Diversification and Concentration of U.S. Film Genre Configurations, 1946-2013

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**Research Question**
How have the genre configurations of popular films changed over time?

**Data**
- N=2,029 films
- 17 genres; 126 genre configurations (source: Rovi Data)

**Findings**
- Post-war era (1946-72) exhibited greater generic diversity than current blockbuster era (1973-2013)
- Post-war era privileged serious films and realistic settings
- Blockbuster era privileges intense films and non-realistic settings
# Genre Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where/When?</th>
<th>Contextual Genres</th>
<th>Affective Genres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonrealism</td>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>Comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science Fiction</td>
<td>Musical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Realism</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>War</td>
<td>Drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historical</td>
<td>Romance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mystery</td>
<td>Action-Adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spy</td>
<td>Thriller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Horror</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Historical Periods of U.S. Film Industry, 1946–present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Period</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Postwar Era</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postwar transformation</td>
<td>1946–1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry recession</td>
<td>1960–1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blockbuster Era</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning of blockbuster production</td>
<td>1973–1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning of industry consolidation</td>
<td>1985–1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry fully consolidated</td>
<td>1996–present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Genre Configurations Present In All Periods

ActAdv
ActAdv-Fantasy
ActAdv-SciFi
Comedy
Comedy-Family
Crime
Drama
Drama-ActAdv
Drama-Comedy
Drama-Romance

Drama-Romance-Comedy
Family
Family-Fantasy
Horror
Romance-Comedy
Thriller
Thriller-Mystery
War
Western
Mean (Raw) Configurations per Year by Industry Period

1946-59: 65 configs
1960-72: 73
1973-84: 58
1985-95: 57
1996-13: 61

Total Configs/Yr
Unique Configs/Yr

- Total Configs/Yr
- Unique Configs/Yr

Legend:
- Total Configs/Yr
- Unique Configs/Yr
Generic Similarity of Industry Periods

Similarity Index (1.0=Identical)

- Similarity of Post-War and Blockbuster eras
Unique Genre Configurations, Post-war Period

1946-1959

1960-1972
Unique Genre Configurations, Blockbuster Period

- ActAdv
- Comedy
- Crime
- Family
- Fantasy
- Horror
- Musical
- Mystery
- SciFi

1973-1984

1985-1995

1996-2013
Findings

- More genres were prominent during post-war era and they were combined in many different ways.
- Popular films increasingly alike during blockbuster era.
- Comedy always popular.
- Post-war era: gravity (drama, romance, epic) combined with realism (Western, war, historical).
- Blockbuster era: intensity (action-adventure, thriller, horror) combined with non-realism (fantasy and science fiction).