



The James Bond Bedside Companion

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Raymond Benson is the author of "The James Bond Bedside Companion," an encyclopedic work on the 007 phenomenon, first published in 1984 with an updated edition published in 1988. Generally regarded by Bond fans as the definitive book on the subject, the "Bedside Companion" was nominated for an Edgar Award as the best biographical/critical work of 1984.

The James Bond Bedside Companion Details

Date : Published 1986 by Galahad Books Inc. (first published 1984)

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Author : Raymond Benson

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Ralph says

A reissue of the Eighties know-all book about everything Bond. While it thoroughly covers all the Bond films through the Dalton era, the book's main appeal for me was it's coverage of the original stories and novels, as well as detailed material on Fleming and his creation. It reminded me once more of how good a writer Fleming was and how unique his creation. One unexpected outcome of this book was to motivate me to once again 're-read all the books in order, something I have not done since the late Sixties. A delightful book and well worth the time of any Fleming and 007 fan.

Russell says

I saw the recent Bond film (Casino Royale w/ Daniel Craig) and decided to go back and re-read some of the novels and re-watch some of the movies. Before I did that I read The Bedside Companion and am glad I did. Its a great overview (although it stops in the mid 80's) but if you are interested in the beginning of Bond, the books, the pre mid 80's movies, this is a great review. Moves quickly. No fat. I enjoyed it.

Ben says

Just to out of date, and rambles on a bit.

Roberto Lagos Figueroa says

Un clásico libro de información sobre todo lo concerniente a Bond y a Ian Fleming, su creador. Exhaustivo y ameno. Una sobredosis de 007 lastimosamente no hay actualizaciones de este libro que quedó en los 80s. Comienza con una sustanciosa reseña biografica de Ion Fleming en relacion a la figura de Bond. Incluye un análisis del personaje literario de Bond y revisa sus aventuras en papel desde las novelas originales de Fleming y sus pastiches. Y se hace nutritiva la exploracion del universo filmico de 007, desde las diferencias y semejanzas con el Bond literario y reseña pelicula por pelicula, dandonos resúmenes amenos e trivia tras bambalinas.

Steve Mitchell says

There are plenty of guidebooks out there to dissect and discuss the phenomenon that it James Bond. Some are fantastic and some are not worth the effort: this one is slap bang in the middle. If I'm totally honest the reason it rates only three stars is that it did not really tell me anything that I did not already know. Considering that I have read and re-read all the novels, seen all the films - including the unofficial ones - many times and read loads of these type of books it is clear that I am being biased and harshly critical.

In fairness this is a decent reference book if you want to look up a fact or two: the glossary is a must for anybody that writes questions for pub quizzes. The problem is that it stops with the film *The Living Daylights* and after John Gardner's novel *Scorpius*, so the book is not exhaustive. To be fair, Raymond Benson could hardly be expected to review his own Bond novels.

I have no real issue with this book in the opinions expressed by Benson - I disagree with the opinions expressed in plenty of other books that discuss Bond - but there are books that cover more of the genre to include Benson's own books and the films of Pierce Brosnan that make better reference books on the subject.

Russianwitch says

This book is weird in the sense that it (or possibly just my copy) is hilariously outdated, and the author hasn't managed to make up his mind what he was writing.

Was he writing the story of the creation of the James Bond phenomenon? Was he writing Ian Flemming's bio? Was he writing the fictional bio of James Bond? All the above books exist and this book draws heavily on some of them but doesn't quite come into its own.

That being said it isn't bad.

For the time in which it was written, it's pretty good. It also gives bits and pieces I didn't actually know about James Bond. The background information is certainly interesting especially since it's been quite a while since I've read the books.

The book has certainly been very helpful in reminding me of the differences between the original character between the original character and the cinematographic version of the same.

It's certainly a very good warm-up for rereading all the original stories and starting in on the non-Flemming written ones later on.

Thou I wouldn't have minded a different title when you start talking about the James Bond Bedside Companion for some reason people always assume you're talking about something other than a book...

Vikas Datta says

An indispensable book for the devoted Bond aficionado... wish someone would write a companion piece, taking it further...

David Schletty says

A phenomenal compilation of James Bond facts, stories, novels, and films. Amazing!

Robert Brown says

Good read

It's a fun read but needs to be updated stopping after the living daylights not sure in the age of DVD and

streaming we need the film plots either but still fun to read

Mark Bond says

A very good resource if you like that kind of thing! Lots of interesting views on all things Bond. A good book to dip into every now and then. Recommended!

Steve says

With the 1988 updates taking the reader through the John Gardner Novel Scorpius and the film The Living Daylights. A look at the life of Ian Fleming and his creation and shepherding of his iconic James Bond character, a look at all of the James Bond books from Fleming and others, and a synopsis of the movies with comments on production actors etc. A great reference work for a Bond fan, looking at the good and the bad of character over the years, but probably a large amount of information for a casual fan with over a hundred photos and hundreds of pages of information. The book that got Benson the deal to write James Bond novels. I would rate this book 3.5 stars if Goodreads allowed half stars.

Bob Cantrell says

More information than needed

First this book does have good points about it. It is a good look at the James Bond phenomenon, but it only goes up to the early 80's. It was very detailed in the approach to James Bond, but it also was a biography of Ian Fleming, which is ok except that it takes up about a third of the total book. Now I was interested in this bio, but I was really wanting to read more on the character, James Bond. It is a fairly good reference book that could have been better. I felt that the way to tell about the books and films would be to do the book then the movie pointing out the differences between the two. Also very little was done with the characters as to who played who yes there were the major characters you are told about, but some of the others are just characters without faces. This review is probably a little disjointed, but so was this book. A final couple of thought on this book: one, none of the Bond movies after Timothy Dalton are mentioned in the book so it is not a complete book on Bond. Two the books that were written by John Gardner is an incomplete list it have been nice that a revised version would have covered all movies and books. As I said it is a nice reference book just don't expect to read it in one sitting.
