



Over Nine Waves

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Journalist Marie Heaney skillfully revives the glory of ancient Irish storytelling in this comprehensive volume from the great pre-Christian sequences to the more recent tales of the three patron saints Patrick, Brigid, and Colmcille.

Over Nine Waves Details

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From Reader Review Over Nine Waves for online ebook

Michael Cahill says

A thoroughly enjoyable read for anybody with Irish roots or an interest in Celtic mythology. Heaney's aim was to make these fantastic old stories come alive, and I for one think she hit the mark.

M.M. Strawberry Reviews says

There are many books out there about Irish myth, and there are variations in each myth, so it's hard to tell which one is the best/most accurate, but this particular book is a great starting point. It introduces some of the most familiar/famous Celtic myths, such as about Chuchulainn, or Fionn MocCummail. It also goes into the story of the three saints of Ireland, and the writing itself is very nice, the author did her best to give these stories a somewhat mythic feel, with the right kind of dialogue and word flow, which is not easy to do with myths, so kudos to her.

Alison Lang says

I read this book in preparation for some quasi-academic research, and was therefore frustrated by the lack of references. Yes, there is a bibliography, but it isn't clear which parts of the text draw on which sources. I was looking for less of a lightweight layman's read and more of a critical analysis. However, as soon as I moved on from "Over Nine Waves" to J.F. Campbell's scholarly "Leabhar na Feinne", I realised that you can have too much of a good thing, and I immediately forgave Marie Heaney for going light on the notes and references. So if you want the stories and just the stories, not an argument about sources and authenticity and appropriation, there's nothing wrong with Heaney's book at all. She makes these legends accessible, all about plot and unburdened by detours, although to my mind they lack some of the flavour you'd expect from folklore.

Ronan McDonnell says

The writing is as beautiful as you would expect from Marie Heaney. But the stories are not very good. Irish epics have been collected from the oral traditions and made into the various myths we know today over the last 200 years. This was an important part of our nation building. So much so, that the stories feel like they have been edited to ensure they include everything an epic should have. But they lack credibility. The characters are glib personifications of whatever quality; the supernatural, the heroic, the wise, the evil. They rarely act in any manner that gives anything back to the reader. All they refer to is how tough life has been in Ireland, and how the strong prevail. In short the stories are stage sets for cardboard heroes.

Initially NO says

When you have words in your language and you've never known the stories behind them, it's eye-opening to read the old symbolic stories compiled so well, that give the etymology of those words you've been using without realising the full context.

The book also has endnotes that give the Irish pronunciation of words/ names used in the stories.

Liwia says

This book is really hard to rate.

The first part about Tuatha De Danaan is really interesting and fun to read, while the second one has Cuchulainn who has to be the most annoying and despise-worthy character in history of literature. The third part is simply boring and full of forgettable characters. The book ends with a short stories about Irish saints, but nothing one wouldn't find on Wikipedia.

I'd recommend reading it up to the tale of Macha and then moving on to something else.

Iris says

Meh

A. Mary says

Heaney's versions of the myths are extremely accessible, rather like a Good News Bible as compared to the King James. She includes a pronunciation key at the back, which is a wonderful bonus, given the importance of language to any culture. This is an excellent introduction to the myth cycles and also includes the patron saints.

Heather says

Highly readable, and collected from various translations and combined to create coherent versions for the lay reader.

Robin says

This is a perfect book for homeschoolers. I really wish I'd had it when I was a kid. It anthologizes all of the four main cycles of Celtic mythology into one concise volume. In this book, it covers the mythological cycle; the story of the Tuatha De Danaan, the wise people who once settled in Ireland, and later hid in sidhes beneath the earth, morphing into the fairies and goblins that we tell tales about today, as well as famous

legends such as that of Midir and Etain as well as The Children of Lir.

It covers also the Ulster Cycle, the story of the great hero Cuchulainn, his life, how he got his name, all the way up until his death. And the Finn Cycle, which tells of the deeds of the great warrior Finn McCool, and finally, the legends of the saints of Ireland, of St. Patrick and St. Brigid among others.

It's a perfect introduction into Irish mythology, and the writing is very easy to read and enjoy.

Diane says

Whether you're interested in Irish legends or are familiar with them and want to read them over again, this book provides a decent handful of such tales. From the infamous stories of Cuchulainn and his short life, to the stories of Finn, and the tales that came before of the Tuatha De Danaan, the inhabitants of Ireland before men, and even a brief representation of the lives of the Saints that so changed the religion of Ireland to Catholicism, all are contained in this volume.

They are easy reads, and even has a handy-dandy pronunciation guide since the names are notoriously Gaelic and even more notoriously hard to pronounce. There are some slight spelling errors and continuity errors, but Marie Heaney can't be charged for the latter of these offenses. If there are continuity errors it is because of the structure of the legend, not so much her. As these tales were often passed from one generation to another by word of mouth, many minor things changed throughout until they were written down. Mistakes often happened this way.

Regardless, the stories are about jealousy, revenge, lust, and power as most stories are, and provide for a decent glimpse of what helped to make Ireland's culture and background what it is.

For my feminists out there, don't be surprised to see many women in the stories as rather vindictive witches. There are some other women who are strong warriors with nothing but pride on the line, but many of these stories were created in a very different time where society was based on masculinity and dominance. You'll be pleased to find, however, that there are very similar, vindictive, jealous men in the stories as well who are wild with temper often and quick to be brash which often means their doom. So, it's easy to see two sides of the fence in these stories from a sexuality stand point.

Lanea says

Marie Heaney is married to Seamus Heaney, and definitely shares his interest in Irish mythology. I think it would serve as a good introduction to Irish mythology--it's not as stodgy as many of the direct translations, and leaves out some of my personal favorite tales, but it's enjoyable throughout.

Wied?ma says

"Za dziewi?t? fal?. Ksi?ga legend irlandzkich" to ksi??ka, któr? czyta si? z ogromn? przyjemno?ci?, cho? widz? j? raczej w r?kach osób zainteresowanych szeroko poj?t? mitologi? oraz folklorem. Pozosta?ym czytelnikom raczej nie przypad?aby do gustu.

Ca?o?? na: <http://wiedzma-czyta.blogspot.com/201...>

Scott Pomfret says

This is a delightful modern but faithful retelling of the main legends of Irish literature. Heaney has a breezy, action-driven approach to the tales that still has a certain emotional resonance (often involving wounded pride). Madness, vengeance, sorrow, teamwork, courage abound, as well as some wonderful descriptions of beauty and Ireland and Tir Na nOg. The Tuatha de Danaan, the Children of Lir, Cuchulainn, and the Fianna are all included here. There is perhaps less focus on certain characters (e.g., Maebh). The tales of Saints Patrick, Brigid, and Columcille that are the last three sections of this book seemed a bit out of place compared to the largely pre-Christian material with which they are grouped. Had I been editor, I would have excluded them--not least of which because, other than Patrick's, the lives described don't have a lot of narrative oomph.

Marie Pennington says

I thought that the myths in *Over Nine Waves* were fascinating. Some had similarities to other myths but for the most part I thought they quite unique from any others I had read or heard before before. I would definitely recommend it for anyone who loves mythology. I read a few of the stories in it for class, but the rest I read just to see if they too had similarities.
