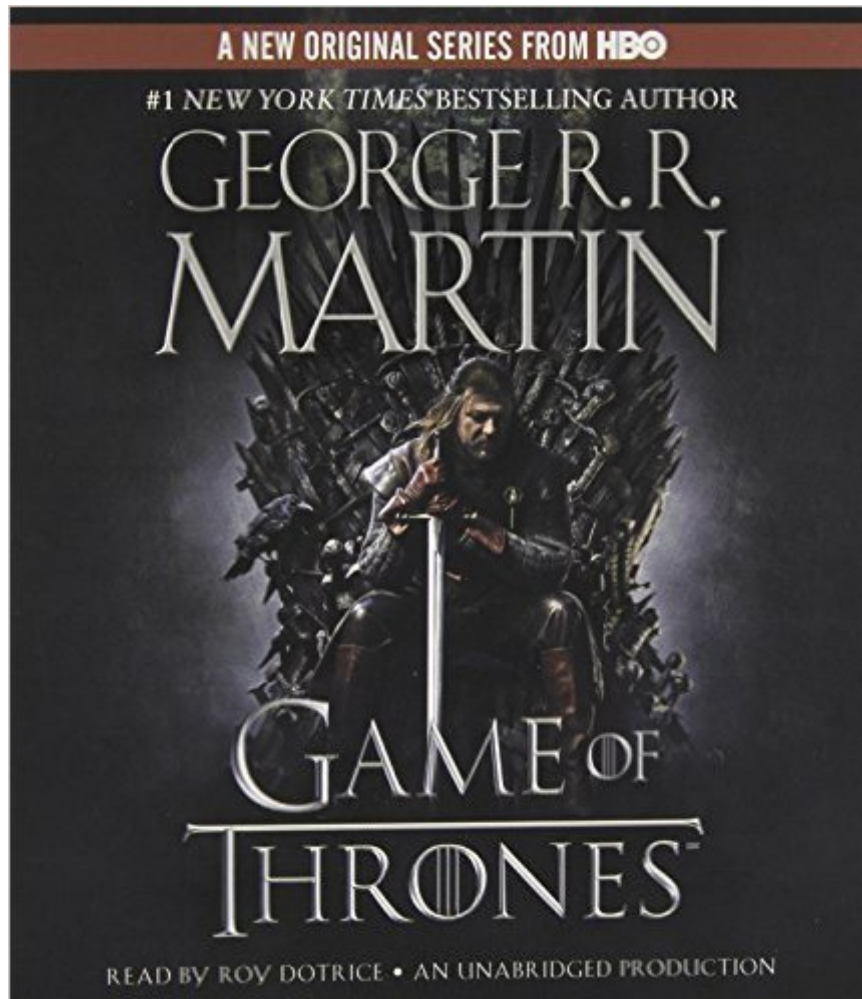


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A Game Of Thrones: A Song Of Ice And Fire: Book One



Synopsis

NOW THE ACCLAIMED HBO SERIES GAME OF THRONES Here is the first volume in George R. R. Martin's magnificent cycle of novels that includes *A Clash of Kings* and *A Storm of Swords*. As a whole, this series comprises a genuine masterpiece of modern fantasy, bringing together the best the genre has to offer. Magic, mystery, intrigue, romance, and adventure fill these pages and transport us to a world unlike any we have ever experienced. Already hailed as a classic, George R. R. Martin's stunning series is destined to stand as one of the great achievements of imaginative fiction.

A GAME OF THRONES Long ago, in a time forgotten, a preternatural event threw the seasons out of balance. In a land where summers can last decades and winters a lifetime, trouble is brewing. The cold is returning, and in the frozen wastes to the north of Winterfell, sinister and supernatural forces are massing beyond the kingdom's protective Wall. At the center of the conflict lie the Starks of Winterfell, a family as harsh and unyielding as the land they were born to. Sweeping from a land of brutal cold to a distant summertime kingdom of epicurean plenty, here is a tale of lords and ladies, soldiers and sorcerers, assassins and bastards, who come together in a time of grim omens. Here an enigmatic band of warriors bear swords of no human metal; a tribe of fierce wildlings carry men off into madness; a cruel young dragon prince barter his sister to win back his throne; and a determined woman undertakes the most treacherous of journeys. Amid plots and counterplots, tragedy and betrayal, victory and terror, the fate of the Starks, their allies, and their enemies hangs perilously in the balance, as each endeavors to win that deadliest of conflicts: the game of thrones.

From the Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

First off, I'm a heavy duty fan of GRRM. I've read over a 100 different fantasy authors in my time (started at 12; I'm now 32). Took about 5 years off from the genre b/c I felt it was all getting too formulaic and cliched. So, when I came back to fantasy at the end of 1999, I read the usual: Goodkind, Jordan, etc. and then someone told me about GRRM and man, that was the kicker! Here are the reasons to choose GRRM. I've also listed the reasons not to choose him to make it fair b/c I know there are certain personalities who won't like this series: WHY TO READ GRRM (1) YOU ARE TIRED OF FORMULAIC FANTASY: good lad beats the dark lord against impossible odds; boy is the epitome of good; he and all his friends never die even though they go through great dangers . . . the good and noble king; the beautiful princess who falls in love with the commoner boy even though their stations are drastically different . . . you get the idea. After reading this over and over, it gets old. (2) YOU ARE TIRED OF ALL THE HEROES STAYING ALIVE EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE UNDER CONSTANT DANGER: this gets even worse where the author kills a main hero off but that person comes back later in the story. Or, a hero does die but magic brings him back. This sometimes carries to minor characters where even they may not die, but most fantasy authors like to kill them off to show that some risked the adventure and perished. (3) YOU ARE A MEDIEVAL HISTORY BUFF: this story was influenced by the WARS OF THE ROSES and THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR. (4) YOU LOVE SERIOUS INTRIGUE WITHOUT STUPID OPPONENTS: lots of layering; lots of intrigue; lots of clever players in the game of thrones.

I see where a reviewer below faulted A GAME OF THRONES for being so chock-full of "tragedy, bloodshed, cruelty, death, rape, incest, drunkenness, murder, (and) infanticide."Heh. Where I come from, that's a five-star recommendation. Glibness aside, the person has a point. A GAME OF THRONES is indeed a graphic, viciously unsentimental novel. It features all the offenses listed above and more besides. It revels in them. Can't you people see? That's the *point.* The writers of heroic fantasy like to write about huge and epic struggles between capital-letter Good and Evil. Yet over and over again they demonstrate only the most puerile understanding of what good and evil actually are. In their blinkered, constrained little worlds, "evil" consists of sitting in a dank tower all day sending orcs or demons or what-have-you after the Crampon of Justice or some similarly-named hogwash artifact. Not even the darkest of their generic Dark Lords would be caught

boffing his own sister or murdering a child (much less get away with it), and in that fundamentally nonsensical bit of characterization lies the crux of their problem: by sticking horns and a lightning staff onto a one-dimensional pulp villain and calling it Ultimate Evil, they cheapen and debase *real* good and evil. I'm sure most of these writers realize this perfectly well; the problem is that they're writing to one of the most idiotically attenuated audiences on the face of the planet, people who really want to read the same book over and over ad infinitum with just enough variation from the template to create the illusion of difference.

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