

# Horror Subgenres

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Though horror is a well-known genre in itself, it is a genre that encompasses many different subgenres. As horror has become a more popular genre in young adult fiction, these subgenres have been explored more widely. This article presents some of these horror subgenres, including some examples of the more popular young adult works.

## Creatures

Horror books featuring legendary and mythic creatures are currently very popular. Three of the most popular examples of this subgenre are explored here.

### **Vampires**



Though some debate whether Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* series should be considered part of the horror genre, it is undeniable that

the books play a sizeable role in the recent resurgence in the popularity of the vampire genre, especially among young adults. Since Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, vampires have been a staple of the horror genre, but they are now

specifically a favourite subject of teen literature. Two current popular teen vampire series are the *Morganville Vampire* series by Rachel Caine and the *House of Night* series by P. C. Cast and Kristin Cast.

### **Zombies**

Zombies are currently one of the most popular horror creatures, found in books, TV shows, and movies for all ages. This trend continues in YA literature. Zombies are also a common topic for cross-genre works, often paired with apocalyptic or post-apocalyptic horror, or inserted in already existing stories to form alternative literature. Some works that may be especially of interest to teens are John Maberry's *Rot & Ruin* and *Dust & Decay*.

### **Werewolves**

Though perhaps not found quite as widely as vampires and zombies, werewolves are a classic horror

creature. With the high profile of YA horror creature literature today, books with werewolves are easily found, often in series.



Bree Despain's *Dark Divine* series and Edo Van Belkom's *Wolf Pack* and *Lone Wolf* are examples of this particular subgenre.

### Psychological

A popular horror subgenre for all ages, psychological thrillers and horror novels are usually void of any supernatural, fantasy, or paranormal elements. Instead, they are set in real places and times, and usually feature a human as the villain or subject of interest. One of the most commonly found topics in this subgenre are serial killers and psychopaths. Barry Lyga's YA novel, *I Hunt Killers*, features the son of a serial killer trying to distance himself from his father.

### Apocalyptic

Apocalyptic (or post-apocalyptic) novels are set during or after a global event that drastically changes the world's landscape. Depending on the harshness of the apocalyptic process and new realities, these sorts of novels often have elements that allow them to fall in the horror genre. Apocalyptic books can often be cross-genre stories; for example, certain creatures, like zombies, can be responsible for the apocalypse. Others, like Mike Mullin's *Ashfall*, feature natural disasters that perpetrate an apocalypse.

### Paranormal and Supernatural

The paranormal and supernatural horror genres encompass horror books with an extraordinary element. In reality, any creature horror literature featuring mythological or legendary creatures like vampires and werewolves would also fall into this wider category. However, there are many paranormal and supernatural books that do not feature horror creatures. Nancy Holder's *Possessions* series features teens who are possessed, as indicated by its title. Melissa Marr's *Ink Exchange* centres on the main character's discovery of faeries.

### Dark Fantasy

The dark fantasy genre is really a cross-genre between fantasy and horror. These books are primarily fantasy, but have a tone that is fitting with the horror genre. Some suggestions for this genre are the *Abarat* quintet by Clive Barker and *Pure* by Julianna Baggott.

### **References**

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