

SFRA Review
Media Review Guidelines

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These are the guidelines for media reviews for *SFRA Review*, current as of August 2019. Past issues of the *Review* are available at <https://sfra.wildapricot.org/SFRA-Review>.

The *Review* regularly solicits reviews through the SFRA mailing list and through SFRA's social media platforms. Please do not submit unsolicited reviews. Any requests or suggestions of media items should be made directly to the media review editor and assistant editor listed above. Such media includes: films, television, web series, interactive media, video games, virtual spaces, online comic books/graphic novels, and audio content, among others.

All commissioned reviews should follow basic MLA Guidelines including: 1-inch margins, double-spaced text, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, and appropriate referencing.

In addition, all commissioned reviews should contain the following information at the top of the first page:

- Item's title in bold (centered)
- Reviewer's name as it should appear in print (centered)
- Complete citation, as per MLA guidelines, of the item (left justified)

Examples:

The Matrix

Jane Doe

The Matrix. Dir. The Wachowskis. Warner Brothers, 2000.

Second Life

Jane Doe

Second Life. Linden Lab, 2008.

Content

The *Review*'s guidelines for media review writers are an extension of the SFRA's mission, which is to encourage scholarship and further excellence in education. Therefore, reviewers should construct their reviews along these lines. The *Review* is not seeking reviews that focus on aesthetics, popularity, or mass appeal—except insofar as they are important to analysis. Reviews should demonstrate the ways that the text is grounded in the history of science fiction, is related to the history of science fiction as a genre, contributes to the intellectual and philosophical concerns of science fiction, and offers an educational opportunity.

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Basic Review Structure

1. **Description:** Provide a brief description of the item (e.g., video game, film, website, interactive medium, etc.). Note, however, that although the review should provide this brief synopsis, its focus should be the larger intellectual questions and concerns raised.
2. **Contextualization:** Provide brief context for the item. Some questions that might be pertinent to be answered are: How does the item fit into the history of the medium? In what ways does it advance or alter the medium? How does it fit into generic SF classifications, if at all? What SF traditions, themes, and tropes does it draw on? In what ways does it extend or alter them?
3. **Assessment:** Provide an assessment of the item's scholarly or academic potential. Consider the following questions: What issues does the item raise in terms of content and form? In what ways might the item be used in a classroom? In conjunction with what other texts? What kinds of scholarly, academic, or pedagogical approaches might be useful? What kinds of classroom activities or exercises might be useful?

Length

There are three possible lengths for reviews:

1. *Short Review* – This type of review should be between 750 and 1,000 words and should give a scholarly overview of the reviewed item. It should aim to briefly explain plot and characters and how they relate to science/speculative fiction concerns, and propose possible topics, themes, or other points of interest (see above questions).
2. *Review Essay* – This type of review should be between 1,500 and 2,000 words long and should give a more detailed and in-depth analysis of the reviewed item. Time should not be spent summarizing the plot or describing the characters in minute detail, except when it is in service of the analysis being conducted. This format favors joint reviews (between two reviewers) and comparative/contrastive reviews (between two or more items) and should aim to open discussion on a more specific topic than merely offer a cursory overview.
3. *Other* – Longer reviews, round table discussions, and other alternative formats are welcome but should be discussed with the editor before submission.