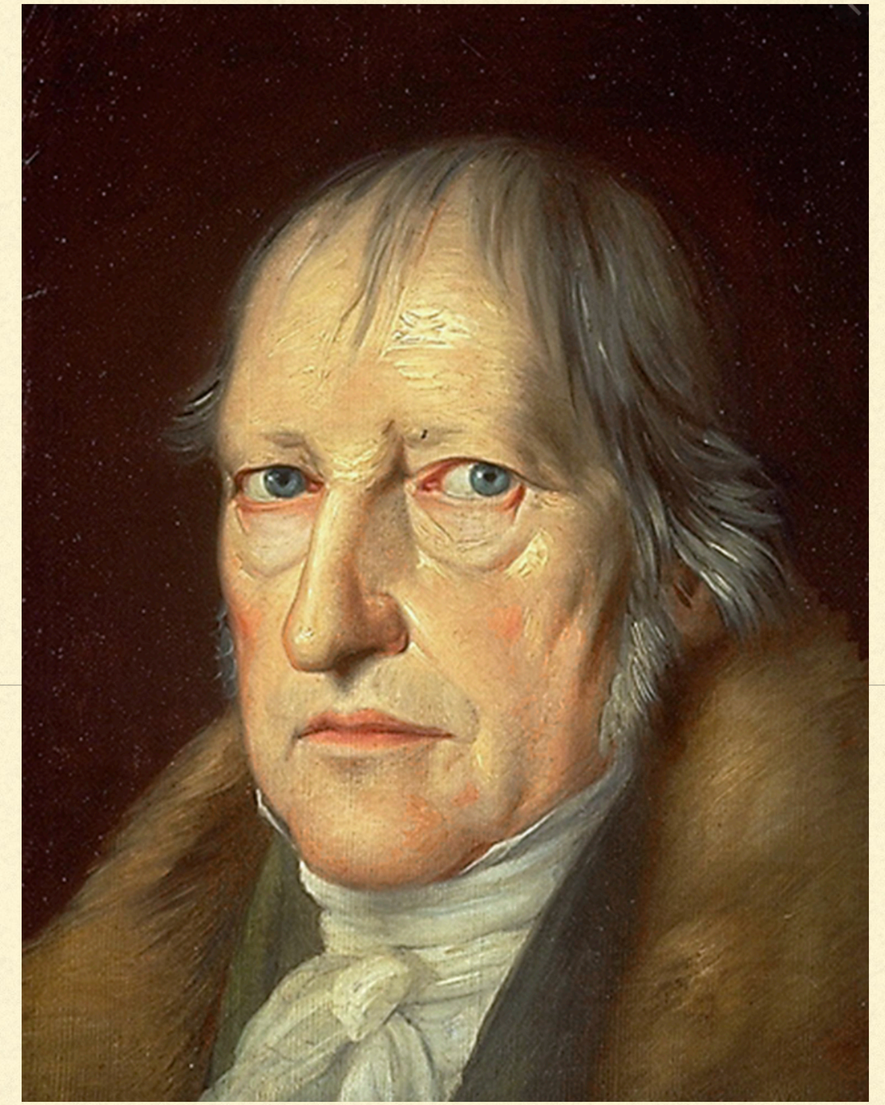
THE SPIRIT OF TIMES IN MOVIES

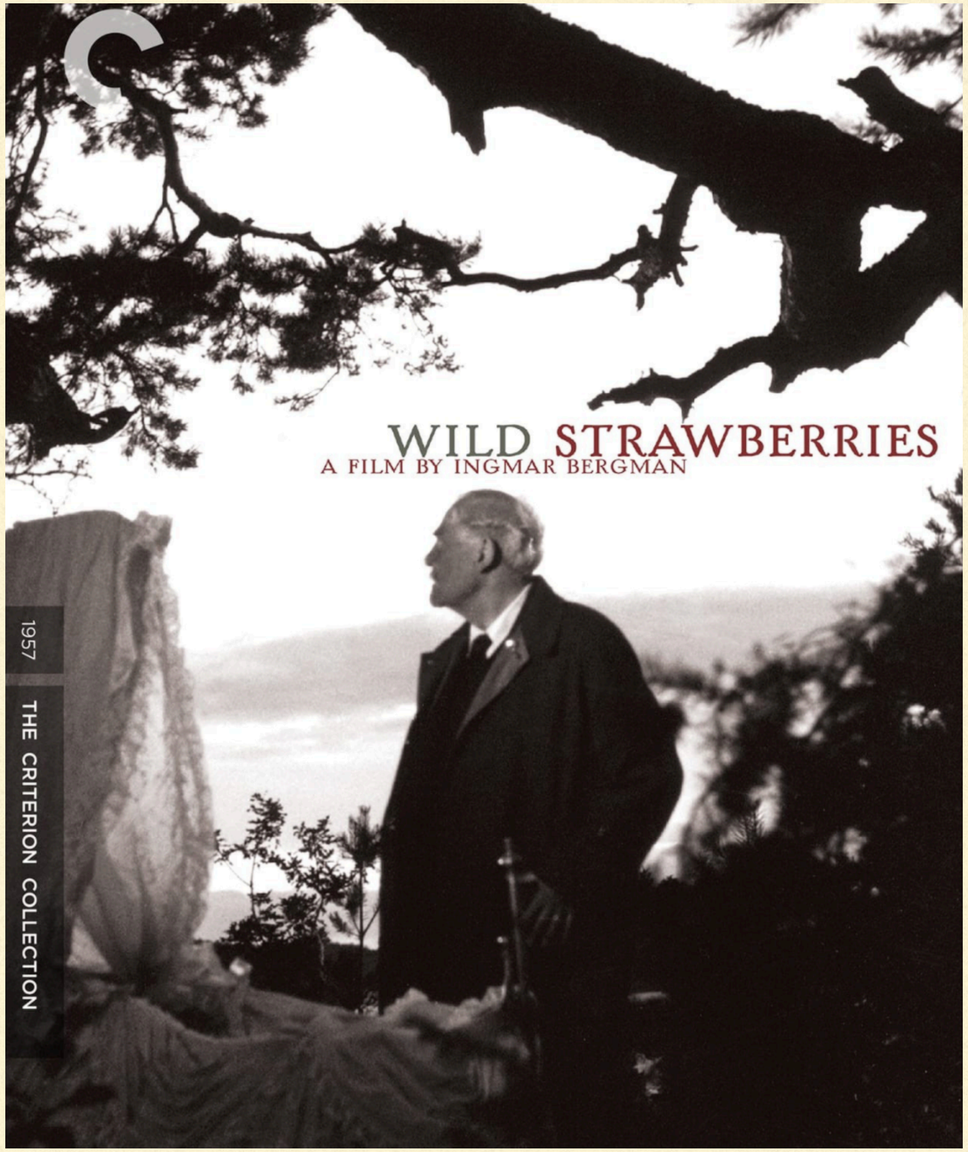
'Geist Der Zeiten'



'G.W.F. Hegel (1770–1831) is a philosopher from the German idealism period

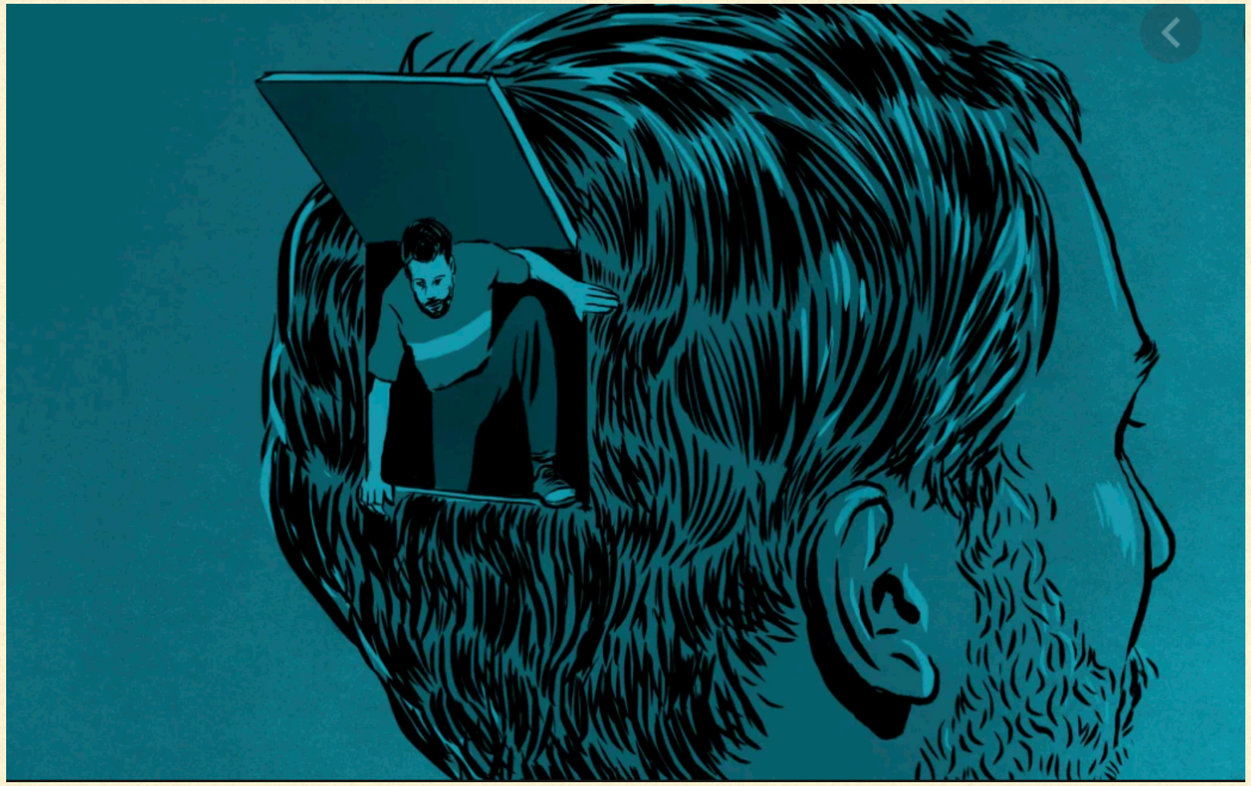
Hegel believed that art reflected the culture of the time in which it was created, the ***'Geist Der Zeiten'*** or the spirit of times as he called it.

The art work is the product of an artist, and the artist is the product of their culture, therefore the art work is the product of the spirit of that time.



Hypothesis:
Movies are a form of escapism.

Question #1
Would a certain historical event change our genre preferences?



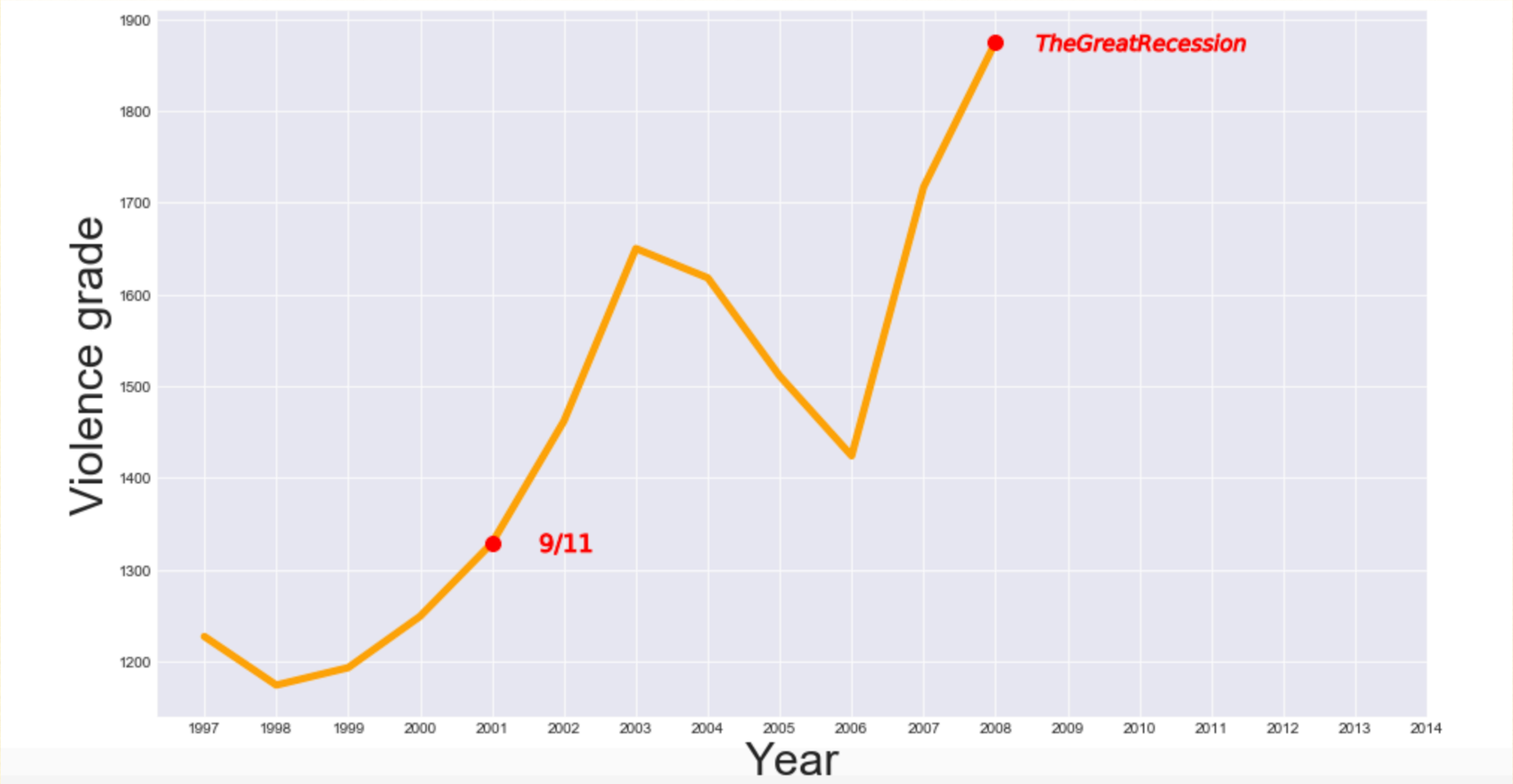
METHODOLOGY

- I wanted to test my assumptions on one traumatic event in our recent history and I picked 9/11. I wanted to see if a violet event changes in any way our genre preferences.

- I picked the first 250 most popular movies on IMDB for each year, from 1950 to 2019 and scraped genre information from 17000 movies grouped by year. I counted every time a genre appeared in these movies and I came up with a list with most familiar genre types and their corresponding genre count for a certain year. When a movie had more than one genre I added each genre to their genre count.

- Having violence as a criteria, I created a genre quantifying system. For example: my system grades romance with 3 and war genre with 10. Using my genre counts I multiplied each genre count with their grade and I summed them up for a year. Each year has a violence grade that takes into account: most popular 250 movies for each year.

- If my assumption that we use movies to escape the reality is right then I should see a decrease in people's preference for violent movies after a violent event.



9/11 IN MOVIES - WHY CHANGE COMES AFTER 1YEAR?

Movies take at least one year to be produced. In 2001-2002 movies coming up were movies produced in 1999-2000.
There is a sharp drop in the preference for violent movies one year after 9/11. If the movie is the product of the director and the director is product of their spirit of time , it means that directors started doing less violent movies right after 9/11 because the spirit of time changed.

SPIRIT OF TIME IN ACTION 1950-2019

INTERNET WAS WIDELY AVAILABLE ONLY AFTER 2000.

For events after 2000 when the internet became widely available the answer to our first question is yes. 9/11 seems to have influenced our genre preferences.

ZEITGEIST

The term ‘**Geist Der Zeitung**’ turned in time into ‘**Zeitgeist**’ which has been used contemporary as **fashion**.

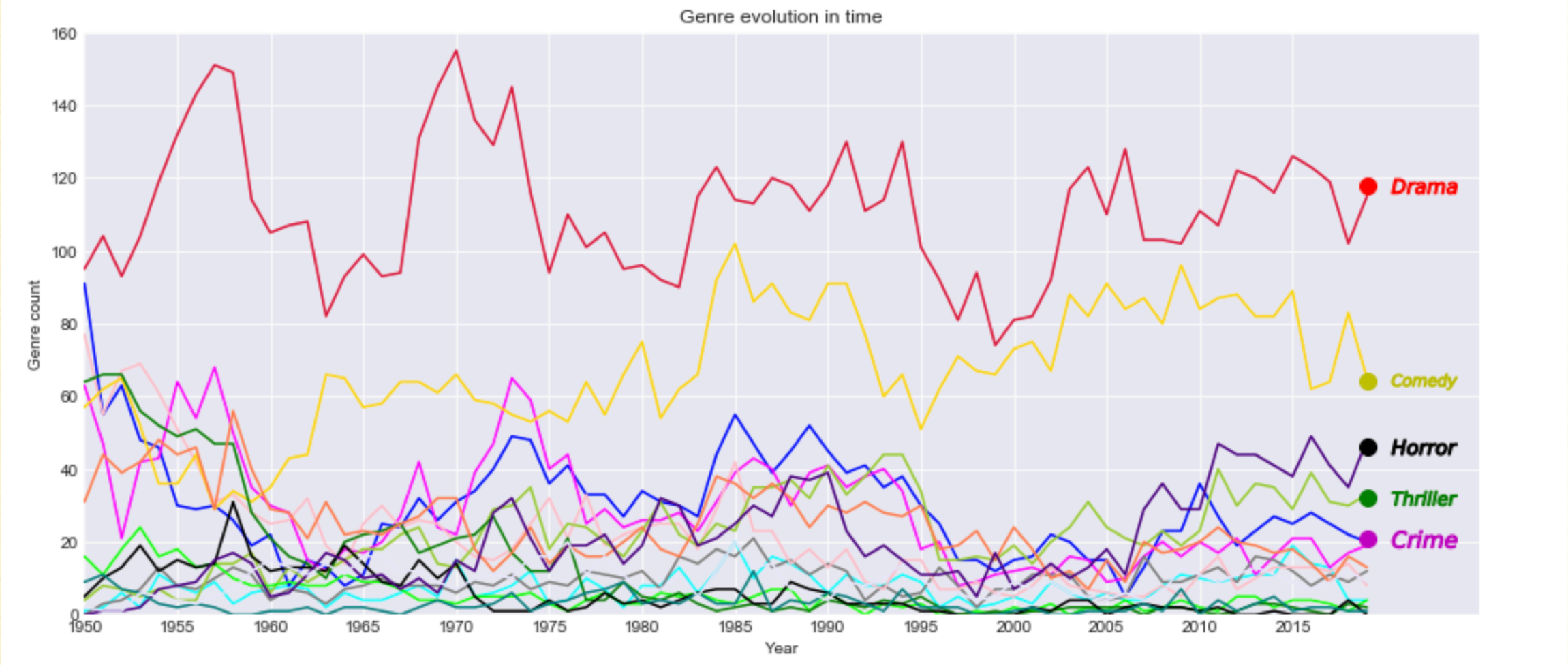
What is considered to be accepted as tasteful at a certain time.

Question #2

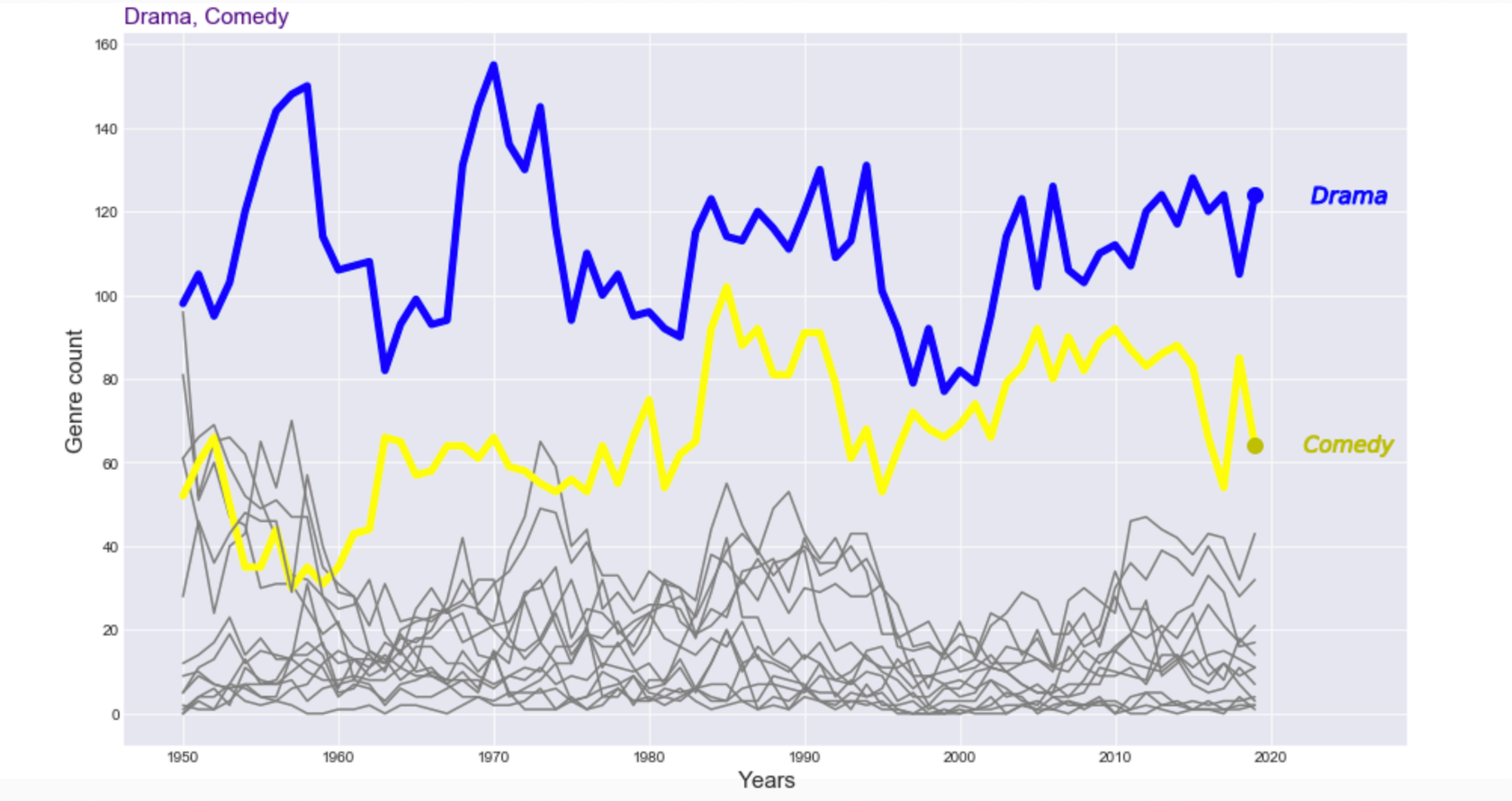
Are there any genres that are always popular?

METHODOLOGY

- I used the genre count to see how popular was each of the genre types in a certain year.
- If a genre like fantasy appeared 10 times in the first 250 most popular movies of the year then it will have a genre popularity of 10. Doing the same for each year from 1950 to 2019 will give us the trajectory that fantasy genre had during this period of time.



The answer to our second question is also yes.



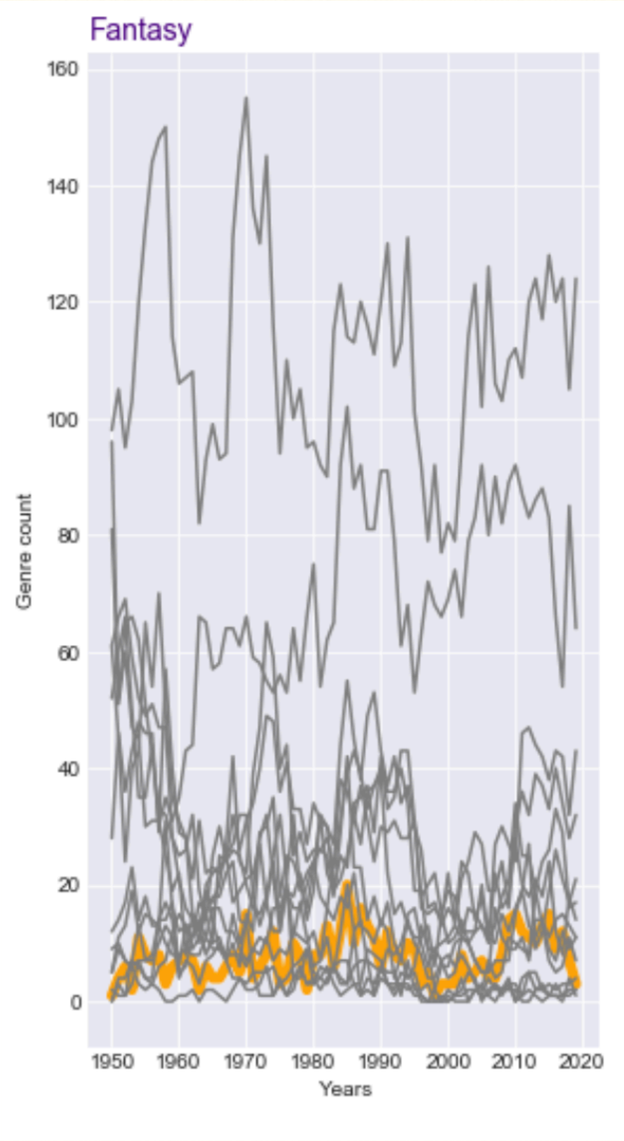
DRAMA AND COMEDY

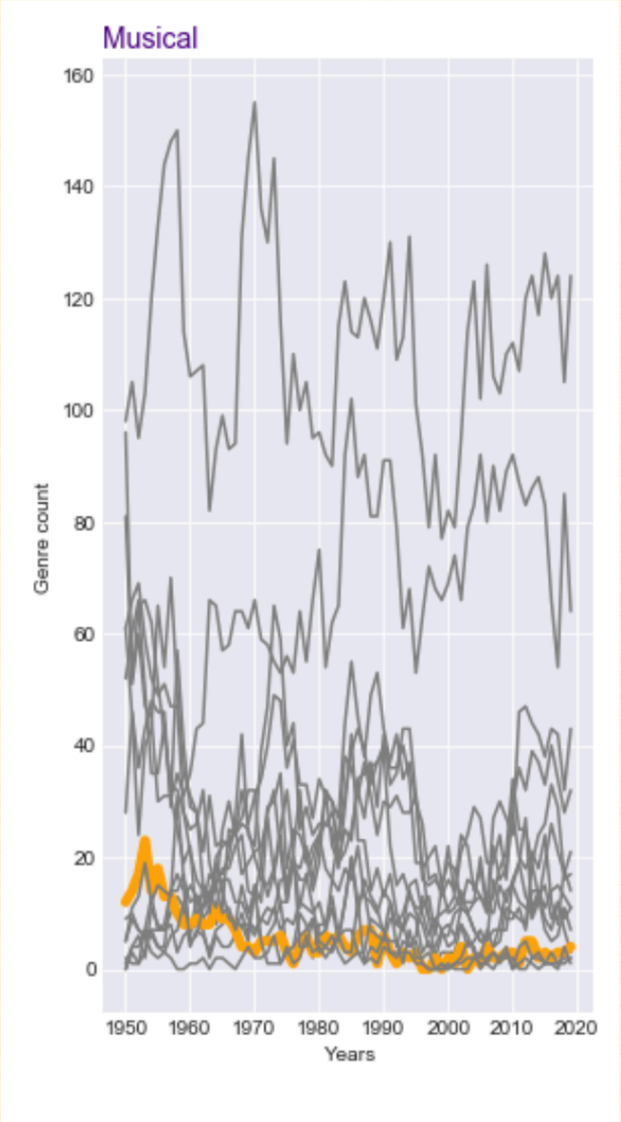
Drama and comedy genres seem to be always fashionable.

ZEITGEIST

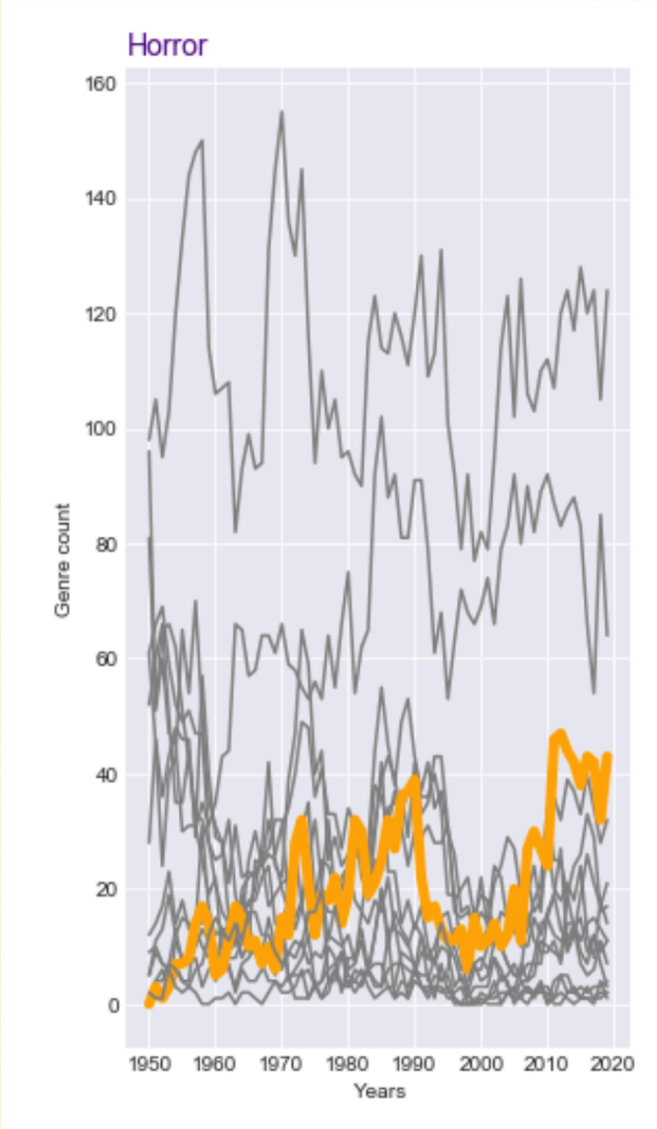
Question #3
What the trajectory of the other genres can say about genre preferences?

FANTASY AND MUSICAL

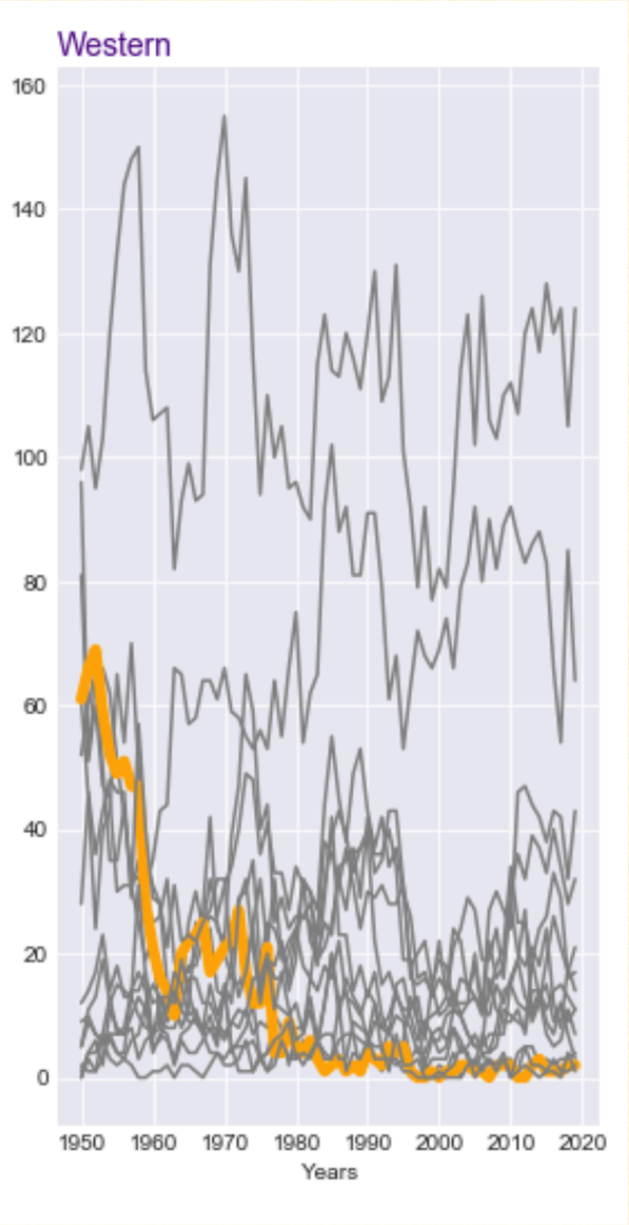




HORROR MOVIES

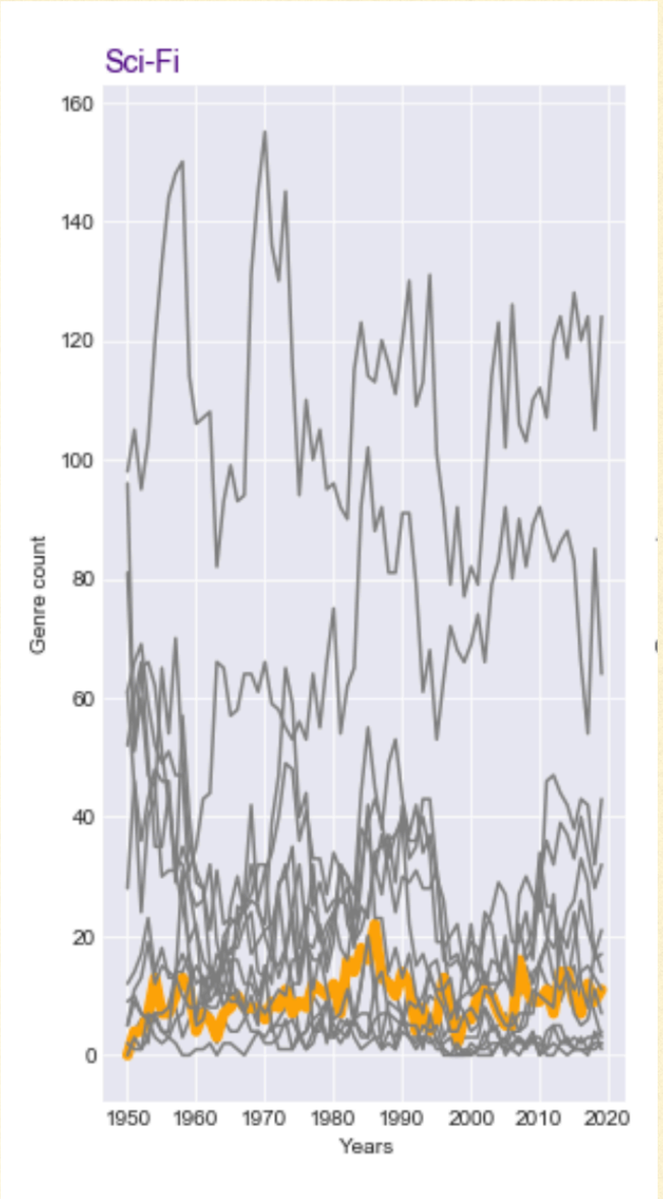


WESTERN MOVIES



SCIENCE FICTION MOVIES

Now I understand why there are not that many Sci-Fi movies. They are just not very popular.



Conclusions:

1. If you want to have a good repository of movies for general streaming, get a good variety with:

- a lot of dramas and comedies,
- some horror, thriller, and action movies
- just a splash of science fiction, musicals and sport movies.

2. After an event such as COVID-19 stir away from movies with hospital settings.