

# **Genre Audiences, LCGFT and User Warrant: An Exploratory Study**

## **Appendix**

### **Survey Questions**

The two surveys were part of an IRB-controlled study (IRB 24-4793), with Steven W. Holloway listed as principal investigator. The text below is a faithful reproduction of the Qualtrics survey instruments sans interactive form input fields.

#### **Genre Usage in Libraries by Patrons Qualtrics Survey**

The purpose of this survey is to gain a broad understanding of how library patrons think about and search for genres, particularly in library catalogs. “Genres” refers to media created using a particular style or content, whether fiction or non-fiction (e.g., science fiction, paranormal romance, slice-of-life comics, sports, true crime, etc.).

You will be asked to provide answers to 11 questions related to what kinds of genres you read, view or listen to, and how you search for them. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

The results of this survey will be used in a larger research project advocating for improvements to library genre vocabularies, to make finding genres easier for library patrons.

**Q1: What type(s) of library do you use to check out or view (i.e. stream) materials? Choose all that apply.**

- Public
- Academic (College or university Library)
- School (K-12, Elementary or secondary school libraries)
- Special (Law libraries, hospital libraries, etc.)
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q2: How often do you use the library to check out or view (i.e. stream) materials?**

- Daily
- Weekly
- A few times a month
- A few times a year
- Seldom/less than a few times a year

**Q3: What kinds of fiction genres do you look for in the library? Choose all that apply.**

- Science fiction
- Fantasy
- Romance
- Horror
- Mystery
- Crime

- Thriller/Suspense
- Action/Adventure
- Comedy
- Western
- Historical
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't read/view any specific fiction genres

**Q4: What kinds of fiction subgenres do you look for in the library? Choose all that apply.**

- Science fiction subgenres (such as Steampunk) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Fantasy subgenres (such as Urban fantasy) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Romance subgenres (such as Paranormal romance) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Horror subgenres (such as Body horror) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Mystery subgenres (such as Cozy) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Crime subgenres (such as Gangster) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Thriller/Suspense subgenres (such as Legal thrillers) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Action/Adventure subgenres (such as Martial arts) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Comedy subgenres (such as ZomCom) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Western subgenres (such as Spaghetti Western) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Historical subgenres (such as Alternative history) (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't read/view any specific fiction subgenres

**Q5: What kinds of nonfiction genres do you look for in the library? Choose all that apply.**

- Biography/Autobiography/Memoir/Documentary
- Travelogue
- Cookbook
- Self-help
- History
- Gardening
- Art
- Journalism (including recent/current events)
- Craft or hobby
- True crime
- Science
- Sports
- Exercise
- Inspirational/Religious
- Philosophy
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't read/view any specific nonfiction genres

**Q6: Where do you search for genres?**

- Only in the library catalog
- Library catalog first and then other methods as needed
- Other methods first and then library catalog

- Only other methods

**Q7: What other ways do you try to find genres? Choose all that apply. Enter the number for the site or resource you use most often.**

1. Readers advisory in the library (ask a librarian, library-provided lists, etc.)
2. Databases (ComicsPlus, OverDrive, Kanopy, Hoopla, etc.)
3. User sites (GoodReads, StoryGraph, Letterboxd, Reddit, wikis and fan sites, etc.)
4. Genre reference sites (NoveList, Fantastic Fiction, IMDb, Grand Comics Database, etc.)
5. Genre marketing sites (Amazon, Tor/Reactor, publisher catalogs, etc.)
6. Genre review sites/blogs/wikis (Dear Author, No Flying No Tights, TV Tropes, etc.)
7. Social media (X, Facebook, etc.)
8. Search engines (Google, etc.)
9. Word of mouth (Friends, family)
10. Library signage and labels (shelf signage, genre stickers on books and videos, etc.)
11. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Which site or resource do you use most often? \_\_\_\_\_

**Q8: If you search for genres in the library catalog, how do you look for them? Choose all that apply. Enter the number for the search method you use most often.**

1. Keyword search using words for genres and/or subgenres
2. Narrow/facet/refine search by genres and/or subgenres
3. Search using a dedicated genre search option (menu option, like "Title" or "Author")
4. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Which search method do you use most often? \_\_\_\_\_

Don't search for genres in the library catalog

**Q9: If you search using words for genres in the library catalog, how specific do you get?**

- Search only by and for broad genres (e.g., Romance, Science fiction)
- Search by both broad genres and subgenres (e.g., both Romance and Paranormal romance)
- Search only by and for subgenres (e.g., Paranormal romance and Steampunk)
- Search only by broad genres, but scan search results for subgenres (e.g., search for Romance and then look for subgenres like Paranormal romance using other information in the search results)
- Don't search for genres in the library catalog

**Q10: If you search by broad genres and scan search results to find subgenres, what do you look for to determine if something fits your subgenres of interest? Choose all that apply.**

**Enter the number for the feature you use to locate subgenres most often.**

1. Cover/container image
2. Summary
3. Creator (Author, Artist, Director, etc.)
4. Subjects (Sports, Love, Zombies, Dragons, etc.)
5. Series/Publisher (Marvel, Criterion Collection, etc.)
6. Characters (Batman, Sherlock Holmes, Elves, etc.)
7. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Don't search for genres in the library catalog

Which feature do you use to locate subgenres most often? \_\_\_\_\_

**Q11: Are there some genres/subgenres where you have struggled to find materials in the library catalog?**

- Yes (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- No

**Genre Usage in Libraries by Staff Qualtrics Survey**

The purpose of this survey is to gain a broad understanding of how library workers create and utilize information about genres, and promote genres to patrons, in their libraries. "Genres" refers to media created using a particular style or content, whether fiction or non-fiction (e.g., science fiction, paranormal romance, slice-of-life comics, sports, true crime, etc.).

You will be asked to provide answers to 13 questions related to how your library creates and uses information about genres, and promotes genres to patrons. You will also be asked to identify the kind of library you work for and the library system and discovery layer/public-facing catalog you use for your job. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

The results of this survey will be used in a larger research project advocating for improvements to library genre vocabularies, to make finding genres easier for library patrons.

**Q1: What type of library do you work in?**

- Public
- Academic (College or university libraries)
- School (K-12, Elementary or secondary school libraries)
- Special (Law libraries, hospital libraries, etc.)
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q2: What integrated library system do you use?**

- Aleph
- Alexandria
- Alma
- Apollo
- Atrium
- Bibliovation
- CARL•X
- Evergreen
- FOLIO
- Destiny
- Horizon
- Koha
- Library•Solution
- Mandarin
- Millennium

- OPALS
- Polaris
- Sierra
- Symphony
- VERSO
- WorldShare Management Services
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q3: What discovery layer/public-facing catalog do you use? Choose all that apply.**

- Aspen Discovery
- BiblioCommons
- Blacklight
- CARL•Connect Discovery
- Destiny
- EBSCO Discovery Service
- Encore
- Enterprise
- Library•Solution
- Primo
- Primo VE
- Summon
- VuFind
- WorldCat Discovery
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- None or None Applicable

**Q4: Does your discovery layer/public-facing catalog have a dedicated genre search option (menu option, like "Title" or "Author")?**

- Yes
- No
- In certain types of searches (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q5: Does your discovery layer/public-facing catalog allow for faceting/narrowing a search by genre?**

- Yes
- No
- In certain types of searches (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Q6: Does your library include genre headings in bibliographic records (e.g., MARC field 655 terms like “Science fiction” or “Graphic novels”)? Choose all that apply.**

- Accept what’s on copy unaltered, don’t add genres directly
- Strip out genres
- Add genres from Library of Congress Genre Form Terms (LCGFT)
- Add genres from other genre vocabularies (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- Add local genres (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure

**Q7: If your library adds genres other than Library of Congress Genre Form Terms (LCGFT), please tell us why.**

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**Q8: Does your library add genre headings retroactively to older bibliographic records?**

- Yes
- No
- For some types of materials (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure

**Q9: Does your library staff provide genre assistance to searching patrons (in-person, lists/genre guides, etc.?)**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**Q10: Does your library promote genre materials to patrons (displays, book lists, etc.)?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**Q11: If your library provides genre assistance or promotion for patrons, what types of assistance/promotion do you provide? Choose all that apply.**

- Direct reader's advisory and/or genre reference assistance to patrons
- Lists or guides of recommended works by genre created by your library
- Access to genre reference works (*NoveList*, published reader's advisory guides, etc.)
- Genre displays
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Not applicable

**Q12: Are there some genres/subgenres where you have struggled to help patrons find materials in the catalog?**

- Yes (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- No
- Not applicable

**Q13: If you would like to provide us with additional details on genre search options at your library (limitations, special features, etc.), please enter them here.**

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## **Questionnaire Questions**

Another part of the study entailed emailing questionnaires to a variety of entities that either deal with genres within the publishing ecosystem or create genre lists/controlled vocabularies to support that ecosystem.

Our first category included organizations that created and/or assigned genres and subgenres to materials that audiences might access. These included: other genre vocabularies, both commercial (BISAC and Thema/EDItEUR) and ones used by libraries (like Homosaurus); library content providers of genre materials (Overdrive/Libby, ComicsPlus, etc.); genre review or information sites (Fantastic Fiction, Grand Comics Database, All About Romance, and so on); publishers, agents, and booksellers (e.g., Sourcebooks, Meet Cute Romance Bookshop); and fan/user sites (like Goodreads and LibraryThing). The second and third categories comprised authors of comics and fiction, and library metadata vendors (Marcive, Backstage, etc.).

### **All groups were asked the following three questions:**

- What is your philosophy/reason behind creating and/or using genres (for agents, the question ended “in marketing works by authors you represent”)? What purposes are you hoping genres will serve for your audiences?
- Do you consider genre audiences, fandoms, etc. when creating, editing or using genres (for agents, the question ended “when using and marketing genres”)? Do you ask for feedback? If so, how is the feedback implemented?
- Have you ever received positive feedback for a genre that you included? Negative feedback?

### **Additional questions for different groups included:**

#### **Agents**

- What markers do you look for within the items themselves when determining genre(s) for marketing purposes? Is there a mechanism for a genre(s) assigned to an item to change?
- Do you consider author input when assigning genre(s) to their works, and/or marketing their works? Do many authors give input?
- Where do you get the genre terms that you use in marketing (e.g., from a singular genre vocabulary, across multiple genre vocabularies, made up in-house, etc.)?

#### **Organizations that create or supplement genres**

- Do you have any presupposed limits on how you will create and/or supplement genres (number or type of words used in genre terms; depth of subgenres; types of information contained in genres like audience, time period, geographic information, etc.)?
- What sources do you consult when determining what’s a genre? Do you have any preferred sources?
- What is required for you to add a new genre, or edit an existing one? Is there a threshold?

#### **Organizations that only supplement genres**

- If you create primarily supplemental genre terms as needed, how do you know you're missing something?

**Organizations that assign genres** (regardless of whether they also create them)

- What markers do you look for within the items themselves when assigning genre(s)? Is there a mechanism for a genre assigned to an item to change?

**Organizations that only assign genres** (but do not create them)

- If you don't create genres at all—where do you get the genre terms that you use? How do you choose the terms you use (e.g., from a singular genre vocabulary, across multiple genre vocabularies, etc.)?

**Authors were asked the following questions:**

- What is your philosophy/reason behind creating works in various genres and subgenres? What purposes are you hoping genres will serve for your audiences?
- What elements (characterizations, settings, tropes, etc.) do you include in your works that reflect those genres and subgenres?
- Do publishers/marketers solicit or consider your input when assigning genre(s) and subgenre(s) to your works for promotional purposes?

**Library metadata vendors were asked the following questions:**

- Do you get genre-specific enrichment requests from customers? If so, which types of materials/which types of libraries (general category/ies, you don't need to name specific libraries)?
- Do you get genre-specific enrichment requests from customers to provide genres beyond the LCGFT? If so, what are the reasons behind those requests?
- What other supplemental genre vocabularies do you use? Which are used/requested most often? Are they for specific subsets of materials? If yes, are they based on format (e.g., comics, DVDs), classification, or something else?