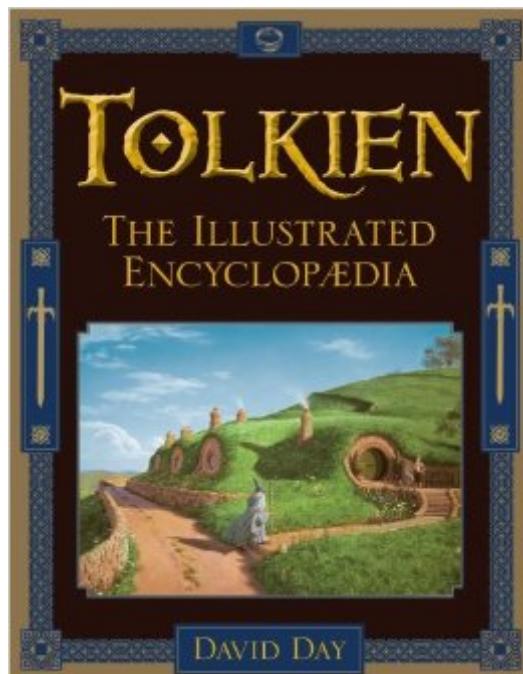


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# Tolkien : The Illustrated Encyclopaedia



## Synopsis

The first encyclopedic illustrated guide to the world of Middle Earth and the Undying Lands, this book brings together every important aspect of Tolkien's vast cosmology. More than five hundred alphabetical entries cover five major subject areas: history, geography, sociology, natural history and biography. The maps, genealogies and time-charts, together with the illustrations of characters, places and events, reveal to the reader the full dramatic sweep and splendor of Tolkien's world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

JRR Tolkien is amongst the most important authors ever to have lived in history. Although he wasn't the direct father of the Fantasy type of novel (Some like Robert E. Howard preceeded him), his work is amongst the most amazing ever done in history. The Lord of the Rings is clearly one of the most important books, if not the most important book, of the 20th century. What Tolkien left was a whole world, a whole universe so complex and vast that it became the object of analysis and study of many people. Many works of analysis of Tolkien's Middle-Earth have been released. Some of them, like Robert Foster's The Complete Guide to Middle-Earth, are quite good. Others, however, are so full of errors and subjective analysis that they become quite worthless to read. David Day's works are the prime example of that, this Encyclopedia being such an example. This so called 'reference work for Tolkien fans' is so filled with errors that one wonders if the author did his research work on Tolkien's works at all, or even if he read Tolkien. For the occasional fan of Tolkien, this book is quite worthless. The art is not exactly what one might call good, though some might disagree, but the

important part, the reference work, is so badly done it's not worth buying this book. Get Robert Foster's Complete Guide to Middle-Earth instead and avoid this, or any of David Day's books, like the plague. For a serious Tolkien fan, these books are an insult to Tolkien's memory and works. To finish, I'll leave here perhaps one of the book's most obvious errors. page 249 softback. "Galadriel - Elven Queen of Lothlorien..." From 'The Letters of JRR Tolkien' - Letter 210 - Tolkien's commentary on an early LotR movie script, commentary between the brackets "It is the home of Galadriel...An Elven Queen' (She is not in fact one)..."

While eye-filling and fairly comprehensive, David Day's work is not a reliable guide to the intricately detailed world of J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth novels. Day is entirely subjective, interposing his own interpretations and additions onto Tolkien's text. Tolkien's fans, who tend to have their own strongly-held opinions about such things, will most likely be annoyed, offended, or outraged. Fan fiction has its place, but not when it is marketed as a faithful representation of the original.

This is one of the worst Tolkien books money can buy. The maps are ridiculous, the entries inaccurate and sometimes even self contradictory, many important characters are not even mentioned, there are perhaps three sentences referring to Tolkien's languages (probably the greatest reason he even began to write his books on Middle-earth), and the so-called 'illustrations' are awful. If you want a Tolkien reference book, whatever you do, DON'T BUY THIS ONE. It is a piece of garbage.

I chose this rating because the paperback that I received did NOT have the same picture on the cover that you see here. The paperback cover is garish and very tribal! It looks more like the artist was more into totems and tiki gods. I was put off by the whole look of it. It appears that the contents were the same (I hope so) because the inner art is also harsh and tribal. "A picture is worth a thousand words" and the pictures in this one that I got did NOT invoke any of the cozy Ren-Fest feelings of the movies OR Professor Tolkien's writings. It is an encyclopedia format (kind of) and a LOT of information. I would recommend it for that but NOT for the illustrations!!!

I am not qualified to critique the content (I'll leave that to the academic Tolkien-ists). I am however very qualified to tell you whether I like something or not, and I don't particularly like this book. The organization of the content is bizarre to say the least. Even the index is complicated. The entries seem disproportionate in length to my interest and the illustrations are rarely illuminating. My

apologies to the author, but I do not recommend this book.

IF YOU WANT REAL INFORMATION ABOUT TOLKIEN, THE LORD OF THE RINGS, OR ANY OF HIS OTHER BOOKS, DO NOT READ THIS BOOK, OR ANYTHING ELSE BY DAVID DAY!! I was given a copy of this book as a Christmas present a number of years ago, and naively perused it, fascinated by the 'insights' into Tolkien's mythos and world. However, once I actually started to study Tolkien, I quickly realized just how completely bogus most of the stuff Day writes is. One particular example that always strikes me is Day's entry on dragons, where he claims that there are three kinds of dragons: legless, legged, and winged. This is just plain wrong- there is no hint anywhere in any of Tolkien's writings that there were legless dragons. Day just seemed to like the idea, and went with it.

I got this as a gift for a friend of mine. I owned my own copy when I was a kid and loved it. I know much of this information is now on the web for free but the great illustrations and the organization that the Encyclopedia has can only be experienced in a print format. Yes for the quick fact look up the web is better, but for someone looking to explore the Tolkien world as a whole this is a great reference resource.

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