

Science Fiction as a Literary Genre and its Importance for Readers

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Abstract

The article analyses the role and effect of reading science fiction as well fantasy. Science fiction is a genre of speculative fiction, which typically deals with imaginative and futuristic concepts such as advanced science and technology, space exploration, time travel, parallel universes, and extraterrestrial life. By reading a fiction and especially a fantasy, a child's interest and love for reading will increase. A particular pupil will benefit from reading about fantasy and fiction, it's a great way to increase learning and reading comprehension in general. Today's avid young readers can easily develop into tomorrow's.

Keywords: literature, science fiction, literary genre, fantasy, classical mythology, imagine, magical creatures, universe.

Science fiction is a genre of speculative fiction, which typically deals with imaginative and futuristic concepts such as advanced science and technology, space exploration, inventions, time travel, robots, parallel universes, and extraterrestrial life. Science fiction appeared firstly in ancient mythology. It is related to fantasy, horror, and superhero fiction and contains many subgenres. Its exact definition has long been disputed among authors, critics, scholars, and readers.

According to Isaac Asimov, "Science fiction can be defined as that branch of literature which deals with the reaction of human beings to changes in science and technology." Robert A. Heinlein wrote that "A handy short definition of almost all science fiction might read: realistic speculation about possible future events, based solidly on adequate knowledge of the real world, past and present, and on a thorough understanding of the nature and significance of the scientific method."

Fantasy contains the works of many writers, artists, filmmakers and musicians from ancient myths and legends to many recent and popular works. As a literary genre, science fiction is literature set in an imaginary universe, often but not always without any locations, events or people from the real world. Magic, the supernatural and magical creatures are common in many of these imaginary worlds. Much of fantasy literature originated from legends and myths. So, it came from classical mythology. Stories involving magic and terrible monsters have existed in spoken forms before the advent of printed literature. Classical mythology is rich in fantastical stories and characters, the best known being the works of Homer and Virgil. A number of fantasy novels originally written for children, such as "Alice in Wonderland" and the "Harry Potter" series novels, also attract an adult audience.

Fantasy literature depends on the actual works consulted. Fantasy fiction develops its own frame released from what we usually consider probable reality. The reader and the hero alike must confront the passing strange and wondrous fair without any of the standards or norms applicable to physical reality.

Fantasy has claimed with considerable vigor a special status in literature. It has insisted that it is capable of non-realism, of an imaginative divorce between fictional models it constructs and the world we all experience. This claim, too, has proved unfounded. No man has succeeded in imagining a world free of connection to our experiential world, with characters and situations that cannot be seen as mere inversions or distortions of that all too recognizable cosmos. Thus, if we must acknowledge that reality inevitably eludes our human languages, we must admit as well that these languages can never conduct the human imagination to a point beyond this reality. (Robert Scholes, *Structural Fabulation* [US 1975], p 7).

Dream worlds are also typically important for Fantasy narration, as indicated by as old a formula as Novalis' Romantically conceived one: "A fairy-tale is a dream-picture without coherence, a collection of wonderful things and occurrences .

As Australian fantasy and science fiction author, Sean Williams says: "Fantasy gives me a means to write more closely to theme, unfettered by the constrictions of the real world (more or less), enabling me to make my own constrictions that will guide the story down thematic paths. It allows the combining of things that don't normally fit, like Australian landscapes, magic, and a post-apocalyptic society in the "Books of the Change", or the same Australian landscapes, Darwinist theism, mirror twins and multi-world theory in the "Books of the Cataclysm". The genre of fantastic fiction allows these things to meet in a way that wouldn't be possible in realist fiction."

Through centuries many literary figures have always been interested in, and have been writing in the genre of, fantasy. They are Thomas Moore, Juan Katherine Rowling, Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev, Nikolay Nosov, Miguel de Cervantes, Herbert Wells, George McDonald, Charles Dodgson, Oscar Wilde, Jonathan Swift and so on. These authors used fantasy as a tool to convey their ideas in a comfortable way because fantasy lets authors and readers sink deep into imagination and make them think about the differences between reality and imagination and better understand the real world we are living. For example, Thomas Moore, one of the outstanding representatives of the English Renaissance, wrote his masterpiece "Utopia", telling a story about an ideal society, with justice and equality for all citizens. At that time, that is to say, in the sixteenth century the social system of England was unsatisfactory and worthy of being criticized. Because injustice and inequality were dominant at that time. So, Thomas Moore created "Utopia" to convince the oppressed people to be patient and wait the time when justice prevails. Herbert Wells, a great English writer who looked into the future, wrote a lot of science fictions, such as "The Time Machine", "The Invisible Man", "The War of the Worlds", "The First Man in the Moon" "Star wars" to encourage the best hope for the future. He devoted more than fifty years of his life to literary works together with science fictions. By writing "The Time Machine", the author wants to convey the idea that humanity has a bright future and everybody should not complain about everything. They should hold tough of hope of a further bright future. Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev, a great Uzbek writer of children's literature, devoted most of his creations mainly to children. His works are of fantasy, adventure and fairy-tales. By reading his works we can see that children undergo wonderful adventure and eliminate evils by magical powers. In "Riding over a Yellow Dev" and "The Death of the Yellow Dev", the adventures of Hoshimjon are told. He finds a magical cap among the ruins and with the help of it he reveals the manipulation, the falsification and deception of people living around his village. J. K. Rowling, an author of "Harry Potter" series novels, wrote most of her works in the fantasy genre and her works are mainly for children. It is well known that this author received a number of prizes because of her works, which played a huge role in children's fantasy. In "Harry Potter" series novels, Harry sees a lot of magical things in Hogwart School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, such as moving pictures, live trees, speaking letters, magic wands, invisible cloaks, flying balls, flying broomsticks and so on. The three main characters Harry, Ronald and Germione undergo a lot of mysteries around the school castle they are attending. They eventually discover the evil wizard and they fight with him and in the end they overcome evils.

Today's student has a lot of choices when it comes to entertainment and many ways to explore their creative minds through fantasy and fiction. They can play countless video and computer games and explore a very visual and interactive world through these options. Unfortunately, many readers are putting down fantasy novels and are starting to view reading as only a skill to scan for information or pass an exam. Although these skills are essential to success in the current academic climate, kids are missing out on the skills they develop when they read about dragons, unicorns, talking dolphins, and planets from far away. When young readers read a fantasy novel, they can expand their imagination to encompass much more than what is right in front of them and develop creativity. Additionally, creative thinkers are often about to brainstorm for solutions to complicated problems as they get older, which is an invaluable skill.

Therefore, fantasy books have a strong effect on imagination. By imagination readers can think of new ideas that have never existed before and it can encourage them to make new inventions. It is a fact that because of a fantasy mankind created cars, phones, trains, plains, rockets, helicopters, radios, televisions, ships, clocks and so on. It can be claimed that fantasy sometimes turns into reality. These days we have a lot of flying cameras, speaking robots and so on. In future we may see flying cars, a moveable house according to some scholars. It is because of a fantasy that they thought of. That is why fantasy is important in humanity's life.

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