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Kaiju Genre Data Analysis in the JVMG Project

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DER MEDIEN

JVMG

Overview

- Research Questions
- Data Analysis
- Ethical Reflections
- Provisional Conclusions

Research Questions

- Genre consolidation through media tropes
- What constitutes a genre? Where can the genre borders be drawn? Which tropes are indicative of a genre?
  - Example Kaiju → transmedia genre, diverse range of topics, narratives, and aesthetics

Data Analysis I

- Analyzed fan-defined kaiju genre using TV Tropes data.
- Dataset: 128 films, 3,134 unique tropes, Zipfian distribution
- Identified 41 core tropes with ≥10% film occurrence.
- “Kaiju” trope appears inconsistently; only 42 films.
- Ultra Series tagging suggests possible subgenre.
- Core tropes (monsters, battles, destruction) lack genre specificity.
- Only 11 core tropes overlap with TV Tropes’ 92 kaiju tropes.
- Single-medium analysis is insufficient for transmedia genres.

	Tropes (tagged films dataset)	Count	Attribution in %	Tropes (TV Tropes list)
1	Kaiju	42	33%	
2	ShoutOut	37	29%	
3	BigDamnHeroes	34	27%	
4	MythologyGag	33	26%	
5	BehemothBattle	30	23%	✓
6	OhCrap	29	23%	
7	BigBad	29	23%	
8	TooDumbToLive	27	21%	
9	Foreshadowing	26	20%	
10	StockFootage	26	20%	✓
11	CurbStompBattle	25	20%	
12	HeroicSacrifice	25	20%	
13	BittersweetEnding	24	19%	
14	DarkerAndEdgier	23	18%	
15	Expy	22	17%	✓
16	HenshinHero	21	16%	
17	LighterAndSofter	20	16%	
18	GiantEqualsInvincible	19	15%	✓
19	WhatHappenedToTheMouse	19	15%	
20	NiceJobBreakingItHero	19	15%	

Data Analysis II

- Inclusion of all kaiju works
- Dataset: 318 works, includes anime, manga, TV series, games, etc.
- Live-Action films still dominate the dataset (39.94%).
- Anime, manga, and animated films have significantly higher trope density and encompass unique tropes.
- Category inconsistencies: e.g., “Anime & Manga” vs. “Western Animation” → non-systemized folksonomy.
- Even core tropes are weakly represented overall.
- Complex trope hierarchy of sub- and super-tropes
- Tropes appear to function in co-occurring clusters rather than as individual genre markers.

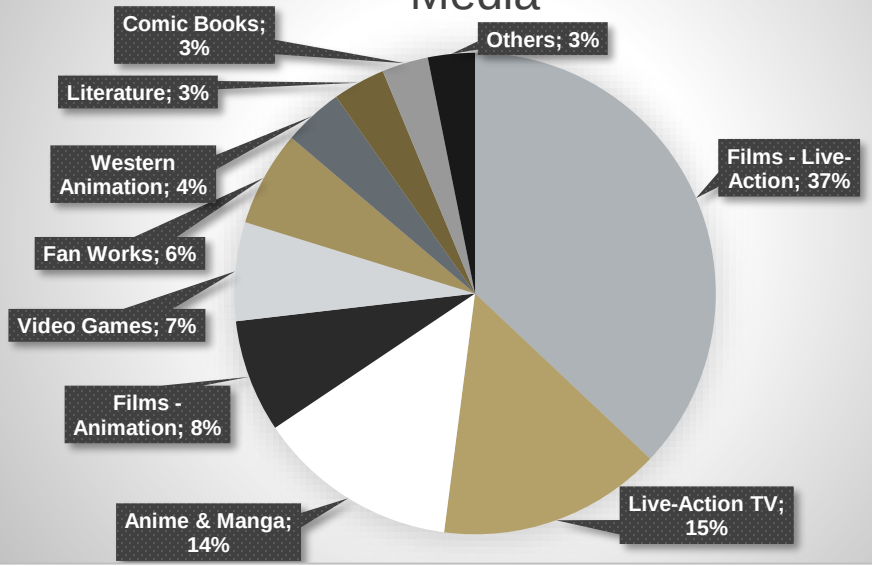
Data Analysis II

	all kaiju works	Films - Live-Action	Live-Action TV	Video Games	Anime & Manga	Fan Works	Comic Books	Literature	Films - Animation	Western Animation	Others[1]
works	318	127	58	30	24	15	15	11	11	8	19
works (%)		39,94%	18,24%	9,43%	7,55%	4,72%	4,72%	3,46%	3,46%	2,52%	5,97%
overall trope count	20854	7723	3132	1383	2823	1336	648	736	1579	837	657
overall trope count per work	65.57	60.81	54.00	46.10	117.62	89.06	43.20	66.90	143.54	104.62	34.57
overall trope (%)		37,03%	15,02%	6,63%	13,54%	6,41%	3,11%	3,53%	7,57%	4,01%	3,15%
unique trope count	7114	3419	1773	1005	2055	1066	555	606	1281	710	560
unique trope count per work	22.37	26.92	30.56	33.60	85.62	71.06	37.00	55.09	116.45	88.75	29.47

[1] Other kaiju works include categories (number of works) of Tabletop Games (5), Web Comics (4), Web Videos (3), Pinball (2), Arts (1), Podcasts (1), Professional Wrestling (1), Rides (1), Web Animation (1).

Data Analysis II

Overall Trope Count Distribution by Media



Top Five Tropes Comparison

	trope_name	count	perc.		trope_name	count	perc.
1	Kaiju	42	32,8%		Kaiju	113	35,5%
2	ShoutOut	37	28,9%		ShoutOut	110	34,6%
3	BigDamnHeroes	34	26,6%		MythologyGag	96	30,2%
4	MythologyGag	33	25,8%		BigBad	92	28,9%
5	BehemothBattle	30	23,4%		BigDamnHeroes	70	22,0%

Thematical Cluster and Individual Tropes

3	BigDamnHeroes	34	26,6%		MythologyGag	96	30,2%
4	MythologyGag	33	25,8%		BigBad	92	28,9%
5	BehemothBattle	30	23,4%		BigDamnHeroes	70	22,0%
6	OhCrap	29	22,7%		CurbStompBattle	70	22,0%
7	BigBad	29	22,7%		BehemothBattle	67	21,1%
8	TooDumbToLive	27	21,1%		Foreshadowing	66	20,8%
9	Foreshadowing	26	20,3%		BittersweetEnding	57	17,9%
10	StockFootage	26	20,3%		DarkerAndEdgier	57	17,9%
11	CurbStompBattle	25	19,5%		HeroicSacrifice	57	17,9%

Ethical Reflections

- Inclusion of Fan Perspectives
- Data Incompleteness
- Complexity of Canon Formation
- Evolving Nature of Genre Definitions
- Evolving Nature of the Database
- Biases and Representation
- Folksonomy vs. Systemic Categorization
- Unequal Interpretive Labor and Fan Knowledge
- Limits of Representation
- Trope Hierarchy and Attribution Practices

Provisional Conclusions

- Bottom-up approach captures genre as actively constructed, negotiated, and expanded by the community
- Method offers a more democratic and inclusive perspective and sheds light on diverse interpretations
- It reveals hidden patterns that a top-down approach might overlook
- Insights can be more context-sensitive, but also depend on the rigidity and evolving nature of folksonomic classifications

Thank you!

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