

Genre Fiction



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The meaning of the genres



- ❧ No true definitions: identified by various elements in story, i.e. tropes, trends
- ❧ Science Fiction (Sci-Fi) has many well known and popular sub-genres and tropes.
- ❧ Fantasy fiction is also easily identifiable by tropes
- ❧ Historical fiction-no true definition
- ❧ “Mash-ups” -blending of genres or subgenres

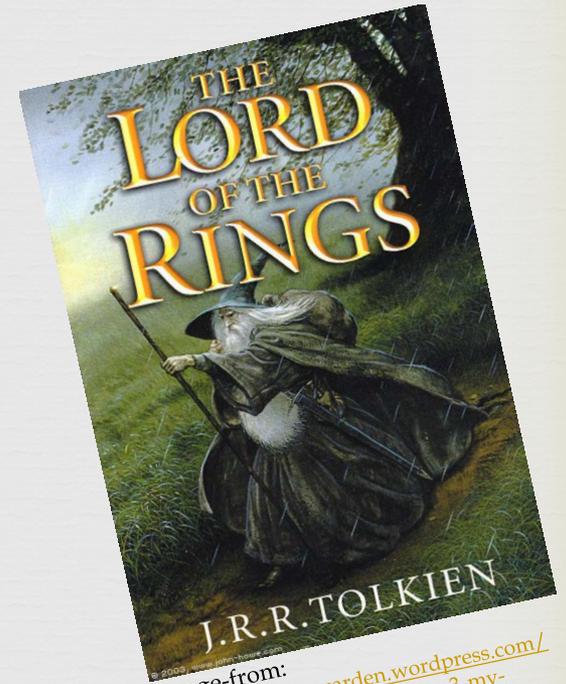
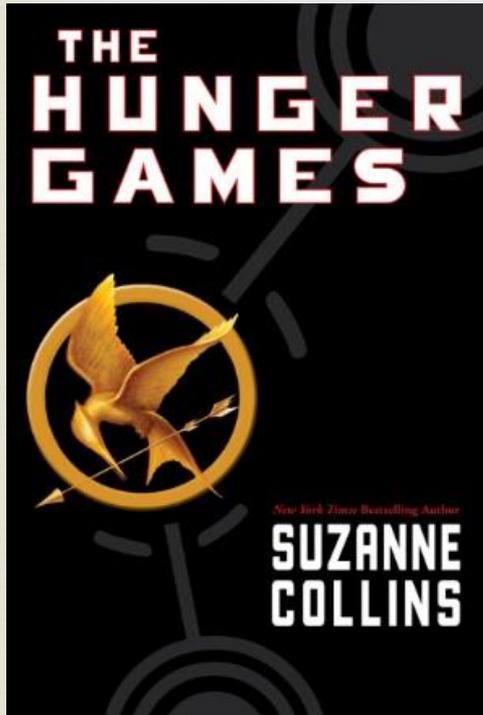


Image-from:
<http://twilightswarden.wordpress.com/2011/05/03/book-meme-day-3-my-favorite-series/>

Identifiers of Science fiction



- ❧ "...science fiction is popularly associated with the evolution of technology..." (Seed 47).
- ❧ Technology is a big part of this genre.
- ❧ A few big sub-genres of sci-fi include: hard sci-fi, alternate history, and space opera.
- ❧ Tropes include: alternate worlds (space), technology, questioning scientific theories.

Image from:
<http://amsjournal.wordpress.com/2012/06/22/on-teaching-teaching-the-hunger-games-in-the-undergraduate-american-studies-classroom/>

Dystopian Science
Fiction

Alternate History



- ❧ “An alternate history is not a history at all, but a work of fiction in which history as we know it is changed for dramatic and often ironic effect” (Duncan 209).
- ❧ Writers take historical event and change it
- ❧ Both sci-fi and non sci-fi
- ❧ Difference from historical fiction is the changed event

Examples



- ❧ *War of the Worlds*-H.G Wells
- ❧ *The Hunger Games*-Suzanne Collins
- ❧ Harlan Ellison “*The Function of Dream Sleep*” (short story)
- ❧ *Divergent* series-Veronica Roth
- ❧ J.R.R. Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings* saga
- ❧ *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*- John Boyne
- ❧ *A Great and Terrible Beauty, Rebel Angels, The Sweet Far Thing* (a.k.a. *The Gemma Doyle Trilogy*)- Libba Bray

Truth or Fantasy?



- ❧ Bigger sub-genres in fantasy: urban fantasy, paranormal (dark fantasy), and historical fantasy.
- ❧ Magical realism also fantasy.
- ❧ “A style of painting and literature in which fantastic or imaginary and often unsettling images or events are depicted in a sharply detailed realistic manner” (dictionary.com).
- ❧ *The Lord of the Rings* series by J.R.R. Tolkien.
- ❧ Historical fantasy make a unique or un real situation out of a historical event.

The urbanization of fantasy



- ❧ Urban Fantasy is a modernized spin on folklore and older settings with a modern setting
- ❧ In Urban Fantasy new recognizable features, i.e. cities (utopian, dystopian), are warped to fit the magical realm.
- ❧ Some elements include: folktales (folklore) and towns that have supernatural events and/or artist minded characters.

Vampires, Werewolves and Zombies.



- ❧ Dark Fantasy/Paranormal Romance-said to have been more recent categorization.
- ❧ Mainly used for publishing purposes.
- ❧ Easy identifiable tropes: vampires, werewolves, ghosts etc.
- ❧ Geared towards younger audiences, young adults mostly.
- ❧ Can be a romance story but a very loose/arguable topic.
- ❧ Difficult to define because there are many similarities between horror and dark fantasy.
- ❧ Kaveny describes his idea of dark fantasy verses horror fiction “...is a literature of accommodation and endurance, rather than of transcendence or despair” (218).

Historical Fantasy



- ❧ “The historical fantasy is a hybrid of two seemingly opposed modes, fantasy, with its explicit rejection of consensus reality, and historical fiction, a genre grounded in realism and historically accurate events” (Schanoes 236).
- ❧ Can question and make a unique/un real situation out of a historical event.
- ❧ “Historical fantasy is not all magic and fairies...give supernatural creatures a historical context” (Rabey).

Historical Fiction 101



- ❧ Set in a past time and place-differs from person to person.
- ❧ Classic literature historical fiction at one time
- ❧ Can have a specific historical character or time period such as: WWII or Christopher Columbus.
- ❧ “The fortunes...of historians and historical novelists also lie in the past...we get the raw materials we use to make the stories by which we earn our bread” (Thom 5).
- ❧ Credibility-make historical fiction fun and credible.

Blending and mash-ups



- Two genres that blend very well together are fantasy and historical fiction.
- Blending process seems natural, a lot of stories and such have medieval worlds with fairies, dragons.
- The Gemma Doyle Trilogy is a fantastic example of blending the two genres.



Image from:
<http://alannatotally.blogspot.com/2009/05/gemma-doyle-gemma-doyle-series-by-libba.html>

Results



- ❧ I conducted a student survey-under 100, ages 17 and up, top genre was science fiction, fantasy was in second.
- ❧ Writer's Market, Goodreads, book websites for reviews and ratings of popular novels.
- ❧ I contacted publishing companies like Tor and authors, local and bigger.
- ❧ Looked at author q&a, interviews, and blogs for advice or tips on successful genre writing.
- ❧ Ethics and human nature/condition are ways to make any genre successful.

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