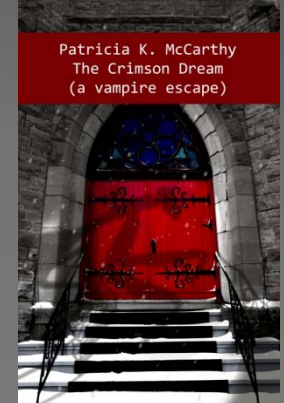
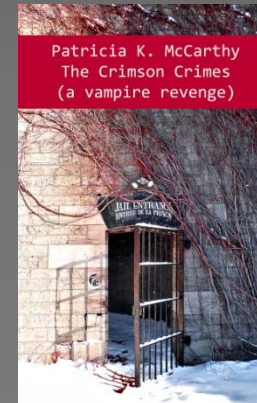
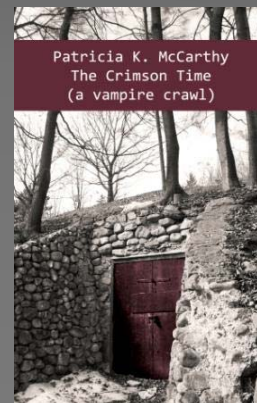
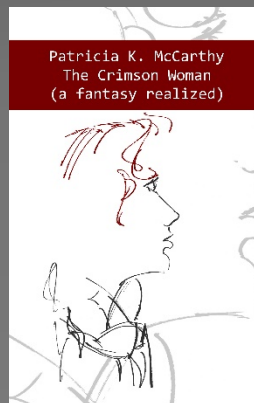
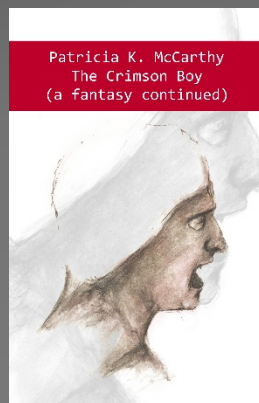
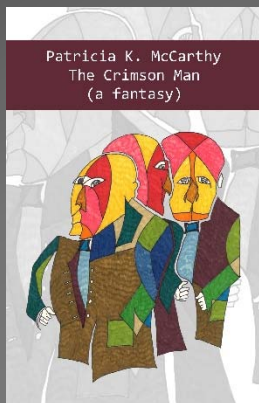
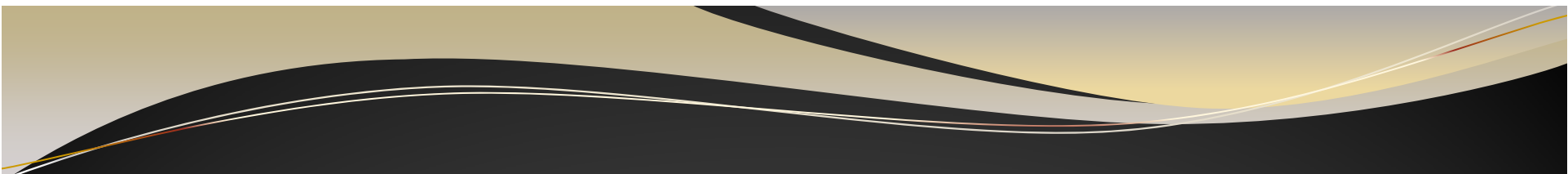


# Writing Fantasy Fiction

Patricia K. McCarthy  
Author of the *Crimson Fantasies*

January 21, 2020



- 
- What is fantasy fiction?
  - Sub-genres
  - Where creative ideas come from
  - What your story cannot do without
  - Ouch! Graphic content
  - Plotting considerations
  - How to Write Fantasy Fiction
  - (10) Universal Myths
  - Devise a basic outline

# What is fantasy fiction?

- Oldest genre in fiction
- Fantastical stories

# What distinguishes fantasy?

- Plot commonly uses magic
- Set in imaginary worlds
- Not Sci-Fi!

# What makes fantasy a success?

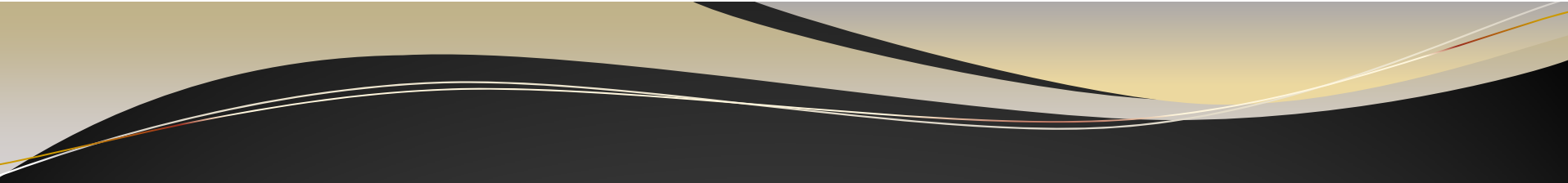
- Most celebrated works
- Wide audience

# What is intrinsic with fantasy?


- In popular culture, the genre is primarily medieval in theme but in a broad sense...
- Any location can be used
- Fantasy allows for a lot of latitude



# Facts about fantasy

- 
- Children's classics considered more acceptable
  - Fantasy and Science Fiction began to be associated with one another in the 1920's
  - In 1923, the first all-fantasy fiction magazine was created Weird Tales; followed by The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction
  - By 1959, fantasy began to gain popularity, to reach a much large audience in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century



- 
- Rudyard Kipling and Edward Rice Burroughs established “Lost World” fantasy, which was the most popular form of fantasy in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Peter Pan and The Wonderful World of Oz were published in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century
  - J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter series and George R.R. Martin’s Song of Ice and Fire series (Game of Thrones) have best-selling status that no one could have conceived 100 years ago



# Sub-genres

# Sub-genres

- Anthropomorphic
- Dark
- High
- Historical
- Low
- Mythic
- Romantic
- Science
- Urban

# Anthropomorphic fantasy

- Animals replace humans
- Long-standing tradition
- 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Century examples



# Dark fantasy

- Gothic or contemporary
- Combines elements
- Sympathetic from monster's viewpoint





# High fantasy

- Epic
- Serious in tone
- Archetypal characters
- Good vs. Evil



# Historical fantasy



- Sub-genre of Historical Fiction
- Occurring before 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- Three basic approaches to plot



# Low fantasy

- Set in either real or fictional place
- Low refers to...
- There's just enough fantasy to blur the lines
- Forms of low fantasy include





# Mythic fantasy

- Myths, Folklore and Fairy Tales
- Overlaps with Urban Fantasy



# Romantic fantasy

- Using many elements/conventions of Romance genre
- Concerned with relationships
- Magic in narrative is innate



# Science fantasy

- Not Science Fiction
- Considered a mixed genre within the umbrella of Speculative fiction
- Draws elements from Sci-Fi, Sci-Fantasy & Horror



# Urban fantasy

- Also known as Urban Paranormal
- Humans co-existing w/ Supernatural
- Defined by place



# Most popular fantasy fiction

- Dracula
- Lord of the Rings trilogy
- Harry Potter Series
- Twilight Series
- Dr. Seus
- Alice in Wonderland
- The Legend of King Arthur

# Re-Cap: 3 Key elements

- Ancient myths & legends
- Real or Fantasy locations
- Magic and supernatural

# Creative Ideas

- Combinational
- Explorative
- Transformational

There is no such thing as...



# What your story cannot do without

- Character Development
- Setting
- Narrative Style
- Plot & Story Arc
- Pacing



# Character development

- Characters are delivery mechanisms that exist in service to a plot
- Main protagonist(s) to care about
- Villain(s) to hate (or admire as an anti-hero)

## Things to Consider:

- Influences such as parents, hardships, disabilities
- Vices, pet peeves, childhood backstory
- Strong points, failings, middle or nickname
- Be prepared to kill off your favourite character

# Setting

- The sky's the limit if its pure fantasy
- Research your setting if its urban/contemporary
- Weather
- Clothing
- History, whether real or imagined
- Elaborate interiors
- Describe smells and sounds

# Narrative style

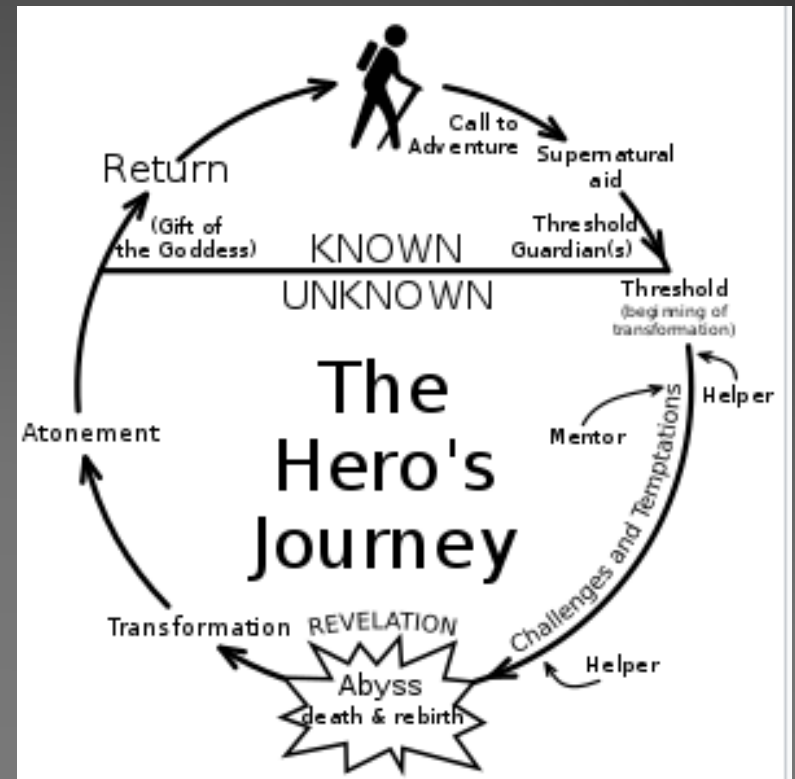
- First Person – most common Diary style
- Third Person – most popular
- Present – immediacy; popular with poetry
- Past Tense – works easily with First or Third person

# • Plot

- Internal logic and flow (cohesive structure)
- You cannot suddenly introduce an element that has no logical place in the story
- Effort put into plotting beforehand will pay off
- Plotting technique coming up

# Story Arc

- The purpose is to move the character(s) along
- Every classic story has a progression of events, i.e.
  - Stasis
  - Trigger
  - Quest/Hero's Journey
  - Surprise
  - Critical
  - Climax
  - Reversal
  - Resolution



# Pacing

- Cliffhangers
- Flashbacks
- Foreshadowing

# Ouch! Graphic content

- Violence
- Swearing
- Romance vs. Erotica



Plotting (argh!)



# Christopher Booker's

## *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*

- (1) Overcoming the Monster
- (2) Rags to Riches
- (3) Quest
- (4) Voyage and Return
- (5) Comedy
- (6) Tragedy
- (7) Re-birth

# Plotting considerations

- What kind of fantasy fiction grabs you?
- Write what you enjoy reading (and then stop reading your favourite genre while you write)
- Average novel word-count is 60,000 to 85,000
- The big novels (James Michener) are 100,000+

# How to write fantasy

## Step One:

- Add in Mythology

## (10) Universal Myths of the Ancient World

- The Great Flood
- Paradise Lost
- Epic Cosmic Battle
- Vampires
- The Atlantis Myth
- A God's Resurrection
- Dragons
- The Hero's Quest
- Explanations
- Apocalypse

# How to write fantasy

## Step Two:

- Build yourself a world

# How to write fantasy

## Step Three:

- Magic & magical creatures which includes supernatural

# How to write fantasy

## Step Four:

- Attributing 'x' number of words to each event for the beginning, middle and end

# Devise basic outline

- Beginning:
  - Introduction of Characters
  - Setting
  - Conflict
- Middle:
  - Story unfolds
- Ending
  - Conclusion or bridge to next installment





QUESTIONS?

# THANK YOU!

