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Summer 2010

Editors

Karen Hellekson

16 Rolling Rdg.

Jay, ME 04239

karenhellekson@karenhellekson.com

sfrareview@gmail.com

Craig Jacobsen

English Department

Mesa Community College

1833 West Southern Ave.

Mesa, AZ 85202

jacobsen@mail.mc.maricopa.edu

sfrareview@gmail.com

Managing Editor

Janice M. Bogstad

McIntyre Library-CD

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

105 Garfield Ave.

Eau Claire, WI 54702-5010

bogstajm@uwec.edu

Nonfiction Editor

Ed McKnight

113 Cannon Lane

Taylors, SC 29687

emcknight@andersonuniversity.edu

Fiction Editor

Edward Carmien

29 Sterling Rd.

Princeton, NJ 08540

sfracfiction@mac.com

Media Editor

Ritch Calvin

16A Erland Rd.

Stony Brook, NY 11790-1114

realvink@ic.sunysb.edu

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SFRA Review

A publication of the Science Fiction Research Association

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SUBMISSIONS

The *SFRA Review* encourages submissions of reviews, review essays that cover several related texts, interviews, and feature articles. Submission guidelines are available at <http://www.sfra.org/> or by inquiry to the appropriate editor. Contact the Editors for other submissions or for correspondence.

SFRA Review Business

EDITORS' MESSAGE

New Editors Galore

Karen Hellekson and Craig Jacobsen

With just two issues of the *SFRA Review* left to go, we are counting down the time to handoff. We have lots of tasty treats for you to close out our tenure. This issue features an Audio Drama 101 by Neil Easterbrook and a Feminist SF 101 by Ritch Calvin, as well as much information about the SFRA meeting in Carefree, Arizona.

In the last issue of the *Review*, we asked for expressions of interest for the general editorship to be sent to SFRA president Lisa Yaszek for consideration at the Executive Board meeting in Carefree. We're happy to report that Doug Davis and Jason Embry have agreed to coedit the *Review*. We must also report that previously we noted that we limited ourselves to a three-year self-imposed tenure. However, when we actually read the bylaws of the organization (ahem!), we discovered that the three-year term is a real one. And here we just thought it *felt* right.

In addition to our exit, two of our longtime section editors are stepping down: we thank the Ed Carmien (fiction editor) and Ed McKnight (nonfiction editor) for their years of service. We invite you to consider applying for one of these editorships. Both Eds promise to help train their successors and are happy to answer questions. The job description is as follows: solicit books from the publishers; find reviewers; get them to deliver copy on time; quality- and fact-check it; and then deliver it to the *SFRA Review* editor on the due date the editor specifies. Please send your questions or your expressions of interest to us (sfrareview AT gmail.com) by October 15, 2010, and in conjunction with the SFRA Board and the new editors, we will select new fiction and nonfiction editors. We are keen to make a smooth transition because so many *Review* leadership positions are falling open at the same time.

This issue, we credit Michael Klein for his help. At the SFRA meeting in Carefree, it was decided that contributors to the *Review* must be SFRA members (with certain limited exceptions). Michael checked all submitters' names against a master membership list to ensure that this was the case.

SFRA Business

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SFRA: Showing the Love

Lisa Yaszek

At the end of SFRA 2010, I overheard someone lament that organizer Craig Jacobsen had done *too* good a job with the conference and that he didn't want to go back home to his regu-

larly scheduled life. And indeed, between the visually stunning desert setting, intellectually stimulating panels on science fiction and fantasy across media, and, of course, emotionally gratifying opportunity to connect with old and new friends alike, I am still seconding that sentiment three weeks later. Kudos to Craig for single-handedly organizing such a spectacular SFRA meeting, and special thanks to guest scholars Pawel Frelik, Joan Slonczewski, and Margaret Weitekamp for sharing their ideas about science, society, and SF with us all. It was an exciting opportunity to celebrate the work of longtime SFRA members while welcoming new scholars into our fold.

Indeed, as the conference progressed, I was increasingly struck by how the diversity of our guest scholars—coming, as they do, from backgrounds in American studies, biology, and history—complemented the diversity of SFRA members and their scholarly interests. A number of presenters at this year's conference chose to grapple with some of the oldest and still most pressing topics in SF studies, including issues related to pedagogy, publication, and scholarship. Others focused on recurring themes in SF fiction and scholarship, including representations of gender, history, and memory. Still others—inspired, no doubt, by the conference theme of “far stars and tin stars” and our Arizona setting—chose to explore how SF authors participate in contemporary debates over the environment and immigration. But what I personally found most exciting was the interaction between diverse participants in the conference itself. This year one-third of our conference attendees were students new to the field of SF studies. I was delighted to see seasoned conference attendees reach out to these new arrivals (sometimes quite literally) and look forward to the day when these new arrivals become SFRA veterans showing the love to a new generation of scholars.

And while we're on the topic of showing the love, I'd like to take this opportunity to remind all SFRA members—old and new alike—that there are many ways to participate in the ongoing development of our organization even when you aren't taking a quick dip in the pool or getting a quick drink in the bar with one another between conference events. For example, some of you might volunteer to help Pawel Frelik with SFRA 2011 in Lublin or Steve Berman with SFRA 2012 in Detroit. (Heck, you might even consider hosting a future SFRA yourself!) If that kind of service strikes your fancy, be sure to check out the SFRA business meeting minutes published in this issue of the *Review* for more details. If you prefer working behind the scenes, you might consider applying for one of the *SFRA Review* editorial positions advertised elsewhere in this issue. And finally, as we all carefully ponder the campaign statements written by the candidates for our next executive committee (also published elsewhere in this issue of the *Review*), I hope that some (many!) of you will think about how you might participate in the administration of the SFRA, thereby increasing the love all that much more.

SFRA 2010 Conference Wrap-up

Craig Jacobsen

From June 24th through the 27th the Science Fiction Research Association held its annual conference in Carefree, Arizona, amid somewhat hostile political and physical climates. The conference attracted nearly one hundred attendees, nearly one third of them first-time participants, a good sign for the health of the conference and association. The high desert setting provided a backdrop for many excellent sessions exploring the conference theme, science fiction and the frontier, and many other aspects of the field.

Guest Scholar Margaret Weitekamp, curator in the Space History Division of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, set the mood with an engaging opening-evening slide presentation on space toys and their connections to American notions of the frontier. International Guest Scholar Pawel Frelik, of Poland's Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, facilitated a pre-conference short course on studying computer games and shared his intriguing research into narratives dispersed across media during Friday's luncheon. Our third Guest Scholar, Joan Slonczewski of Kenyon College, gave a presentation on alien biology in *Avatar* that left attendees reluctant to leave. Pioneer Award winner Allison de Fren shared her disturbing and fascinating documentary film, *Mechanical Brides*, in a Friday evening screening. The roundtable discussion inspired by Arizona's recent anti-immigration legislation explored the ways in which science fiction intersects with such real-world issues. Beyond the "featured" programming, the conference was of course packed with fascinating paper and panel presentations that generated lively discussions.

The conference coordinator is perhaps not the best judge of its success, but the conference seemed to provide attendees with those things that I look for as an attendee: many new things to think about, a chance to reconnect with valued colleagues, and the opportunity to meet fascinating new ones. Every conference is a collaboration amongst everyone attending, so thanks to everyone who contributed.

Next year, Poland!

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Candidate Statements for SFRA Executive Council Positions 2011–2012

Adam Frisch

Candidates are listed in alphabetical order by surnames

Presidential Candidates

Ritch Calvin

It is my honor and privilege to be nominated for the position of President of SFRA. Since 2008, I have served as the Vice President, during which time I, with the help of some very

capable people, began the process of shifting much of the organization online, which included the membership database, the registration process, the syllabus project, conference resources, and the directory. In addition, in 2008 I was the conference organizer for the annual conference (Lawrence, KS). I have also been the Media Reviews editor for the *SFRA Review* since 2008—I hope that you at least look through the lists that I send out quarterly and find some interesting things! In addition, I served on the Mary Kay Bray Award committee from 2006–2009. In 2010, I was awarded the Mary Kay Bray Award for my short essay on mundane science fiction.

If you elect me President of SFRA, I will endeavor to: (1) ensure that all the aspects of the SFRA (annual conference, publications, Web site, awards, membership outreach) continue to function seamlessly; (2) continue the process of transitioning to electronic media (electronic registration, journal management, membership database, and membership directory); (3) continue to develop a web presence through various electronic and social media; (4) work with the Executive Committee and with the membership to find ways to reflect and incorporate the increasingly diverse interests of the members and the rapid expansion of our field of study.

Libby Ginway

I am honored to have been asked to run for the position of SFRA President. I was a member of the Executive Committee of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association 2004–2006, and attended my first SFRA meeting in 1993. In October 2005, I organized the symposium "Latin America Writes Back: Science Fiction in the Global Age" at the University of Florida, where I am currently Associate Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies. I work mainly with Brazilian science fiction, but do so from a comparative perspective with Anglo-American SF. We are at an exciting moment in science fiction studies as the genre increases its visibility as a global genre, with a foothold in postcolonial studies. I look forward to the future as SFRA begins to hold meetings in international venues. My priorities include: increasing the organization's global/international perspective; encouraging of young scholars, foreign scholars and graduate students; setting the stage for more international visibility and future venues; and facilitating comparative perspectives in teaching and criticism.

Vice-Presidential Candidates

Jim Davis

I am Jim Davis, a candidate for vice-president of the SFRA. I am an Assistant Professor in the English Department at Troy University in Troy, AL, where I designed and first taught a junior-level SF lit course in 1989, and got it added to the catalog and regular lit rotation the following year. As my area of specialization is creative writing, I have, within the past five years, begun a workshop on writing SF. This fall I will begin my fourth year on the faculty senate and second year as secretary of that body.

I have been presenting papers on SF topics since 2003, and have been a member of SFRA since 2007. I recently completed a three-year rotation on the SFRA's Graduate Student

Paper Award Committee—now the Student Paper Award—and served as chair of that committee this past year, 2009. I hope to be able to continue my service to the SFRA as VP. Thank you very much!

Jason Ellis

I am extremely honored to be nominated as a vice presidential candidate, and I hope to continue my service to the SFRA in this position if I am elected. I have been a member of the organization since 2006. Since then, I have won the 2007 Mary Kay Bray Award, served as the organization's publicity director beginning in 2008, served on the MKB Award committee beginning in 2008, and promoted the organization, its meetings, and its members on my science fiction scholarship blog dynamicsubspace.net.

If I am elected as vice president, I will pledge myself to the maintenance and efficient running of the organization. As vice president, I will be specifically charged with member recruitment, to which I will dedicate myself in addition to the related functions of organizational promotion and member retention with these three plans: (1) I will work cooperatively with the EC, the *SFRA Review* editors, the publicity director, the web director, and the membership to promote, develop, and expand the SFRA. Significant growth of the organization will be a collective effort. (2) I will work hard to invite new scholars and graduate students to join SFRA using personal invitations via in-person meetings, traditional letters, and social media. Along with this, I will guide the development of sfra.org into a useful tool for members and a point of contact for non-members, the media, and the public for all matters related to the work that we do. (3) I will poll current members about their needs that can be met by the SFRA, elicit members' ideas regarding the development of the organization, and advocate those findings with the organization.

Given the chance, I hope to serve the organization and its members as the next vice president of the SFRA. Thank you for your consideration, and see you all in Lublin!

Treasurer Candidates

Patrick Sharp

I am excited about the possibility of serving the SFRA as Treasurer. I joined the SFRA and attended my first conference on the Queen Mary as a grad student in 1997. Since that time my work on science fiction literature, film, and television includes a book, a coedited anthology, several essays and reviews, and dozens of conference presentations. I am currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Liberal Studies at California State University, Los Angeles as well as Secretary of the SFRA. If elected Treasurer, I intend to continue the work I am engaged with as Secretary: I will work to improve the online membership renewal system and look for ways to streamline our current operations in a way that will save the association money. I will work with the other committee members to expand our membership and support the association's inclusive approach to studying science fiction in all print and electronic media. I will work closely with the Secretary and the journal editors to ensure that we are responsive to any member issues that arise.

James Thrall

I first attended an SFRA gathering in 2002 at New Larnark, Scotland, and have made getting to as many of the conferences as I could a priority ever since. The collegial camaraderie that is such a hallmark of the group, and is expressed so well in the relaxed friendliness of our online exchanges and our meetings, represents academic collaboration at its best. I have certainly felt warmly welcomed, even as something of an interloper from the field of religious studies. My work in religion and culture permits me to turn lifelong SF fandom into a major focus of my studies in fiction, film and television. SFRA has been the perfect home for pursuing that mingling of academic endeavors—a place to try out ideas and be excited by the ideas of others. As I result, I find myself something of an SFRA evangelist, encouraging anyone who expresses the slightest interest in the academic study of SF to join. Having received so much from the group, I would be pleased to have the opportunity to give something back by serving as treasurer. I actually have some experience in that area to offer. My wife volunteered me to be permanent treasurer for our homeowner's association, explaining that there should be some community benefit from what she considers the unnatural pleasure I take in balancing our checkbook.

Secretary Candidates

Pawel Freluk

I am Assistant Professor in the Department of American Literature and Culture at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (Lublin, Poland). My main research and teaching interests include, among others, slipstream literatures, media SF and new modes of story-telling. Beyond membership, my experience in academic societies includes service on the Boards of the Polish Association of American Studies (1999–2007) and the European Association of American Studies (2007–present). I am also one of the editors of the *European Journal of American Studies*, the official academic journal of the EAAS.

I am honored to be nominated for the position of SFRA Secretary. I joined the organization in 1997 after Elizabeth Kraus's mention of an association that so ideally reflected my academic interests. Since then I have attended a number of SFRA conferences and served on two committees: Pioneer (twice as a member and once as a chair) and Graduate Student Paper Award (twice as a member). I am also the organizer of the 2011 SFRA Conference in Lublin. If elected, I will do my best to conduct the statutory duties but also try to help foster further internationalization of SFRA, especially in Europe, and forge links with other academic associations such as the Utopian Studies Society, to promote and expedite further development of the online presence of the organization, including such initiatives as the online directory or digital archivization of *SFRA Review*—some of these have already been initiated or suggested but, to my mind, could be pursued more decisively.

Susan George

I'm excited to have the opportunity to run for Secretary of SFRA. I attended my first SFRA/Eaton conference in 1997 on the Queen Mary and since then I have attended every few years.

I volunteered at the Atlanta conference and helped with preparing the packets, working registration, and serving as an author liaison. I enjoyed this so much I volunteered to help in Carefree as well. For the last two conferences I have organized the Teaching SF round tables. Last year I became a member of the Mary Kay Bray Award committee and decided, now that my tenure as division head for ICFA is over, that I want to devote some time to SFRA. Secretary seems like a good position to learn more about the organization and get involved.

Currently I'm teaching at the University of California, Merced, and my research and publications focus on the representation of gender and the alien other SF film and TV. If elected, I will endeavor to carry out the duties of the office efficiently and on a timely basis; work with the other SFRA officers to make sure the organization continues to grow, is open to new areas in SF scholarship, and provides a place for new and accomplished scholars and authors to exchange ideas; be responsive to the needs and concerns of the membership; and welcome all those interested in SF and the organization.

I would truly appreciate your vote so I can serve SFRA as secretary. If you would like to see my CV, feel free to e-mail me directly at sageorge13 AT sbcglobal.net.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Meeting Minutes

Patrick Sharp

SFRA Executive Board Meeting

June 25, 2010

Carefree, Arizona

I. SFRA Annual Meetings

- A. SFRA 2010: Phoenix, AZ (Craig)
Things look good. 90 or so people registered for the conference, which financially is fine. There is still about \$1000 left in the budget. There were some minor things with the hotel (some key issues).
- B. SFRA 2011: Poland (Pawel): July 7–10, 2011, in Lublin, Poland.
Preparations are in good shape. His institution is giving us the space for free. This is a good time to send him money because the dollar is strong. He is trying to get guest authors lined up. Travel arrangements with the possibility of discounts are being discussed, as well as how to get from Warsaw to Lublin. We will be sure to publicize it widely with European contingents of IAFA and American Studies.
- C. SFRA 2012: Detroit, MI (Steve Berman via Ritch)
He is working on accommodations and guest scholars. He should give a presentation on Sunday morning.
- D. Future SFRA conferences? (All)
SFRA 2013: Los Angeles, CA (Patrick Sharp, Sharon Sharp, Kate Sullivan). We are now scouting out possibilities for location and activities, as well as guests authors and people from the film, television, and new media industries.

II. Financial and Membership Matters

- A. Treasurer's Report (Mack)
Remains about the same: right about \$60,000, which is down about \$4,000. Reasons: not as much in royalties coming in, and membership is down a little bit. We'll make a little money on the conference. We picked up the tab for the Pilgrim winner, which will cost a little. We don't need to raise dues, but we do need to watch expenses.
- B. Membership Report (Mack)
We have 309 members for 2010, and we will probably pick up more at the conference. This is down from 360 last year. This is probably due in part to the economy. Our library membership is about the same. We need to work on recruitment through the Web site and using electronic means to facilitate increasing membership. We need to work on how people pay through the Web site too. There are some bugs that need to be investigated.
- C. Status of SFRA Grants (Patrick)
We have yet to receive any formal applications, though there have been some queries.

III. Transitional Matters

- A. Automating the SFRA: update (Mack, Ritch, and Patrick)
We are in the process of trying to get the membership database up online in the database. We are going to e-mail members about using the Web site and updating their information. We are trying to get things set up and ready for the next EC to continue this automation process and to help get the directory up as a password-protected and members-only part of the Web site.
- B. SFRA elections (Adam)
Right now we have one person for each office nominated. We are trying to get more candidates. We will try to get more candidates at the conference.
- C. Awards Committees (Lisa)
We have candidates for the committees.

IV. Other Issues

- A. Review work of current PR and web directors (Ritch and Patrick)
See above.
- B. Should we require conference attendees to join the SFRA? (Lisa and Adam)
Other organizations do this, and so should we. Yes.
- C. Should the SFRA establish formal affiliations with the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE)? (Lisa)
Yes. There are lots of possibilities that are positive. We should probably come up with guidelines for this and the next EC could pursue affiliations with other organizations.
- D. Should the SFRA join the Consortium of Professional and Academic Associations condemning Arizona SB 1070? (Craig)
We should discuss this with the membership. It would

involve a slightly larger symbolic commitment than what we have already made.

- E. Should we pursue McFarland's proposal to produce *SFRA Proceedings* on an annual basis? (Karen)
Maybe we should revisit this in two years. We did it as double-blind peer-reviewed book, but it may be difficult to maintain. Maybe do a focused publication as special issue in a journal instead. Who would do that? Maybe *Extrapolation*.
- F. Review *SFRA Review* editor applications (Lisa will bring copies)
We need to review the candidates and explore all possibilities.
- V. Other Old Business
- VI. Any New Business
We need to get students involved.
We need to explore new 21st century formations of the organization that take advantage of electronic media, networking, publishing, etc.
SFRA 2020 committee (that includes students and chaired by Karen) can explore possibilities for using media and upgrading organization.

SFRA GENERAL BUSINESS Meeting Minutes

Patrick Sharp

SFRA General Membership Meeting
June 25, 2010
Carefree, Arizona

1. Craig—Conference report

It's done. There were 88 registered attendees, and a few more than that for the banquet. We finished on budget and should just about break even. There were no major complaints.

2. Mack—Financial report

The organization has about \$60,000 in cash on hand, which is a slippage of about \$4,000 from last year. Reasons: membership is down to 309 from 360, the economy is weak, and there were some problems with the officers sending out membership renewals. We had some extra expenses this year: plaques, awards, Pilgrim winner travel, etc. We advanced \$1,000 to Pawel for the 2011 conference in Lublin, Poland. We have not raised dues.

Discussion issue: International rates have two tiers depending on postage. We will look at raising it \$15 for international scholars and going to one postage rate.

Discussion issue: We may be able to save money by sending electronic copies (or links to PDFs) of the *SFRA Review* to the publisher instead of physical review copies. This would make it easier for Jan Bogstad. (M/S/P)

Discussion issue: Do we need to start enforcing the rule that those writing reviews for the *SFRA Review* be members? Yes. (M/S/P)

Discussion issue: We will take a volunteer to handle contacting publishers and getting back to reviewers for the *SFRA Review*.

Discussion issue: Some joint members still get two copies of everything instead of just the *SFRA Review*. The Executive Committee will investigate.

3. Adam—Elections

We have one candidate for President, two for Vice President, One for Treasurer, and two for Secretary. Anyone wishing to run for office needs to contact Adam ASAP.

4. Future Conferences

SFRA 2011—Lublin, Poland—Pawel Frelik—July 7 to 10. There will be reasonable flights to Warsaw (approx. \$550 from New York, \$800 from Los Angeles). There will be conference information up on a Web site in late July. The earlier people book, the cheaper it will be for them.

Discussion: We would like information on train travel from Poland to other parts of Europe. If there is a contact number or travel agent, it would be helpful.

Discussion: There may be issues with rental cars from outside the country into Poland. The cost gets significantly higher. Pawel will investigate other potential problems. Within Poland this will not be a problem.

Discussion: Is there a Polish rail pass or pan-EU rail pass? Pawel will investigate.

Discussion: Nailing down transportation between Warsaw and Lublin will be helpful for publicity. Flying direct via Polish airlines is cheaper, and if we can get commitments of 10 or so members per flight we can arrange buses and shuttles. We'll see if we can get package deals for people coming from far away that would include additional travel. We'll continue the conversation about Poland on the listserv.

SFRA 2012—Detroit—Steve Berman, Jaema Berman, Debbie Randolph. It will be held at the Courtyard Marriott in downtown Detroit. Steve is working on the deal with this hotel. There are a number of potential guests who haven't been contacted yet.

SFRA 2013—Patrick Sharp, Sharon Sharp, Kate Sullivan. Looking at downtown LA and maybe Pasadena or Riverside (in conjunction with Eaton Conference?). Potential guests from new media sf are being discussed (e.g., Mark Laidlaw—writer of *Half-Life*).

Brazil is proposed by Alfredo Suppia for 2014 SFRA. We will discuss this. There might be a conflict with the World Cup in Brazil during summer 2014.

5. Other Issues

Membership: If you work for the SFRA you must be a member. (M/S/P)

Conferences: Anyone presenting at the SFRA conference must be a member. (M/S/P)

We'll need to set a deadline before the conference (set by the conference director) such that when you pay registration for the conference, you pay for the membership.

Economy: We should figure out a way to deal with the jobless rate. Emeritus rate is \$50. We might have a sliding wage scale for amount of membership fee.

Arizona SB 1070: We are signatories of a statement against SB 1070. We could join the consortium (which is having an ongoing conversation about this and other issues). We would not be put on future statements on other issues without approval of the organization. Poll of membership at the business meeting: passed unanimously. We will put an announcement about this in the next *SFRA Review* to set up an anonymous survey to gauge the membership on this issue.

McFarland Proceedings: One of the peer reviewers of the last such book asked how well it was organized and who was the audience. Maybe we should consider edited journal special issues. *Extrapolation* would be a good fit. We should start talking to the journals and move from there. Then consider some sort of “works in progress” component that would be distributed in some other way. Motion: The SFRA will move forward with discussing a proceedings issue with *Extrapolation*. (M/S/Passed unanimously)

Next year we will revisit some kind of online, Creative Commons works in progress for a proceedings.

AWARDS UPDATE

2010–2011 Award Committee Personnel

Lisa Yaszek

SFRA announces the following committees for next year’s awards and thanks their members for agreement to serve:

- Pilgrim Award (for lifetime contributions to SF/F studies): Gary Wolfe (c); Marleen Barr; Brian Attebery.
- Pioneer Award (for outstanding SF studies essay of the year): Sherryl Vint (c); De Witt Kilgore; Neil Easterbrook.
- Clareson Award (for distinguished service): Paul Kincaid (c); Andy Sawyer; Joan Gordon.
- Mary Kay Bray Award (for the best essay, interview, or extended review in the past year’s *SFRA Review*): Jason Ellis (c); Susan George; Sharon Sharp.
- Student Paper Award (for best student paper presented at the previous year’s SFRA meeting): David Mead (c); Alfredo Suppia; Jim Thrall.

2009–2010 SFRA AWARDS

Remarks for Pilgrim Award

Elizabeth Hull (chair), Gary Wolfe, Marleen Barr

For lifetime contributions to SF/F studies.

We are proud to inform our community that Eric S. Rabkin is the most recent recipient of this cherished honor. Please

find below a description of Eric’s career (taken from his Web site) followed by Gary’s and Marleen’s comments.

Career Description

Eric S. Rabkin is Arthur F. Thurnau Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Born (1946) and raised in New York City and educated at Stuyvesant High School, Cornell University (AB, 1967), and the University of Iowa (PhD, 1970), he joined the Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 1970, became associate professor in 1974, and full professor in 1977. His current research interests include fantasy and science fiction, graphic narrative, the quantitative study of culture, traditional literary criticism and theory, and academic computing.

As a teacher, Eric is especially known for his large, popular lecture courses on science fiction and fantasy, and for his many teaching innovations, including the development of the highly successful Practical English writing program for those who will use writing in their work lives, and for his work at all levels, including faculty training, in research and communication applications of computer technologies.

He received the University Teaching Award (1990), the LS&A Excellence in Education Award (2000), and the Golden Apple Award (2006) given annually by the students for the outstanding teacher at the University of Michigan. Eric has over one-hundred-seventy publications, including thirty-two books written, co-written, edited, or co-edited, including *Narrative Suspense* (1973); *The Fantastic in Literature* (1976); *Science Fiction: History, Science, Vision* (with Robert Scholes, 1977); *Teaching Writing That Works: A Group Approach to Practical English* (with Macklin Smith, 1990); *It’s A Gas: A Study of Flatulence* (with Eugene M. Silverman, 1991); *Stories: An Anthology and an Introduction* (1995); *The Rise and Fall of Twentieth-Century Formula Fiction* (ed. with Carlo Pagetti, 2001), *Mars: A Tour of the Human Imagination* (2005); and *Masterpieces of the Imaginative Mind* (audio/video lecture series, 2007).

Eric has lectured widely, to both general and academic audiences, on fantasy, science fiction, fairy tales, humor, American literature, literary theory, culture studies, pedagogy, composition, administration, and information technology. He has had lecture tours in the United States, Europe, Australia, and South Korea.

Comments by Gary K. Wolfe

For science fiction and fantasy scholars and critics of a certain generation, in fact the first generation of university-trained scholars publishing with university presses, the work of Eric Rabkin was both a road map and a liberation. When his pioneering book *The Fantastic in Literature* appeared from Princeton in 1976, only a handful of formal scholarly works on the fantastic had been published outside the specialty and fan presses, and Eric’s work not only spoke knowledgeably of writers from Lewis Carroll and George MacDonald to Theodore Sturgeon and Arthur C. Clarke; it provided us with one of the first useful theoretical contexts for locating science fiction and fantasy in a broad range of narrative traditions; his notion of a continuum of the fantastic remains a cornerstone of critical history even today, when genres are blurring and merging together more than ever.

Eric continued his groundbreaking criticism a few years later with his *Science Fiction: History, Science, Vision* (coauthored with Robert Scholes) and an insightful short study of Arthur C. Clarke, but also broadened his influence with two widely-used anthologies from Oxford University Press, one of which, *Fantastic Worlds* (1979), was a brilliant illustration of his notion of the continuum of the fantastic. But Eric was also a great supporter and promoter of the work of other scholars in the field. He was a leader in organizing the annual Eaton Conference of science fiction studies, and over a period of more than fifteen years edited with various collaborators the series of theme-based collections of critical essays, often drawn from Eaton proceedings, from Southern Illinois University Press and later the University of Georgia Press. An entire generation of scholars saw some of their first book publications in these volumes, which still constitute one of the longest-running series of science fiction studies ever published.

But Eric's contributions to the growth of science fiction studies are not limited to his own work. At the University of Michigan, where he has taught since 1970, Eric instituted not only a series of courses that treat science fiction and fantasy, but established an award-winning Web site, a wide-ranging DVD course on imaginative literature, and the Genre Evolution Project, which engaged a new generation of both undergraduate and graduate students in reading and contextualizing a huge variety of science fiction and fantasy texts from early pulp stories to postmodern experiments. That project, which later extended to students in other universities, remains one of the most ambitious and wide-ranging efforts to catalog the entire field in terms of genre and formula characteristics. At least one young novelist that I know, Amelia Beamer, traces her interest in science fiction and fantasy history to her participation in that project. Another popular writer of young adult fiction, Ellen Klages, recalls Eric as the most inspirational of all her college teachers.

In short, Eric's influence among both scholars and writers has cascaded through the field for decades, and may be so complex by now that it is impossible to trace all his descendants. There can be little doubt that, from his own scholarship to his teaching and his promotion of the field through both anthologies and large-scale research projects, Eric represents exactly the kinds of achievements that the Pilgrim Award was designed for. He is almost certainly one of the most deserving Pilgrims of all.

Comments by Marleen S. Barr

And when our 2010 Pilgrim Award winner Eric S. Rabkin is flying to his lecturing engagements it would be correct to look up in the sky and proclaim It's Super Science Fiction Scholar! This is not hyperbolic. Rabkin's life long record of achievement in our field positions him as a bona fide science fiction scholar super hero. Generating over one hundred seventy publications is indeed a Herculean feat that we are privileged to honor and celebrate tonight. It represents forty years of unfaltering scholarly dedication and a continuous commitment to productivity. And he is still at it! Although this may be carrying science fiction gender bending too far—and Eric does not travel to lectures on a barge—his contribution is Shakesperian as well as super: Age cannot wither him, nor custom stale His infinite variety.

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Eric's dedication to teaching is as extraordinary as his dedication to writing. This science fiction scholar extraordinaire humanizes the classroom and genuinely cares about his students. This is no knee jerk de rigueur assertion. The person authoring these words was in 1974 a beginning graduate student who sat awestruck and starstruck as a member of Rabkin's class. She has spent thirty-six years witnessing exactly how the light radiating through people's lives via his pedagogical brilliance shines on. Her intellectual life—and the lives of many others who closely encountered Eric in classrooms and at conferences—was enhanced in an out of this world manner. But Eric's super sized vita and almost larger than life impact upon the scholarly pursuits of others is not the most noteworthy aspect of his lifelong engagement with science fiction studies. The greatest thing about Eric is that he has managed to accomplish all of this success in a manner infused with dignity, politeness, finesse, and honor. This has been called truth, justice, and the American way. Or, as residents of the Queens neighborhood where Eric grew up would say, Eric S. Rabkin is a mensch. As we are all saying tonight: Eric S. Rabkin, the author of *The Fantastic In Literature*, is nothing short of fantastic himself.

P.S. Dear E, I first communicated with you in the days when there was no e-mail and it was necessary to use paper and stamps. I still have all the letters you sent to me filled with invaluable advice. During all of our years of conversation, I never did get around to telling you that very early in my career I decided always to use my middle initial on my publications because I noticed that this is what you did and I very purposefully wanted to try to be just like you. Who would have thought that now, all of these years later, it turns out that I am publicly charged with communicating the breadth of your achievement in a succinct way. I find this task to be mission impossible because I really don't have the words to express just how wonderful it is to learn from you and to know you. So I will boil everything down to this one word which expresses what the science fiction scholarly community wishes to say to you upon the occasion of honoring you with the Pilgrim Award: Thank you.—Love, M.

Pilgrim Award Acceptance Speech

Eric Rabkin

Thank you so much for that introduction. I am truly grateful; indeed, grateful enough that in anticipation I gathered up my passport, traversed the continent, and risked crossing the border into Arizona—even though I know that here as elsewhere, in some sense, a serious concern for science fiction may mark one as dangerously alien. As many of the members of SFRA know painfully well, including many of the fine company of Pilgrims I am now so deeply honored to be allowed to join, the alienation that comes from taking science fiction seriously can be as real in the academy as I imagine it in Arizona. Yet it is your work—our work—that has made the border between the erstwhile “science fiction ghetto” and the world of “literature” so porous as sometimes to disappear entirely, to the glory of all

concerned. So I thank you sincerely for your work as well as for this honor and, of course, for that introduction.

Being introduced, you know, especially on an occasion such as this, reminds one that listening to others can be very gratifying. Sometimes what one hears are delightful words of praise, other times necessary criticisms; sometimes unintended stimulation, and sometimes explicit challenges. In every instance in my life when I have listened deeply, I have been well served. I strive to listen better yet. Most of us here are teachers, but all of us here have been students, and certainly, then and now, we have been and are readers, attending to the words of others for pleasure, guidance, enrichment, indeed, for the very building of our selves. For good or ill, my self has developed to a significant degree within the realm of science fiction, a realm I first truly entered in response to a challenge from my father.

When I was young, I never seemed to get enough of his time. So, I would do whatever I could to share time with him. When my father would come home from work, he often felt a need to erect a barrier between himself and the family, or so it seemed to me, perhaps something like that invisible bubble I later read about in which the neoterics live in Theodore Sturgeon's classic "Microcosmic God." Dad's bubble was made of narrative. He would hang up his coat, retreat to the bathroom, emerge with hands and face washed, turn on the television, and sit in a wing-backed chair facing some show and simultaneously reading, visually half shielded by the chair, mentally posted with a doubled sign that seemed to read, "No Trespassing on the worlds of my mind." What was a nine-year-old to do?

Because I had health problems that kept me out of school a lot and because I was quite satisfied exploring in other ways—like blasting a hole in my grandmother's linoleum while performing one of my notable early experiments in electricity—I didn't really learn to read until I was seven. And then suddenly I could. Like many of you, I'm sure, I soon found schoolbooks were just too easy. Dad suggested *Robinson Crusoe*.

(I had no idea then that someday I would read Stanislaw Lem's observation that all Jules Verne's *voyages extraordinaires* can be thought of as robinsonades. Perhaps, therefore, one could think of Daniel Defoe's 1719 novel—with shipwreck on an unknown shore, building a new civilization by wit and technology, and confrontation with the alien—as some sort of science fiction. How wonderful, I now think, that this possible science fiction novel is often called the first true novel of any kind in English.)

Have you looked at *Robinson Crusoe* lately? Here is how it begins:

I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull. He got a good estate by merchandise, and leaving off his trade, lived afterwards at York, from whence he had married my mother, whose relations were named Robinson, a very good family in that country, and from whom I was called Robinson Kreutznaer; but, by the usual corruption of words in England, we are now called—nay we call ourselves and write our name—Crusoe; and so my companions always called me.

Nowadays, of course, I see the set-up here, the importance of details and logical, practical explanation; the accounting for the present by attention to the past; the paternal assimilation to Englishness. This potentiates the rebellion of the eponymous son who follows his father's footsteps far enough to wind up as a stranger in a strange land, but instead of doing as the Romans do, he remakes that land as best he can into a simulation of England. And, of course, that whole paragraph is about the derivation of the protagonist's name: labeling things, planting the flag, discovery. It calls to mind Adam naming the animals before his desire for the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil led to his expulsion. Words, knowledge, meeting the alien and dealing with one's heritage, these are all in that first paragraph. The book is a deserved classic, both of the novel in general and of science fiction. But listen to the language. I was smart, but I was nine. My father, in recommending it to me, of course, was insane.

For Dad's sake, I tried intermittently to read *Robinson Crusoe* until, finally, at twelve I succeeded. In fact, I enjoyed it, and still do, despite its obvious racism. But by twelve I was already, mostly, into something else.

Often when Dad snapped on his bubble shields of narrative, the material in his hands was a science fiction magazine, something with the gaudy, gorgeous covers of what is now called The Golden Age of science fiction. So, while he read the current issue of something with a nerve-tingling adjective in the title ("amazing," "astounding," "thrilling," and so on), sitting on the floor beside Dad's chair, I would read some similar magazine he had laid aside. Typically we read in silence, except for the background drone of the television.

One day, seeing that his *Robinson Crusoe* suggestion had gotten nowhere and that I was wasting my brain by taking his dessert as my main course, he looked down at me over the chair's arm and demanded, "Why are you reading that crap?" At the time—I remember it vividly—I took this as an angry accusation, which, of course, stung me hard since I was only trying to emulate him. Still, I mustered the strength to reply that I was just reading what he read. "Well," he said, "if you're going to read science fiction, at least read classic science fiction."

In that instant, I understood that *Robinson Crusoe* was literature and science fiction was something else, something less, something even dirty, the crap that perhaps was one of his drugs, but not something he was proud of or that, as a father, he could endorse as my reading. I had no idea then that his implicit admission was an act of love by an unhappy man of what I now consider a mere thirty years of age, an admission that he wanted something better for me. I also had no idea what "classic science fiction" could mean, so I asked.

"Well," he said, "*Slan*. By A. E. van Vogt." Then he turned back to his magazine.

I don't remember how I found a copy of *Slan*, but I did. To this day, I see the action of that first chapter in my mind's eye and feel the protagonist's tension in my imagination's body. Here is how it begins:

His mother's hand felt cold, clutching his.

Her fear as they walked hurriedly along the street was a quiet, swift pulsation that throbbed from her mind to his. A hundred other thoughts beat against his mind, from the

crowds that swarmed by on either side, and from inside the buildings they passed. But only his mother's thoughts were clear and coherent—and afraid.

"They're following us, Jommy," her brain telegraphed. "They're not sure, but they suspect. We've risked once too often coming into the capital, though I did hope that this time I could show you the old slan way of getting into the catacombs, where your father's secret is hidden. Jommy, if the worst happens, you know what to do. We've practiced it often enough. And, Jommy, don't be afraid, don't get excited. You may be only nine years old, but you're as intelligent as any fifteen-year-old human being."

Don't be afraid. Easy to advise, Jommy thought, and hid the thought from her. She wouldn't like that concealment, that distorting shield between them. But there were thoughts that had to be kept back. She mustn't know he was afraid also.

It was new and exciting, as well....

Any of you who have read *Slan* will remember that Jommy's mother sends him off while letting the followers pursue her. Their filial telepathy disappears with distance but Jommy's alien identity is discovered and through most of the chapter he is hounded by a crowd. At one point, with his slan strength, he hangs on to the bumper of a speeding car, only to discover by mind-reading that the chauffeured passenger is the chief of the slan-hunting police and that his mother had been killed ten minutes earlier. This is a 1940 book, one I now see reflected the Gestapo coming in the night, the semi-official pogroms like Kristallnacht (9–10 November 1938), and the boiling anti-Semitism of the times. Jommy flees, hides, and eventually believes he may safely emerge from the hole he has found, only to be captured by an avaricious and hateful witch-like woman.

I suppose I sensed even then the radical connection between science fiction and fairy tale, but I know I saw mainly the desperation, the back-story loss of a father, the narrative present loss of a mother, the sense that this boy was really much stronger and smarter than ordinary people would credit and that he had an important destiny to fulfill, one his parents may have failed at but that he must not. (Yes, his name was Jommy Cross, so his loss could well prefigure a self-sacrifice for others. Do you think that van Vogt or even Defoe thought of Robinson Kreutznauer as "Kreuz—naher," one who draws near to The Cross?) We in the SFRA all know Sturgeon's Law. It comes in many forms. The one I like, even though not necessarily canonical, is that "95% of science fiction is crap. But then, 95% of everything is crap." What I know now about *Slan* is that my father was saying, "It doesn't matter what I read. Here's the 5% that you should read. Be better than I am."

To this day, I cherish that act of love.

There have been many arguments about the exact dates of science fiction's Golden Age. 1940–1960 is tenable. So is 1937–1952. SF historians will know the pros and cons of these and other candidates. But perhaps the least arguable definition for many people is the observation that the Golden Age of Science Fiction is twelve. For me, though, it was nine. The age at which I met Jommy Cross.

Since then, many years have passed, although heaven knows I wish for as many more yet to come. I read science

fiction devotedly through college but the professionalization of graduate school left little time for that, and maybe even diverted my taste for it.

But then I taught a first-year composition course at the University of Michigan. I believe that real work is better than homework, and so I design my courses to make the work real. In that course, the first assignment was to argue for a subject area in which we would read so as to have something to write about. The winning argument defined the reading content of our syllabus. Fortunately for me, the students chose Fantasy. And, frankly, they and I never figured out what that term meant. But soon after, I believe I did. *The Fantastic in Literature* was my third book. I won't argue its positions here, but I want to say two things about it. First, I would never have come to the understanding I did of the fantastic, nor back to reading science fiction, nor to this room today had I not listened as best I could to the intellectual struggles of my students. Second, I came then to believe what I still do, that the fantastic is an affect generated by the diametric, diachronic reversal of the ground rules of the narrative world; that there are many degrees of the fantastic in many different genres; and that science fiction is not only the most important of the fantastic genres for our time but arguably the most important artistic movement of our time because by definition science fiction gives artistic expression to the human consequences of science and technology, and to thinking as scientists and technologists do, that is, science fiction turns our imaginations to the most far-ranging forces that can and do shape our world.

It is also true, because science fiction is a popular genre, that much of it, Ted Sturgeon's ninety or ninety-five percent, is very similar yet, unlike Westerns, say, or romances, each work strives to have some unique twist, as if an experimenter were changing one variable at a time. This makes science fiction a prime field for literary and more general aesthetic theoretical inquiry.

And I have done my share of that, as some of you have kindly noted.

But one can do more. Since 1998, I have been leading the Genre Evolution Project at the University of Michigan. There, by listening to each other, we have developed protocols for coding science fiction short stories. (We have worked on other materials, too, but SF more than any other and SF is, after all, what brings us together today.) One of our members, Zach Wright, thought it might be fun to generate a word cloud from our database. You may have noticed the tee-shirt I'm wearing. It came from Zach's idea. Our database has what we believe is a representative sample of about 2500 science fiction short stories published in America from the launching of SF magazines by Hugo Gernsback in April, 1926, until the end of 1999. Zach took all those 2500 titles and amalgamated them into a single text from which we generated this word cloud. The relative positions and orientations of the words are arbitrary, but their sizes are proportional to their frequency. That is, the big words are "man," "time," "space," "death," "world," "last," and so on. Only much smaller do we find "moon" or "planet" or "Martian." It is no wonder that Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) is often considered to be the first true science fiction novel. It is about Man and Time and Death and the World and the possible Last.

The Genre Evolution Project already has half a dozen substantial publications, including contributing material for the special issue of PMLA that Marleen Barr and Carl Freedman edited. The GEP methods are much more complex than mere text mining. Still, text mining offers some provocative findings. Rainer Hilscher, another member of our group, thought to extend the word cloud idea. He downloaded the whole of the Internet Science Fiction Database and used Natural Language Processing to examine the uses of the main words we had discovered early with short stories in all the titles there. His findings are still preliminary, but already he sees that, in fact, taken as a whole, these words have about the same role in all SF titles as they do in the titles of our sample of American science fiction short stories of the twentieth century. What is equally interesting to me is that, and I quote Rainer, "... in the decade 1951–1961 the frequency of "man" and "time" about triples but the others stay about the same. I controlled for the jump in overall production of titles." In the duck-and-cover decade, "man" and "time" soar. Was this the end of man or would we have more time? Note that not only do they soar, as Rainer discovered, but the total volume of SF increased dramatically. One might guess that in the xenophobic days when Hollywood produced *Them!* and *It Came From Outer Space*, the increase of SF was perhaps merely fearful. But with *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, we know, it was also hopeful. In our fraught present, of course, science fiction can be found everywhere, in the works of Nobelists' novels and Hollywood blockbusters, in the visions of architects and city planners, in the music we relax with and the news clips that tense us right back again.

In 1990, I had the great pleasure of meeting van Vogt at a conference. We enjoyed each other's company, or so he was gracious enough to suggest, and I told him the story of my father challenging me to read *Slan*. During a break in the program, he and his wife Lydia went to the local used book stores and found a copy of *Slan* which they bought, he signed, and they presented to me. I am far from an autograph hound, but this act of spontaneous kindness has stayed with me even more powerfully than you might imagine.

At that time, my father was dying of prostate cancer. His last eighteen months were a horror I will not describe. I will say, however, that when we were all called to his bedside at Sloan-Kettering, I brought with me that book. My father was, I am sorry to say, unconscious. But I held his hand and told him the story. I reminded him of his challenge years earlier and of how it had not only helped shape me and invite me into a subject and community that has enriched every day of my life, but that even just then it had led to another wonderful and unanticipated gift. I wanted my father to know that I was so, so grateful for his challenge and all that he had done for me. I want to believe he heard me. Even if he didn't, I want to believe he understood.

In 1990, my father was sixty-four years old, and he died. I am now sixty-four years old, and, for all I know, I will die tomorrow. But for today, I want to thank all the people I have listened to, and those who have been kind enough to listen to me, including, of course, all of you, and my father. He sent me here.

Remarks for Pioneer Award

Larissa Koroleva (chair); Sherryl Vint; De Witt Kilgore

For outstanding SF studies essay of the year: Allison de Fren, "The Anatomical Gaze in Tomorrow's Eve," Science Fiction Studies 36, no. 2 (July 2009): 235–65.

The Pioneer Award Committee worked very hard as it had to read a great number of the articles eligible for the award in journals ranging from *Science Fiction Studies* to *African Identities*. We had a lot of excellent scholarship from which to choose, but it was clear to all committee members that the Pioneer Award for "the best critical essay-length work of the year" 2009 should be awarded to Allison de Fren for the article "The Anatomical Gaze in Tomorrow's Eve" published in *Science Fiction Studies* (no. 108, vol. 36, no. 2, July 2009, 235–65).

Ms. de Fren's work addresses important questions in a provocative way. The ease and elegance of her informed and convincing writing supports a critical analysis that opens up questions of gender and sf to new insights. As one member of the committee says, the article "provides a convincing argument for Philippe Auguste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *Tomorrow's Eve* (1886) as a text that both encodes and forecasts an enduring preoccupation of modern science fiction." Her work on Villiers' fictional Edison "reconfigures our understanding of how a defining figure of science fiction—the female cyborg—emerged and why," allowing us to "reconsider what observational science means when it penetrates bodies created or seen as a dead/alive, sublime/grotesque, female/male Other."

We all were impressed by the way Ms. de Fren analyzed real and artificial female figures in the text within the "anatomical" and "cinematic" gazing that offered a new look at the thematic of dissection and notions of female beauty. As another committee member points out, "by comparing literal/verbal dissection of a beautiful woman with the medical/anatomical of the android and looking at the means that help to create deceptive and artificial beauty," Ms. de Fren presents a meticulous anatomical study through "aesthetic categories of the sublime and grotesque" that "arrives at multiple levels of perspectives and thus opens new grounds in theorizing female." In the view of another committee member, this article "makes important connections among some of the best known texts in sf criticism and the very early days of the genre, enriching our sense of its engagement with questions of embodiment and gender." Effectively linking sf's long fascination with android and cyborg figures to a longer cultural history of depictions of gender and the Pygmalion fantasy of creating—and controlling—a woman, Ms. de Fren's "innovative use of medieval anatomy illustrations extends our understanding of the semiotics of film representation" to connect images contemporary with the birth of modernity to more recent texts such as the fragmented female body of Terminator Cameron in publicity for *The Sarah Connor Chronicles*.

The committee members are sure that Ms. de Fren's article will inspire vigorous debate and further exploration of the questions touched upon in this study. The Pioneer Award Committee—Sherryl Vint, De Witt Douglas Kilgore and chair

Larissa Koroleva—would like to congratulate Allison de Fren for the exemplary piece of scholarship and her significant and innovative contribution to sf studies.

Pioneer Award Acceptance Speech

Allison de Fren

I am extremely honored and humbled to be standing here, and I was (I think the most accurate word is) shocked to hear that I was receiving this year's Pioneer Award. Since I am new to both science fiction studies and the SFRA conference, I wanted to tell you a bit about my work and then thank the people who helped shepherd me into your midst.

I am a media practitioner and theorist by training, and my work tends to focus on the body and technology. The essay for which I am receiving the Pioneer Award, "The Anatomical Gaze in Tomorrow's Eve," was a revised chapter of my dissertation, which explored representations of artificial female bodies in art, literature, and media—from the myth of Pygmalion to the present—as well as the dialogue between such fictional beings and their real-life counterparts—from historical automata to the current development of life-sized silicone lovedolls and gendered robots. My research was informed by my own experiences with artificial bodies in the course of making a feature length documentary (which a number of you saw last night) called *The Mechanical Bride*, on the attempt to manufacture artificial companions in the sex and robotics industries. After completing my doctoral coursework, I took time off to work on the documentary and, when I returned (actually, I was forced to return by my dissertation committee, but that's another story), I found that much of what I was reading about artificial women within my home discipline of film and media studies had little relevance or explanatory power for the experiences that I had "out in the field."

To the extent that the artificial female is theorized, she's often read in relation to one of two categories—the utopic and dystopic—understood as reflective of a binary attitude not only towards women within a kind of virgin/whore dichotomy, but also towards technology as a symbol of human progress or destruction. Robot women are seen as either walking Venuses, the ultimate example of the extraordinary power of technology to satisfy our desires or they represent female sexuality as analogous with the destructive potential of technology, and lurking within their alluring exterior are machine gun breasts or a nuclear warhead or a faulty program that goes haywire. While these images certainly exist, my own experience in the course of making my documentary is that rather than falling into either/or categories, the appeal of the artificial woman is often in her in between or borderline status and the ambivalence and tension engendered by the vacillation between such opposite states as perfection and imperfection, exteriority and interiority, the animate and inanimate, and fantasy and reality. It's this state of ambivalence that I've been exploring in my work.

Although I'd been dealing with many science fiction texts and although I am a long-time science fiction lover, I hadn't considered making my work relevant to science fiction studies

until I was serendipitously introduced to Rob Latham. In fact (it's a funny story), we met in a bar through a mutual friend, and I just happened to tell him about my dissertation as we both stood at the bar ordering drinks. He kindly offered to read a couple of chapters and, a year later, I had two essays published in back-to-back special issues of *Science Fiction Studies Journal*. As a fan of the Surrealists, I'm a big believer in chance encounters, so it seemed like an entirely appropriate way to get published. Most importantly, however, it was in revising my work in relation to science fiction that I got a real handle on the kind of intervention that I was trying to achieve in the critical understanding of artificial bodies in popular culture.

So, to begin my thanks, I'd like first to offer my gratitude to Rob Latham for taking me on and providing invaluable editorial guidance throughout the process of revising my essay for publication. I'd also like to thank the other editors of *Science Fiction Studies Journal*—Art Evans, Joan Gordon, Veronica Hollinger, Carol McGuirk, and Istvan Csicsery-Ronay Jr.—who were willing to give an unknown scholar prime real estate in their publication for two issues in a row.

I would, further, like to thank the Pioneer Award committee members—Larissa Koroleva, Sheryl Vint, and Dewitt Douglas Kilgore—for singling out my essay, as well as the SFRA for all that they do to promote science fiction scholarship. Finally, I'd like to thank everyone here; although I've arrived somewhat belatedly to the party, I feel entirely at home, and I look forward to joining you again in the future.

Remarks for Clareson Award

Doug Davis (chair); Paul Kincaid; Andy Sawyer

For distinguished service.

Author. Scholar. Editor. Reviewer. Encyclopedist. Three-time SFRA conference organizer. Past president of the SFRA—multiple times. Past treasurer of the SFRA—multiple times. It is my pleasure today to present the Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service to the one man who is all of these things and more: David G. Mead.

Dave had been a member of SFRA for only four years when he offered to host the SFRA conference in Corpus Christi back in the 1980s, which all who attended agree was a Great Conference. He later organized the SFRA conference in Las Vegas and, almost immediately after that, the SFRA conference in Kansas City. For decades, Dave has served both the SFRA and science fiction scholarship in general while also serving as department chair and associate dean for his home institution, Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi.

Dave's commitment to service is evident in his scholarship as well.

He is the author of *An Encyclopedia of Jack Vance, 20th Century Science Fiction Writer*. He reviews copiously for the *New York Review of Science Fiction* and the *SFRA Review*. Recently, he coedited the collection, *Playing the Universe: Games and Gaming in Science Fiction*, with this year's guest scholar, Pawel Frelik. He also authored a collection of original short fic-

tion with his former student, Oscar de Los Santos, titled *Infinite Wonderlands*.

When the members of the Clareson Committee were discussing this year's award candidates, we were shocked to realize that Dave had not already received this award for distinguished service. I suspect we may have been waiting for him to retire to see what else he could possibly do. Well, Dave did recently retire after working for more than 30 years at Texas A&M's Island University. For much of that time Dave was also working for all of us here in this room as well.

In addition to running three SFRA conferences, Dave dedicated over a decade of his distinguished career to serving as an officer of this organization, both as President and as Treasurer. Looking back on his service, his writing, and his scholarship, one senses the grace of Dave's personality. In many ways and for many years, in public and behind the scenes, Dave has worked to keep this community together. His legacy is the collegiality and good spirit we have come to associate with the Science Fiction Research Association. So it is my pleasure to present the Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service to David G. Mead.

Clareson Award Acceptance Speech

David Mead

Thank you. I am grateful, and delighted, to receive the Thomas D. Clareson Award. I am truly honored to join the ranks of so many distinguished figures in our field. This award is all the more special to me because it is given in memory of Tom Clareson, who was more or less responsible for my engagement with the SFRA. It's not just that Tom founded the organization. His collection of essays entitled *SF: The Other Side of Realism* supplied my first encounter with SF criticism at a time when I desperately needed guidance, having been assigned to teach my first class in Science Fiction. It also led me to attend the SFRA meeting in Rolla, Missouri, in 1984. There it was Tom in person who took pity on a newbie and invited me to join him, his wonderful wife Alice, Muriel Becker, Charlotte Donsky, and other old hands, at dinner. That conversation, that weekend, his generous kindness to a novice, the kindness of his friends—all defined SFRA for me, and I always tried to emulate his cordiality in the various jobs I took on for the organization.

The Clareson Award is given for service activities. Mine have been almost entirely dedicated to the SFRA. I have loved this group from the moment I boarded the bus at the St. Louis airport on my way to Rolla. That I was an SF geek must have been vividly obvious, as I was immediately asked if I were on my way to SFRA, and then clutched to the bosom, so to speak, of Betsy Harfst, Muriel Becker, Charlotte Donsky, Jack Williamson, and others. I was instantly one of the gang.

By the time we left Rolla, I had made many new friends, had arranged to write an entry on Gibson for Curtis Smith's *20th Century Science Fiction Writers*, and was planning a paper for the next year's meeting in Kent, Ohio, which led to a panel at the San Diego meeting, which led to a publication in *Extrapolation*

and also an invitation to host a meeting in Corpus Christi in 1988. I was totally hooked.

In short order, it was "Dave, want to run for secretary? Sure. "Run for president?" OK. "How about treasurer?" I guess. "President again?" Why not?

I am getting an award from SFRA when I should be giving one, for enriching my life by giving me numerous opportunities to do interesting things, go great places, and meet the best people on earth. Thank you. I love my Clareson Award, and I love you.

Mary Kay Bray Award Remarks

Patrick Sharp (chair); Jason Ellis; Susan George

For the best essay, interview, or extended review in the past year's SFRA Review: Ritch Calvin, "Mundane SF 101," in SFRA Review 289 (Summer 2009), 13–16.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members, Jason Ellis and Susan George, for their hard and efficient work this year. It was actually a pretty difficult decision this year: there were a number of very strong candidates we had to consider for the award. We ultimately decided that the best review, review essay, or extended essay in the *SFRA Review* was Ritch Calvin's "Mundane SF 101" essay in the Summer 2009 issue. In the estimation of the committee members, Ritch's "Mundane SF 101" essay "accomplishes the task of the 101 essay series perfectly, which is to provide a primer for those unfamiliar with a particular area of study." In the essay, "Ritch captures the complex contradictions within the [Mundane SF] movement, and he does this by demonstrating how Mundane SF parallels the earlier cyberpunk movement." On behalf of the committee, it gives me great pleasure to present the 2010 Mary Kay Bray Award to Ritch Calvin.

Mary Kay Bray Award Acceptance Speech

Ritch Calvin

First, I would like to thank the Science Fiction Research Association for the honor and privilege of receiving the Mary Kay Bray Award. Second, and more specifically, I would like to thank the members of the Mary Kay Bray Award Committee, Patrick Sharp, Jason Ellis, and Susan George. I know all three fairly well, and the first thing that came to mind when I got the news was, "I thought these people were smarter than that."

But truly, I am honored and humbled that the committee selected my essay, "Mundane SF 101," from this year's issues of the *SFRA Review*. If you read the *Review* regularly, and you should, you will know that many very good essays and reviews have appeared there this year. I read the *Review* pretty regularly, and, in my opinion, some very good pieces appeared in the last

year, which makes it all the more meaningful to me that the committee selected my work.

Furthermore, as I look at the list of past winners of the Mary Kay Bray Award, I see several recipients in the room tonight, and I am pleased and honored to have my name included among theirs.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't do due diligence as one of the area editors of the *SFRA Review* and invite, encourage, and implore each of you to pick up your pens (or boot up your laptops) and submit an essay, a review, or *something* to the *Review*.

Again, to the Mary Kay Bray Award Committee and to the SFRA, thank you so much for this award.

Remarks for Student Paper Award

Jim Davis (chair); David Mead; Alfredo Suppia

For best student paper presented at the previous year's SFRA meeting: Andrew Ferguson, "Such Delight in Bloody Slaughter: R. A. Lafferty and the Dismemberment of the Body Grotesque"

The main mission of the SFRA is to promote scholarship in the field of science fiction, and a major component of that mission is to encourage graduate and undergraduate students in the field. Toward that end the SFRA provides travel grants to assist students who wish to attend the annual conference, and presents annually the Student Paper Award for the best student paper presented at the previous year's conference, as judged by the members of the committee.

The 2010 winner is Andrew Ferguson, a student at the University of Tulsa who has spent the past academic year in the SF Studies program at the University of Liverpool. He also serves as an assistant editor of *Foundation*. His paper, "Such Delight in Bloody Slaughter: R. A. Lafferty and the Dismemberment of the Body Grotesque," was the overwhelming choice of the committee members, who cited the way in which the paper sets the works of Lafferty firmly in a prominent place in SF history, and the ease and clarity of the writing. The paper opens the door for much greater appreciation and deeper study into the works of R. A. Lafferty.

The award consists of a certificate and a check.

Because he has remained in Liverpool to research another paper on Lafferty, Andrew is unable to attend this evening.

Student Paper Award Acceptance Speech

Andrew Ferguson

Thank you very much—I'm honored to have my presentation selected by the SFRA for the Student Paper Award, and I'm hopeful that others will join me in digging into the works

of R. A. Lafferty. My thanks to the University of Tulsa Graduate School for supporting my research, and in particular to the Special Collections department of TU's McFarlin Library, under head archivist Marc Carlson, for giving me the run of the Lafferty materials held there. Thanks also to the Executive Board of the SFRA for the Travel Grant program, which made it possible for me to attend last year's conference.

Though I am glad to have a bit more time to study in Liverpool, I really wish I could have joined everyone there tonight. Thanks again, and I look forward to seeing you all in Lublin next year.

Feature

SF Audio 101, or "It's Alive!"

Neil Easterbrook

"Things are things," says Wintermute in the role of the Finn, demonstrating that even supercomputer artificial intelligences know *jack* about *shit*, since things are never just things.

There are things in this one life that inspire us. There are things that amuse us. There are things we always avoid, or things that make us all warm and fuzzy. Things that we do because we turned into the people we were trained to be. Things that just grew on us and we can't cut off, like marriages and children, mortgages and cell phones.

Then there are the things that obsess us.

I am obsessed with SF audio.

Using one sentence paragraphs might suggest the acritical level of my fervor, my ardor, my compulsion. Or the colloquial tone throughout what should be a sober scholarly account.

There are times when my friends have to rope me to the mizzen mast so that I don't become a victim of the sirens, who call to me every day, keeping me both from the quotidian comforts of simple human companionship and from writing the smug little scholarly diatribes upon which academic bread gets buttered.

Probably I should be much more embarrassed by this abject addiction than I am. In some respects, it has undeniably damaged my judgment; I've frequently made up my mind about an author or a series or a sub-genre based on the audiobook alone, and often on a very short and altogether unscholarly experience with them—Jim Butcher's *Dresden Files*, for example, which strike me as idiotic. (Judgment check? *Sullied perhaps, but still spot-on.*) In other respects, there are a great many things that I never would have "read" if not for the audiobook—YA fiction, for example. My Harry Potter, Artemis Fowl, and Bartimaeus experience is entirely by audio. Ditto my Richard K. Morgan experience. *The Da Vinci Code* or *Eragon* would have been intolerable in any medium except audio. Audio has kindled (pardon) my interest in bestsellers, especially crime fiction, forensic procedurals, and technothrillers. Even Michael Crichton is pretty good with a good reader. I've enjoyed readings of *Halo* novels (yikes!), and I look forward to the intelligence and taste Greg Bear might bring to the franchise—the first of his three audiobook *Halo* titles (all will be Forerunner prequels) is currently scheduled for early January 2011. Audio can survive bad

prose if the performance is strong, and if the adaptation (which often involves abridgment) is sensible.

But I'm always confused and disappointed when I discover, as happens at every SFRA or ICFA or Eaton conference that I attend, that few people seem to share my interest. In many cases, conferees don't even know that audio, especially original audio drama, is still a viable and sophisticated medium for SF. In a 2009 *Strange Horizons* review of an Iain M. Banks BBC Radio 4 adaptation, Farah Mendlesohn remarked

travel writing works very well on the radio with its endless descriptions and explanations, and there is one view of the genre that understands science fiction as travel writing of the imaginary. With its casual descriptions of the different and explanation of the familiar, and happy As You Know Bob dialogue, along with well developed techniques to avoid that cliché, science fiction may well be the perfect form of fiction for the radio.

While I'm not sure that the reverse is true—that audio is the perfect form for SF—there's certainly available an enormous amount of very high quality SF audio, and I'd like to tell you about some of it.

Everywhere and everywhen you could listen to radio, television, or your iPod, you can listen to audio SF. Cooking, cleaning, exercising, sunning by the pool, commuting. Anywhen and anywhere. Yet for me, audio has *not* replaced slow reading, the creative reading practiced by all lovers of literature. In- or outside the genre, where the prose is rich or complex, I prefer the hard copy and a more active experience; cognitively, I both process and retain the information better. But curiously, in some respects audio actually *slows* reading. One moves at the reader's pace, and generally it takes longer to say a word than to read it silently. Some of us are exceptionally fast readers, so audio slows us down, forces us to pay closer attention. Another curiosity of audio is that hearing someone else read or perform a text provides insights, sometimes startling ones, into the themes, significance, and even occasionally the style of the original. Of audio SF, I would concur with Philip K. Dick's comment about film: "The book and the movie do *not* fight each other. They *reinforce* each other..." Indeed, I've found that a good reading makes even the most complex literary prose worth listening to. This is as true of Toni Morrison as it is of William Gibson. William Dufris helped me understand *Anathem*, Charles Leggett compelled me to read Greg Bear's *City at the End of Time* a second time. Audio SF may be hugely entertaining, but it never diminishes my lust for the textual original. Instead, it makes my aesthetic experience more distinct, more fulfilling, more sublime.

History

As a kid, I got hooked on radio. I didn't much get on with my parents, and other than Buffalo Bills football and a few shows (*Nova*, *Star Trek*, *All in the Family*) I wasn't much interested in television. In the evenings, I'd go to my room and, after not doing whatever homework I hadn't bothered to note I was supposed to do, listen to St. Louis' KMOX, a 50,000 watt "clear channel" AM station that, miraculously, I could get in Buffalo. The baseball Cardinals and the hockey Blues quickly became my favorites, then later the Buffalo Sabres and Toronto

Blue Jays. I was passionate about rock music and progressive radio, and went to college hoping to become a professional DJ. Still, other radio programming was also attractive. The comic serial *Chicken Man* had run on commercial stations in between pop songs. My brothers brought home Spike Jones LPs. Just then rock bands such as The Byrds and The Beatles began to produce music that was more for recorded listening than live performance (such as "Good Vibrations" or *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*), and so too many comic groups (my continuing favorite of which is *The Firesign Theater*) began producing LP records that were too blue for radio or television, and also too linguistically complicated for those more *passive* media. *CBS Mystery Theater* provided my first exposure to more serious radio drama, and then some years later when I found myself living in the rural, farming village of Brewerton NY (where I had my first high school teaching gig), WRVO, the nearby public radio station in Oswego, broadcast Old Time Radio (OTR) from 6pm to midnight. I heard *Fibber McGee and Molly*, *Burns and Allen*, *The Shadow*, *Our Miss Brooks*, and many similar programs. Garrison Keillor's weekly broadcasts sparked my interest.

Then NPR ran *Star Wars*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, and *The Lord of the Rings*. I was a goner.

In the early 1990s, I finally began to acquire a disposable income at precisely same the time my personal life was in, well let's call it *spiraling stasis*; just then the audiobook industry was kicking into high gear. I started begging, borrowing, and buying, acquiring dramatizations and readings of Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke, and others, most of these produced in the 80s and early 90s in sharply abridged versions and circulated on cassettes. I'm particularly fond of three hour programs of *Foundation* and *The Left Hand of Darkness*, each read by their authors.

It turns out that I wasn't the only one obsessed. Audio-books have been around for a surprisingly long time, with their beginnings in radio. In turn, radio dramas and readings gave rise to a movement to supply blind Americans with these and similar recordings. The Books for the Adult Blind Project, a US congress funded initiative to send audio recordings to the blind, began in 1932. This project has generally been referred to as "Talking Books." The continuing success of these titles and the collapse of radio drama after the 1950s, largely because of the commercial dominance of TV, led to increasing interest in recorded or dramatized books for the home market. By the late 1970s, companies such as Recorded Books and Books-on-Tape made commercial products on LP disc and cassette. In the 1980s, cassettes became the default format. Surprisingly, though the CD was introduced in 1981 it wasn't until the late 1990s that it became the preferred format for audio. The next wave seems to be downloading in compressed formats (such as MP3), although the CD market remains healthy, primarily because of the growing interest but also because of the very large profit margins.

At a 2009 WorldCon panel, John Grace of Brilliance Audio said that the cost of production—talent, permissions, recording, and editing—runs just \$500 to \$1000 for the typical audiobook. This strikes me as a cash cow for the producers, who typically charge \$20, \$30, or \$40 per issue. "Library Editions," which appear to differ only because of special packaging to weather rough handling, can be another \$50 to \$60. In addition

to raking in their filthy lucre, the reason publishers have made the prices so high is their fear that lower prices will destroy the market for hardcover hardcopy books, already threatened by mass market paperbacks and, increasingly, eBook readers.

Of course, the beginnings of SF were coextensive and isomorphic with the emergence of radio dramatizations. SF's "official" release date is (depending on what semantic formulation strikes you) 1926 or 1929, and at the same time radio was emerging as a commercial medium. Common place by the end of the 1920s, radio drama flourished between the 30s and the 50s. Much of this material was explicitly SF or SFnal. Everyone today knows of The Mercury Theater's 1939 Halloween broadcast, but not everyone remembers the wonderful SF series of the 50s—*Dimension X* and *X Minus One*, weekly NBC programs that dramatized stories first published in *Astounding* and later *Galaxy*. Other series were also broadcast, including Mutual's *2000 Plus*. The first SF TV programs, such as *The Twilight Zone* and *Science Fiction Theater*, were modeled on these radio productions.

As audiobooks grew in popularity, so too did the possibility of audio originals. While BBC, CBC, and others never abandoned radio drama, and following broadcast increasingly made the programs available for purchase, the internet made it profitable for companies to find customers here and there, increasingly developing products for niche markets. Original audio plays have full casts, music, sound effects, and very high production values.

Big Finish Productions is a recent, prime example, and one that specializes in SF. The people who run Big Finish, including Gary Russell, Nicholas Briggs and Jason Haight-Ellery, began *Audio Visuals* as the audio equivalent of fan fic: following the suspension of the television version of *Doctor Who* in the late 1980s, they produced audio dramas—29 total—written by fans (i.e., themselves) and starring famous, at least in the UK, SF fans. Soon they discovered that even famous fans aren't especially good audio performers, so the project collapsed, even though it developed a considerable following. Later with an all-professional cast and crew, Big Finish began producing audio dramatizations of *Doctor Who* spin-off novels featuring the character Bernice Summerfield. These programs were so successful that eventually BBC Worldwide licensed original audio episodes of the real deal. Their first release in 1999, *The Sirens of Time*, involved the fifth, sixth, and seventh Doctors, Peter Davison, Colin Baker, and Sylvester McCoy. Subsequent releases have involved many of the most popular companions of the long-running television serial, including Ace, Nyssa, Peri, and many others—even companions of the first three Doctors, the last of whom "retired" in 1974.

Big Finish has significantly expanded the Doctor Who universe, developing many adventures with the eighth Doctor (Paul McGann), who appeared on television just once, in the dubious collaboration of BBC and FOX for a 1996 television movie. Big Finish have also released spin-off series and single reader titles, as well as audio programs devoted to other BBC and SF sources. Recently, they have been releasing *Stargate SG-1* and *Stargate Atlantis* titles that feature two readers, one of them a featured performer from the television programs.

Categories

There are perhaps four main analytic divisions in the larger category called audio drama or audio theater: (1) original audio plays; (2) full-cast adaptations; (3) audiobooks; and (4) podcasts. The first two categories have very similar sources and genesis. *Original audio drama* includes such things as radio plays (either new or OTR), CD audio plays, and fan produced web originals; *full cast adaptations* also come from the radio or from companies producing CDs or Webcasts. The term *audiobooks* usually designates single (but sometimes multiple) readers of abridged or unabridged print texts. Podcasts are varied and flexible, and might include any of the first three categories, but usually they are short programs of two types: either short stories read by fans or authors, or they are the web's version of a chat-show, including interviews with authors.

To someone new to audio SF, probably the most familiar of these forms is the staid, quotidian, mundane audiobook. About audiobooks there are two matters for discussion: abridgment and performance. In the early days of consumer audiobooks, the audience wanted (or was perceived to want) abridgments, rather in the model of *Reader's Digest Condensed Books*; the audience was time-conscious, and wanted an executive summary rather than the entire text. Everything got condensed (usually to three hours), even for the most devoted geeks who listened to *Star Trek* or *Star Wars* audiobooks. (That, um, includes me.) The pendulum of fashion now dictates unabridged releases, something obviously desirable in texts with subtle characterization, intricate plots, and acerbic dialog. Unabridged Elmore Leonard *über alles!* Except that most bestsellers aren't written by Elmore Leonard. So in my view, for bestsellers abridgment is almost always preferable, though increasingly rare. For example, almost anything by David Weber will benefit from being cut in half, or two-thirds. Perhaps that's not true for the first book or two in each of his series, but following those early installments you'll be better off with abridgments. Trust me. (Keep chanting *The Da Vinci Code, The Da Vinci Code*, and you'll understand.) Equally true of the Harry Potter cycle. The primary reason that Potter films have been more aesthetically successful than the books is that the text has been edited, condensed, and reworked. I'll bet real money that even setting aside *Potterfatigue* (think of it as a translation from the German) the final two films, based on the absurdly bloated seventh novel, will be the best worst of the lot. Hands down. See me at the next conference if you want to take the wager.

Probably more important than the length of the text is the quality of the performance, which is an audio's essence, its very imminence. Our colleague Karen Hellekson, for instance, has told me that she enjoys full-cast scripted audio (such as that produced by BBC Radio or Big Finish), but has no abiding affection for single-reader audiobooks. *De gustibus non est disputandum*. But a single-reader audio can be (almost) as fulfilling as a full-cast presentation. Just like the talent of the actors in TV, movies, or stage plays—the reader can make or break a production. Trust me—you'd probably prefer a root canal to Burt Reynolds reading a Robert B. Parker Spencer novel. On the other hand most Spencer novels have been performed by Joe Mantegna, who wonderfully captures the character's complex mix of smug confidence and knowing ennui, just as Judy Kaye

It's Expensive, but It's Free

strikes just the right tone, simultaneously perspicacious and bewildered, for Sue Grafton's Kinsey Millhone books. The rich, resonant, powerful voice of Tim Piggot-Smith can bring to life something where the prose is at its very best pedestrian, such as Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King*, an otherwise wonderful trilogy retelling the Arthur myth.

Classics can be rediscovered with a strong performance, so George Wilson made me a born-again believer in Joe Halde- man's *The Forever War*. One of the most experienced and best audiobook readers in SF & F, John Lee, now quite active with Tantor Media, brings a persnickety British precision, which turns out precisely right for China Miéville's *The City & the City*, a "noid" detective fiction, or for the space opera of Peter F. Hamilton's four "commonwealth" books, which clock-in at a whopping 114 hours (I told you I am "all in"). Hamilton's fifth volume appears this fall, raising the kitty to 143 hours. It's counter-intuitive, but actually audio can be a good medium for long SF texts and series: *Anathem*, *City at the End of Time*, the Hyperion Cantos, or anything by Alastair Reynolds.

One alternative to the single-reader audiobook is the multiple-reader production, less common but sometimes quite pleasing. Random House released Margaret Atwood's *The Year of the Flood* in this form, which has been effective for other texts. Led by the remarkable Stefan Rudnicki, Fantastic Audio (now owned by Blackstone) produced Orson Scott Card's Ender books and Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea series with as many as six readers; single readers (including Harlan Ellison) took separate portions of the text, although occasionally working together for bits of dialog. A few audiobooks are supplemented with more elaborate soundscapes, such as M.T. Anderson's *Feed*, with both special effects and multiple performers.

Hybrids of full-cast dramatization and single-actor readings can produce very satisfying results. In the author's "Post-script" to *Ender's Game*, Card even remarks that audio is his ideal medium for SF: "My narration is meant to be read aloud... For me, the ideal presentation of any book of mine is to have excellent performers perform it in an audio only format." (Though there Card also calls Asimov "probably the finest writer of English prose in the American tradition." Yikes!)

Finally, podcasts provide an interesting additional source for audio SF. Fundamentally, a podcast is simply a periodic program made available from some site. Most programs can be heard individually, either as an audio stream or by downloading; many sources permit subscriptions, so that back catalogs or new programs will download automatically. Some publishers or authors record and disseminate their stories or novels this way. Tor does, as does James Patrick Kelly. Here in the *SFRA Review* last summer (#289), Alfred E. Guy gave a very enthusiastic recommendation to *Escape Pod*, an entirely free source for, as of this writing, 249 short stories available for your aural entertainment. Podcasts can also include sites such as Rick Kleffel's *The Agony Column*, which provides both book reviews and frequently extensive, enlightening author interviews (<http://www.bookotron.com/agonypod/index.html>). You can subscribe to *Escape Pod* or the Tor series at their home sites, or through syndication at a site such as iTunes. Kleffel maintains his back catalog of interviews, providing more than 100 hours with the writers we venerate.

Consider a current important work of SF, Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*, now available in trade paper from Amazon for \$10.17; the audio CD (read by Jonathan Davis, who is a good performer) is \$19.79, just about twice the cost, and even three dollars more than the hardcover edition. Sometimes the difference between print and audio can be much more prohibitive, running to four times the cost. Even though there is a vigorous market in used-titles, it can be quite expensive to choose the audio over the print publication.

Buying commercially necessarily couples convenience with expense. If it fits your budget, you'll find some excellent products from companies such as Books on Tape, Recorded Books, Blackstone Audio, BBC Audiobooks America, and Random House Audio, which produces the excellent line of children's audio published as Listening Library. For SF, the two most aggressive and adventurous commercial companies are Brilliance Audio and Tantor Media, both of which are releasing titles old and new, and with greater frequency than others. Smaller companies, such as AudioText—Infinivox (<http://www.audiotexttapes.net/>) also offer lots of material. Almost all of these are conventional audiobooks—single author readings of novels or short story collections.

Slightly cheaper than purchasing CDs is downloading compressed files. The best known of the download companies is Audible, which has deals both with iTunes and with Amazon. Membership agreements vary, but you will have to sign up, download some software, and then pay for individual titles or for periods of access. After the recruitment bonus (a discount, a free title, or so on), prices are a little below that for either audio CD or MP3 discs. For some people, the immediate access is also a significant benefit. Audible offers many things that aren't available elsewhere, such as a version of Gibson's *Burning Chrome*, with different narrators for each of the nine stories. All Audible offerings are still encoded in forms that can be played only on iTunes or the Amazon player, and all are restricted by DRM—Digital Rights Management. Most of these, however, can be burned to CDs, providing a backdoor solution to DRM. Recent upgrades in quality have made Audible far more attractive than in the past, and the company seems to be in an aggressive period for developing SF, in a series they call "Audible Frontiers," with 3301 titles currently ready for download.

Rather than buying the audio outright, you can rent, a less expensive alternative. Many companies, such as Kitabe or Audiotogo, provide for audiobooks a service similar to what Netflix offers for video. You agree to a monthly rental program, which then provides x number of rentals or x period of service. You choose a title, it arrives in the mail, you listen, and then return in a prepaid envelope. In mid-July, Kitabe (now all download) was offering a basic annual membership—one title for \$12 each month, 2 @ 22, and 3 @ 28.

Yet despite the apparently high costs, SF audio is also freely available for free! The two most common sources are radio and libraries, but podcasts are also quite appealing. In the US, radio drama now exists only in isolated pockets, but the web permits escape from our provincial polders. Today, the central source of SF on the radio is the BBC (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/>), especially Radio 4 and Radio 7, the latter carrying a

regular slate of programs in the series called *The 7th Dimension*. The BBC's offerings run across style and genre. In just the last few years, there have been comedies (the exceptional *Nebulous*), dramas ("Alpha"/"Omega"), weird adventures (*The Wyrd Sisters*), and even space opera (*The Laxian Key*). There have also been versions of TV originals, such as *Torchwood* or *Blake's 7*. The programs are almost equally divided among original scripts, full-cast adaptations, and single-actor readings. A good many of the BBC broadcasts are available for purchase as CDs (or sometimes, for download): you can search for titles at the BBC Shop, or through online sellers such as Amazon UK.

The BBC website also makes programs available on demand, in a "Listen Again" feature, for seven days after initial broadcast. This means you can time shift as you like. However, there are other ways to time shift. For programs that seem promising or that I really enjoyed, I archive the broadcast using a recorder for streaming audio (any number of companies have these available for purchase; and some are free, such as Audacity—<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>), listening again whenever I wish (under the provisions of the Fair Use Act). Once you've recorded a program, you can edit as you choose; Audacity includes a cross-platform editor. And did I mention that it's free?

Even for those with good internet connections and the good sense to keep up with the broadcast schedule, there is a much better source of free SF audio. Of course, the BBC isn't really free if you live in the UK, where residents pay a special fee. In the US, public libraries are paid for through city or county sales tax, but using them feels free, since you pay whether you use them or not. I say use them! My public library here in Fort Worth Texas currently has 17,184 audiobook titles, stored in three categories—adult, young adult, and children's. Most of these are single-reader titles, and like the library's holdings in hard copy fiction, most are bestsellers or have a broad popular appeal. I usually have three or four of their audiobooks at one any time; because of the nature of their collection most of these are mysteries, thrillers, and lawyers in trouble, lawyers helping the wrongly accused, and lawyers with serial killers devoted to hacking off their *accoutrements*. My library's holdings in SF & F are not particularly good, except in the young adult and children's collections, though most of these are fantasy.

Many public libraries, and my guess is that virtually all libraries in urban counties, now feature downloadable audiobooks. My local library makes such titles available from two companies, Overdrive and NetLibrary, currently listing 182 titles in SF & F. I recently listened to a very nice single reader performing Cory Doctorow's *Little Brother*. I look forward to hearing Joe Haldeman's *The Accidental Time Machine* soon. After installing their software, my library/company allows me to set up a wish list, to reserve a title, to receive email notification when it's available, and to download in several formats. Some titles can be played only once or are available only for a short check-out period, but in other cases, such as a lovely 1979 full-cast NPR version of *The Hobbit* (available also from High-Bridge Audio), I'm allowed to burn to disc either in CD audio or MP3 formats.

One danger of all "free" source materials is that you might lose track of what's free and what actually isn't. No matter how innocent you think it is, and no matter how extreme your passion for audio may be, it remains illegal to download, burn,

copy, or swap anything that is under copyright, unless you have the explicit permission of the copyright holder or service. Just because you are a soul of good faith, and copying seems fair to you, that doesn't mean it's fair use.

Audio programs, like books or Hollywood films or the technological secret of Luke's lightsabre, are the intellectual property of their makers and copyright holders. To copy without the copyright holder's permission is *stealing*. And if Dame Fortuna turns her great wheel and the owner's finger points toward you, things can get rather grim, and really fast. One recent case concerns Joel Tenenbaum, a Boston University graduate student who used the internet to download 30 songs (he actually admitted to downloading 800, but the court case concerned just 30). Found guilty in 2009, his initial fine was \$675,000, and although in July 2010 an appeals court judge reduced the fine to just one-tenth, Tenenbaum remarked to the press that "I can't pay \$67,500 any more than I could pay \$675,000." At iTunes, the 30 songs would have cost \$35-\$40, a number he *could* have afforded.

In *Content*, Cory Doctorow makes the case that giving away things for free can actually increase sales (which is why he makes his work available through Creative Commons Licenses), but he doesn't advocate stealing—just changing the law. CCC licenses often carry restrictions (such as concerning editing the file), so it's important to abide by the conditions of the license. Many podcasts carry CCC conditions. There are many Bit Torrent sites that will allow you, in one or another fashion, to run riot with copyright law and to download things illegally. You do so at your own risk. (Many Bit Torrent sites are perfectly legal—but be careful, both for moral and for legal reasons).

There is something called the Audio Home Recording Act, a 1992 amendment of US copyright law that permits digital copies of already owned materials either to digital audio tape or to CD. Hard drives and handheld music players (such as iPods) are not covered by this legislation, though they seem to have the same legal protection. In short, you can make as many digital duplicates or mix-tapes for your own use as you would care to, but you cannot copy material from the library, the web, or a friend's collection if it is under copyright. (A slight exception, though it has nothing to do with this law, is that if it has been broadcast on the radio, or if it is not available for sale in your country, it seems to fall under international fair use rules, so go ahead.) While I don't think you need to consult your lawyer before loading your Droid (and I don't mean R2D2) with audio files, I do urge you to be judicious, discrete, and *always know your dealer!*

More Information

Here are some recommendations for free materials, radio sources, and information about SF audio.

- The best source for general information, announcements, and reviews is SFFaudio.com, which also provides links to free SF audio, usually in the form of downloadable MP3 files.
- For information about free radio and OTR, I recommend an excellent list maintained by Mark Leeper (see <http://>

lepers.us/radio.htm), a professor at Wayne State College. Sites such as *Radio Drama Revival* also have lots of useful information and news.

- Copies of OTR, especially programs such as *Dimension X* or *X Minus One* are generally available from any OTR site. No doubt you'll find many of these recordings in your own public library, or available at The Internet Archive (Archive.org). Two of my favorite sites are *Great Northern Audio Theater* (<http://www.greatnorthernaudio.com/>), which provides original programs, OTR, and good links to similar sites (such as *Full Cast Audio* and the *Atlanta Radio Company*); and *The Digital Deli* (<http://www.digitaldelift.com/>), where for just \$7 per gigabyte you can download both OTR and much more recent SF audio as well (though you will also need FTP software).
- Radio broadcasts released on CD or available as downloads can be found at the "shop" sections of many major radio companies, such as BBCshop.com and CBC.ca/shop. Sadly, almost none of the many wonderful NPR programs, such as the superb five hour full-cast adaptation of *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, are available through NPR.
- As with all matters in popular culture, Wikipedia contains many excellent entries on radio drama, and also offers interesting production notes, lists of cast and crew, and histories of productions.
- Several years ago, *Locus* started a review column for SF audio, which unfortunately lasted just two issues—a general intro by John Joseph Adams (see http://www.locusmag.com/2004/Reviews/08_AdamsAudiobookPrimer.html) followed by one month of reviews, and then nothing since.
- In addition to Escape Pod and Tor, good sources for podcasts (many of them free) are LibriVox (<http://librivox.org/short-science-fiction-collection-036/>), Loadstone, Podiobooks, TellTaleWeekly, Fictionwise, StarShip Sofa, Silksoundbooks, and Rocketridebooks.

You Can Take These to the Bank

Full-cast radio plays or CD originals with superior soundscapes are the most seductive kinds of Audio SF, and the easiest place to start. If you've not yet become addicted, or if you've tried single-reader audiobooks and been left nonplused, try these productions. With the exception of the last two titles, all should be available in good public libraries. Here's my top five.

1. Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy (Listening Library, 1999–2001)

This is the recording from Listening Library, a division of Random House Audio (not to be confused with the vastly inferior BBC 4 production that reduces each book to a two hour radio play). I think, but have been unable to confirm, that in 2007 BBC Audio made the Listening Library version available for UK audiences. The production was recorded in London, and features a British cast.

This series is a spectacular unabridged presentation of the three novels, with Philip Pullman as the narrator and a full cast for the individual characters. Pullman's gentle, fatherly, bedtime-story narration provides a splendid counterpoint to the spirited and lively performances of the more than 25 actors, who may be well-known in the UK but whose names I don't recognize. Bruce Coville, who now runs Full Cast Audio, is one of the executive producers.

With just a small amount of added original music, the entire production is the entire book, performed by multiple readers. This is the best such production that I know, and since the material is entirely captivating, the charming presentation makes it utterly irresistible. Even purchased brand new from an online discounter, the three audiobooks will together cost just \$80—and used prices are about \$18! My feeling is that you simply cannot go wrong at this price. No one, even the bankrupt, can be excused from listening to this wonderful production, since I'll bet dollars to donuts that the children's or young adult sections of your public library have more than one copy of the complete series.

2. *The Lord of the Rings* (1981 BBC Radio 4)

Originally broadcast in 26 half-hour episodes, the program was later remixed as one-hour episodes and released on CD in 2002. Although edited for length, with a new introducer for the American audience, the program aired on NPR in 1984. Those of you who have only heard the NPR version will enjoy hearing the longer, more powerful British original. (In 1979, NPR aired an 11 hour adaptation, one entirely separate from and significantly inferior to the BBC production now under consideration.)

This BBC production has a great many strengths, the most striking of which is the extraordinary ensemble acting, with performances that, to my mind, are far superior to those of the Peter Jackson films (there's even a website devoted to examining the performances, line by line and phrase by phrase). The cast includes several superb actors, featuring Ian Holm as Frodo, Michael Hordern as Gandalf, Bill Nighy as Sam, and Robert Stephens as Aragorn. While you may have enjoyed Andrew Serkin on the big screen, Peter Woodthorpe's Gollum is absolutely magnificent, a creation entirely of sound and memorably amazing in the mind's eye.

The careful abridgment and compelling dramatization (primarily by Brian Sibley) also interpolates a small amount of material from other books by JRRT. The series has original music (with a very catchy LOTR theme) composed by Stephen Oliver, with some of JRRT's songs set to music and sung by the cast or a choir.

3. *Star Wars* (1981 and 1983 on NPR, and HighBridge Audio's finale in 1996)

This Lucasfilm-approved radio adaptation of what we now call *A New Hope*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *The Return of the Jedi*, began shortly after the first two feature films, with the first two installments starring Mark Hamill and Anthony Daniels, with sound design by Ben Burtt, who was responsible for the effects in the original films. The first series introduces about two hours of new material, especially concerning Luke's

backstory on Tatooine with Biggs Darklighter, but otherwise the three series generally closely follow the films.

Again, excellent ensemble acting, an intelligent script (by Brain Daley), and superior sound design—great with headphones! 13.5 total hours divided into 25–30 minute episodes.

4. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (five series) BBC Radio 4: 1977, 1980, 2004, and the final two both in 2005

The first two series were broadcast by NPR in 1981; in the US, all five series are available on CD.

This title has a curious history, since it was originally a two series radio play; which became a three volume book; which became a one-series television program; which became a nine-part comic book; which then had several computer game versions (such as the delightful text-only game from Incofom in 1984); which then had a fourth book; which by then had had approximately four failed Hollywood movie treatments; which became four audiobooks; which became a fifth book and audiobook; which led to three more radio series; after which a feature film finally appeared.

I suspect that this radio series is so well-known that it needs little comment, but at the recent SFRA conference I was surprised to discover that even people who had boundless enthusiasm for the first two series knew little or nothing about the final three. All are worthy of purchase and of repeated listening. The CD releases of the final three series contain additional material that was part of the books but edited for radio broadcast.

Radio 4 has also done full-cast productions of the two Dirk Gently books, and they have their charms, but I very much prefer Adams' own reading of the unabridged novels. Adams also recorded all five Hitchhiker's books, which are available unabridged; the books do contain some material that does not appear in any of the radio or CD recordings.

5. *Doctor Who*—(Big Finish, 1999–)

The number of “Classic Doctors—Brand New Adventures” now numbers more than 170 titles, and if you count the various associated series almost 240 individual programs, most of which run about 110 minutes. (There are at least another 150 titles of other programs, and Big Finish are now releasing 6–8 new titles per month.) Since the company seems healthy and *Doctor Who* interest remains high, I see no reason to suspect that they will soon cease production, or even that spigot will be capped, diminished by a relief well, or finally finished off by a cocktail mixture of concrete, golf balls, and polyunsaturated ghee.

Because there are so many individual programs, let me recommend a few favorites. Since I began my *Doctor Who* experience with the fourth Doctor (Tom Baker), I guess I continue to enjoy the programs that feature a lively sense of humor and witty dialog or plots—Douglas Adams was the script editor for the programs I first saw. I provide both the program series number and the specific episode title:

33½—“The Maltese Penguin.” The Doctor's pal Frobisher, a penguin who is also a noir-style private detective, investigates a tricky case.

34—“... ish.” A pan-galactic conference on lexicography leads the Doctor and Peri to a planet where they discover a sentient dictionary and must solve a murder.

This program has a very clever story and extraordinary soundscapes.

40—“Jubilee.” With baby Daleks and a British prime minister who will stop at nothing, a very funny script. One of Big Finish's intelligent innovations is to introduce new companions, and this program features Evelyn, who appears in 17 separate adventures.

74—“Live 34.” The entire episode is told as the live broadcasts of a CNN-style news program. The seventh Doctor, with Ace and new companion Hex.

90—“The Year of the Pig.” Mysterious guests at an elite Dutch Hotel and the very end of the Belle Epoch. Paul Brooke, playing The Sapient Pig, gives the sort of bravura vocal performance that Big Finish actors regularly provide.

One of the spin-off series (which feature Unit or politics on Gallifrey or Daleks and Cybermen without the Doctor) is *Doctor Who Unbound*, eight programs with radically alternative scenarios for the Doctor. In number three, “Full Fathom Five,” the Doctor is evil (David Collings); in number six, “Exile,” the Doctor is a woman (Anabella Weir). Other Doctors in the series include David Warner, Derek Jacobi, and Michael Jayston (reprising his role as the Valeyard).

#6. [Hey, what am I, a math major?]: *Seeing Ear Theater* (1997–2001)

The late, lamented *Seeing Ear Theater* produced at least 86 programs during its short run. Led by Stefan Rudnicki, SET was a collection of LA-area actors, producers, and writers, an attempt to revitalize audio drama in the US and initially supported by Sci-Fi.com, which made the episodes available until 2007, when it inexplicably decided to drop the website. Since then, some of the programs have become available on CD.

You'll find wonderful work here, including a four-hour adaptation of Octavia Butler's *Kindred*, unpublished stories by Neil Gaiman and J. Michael Straczynski, dramatizations of stories by Kim Stanley Robinson, Poul Anderson, and Greg Benford, as well as many originals. Of the originals, particular favorites are “Feel the Zaz” (by James Patrick Kelly), “The Nostalgianauts” (by S.N. Dyer), “Emily 501” (by Tamara Hladik), and “Daughter Earth” (by James Morrow). Performers include many well-known Hollywood and TV actors, such as Paul Giametti, Richard Dreyfus, Walter Koenig, Tim Curry, and Marina Sirtis.

I know of no definitive source discussing the history of the project, or a full index of the titles it produced, though SF-FAudio has made many of them available again (<http://www.sffaudio.com/?p=19883>). Their page, written by Jesse Willis, provides a good catalog of many of the titles, producers, writers, and performers. I suggest that you download these ASAP, since I don't know if the page will be permanent.

Adieu, Ciao, Servus

I really wish I could spend more time sharing my passion with you, but the UPS guy just delivered an MP3 set of Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*, and I hear the mellifluous, sonorous, inviting sirens' call. Gotta book.

Nonfiction Reviews

Into Your Tent: The World of Eric Frank Russell

Amelia A. Rutledge

John L. Ingham *Into Your Tent: The World of Eric Frank Russell, One of Britain's Science Fiction "Greats."* Reading, UK: Plantech (UK), 2009. Paperback, 375 pages, \$18, ISBN 978-0956457608-3988.

With *Into Your Tent*, John L. Ingham has removed one of the major frustrations in research about Eric Frank Russell. Biographical information has been difficult to find beyond terse public records, especially sparse for World War II. This is primarily because of Russell's firm, occasionally ferocious, response to inquiries, either tactful or as ill-advised as the detailed questionnaire sent by Sam Moskowitz for a profile he was writing. There is little information about Russell's childhood, but Ingham's first chapter provides a detailed history of Russell's family, with many photographs. The author ventures into speculation only once, when he suggests that Russell's father may be the original of the portrait of the tyrannical military father in "I Am Nothing" (1952); this story of such a man's encounter with a war-traumatized child remains deeply moving despite its improbable denouement.

The rich contextual material provided throughout permits Ingham to provide a valuable survey of the culture of science fiction (SF) readers, writers, editors, and publishers without losing focus on Russell. A list of those associated with the British Interplanetary Society (BIS) and its short-lived journals (Philip Cleator, Leslie Johnson, Arthur C. Clarke, and an initially reluctant Olaf Stapledon) is a historical sketch in itself. Likewise, the list of writers and editors Russell met on his one trip to the US (John W. Campbell, Jack Williamson, Otis Adelbert Kline, Henry Kuttner, and Sam Moskowitz) shows the range of his contacts; Russell and Campbell had a long and largely cordial professional relationship.

Russell's enthusiasm for SF began with reading remaindered copies of "pulp" magazines; one hallmark of his style was his mastery of the diction one offended critic called "Americanese." Like-minded readers, both University-educated professionals and men like Russell, an industry-trained engineer, responded to the BIS's membership advertisement placed in Hugo Gernsback *Amazing Stories*. Photographs provide further insight into the SF culture of the 1940s and 1950s; the only women who make rare appearances are the wives of writers and publishers. Later, the only woman mentioned in the context of Russell's SF career is Judy-Lynn del Rey, who was involved in the negotiations for the anthology, *The Best of Eric Frank Russell*. As in most SF produced when Russell was writing most of his stories, female characters are incidental. Ingham points out that Russell, however, was one of the few writers to have black characters in significant roles, e.g., in the stories collected as *Men, Martians, and Machines*, which also features chess-obsessed Martians in its multispecies crew.

The bulk of Ingham's biography is a publication history of Russell's fiction, especially the seminal novel *Sinister Barrier*, which leads into a discussion of Russell's life-long interest in the theories of Charles Fort; Russell became an honorary member of the US Fortean Society, and Fort's "we are under others' control" is a frequent motif of Russell's stories. Ingham discusses the antixenophobic "Dear Devil" and "Somewhere A Voice" as providing salutary contrasts to "Resonance," in which Russell's anti-Japanese sentiment is distastefully prominent. The biography notes, at one point, that Russell also wrote a few children's stories; it also devotes a short chapter to Russell's nonfiction. The story of Russell's one Hugo award, for the short story "Allamagoosa"—retrieved from a railway baggage claim area—provides an amusing side note.

Russell's writing career came to a close in the late 1950s; he claimed that he had simply run out of new ideas. The biographical portion ends with a brief summation focusing on Russell's characteristic style, and a hope that a new generation of readers will come to appreciate this writer of classic tales.

The final chapters are detailed bibliographies of all of Russell's published work, including non-English versions. While the endnotes of the first chapter demonstrate Ingham's thorough archival research, elsewhere he gives only the most general indication for his sources; he mentions the archives of the BIS, but there is no location information beyond "North Lambeth." The absence of a full scholarly apparatus implies a general reading audience, but this biography is unlikely to be superseded and belongs in academic collections.

Master Mechanics and Wicked Wizards

Mark Decker

Glenn Scott Allen. *Master Mechanics and Wicked Wizards: Images of the American Scientist as Hero and Villain from Colonial Times to the Present.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009. Paperback, 304 pages, \$29.95, ISBN: 978-1-55849-703-0.

Glenn Scott Allen's *Master Mechanics and Wicked Wizards*, with its persuasive but ultimately problematic attempt to use two categories to account for all the portrayals of scientists found in American culture, reminds me of an old joke: there are two types of people in the world: those who categorize people as one of two types and those who don't. If there is any humor here it is because no matter how apt any two categories seem at first glance, they always fall apart under close scrutiny. For scholars, it's difficult to create a clearly comprehensible binary pair that explains highly complex cultural assumptions without slipping into the circularity of the old saw referenced above. So while Allen makes a strong case that scientists can be portrayed either as heroic figures "with mastery over technology who utilize that skill in the service of [their] community to achieve relatively limited goals of reform" or as "villains whose arrogance is rooted in the intellect and who seek, to the detriment of [their] community, some sort of totalizing revolution" (8), he does not provide enough evidence to convince readers that

Americans always see scientists this way. Because American authors, playwrights, and directors have generated a staggering number of texts that portray scientists, Allen simply cannot apply his binary broadly enough for it to be truly totalizing. Consequently, readers are left appreciating the strength of Allen's more in-depth readings while at the same time wondering if a character from a text Allen neglected to mention—or mentions only glancingly—is a Master Mechanic or Wicked Wizard.

Because Allen's book makes an important contribution to the study of science fiction and fiction that deals with science, I will start by praising the strengths of his core argument. His concise history helps us see that American scientists were initially "groups of local hobbyists" trying to create useful gadgets while Europeans were fully professionalized and "hierarchically specialized" (13). Because American science was more pragmatic and European science was more theoretical, "the public reception and perception of the scientist tended to favor the independent amateur over the university professor, the practical inventor over the abstract theoretician" (16) Thus America's "faith in, even reverence for technology" finds itself channeled through a preference for the idealized engineer who was democratic and perhaps working class over the "elitist, aristocratic, and therefore vaguely foreign" theorist (18–19). This preference is the backbone of Allen's binary: Americans like Master Mechanics and fear Wicked Wizards. Here, Allen clearly articulates a dimension of American culture that I have been struggling to fully apprehend, and I am sure that his book will influence the way I teach about the interaction between scientist and society in American literature.

Because of this delineation of American attitudes towards science and scientists, Allen is able to generate powerful readings of texts that range from early American literature to contemporary American films. Allen finds Wicked Wizards in Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and Hawthorne's short stories "The Birthmark," "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "Ethan Brand." Allen proves that this is not a nineteenth-century phenomenon when he examines 1950s films like *The Thing* and *Forbidden Planet* and more contemporary cinema like *Independence Day* and *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence*. Allen is even able to mount a persuasive argument that James Bond supervillains are Wicked Wizards and to use his binary to discuss the colonial implications of the first *Star Trek* series.

Allen's text is not without its weaknesses, however. When attempting to trace a trope through centuries of literature, a scholar might take an in-depth look at selected texts and argue that they are typical, or a scholar might intersperse briefer readings or short mentions of several texts among more substantial readings. While this second approach can make the trope under discussion appear to be broadly distributed, it can also lead scholars to create brief readings that seem to do violence to the text under consideration. Allen's book is marred by these kinds of underdeveloped readings. For example, Allen makes a problematic claim that Melville's Captain Ahab is a mad scientist (29) and labels the 1947 film *The Beginning of the End* "a rare cooperative effort between Washington and Hollywood" (83) even though Washington and Hollywood collaborated extensively during and just before World War II. He argues that Darth Vader "has no domestic relationships, his only son, Luke, having been placed beyond his corrupting influence" (187) even

though the three prequel films show a more domestic dimension to the Emperor's minion. Allen also suggests that in the *X-Files* the "heroes are FBI agents who reveal the 'truth' of UFOs and monsters, and the villains are government hacks and scientists who work to cover up any indication there is a world beyond everyday reality" (248) even though one of those FBI agents, Dana Scully, is a physician who often doubts the existence of the UFOs and monsters on scientific grounds. Allen claims that Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* is "an apocalyptic cautionary tale about placing too much faith in the ability of technology to create utopias" (58) even though it is Merlin, a real Wicked Wizard, who destroys Hank's technological utopia. Allen also makes the curious assertion that around 1930—decades after Taylor began his time and motion studies—"for the first time in the nation's history, technology was seen as a potential enemy of labor" (76).

There are many texts that I would have liked to see Allen discuss. Some of the omissions were probably victims of a lack of space—the University of Massachusetts Press was undoubtedly not interested in publishing this book in two volumes. For example, Allen goes to great lengths to demonstrate the Mercury Astronauts would become "the latest incarnation of Master Mechanics—Master Mechanics in Outer Space" (159). According to Allen, NASA mounted a decades-long PR offensive designed to present their astronauts as clean-cut, domesticated men, but he does not even mention the television series *I Dream of Jeannie*, which ran from 1965 to 1970. If a series that presents a clean-cut astronaut and Air Force major sharing a suburban home with an attractive woman but not sleeping with that woman until they are married even though she constantly says "your wish is my command" does not present astronauts as the ideal of midcentury American manhood, I don't know what does. Yet other omissions are more puzzling. For example, Allen makes a great deal of the influence of the Puritans on the conception of the Master Mechanic. Yet even though he is implying that Americans want to see scientists with a Protestant ethic that forces them to demonstrate their spiritual worth through good works (55), he does not bother to quote from or even mention Max Weber. Indeed, Allen does not seem to have a firm grasp of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century social thought. He labels economist Thorstein Veblen a "social critic" and only quotes briefly from Veblen's advocacy for Technocracy, Inc. even though Veblen seems to be praising something very close to Allen's Master Mechanic in works like *The Engineer and the Price System*. Still other omissions are probably best described as selection bias. For example, Allen rightly makes much of Collin Clive's performance in James Whale's 1931 film version of *Frankenstein* as the ideal type of the cerebral, antidomestic Wicked Wizard. Yet there is no mention of the 1985 John Hughes movie *Weird Science*—in which a clip of Colin Clive in *Bride of Frankenstein* plays a central role—that features socially awkward teens creating an attractive female "monster" that moves them towards sociability and, by extension, eventual domesticity. Allen also argues that "we have a deep need to differentiate the human ingenuity of the Good Astronaut from the cold logic of the Bad Alien" (190). Yet Tom Godwin's 1954 short story "The Cold Equations" approvingly portrays an astronaut's cold, logical decision to eject a female stowaway into space so that he can complete his mission.

The omission that is most difficult to understand is Sinclair Lewis's 1925 novel *Arrowsmith*, which is about a medical researcher and which was prepared with the help of real-life scientist Paul de Kruif. Addressing the impossibility of discussing every portrayal of scientists in American culture, Allen discusses his criteria for inclusion: "I primarily focus on those books, films, and other "texts" that were popular in their time, and especially those that have proven popular beyond their time" (6). *Arrowsmith* was a bestseller, won the Pulitzer Prize—which Lewis declined—was made into a film, found its way in altered forms onto television and the radio, and is still in print after 85 years. Perhaps Allen doesn't even mention the novel because it disrupts his binary. Martin Arrowsmith acts like a Master Mechanic when he throws aside scientific protocol to end a plague and acts like a Wicked Wizard when he retreats into the woods at novel's end to escape from the pressures Big Science puts on researchers. Arrowsmith also problematizes Allen's contentions about scientists and domesticity because he is in a very conventional domestic relationship with his first wife, Leora Tozer, but leaves his scheming, social-climbing second wife, Joyce Lanyon, to concentrate on science.

Despite these shortcomings, however, *Master Mechanics and Wicked Wizards* cannot be overlooked by anyone with a serious, scholarly interest in the way American society articulates its relationship with science. This book belongs in university libraries and on the shelves of people who teach and research about the intersection of science and culture.

Middle-earth Minstrel

Bruce A. Beatie

Bradford Lee Eden, editor. *Middle-earth Minstrel: Essays on Music in Tolkien*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010. Paper, viii + 207 pages, \$35, ISBN 978-0-7864-4814-2.

Dr. Eden, a technical services librarian with a doctorate in musicology, has put together an interesting collection of essays that, he says, "examines the impact and uses of music in Tolkien's works" ("Introduction,"⁴), though as we shall see both the title and subtitle are somewhat misleading. Only one of the essays deals more than in passing with what David Bratman (144) calls "the most remarkable musical event in all of Tolkien's legendarium," the "Music of the Ainur" (*Ainulindalë*) which forms the opening section of *The Silmarillion* and, in Tolkien's cosmology, is both the beginning and the end of all things. Let me begin, therefore, with that essay, Keith W. Jensen's "Dissonance in the Divine Theme: The Issue of Free Will in Tolkien's *Silmarillion*" (102–13). Though dissonance is primarily a matter of sound, Jensen discusses rather the moral discord which proceeds from Ilúvatar's announcement to the Ainur that "Melkor's dissonance is part of his divine plan to begin with." (102) But he does deal concisely with a fascinating point of Tolkienian philosophy.

The essay that comes closest to matching the title is also the longest, David Bratman's "Liquid Tolkien: Music, Tolkien, Middle-earth, and More Music" (140–70). A librarian like Jensen, Bratman is also a music critic in San Francisco. His

fine essay has two distinct parts: "Music in Tolkien's Life and *Legendarium*" (140–52), which deals not only with Tolkien's own limited musicality (including his performances) but with the music and musicians that influenced his writing; and "Music Inspired by Tolkien" (152–70), which looks with the ears of a music critic at some of the compositions discussed by Amy H. Sturgis in her "'Tolkien Is the Wind and the Way': The Educational Value of Tolkien-Inspired World Music" (126–39). The approach of her essay, based on a class she has taught at Belmont University in Nashville, is rather thematic than musical. Eden's own contribution, "Strains of Elvish Song and Voices: Victorian Medievalism, Music, and Tolkien" (85–101) considers extensively some of the musical influences on Tolkien's work, again in terms more of content than of music per se.

All but one of the remaining essays allude, to a lesser or greater degree, to Tolkien's own mentions of music in his works, but focus on textual matters. Jason Fisher's "Horns of Dawn: The Tradition of Alliterative Verse in Rohan" (7–25) considers the evidence for Anglo-Saxon use of horns and drums, and argues that Tolkien based the music of the Rohirrim on the Anglo-Saxon model; his concessive phrases ("it seems defensible to argue," "the similarity...could be entirely coincidental" [17]; the use of percussion by the Woses and the Ents "cannot be coincidental" [18]) indicates his stretching of the evidence. John R. Holmes's "'Inside a Song': Tolkien's Phonaesthetics" (26–46) discusses the phonology of Tolkien's names and descriptions, asserting that "philology has its own music, and... Tolkien was perhaps its most accomplished wizard." (26). Peter Wilkin's "Æfre me strongode longað: Songs of Exile in the Mortal Realms" (47–60) is, like Jensen's essay, more philosophical, considering the themes of exile and the fall as parallel, for both elves and men, to the Biblical loss of Eden.

In her essay "J. R. R. Tolkien: A Fortunate Rhythm" (61–74), Darielle Richards uses Neoplatonic models to argue that "The kind of creation Tolkien sought came...from a dreaming psyche just below the surface, personal and collective." (71) "Tolkien's Unfinished 'Lay of Lúthien' and the Middle English *Sir Orfeo*" (75–84), by Deanna Delmar Evans, is basically a convincing source study with only token references to music. And finally, Amy M. Amendt-Raduege's "'Worthy of a Song': Memory, Mortality and Music" (114–25) is a brief but interesting look at the Anglo-Saxon tradition of the elegy as an influence on the elegiac character of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Why the last (and next-to-longest) essay was included defies my understanding. Anthony S. Burdge's "Performance Art in a Tunnel: A Musical Sub-Creator in the Tradition of Tolkien" (171–200) is an appreciation in new-age style of a new-age "prayformance" artist in New York. Born Stephen Kaufman in 1954 to a mixed-race woman who was tympanist for the New York Opera (Wikipedia), he later took the Egyptian name of Thoth and now performs, in the Angel Tunnel in Central Park and elsewhere, "soloperas" in an invented language ("Lila'Angelique"). He claims to have been strongly influenced from childhood on by Tolkien's work, but Tolkien's reaction to the idea that his performances are "sub-creation in the tradition of Tolkien" is hard to imagine.

With that exception, the book is a worthwhile collection of often quite interesting insights into Tolkien's work and its influence. It is well edited; I found few typos or stylistic

problems. One typo easy to overlook by someone depending on a word-processor's spell-checker is "keeping a special hand on the intellectual reigns." (68) The language of Burdge's "essay," however, is full of solecisms, confusing sentences, and faulty references—I would sympathize with Dr. Eden's problems as editor, were it not that he selected the essay for inclusion. The book concludes with paragraphs on contributors (201–3) and an index (205–7).

Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists: a Biographical Dictionary

Philip Kaveny

Jane Frank. *Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists of the Twentieth Century: A Biographical Dictionary*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009. Hardcover, 534 pages, \$135, ISBN 978-0-7864-3423-7.

As a retired, trained librarian, I subscribe to the dictum of the Anglo-Austrian linguistic philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein that words are tools. By extension I consider a well-constructed and meticulously researched reference work—such as *Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists of the Twentieth Century: A Biographical Dictionary*, by world class expert Jane Frank—to be a multipurpose tool kit with a wide range of academic and public-sphere applications. I heartily agree with my colleague, Steve Silver, with whom I had the pleasure of working when I co-chaired academic programming at the 2000 Chicago World Science Fiction Convention, when he states that "*Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists of the Twentieth Century* should be shelved along with the John Clute and Peter Nicholls *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, the John Clute and John Grant *Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, Neil Barron's *Anatomy of Wonder*, and other classic science fiction reference works."

But I will go a bit further than Steve and state that books like the fine examples that he cites alongside *Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists of the Twentieth Century* ought not just to sit on the reference shelf. They ought to be used as access points into the entire genre of Science Fiction and Fantasy which has done so much to shape and define the art and literature of the previous (that is to say, the twentieth) century. More than that, as many of our SFRA researchers have indicated, perhaps most particularly Bruce Franklin, in the case of his book *War Stars: Super Weapons and the American Imagination* (Revised 2008), science fiction and fantasy have shaped the socioeconomic and geopolitical landscape of the twentieth century itself.

This biographical dictionary is an outstanding access point into the lives of the four hundred or so artists who were part of this process. One of earliest is the H. G. Wells illustrator Warrick Gobel (1862–1943) who was born shortly after the midpoint of the nineteenth century and worked well into the twentieth. At least some of the younger artists represented as working in the decades towards the end of the twentieth century will be working well past the midpoint of the twenty-first. (This is particularly true if we continue to elect many more Republican administrations or Congresses.) Thus in a way this book

acts as a window onto artistic life and productive capacities that span across three centuries.

These artists' biographies and publication sources are particularly useful because of the work's historically contextualizing introduction: "A Century of Science Fiction Art" by Robert Weinberg and Jane Frank, which brilliantly and implicitly makes the argument that the entire genre of science fiction and fantasy in the twentieth century was not culturally autonomous by any stretch of the imagination. Rather that it had a highly volatile cultural presence, surviving the contraction, and even collapse, of certain markets only to morph and expand into others throughout the century.

Of course so far in this review I am preaching to the choir. By this I mean a SFRA readership where even the youngest academics, (with the exception of a few *Wunderkinds* the likes of Delany when he was twenty in 1962, or Asimov who was the same age in 1940) are in their mid-twenties. That is to say they might have even been born into a home in which there was no home computer (we got our first a 64K Morrow in 1984) and who might have even reached middle school without high-speed broadband home access to the Internet.

For them, the twentieth century is still part of memory's reach. But I can say through my daily contact and exposure to this year's 2010–2011 college freshman class that the same thing cannot be said of them. For them, the twentieth century is rapidly sinking below their event horizon. I can speak with some authority on this matter since I am a nontraditional student, returning to get yet another degree in religious studies, so I deal with them on a kind of peer basis. Ironically, they all want to hear about the sex, drugs, and rock and roll of the late 1960s, but they are clueless about how a grade in a course could become a life-and-death matter to a student with a Vietnam-era draft deferment.

Yet paradoxically, because of the proliferation of Web-related electronic resources, many of the twentieth century's science fiction and fantasy cultural and artistic products are readily available to purchase and download on demand, and for free on sources like YouTube. Some of those appear in complete audiovisual form, such as *The Lord of the Rings* films, completed during the first few years of the twenty-first century. As a result, even middle school students have reference questions that are answerable using Jane Frank's book.

This is something we should all be celebrating. Yet we live in these draconian times when middle and high school media centers are being shut down and librarians and media specialists are being given pink slips, and all enrichment programs are under pressure to give way to increased class size and greater teaching loads.

I mentioned before that I am professionally trained as a librarian. My eight-hundred-square-foot office workplace-library is located in a high tech section of a converted tire plant which twenty years ago, before it fell victim to crude economics of the global race to the bottom, employed two thousand well-paid unionized workers. Since I keep my door open when I work on my various projects, I find myself becoming the semiprivate librarian in residence, and lately I have been using Jane Frank's *Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists of the Twentieth Century* to give a kind of crash course to visitors in how to use a reference book, starting with the principles Beverly DeWeese, who retired

not so many years ago as head of reference for the Milwaukee Public Library, related to me a couple of decades ago: “Any decent reference book worth its salt will have this stuff in the front which will tell you how to use it, but many people think they are too busy to read the instructions, so they wander around and don’t find anything, and most times can’t even state their question, and they wander off before anyone can help them.”

Yes. I can report that everyone who I made read pages 5–7, the section entitled “How to Use This Book,” has found it quite useful, and were able to find the answers to their questions. The book is well laid out with typography that is relatively easy on my eyes (I wear trifocals). It also has very attractive and sturdy painted book boards and a drop-resistant library binding. I know because I inadvertently dropped it on my office’s poured concrete floor; it bounced twice and survived without a dent!

Fiction Reviews

Things We Didn’t See Coming

T. S. Miller

Steven Amsterdam. *Things We Didn’t See Coming*. New York: Pantheon, 2010. Hardcover, 208 pages, \$24, ISBN 978-030-737850-7.

Rewind back to 1999: in spite of all the literal millenarianism in the air, one of the “things we didn’t see coming” was the subsequent explosion of the literary mainstream’s interest in the familiar SF subgenre of postapocalyptic fiction. Margaret Atwood’s Booker-shortlisted *Oryx and Crake* (2003) came as a small surprise—especially when she initially denied it was science fiction at all—but at least we had known her as a fellow traveler; soon enough Cormac McCarthy achieved an even more astonishing success with a mainstream postapocalyptic novel, pulling in a Pulitzer for *The Road* (2006). And not only have there been many more “literary apocalypses” published in the last decade than these two alone, but they keep coming, and from all over the map, with this latest, Steven Amsterdam’s literary debut, hailing from that postapocalyptic hotbed Australia. *Things We Didn’t See Coming* is a collection of nine interlinked short stories that follow a single narrator over the course of a kind of alternate future past, beginning in the midst of the apocalyptic anxiety of Y2K, and concluding approximately thirty years later in the ruins of an unspecified North American country that nevertheless seems more or less congruent with the borders of the United States. In contrast to its unifying narratorial voice, the book contains a veritable monster mash of postapocalyptic tropes: assorted natural disasters, climate change, hematematic plagues, declining male fertility, political and social upheavals, dystopian state apparatuses, and all the rest. While I would judge the individual stories as uneven in quality, their total effect is striking: we’ve seen all of these scenarios before, but possibly not quite in this way.

For one, Amsterdam makes a very interesting opening move in choosing to revisit Y2K after 9/11: the first story finds the young boy on a New Year’s Eve flight from civilization with his paranoid father and long-suffering mother. In fact, since the book’s timeline appears to diverge from ours once the ball drops, the narrative completely bypasses 9/11, that thing we didn’t see coming *nonpareil*. Yet this omission perhaps calls attention to Amsterdam’s unique project, as the book serves in part as a dissection of all our *forgotten* apocalypses, juxtaposing plenty of things we didn’t see with the ones we thought we saw; for example, beyond Y2K, Amsterdam also makes offhand reference to a deadly infectious disease “in birds” (87). Each of the remaining stories focuses on one of the narrator’s different professional stints—usually as some kind of thief, or employee of the latest ad hoc government, or both—and the challenges that face him are as often moral and interpersonal as they are environmental. Indeed, the greatest weakness of these highly reflective stories may be their tendency to conclude too self-consciously “sparkling with epiphanic dew,” to borrow a line from Michael Chabon (18). Certain of these hallmark “literary” endings, however, work to great effect, as in “Dry Land,” a competent story in the venerable months-long-rain tradition that ends with a vision of an idealized woman. In the opening sentence of the next story, just such a woman seems to materialize in the form of a new character named Margo—only she’s walking away. Generally, the links between the stories are more subtle, or even nonexistent, creating a continuity in discontinuity in the narrator’s life that reflects the world around him, as it dies and dies again in paradoxical fits and starts. At their worst, the connections between stories in such interlinked collections can become arch or artificial, but Amsterdam uses the form well, fully availing himself of the flexibility it offers to describe the slow death of the narrator and his world from a number of different postapocalyptic angles.

Things We Didn’t See Coming, then, presents a refreshingly fractured view of several frustrated apocalypses, making intriguing use of both the dystopian and postapocalyptic genres as it hovers at their peripheries, primarily because of its emphasis on the character of its own fringe-seeking narrator. Moreover, I think we should always pay attention to the type of speculative fiction that a literary magazine like *Harper’s*, for example, will praise *at the expense* of SF: “[T]he strength of Amsterdam’s book, as of Atwood’s recent work, lies in its eschewing of pie-in-the-sky theorizing that so often mars science fiction.” I noted only a single direct allusion to science fiction within the work itself, as the clearest statement of the motivation behind the collection—the idea that “[y]ou think you’re worrying about the right thing and then you’re sideswiped” (122)—invokes *RoboCop* as an example of a then-plausible but hopelessly erroneous prediction of the future. We might interpret this reference as a critique of SF—what SF didn’t or doesn’t see—but Amsterdam explicitly acknowledges that each of his own “assays” might be getting it wrong as well; the word “assay” appears prominently in one of the stronger stories, “Predisposed,” where it ironically refers to a test promising perfect prediction of future medical conditions. In fact, because of the return-to-Y2K conceit, Amsterdam’s first few accounts of the apocalypse were, in fact, preemptively invalidated by our own history, apocalypses always already averted. At the same time, what had worried the

narrator's father on the eve of the new millennium may set the tone for the entire book: "I'm not just concerned about tonight as one event. [...] This whole thing is symbolic, symbolic of a system that's hopelessly short-sighted, a system that twenty, thirty years ago couldn't imagine a time when we might be starting a new century" (22). Rather than an attempt to write an apocalypse at odds with the aims of science fiction proper, Amsterdam implies that a *failure* to "pie-in-the-sky theorize" can be dangerous, or perhaps simply that we can't help but do it.

I won't trouble myself here to "claim" the book as a piece of science fiction, and in the end I don't think we need to. Even so, it should prove of interest not only to those working on apocalyptic and postapocalyptic fiction, but also to anyone concerned with the perpetual question of the "slipstream" and the ever proliferating intersections of the genres with the highbrow literary. *Things We Didn't See Coming* is further proof that the literary establishment's obsession with a subgenre that was formerly the near-exclusive domain of speculative fiction has not yet run its course, but also further proof that some of the finer recent work in that subgenre, for whatever combination of reasons, has been cropping up on the other side of the fence.

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Tomb of the Fathers—A Lydia Duluth Adventure

Sandra J. Lindow

Eleanor Arnason. *Tomb of the Fathers*. Seattle: Aqueduct Press, 2010. Softcover, 144 pages, \$15, ISBN 978-1-933500-36-2.

Nearly a score of years has passed since Eleanor Arnason's 1991 publication of her gender-bending Tiptree Award-winning novel, *A Woman of the Iron People*. Since then Arnason has published one novel, *Ring of Swords* (1993), choosing to focus instead on short stories, of which there are two series: the Hwarhath stories that follow *Ring of Swords*, and the Lydia Duluth stories that follow her Hugo-nominated "Stellar Harvest" (1999). Arnason's 2005 collection, *Ordinary People* was published by L. Timmel Duchamp's Aqueduct Press as part of Duchamp's Conversation Pieces series, collected short works by authors whose work is intended to inspire "grand conversation." This label is deserved for Arnason's work is founded on a well-considered and evolving left-of-center political and philosophical base, which she discusses in her May 2004 Wisconsin guest of honor speech. Here she explains, "My own private image of capitalism and capitalists is the great white shark—a primitive animal, in many ways limited, but very good at what it does. One cannot build a humane society on a base of great white sharks" (*Ordinary People* 99). Now Duchamp has published Arnason's most recent novella, *Tomb of the Fathers*, as a continuation of that earlier conversation.

Tomb of the Fathers can best be described as an intimate conversation, a planetary romance, more like Ursula K. Le Guin's carrier bag of interesting found objects than a traditionally plot-driven SF adventure. *Tomb* is set in an existential universe where a future Earth is in shambles due to a profound ecological and economic crisis created by out-of-control venture capitalism. Rescued and partially controlled by artificial intelligences who have mastered faster-than-light travel, a secret that can't be shared because it requires "specialized hardware and software" no intelligent species can understand, humanity now is learning to coexist with other intelligent species as well as the (usually benign) meddling of collaborative AIs who make inscrutable decisions that affect everyday individuals. Lydia Duluth, a scout for Stellar Harvest, an interstellar movie company, and her peculiarly talented and gendered crew are stranded on the long lost home planet of the lizard-like Atch when an AI goes rogue and destroys the stargate that they came through. Faced with a possible twelve years until rescue, the crew decides to explore the planet where they meet several tribes of variously violent Atch females, all clones because males no longer exist on this planet. Duluth is a human recorder who shares consciousness with an AI implant in her brain that seems male and provides advice and encyclopedic commentary.

Duluth's crew includes her sometimes lover, Olaf Reykjavik, a handsome blonde, blue-eyed, black-skinned tour guide; Geena, an uplifted ape woman, whose original name was Vagina Dentata; Precious Bin, a peace-loving male Atch who was hired as an interpreter; Striker, a sentient rat; and Mantis, a shape-changing AI. Aiding them are a number of intelligent machines including space suits that can transform to become lethal weapons or go for sight-seeing walks on their own and a Buddhist space ship/land rover combo called a courier that limits its explorations because it does not want to "harm the native live forms" by rolling over them (72). Arnason has been using intelligent nonhuman companions from the beginning of her career, with the heroic rat, Shortpaw, from her second novel, *To the Resurrection Station*, being an excellent example. On a Marxist level, these undervalued and exploited individuals seem to represent the proletariat struggling to make sense of their lives in a universe where "sharks" control the means of production, but rather than being a didactic rant, *Tomb* tends to be rather chatty, an exercise in a gentle, idiosyncratic brand of Minnesota Marxism where the only "cocktails" Arnason's characters imagine are fruity alcoholic drinks sipped on the patio.

Lest *Tomb* be criticized as "talking heads," Arnason includes satisfying sexual intercourse and describes toilets and other sanitation issues. In a universe where characters are frequently powerless, human comfort and kindness are crucial. Late in the novella, Ursula K. Le Guin comes to mind when Precious Bin says, "In the end, we have only one another. Everything else—both hope and belief—come from the community we make with nurture" (135). Despite a difficult situation where other leaders might dissolve into depression or overreact with pointless heroics, Duluth is a model of facilitative leadership. Her ability to listen, learn, and allow leadership to shift appropriately improves morale and makes the team more effective. What is most interesting is how Duluth processes her experiences. Her analysis of indigenous moral development is

achieved through careful observation and asking the right questions.

Arnason has a dry humor and a well-developed sense of the absurd. Her take on human foibles is reminiscent of Pamela Sargent's "Danny Goes to Mars" (1993). Conceptually, *Tomb* resembles Le Guin's "Sur" (1983) and Joan Slonczewski's *The Children Star* (1998). Although *Tomb of the Fathers* is deceptively short and mild-mannered, Arnason is a master storyteller, demonstrating craft and *craft*—creating engaging characters and steering her story *craftily* through a moral and political agenda without being too intrusive—and thought-provoking enough to inspire other grand conversations.

Media Reviews

***Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* [film]**

Greg Conley

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time. Dir. Mike Newell. Perf. Jake Gyllenhaal, Gemma Arterton. Disney. 2010.

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time came out at the end of May 2010, and I headed into a theater soon after to see it. The film is an adaptation of a video game of the same name produced by Ubisoft (the people who do *Rainbow Six* and *Splinter Cell*), and I've been a fan of the game series since Ubisoft got the license. Well, kind of—*Sands* is amazing, and the two sequels were bad and OK, respectively.

Both game and film versions of *Sands* go like this: the son of the king of Persia breaks into a city and acquires the Dagger of Time, an artifact that allows the bearer to rewind time, but only for short periods. Bad things happen, the prince works to restore the dagger with the help of the city's princess, and he defeats the evil vizier standard in such stories. In the game the prince is only known as "the prince"; he is not named. For a game, in which the player takes over the character, this makes sense. He's Dastan in the film. He's also an acrobatically inclined orphan adopted by the king in the movie, creating a more familiar story arc for a film.

Prince of Persia is more fantasy than SF, if you're into distinctions like that. The time reversal is toned down a lot in the movie; I suspect to help retain some tension. If Dastan could rewind time constantly, even if only a minute at a time, he could handle everything. The film keeps the satisfying ending of the game, wherein the prince, in the course of stopping the villain, resets time and stops the invasion of the city before the dagger can be used to do any damage to either kingdom, leaving the prince as the center of a wheel. In the game he narrates constantly, both through cut scenes and game play, and the game itself is the prince telling princess Farah (Tamina in the film) what happened and how to avoid it happening again. Players aren't told this until the end, so the holes and questions of the plot are resolved through the mechanic that has served only as a game play function until that point.

It's a better game play mechanic. The movie doesn't examine the questions that inevitably come with time manipulation, but it makes no promises to do so. In between the Indiana Jones action and jokes about ostriches, a fairly believable relationship builds between Dastan and Tamina, which is necessarily obliterated by the time travel their relationship facilitates. The game doesn't really allow for the relationship to continue, but in the film they're married (by Dastan's brother) to strengthen political alliances.

The movie's fun but not terribly useful in the classroom as an example of time travel. Its fairly simple time travel plot could provide places for discussion and exercises to take off: how does it work, and how does it screw up? It will make an excellent touchstone, I suspect—it's projected to become the highest grossing video game adaptation yet (Subers). That means most students should be familiar with it, even if they didn't see it in the theater.

The game, on the other hand, could be more useful. As I said, I'm a fan of *Sands*, but the sequels shifted focus away from acrobatics towards fighting, and *God of War* they never were. Most of the time manipulation takes place over acrobatically inspired platforming and platform-puzzling. The second game, *Warrior Within*, is best known among gamers for its clichéd prince, who becomes brooding and snarling in contrast to the likable, slightly rude prince of *Sands* who learns his lesson by game's end. The third game, *Two Thrones*, tries to rectify everything with a split-personality prince, each side of the split coming with its own game play mechanics. However, neither of their stories so completely encapsulates on a macro scale what happens constantly on a micro scale: the reversal and manipulation of time. *Sands* allows the player to rewind time and pause it for short periods.

Although not all that long, a game might still strain the time budgets of students, especially undergraduate students. If one could guarantee one's students could play enough of the game to get a taste of what it's like to personally control time manipulation, rather than seeing it on screen or reading it, impersonally, the game might make a useful addition to a course more focused on the topic of time manipulation specifically. As simple as the mechanic is, it's still compelling and discussion-worthy through its player-controlled nature. The interaction of gamer/game is different from book/movie, and drastically different from film/viewer. A mixed media syllabus might be well-served by *Sands*, as it would provide an excellent platform from which to begin discussing how player interaction shapes the game in different ways than other media.

The higher profile of the movie makes it a discussion topic, but not a text for a class. The game, through its relation to the film and its mechanics, make it a possible text for a class, but one would have to take care. Videos shown to a class, with this game especially, but with all games generally, will not be as effective as allowing the students to play themselves. I have had good luck with bringing in a game, system and all, and having a handful of game-versed students play for a short time while the rest of the class watches—one gets more of the feeling of playing if the player is present. A little more of it, anyway.

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***The Losers* and *The Losers Book One* [film + graphic novel]**

Dominick Grace

The Losers. Dir. Sylvain White. Warner Brothers, 2010.

Diggle, Andy, and Jock. *The Losers Book One*. New York: DC Comics, 2010.

The Losers is one of the myriad recent comic book movies. *The Losers Book One* collects the first twelve issues of the Vertigo comic book series, including much of the material used as the basis for the film. *The Losers* qualifies barely as SF by virtue of the McGuffin, a doomsday weapon called a "sonic dematerializer" that the villain, a rogue CIA (we infer) operative code-named "Max" plans to use to jump-start the War on Terror by faking a terrorist attack on American soil. Max is a bad guy. We know this because the first time we meet him, he has someone thrown off a building. And he shoots a woman dead for dropping his parasol. And he mocks foreign accents. And he pokes a dwarf. If there were a dog in the movie, no doubt he would kick it. He's a very bad guy. The Losers are a Special Ops five-man team consisting of the usual clichés and bearing more than a passing resemblance to the A-Team (a resemblance that, to its credit, the comic acknowledges). They're bad asses, but they're good guy bad asses. We know this because they violate their orders to try to save a couple of dozen children Max is willing to kill to further his agenda (this is the op that goes bad and leads to their supposed deaths and filmic quest to clear their blah blah and reclaim yada yada yada). And because one of them just wants to get back to his pregnant wife. And because one of them roots for his niece's soccer team. They're aided by Aisha, the mysterious, hot, wealthy woman who manages to find out that they're still alive by counting the number of teeth found at the site of the helicopter crash that supposedly killed them—she is apparently more dedicated than American military investigators—and then locates them in order to recruit them to take down Max, but who, shockingly, has her own secret agenda. If all of this sounds generic and hackneyed, well.... This is formulaic stuff, somewhat redeemed by adequate if unspectacular performances but almost sunk by the blizzard of clichés and illogic.

The comics are marginally superior, though they suffer from unnecessarily muddy/moody art by Jock, which often makes it difficult to tell who we're looking at despite the standard comics shorthands to character (Roque: big facial scar; Cougar: cowboy hat; Jensen: spiky blonde hair and John Lennon glasses; etc.) or what's going on, because dramatic poses, big explosions and fancy angles can conceal a multitude of narrative sins. The comics offer a somewhat similar narrative—a few elements of the film are lifted largely intact

from the first narrative arc—but there are several crucial differences, some dictated by genre and others by the economy of scale that demands that a film must have broad audience appeal. Despite its logical problems and the convolutions necessary to maintain suspense, the film is far more linear and economical than the comic. For instance, the mission that goes bad takes up the first act of the film but is only referred to in passing in Book One, as a mystery from the past the ultimate revelation of which presumably serves as one of many hooks to keep readers coming back month after month. Both the violence and the profanity of the comics are significantly greater than those of the film, presumably because R-rated comic book films don't do well. Consequently, the profanity of the comic is reduced to the single PG-permitted f-bomb, and the exploding body parts of the comic book (one scene adds new and vivid meaning to the term "scatterbrain," as a bad guy bad ass spells out) are replaced by a lot of kinetic movement, close-ups and sound effects, but not much in the way of actual hard-core violence—something of a limitation in a work specifically about military bad asses with huge weapons mercilessly killing each other. By contrast, the film plays up enormously the sex appeal of Aisha, not only by having her scantily clad for most of the film but also by creating a relationship between her and the Losers' leader, Clay, which begins with a literal fight/metaphorical sex scene that literally sets the room on fire. It's hard not to see these cinematic decisions as largely cynical in their catering to audience titillation within the framework that will allow a wide audience into the theater.

Ideologically, the comics have a sharper edge. Max is, ironically, more of a cartoon in the movie than he is in the comics (though, even more ironically, he hardly appears at all in *Book One*), in which there is some nodding acknowledgment of real issues such as CIA malfeasance, the complexities of the War on Terror, and the legitimate gripes the Islamic world might have against America (Aisha in the comics is Islamic, though her past remains in shadows throughout *Book One*; in the film, she's the daughter of a Columbian drug lord seeking vengeance on those responsible for his death)—all in the context of hyperbolic action, but at least grounded in something like a real-world political sensibility. The change of Aisha from Islamic to Columbian, and the change of her mission to revenge for the death of a drug-dealer father, eliminates the comic's (superficial but at least real) efforts to address complex international politics. Indeed, the film relies on racial stereotypes even while using racism as one of Max's various faults. Indians are nebbish technogeeks, for instance. More significantly, the race of the Loser who betrays his own (there isn't a cliché this film doesn't love, though to be fair, this plot element is in the comic, too) is changed from white to black, which does still leave one good black guy but nevertheless plays into racial profiling: of course the big, dangerous-looking black guy can't be trusted!

The film might with some usefulness be discussed in a popular culture course as an example of generic block-buster film-making, as it conforms in almost every respect to the blockbuster category, both structurally and ideologically. The comic might therefore with some usefulness be studied in contrast with the film, to consider the implications of what is retained (mostly action set-pieces), what is added (a love story; far more family back story for the Losers), and what is changed

(notably the racial and political shifts). The comics are decent enough less postmodern(ish) action-adventure-technothriller pastiche; the film is forgettable genre hackwork, with some pretensions to cleverness (e.g., its retention of some of the comics devices, such as on-screen place captions) and an optimistic belief in its ability to generate a sequel (Max is foiled but escapes). Any number of recent SF films deal far more imaginatively and interestingly both with converting comics to film (*Kick-Ass* came out at about the same time as *The Losers* and is vastly superior; *Watchmen*, for all its problems, is both a better comic book adaptation and more ideologically intriguing) and with dealing with complex political issues in an action context (e.g., *District 9*). And any number of recent graphic novels play far more cleverly with generic form and convention in an SF context (e.g., Morrison and Quiteley's *All-Star Superman*).

Darwinia and Multiwinia [video games]

William Tung-peng Sun

Darwinia. Introversion, March 2005.

Multiwinia. Introversion, September 2008.

Darwinia+. Introversion, February 2010.

You are overlooking a highly abstract space. Above, blocky square patterns dot what appears to be a flat sky. Below, white wire-frames are superimposed on the triangle fractal landscape of mountainous islands surrounded by dark but reflective water. Between, shimmering particles slowly drift around in the air. Beyond, there is only darkness. But who are you? How did you get here? It does not matter. The digital world of *Darwinia* has been invaded by viruses, and only you can help the native artificially intelligent green humanoid polygons, Darwinians, to recover their world from the various monstrous insectoid and serpentine red Virii.

Darwinia, the grand prize winner of the 2006 Independent Games Festival, is the second title published by the British independent game developer, Introversion, a company renowned for its unique visual style strongly reminiscent of computer graphics of the 1980s, enhanced, however, by contemporary fractal generation and pixel shading technology. The game play is a mixture of real-time strategy and squad shooter action; the player can create units, or “programs” such as “soldiers” and “engineers,” around nodes such as “Trunk Ports” or “Rader Dishes,” and order the programs around as in conventional real time strategy games. Unlike conventional strategy games, no resource gathering is required to create these units. However, the player can only have a limited number of programs running at one time. The units will automatically perform their functions near where the player assigns them to; the engineers will recover facilities and data, and the soldiers will shoot at viruses. Yet, the soldiers are not very effective against the Virii on their own; the player has to control them manually to shoot lasers and throw grenades in a way reminiscent of the Commodore Amiga game, Cannon Fodder. Dr. Sepulveda, the computer scientist who designed the digital world of *Darwinia*, will work on upgrading these programs and give the player, a total stranger

who somehow hacked into Dr. Sepulveda's network of super-computers, objectives to complete to save the world.

The first title published by Introversion, *Uplink* (2001), simulates the hacking experience as popularized by Hollywood films, in which the player buys and executes various hacking programs with graphic user interfaces against corresponding methods of security and race against the progress bars. Their third title, *Defcon* (2006), simulates the iconic War Room computer, as the players plan and launch nuclear holocausts against each other on the 1980s-style vector graphics computer screen. In the same vein, the premise of *Darwinia* corresponds to the idea popularized by science fiction films: that is, AIs must be graphically embodied. The game takes the concept several steps further: the Darwinians live, work, and die in their polygon body; their “digital souls” float up to “the Great Repository” so that they may be reborn and evolve into more advanced AIs. One of the primary objectives in the game is to repair the mechanism for this digital reincarnation. The Darwinians are described as having their own religious myth and rites about this mechanism. In other words, the player is participating in the cosmogony of a virtual world.

Multiwinia (2008) is designed as a multiplayer follow up of *Darwinia*. The Darwinians have survived the virus attack, but they have also been changed by the virus: they are now “Multiwinians.” Multiwinians are colored differently and fight Multiwinians of different colors. The game play dynamics are also drastically different. Players no longer have direct access to the “programs” in the previous game; they now control and order the Multiwinians directly as in conventional RTS games, but the players can also promote the Multiwinians to “officers” to organize Multiwinians into armies. The original project that resulted in *Darwinia* was called *Future War*, which envisions battles on the scale of tens of thousands of troops on screen; *Multiwinia* is a bit closer to the project in a sense. There are six different game modes in *Multiwinia*, but the basic principle remains the same: to capture something by occupying them with Multiwinians, be it spawning points, score points, rocket fuels, symbolic statues or WMDs. *Multiwinia* is a much faster paced game than *Darwinia*. Players usually have the same footing as their opponents, and they have to quickly capture strategic places to tip the scales; but there are also “crates” that drop out of the sky onto random locations and contain random “programs” or even “Virii” that can turn the tide of the battle dramatically. Plot is nonexistent, but there are a few lines about the background story in the descriptions of each map. In one it says that Multiwinians appear to be fighting for the sake of fighting. Does this say something about races and conflicts? The Darwinians in the original *Darwinia* was voice acted by a cat, but in *Multiwinia*, the players will hear all-too-human cries of anger and agony. But would this stop the players from sending the digital life-forms to their digital deaths?

The premise of *Darwinia* and *Multiwinia*, of a digital world corrupted by virus, is strangely similar, but probably unrelated, to the shattering revelation about mankind in the novel under the same title, *Darwinia* by Robert Charles Wilson in 1998. In Wilson's *Darwinia*, human beings are actually consciousness preserved in the supercomputer-like Archive, threatened by the virus-like Psilifes that presented alternative paths of evolution. Time has already ended for human be-

ings. In *Darwinia*, however, the Darwinians are indigenous of the virtual world, and they are supposed to evolve with each generation. Darwinians have a future, supposedly. The visual style of *Darwinia* has always been called “Retro”: it expresses a kind of nostalgia for a future of virtual reality, as represented by science fiction films such as *Tron* (1982), *Lawnmower Man* (1992), and *Johnny Mnemonic* (1995)—a future that never was. In fact, *Darwinia* makes a number of in-jokes about the culture memes of cyberspace with many variations of intros, including one styled after *The Matrix* (1999).

The science fiction films simulate computer simulation of reality; this simulation is one of our deepest fantasies in science, but the film representations of digital beings as vulnerable to the destruction of their graphic representation has never been an imitation of any reality—since such reality does not exist. *Darwinia* and *Multiwinia* simulate these simulations as computer games; they recreate the fantasy about computer simulation as computer simulation. From a simulacrum that “masks the absence of a profound reality,” it proceeds to a stage that “bears no relation to any reality and is its own reality whatsoever and is its own pure simulacrum” Baudrillard, *Simulation* 6). In *Impossible Exchange*, Baudrillard writes about artificial intelligence and virtual reality: “Where we might deplore the disappearance of the real in the virtual..., we should instead rejoice in this totalization of the world which, by purging everything of its functions and technical goals, makes room for... the singularity of the object and the image” (121). In other words, *Darwinia* and *Multiwinia* are simulations of simulations that would make Jean Baudrillard rejoice.

Introversion published *Darwinia+* on Xbox 360 in February 2010, which includes both *Darwinia* and *Multiwinia*. This review is based on the Windows versions of *Darwinia* and *Multiwinia*.

Works Cited

- Baudrillard, Jean. *Impossible Exchange*. Trans. Chris Turner. London: Verso, 2001.
- . *Simulacra and Simulations*. Trans. Sheila Faria Glaser. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1994.
- Robert Charles Wilson. *Darwinia*. New York: Tor, 1998.

Announcements Calls for Papers

Compiled by Michael Klein

Call for Papers—Journal

Title: *Science Fiction Studies* Special Issue on Science Fiction in/and California

Topic: This special issue of *Science Fiction Studies* invites critical and scholarly articles dealing with California as a science fiction space, theme, or concept. In this issue, we hope to promote dialogues between theorists of the new urban geography, such as Mike Davis and David Harvey, and sf writers and

critics. Philip K. Dick, Kim Stanley Robinson, Neal Stephenson, Ursula K. Le Guin, Robert Silverberg, Octavia E. Butler, and William Gibson have all depicted California in their work, whether as a site of utopian inspiration or as a dystopic realm where history and authenticity are erased and natural beauty is threatened by economic and ecological mismanagement. California has offered sf writers a fruitful space where forward-thinking blueprints—sociopolitical and sexual utopias, technocultural avant-gardes, and impulses towards collective and personal reinvention—are projected onto a beautiful and fragile landscape. We encourage essays that address these concerns or any others related to how California has figured within sf discourse.

Due Date: Abstracts of 500 words should be submitted by February 1, 2011. Full drafts of essays will be required by May 1, 2011. Send abstracts to Jonathan Alexander (jfaalexan AT uci.edu) and Catherine Liu (liu AT uci.edu).

URL: <http://www.depauw.edu/SFs/>

Call for Papers—Conference

Title: Spaces of Alterity: Conceptualising Counter-Hegemonic Sites, Practices and Narratives

Conference Date: April 28–29, 2011

Conference Site: University of Nottingham, UK

Topic: This two day international conference for postgraduate and early career researchers explores interdisciplinary conceptions and representations of radical, counter-hegemonic space. As concerns grow over such issues as spatial privatization, commodification and homogenization, surveillance, extra-legal spaces, social and political “nonspaces,” and the loss of common or public spaces, so too a plethora of interventions—across genre and disciplinary boundaries—have been launched in opposition to these trends. Examples are diverse, and can be found, for example, in literary studies of estranging narratives in contemporary fiction; spatial representations in film, TV and new media; the creation of critical spaces of alterity in political activism (such as semi-autonomous zones); psychogeographical spatial strategies, and philosophical and theoretical conceptions of counter-hegemonic space. We invite proposals for papers of 20 minutes from candidates across the arts and humanities, welcoming individual papers as well as group panels that respond to these and other conceptions of counter-hegemonic “Spaces of Alterity.”

Due Date: Abstracts of 250–300 words should be sent by e-mail as a Word attachment to spacesofalterity AT gmail.com by November 3, 2010 and should include name, affiliation, e-mail address, title of paper and 4 keywords.

URL: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/culturalstudies/research/conferences.aspx>

Call for Papers—Conference

Title: Science Fiction and Fantasy Area, PCA/ACA & Southwest/Texas Popular Culture and American Culture Associations Joint Conference

Conference Date: April 20–23, 2011

Conference Site: San Antonio, TX

Topic: The area chairs of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Area would like to invite paper and panel proposals on any aspect of science fiction and fantasy in literature, film, television, and other media.

Due Date: Please send 250 word paper proposals, and 500 word panel proposals to Ximena Gallardo C. (ximena_gallardo_c AT yahoo.com) by December 15, 2010. Include full contact info (name, institutional affiliation if any, snail mail address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail) for all participants, and titles for proposals.

Contact: tamy.burnett AT gmail.com

URL: http://swtxpca.org/CFPs_2010/SciFi_Fantasy/2010_gallardo_sff.pdf and <http://www.swtxpca.org/>

Call for Papers—Conference

Title: Mervyn Peake and the Fantasy Tradition: A Centenary Conference

Conference Date: July 15–16, 2011

Conference Site: University of Chichester, UK

Topic: This conference and related events next July to mark the centenary of Peake's birth include exhibitions of his paintings and illustrations in Chichester (Peake lived in nearby Burpham while writing the Gormenghast books, and is buried there). July 2011 is also the publication date of *Titus Awakes*, Maeve Gilmore's conclusion of her husband's Gormenghast sequence. The conference will celebrate, explore and discuss the many facets of Peake's rich creativity, including his work as fantasy novelist, children's writer, playwright, poet, and writer of nonsense verse, artist and illustrator.

Due Date: Submit 300-word abstracts via e-mail for papers not exceeding 20 minutes by January 14, 2011. Send your proposal, a brief CV and the submission form (downloadable from the conference website) in Word .doc or .rtf format to b.gray AT chi.ac.uk (copied to l.sargent AT chi.ac.uk). Please include your last name and "MP Fantasy Tradition" in the subject heading of the e-mail and filename of your abstract.

Contact: William Gray (b.gray AT chi.ac.uk)

URL: <http://www.chiuni.ac.uk/english/MervynPeakeConference.cfm>

Call for Papers—Book

Title: *Film and TV Superheroes in the New Millennium*

Topic: We invite submissions for a forthcoming edited collection on superhero films and TV shows, which is currently under contract for publication. This edited collection aims at studying not just the "good" superheroes but also their "evil" counterparts by focusing solely on film and TV representations. We are currently seeking an additional 2–3 complete essays in the categories of Gender and Superheroes and/or Superheroes and Genre.

Due Date: Completed essay with bibliography and 400-word abstract and 1-page CV including affiliation and recent publications by September 15, 2010.

Contact: Betty Kaklamanidou (bettyk AT freemail.gr) and Richard Gray II (rgray AT cn.edu)

Call for Papers—Book

Title: *Blood, Body, and Soul: Health and (Dis)Ability in Joss Whedon's TV Worlds*

Topic: We are interested in the ways in which Whedon and his creative teams construct and utilize health and wellness—physical, mental, and emotional/psychological—and, conversely, illness, injury, and (dis)ability. Proposals may focus on any of Whedon's primarily televisual works—*Buffy*, *Angel*, *Firefly/Serenity*, *Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog*, and/or *Dollhouse*—though they may also incorporate other media forms (like comics) as appropriate. The editors are interested in any and all topics related to representations of physical, mental, or emotional/psychological health, illness, or (dis)ability.

Due Date: 300–500-word proposal in Word or RTF, including name, affiliation, and contact information, by September 15, 2010. Full-length essays of 6,000–7,000 words in MLA format due April 1, 2011.

Contact: Tamy Burnet (tamy.burnett AT gmail.com) and Ami Comford (acomford AT dixie.edu)

Call for Papers—Book

Title: *Scaping the Territories: Critical Explorations of Farscape*

Topic: A scholarly treatment of the award-winning science fiction series *Farscape* is currently under consideration for publication by McFarland Publishers as part of its Critical Explorations in Science Fiction and Fantasy series (series editors Donald E. Palumbo and C. W. Sullivan III). This book, tentatively entitled *Scaping the Territories: Critical Explorations of Farscape*, will be a collection of articles with the general objective of increasing the critical academic exploration of this series. A book examining *Farscape* has been published previously (Battis 2007), which addressed divergent social issues such as masculinity and femininity, sexuality, racism and imperialism. The proposed book aims to expand discussion of these issues and of the series by examining the myriad ways in which academics/fans envision themes explored during the airing of the original series, and its extension into print media, including graphic novels.

Due Date: Formal proposals, December 1, 2010; final drafts, May 1, 2011.

Contact: Sherry Ginn (DoctorGinn AT gmail.com)

Call for Papers—Book

Title: *A Zombie Ate My Writing Arm: A Collection of Academic Essays*

Topic: *A Zombie Ate My Writing Arm* is an edited book of collected essays geared toward deconstructing and contextualizing representations and manifestations of uniquely American fears, specifically in zombie form. Written for both an academically oriented audience as well as a mainstream audience interested in a deeper look at the subject, *A Zombie Ate My Writing Arm* offers an array of opinions on why we are so fascinated with the zombie and the idea that a zombie apocalypse could wipe out a huge chunk of the Earth's population.

Contributions: Essays in Word submitted should be original and unpublished and should focus on the American zombie tradition. Include bio.

Contact: Valerie Robin (vr7396 AT gmail.com)

Science Fiction Research Association

www.sfra.org

The Science Fiction Research Association is the oldest professional organization for the study of science fiction and fantasy literature and film. Founded in 1970, the SFRA was organized to improve classroom teaching; to encourage and assist scholarship; and to evaluate and publicize new books and magazines dealing with fantastic literature and film, teaching methods and materials, and allied media performances. Among the membership are people from many countries—students, teachers, professors, librarians, futurologists, readers, authors, booksellers, editors, publishers, archivists, and scholars in many disciplines. Academic affiliation is not a requirement for membership. Visit the SFRA Web site at <http://www.sfra.org>. For a membership application, contact the SFRA Treasurer or see the Web site.

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lisa.yaszek@lcc.gatech.edu

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Stony Brook, NY 11790-1114
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SFRA Standard Membership Benefits

SFRA Review

Four issues per year. This newsletter/journal surveys the field of science fiction scholarship, including extensive reviews of fiction and nonfiction books and media, review articles, and listings of new and forthcoming books. The *Review* also prints news about SFRA internal affairs, calls for papers, and updates on works in progress.

SFRA Annual Directory

One issue per year. Members' names, contact information, and areas of interest.

SFRA Listserv

Ongoing. The SFRA listserv allows members to discuss topics and news of interest to the SF community, and to query the collective knowledge of the membership. To join the listserv or obtain further information, visit the listserv information page: <http://wiz.cath.vt.edu/mailman/listinfo/sfra-l>

Extrapolation

Three issues per year. The oldest scholarly journal in the field, with critical, historical, and bibliographical articles, book reviews, letters, occasional special topic issues, and an annual index.

Science Fiction Studies

Three issues per year. This scholarly journal includes critical, historical, and bibliographical articles, review articles, reviews, notes, letters, international coverage, and an annual index.

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(Discounted subscription rates for members)

Foundation

Three issues per year. British scholarly journal, with critical, historical, and bibliographical articles, reviews, and letters. Add to dues: \$33 seairmail; \$40 airmail.

The New York Review of Science Fiction

Twelve issues per year. Reviews and features. Add to dues: \$28 domestic; \$30 domestic institutional; \$34 Canada; \$40 UK and Europe; \$42 Pacific and Australia.

Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts

Four issues per year. Scholarly journal, with critical and bibliographical articles and reviews. Add to dues: \$40/1 year; \$100/3 years.

Femspec

Critical and creative works. Add to dues: \$40 domestic individual; \$96 domestic institutional; \$50 international individual; \$105 international institutional.

