

The Fortean Collection: The Book of The Damned, New Lands, LO!, Wild Talents, The Outcast Manufacturers (with Linked TOC)

CHARLES FORT

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The Fortean Collection is comprised of all five existing books by Charles Fort, THE BOOK OF THE DAMNED, NEW LANDS, LO!, WILD TALENTS, and his only novel THE OUTCAST MANUFACTURERS.

Charles Hoy Fort (August 6, 1874 – May 3, 1932) was an American writer and researcher into anomalous phenomena. Today, the terms Fortean and Forteana are used to characterize various such phenomena. Fort's books sold well and remain in print.

Understanding Fort's books takes time and effort: his style is complex, violent and poetic, profound and occasionally puzzling. Ideas are abandoned and then recalled a few pages on; examples and data are offered, compared and contrasted, conclusions made and broken, as Fort holds up the unorthodox to the scrutiny of the orthodoxy that continually fails to account for them. Pressing on his attacks, Fort shows what he sees as the ridiculousness of the conventional explanations and then interjects with his own theories.

Fort suggests that there is, for example, a Super-Sargasso Sea into which all lost things go, and justifies his theories by noting that they fit the data as well as the conventional explanations. As to whether Fort believes this theory, or any of his other proposals, he gives us the answer: "I believe nothing of my own that I have ever written." Wilson suspects that Fort took few if any of his "explanations" seriously, and notes that Fort made "no attempt to present a coherent argument".

Jerome Clark writes that Fort was "essentially a satirist hugely skeptical of human beings' – especially scientists' – claims to ultimate knowledge". Clark describes Fort's writing style as a "distinctive blend of mocking humor, penetrating insight, and calculated outrageousness".

Wilson describes Fort as "a patron of cranks" [4] and also argues that running through Fort's work is "the feeling that no matter how honest scientists think they are, they are still influenced by various unconscious assumptions that prevent them from attaining true objectivity. Expressed in a sentence, Fort's principle goes something like this: People with a psychological need to believe in marvels are no more prejudiced and gullible than people with a psychological need not to believe in marvels. ---From Wikipedia



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