



# The Literature of Hope in the Middle Ages And Today

*Flo Keyes*

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The influence of medieval literature is instantly apparent in modern fantasy literature, where knights and wizards populate castle-strewn landscapes. Less obvious but still recognizable is the influence in science fiction, which draws on medieval story structure and themes. Beyond these superficial similarities, deeper connections become evident through an analysis of the literature's social function. Like the fantasy and science fiction of today, the romances of the Middle Ages were written in times of extreme and prolonged social upheaval. In all three genres, the storytellers draw on the same archetypes—the hero, the quest, the transformation—for stories whose goal is to provide hope. Using Jungian theory and comparative analysis, this book explores the connections between the three genres. It finds common ground among them in plots that often reflect the recurring cycle of life and the elements of psychological rather than literal realism. Representative texts such as Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*, the *Witch World* series by Andre Norton and *More Than Human* by Theodore Sturgeon are examined in depth, and the use of archetypes in each is thoroughly explored. Analysis reveals similarities in images, structures, and the pervasive belief that a perfectible universe is within man's capabilities—if not now, then someday.

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