

Flight into Fantasy



A READERS' ADVISORY FOR FANTASY FICTION

Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives
May 2017

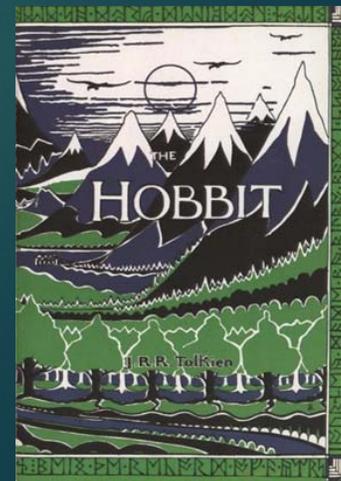
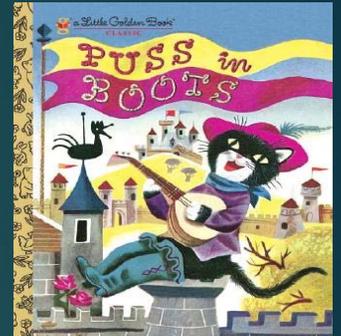
Today's Agenda

- ▶ Characteristics and History
- ▶ Overview of Sub-Genres
- ▶ Genreblending
- ▶ Resources
 - Lists of lots of authors and works



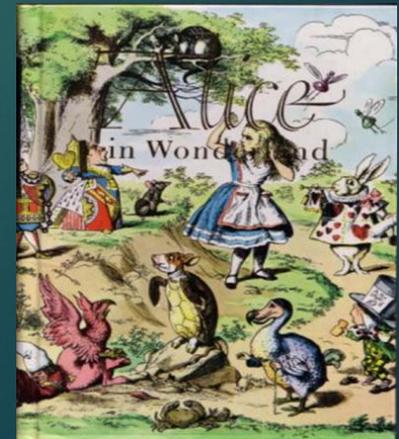
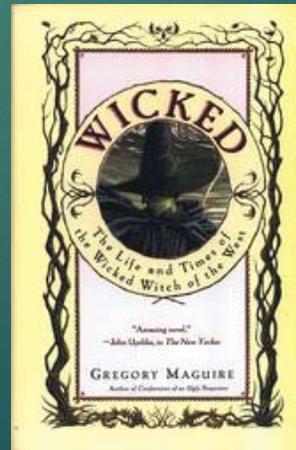
What is Fantasy?

- ▶ Speculative Fiction
- ▶ Confusion with Science Fiction
- ▶ Includes fantasy elements to make events happen that cannot realistically take place.
- ▶ Overlap with Horror and Paranormal Romance
- ▶ Focus is on the fantasy aspects.



Characteristics and Appeal of Fantasy Fiction

- ▶ Magic usually features prominently in the story
- ▶ Storyline stresses good (light) over evil (dark)
- ▶ Good and evil are clearly defined with good usually prevailing over evil.



Characteristics and Appeal of Fantasy Fiction

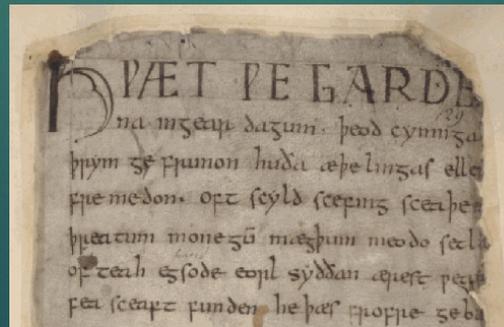
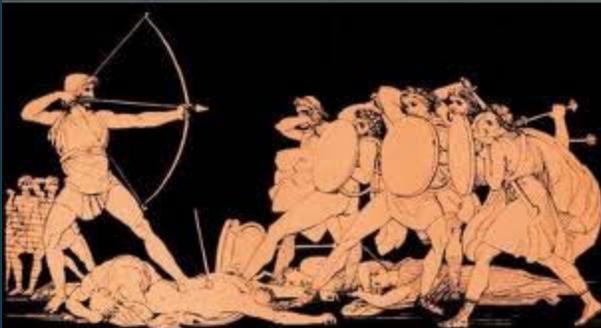
- ▶ Themes of transformation – coming of age, becoming a hero
- ▶ Characters include mythical creatures, everyday people and animals
- ▶ “World building” -- Detailed settings describing another world, sometimes our world



History of Fantasy Fiction

▶ Myths, Legends and Fairy Tales

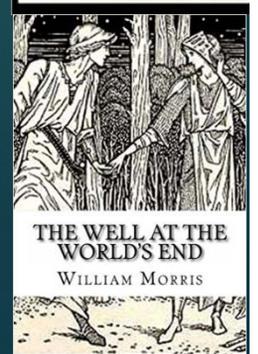
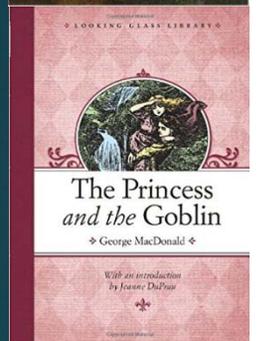
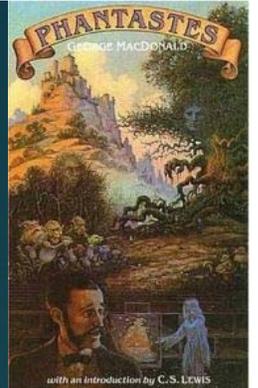
- Epic of Gilgamesh, 1300-1000 BC
- The Odyssey, 700s BC
- Beowulf, 500s BC
- Arthurian Legends, Medieval 6th-16th centuries
- Fairy Tales – Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, etc.



History of Fantasy Fiction

Modern Fantasy (19th Century)

- ▶ George MacDonald = Phantastes (1858), The Princess and the Goblin (1872)
- ▶ Lewis Carroll = Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865)
- ▶ William Morris = The Well at the World's End (1896)
 - one of the first imaginary world fantasies

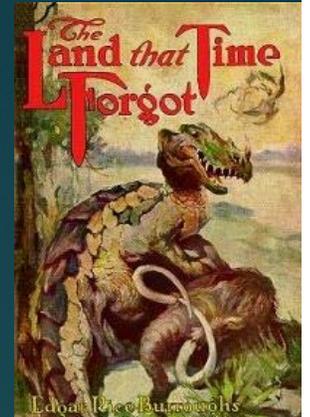


History of Fantasy Fiction

Late 19th-Early 20th Century Fantasy

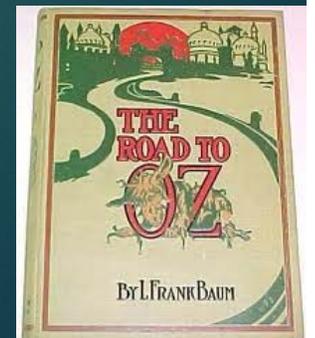
▶ Mainstream authors writing fantasy

- H. Rider Haggard = King Solomon's Mines (1885)
- Edgar Rice Burroughs = The Land that Time Forgot (1915)
- Rudyard Kipling = The Jungle Book (1894)
- Robert E. Howard's Conan stories of the 1930s



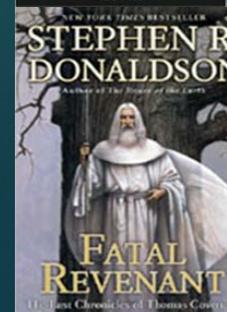
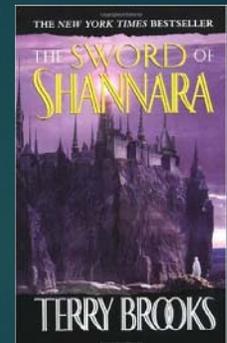
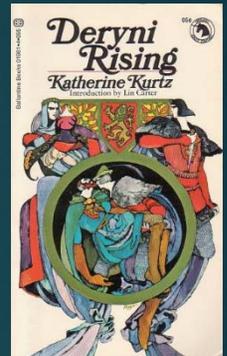
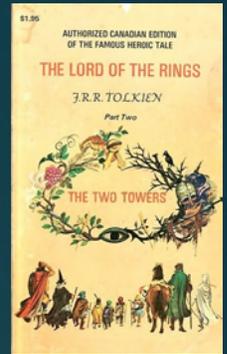
▶ Children's fantasy classics written in this era

- L. Frank Baum = Wizard of Oz (1900)
- J. M. Barrie = Peter Pan (1911)



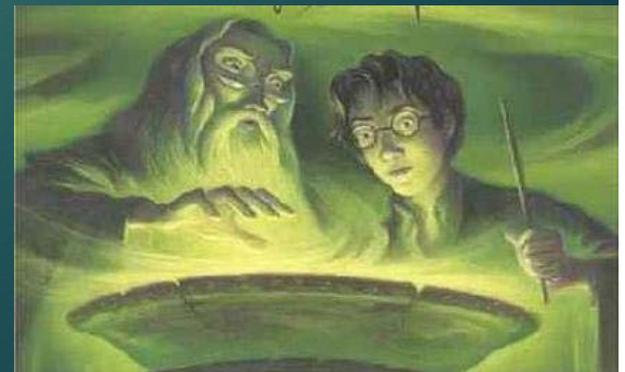
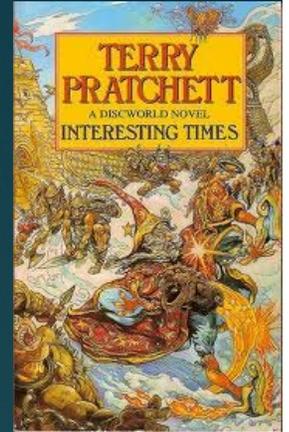
History of Fantasy Fiction

- ▶ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit* (1937)
- ▶ Late 1960s and early 1970s: Andre Norton, Peter S. Beagle, Michael Moorcock, Katherine Kurtz and Roger Zelazny
- ▶ Late 1970s: three key series
 - Terry Brooks' *Shannara Series*
 - Stephen R. Donaldson's *Thomas Covenant*
 - Piers Anthony's *Xanth Series*



History of Fantasy Fiction

- ▶ Late 1980s: Marion Zimmer Bradley, David Eddings, Raymond Feist, Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman, R. A. Salvatore, Terry Pratchett
- ▶ Late 1990s resurgence in children's fantasy
 - Harry Potter
- ▶ 21st Century
 - Continuing expansion of children's and young adult fantasy
 - Popularity of adult fantasy through other media



High vs. Low Fantasy

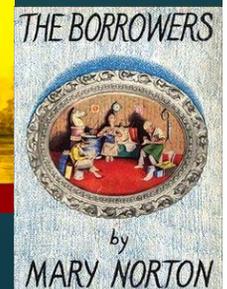
▶ High Fantasy

- Set in fictional, “secondary” world
- Can also be a world-within-a-world
- Epic Fantasy, Heroic Fantasy, Sword & Sorcery



▶ Low Fantasy

- Set in real, “primary” world
- Urban Fantasy
- Juvenile Fantasy



Subgenres of Fantasy Fiction

- ▶ Epic Fantasy / Quest Fantasy
- ▶ Sword & Sorcery
- ▶ Heroic Fantasy
- ▶ Magic
- ▶ Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends
- ▶ Magical Creatures
- ▶ Alternate History
- ▶ Parallel Worlds
- ▶ Urban Fantasy
- ▶ Steampunk & Gaslamp Fantasy
- ▶ Time Travel
- ▶ Humorous Fantasy
- ▶ Literary Fantasy

Epic Fantasy

► Epic Fantasy is

- Associated most closely with fantasy fiction
- Usually written in series
- Heavily influenced by Tolkien
- Takes place over a span of time
- Set in imaginary world
- Lots of characters and subplots
- May concern a quest



Quest Fantasy

▶ Three kinds of Quest Fantasy

- Locate and rescue a person
- Locate and retrieve an item
- Journey to destroy an item



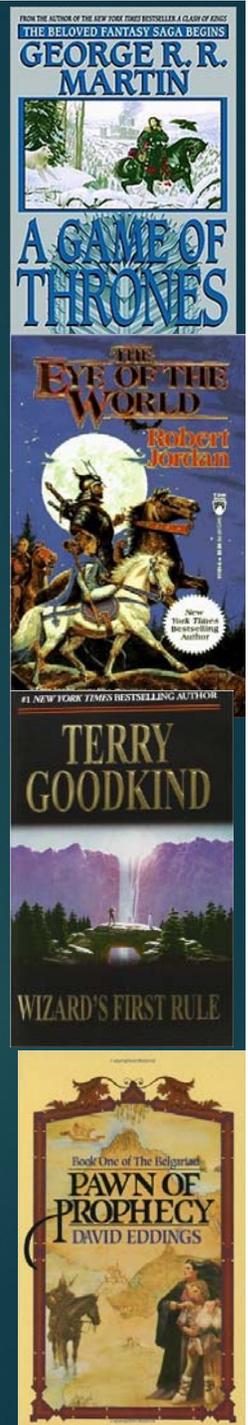
▶ Quests usually involve a group of adventurers with distinctive talents.



▶ Later novels in the epic fantasy series may have the same characters, but no quest.

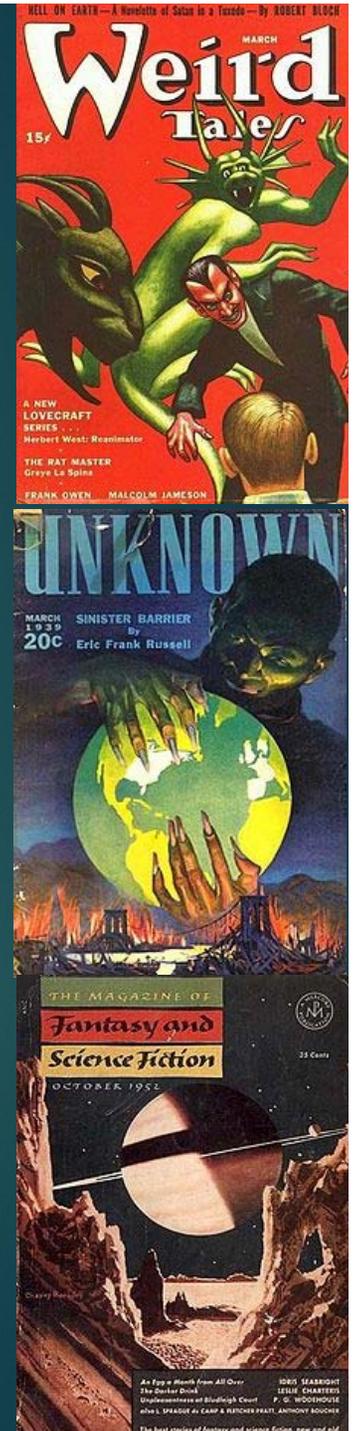
Epic Fantasy / Quest Fantasy

- ▶ J. R. R. Tolkien – The Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit
- ▶ George R. R. Martin – Song of Ice and Fire series (Game of Thrones)
- ▶ Robert Jordan – Wheel of Time
- ▶ Terry Brooks – Shannara series
- ▶ Terry Goodkind – The Sword of Truth series
- ▶ David Eddings – Belgariad and Mallorean sagas
- ▶ Steven Erikson—Malazan series
- ▶ Robin Hobb—Realms of the Elderlings series
- ▶ Brian Sanderson—Stormlight Archive series, Mistborn series



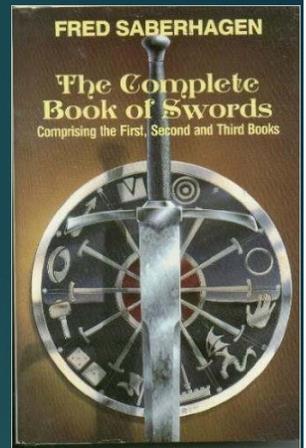
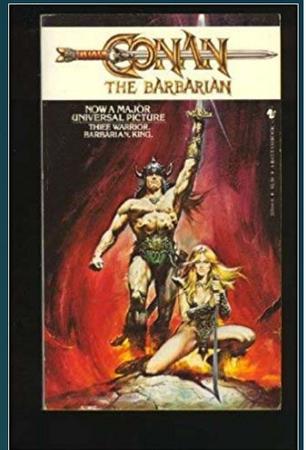
Sword & Sorcery

- ▶ Origins in pulp fantasy magazines
 - Weird Tales (1923)
 - Unknown (1939)
 - The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction (1949)
- ▶ Swashbuckling heroes in exciting conflict
- ▶ Focus mainly on personal battles, not dangerous world matters



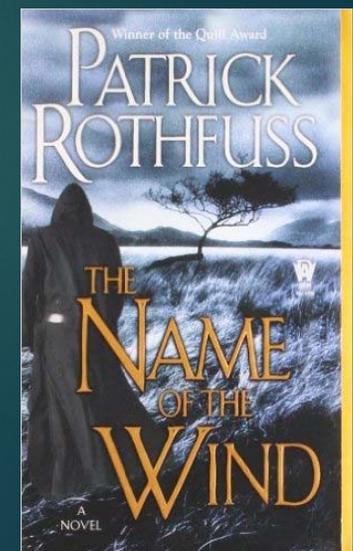
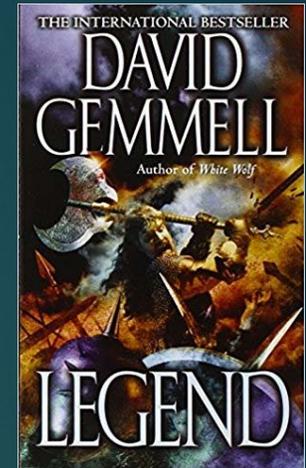
Sword & Sorcery

- ▶ Robert E. Howard—Conan, Kull
- ▶ Fritz Leiber
- ▶ Michael Moorcock—Elric Series
- ▶ Fred Saberhagen—The Book of Swords
- ▶ Marion Zimmer Bradley—Sword and Sorceress Anthology Series



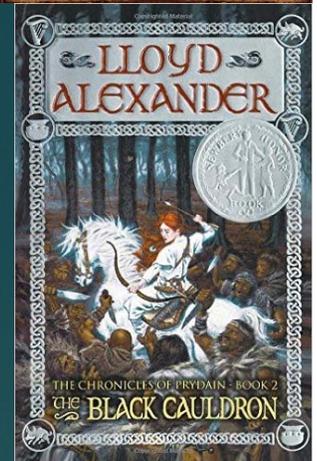
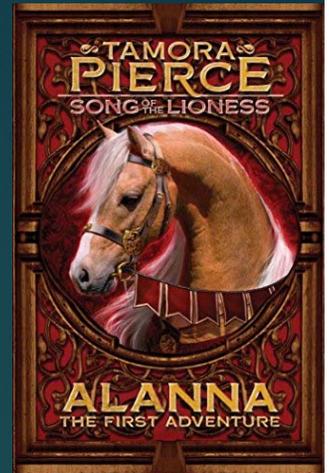
Heroic Fantasy

- ▶ Related to Sword & Sorcery
- ▶ Focused on hero in imaginary lands
- ▶ Hero might be of low-station or unknown noble birth
- ▶ May have unknown magical abilities
- ▶ May be a coming-of-age or transformation story
- ▶ New trend in “anti-hero” or villain as the protagonist
- ▶ Overlap with Epic Fantasy



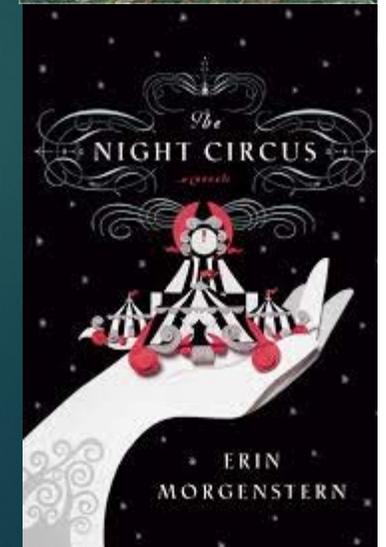
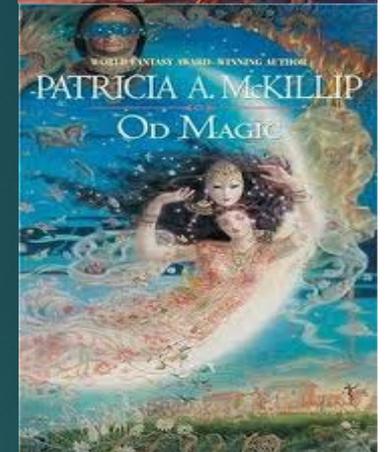
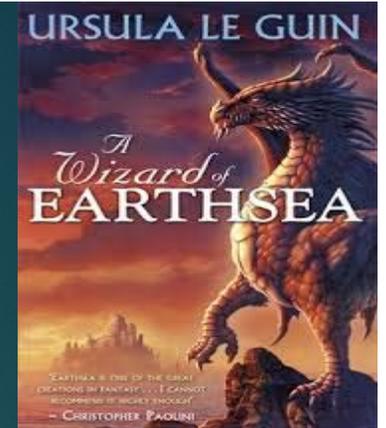
Heroic Fantasy

- ▶ David Gemmell
- ▶ R. A. Salvatore
- ▶ Patrick Rothfuss—The Kingkiller Chronicle series
- ▶ Jessica Amanda Salmonson—Tomoe Gozen trilogy
- ▶ Lloyd Alexander—Chronicles of Prydain series
- ▶ Mercedes Lackey—Valdemar novels
- ▶ Tamora Pierce—Tortall novels
- ▶ Sarah J. Maas—Throne of Glass series



Magic

- ▶ Focus is on magic
- ▶ Can be set in our world or in another time or place
 - Ursula Le Guin – Earthsea novels
 - J. K. Rowling – Harry Potter series
 - Patricia A. McKillip—Od Magic
 - Erin Morgenstern – The Night Circus
 - Tanya Huff – The Gale Women series
 - Deborah Hakness – All Souls Trilogy
 - Lev Grossman— The Magicians series



Fairy Tales

Snow White

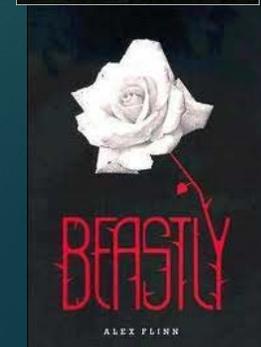
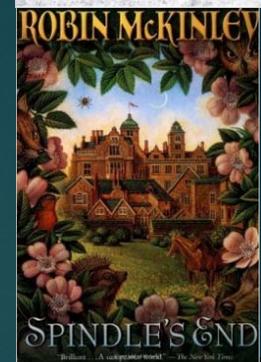
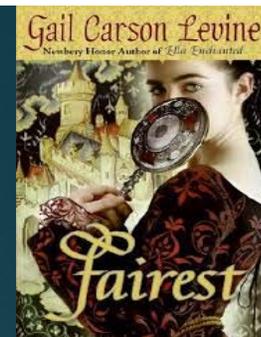
- Gregory Maguire—Mirror, Mirror
- Gail Carson Levin—Fairest
- Alex Flinn—Mirrored
- C.J. Redwine—The Shadow Queen

Sleeping Beauty

- Mercedes Lackey – The Gates of Sleep
- Robin McKinley—Spindle's End
- Alex Flinn – A Kiss in Time

Beauty and the Beast

- Alex Flinn – Beastly
- Mercedes Lackey – Fire Rose
- Robin McKinley—Rose Daughter
- Cat Hellisen—Beastkeeper



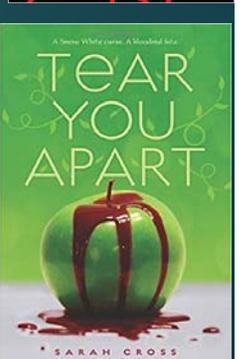
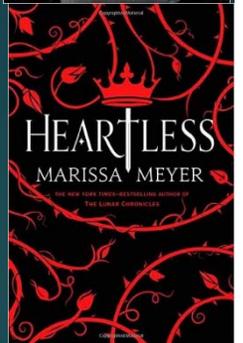
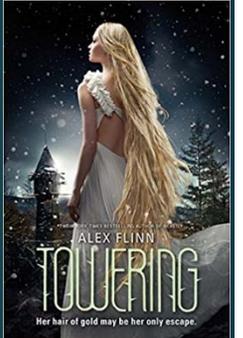
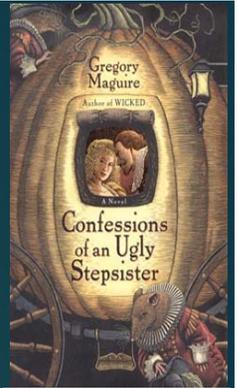
Fairy Tales

Cinderella

- Gregory Maguire –Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister
- Gail Carson Levin—Ella Enchanted
- Alex Flinn – Bewitching

And a few more...

- Gregory Maguire –Wicked series
- Mercedes Lackey—Black Swan
- Alex Flinn—Towering, Cloaked
- Heather Dixon—Entwined
- Marissa Meyer—Heartless
- Sarah Cross—Killing Me Softly, Tear You Apart



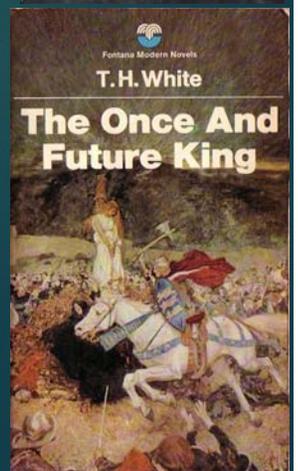
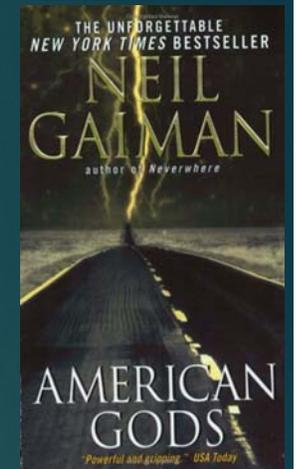
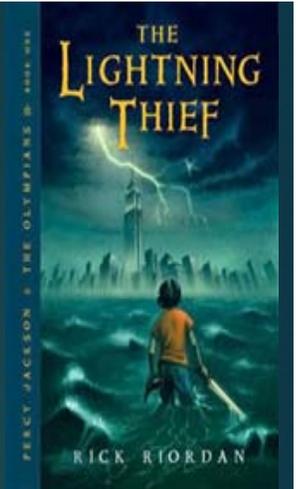
Myths and Legends

Mythology

- Rick Riordan – Percy Jackson series, Heroes of Olympus series, Red Pyramid series, Magnus Chase series, etc.
- Patricia A. McKillip—Riddle Master trilogy
- Neil Gaiman – American Gods, Anansi Boys

Arthurian Legends

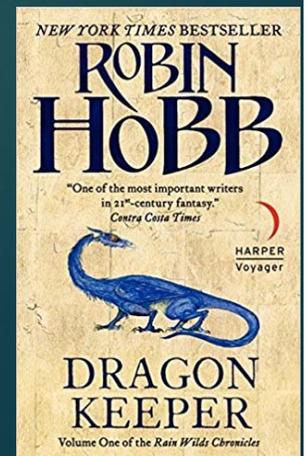
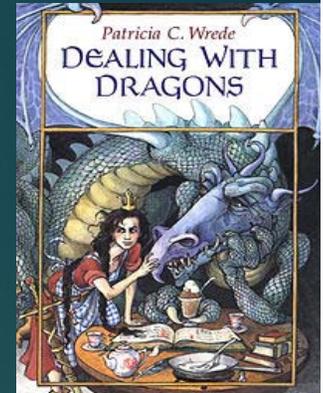
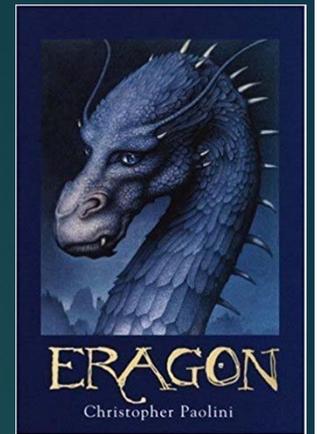
- Stephen R. Lawhead – Pendragon Cycle
- Marion Zimmer Bradley – Avalon series
- Diana Paxson – Hallowed Isles series
- T.H. White – The Once and Future King
- Susan Cooper – Dark is Rising series



Magical Creatures

Dragons

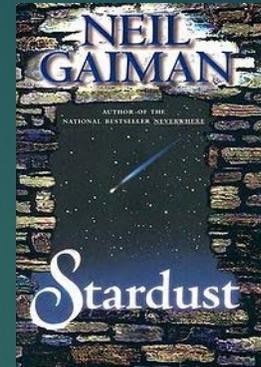
- Gordon R. Dickson – Dragon Knight series
- Christopher Paolini – Inheritance Cycle
- Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman – Dragonlance
- Patricia C. Wrede – Enchanted Forest Chronicles
- Naomi Novik – Temeraire novels
- Mercedes Lackey – Dragon Jousts series
- Cecelia Holland—Dragon Heart
- Robin Hobb—Rain Wilds Chronicles



Magical Creatures

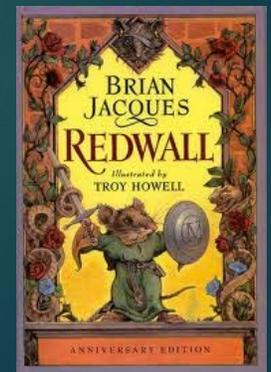
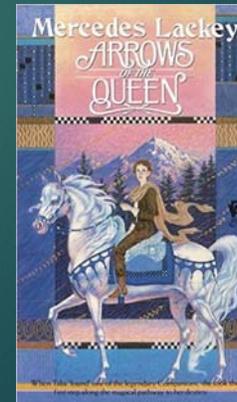
Faerie

- Neil Gaiman – Stardust
- Elizabeth Bear—Promethean Age series
- Holly Black—Modern Faerie Tales
- Melissa Marr—Wicked Lovely series
- Julie Kagawa—Iron Fey series
- Sarah J. Maas—Court of Rose and Thorns series



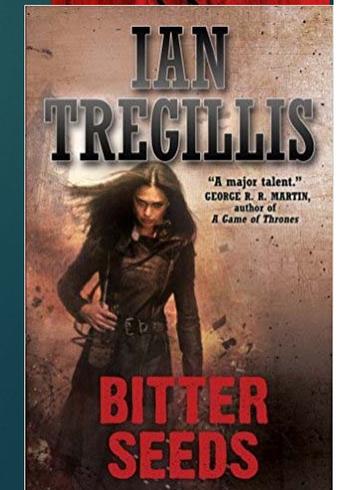
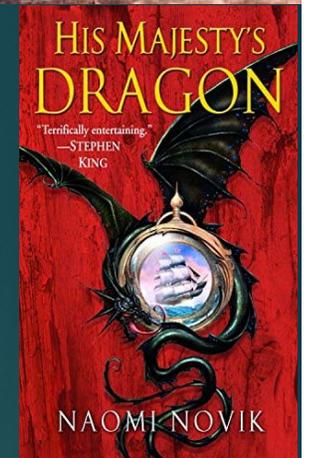
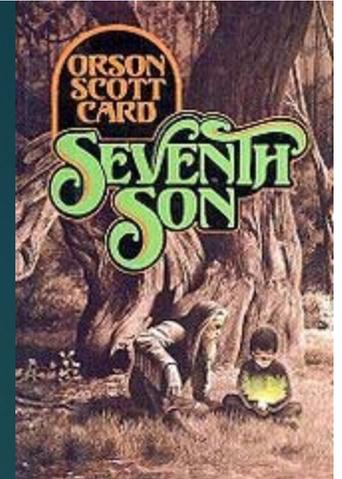
Other Creatures

- Mercedes Lackey—Valdemar series
- Peter S. Beagle—The Last Unicorn
- Brian Jacques—Redwall series



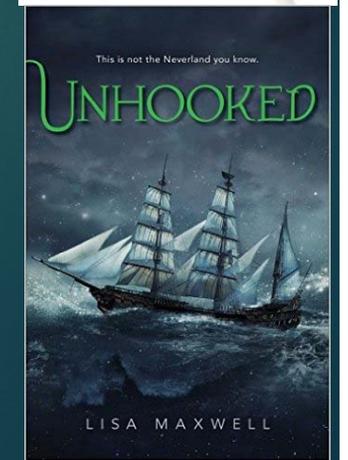
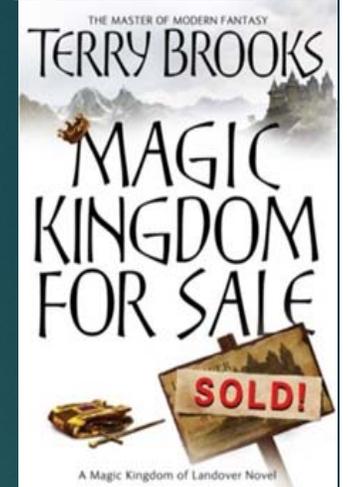
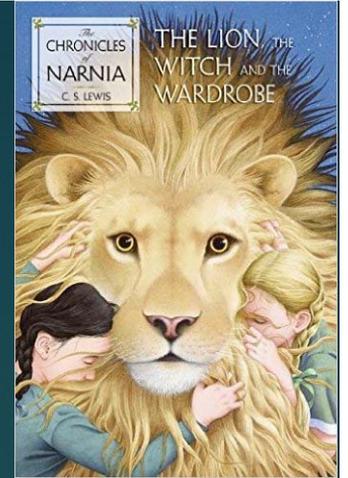
Alternate History

- ▶ What-if situations that change history
 - ▶ Magic or the supernatural is involved
 - ▶ Crossover with Steampunk/Gaslamp fantasy
-
- Orson Scott Card – Tales of Alvin Maker
 - Naomi Novik – Temeraire novels
 - Ian Tregillis—Milkweed series
 - Susan Clarke—Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell



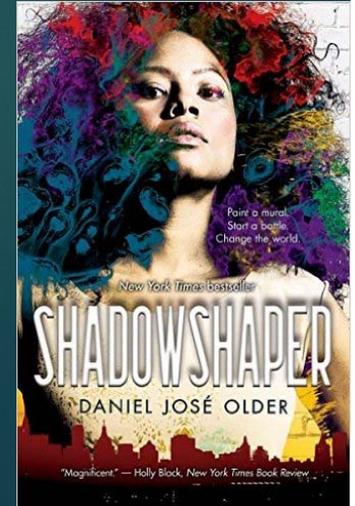
Parallel Worlds

- ▶ Characters explore alternate worlds
 - C.S. Lewis – Chronicles of Narnia
 - Terry Brooks – Landover series
 - Frank Beddor—Looking Glass Wars
 - Neil Gaiman – Coraline, Graveyard Book
 - Lisa Maxwell—Unhooked
 - V.E. Schwab – Shades of Magic series
 - Genevieve Cogman—Invisible Library series



Urban Fantasy

- ▶ Takes place in a city, usually a contemporary setting
- ▶ Coexistence of humans and the paranormal
- ▶ Overlap with Fantasy Mystery and Paranormal Romance
 - Jim Butcher – Dresden Files series
 - Laurell K. Hamilton – Anita Blake series
 - Patricia Briggs – Mercy Thompson series
 - Ilona Andrews – Kate Daniels series
 - Kim Harrison – Rachel Morgan series
 - Anne Bishop – Others series
 - Cassandra Clare – Mortal Instruments series
 - Daniel José Older – Shadowshaper Cypher series



Steampunk and Gaslamp Fantasy

Steampunk

- ▶ Fantasy combined with steam-powered technology
- ▶ Set in fantasy world or alternate version of real world
- ▶ May overlap with Alternate History
- ▶ May include supernatural elements

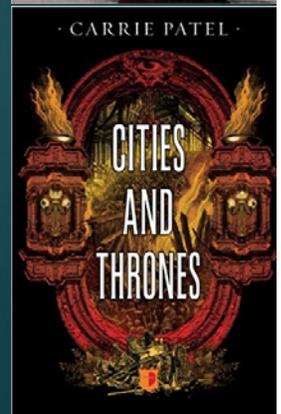
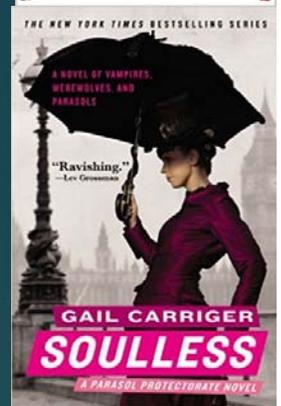
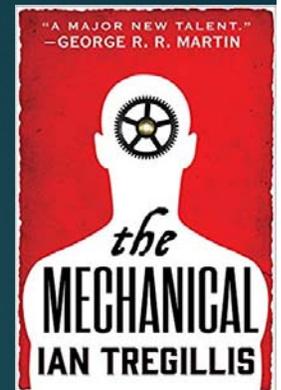
Gaslamp Fantasy

- ▶ Gaslight fantasy or Gaslight romance
- ▶ Victorian or Edwardian setting
- ▶ May include Victorian icons, such as Jekyll and Hyde, Jack the Ripper and Sherlock Holmes



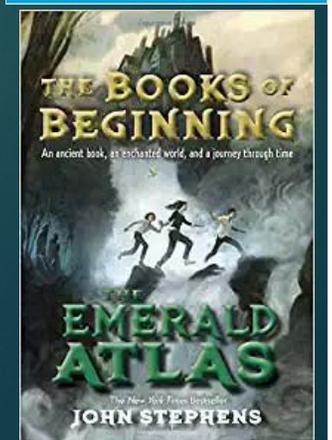
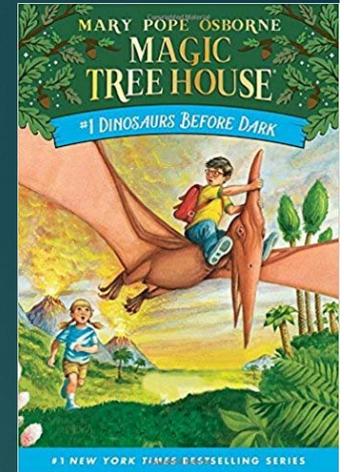
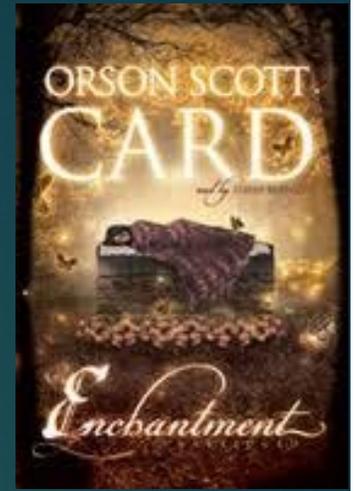
Steampunk and Gaslamp Fantasy

- Cassandra Clare—Infernal Instruments series
- Gail Carriger—Parasol Protectorate series, Finishing School series, Custard Protocol series
- Ian Tregillis—The Alchemy Wars series
- Emma Jane Holloway—The Baskerville Affair series
- Carrie Patel—Recoletta series



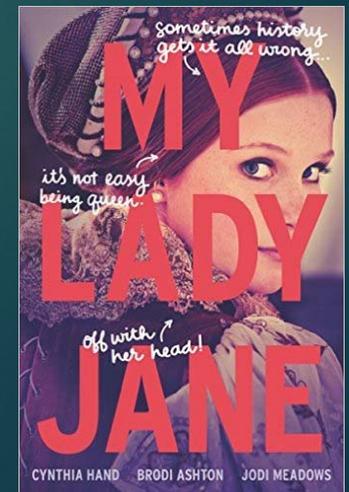
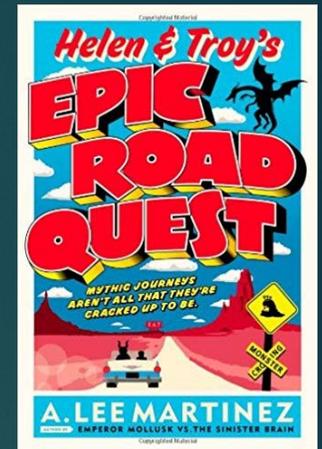
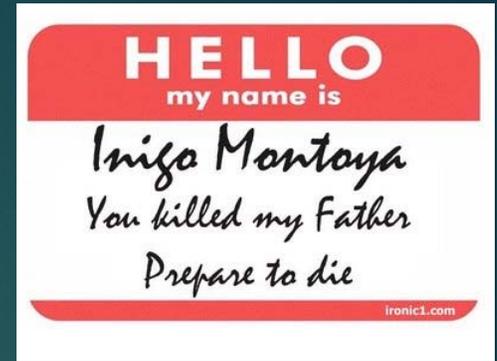
Time Travel

- ▶ Not a new concept
 - Mark Twain – A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court (1889)
- ▶ Popular plot device in romance novels
 - Diana Gabaldon—Outlander series
 - Orson Scott Card—Enchantment
 - Audrey Niffenegger—The Time Traveler’s Wife
 - Mary Pope Osborne—Magic Tree House books
 - John Stephens—Book of Beginnings series



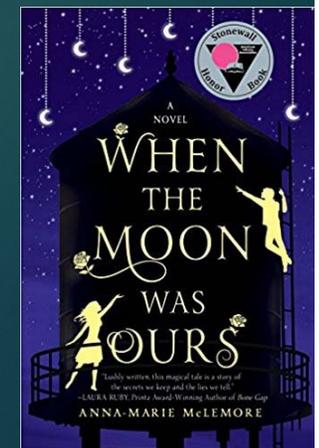
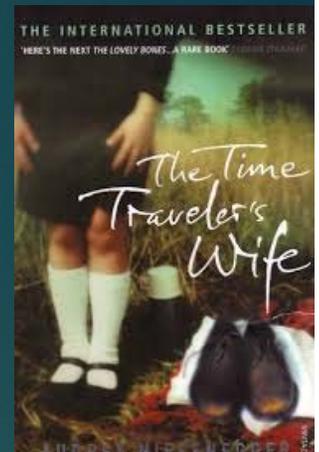
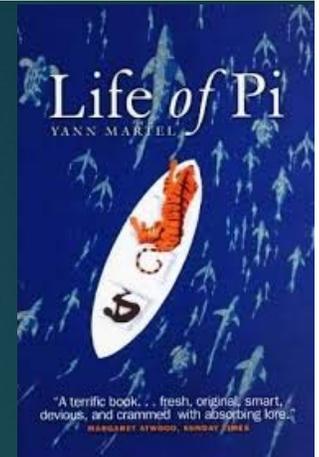
Humorous Fantasy

- Terry Pratchett—Discworld
- Piers Anthony—Xanth
- Robert Asprin—Myth Adventures
- Jasper Fforde—Shades of Grey, Chronicles of Kazam series
- Christopher Moore
- William Goldman—The Princess Bride
- A. Lee Martinez – Helen & Troy’s Epic Road Quest
- Tina Connolly—Seriously Wicked series
- Cynthia Hand, Brodi Ashton, Jodi Meadows—My Lady Jane



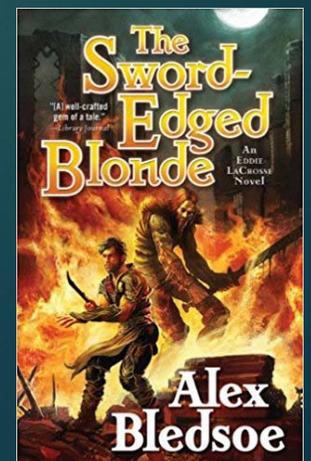
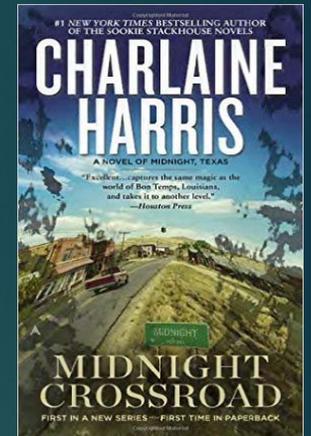
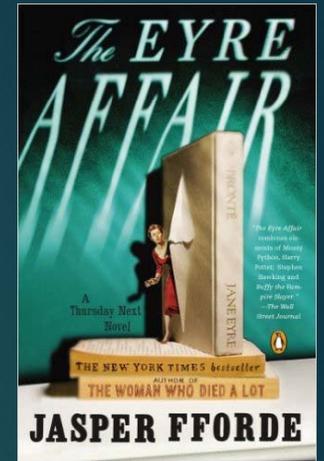
Literary Fantasy

- Magical Realism
 - Contains elements of fantasy
 - Generally set in real world
- Yann Martel—Life of Pi
 - Audrey Niffenegger—The Time Traveler's Wife
 - Alice Hoffman
 - Sarah Addison Allen
 - Anna-Marie McLemore—The Weight of Feathers, When the Moon was Ours
 - Laura Ruby—Bone Gap
 - Stacey Lee—The Secret of a Heart Note



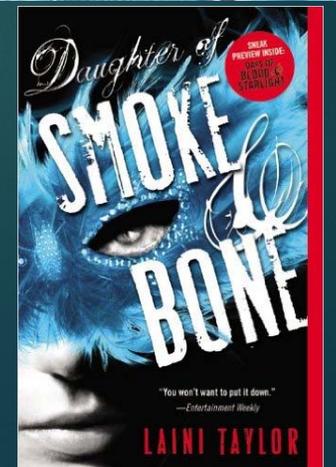
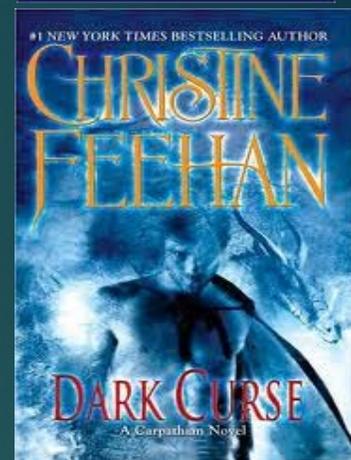
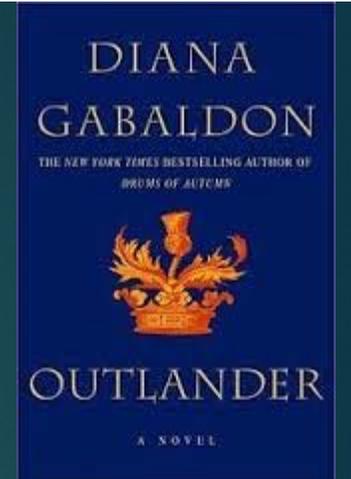
Fantasy Mystery

- ▶ Mystery with fantasy elements or setting
 - ▶ Some overlap with Urban Fantasy and Humorous Fantasy
- Jim Butcher – Dresden Files
 - Jasper Fforde – Thursday Next and Nursery Crimes novels
 - Glenn Cook – Garrett, PI series
 - Charlaine Harris – Southern Vampire mysteries (True Blood), Midnight, Texas series
 - Alex Bledsoe—Eddie LaCross series



Fantasy Romance

- ▶ Romance with fantasy elements
 - ▶ Falls under Paranormal Romance
- Diana Gabaldon – Outlander series
 - Christine Feehan – Carpathian series
 - Sherrilyn Kenyon – Dark Hunter series
 - Karen Marie Moning—Fever series
 - Laurell K. Hamilton – Anita Blake series, Meredith “Merry” Gentry series
 - Laini Taylor – Daughter of Smoke and Bones series



Expanded Universes

▶ Dragonlance

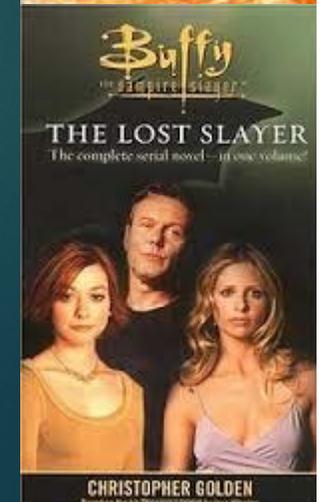
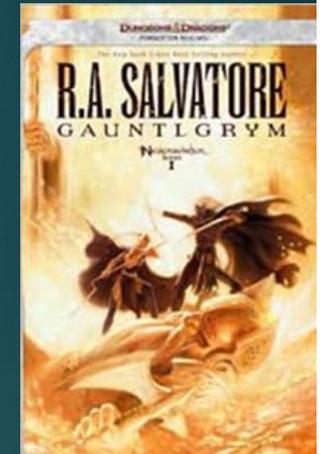
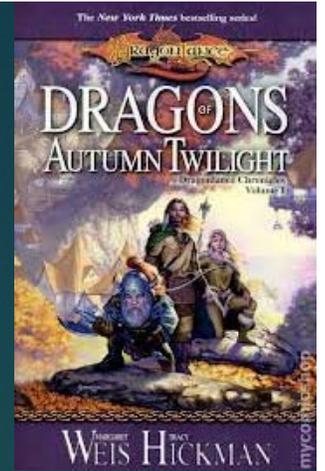
- Tracy Hickman and Margaret Weis
- Chronicles trilogy

▶ Forgotten Realms

- Ed Greenwood
- R. A. Salvatore

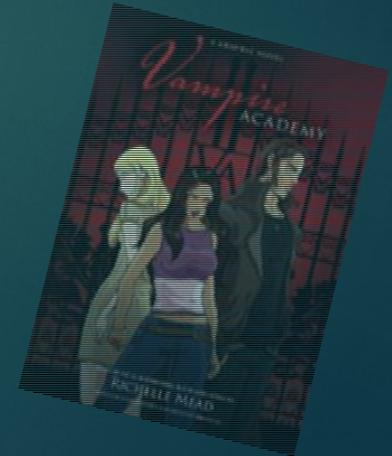
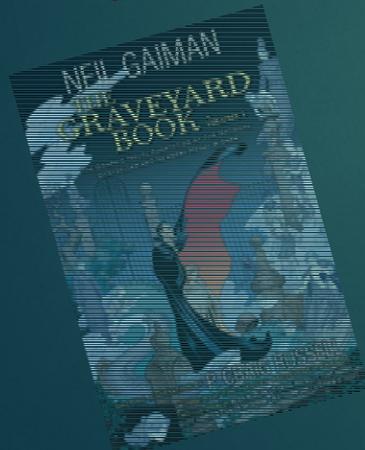
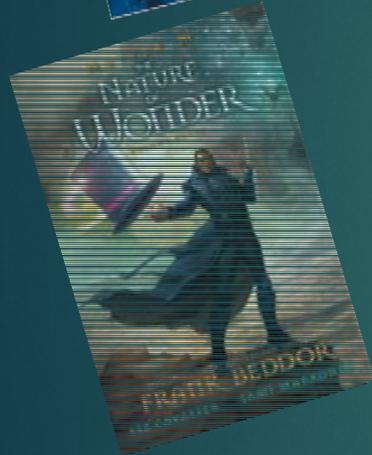
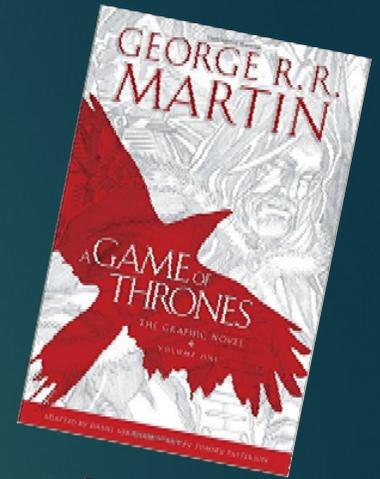
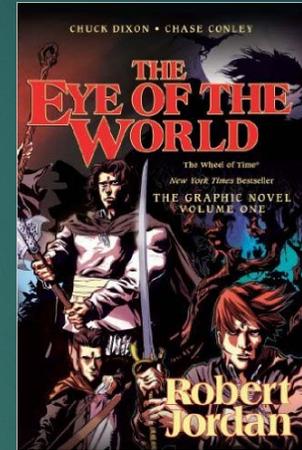
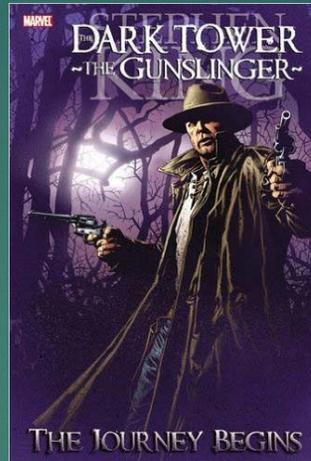
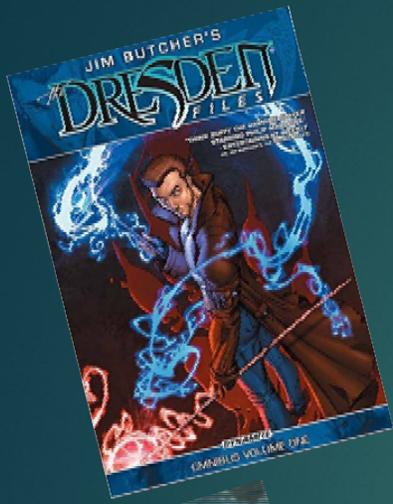
▶ Magic: the Gathering

▶ Buffy the Vampire Slayer



CHRISTOPHER GOLDEN

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- ▶ www.barnesandnoble.com
- ▶ <https://www.fantasticfiction.com/>
- ▶ www.locusmag.com
- ▶ www.uchronia.net

Awards for Fantasy

- ▶ World Fantasy Award -- <http://www.worldfantasy.org/awards/>
- ▶ Mythopoeic Awards -- <http://www.mythsoc.org/awards/>
- ▶ British Fantasy Awards – <http://www.britishfantasysociety.org/>
- ▶ Hugo Awards – <http://www.thehugoawards.org/hugo-history/>
- ▶ Nebula Awards -- <http://nebulas.sfwawards.org/>

Looking for Teen Titles?

- ▶ <http://www.teenlibrariantoolbox.com>
- ▶ <http://voyamagazine.com/topics/voyabooklists>
- ▶ <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/teenstopten>
- ▶ YALSA Book Finder: <http://booklists.yalsa.net>

Other Resources

- ▶ Herald, Diana Tixier and Bonnie Kunzel. *Fluent in fantasy : the next generation*. Westport, Conn. : Libraries Unlimited, 2008.
- ▶ Hollands, Neil. *Read on...fantasy fiction*. Westport, Conn. : Libraries Unlimited, 2007.
- ✓ Buker, Derek M. *The science fiction and fantasy readers' advisory : the librarian's guide to cyborgs, aliens and sorcerers*. Chicago : American Library Association, 2002.
- ✓ Drout, Michael D. C. *Rings, swords and monsters: exploring fantasy literature*. Prince Frederick, MD : Recorded Books, ©2006.
- ✓ Orr, Cynthia and Diana Tixier Herald. *Genreflecting : a guide to popular reading interests*. Santa Barbara, California : Libraries Unlimited, 2013.

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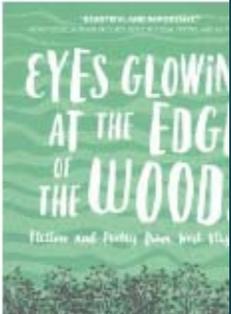
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