

Spotlight on Paranormal

Created by Inaburra Senior Library, 2018

What is it?

Inaburra's definition of paranormal is a story about a romance between a mystical creature and a human.

Problems defining paranormal

Within the literature community there are a lot of different definitions of paranormal that all vary slightly. This is because it is difficult to define the differences between fantasy, sci-fi and paranormal, and all the various sub-genres of these genres, and everyone has their own criteria for defining what a story is. Just to confuse things further, some people have even more specific genres such as supernatural and preternatural.

History of the paranormal genre

Paranormal has roots in gothic fiction, which featured supernatural creatures (particularly vampires) and suspenseful plots.

Paranormal has had a revival in recent years, partly due to the popularity of the Twilight series. Since this surge in popularity it has started to be seen as a separate genre from fantasy.

Common themes in paranormal books

- Creatures such as vampires, werewolves, ghosts, angels, and other supernatural beings
- A romantic plot, and often a love triangle
- Supernatural powers such as telepathy or ESP
- A blend of elements from other speculative fiction genres including fantasy, sci-fi and horror
- Suspense and mystery
- The protagonist is often in some form of danger and will overcome the danger with the help of the supernatural being
- The good characters and the bad characters are usually clearly defined

Famous paranormal authors

Stephanie Meyer

Cassandra Clare

Julie Kagawa

Lauren Kate

Maggie Stiefvater

Amanda Hocking

Jessica Shirvington

Richelle Mead

Aprilynne Pike