

The House of the Spirits

Romance

- Existence of the fantastic and supernatural
- Expansion of human abilities / capacities
- Movements / cycles of human experience
- Spiritual power of love to heal pain / suffering
- Structurally a quest narrative
 - Epic struggles, extraordinary characters, improbably events, expansive time

Structure and Devices

- Multiple narrators
 - 3rd person omniscient / 1st person testimonial
- Internal / external conflicts
 - Family dynamics against backdrop of political coup
- Syntax
 - Ornate/imagery to terse/action
- Foreshadowing
- Historicism (Allende family)
- Magic Realism – the magical is introduced with the real – told in an objective, realistic tone

Themes and Issues

- Revenge vs. forgiveness
- Role of love in life
- Free will vs. fate
- Rise of socialism and feminism in 20th century
- Politics of the left vs. the right
- Existence of good and evil
 - See William Blake's "Tyger" and "Lamb" poems
- Play on the tragic hero – flaws and falls
- Patterns in families – the prison of genes