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American Young Adult Novels and Their European Fairy-Tale Motifs

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Book synopsis

No significant study of fairy-tale motifs in young adult literature exists as of today. *American Young Adult Novels and Their European Fairy-Tale Motifs* is the first organized study linking these two genres. This book examines fairy-tale motifs in eleven acclaimed young adult novels published in the 1980s. Five fairy-tale motifs appear in these novels. They are «the helper», «the unpromising hero/heroine», «abandoned children», «magic», and «deception».

The findings of this study suggest that English teachers in secondary schools could apply fairy-tale motifs in their teaching of young adult literature. Since students are familiar with fairy tales, using their motifs to interpret young adult novels is a reasonable approach and a good introduction to literary criticism. This method enables the students to compare different genres of literature, to figure out motifs that appear frequently in movies, plays, and television programs, and to appreciate literary works.

About the author(s)/editor(s)

The Author: In 1994, Lucia Huang received her Ph.D. in Education from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She also holds an M.A. in German Literature from the same institution. At present, she teaches German at Wilson High School, Florence, South Carolina. Dr. Huang has published articles in the areas of language acquisition and young adult literature.

Reviews

«Literary scholarship often tends to be narrowly focused... But occasionally boundaries are crossed and fields not normally linked are found to have common elements in sufficient number to make their study worthwhile. This is the kind of scholarship Dr. Lucia Huang offers us in this extraordinary volume: an exploration of the existence of fairy-tale motifs in young adult literature.» (From the foreword by Ted Hipple, Professor of Teacher Education, University of Tennessee, Knoxville)

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