

CRASH COURSE IN FANTASY

NoveList



Panelists



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Skokie Public Library



Victoria Caplinger Fredrick

Director, Book Discovery
NoveList



libraryreads.org

Speculative Fiction



Science Fiction

What if our scientific theories are real?



Horror

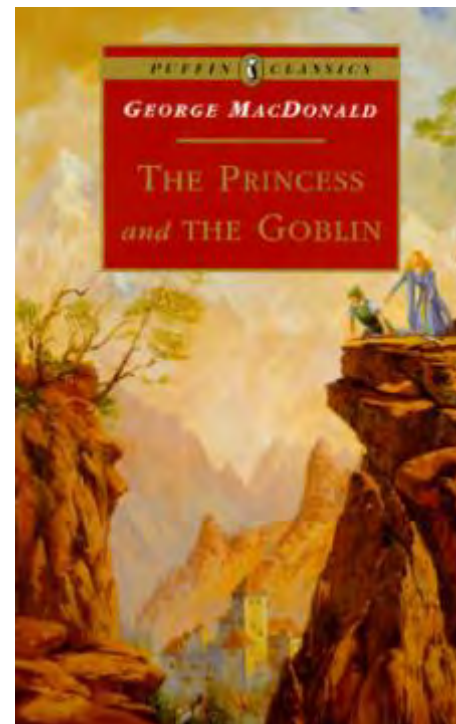
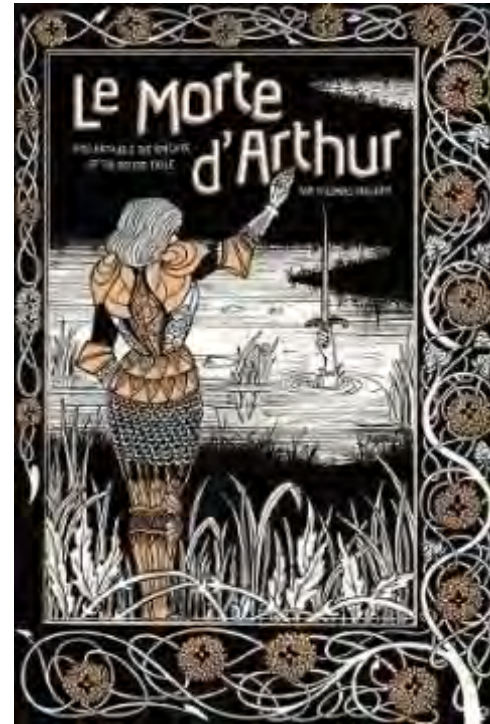
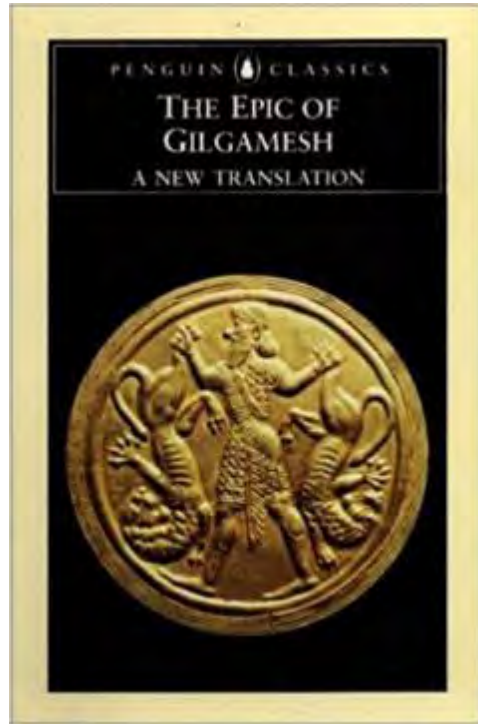
What if our nightmares are real?



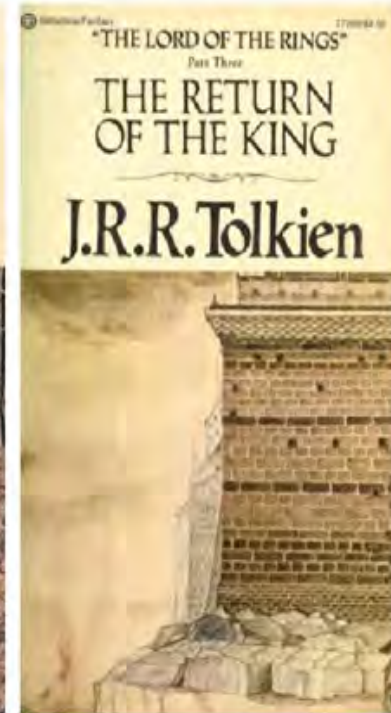
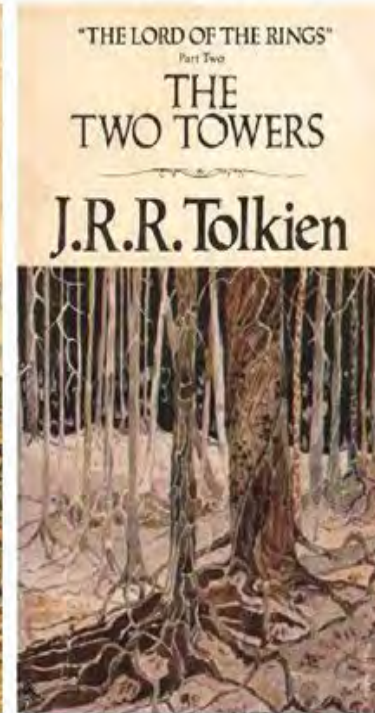
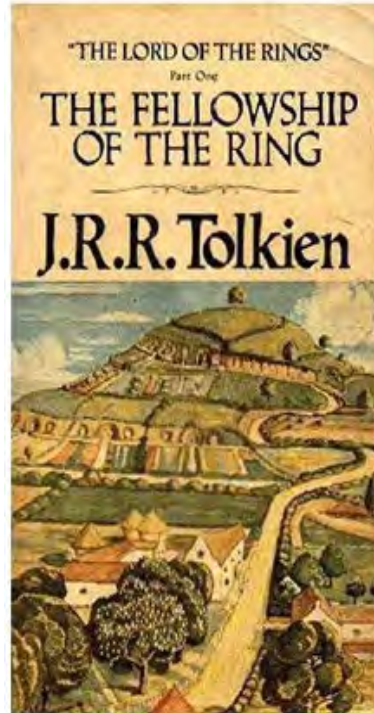
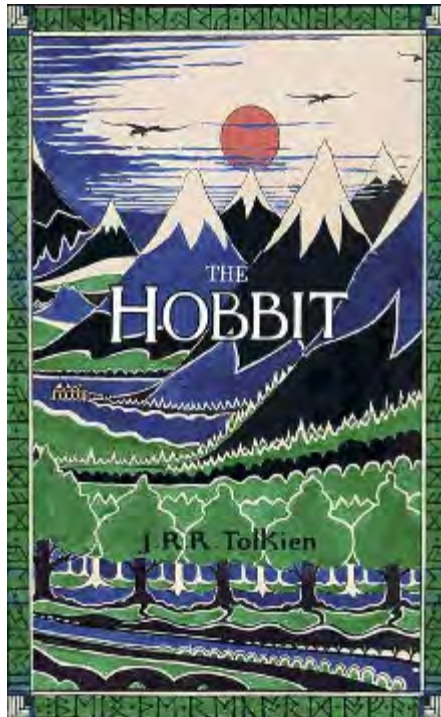
Fantasy

What if magic or magical creatures exist?

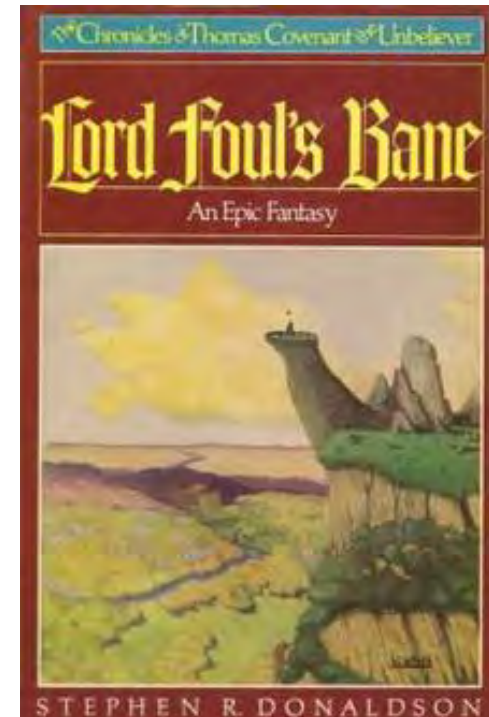
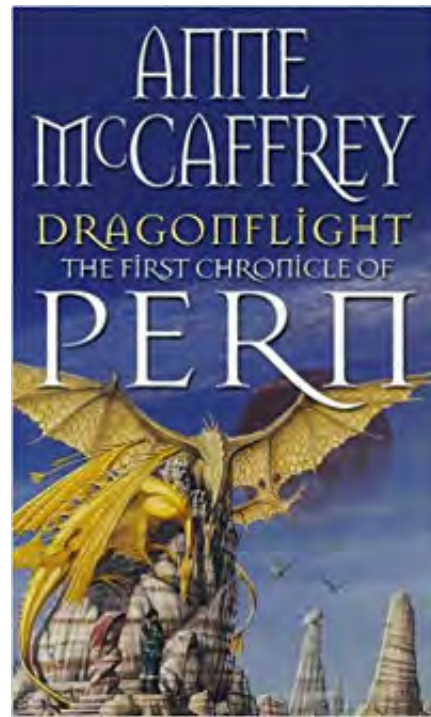
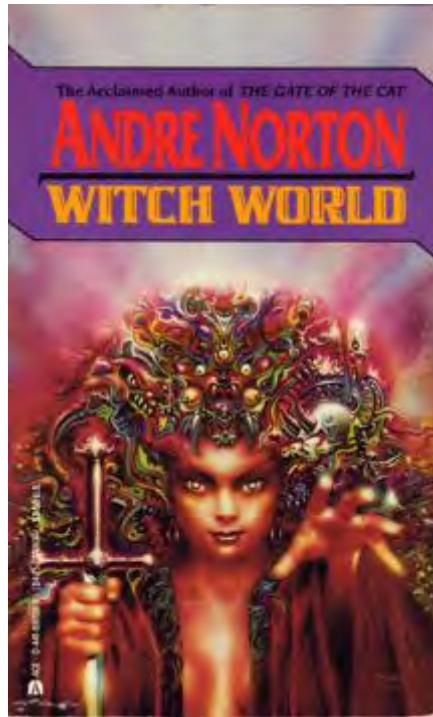
History of the Genre



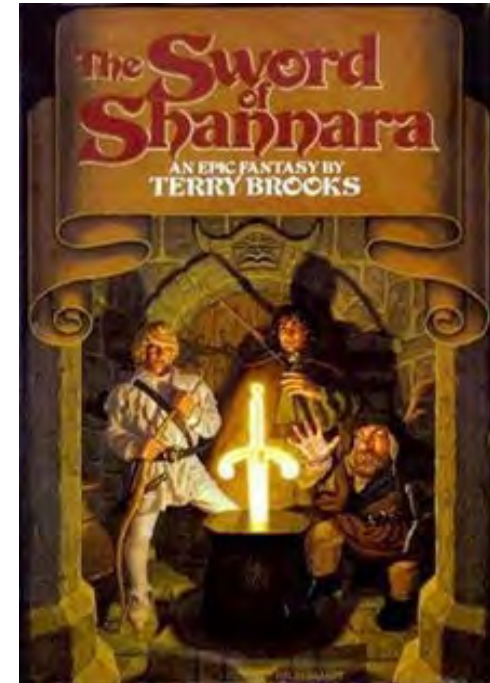
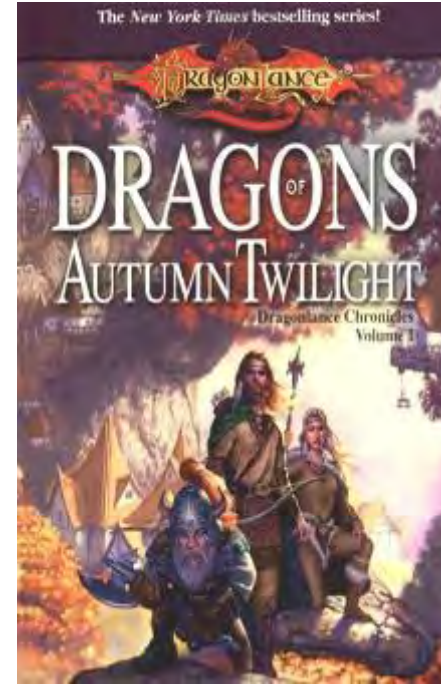
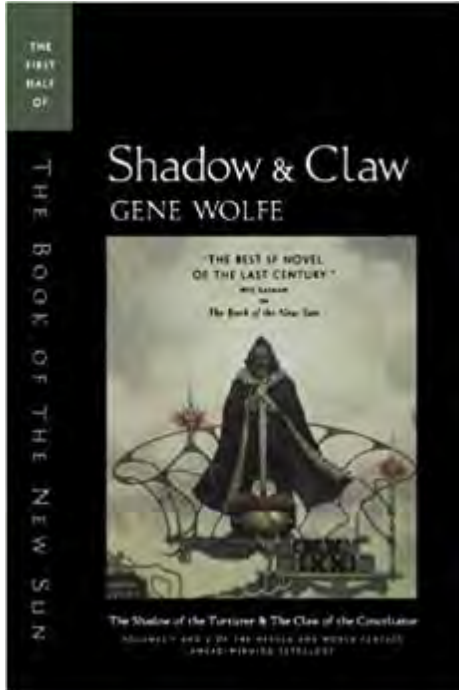
J.R.R. Tolkien



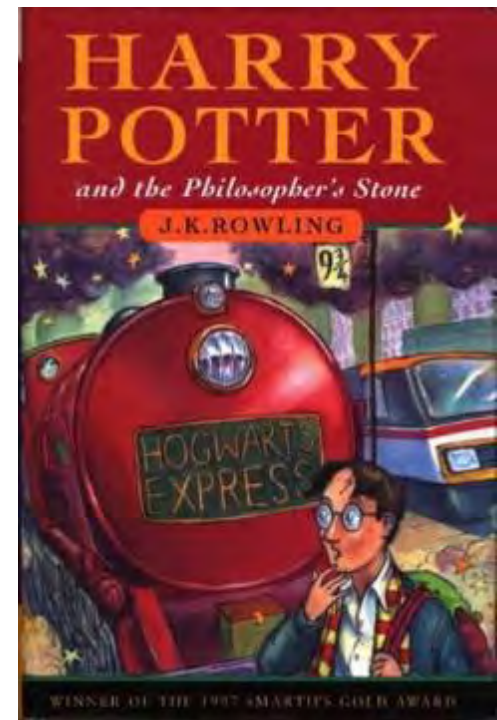
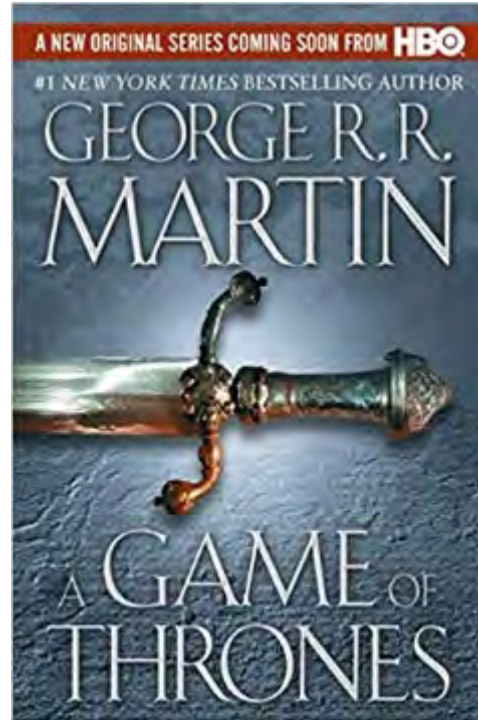
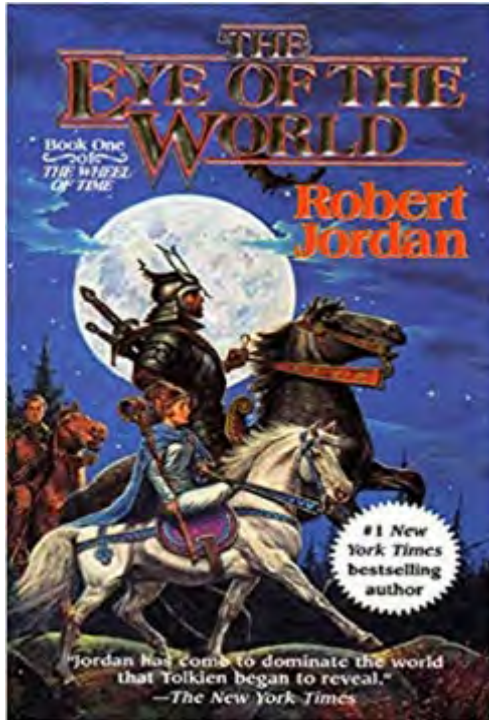
Fantasy in the '60s and '70s



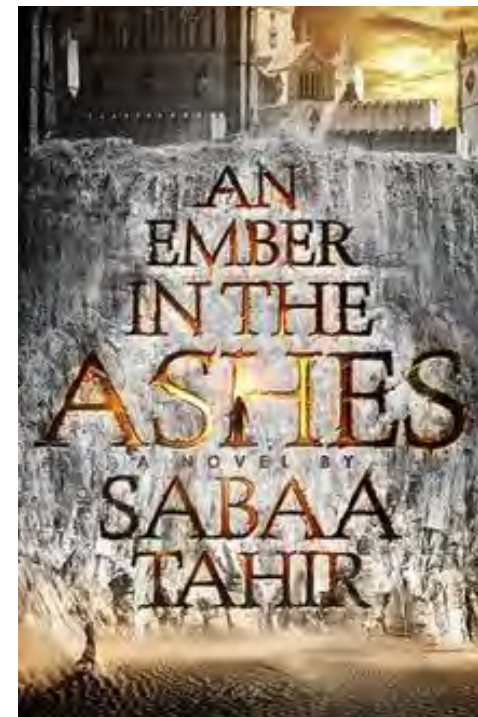
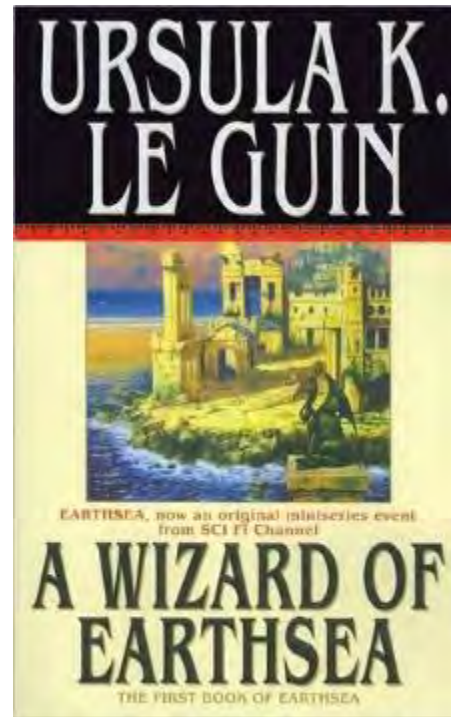
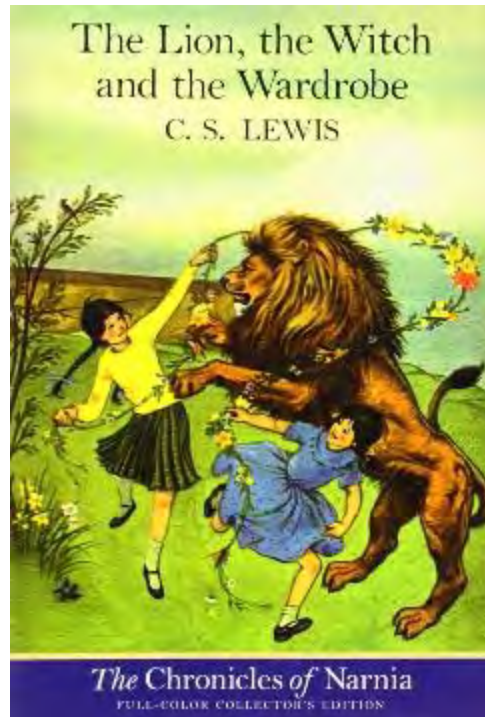
Fantasy in the '80s



Fantasy in the '90s



Fantasy for All Ages

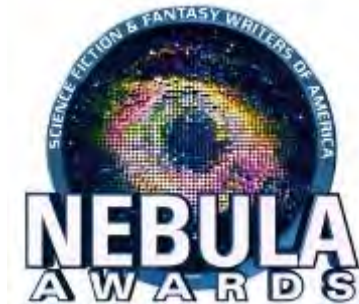


Awards



The **Hugo Awards** are probably the most prestigious fantasy and science fiction awards. Categories include: literature, artwork, film, performance and other accomplishments in science fiction and fantasy.

The **Nebula Awards** recognize only literature. Categories include best novel, novella, novelette and short story.



The **World Fantasy Awards** recognize literature and artists, and are voted on by attendees of the annual World Fantasy Convention.

Why Fantasy?

- Escape from reality into immersive worlds
- Magic and magical creatures are awesome
- Forge strong emotional connections to characters (often) over the course of multiple books

“Fantasy is silver and scarlet, indigo and azure, obsidian veined with gold and lapis lazuli. Reality is plywood and plastic, done up in mud brown and olive drab. We read fantasy to find the colors again, I think ...”

— George R.R. Martin

Fantasy Readers

- Are whole-collection users, frequently well-versed in pop culture
- Often don't discriminate between adult, teen, or youth books
- World-building is essential, but also read for character, pacing and tone within the genre

world-building

large cast of characters

sweeping

dramatic

intricately plotted

bleak

gritty

violent



offbeat

amusing

quirky

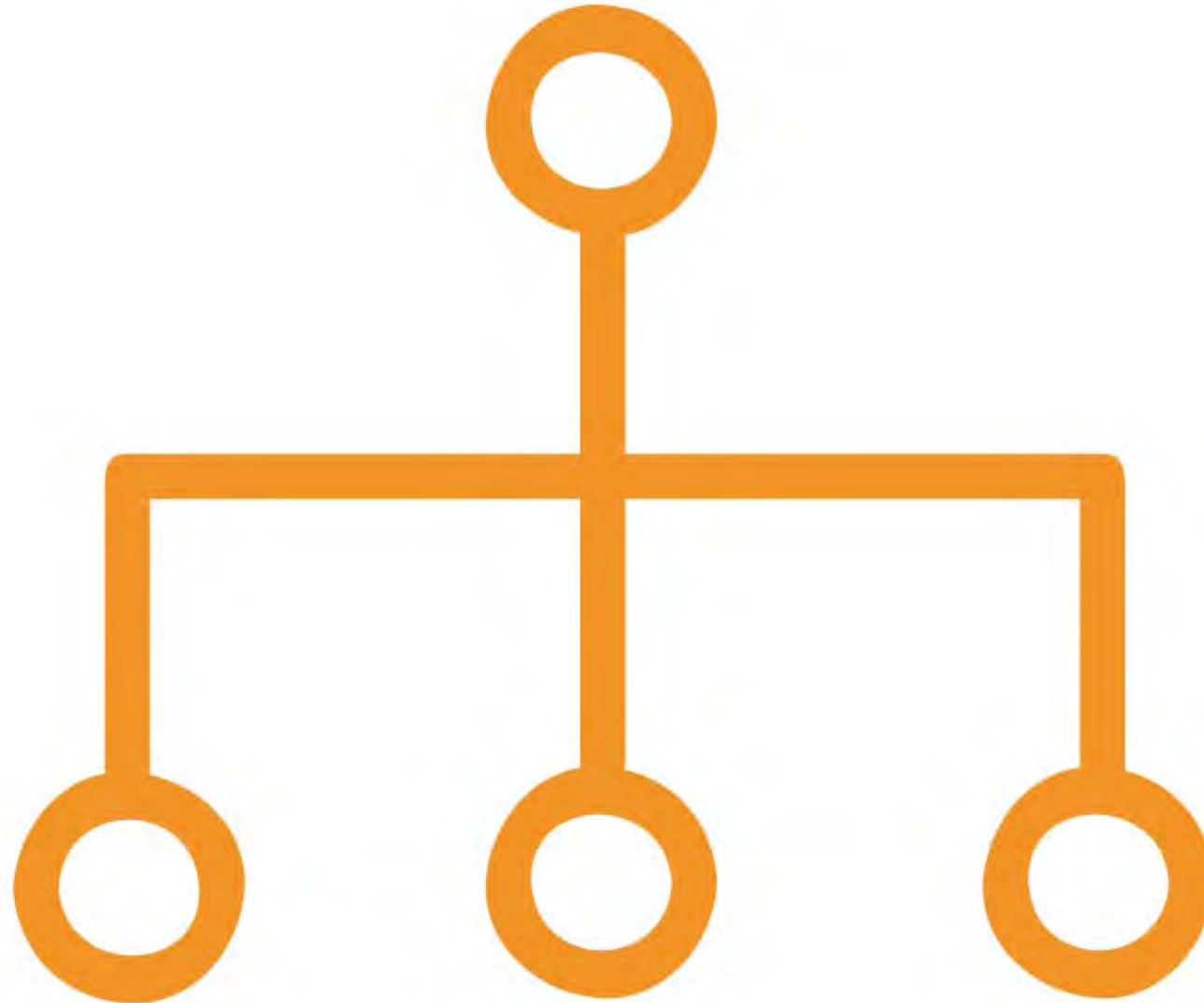
funny

lyrical

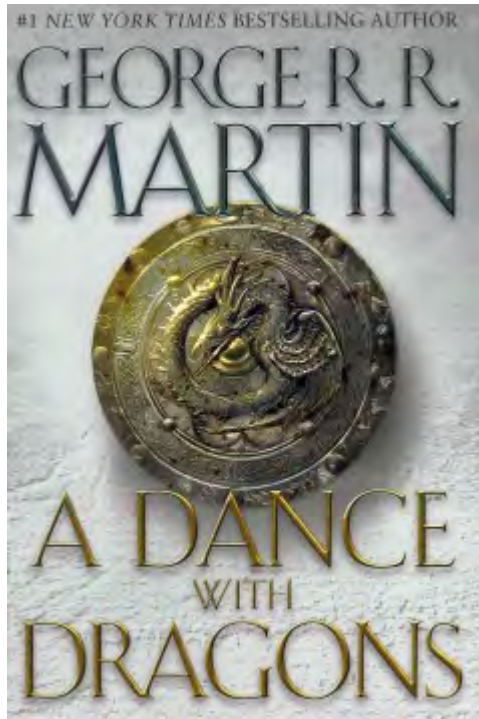
descriptive

lush

Fantasy Subgenres



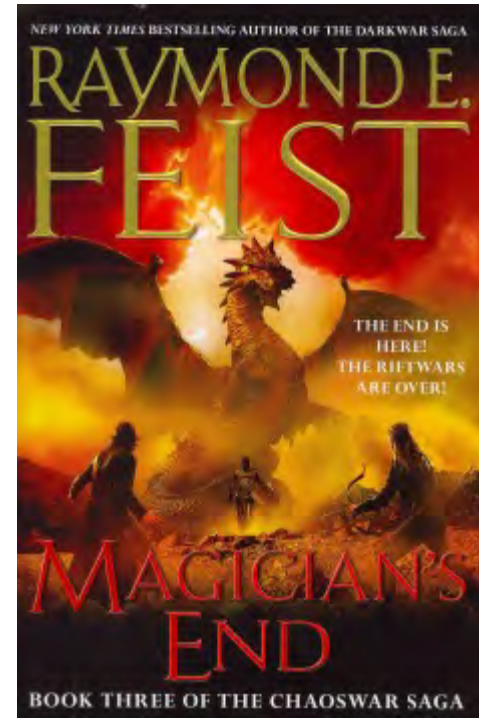
Classic Subgenres



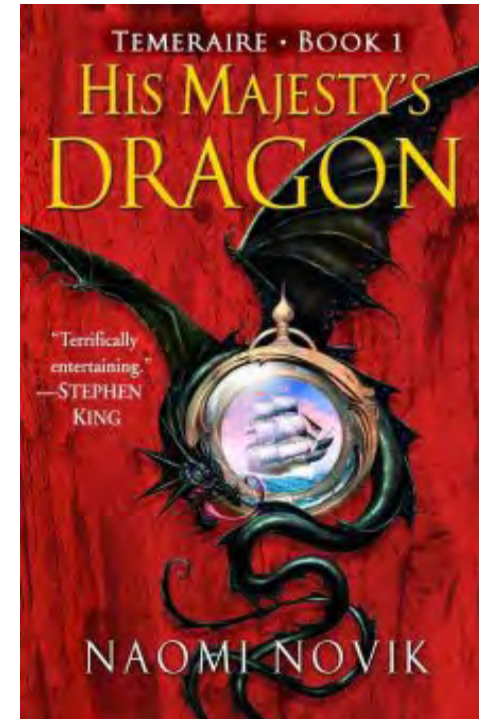
Epic Fantasy (Adults)



High Fantasy (Juvenile)

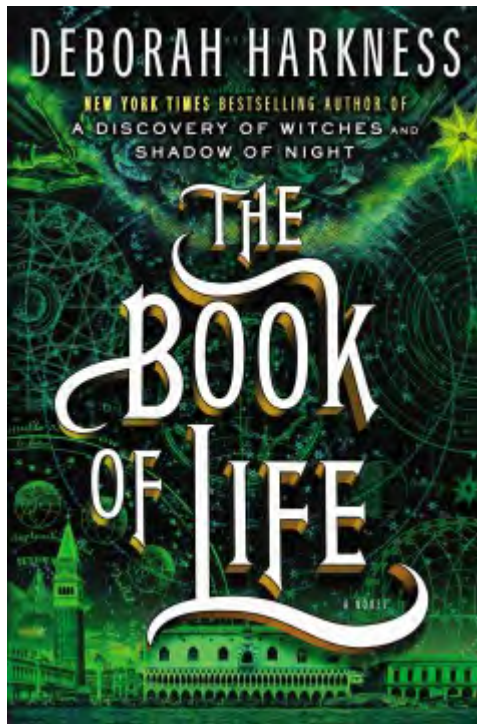


Sword and Sorcery

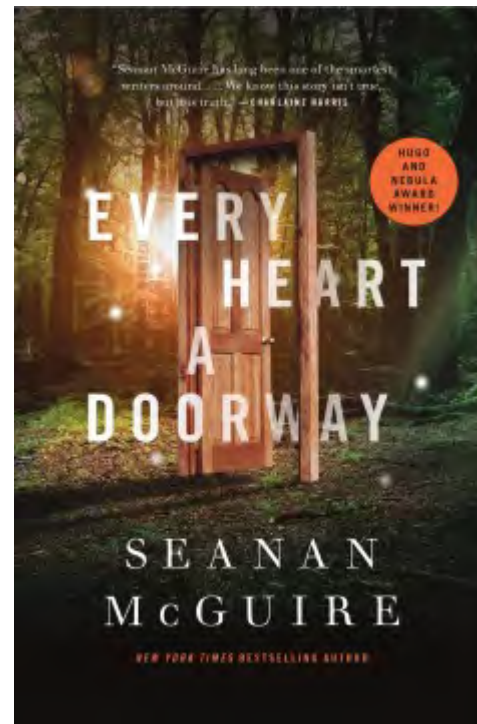


Military Fantasy

Rooted in This World



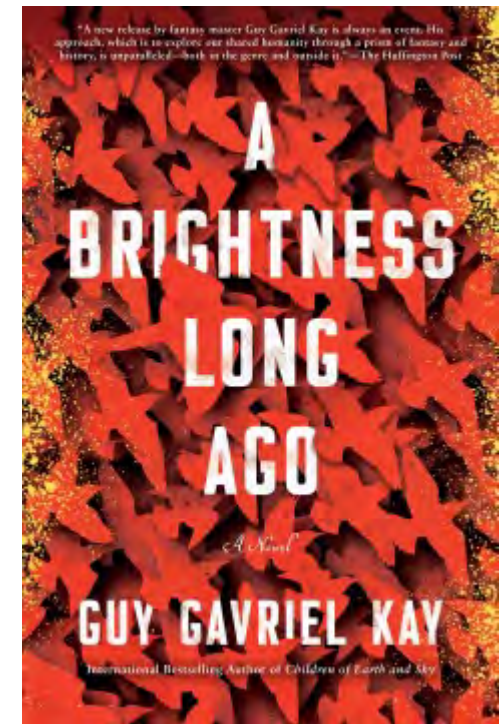
Contemporary Fantasy



Gateway Fantasy

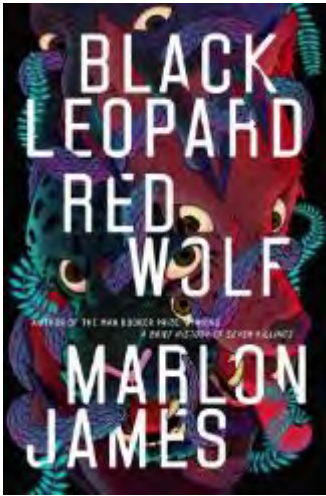


Urban Fantasy



Historical Fantasy

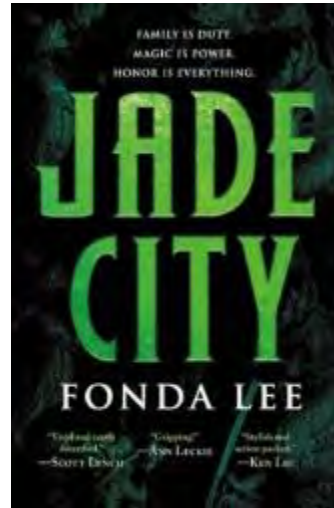
Inspired by Setting, Myth, or Culture



Afrofuturism and
Afrofantasy



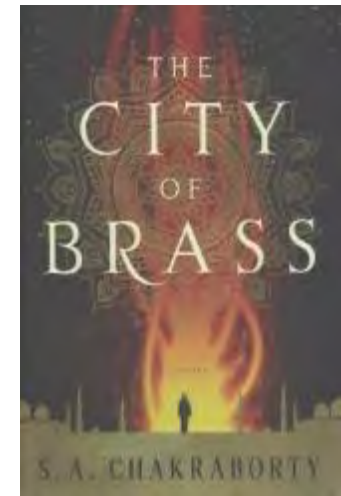
Arthurian Fantasy



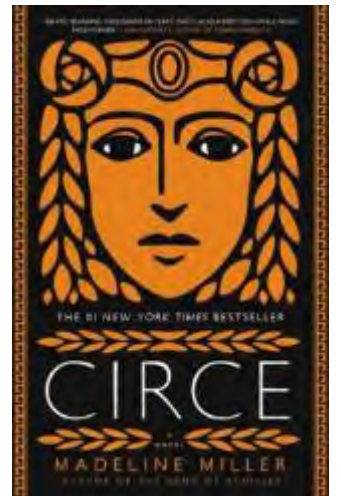
Asian-Influenced
Fantasy



Celtic Fantasy

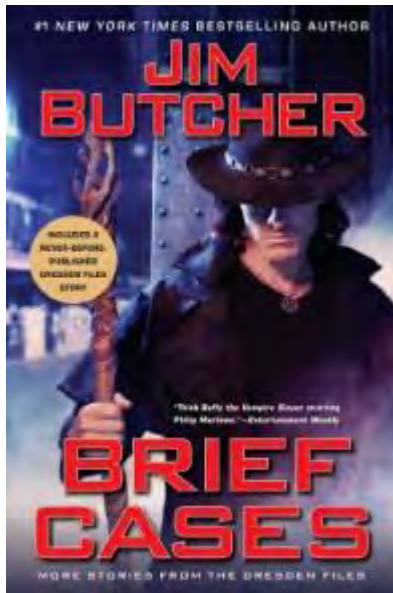


Middle Eastern-
Influenced Fantasy

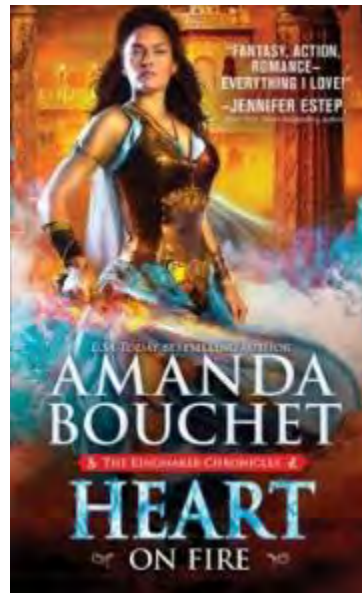


Mythological
Fiction

Genreblends



Fantasy Mysteries



Fantasy Romances



Science Fantasy



Steampunk



Weird Westerns

Fantasy Themes



Classic Storylines

Be careful what you wish for

Defend the realm!

Quest for magical items

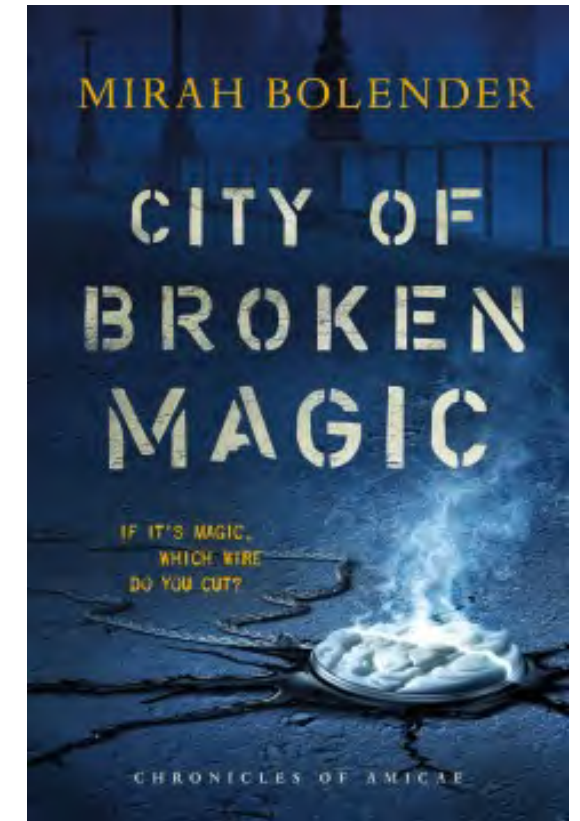
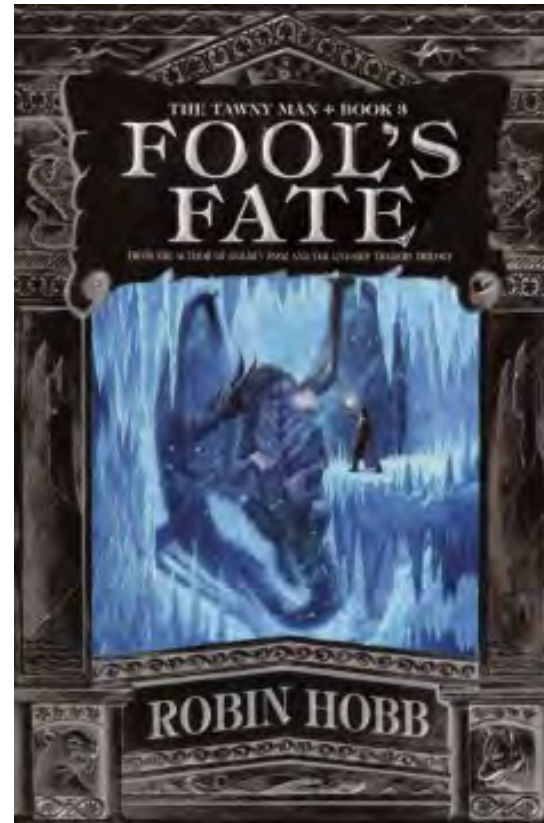
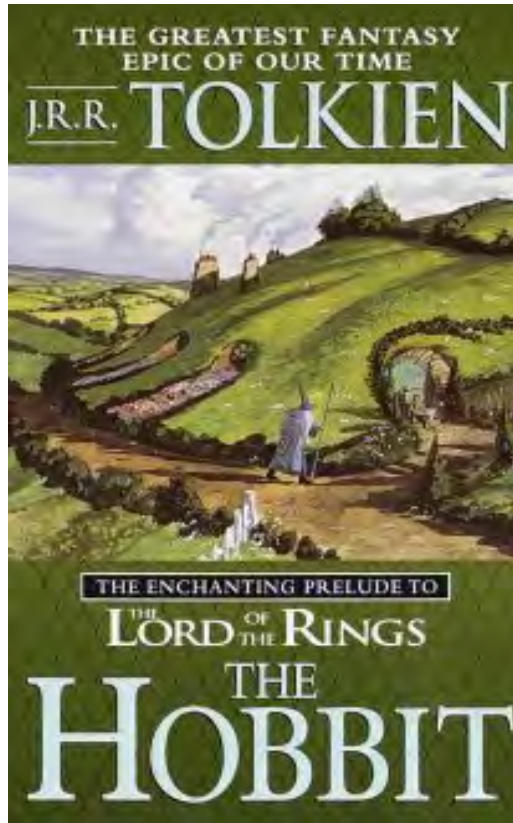
Slaying the dragon

To the rescue!

Vengeance is mine

Slaying the Dragon

Only hero(in)es true may face these beasts and live to tell the tale.



Characters

Chosen one

Dark lord

Hidden heritage

Last of their kind

Reluctant allies

Rightful heir

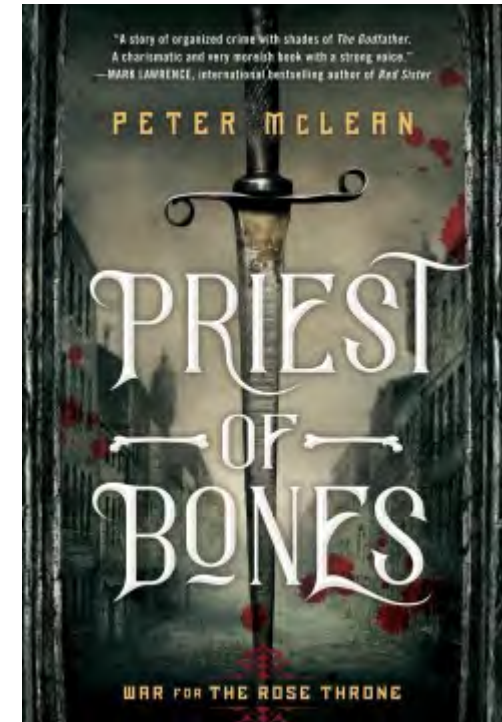
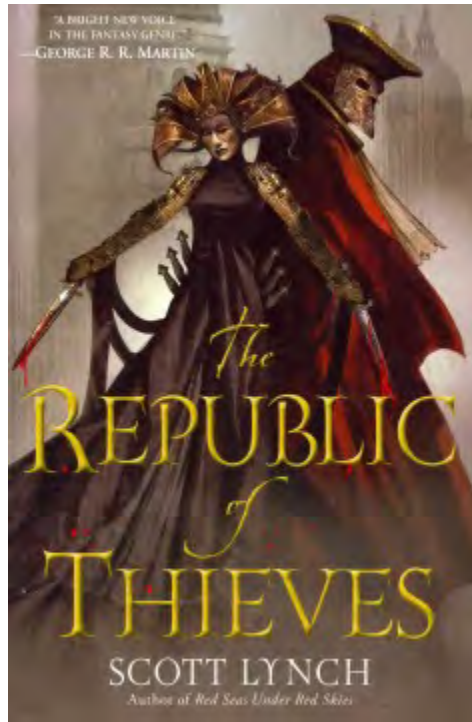
Scum and villainy

Women of steel

Zero to hero

Scum and Villainy

Sometimes you have to root for the bad guy. Antiheroes, villains, thieves and assassins make compelling protagonists in these morally grey tales.



concepts

Bad religion

Court intrigue

For the resistance

Magic goes away

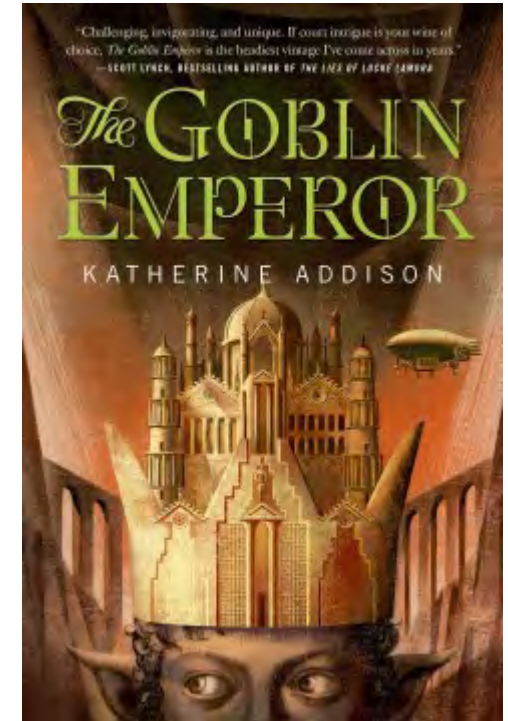
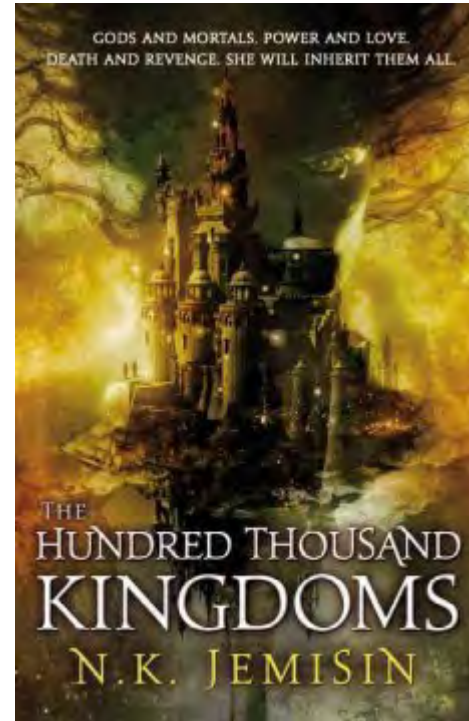
Metaphorical racism

Return of magic

Too powerful to contain

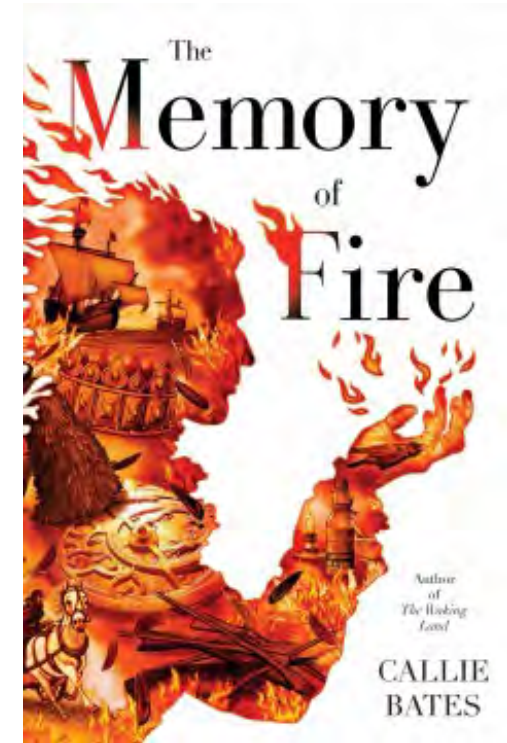
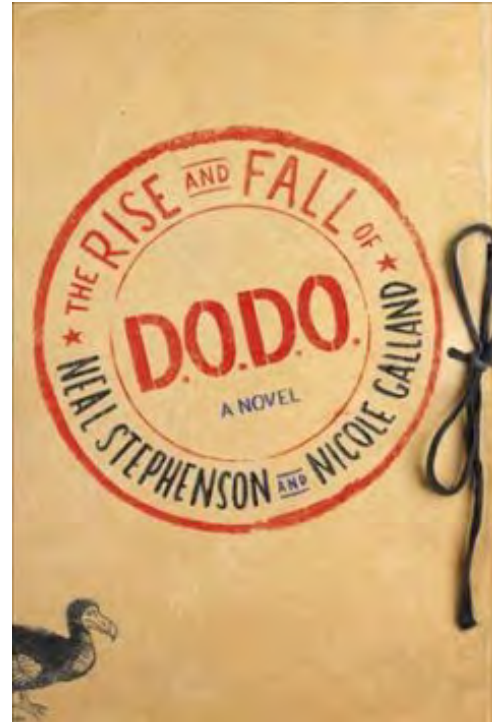
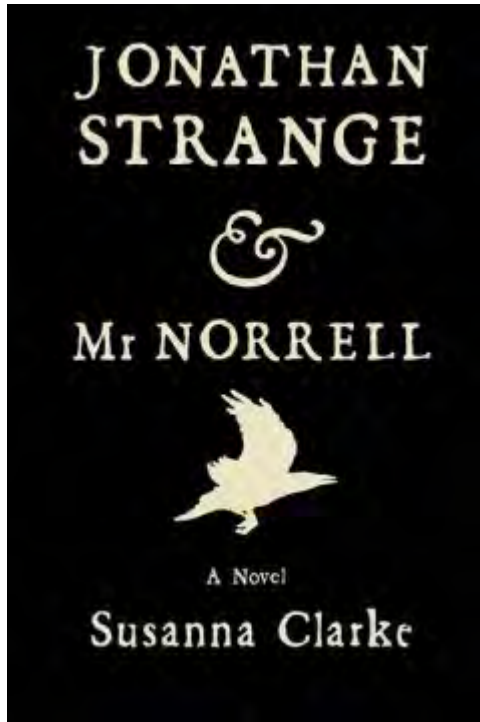
Court Intrigue

What's better than power? More power. In the halls of the mighty, any cup might be poisoned and any friend may be foe.



Return of Magic

Legend becomes reality as magic reenters the world.



Setting

Academies of magic

Faerie realm

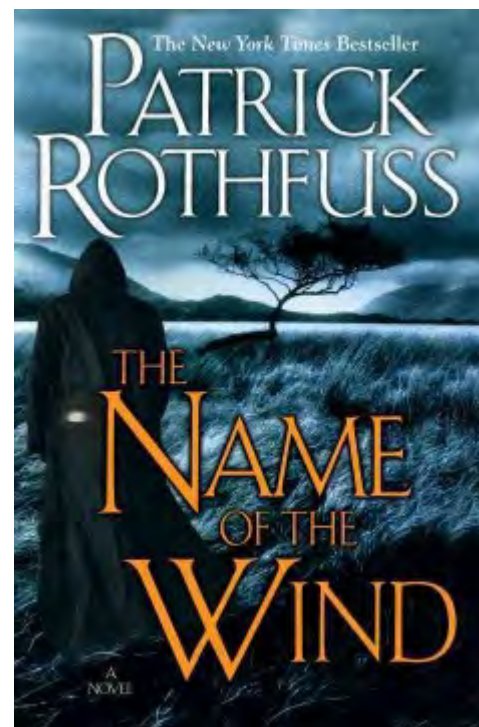
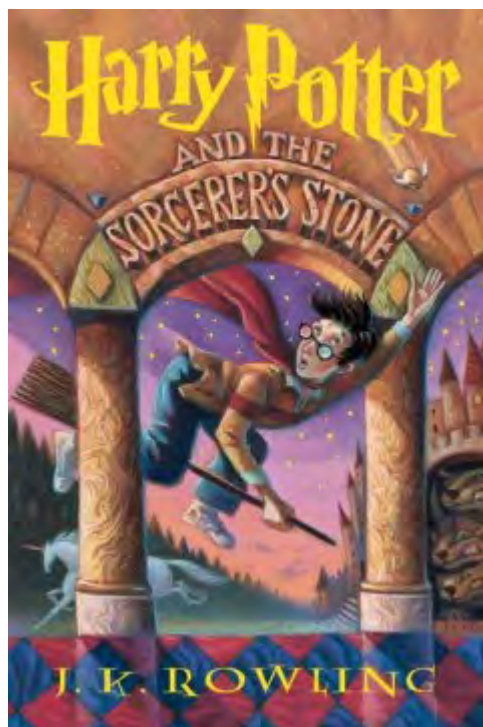
Hidden among us

Laws of magic

Realm of the dead

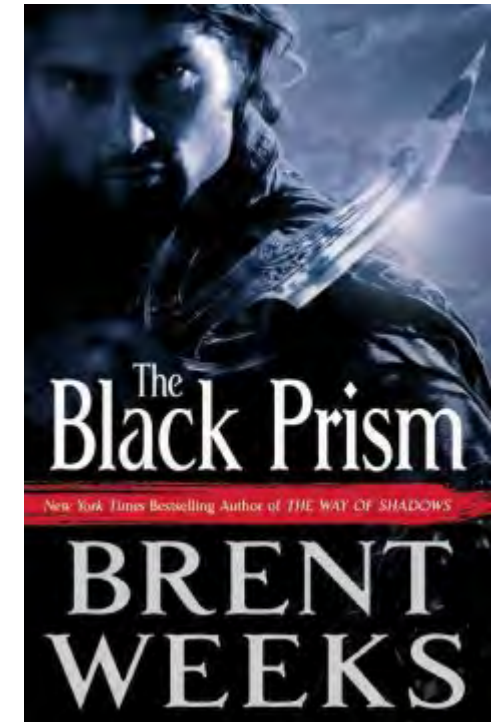
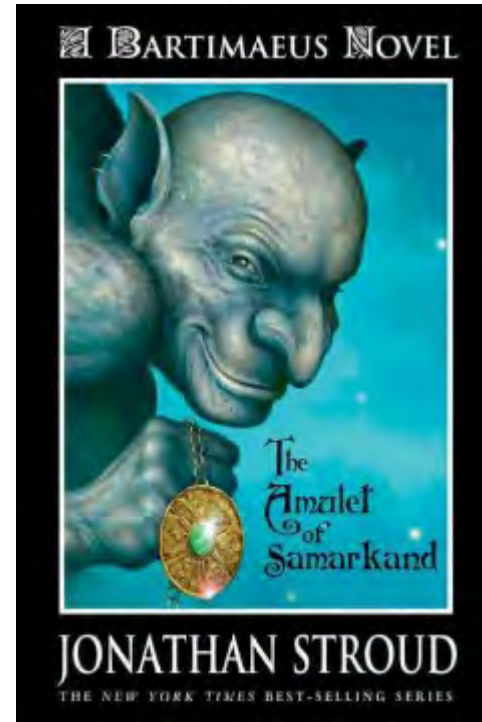
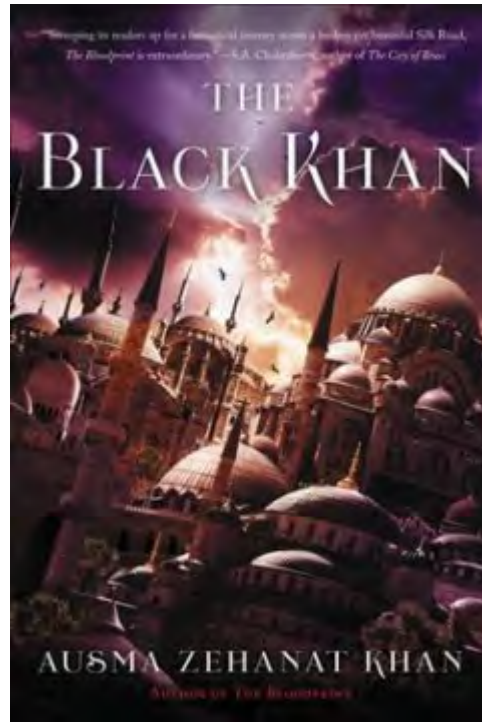
Academies of Magic

No. 2 pencils, pointy hats, owls, wands, superhero capes, etc.; these young people are off to a very specialized school for the gifted.



Laws of Magic

A wizard did it ... in accordance with a complex magical system.



A few words about series...



A few words about series ...



Series Complete



Series Complete

Popular Complete Series



First Law



Queen of the Tearling



Mistborn Trilogy Novels



The Magicians

Popular Ongoing Series



Dandelion Dynasty

Dresden Files

Kingkiller Chronicles

Mercy Thompson

Helping Readers



NoveList Resources



Genre outlines

Keeping up pages

Recommended reads lists



Getting Up to Speed in Fantasy

by Joyce Saricks; revised by Sarah S. Davis

[Download this genre outline](#)

What is Fantasy Fiction?

With its intuitive (rather than rational) approach, fantasy describes worlds that cannot exist, ones where magic rules. Fantasy deals more with emotions and relationships than ideas, and fantasy cherishes and preserves familiar stories, legends, and myths, retelling them. These are often elegantly written stories with a haunting quality, something just behind the story that hints at a larger meaning.

What happens in a Fantasy novel?

Storylines feature Good versus Evil and protagonists battling, and ultimately conquering, the dark forces. The characters, usually clearly defined as good or bad, often attain special magical gifts, and the storylines explore ways to discover one's own potential, magical or otherwise. Characters may include mythical creatures — dragons, unicorns, elves, wizards — as well as animals that are more common. Characters more traditionally associated with Horror (vampires, werewolves, and more) may also find a home in fantasy. Quests commonly drive the plot, and adventure elements play an important role.

Elaborately detailed settings describe another world, often Earth, which does not follow earth's timeline. Thus the setting may be a pseudo-Medieval world with knights and dragons or a fictional future world with elves or motorcycles. Gritty urban settings are almost as popular as more traditional historical ones.

In general, fantasy novels generally start slowly as the author sets the scene, often involving a large group of characters in a strange world. Pacing accelerates later as the adventures become more dangerous.

Why do people like Fantasy Fiction?

Readers who appreciate well-developed landscapes in another time and place can find a range of characters, storylines, and tones to match their moods. Fantasy novels create worlds in which magic exists and battles between good and evil resolve questions of right and wrong. Novels cover a wide range of tones, from the humorous to the dark and gritty. Fans of familiar stories such as fairy tales, folk tales, and myths, or legends, discover much to appreciate here, as these stories, told with a twist, often form the foundation of much fantasy. Popular themes — good versus evil, coming of age, struggling to reach one's potential and find one's place — permeate all forms of the genre. Protagonists may be male or female, and writers of both genders spin their tales here. Readers expect big books and long series; they read them in order and eagerly await each installment.

Key titles



The Night Circus

Erin Morgenstern

The Night Circus transports readers to a world with a fabulous circus. The spectacle only at night and serves as the stage on which two young magicians unknowingly fight a battle for their lives. This playful and imaginative tale, simultaneously charming and terrifying, offers polished, magical prose, a complex situation, and engaging characters.



Fantasy immerses readers in imaginative worlds of magic, wonder, and the supernatural. Fantasy stories frequently depict heroism in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds, and feature epic clashes between the forces of good and evil.

GENRE ESSENTIALS AWARDS TO KNOW

- Getting Up to Speed in Fantasy
- All About Fantasy (Teens)
- All About Fantasy (Older Kids)
- Aurealis Awards Best Novel
- World Fantasy Awards

Explore FANTASY themes like this one...



Quest for magical items

The objects of power are scattered, and we set. It takes several books to collect them all. (adult, teen, ages 9-12)

[Find more books with this theme!](#)

[Discover all Fantasy themes.](#)

LOVE THESE LISTS!

Adults	Teens	Ages 9-12
Epic Fantasy	If You Like Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children	Speculative Fiction with Diverse Characters
Fantasy Short Stories	Fantasy Med Reads	Classic Fantasy
Humorous Fantasy		Other Worlds

We Recommend...



[Browse more Fantasy](#)

Urban Fantasy [\(Hide Details\)](#)

Document Type: Recommended Reads

Description:

These stories are marked by the mingling of the real world and "Other" works. Some urban-fantasy tales are set in the real world, focusing on human characters with magical powers. Whether unraveling a mystery or completing a quest, you never know quite what to expect.

Adults **Fiction**

Contributed By: [Rudis, Kimberly](#)



agic triumphs
(ug 2018)

By: Andrews, Bona

Popularity: ★★★★★

[Check Availability](#)



Impostor syndrome
(Mar 2016)

By: Baker, Mishel

Popularity: ★★★★★

[Check Availability](#)



King of the road
(Dec 2018)

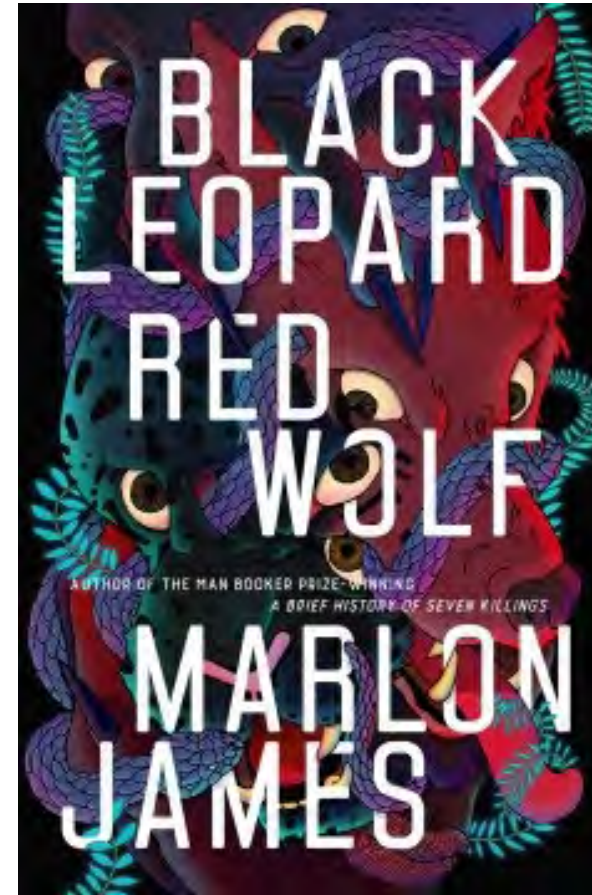
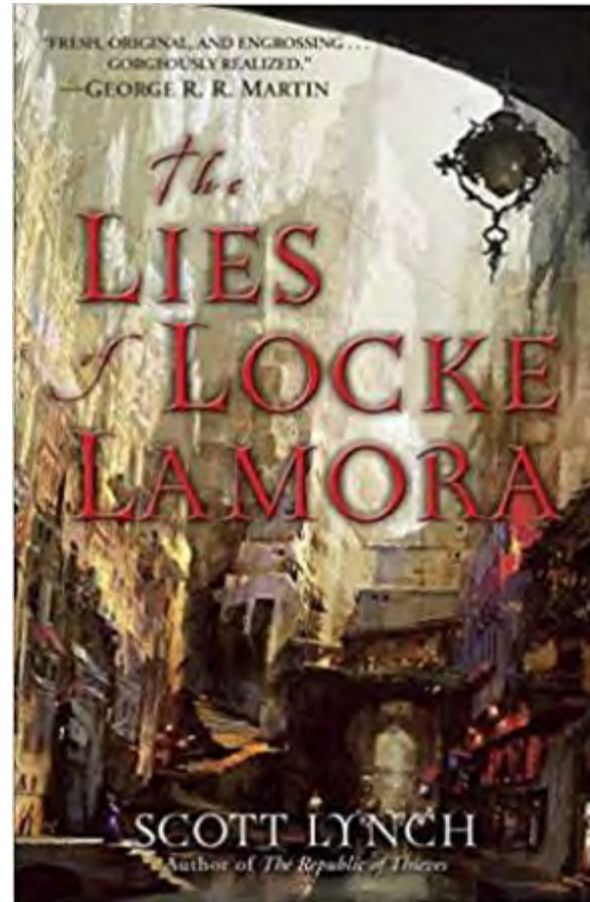
By: Belcher, R. S.

Popularity: ★★★★★

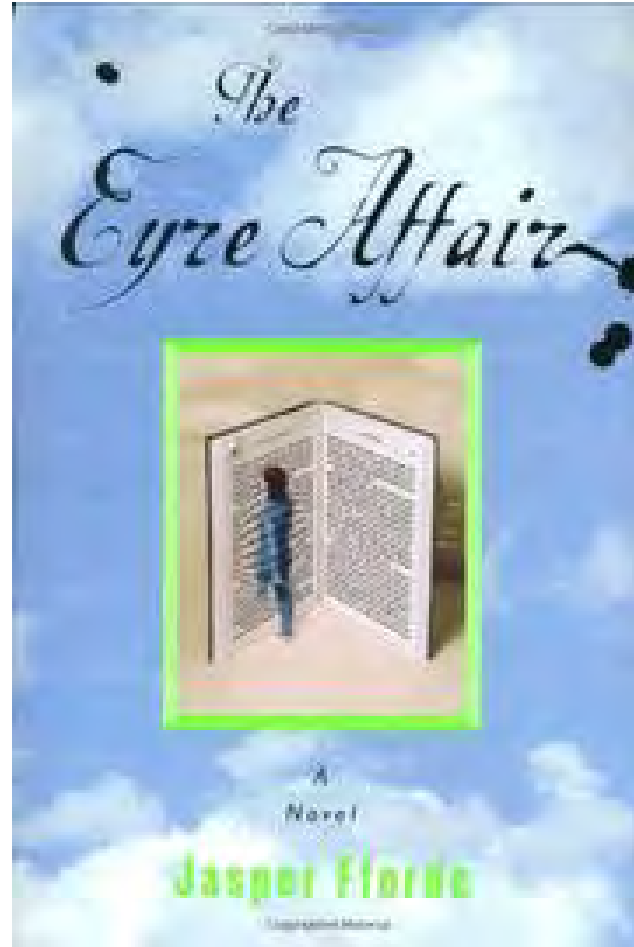
[Check Availability](#)



Do you want something **action-packed**
or do you prefer dense **world-building**?



Do you want something **funny** or do you prefer something more **menacing**?



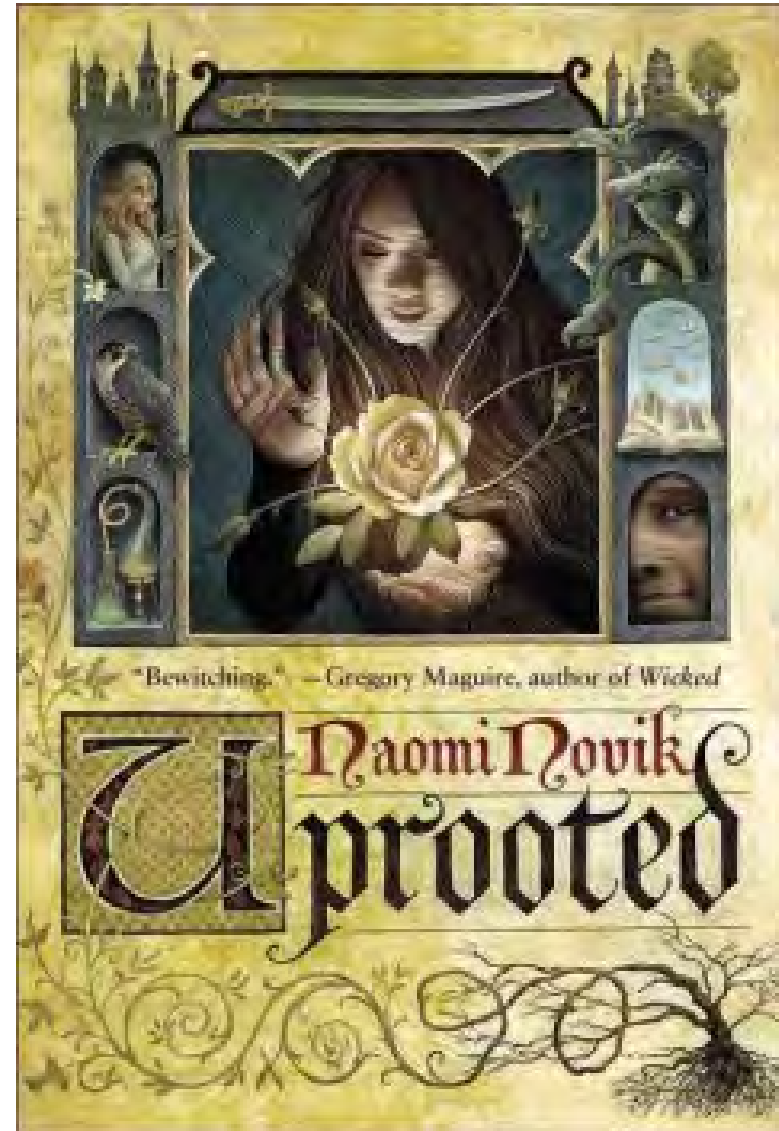
Fantasy Starter Pack

- ✓ Representative of genre
- ✓ Well-reviewed
- ✓ Wide appeal
- ✓ Stand-alone or series starter



Uprooted by Naomi Novik

- Lush writing
- Subtle romance
- Strong heroine
- Inspired by folk tales



A Darker Shade of Magic by V.E. Schwab

- Fast-paced adventure
- Court intrigue
- Parallel worlds



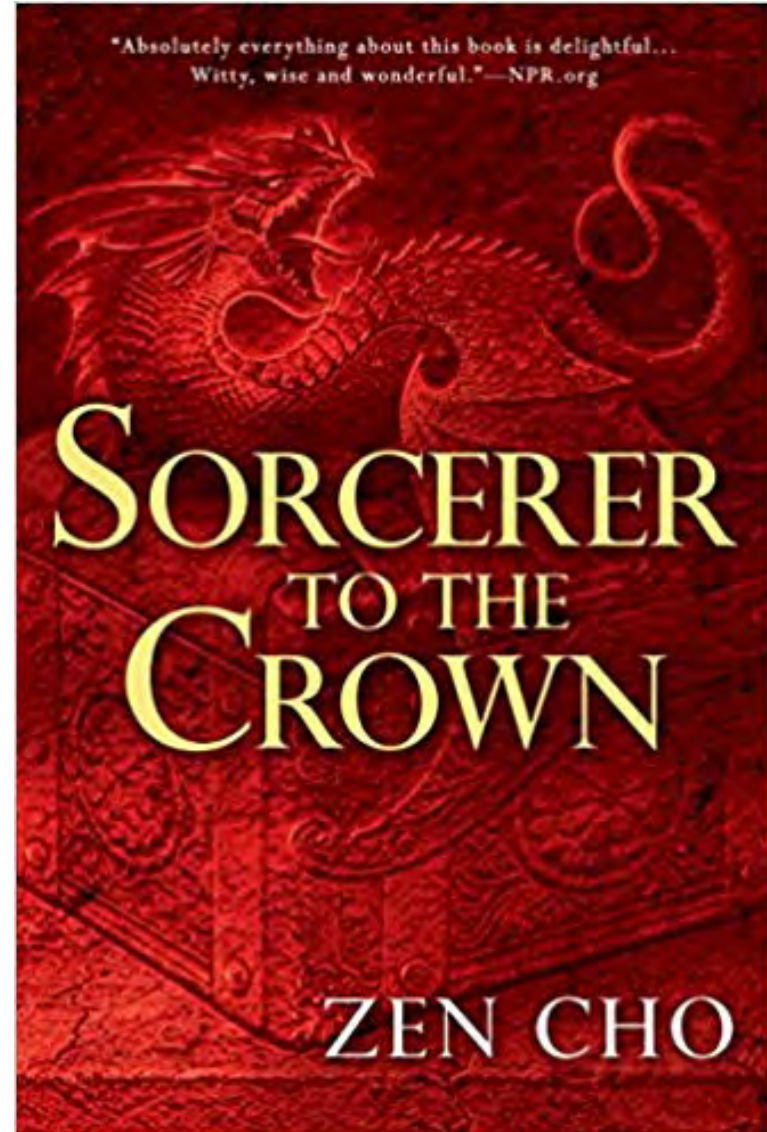
The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms by N.K. Jemisin

- Multifaceted characters
- Intricately plotted
- Thematic complexity



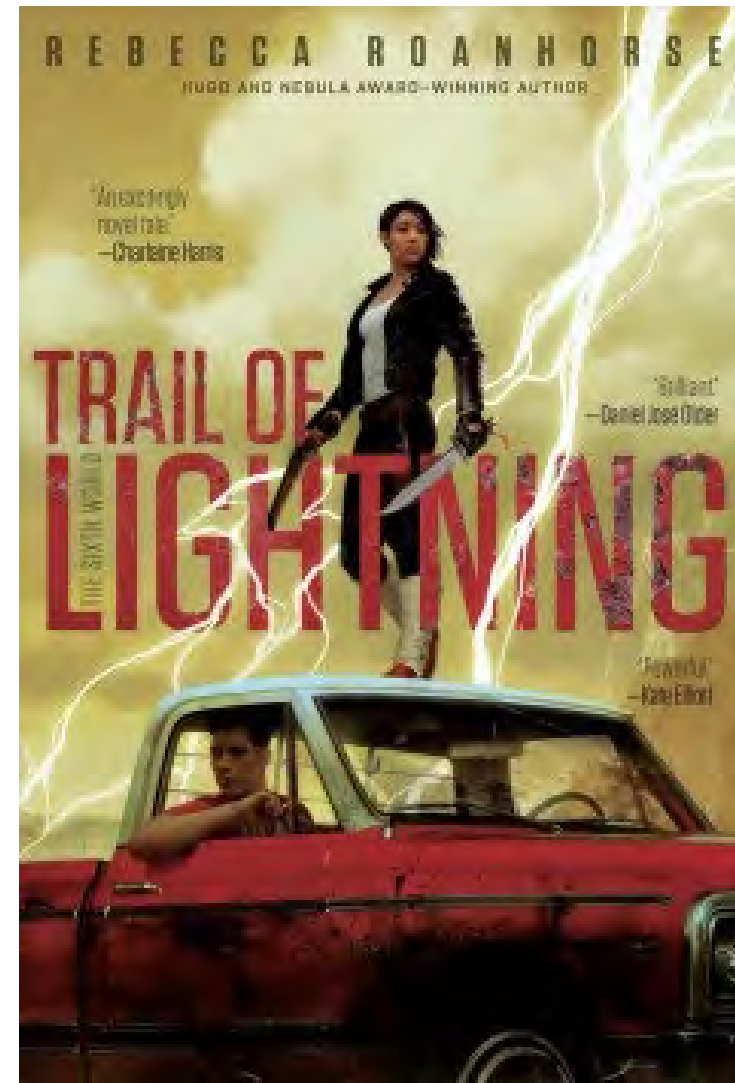
Sorcerer to the Crown by Zen Cho

- Regency-era London setting
- Sparkling dialogue and humor
- Diverse lead characters



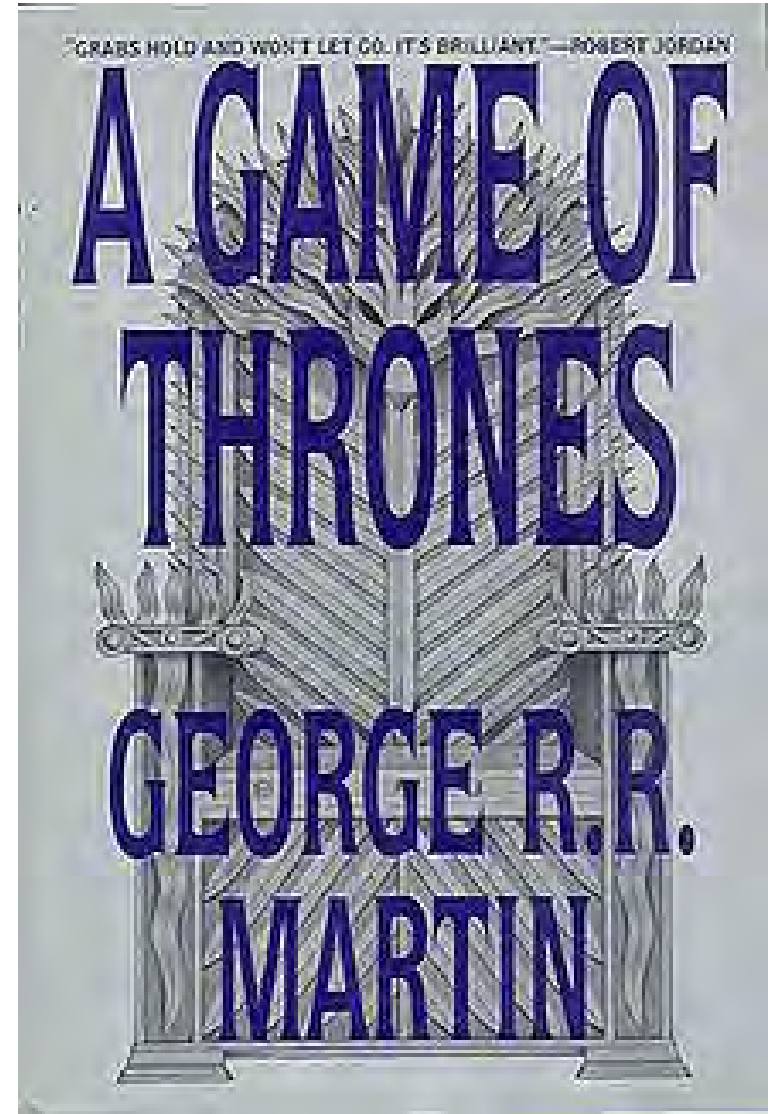
Trail of Lightning by Rebecca Roanhorse

- Post-apocalyptic urban fantasy shot through with supernatural elements
- Based on Native American mythology
- Action-driven with strong characters



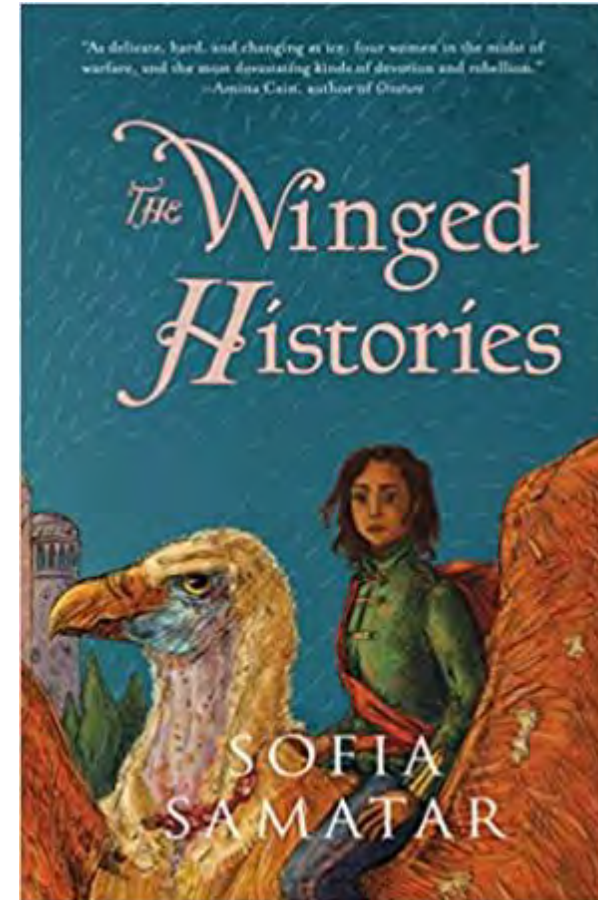
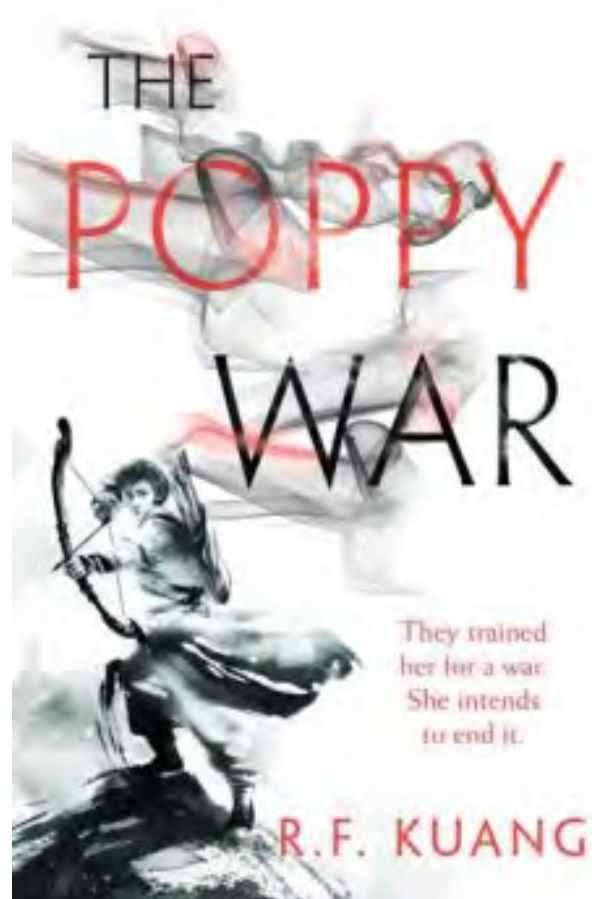
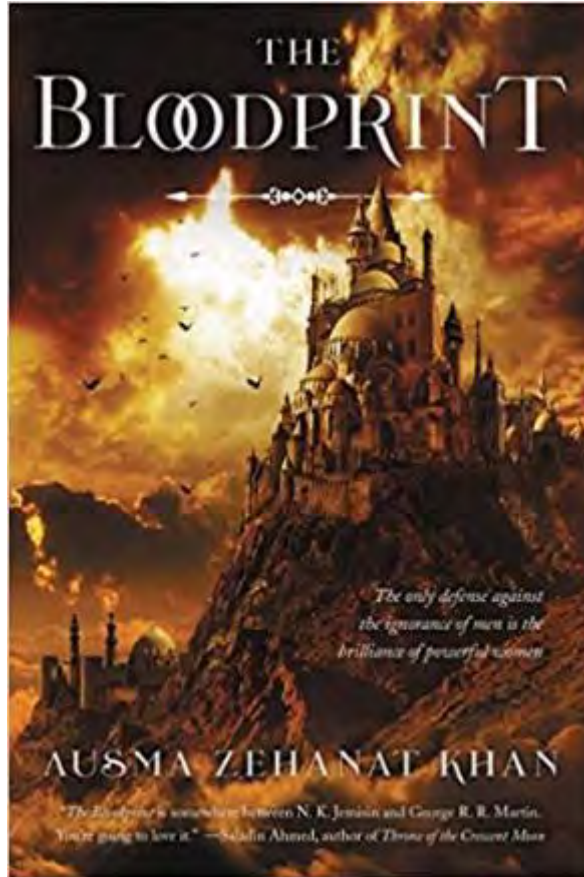
A Game of Thrones by George R.R. Martin

- Multiple first-person viewpoints
- Intense family drama
- First book feels more like historical fiction than fantasy

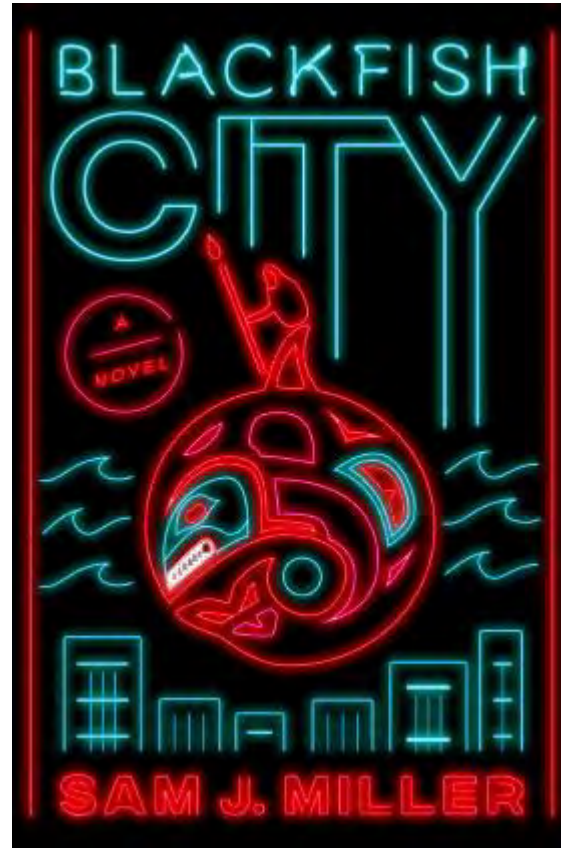
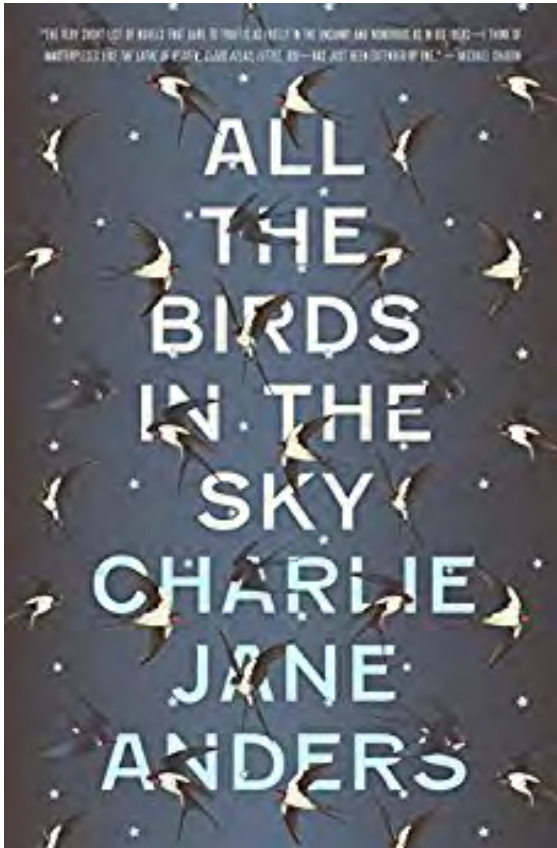




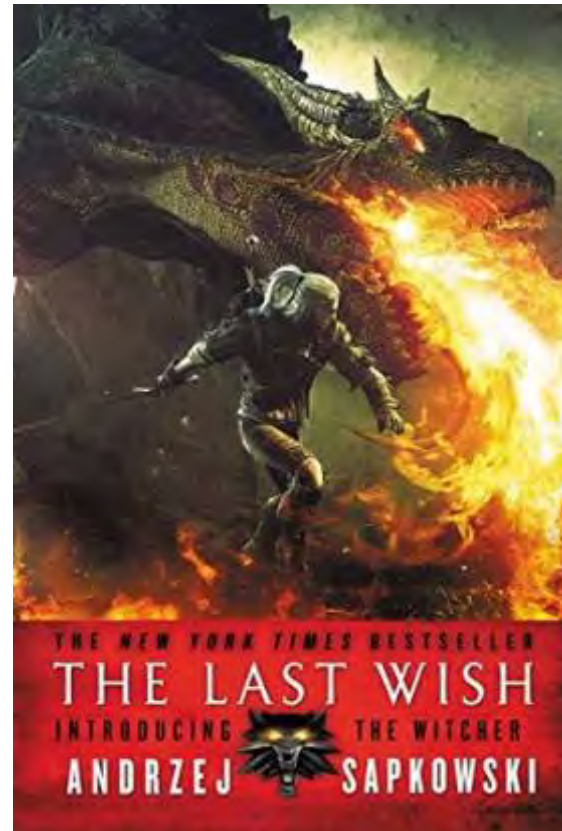
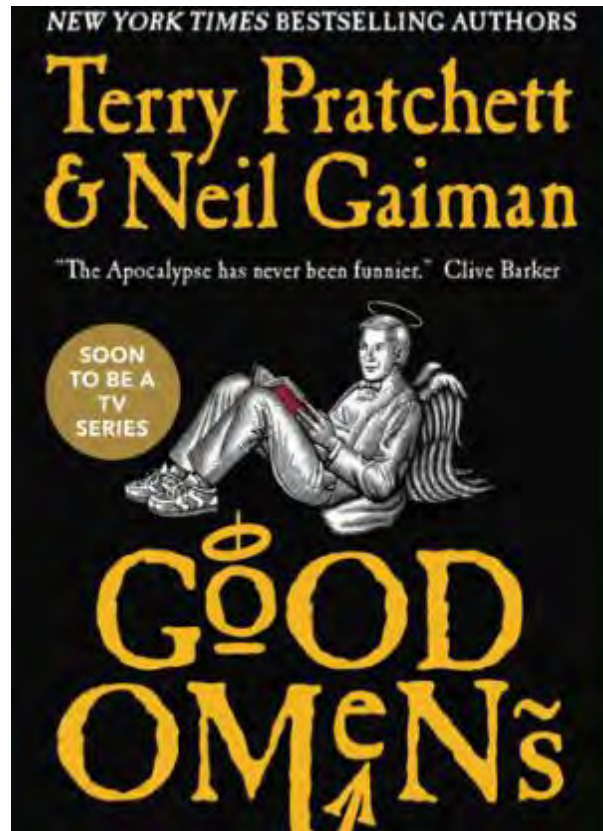
Diverse Mythologies



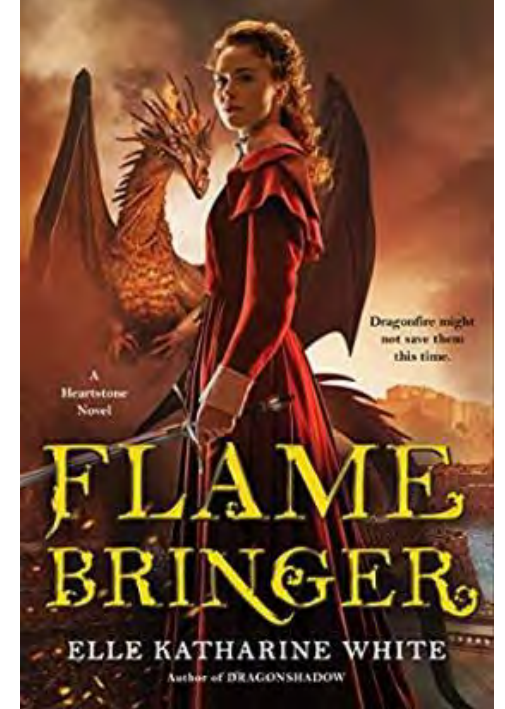
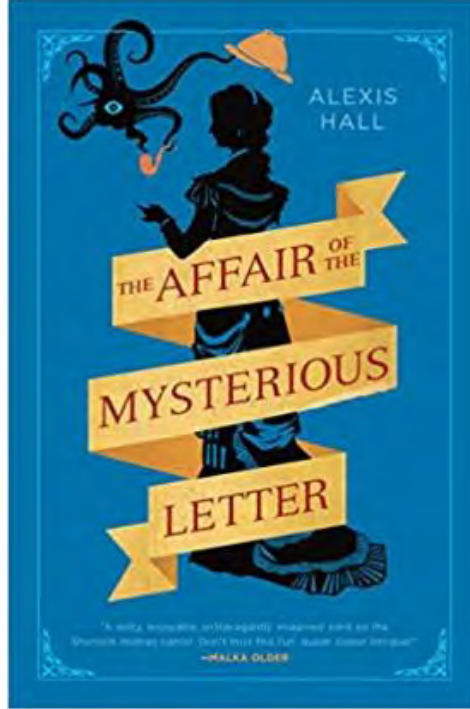
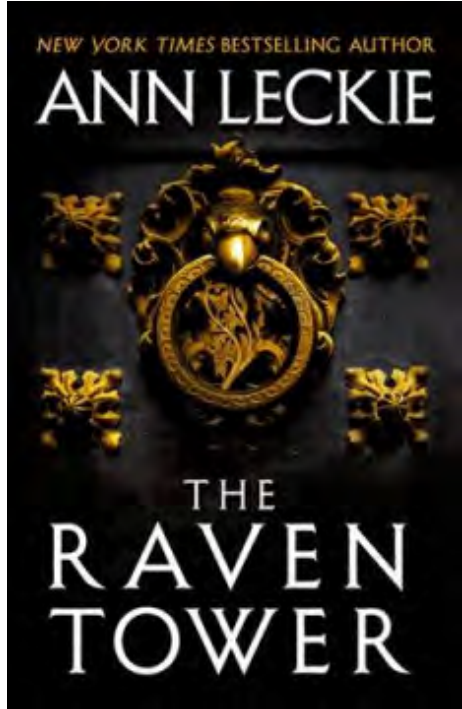
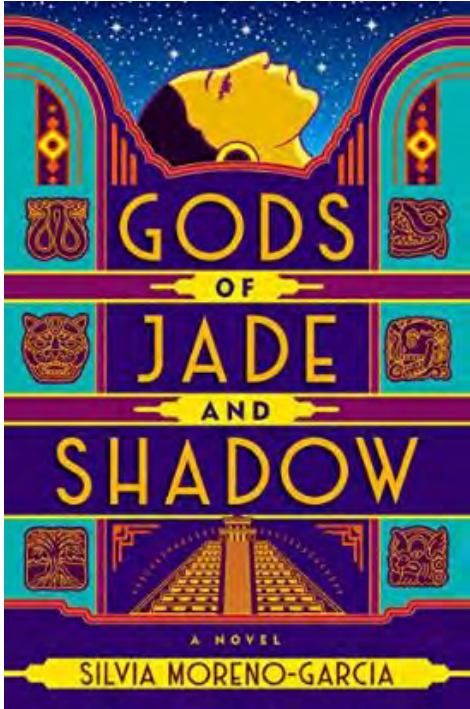
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