

Voros, Joseph John. *The Fantastic, the Uncanny, and the Marvelous: Aspects of the Unreal in Three Canadian Novels*. Thesis (MA [English]), University of Manitoba. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI, 1994. (Publication No. MM16358)

Abstract

This thesis is an investigation of three Canadian novels. The thesis examines Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, Timothy Findley's *Not Wanted On The Voyage*, and Robert Kroetsch's *What The Crow Said* in relation to structural paradigms established by Tzvetan Todorov and Sigmund Freud. The investigation will follow the method of analysis developed by Tzvetan Todorov in *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach To A Literary Genre*. This structuralist method allows for an analysis of texts within the boundaries of "The Fantastic" genre, which includes the neighboring genres of "The Uncanny" and "The Marvelous". "The Fantastic" is a name given to a kind of literature, to a literary genre. When we examine works of literature from the perspective of genre, we engage in a particular enterprise. We discover a principle operative in a number of texts, rather than what is specific about each of them. Genres are precisely those relay-points by which the work assumes a relation with the universe of literature. The method of analysis developed by Sigmund Freud in *Art and Literature* – specifically in his essay titled "The Uncanny" – modifies Todorov's paradigms. Freud's paradigms help to place the text within a psychoanalytic perspective.

I will argue that each text employs specific paradigms of "The Fantastic" genre as a strategy for the text's framework. Oftentimes "The Fantastic" is a pretext for some critical end – some social position – offering a kind of social commentary on power, politics phallocentrism and logocentrism. The reader discovers that a fantastic text's ontology explores questions of epistemology; this exploration challenges the reader to grasp what such a narrative strategy signifies.