



Fiend Folio: Tome of Creatures Malevolent and Benign:

Don Turnbull (Editor) , Chris Baker (Illustrator) , Bill Willingham (Illustrator) , Polly Wilson (Illustrator) , Tony Yates (Illustrator) , Jeff Dee (Illustrator) , Emmanuel (Illustrator) , Albie Fiore (Illustrator) , more... Alan Hunter (Illustrator) , Russ Nicholson (Illustrator) , Erol Otus (Illustrator) , Jim Roslof (Illustrator) , David C. Sutherland III (Illustrator) ...less

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The *Fiend Folio* is a collection of monsters for use with *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, similar in format to the original *Monster Manual* and effectively a supplement to that book.

Fiend Folio: Tome of Creatures Malevolent and Benign: Details

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Author : Don Turnbull (Editor) , Chris Baker (Illustrator) , Bill Willingham (Illustrator) , Polly Wilson (Illustrator) , Tony Yates (Illustrator) , Jeff Dee (Illustrator) , Emmanuel (Illustrator) , Albie Fiore (Illustrator) , more... Alan Hunter (Illustrator) , Russ Nicholson (Illustrator) , Erol Otus (Illustrator) , Jim Roslof (Illustrator) , David C. Sutherland III (Illustrator) ...less

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From Reader Review Fiend Folio: Tome of Creatures Malevolent and Benign: for online ebook

Lyn says

First published in 1981, the Fiend Folio, Tome of Creatures Malevolent and Benign, was according to the inside forward, “the first major British contribution to the Advanced Dungeon’s and Dragons game system”.

With a Githyanki looking out ominously from the cover the Fiend Folio was presented as a companion to the earlier Monster Manual. Whereas the Monster Manual had been a product of the fantastic imagination of Gary Gygax, the Fiend Folio was much more of a collaborative effort with many of the United Kingdom fans of the game lending ideas, and under the capable editorial work of Don Turnbull.

I must admit that though the Folio was rich in art and detail, the monsters within never achieved (at least in my group) the first tier recognition of it’s Monster Manual peers. While many of the creatures were an expansion of the previously listed mythos, there is a lot of weird and heretofore unknown villains to spice up a game.

Some of the highlights are the crypt things, death knights and scarecrows, as well as several other new varieties of undead monstrosities; Lolth – demon queen of spiders; oriental dragons; Drow Elves (later made famous by R.A. Salvatore ‘s Drizzt Do'Urden; a couple of new species of giant – Fog and Mountain; Deep gnomes (svirfneblins); a few new trolls; and vodyanoi (Slavic aquatic monsters also used with some minor changes by China Mieville in his Bas-Lag books).

Garry says

OMG - Did you ever wonder about the subtle differences between the mindless hordes of Githzari versus the cunning wiles of the Githyanki Assassin? Trying to figure out exactly what might be stalking your fevered dreams in the astral plain? My friends, look no further. The Fiend Folio has it all in alphabetical order! I carry this mighty tome of arcane knowledge where ever I wander/adventure and/or quest. Especially potent at Coffee Shops and Used Book Stores. I recall on more than one occasion; a quick flash of its fiery cover has saved me from the clutches/machinations of a wiley dominatrix or two. The Fiend Folio is as indispensable as my +4 Two-Handed Vorpall Long Sword of Sanford & Son. If your not yet acquainted with this volume then by "The Hand of Vecna" I COMPEL THEE. BY THE HAND OF VECNA I COMPELL THEE.....sigh.

Jason Koivu says

And the winner for "Least Creative Cover" goes to the...

Fiend Folio

Good golly miss molly, it may not be the *worst* cover D&D ever used for one of their books, but jayzus, it's lame! A monster wielding a sword and essentially nothing else? This is tantamount to a band photo of a rock singer shouting into a microphone. Come on, try a little!

On the whole, I'm not a fan of the artwork within either. One artist, who shall remain nameless, particularly liked to use that dot-shading style, so all his monsters ended up looking warty, pimply or like they'd just come out of the ocean and rolled in the sand. Gotta give it up for the artists though in this respect: there are some gruesomely realistic violence portrayed...

And a bare breast or two appears, so three cheers for sex and violence!

My knock on the illustrations aside, in my mind the *Fiend Folio* book of monsters (third tome released on the subject by D&D and TSR if I'm not mistaken) included more unusual, bizarre, and oddly original beastly creations than its predecessor, *Monster Manual II*.

FF provided players with lots of powerful skeletal creepos (often called Death-something-or-other), plenty of more goblin-like sword fodder, a few more giants (filling out the ol' material elements: fog and mountain), more dragons (but this time all-"oriental"!) and the oh-so popular evil elves, the Drow:

However, it also came with a heaping share of ridiculous and downright silly boogermen such as the crabmen (yes, men with crab claws), a giant snail with morning star antennae, a "frostman" that looked like a 70s pornstar on his way to a Halloween party in a mixed up half caveman/half pirate costume, an ice troll that looked a lot like The Simpson's Mr. Burns, lots of things with heads WAY too big for their bodies, and the lava children. Who could take serious something that looked like a cross between a hairless gorilla and Howdy Doody?

So all-in-all D&D gave us players some good old wacky wickedness to infuse into our games, and although this publication may not have been wholly necessary (and was probably pushed to publication by D&D's overwhelming popularity at the time,) I did appreciate having it for at least one reason: the game in which I inserted a Crypt Thing. It teleported away the players' characters, scattering them about the dungeon and wreaking havoc. It was the first time they'd been "on their own" and they shit themselves. Good times for the DM!

Timothy Boyd says

All those over anxious adventuring heroes need someone to fight as they wander through your world. Here is an excellent volume of new and odd monsters and races for them to encounter. Nice addition to the basic AD&D monster manual. Recommended to gamers

Amanda says

Went to a Halloween party as something I found on this book and won the costume contest.

Absolute essential.

Carolee says

I wish the picture icon for this book showed the true cover art. Another invaluable source for over/under world adventurers. I remember back in high school (when I wasn't a D & D er) overhearing some guys while they conjured up the description and various statistics (even worked on an artistic rendition) of a monster they could 'submit' for consideration to the Dungeons and Dragons gurus (ie. the 'Fiend Factory' in the UK) at the time ... and that's how all these wonderfully imaginative tomes came to exist.

Peter Greenwell says

I'm probably opening a can of worms by rating a D&D handbook since I've read/owned so many of them, but this is noteworthy for having a bunch of monsters that rather than inspiring fear and awe, inspire gales of laughter. *Yes, you've been attacked by a flimph!* A flimph, yes! A landmark work, really, for all the right reasons, hilarity or otherwise.

David Sarkies says

A folio of fiendish fiends

31 July 2015

Well, here I am, somewhere over the central Australian Desert travelling at 36000 ft (according to the screen in front of me) and I have another four hours to sit in this flying coffin before I reach my destination. At this point my brain is a bit frazzled from having been reading for the last three hours (punctuated by some sleep, as well as a meal that the stewards seemed to take ages to get around to removing the tray – but then again I am in economy class so I guess us plebs have to wait while all of the important people up the front are being pamper, including the guy and his four kids sitting in business class seats which I must admit simply looked weird). Anyway, I probably shouldn't spend all of this time rabbiting on about my adventures at 36000 ft (though I have yet to join the mile high club, and if I had I probably wouldn't tell you either) but rather get on with writing my commentary on the Fiend Folio. However, before I do I sort of wander why they make us plebs walk through business class to get to our economy class cabins – maybe it has something to do with us being showed the luxury that we can't afford while reminding the people who actually paid for business class that they aren't rich enough to sit where the plebs don't wander through their cabin.

Anyway, as I suggested, this is supposed to be a review of the Fiend Folio (first edition) and not some discussion on the particularities of air travel. The problem with writing a review on this book is that Jason Koivu has already done such an excellent job that anything that I would write would either pale in comparison, or simply be little more than plagiarism (though I suspect the definition of plagerism is a lot

narrower than simply being inspired by the writings of a great author). Anyway, I probably should say a few words about this book despite the bar being raised to such a height.

Anyway, this is basically a collection of monsters, but not just any old monsters, but strange and weird monsters that appear to have pretty much come directly from the imagination of the AD&D creators. Okay, not all of these creatures are strange and/or weird – you do find the drow in here which has gone on to become one of the staples of the AD&D world. However you do find the flail snail:

Anyway, the less said about that particular creature the better (and here have been some huge debates as to whether the flail snail is actually cool or not – unfortunately I've never actually used one in an adventure so I can't really say all that much about this particular creature, though I'm sure it would be fun to send this creature in to give the players a good old pummelling (that is if they don't end up killing it with a couple of blows of their swords).

Actually, come to think of it the collection of this book wasn't actually all that weird since it did contain a collection of Daemons, which were not quite devils, and not quite demons, but something that sort of floated in between (in the original Dungeons & Dragons world the devils inhabited the nine hells and were considered lawful evils, while the demons inhabited the abyss and were considered chaotic evil – and if you have no idea what I am talking about, don't worry because not many people outside of the secret world of Dungeons and Dragons players would either).

It did have some pretty cool daemons, but one of my favourites would have to be the Githyanki – I'm not sure why I just thought that they were really cool. I'm not sure exactly where they originally came from, but they are plastered across the cover of this book and they run around with these awesome swords. In any case their names were pretty cool, and I must admit that it sounds much better than their cousins the Githzerai. What I do know about them is that they are also dwellers in the outer planes (meaning that they are not of this world making them incredibly powerful creatures) and I suspect that they were quite chaotic as well (but since I do not have access to the book I am unable to actually say all that much more about them).

Look, in the end this wasn't a bad book, and I did like it better than the Monster Manual Two (in fact the MM2 had some even weirder monsters in them than this one, such as the Mondrons – I will like you go and work out what they are – I'm sure the internet will tell you) but did I really need it to play the game? Probably not, but still, I really liked checking out the monsters, especially when I was a snotty nosed teenager, and anyway, since nobody really plays first edition anymore (actually they do, but only a handful) this book is probably only good for some sentimental value.

Oh, and now I'm back on solid ground (in Singapore – I wasn't able to upload that post to the internet while sitting in that flying coffin, even though to go get wifi on planes these days) I have actually found my digitised copy of the Fiend Folio and as it turns out they don't have the daemons (I thought they did), but what they do have is only of my all time favourite creatures of darkness – The Death Knight.

A chilly European Morning

28 March 2013

Well, now I am sitting in the lobby of the Tulip Inn in Amsterdam on a rather chilly Dutch morning, killing some time while waiting for my train to take me back to Frankfurt (so that I can then fly on to England). As such I thought I might write a couple of more commentaries, and while I could have made some comments when I wrote up on The City of God, I did not feel that it really fitted in, so I decided to also write a commentary on the Fiend Folio. Mind you, before I go on, I should mention that this is a strange city for where Bangkok is full of dirty old men, this city is full of young tourists (I have noticed a lot of Germans and English). I suspect that is because they all come flocking over here (especially on weekends) to take part in a rather interesting atmosphere. It was rather amusing to see a fair set up outside Queen Beatrice's palace.

As for this book, well it is a collection of monsters that had appeared in all of the first edition Advanced Dungeons and Dragons modules up until its publication. When I had come to the game there was a Monster Manual, and later there was a Monster Manual II, but while I had heard of the Fiend Folio, I did not know that it was a collection of monsters until later. Mind you, I suspect that there are also a lot of new monsters in this collection as well to fill up the pages. However, some people have suggested that they ignore the Fiend Folio because it is full of merely silly monsters.

Later editions have also come out with their own Fiend Folios, and it seems to be one of those titles that tend to be full of odd and uniquely Dungeons and Dragons creatures. When second edition came along, the first two Monsterous Compendiums tended to contain the standard types of monsters, and an updated version of this book came out sometime later. This was also the case with Third Edition, though when I have looked through the 3E version of this book I noted that all of the monsters that were contained therein seemed to have no connections with any of the other editions.

T.A. Uner says

The cover and tacky artwork brought this down to 3 Stars. But still it brings back good memories of my childhood and playing D&D.

Mike (the Paladin) says

A book of real nasties. You can use it to set up your adventures, populate your dungeon or for a quick bad guy when needed. I didn't use it often, but I found it interesting to read and use.

Scott says

When I first read this book as a teenager, I didn't know the designers were British but I did detect something "unusual" about the contents. The art and the design of the monsters was quite different from the "house style" of Gygax & TSR but a lot of these critters have gone on to become staples of the game (and several are legendary in their goofiness).

K.T. Katzmann says

Hell yes. Beautiful craziness.

Purchased long ago from a library for fifty cents, the Fiend Folio is exactly what you expect from an 80's monster making contest. Terrifying fiends like the Eye of Fear and Flame...

...share pages with the ridiculous Flumph...

...and the gruesome silliness of the crabman massacre shown above.

Aside from it's provenance in D&D (the first Drow), it's an amazing vintage artbook of balls-to-the-wall ridiculous creatures. Get your Gith on.

Michael says

So far as I can recall, I never used any of the monsters from this book in my fantasy role-playing adventures, although I owned it for most of the time I played D&D. I remember being rather disappointed by it at the time, although looking through it now, it seems to me that there are some pretty interesting creatures. I suspect that the problem was that I wanted to use "traditional" fantasy creatures (trolls, hippogriffs, dragons, chimeras, etc) and those were adequately covered in the Monster Manual, so I never really found any need for this volume. Some of these creatures later made an appearance when I started playing "Baldur's Gate" (eg: xvarts, flinds, ettercaps, ogrillons) and I have to admit that they fit in fine, so perhaps the problem was not the book, but myself.

Looking it over now, I discover that it was culled from contributions to a British RPG fan magazine, presumably representing the "best" of the monsters that players had developed for their own campaigns. That is bound to be a somewhat mixed bag, but it's clear that there were a lot of monsters that didn't make the cut, and that playability and conformity to the D&D system was placed at a premium. They seem to have retained the British spellings (hence one column is "Armour Class"), which might have turned me off as a kid, but I don't think it would have been that big of a deal. Although the work of several artists is represented, on the whole I would say that the look is darker and a bit grittier than the older D&D books, and that may have been a factor as well. One small improvement from the Monster Manual is the inclusion of a heading for "Level/XP value" which saves one from having to find the information elsewhere or make it up on the spot.

If there is a problem I can identify, it's that most of the monsters are listed as "Rare" or "Very Rare" and many are of them are intended for higher-level parties, making them less useful for starting players. Still, the imagination that went into creating them can be inspirational by itself. For example, the detailed narrative that accompanies the githyanki and githzerai (closely related races who are in perpetual war, and who both hate mind flayers) gives a built-in worldview that could inspire a Dungeon Master to create a world in which these races have profound influence, even controlling some of the lesser monsters that lower level characters fight, with clues to the hidden masters becoming clearer as the party becomes more powerful. A book of monsters that can inspire whole campaigns obviously deserved more attention than I gave this as a kid, but

no doubt it was appreciated and used by many others.

Capitalismissexy says

death knight, sons of yudkuss, and more fun than u can possibly imagine!

sometimes looking at the things others dream up is just fascinating!!

also pre 1989 art is best!! everything seemed to goto fast fodo junk status since 1989
like the nba

Rena Sherwood says

Yes, it's a rule book for AD & D, but this was a magic treasure chest of stories to me when I was a kid and snuck this from my brother's library. Not only did the artwork enchant me, but meeting these creepy crawlies helped ignite my imagination -- which I sorely needed during my cold, lonely childhood.
