

# Gothic Movement

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# Brief Overview

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Gothic themes include sub-genres:

- Gothic Romance
- Gothic Horror
- Gothic Horror Romance
- American Gothic genre
- American Southern Gothic
- Female Gothic
- Modern Gothic



For all of these categories, certain requirements must be met:

- melodramatic tones
- sense of heightened drama
- psychological extremes
- use of extreme dominant/submissive personalities
- situations of murder, violence, physical confrontations

# *Gothic Landscapes*

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Gothic settings are crucial to the development of:

- mood of story
- atmosphere, tone, and plot-lines
- characterizations of key figures
- the protagonist's desires
- the protagonist's psychological condition

This multi-functional image even symbolizes the inevitable decay of:

- society as a whole or of a community's traditions and values
- society's infrastructures and historical progressions

# *Gothic Landscapes*

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The house in Poe's classic "The Fall of the House of Usher" symbolizes:

- the Usher family
- the Usher family's values and philosophies
- Roderick's mental breakdown and swings of emotion
- Roderick's physical weaknesses
- Roderick's possible addictions
- the European ideals of the time

*plus* acts as a character onto itself

# *Typical Gothic Characters*

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arch villains, tyrants, bandits, pirates, mercenaries

rapists, murderers

maniacs, madwomen, madmen

persecuted maidens

magicians, sorcerers, witches, warlocks

vampires, werewolves, banshees, mummies

monsters, demons, ghosts

moody, obsessive heroes with family curses, family secrets

# *Female Gothic*

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- sub-genre of Gothic
- explores themes of entrapment of women within traditional domestic settings such as the kitchen, bedroom, or garden
- explores the notions of the subjection of female figures to a patriarchal authority
- these of course enable an expansion of symbolism from one focal character to the full female gender
- strong example: “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman