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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. All submitters must be current SFRA members. Contact the Editors for other submissions or for correspondence.

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# SFRA Review

A publication of the Science Fiction Research Association

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## Plays Well With Others

Doug Davis

AS I WRITE THIS, the joint Eaton/SFRA Conference has recently come to an end and all the participants have returned to their homes around the globe. While each SFRA and Eaton conference on its own usually has the intimate feel of a family gathering, attending the joint conference felt different: the SFRA family was now participating in a much larger meeting of a greater intellectual community. It was a good feeling. It showed me just how many professional and independent scholars and artists are committed to the serious study of science fiction: not dozens and dozens but hundreds and hundreds. The conference organizers in Riverside did a tremendous job hosting our massive combined crew. I direct you to the messages from SFRA President Pawel Freluk and Vice President Amy Ransom below for their reflections on both our recent meeting and the year to come. Of course, this recent combined conference was not the first time that the SFRA had joined forces with another scholarly group. Past combined meetings include those with the Heinlein Society and the Campbell Conference. And there are more joint meetings to come, starting next year. If the joint SFRA/Eaton conference felt like a large community meeting, I cannot imagine what the joint SFRA/WisCon meeting will feel like....

In this issue of the *Review*, readers can experience the inner workings of the SFRA via the two sets of meeting minutes taken at our recent conference by Secretary Jenni Halpin, one from the Executive Committee's own annual meeting and the other from the conference's concluding business meeting. Treasurer Steven Berman has prepared a treasurer's report that details the financial state of the SFRA. In addition to our usual slate of fine reviews, this issue also contains a new Feature 101 piece by one of our regular contributors, Dr. Victor Grech. In his 101 piece, Dr. Grech treats us to an extensive analysis of philosophical dualism across *Star Trek's* many iterations that should be helpful for anyone who teaches the series. Enjoy!

## Changes, Changes, Changes

Pawel Freluk

THE JOINT EATON/SFRA CONFERENCE is behind us and I think we can all agree that it was nothing short of a success. The critical mass of people, ideas and conversations was certainly achieved and the southern California climes helped the conference's mood, too. Given how big the event was, one might find it surprising that there were so few glitches. Then again, it is not, considering the expert team that put the meeting together. For all their hard work and moments of exhaustion and despair we will never know about but which every event of this size is burdened with, I would like to thank once again the people who made it possible: Melissa Conway, Sherryl Vint, Rob Latham, and Patrick Sharp but also Sarah Allison and Julie Ree as well as all students and helpers that we may not even know by name but who certainly contributed to what Eaton/SFRA 2013 was. Thank you so much!

And since we're on the subject of conferences, in 2014 SFRA will again partner for its annual conference—this time with WisCon. Mike Levy, the conference director, who works with Rebecca Holden and Victor Raymond, will issue the call for papers very soon, but we know already that the principal SFRA hotel will be two blocks from WisCon's main convention hotel and that all attending SFRA members will have access to almost all WisCon events. Naturally, the event will be held on the same weekend as WisCon—May 23-26, 2014.

Since the previous issue of *Review*, we have had some personnel changes. Due to other obligations Susan George had to step down as Treasurer. Even though she was not treasurer for long, she definitely helped the organization sail through the crucial period of membership renewals, which this year was additionally complicated with the introduction of the new membership back-end on the website. Thank you so much for this, Susan. Equal thanks are due to Steve Berman, who, without much earlier notice, kindly agreed to take over the position. Given his organizational skills proven at the Detroit conference in 2012, the transfer should not be felt in any way—just make sure you know who to send money to. We would also like to welcome Michael Klein, who is now officially

the co-editor of *SFRA Review* with Doug Davis.

Still in the changes department, during its Riverside meeting, the EC decided to proceed with several measures that will improve the look and the functionality of the website. If all goes well, we may see a new visual design by the end of the calendar year while the organizational memory, as reflected on the website, will definitely get a solid boost over the summer. We will steadily solidify our social media, too—our goal is to have at least one tweet a day with an interesting link to sf resources or CFPs as well as to shift at least some of the discussions from the email listserv to Facebook. Finally, we want to expand the many sections of the main website and for that we will need YOU—any organization is only as good as its members and with our collective know-how we can turn *sfra.org* into a major knowledge hub.

Some other matters discussed in Riverside during the EC meeting as well as the SFRA business meeting included a suggestion to transition *SFRA Review* to the electronic journal format, which would enable us to fully exploit affordances of the e-version. Doug and Michael will be looking into this, but don't expect any sudden moves. Soon, we will also be asking all members for any materials, photos or memories related to previous SFRA conferences, particularly those earlier than a decade or so ago. We dramatically need to record our own history before some of this is lost forever.

In the meantime, have a great summer. Read more books, see more movies and, maybe, play a few games.

#### VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## **This Program was a Co-production of the SFRA and the UC-Riverside Eaton Collection: Reflections on a Long Weekend Well Spent**

Amy J. Ransom

AS I LEFT MY STUDENTS with various tasks and headed to the airport, I left behind any sense of guilt—although there had been several groans of jealousy when I announced I was leaving for California when it was still a cold, damp and gloomy 45° in early April in mid-Michigan. Everything augured well as my connections were made, I glommed onto some fellow SFRAers' hotel shut-

tle (thanks, Mike!), and had several hours to wander Riverside's glorious little downtown. Reading some Lovecraft on my Kindle in the shady park below the foothills offered a peaceful, but somehow science-fictionally appropriate moment, as past and present, contemporary technology and classic cosmic horror blurred, before friends began to arrive and the flurry of the conference experience, both social and intellectual stimulation, began.

As we might expect given the conference theme of "Science-Fiction Media," the 2013 joint SFRA/Eaton Conference on Science Fiction offered attendees engaged discussions of a wide range of SF (and related genre) media texts, examined from an array of critical angles. While contemporary texts were heavily represented, papers covered the entire history of SF film and television from Lang's *Metropolis* (1927) to *The Watchmen* (2009) and from *Star Trek* (1966-1969) to *Caprica* (2010). Among the usual suspects for analysis were such classics as Wise's *The Day The Earth Stood Still* (1951)—part of a beautiful plenary analysis by Istvan Csiscery-Ronay, Jr.—and Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982), but some interest readings were presented using the tools of SF & F genre theory and criticism to examine *Breaking Bad* (2008-present) and *The Wild, Wild West* (1999). Presentations on radio and sound technology, screenwriting, and the intersection between music and SF broadened the array of media covered, with some really interesting and original connections being made between popular music and SF (for example, in Keren Omry's paper on Amon Tobin and Bjork or John Rieder's discussion of Sun Ra). I was a bit surprised that the presence of games and gaming was not greater, although a panel discussion and at least three papers addressed this topic.

In spite of this necessarily heavy presence of genre-related media, research on SF literature continues; what struck me here was the great variety of authors examined in the various papers. Only Octavia Butler, Kim Stanley Robinson and Ian Watson, it appears, had entire sessions organized around their work. Papers on Asimov, Atwood, Dick, McMaster Bujold, Heinlein, Herbert, and Wells demonstrated the tenacity of the classics; on the other hand, I came away with very few "exciting new must read" texts on my lists apart from Pablo Bacigalupi's *The Wind-Up Girl* (2009) which has been generating buzz at more than one recent conference. Few strikingly new critical approaches adorned the program either; papers and sessions organized around sub-genres (apocalypse, utopia/dystopia, time travel, alternate history) and critical approaches (feminist-gender-queer studies, ecocriticism, historico-

political readings) dominated; since Sheryl Vint's book and some of Joan Gordon's work, the animal-cyborg approach may be catching on (Travis West's paper on Ted Chiang's work—another perhaps rising author). Even colonial-postcolonial and indigenous studies approaches appear to have reached the mainstream of SF criticism.

Given my own personal interests, I attended almost all of the sessions involving international SFs; of the seventy total sessions, however, I can almost count on one hand the number of these dealing with non-Anglo-American texts. Japan's secondary "dominance"—in scare quotes because of its underrepresentation here—as a producer of science-fiction media appeared in the staggering *four* presentations on Japanese SF film, literature and manga. The entire Luso-Hispanic world was the object of only five papers, and single papers were delivered on texts from Russia, Québec (officially a "nation" within Canada). Although Mumbai's film industry known as Bollywood, along with India's other regional cinemas, now surpasses that of Hollywood in production and audience numbers, we see the slow development of SF film there with two papers on the topic, along with a session on *The Seventh Sense* (2011), a Tamil-language blockbuster. Jules Verne has been so thoroughly appropriated as an international figure—a point effectively made by Jean-Michel Margot in his presentation—that he cannot really be viewed as representing only a "French" national SF (although such arguments can certainly be made).

This was my first Eaton, and Riverside is a lovely, tourist-friendly town, with a wide variety of restaurants available within walking distance; the ambiance of the historic Mission Inn made me feel almost as if I had traveled in time, thus adding to the richness of the conference experience. In terms of participants, Anglo-American (I include English-speaking Canadians here, of which there were many participants, many of them good friends) again dominated the program, with a particularly heavy representation from UC-Riverside (at least two dozen participants) and the West Coast in general. Nonetheless, attendees hailed from as far away as Russia and India, Poland (our esteemed President) and Finland, Israel and Australia, India and the UK. At least three Canadian provinces and well over half of the fifty US states were represented. With plans for a Brazil conference location for 2015 and Toronto in 2016, our international profile and membership should continue to grow, while offering these exotic locations as intellectual tourist destinations. (If you don't think Toronto can be exotic, then read Nalo Hopkinson's *Brown Girl in the Ring* before you go!)

One of the huge advantages of the collaboration be-

tween SFRA and the Eaton conferences, with Riverside's location in Southern California and the focus on media this year, was the ability to include special guests that we otherwise would not have interacted with. In addition to the guest scholars like Vivian Sobchack and Marc Bould, as well as James Gunn who was honored in a paper session, and the writers David Brin, Gregory Benford, and Nalo Hopkinson, Hollywood and television "insiders" appeared in panel sessions, such as Kevin Grazier, science advisor for *Battlestar Galactica* (among others) and producer André Bormanis. Those who attended the Saturday evening awards banquet had the thrill of being in the same room as John Landis, who accepted the lifetime achievement awarded to Ray Harryhausen. Youngsters, if you don't know who these last two people are, then please Google!

The joint conference, although it presents some unique challenges, is definitely a rewarding and worthwhile experience. One of my first SFRA's was with the Robert A. Heinlein Centenary celebration—that certainly opened my perspectives on SF and its various fandoms, but also gave me the chance to listen to Arthur C. Clarke streaming to us from his South Pacific hideaway; next year's co-production with WisCon should also prove exciting and enlightening. See you in Madison!

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

Steven Berman

TO DATE, there are 333 members of the Science Fiction Research Association. This is a slight increase over the announced number of members presented during the April 2013 SFRA Business Meeting in Riverside, CA. In fact, previous members are renewing for 2013 at a slow but steady rate since the 2013 conference ended.

There are still quite a few previous members of SFRA who have not renewed their membership. Of course we will actively encourage these previous members to renew their membership while seeking new members, students and organizations to sign up. For those who don't know, the SFRA membership includes a subscription to *Science Fiction Studies* and *Extrapolation*.

At present, there is \$69,982.77 in the SFRA bank account. There are still several debts to be paid, but, financially, the SFRA is strong.

I want to thank Susan George for orienting me to my new role as Treasurer over the past few months, and I look forward to working as SFRA treasurer for the remainder of this term.



## Executive Committee Business Meeting Minutes [April 10 and 11, 2013]

Jenni Halpin

In attendance: Pawel Frelik, Amy Ransom, Susan George, Ritch Calvin, and Jenni Halpin. Also in attendance for relevant portions of the meeting: Doug Davis and Michael Klein (re: *SFRA Review*); Patrick Sharp (re: 2013 conference).

### I. SFRA Annual Meetings

- a. 2013: Riverside, CA (with Eaton). Patrick reports we're probably up 60 people over last year's numbers by the end of registration, with a big boost in California scholars joining SFRA. In the future it might be good to schedule a California SFRA in an off year for Eaton.
- b. 2014: Madison, WI (WisCon)—Mike Levy, Rebecca Holden, Victor Raymond. With the most recent estimates from Mike and with sharing guests of honor with WisCon, we think we can meet our costs at the WisCon registration rate of \$50. To keep on this budget, we should plan on our guest of honor being a critic from not too far away from Madison. We still plan to require presenters to be members of SFRA.
- c. 2015: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil—Alfredo Luiz Suppia. Alfredo is still weighing various locations and has not yet gotten down to specifics. We should poll at the business meeting this week about the number likely to go, to see if we can expect to have enough people in attendance. Pawel will ask Alfredo to submit a formal proposal by September.
- d. 2016: Seneca College, Toronto, or Stony Brook, NY—Graham Murphy or Ritch Calvin. Graham wants 2016 as it's the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the last time we were there, and he seems to have a lot of institutional support, though we have yet to see a specific proposal. Ritch will put in a proposal for Stony Brook in 2017, but we can also put the call out for other folks who are interested.

### II. Financial Matters

- a. Treasurer's Report (Susan). We have \$56,000. Our renewals and membership process this year has been complicated by not having an archived copy of who

renewed before December 28, 2012, due to the way the website update happened.

- b. Status of Grants. We need to regularize our budgeting and application processes for grants. We'll budget \$3000 per year for the purpose. Individual grants should be capped at \$300 for regional travel and \$500 for intercontinental travel. We'll institute a deadline of 60 days before the conference for conference travel applications but continue to offer research grants on a rolling basis. Application requirements (such as laying out a budget, explaining other possible funding sources, and providing an abstract of the work) will be posted online.

### III. Officers

- a. New Treasurer. As Susan needs to step down, the EC would like to appoint Steve Berman to assume the office.
- b. Bylaws. We need to get the current version (revised at last year's meeting in Detroit) up onto the website.
- c. Next Meeting(s) of the EC. Given our geographic dispersion, traveling to meet in person for a weekend seems unwieldy, yet we do not want to lose out on the synergy of a sustained time together. So, rather than holding the meeting as a single Skype, we'll try a series of Google hangouts, starting in September.

### IV. Organizational Memory

- a. We need a Dropbox account with full documentation, including labeled folders and dated documents. The IPP would be responsible for transitioning the account to the new President and EC. The VP would be responsible for uploading documents of the current EC.
- b. We should have an archive of past conferences and awards. A separate wiki, with access for conference directors and the EC, of the "conference Bible" and planning advice from those with experience would be helpful as well.

- V. Social Media. We need a new Press Officer, who would oversee persons responsible for Facebook and twitter, among other publicity issues. We should close the Facebook group but keep the Facebook page. We should link Facebook, Twitter, and Google+. We might want to enable logged-in members to tweet through the website. There's also a SFRA Steam group (gaming platform).

### VI. Membership

- a. How do we attract younger scholars? A good website; we have a stream site on gaming; there's also Google+; by integrating our web presence (twitter, Facebook, Google+, etc.); with a new cheap intro category without major journals? (but stressing that it makes sense

financially to take the journal subscription)

- i. Between \$20 for *SFS* and \$22 for *Extrapolation*, there isn't much left over for us on our cheapest membership. We could add a student option, at the same rate and condition as the emeritus option (*SFRA Review*, electronically, and access to the website, but not the other journals).
  - ii. We want to keep the maximum of five years at the student rate, though we don't currently monitor this limit.
  - iii. We'll discuss the new option at the business meeting.
- b. Prepare a 1-page promo leaflet that can be laid out at conferences

## VII. Publications

### a. *SFRA Review*

- i. Michael is now a coeditor. The *Review* just came out. Doug feels the electronic transition has been done well. It still looks good on paper; we can discuss moving further into digital form possibilities. Doug would like to consider wiki and web possibilities, alongside the periodical, perhaps. Michael will look into systems for online journals and look at models already out there. We need to stay periodical (with issue numbers) for tenure legibility. Do we have the same ISSN? The print option will be a yearbook form for the foreseeable future. We're working on hotlinking the products mentioned so that Amazon purchases can generate a revenue stream. Reviewed works pretty much are being linked, but we could have links to everything that is referenced, too. If we make further changes to our subscriptions, we have to put out multiple messages/warnings to be sure folks are informed of them.
  - ii. Susan reports some libraries are reporting not receiving copies. The list sent of library subscribers needs to be double-checked. (Patrick was present he noted that EBSCO is a poor middleman for library subscriptions and we should do direct marketing to libraries.)
  - iii. Doug's term is up at the next SFRA. He's willing to continue but doesn't want to keep it if somebody else wants it. (Editor terms are 3 years, renewable.)
  - iv. If Michael is staying on as coeditor, he'll drop non-fiction in December.
  - v. The EC has been putting out calls for interested parties.
- b. There was a scanning initiative at, Ritch thinks, Univ. of Central Florida; he identified what they have. We were going to try to fill in the holes. We have an agree-

ment with them about the project, and we should at least link to their page that indexes our issues.

- c. SFRA anthology. We're still getting royalties off of the old one. To do a new one we'd have to start from scratch. It might be better to try to fill the gap in availabilities with an electronic publication. We should use the current anthology as a basis and add more non-white, non-male, non-American SF. We need an editor to do the work of selecting and of obtaining permissions.
- d. Publication of 101 articles in book format. The *SFRA Review* #303 has a call for submissions due summer-time.

## VIII. Website

- a. The current set up can do the downloading of subscriptions, if we can learn how to use it and reliably have the administrative permissions.
- b. What's next?
  - i. Reports, especially who has ordered which journals, need to be easily downloadable. Matt needs to be told more about what we are trying to do with the back end information management.
  - ii. We should make the member directory an online directory behind the password (rather than a print directory). It'd be great if it were dynamically searchable.
  - iii. Pawel will look into a redesign on the assumption that a Polish designer could do something great for just two to three thousand USD.
  - iv. Content needs to be updated going forward and filled in going back.
  - v. Members should be encouraged to contribute.

## IX. Awards

- a. We need to recruit a new member to each of the awards committees
- b. Student essay award—redefine and tighten criteria?
  - i. Clarify that it is an award for the paper as presented, not a revised paper
  - ii. Give submitters a formatting guide.
- c. Awards winners—which we sponsor, and which expenses?
  - i. Mary Kay Bray Award (*Review* publication): none
  - ii. Student Paper Award: check with Patrick
  - iii. Pilgrim (lifetime), Pioneer (critical essay), and Clareson (service): room, travel, and conference registration
  - iv. Also the banquet and a lifetime membership for the Pilgrim and Clareson

## X. Adjournment

# General Membership Business Meeting Minutes [April 13, 2013]

Jenni Halpin

Meeting called to order at 12:30 p.m.

All of the EC was in attendance (Pawel Frelik, Amy Ransom, Susan George, Ritch Calvin, and Jenni Halpin), as well as some 25 other SFRA members.

Treasurer's Report (Susan George): We have some journals to pay and some membership fees to deposit, but our checking account currently stands at approximately \$56,000. We have \$20,000 in reserve. Our current membership numbers approximately 320 (up from our usual 250 to 275). Susan is resigning as treasurer. With his agreement, the EC have appointed Steven Berman to take over the office. Steve and Susan will work together to achieve the transition over the next few weeks, including moving the bank account to Detroit.

2013 Conference (Patrick Sharp): Patrick has enjoyed working with Eaton. Having the conference in California has worked nicely to attract California scholars, who previously had not been SFRA members in such numbers. A full budget report is forthcoming.

Speaking for Eaton, Melissa Conway reports costs around \$40,000 in expenses and \$22,000 in staff preparation. The location's been generally enjoyed, but before such a collaboration is attempted again an MOU should be put in place.

Upcoming Conferences (Pawel): We're working with WisCon to have as full a coordination as possible for a joint conference in May 2014. We will still require presenters in our panels to be SFRA members. WisCon will be selecting writers as guests of honor; we will try to bring in a scholar guest of honor. Mike Levy will be coordinating.

Alfredo reports that he is getting going with planning for 2015 in Brazil. He is considering Sao Paolo, Juiz d'fore, or Rio de Janeiro. Juiz d'fore is where Alfredo's home university is, and they are interested in hosting. It's a small town about two or three hours from Rio by car or bus. Rio might be a more difficult location, especially in terms of negotiating good prices. (Ritch notes that airfare from Florida to Ontario, CA, is pretty similar to airfare from Florida to Sao Paolo.) Late June would be a good time of year.

The general body present expressed interest in attending in Brazil, with questions about visas. We'll have to get into that, but it should just be a bit of extra paperwork for most members. We'll have a survey of interest among the broader membership.

Pawel reports plans emerging for SFRA 2016 in Toronto, which will be 30 years since we were last there.

Ritch is planning for Stonybrook in 2017; the location is convenient from Manhattan, with a film festival, national labs, the Staller Center for the Arts, and other resources.

We will also send out a call to the membership for proposals for conference sites.

*SFRA Review* (Doug Davis): We lost funding for print distribution from Eau Claire and therefore shifted to digital and print on demand, which was a fast shift but went smoothly. This might be our opportunity to change the *Review* to take advantage of being digital, and the editors are now looking for models to consider following. We're mindful of the need to continue being legible for tenure review purposes (and of how beneficial it would be if we were able to join the web of science).

SFRA Publicity (Pawel): We need a new publicity officer. We have somebody working on Facebook and somebody for twitter, but we need somebody overall seeing to what gets promoted about the association (and especially the conference). Lisa Yaszek notes that the position was created to report to the VP, keeping the website updated, coordinating with Facebook and twitter and such, and generally putting out the word; the thought at the time had been that a pre-dissertation graduate student would be a good person to have in the role.

Membership (Pawel): We want to be keeping up and growing our membership, including retaining those who might otherwise just join for a single year to present at the conference. One idea is a basic membership category, modeled on our current \$35 emeritus category. Patrick wonders how this category would affect student members gaining access to three years' back issues of *Science Fiction Studies*. Art would consider the promotion of such a category a bit of a separation between SFRA and *SFS*, as it could translate into fewer subscriptions and require a higher rate for SFRA subscriptions to *SFS*.

General discussion continued, including the observation that many other associations regularly require membership and even subscriptions as a prerequisite to presenting at the conference. There was a general consensus against creating such a membership level. Counter suggestions included:

- there could be some kind of small grants to graduate student members to remit their costs;
- making renewal automatic might keep more people current in their memberships, but it would also leave many at lower levels of membership rather than shifting upward from a basic to a regular membership;
- perhaps we could create a "sustaining membership" category at a higher annual rate, or scale our rate to income as many other associations do.

Recruitment (Amy): We're creating a one-page promotional sheet that folks can place at tables at other conferences (e.g. ICFA, SLSA, American Academy of Religion, Video Games conferences). E-mail Amy the listservs you're on, and she'll send you information to post to them.

Awards Committees (Pawel): We need volunteers for the committees. We have someone for Pioneer lined up. Craig volunteers for Mary Kay Bray; Grace and Larisa volunteers for any of the committees.

Website (Pawel): We lost the database last year, which is why everybody needed a new registration on the site. Overall the transition was successful, and we have lots of benefits on the back end of the site. We have the ability to do automatic membership renewals. We want a graphics redesign, though. And we want a lot more materials posted online, including our organizational memory in terms of ephemera from past conferences, awards committee members and awardees, etc. We also want to encourage members to contribute content to the site.

With no further business, meeting adjourned at 1:36 p.m.



PILGRIM AWARD

Remarks

Brian Attebery (Chair); Roger Luckhurst; Lisa Yaszek

*For lifetime contributions to SF/F studies*

THANKS TO THE SFRA for creating this award and to the other members of this year's Pilgrim committee, Lisa Yaszek and Roger Luckhurst, for the thought-provoking and congenial conversation that led to our choice.

Since the winner has already been announced and there is no suspense, I will take a slightly roundabout route to talking about our honoree and her distinguished contributions to our field.

I saw my first 3D printer back in 2004, in Kate Hayles's house. That seems like as good a way as any to begin talking about her unique place within science fiction scholarship. What kind of literary scholar has a piece of cutting-edge technology in her home? One with wide interests and good connections, obviously. One who has never limited herself to canonical texts or standard conceptions of their value and functions. Hayles is a cultural critic, like our previous Pilgrims Donna Haraway and Fredric Jameson. Like Haraway, she began as a scientist and is able to track an important idea across cultural and disciplinary boundaries. She is able to translate the discourses of cybernetics and chaos theory into humanistic inquiry without turning them into empty metaphors. She can talk to artists and scientists and writers and entrepreneurs—as a matter of fact, the reason I was in her house was that I was taking part in a symposium on nanotechnology organized by Hayles in an attempt to create a conversation among just such disparate groups. The symposium was a natural outgrowth of her double background as well as her earlier published work on relationships between scientific models and literary techniques.

But back to the printer. A 3D printer turns information into solid objects, but it does not do so magically, like a Star Trek replicator. Early printers were slow, bulky, and expensive. The objects they created were papery things rather like wasps' nests. To produce even such insubstantial artifacts required new generations of software and major retoolings of hardware. I'd like to turn that 3D printer into a metaphor, but, I hope, not one emptied of its materiality and scientific reasoning.

In Hayles's book *Writing Machines*, she looks at the usually invisible technologies that produce written texts. Even if one sticks to print, rather than reading on an e-reader, the

book in one's hand no longer seems to be the direct and natural expression of a writer's intentions. It is the result of a collaborative effort that incorporates highly sophisticated devices at every stage from invention to sales. Reading Hayles, it struck me that books are more like movies than we usually think. The book in my hand is the result of a different sort of 3D printing. It is a truism in film criticism (or it ought to be) that all cinematic effects are special effects: which is to say that all movies are science fictional if we think about not only what shows on the screen but what went on behind the scenes to produce those images and sounds. The same is true of books. Nowadays, when a printed book is merely the hard-copy version of an electronic file and when whole libraries of early texts have taken up residence in electronic archives, when variorum editions of Shakespeare can be read the same way we might read the diverging paths of a choose-your-adventure tale, when sources and commentaries hover hypertextually around every classic—now more than ever we need people like Hayles to show us the machine in operation, and thus to help us understand our ramified, cyborgized, science fictional existence.

Luckily we have Katherine Hayles around, and even more fortunately, she has chosen to pay attention to and give credit to the writers who care about both machines and non-empty scientific metaphors. She is one of the best readers of sf we have. Scattered throughout her work are breathtaking analyses of writers like Philip K. Dick, Stanislaw Lem, and Neal Stephenson. She is also one of the most insightful commentators on the overlapping communities of scientists, writers, and readers who use sf images and story arcs to explore our technologized, mediated, post-future world. She has given us a wealth of quotable wisdom on everything from paradigm shifts to comics. In our online discussion of this award, my fellow committee members and I considered many worthy candidates, but we kept coming back to Hayles. As Lisa Yaszek said in our discussions, "Hayles is important to sf studies because of her emphasis on the mutual co-evolution of humans and machines: we engineer machines but our interactions with them simultaneously re-engineer what it means to be human."

To that I would add that part of what makes Hayles's work so provocative and useful is that she never loses sight of the materiality of books, machines, or humans. She reminds us that we too are 3D objects, printed from complex genetic instructions by the nanomachines in our cells. We are embodied even when we forget that fact and imagine ourselves as free-floating bits of information. Hayles finds great hope in this fact.

"As long," she says, "as the human subject is envisioned as an autonomous self with unambiguous boundaries, the human-computer interface can only be parsed as a division between the solidity of real life on one side and the



illusion of virtual reality on the other, thus obscuring the far-reaching changes initiated by the development of virtual technologies.” But if we break free of older models of consciousness, the body, and autonomous self, she promises, “human functionality expands because the parameters of the cognitive system it inhabits expand. In this model, it is not a matter of leaving the body behind but rather of extending embodied awareness in highly specific, local, and material ways that would be impossible without electronic prostheses. [...] Although some current versions of the post-human point toward the antihuman and the apocalyptic, we can craft others that will be conducive to the long-range survival of humans and of the other life-forms, biological and artificial, with whom we share the planet and ourselves” (*How We Became Posthuman* 290-91).

For that vision as well as all her other contributions to the study of science fiction, the SFRA is pleased to present this year’s Pilgrim Award to N. Katherine Hayles.

## Acceptance Speech

N. Katherine Hayles

I CAME TO SCIENCE FICTION LATE—not as a kid but as a young adult. That was because my older brother, who had a paper route and so a little money of his own, subscribed to the SF magazines, stashing them under his bed and forbidding me to touch them. By the time I was an undergraduate, I too had a little money of my own and began buying SF novels, sometimes devouring them through the night until the letters blurred on the page as dawn broke. The taste of the forbidden lingered, for these were guilty pleasures, stolen time from useful tasks I was supposed to be accomplishing, like memorizing the periodic table. Fast forward to my first job, when instead of offering courses on Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, I was sneaking in courses in science fiction, another guilty pleasure. No surprise, then, that my colleagues kicked me out at the first opportunity. The second time around I was canner and figured I had better negotiate *before* I look the job. “I want to teach science fiction courses,” I said. “Fine,” they said. “And I want to write about science fiction,” I said. “Fine,” they said. It was going all too smoothly; I suspected a trap. But no, instead of being fired this time around, I was promoted.

In the intervening years, I have had time to invent some convincing rationales for these once-guilty pleasures. Science fiction has finally emerged from the closet and marched into our classrooms, and indeed into the brilliant Southern California sunshine and the archives of the superb Eaton Collection at UC Riverside. Science fiction texts are the best books I know to interrogate the complexities of our contemporary technosciences and their conceptual and cul-

tural implications. Without a doubt, science fiction scholarship is now a mature field, with several journals to its credit, an active community in which scholars and writers both participate, a series of regional, national, and international conferences, and a robust array of books and articles published each year. Attending the SFRA conference this year, I am reminded again how supportive and congenial is the SF community. I am thrilled to think that I have contributed to it in some way. I thank the selection committee for their vote of confidence in my work; all those colleagues here and elsewhere whose work has enriched my own research; and everyone who has worked to make not just this conference, but the field as a whole, such a success. I am deeply honored and at the same time humbled by the Pilgrim Award, and I look forward to many more stimulating exchanges with you all.

## PIONEER AWARD

## Remarks

Neil Easterbrook (Chair); Keren Omry; Amy Ransom

*For outstanding SF Studies essay of the year*

*Winner: Lysa Rivera for “Future Histories and Cyborg Labor: Reading Borderlands Science Fiction after NAFTA.” Science Fiction Studies 39.3 (November 2012): 415-436.*

THIS YEAR THE PIONEER AWARD COMMITTEE, consisting of Keren Omry, Amy Ransom, and, alas, me, read approximately 130 new essays published in the calendar year 2012. That number is down considerably from two years ago, but still speaks to a substantial and healthy body of scholarly work in the field. Especially notable in the last several years is the number of, well let’s call them “mainstream” scholarly journals, that are now publishing substantial essays primarily about sf and sf texts. That’s a very healthy phenomenon.

I’d like to thank both Keren and Amy especially because in this last year I’ve been rather distracted, for personal reasons, and I wasn’t a very good chair. However, both of our colleagues were exceptional in the care and precision of their reading, and we have both a prizewinner and an honorable mention.

Our honorable mention goes to Hugh C. O’Connell, for “Mutating toward the future: the convergence of utopianism, postcolonial sf, and the postcontemporary longing for form in Amitav Ghosh’s *The Calcutta Chromosome*” published in *Modern Fiction Studies*. One committee member offered this comment on O’Connell’s essay: “A stylishly written, significant contribution to the field in that the au-

thor puts Postcolonial SF on the map by publishing this essay for a mainstream audience. His analysis builds on a small, but growing body of work on Amitav Ghosh's *Calcutta Chromosome*, and brings to bear the work of Ashis Nandy in what, as far as I know, is the first application of that utopian thinker's work to postcolonial sf. The author explores the novel's critical paradigm of "counter-science" as a means of breaking with the teleological aims of empire and as an attempt to imagine the future as "radical possibility."

Hugh could not be with us but sends these thoughts: "First, I'd like to give my sincere appreciation and thanks to the SFRA and the Pioneer Awards committee; with such a wealth and prodigious diversity of great sf work being done today, in a vast array of venues, it is truly an honor to receive their recognition. I'd like to thank everyone who provided me with feedback and comments on early drafts of the article: Scott Michaelsen, Salah Hassan, Zarena Aslami, Justus Nieland—and especially Sarah Hamblin. I'd also like to thank R. Radha-krishnan for his thoughtful advice on the final draft, and for ultimately choosing to include the article in his special issue on "Modern Fiction and Politics" for *MFS*. Finally, my heartfelt congratulations to everyone being recognized today. Cheers! Hugh C. O'Connell."

Professor O'Connell's essay was terrific, as were many others, and the committee had a very hard time selecting between them. But when we came to an agreement, it was unanimous. As for the winning essay, one committee member assessed it this way: "With this pertinent and appropriate postcolonial reading of "borderlands sf," sf produced in the US-Mexico border region by Chicano/a and Northern Mexican writers and filmmakers, the author is performing cutting edge work. The close analysis of Alex Rivera's *Sleep Dealer* adds to our understanding of a film rapidly becoming a minor sf classic; her examination of the graphic novel *Lunar Braceros* presents a completely unstudied text. Rivera reads these texts as allegories for the post-NAFTA era, drawing on Tom Moylan's notion of the 'critical dystopia' and on Gloria Anzaldúa's *borderlands/la frontera* theory."

The Pioneer Award for 2013 goes to "Future Histories and Cyborg Labor: Reading Borderlands Science Fiction after NAFTA," published in *Science Fiction Studies*, by Professor Lysa Rivera.

## Acceptance Speech

Lysa Rivera

WHEN IT COMES TO SCIENCE FICTION OF THE BORDERLANDS—by which of course I mean science fiction produced here in the consumer-oriented culture of El Norte and in the labor-oriented culture of Mexico—the cyborg assumes important significance. U.S. filmmaker Alex

Rivera and Guillermo Lavin, Mexican resident of Reynosa (of the McAllen-Reynosa "borderplex"), not only deploy the cyborg metaphor to symbolize and militate against dehumanized and invisible forms of migrant labor (which the U.S. consumer benefits from the most). More importantly they also remind us that the historical and lived experiences of labor in the age of desert capitalism actually anticipates the cyborg Hollywood fell in love with in the 1980s, when Ridley Scott's *Terminator* smashed its way into our collective U.S. imaginary.

One hundred miles from here in Tijuana, Mexico, the "sleep factories" Alex Rivera imagines in *Sleep Dealer* actually exist—and have since 1965, when the first *maquiladora* opened its doors. Yet how many filmgoers actually know about the life of the flat-screen TV before the display window? How many people actually know that the border *colonias* that house the factory-workers fail to provide the basic necessities of daily life: safe drinking water, electricity, and waste management? How many know that many *maquiladoras* require random pregnancy tests to ensure optimal labor output from their young female employees? This labor, precisely because it's invisible, is sheltered from both tax burdens and public scrutiny.

While the border has become thoroughly militarized, where high-tech surveillance technologies, including aerial drones and underground sensors, police and contain brown bodies, the benefits of indigenous and commodities of indigenous labor continues to cross over to the other side. Far more than laboratories for the postmodern condition that bespeak the future of global capitalism, cities like Juárez and Tijuana are where the dark side of our post-human technoculture is playing itself out.

If by chance my essay on borderlands science fiction enjoys even a slightly wider readership because of this award, it may prompt more people to read, think, and talk about the alternate economies Pita and Sanchez imagine in *Lunar Braceros*, or the cross-border alliances suggested at the very end of Alex Rivera's *Sleep Dealer*. Perhaps more people will learn about Guillermo Lavín, whose short-story "Reaching the Shore" examined the ravaging ecological and psychological effects of transnational capitalism from the perspective of indigenous eyes the year NAFTA was ratified. If anything, more people will realize that science fiction along the borderlands has important stories to tell about the price many have paid to make our accelerated technoculture possible and affordable.

Borderlands science fiction makes the invisible hand of global capitalism visible. In refusing to take the mundane world for granted, it challenges its readers on both sides of the border to think long and deeply about machine culture and the ravaging tolls it has taken on those who live, love, work, and die in the borderlands.

## CLARESON AWARD

### Remarks

Joan Gordon (Chair); Alan Elms; Ed Carmien

*For distinguished service*

*Speech delivered by Alan Elms*

AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, the Clareson Award was named in honor of Tom Clareson, who was the SFRA's founding President. As originally established, "The Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service is presented for outstanding service activities—promotion of SF teaching and study, editing, reviewing, editorial writing, publishing, organizational meetings, mentoring, and leadership in SF/fantasy organizations." The first Clareson Award was presented in 1996, and the early choices were obvious: Fred Pohl, Jim Gunn, Betty Hull. When I became SFRA president in 1999, it still seemed easy to draw up a list of well-qualified candidates for the Clareson Award. But the Awards Committee had a question for me: should the recipient be someone who had done outstanding service in ALL those eight areas originally stipulated, or could it be someone who had served in just half a dozen areas, let's say, or perhaps only one or two? I had not been privy to the planning of the Award, so I didn't know what to suggest to the committee or who to ask for further elucidation. One of my Executive Advisers—probably Joan Gordon, my most reliable adviser throughout my presidency—at least knew whom to ask. She said, "Go ask Alice."

Alice was, of course, Alice Clareson, Tom's widow. Alice had worked closely with Tom during all his years with the SFRA, and after his death she had been a vigorous advocate for the development of the Clareson Award. I don't recall whether I telephoned her or emailed her, but I do remember her quick and emphatic response: *Of course* the award should go to someone who had served outstandingly in *all eight* areas. Tom himself had done them all, Alice said, and our field was much the better for his work in all of them. Why should any prospective recipient of the Clareson Award be expected to do less?

So the Awards Committee had its authoritative answer, and for at least the next several years the Clareson Awards were so chosen: on the basis of broad and outstanding service in all the areas as originally defined. I haven't closely followed the awards in recent years, but from a quick look at the list of recipients, I'd say the awards committees have been keeping firmly in mind Tom Clareson's model and Alice Clareson's expectations.

Now we come to 2013 and to the 18<sup>th</sup> winner of the Clareson

Award, Rob Latham. This year's Awards committee, with Joan Gordon as chair plus me and Ed Carmien, quickly reached unanimity when Rob's name was proposed. We did not go systematically through that list of eight service areas, I must confess; but we knew that Rob had been all over the SFRA map for some years and was simply this year's most obvious candidate. Joan had been working with Rob as a co-editor of *Science Fiction Studies* and knew him well. Ed and I both took a look at Rob's vitae to confirm our general impressions, and we were duly impressed. Rob is central to UC Riverside's ongoing efforts to develop an impressive science fiction studies program at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and of course he is co-director of this year's Eaton and SFRA conference as well as several previous Eaton conferences. Those are only parts of the ways in which he fulfills items one and eight in that eight-item list of service activities. Regarding item two, I've already noted his important role as an editor of *SF Studies*. His editorial activities also include editing the *Oxford Handbook of Science Fiction* and co-editing the *Wesleyan Anthology of Science Fiction*, plus service on the editorial boards of the journals *Writing Technologies* and *Science Fiction Film and Television* and the editorial board of consultants for the *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, among others. As Ed Carmien has told me, Rob is in various ways "a behind the scenes road builder and, certainly, traffic cop who helps assure that ideas of quality move swiftly from idea to published page." I won't go through the rest of Rob's vitae to check off the rest of the eight service areas, but be assured that they all are there, impressively fulfilled. One field that particularly drew my attention—since I read a lot more book reviews than books—is item three, reviewing. Rob has written an astonishing number of book reviews, published in many venues over the past quarter-century. Here is just a partial list of those reviews [*CV print-out held up for display*]-many reviews of varying length, of both nonfiction and fiction. At the end of this list of reviews in his vitae, Rob adds rather casually, "Plus over 50 other reviews, mostly of contemporary fiction, in various publications."

I could go on, and on and on, but I'm eager to hear from Rob himself. Back briefly to item one, I'll mention that in the online Rate Your Professors website, Rob consistently gets excellent evaluations from undergraduates, in spite of several reports that he "curses a lot"—and one student says he's "super hot in a nerdy, intelligent way." Outside of our list of eight service areas, Joan also tells me that Rob "is a good cook who has to work around a completely salt-free regime"—an attribute that impresses me as merely an adequate cook with high blood pressure. Finally and sadly, I'll note that Alice Clareson passed away at the end of 2012, aged 83. But I'm pretty sure that if she were able to be with us tonight, she would give her full approval to Rob Latham as the recipient of the 2013 Thomas D. Clareson Award.



## Acceptance Speech

Rob Latham

FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK Alan Elms and the selection committee for even considering me for this award. I am very humbled and grateful. As I tell my graduate students, service is one of those invisible and largely unrewarded activities that faculty engage in out of some combination of commitment to the profession and work-ethical guilt. This award is thus a fitting tribute to the memory of Tom Claerson, whose service to our field was so extensive and extraordinary.

I would like to say a few words of tribute to two gentlemen who were mentors to me, and whose service to our community was vast and often unrecognized. The first is Robert A. Collins, founder of the International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts, who invited me to join the staff of his journal *Fantasy Review* when I was still an undergraduate student. Bob taught me the editorial skills that have served me well for over two decades now. He also gave me the first opportunity to present my work at a conference and was instrumental in assisting with my first publications. I doubt I would have been accepted to a first-rate PhD program were it not for Bob's assistance and good counsel. Like so many of us, I owe him a debt that is almost incalculable, and I regret that I cannot share this happy occasion with him tonight.

Richard D. Mullen also founded one of the key institutions in our field, the journal *Science Fiction Studies*, and managed and edited it, on and off, for some fifteen years. Dale invited me to review for the journal when I was still a graduate student, giving me high-profile publications that undoubtedly helped me land my first academic position at the University of Iowa. Some years later, he was generous enough to invite me to replace him as reviews editor, and the day I joined the editorial collective of *SFS* is among the proudest of my professional career. I only met Dale once, at his apartment in Terre Haute, Indiana in 1997, where he gave me his priceless collection of SF reference works, saying "you'll need these now." A couple of weeks later he was dead, and so again I am unable to tell him just how much his mentorship meant to me.

But it seems fitting at this moment to acknowledge the tireless work of these two men, who made our field richer through their selfless service. All I have tried to do, in whatever small way I can, is to follow their example and give back to the field that has given me so much. Thank you.

MARY K. BRAY AWARD

## Remarks

Sharon Sharp (Chair); Joan Haran; T. S. Miller

*For the best essay, interview, or extended review in the past year's SFRA Review*

*Winner: Chris Pak for "Terraforming 101." SFRA Review 302 (Fall 2012): 6-15.*

ON BEHALF OF THE MARY K. BRAY AWARD COMMITTEE, I am pleased to announce that this year's award for the best essay, interview, or extended review in the *SFRA Review* goes to Chris Pak for his essay "Terraforming 101" which appeared in the Fall issue. As one committee member commented, "This feature on terraforming—and, secondarily, the relationship of terraforming to the Gaia hypothesis—packs a tremendous deal of information into a relatively small space, documenting both major themes from their earliest days in SF." In the essay, Chris "tracks the co-incidence of the Gaia hypothesis and terraforming both before and after the concepts had even been formally named and introduced in non-SF discourse" and "hints at the two-way influence between SF depictions of terraforming and popular and scientific culture." In the estimation of the committee members, the essay is "an invaluable resource" that promises to "open up many new potential paths for future work." The Mary Kay Bray Award Committee is pleased to present the award to Chris Pak.

## Acceptance Speech

Chris Pak

I AM ASTOUNDED AND GRATIFIED to have received the Mary Kay Bray Award. Coming just months after completing my PhD, it seems a landmark from which I can look back on all the support that I received from members of the SFRA since I first began to get involved with the organisation. It has truly been a formative experience for me, helping me to "grow up," so to speak, as a scholar, and I am looking forward with pleasure and anticipation to a future of continued contributions to this scholarly community.

There are many people I would like to thank: the award



committee, and Doug Davis, who has been a supportive editor of the *SFRA Review*. To Andrew Ferguson, for his friendship and kind offer to say a few words on my behalf at the awards ceremony; I regret that I was unable to attend to thank everyone in person. To Pawel Frelik, who organised the 2011 SFRA conference at Poland and so gave me my first experience with the wider SFRA community and allowed me to meet many great people.

I must extend a very special thank you to Andy Sawyer who, in 2006, first brought to my attention that it was possible to study science fiction academically. Since then, his mentorship throughout my MA and Ph.D has been stimulating and delightful. It was his encouragement that led me to write the original draft of "Terraforming 101"—an absolutely gigantic document in its initial form and a work that could only have been written toward the end of my Ph.D. Others have supported me along the way. I would like to think of this award as a testimony to all their encouragement and criticism.

I would like to thank everyone again for their support, and for the honour of the Mary Kay Bray Award. Many thanks!

#### STUDENT PAPER AWARD

### Remarks

James Thrall (Chair); Sonja Fritzsche; Eric Otto

*For best student paper presented at the previous year's SFRA meeting*

*Winner: W. Andrew Shephard for "Beyond the Wide World's End": Themes of Cosmopolitanism in Alfred Bester's The Stars My Destination."*

ANDREW SHEPHARD'S ESSAY, "Beyond the Wide World's End": Themes of Cosmopolitanism in Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination*, offers a quite relevant conversation about contemporary issues of cosmopolitanism, even while addressing a novel written more than fifty years ago. As Shephard explains, Alfred Bester's 1956 novel *The Stars My Destination* emerged out of a particularly rich engagement with a newly globalized world by post-war Golden Age science fiction writers. In Bester's novel, Shephard argues, mentally generated teleportation, or "jaunting," destabilizes global economies and

presents new challenges for concepts of national identity in ways that have prophetic resonance for today. In his essay, Shephard makes good use of the political concept of cosmopolitanism advanced by political candidate Wendell Wilkie, as well as Emile Durkheim's theory of organicism in building a well-developed argument that moves a reader easily from one point to the next. Committee members praised the essay for being coherent, focused, and accessibly written in clear prose that manages to convey sophisticated ideas while still inviting a reader in.

## Acceptance Speech

W. Andrew Shephard

HELLO, EVERYONE. As I am accepting this award for a paper on *The Stars, My Destination*, I was half-tempted to deliver this speech in "gutter" as Gully does at the end of the novel. And then I realized that you all would never have me back. At any rate, I am tremendously honored to be the recipient of this year's SFRA student paper award. It truly means a lot, not only to win, but also to have such a warm, inviting and supportive environment in which to share one's work. This is my third time at SFRA and every time I come out, I return home having learned so much and feeling utterly energized to be working in science fiction scholarship. It is a truly humbling and rewarding experience to be recognized by such a venerable institution.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the awards committee for their acknowledgement, as well as Sarah Zettel for being a wonderful respondent and moderator. She was a very comforting presence in what can still be something of a nerve-wracking situation for me. I would also like to thank Stanford University, both for their generous support of graduate student research and for their continued tolerance of my generally weird scholarly interests. And special thanks to Mark McGurl for *enthusiastically* agreeing to let me write a paper on Alfred Bester for his *Literature @ Scale* seminar, as well as the very helpful comments he gave as feedback. It is definitely a stronger paper for them. Writing and presenting this paper has been, without a doubt, one of the most rewarding experiences of my academic career so far. I look forward to trying to top it. And I look forward to seeing all of you in Madison next year. Thanks again.

## Brain and Dualism in *Star Trek*

Victor Grech

### Introduction

IN THE PHILOSOPHIES that deal with the mind, dualism is the precept that mental phenomena are, to some degree, non-physical and not completely dependent on the physical body, which includes the organic brain.

René Descartes (1596-1650) popularised this concept, maintaining that the mind is an immaterial and non-physical essence that gives rise to self-awareness and consciousness. Dualism can be extended to include the notion that more broadly asserts that the universe contains two types of substances, on the one hand, the impalpable mind and consciousness and, on the other hand, common matter. This is in contrast with other world-views, such as monism, which asserts that all objects contained in the universe are reducible to one reality, and pluralism which asserts that the number of truly fundamental realities exceed two.

Star Trek (ST) is a fictional possible future history of how humanity might advance and develop up to the 24th century. The series and movies comprise a metanarrative that encompasses 735 hours of viewing time, and thereby provides a fertile ground for the analysis of various areas of critical study.

This paper will review the philosophy of the mind as depicted in ST, and will show that ST accedes to mind-body dualism, with a cognitive proviso that in turn complies with the tropes and conventions that are recognised not only by ST, but also within the broader scope of the SF genre itself. An inevitable tension will be shown to have arisen between the notion of what is, to all intents and purposes, a soul, with the spiritual and possibly even deist accoutrements that this brings along, versus science, which, even within SF, acknowledges exclusively rational tropes and explanations, an acknowledgment which would automatically exclude these motifs.

This paper will also demonstrate the interesting permutations and combinations of mind-body and mind-mind interaction that is only possible within this genre, with narratives that include the crossing of consciousness not only across organic bodily boundaries, but also across and between machine consciousnesses. It is crucial to note that these narratives ignore the warnings of post-humanist researchers who believe “that the mind-body duality is a social construction that obscures the holistic

nature of human experience” (Hayles 245) and ignores “the importance of embodiment” (20).

Moreover, this essay will show that in the vast majority of cases, these interactions constitute one of two events: a dybbuk, which, in Jewish mythology, is defined as the possession of the body by a malevolent spirit, usually that of a dead person, or outright possession by beings with superhuman powers. The narratives then focus on countermeasures that need to be undertaken in order to restore the original personality into its former body, thereby emulating a morality play, with good mastering evil.

### Narratives

For the purposes of this essay, only sources that are canonical to the ST *gesamtkunstwerk* are considered, i.e. the television series and the movies.

#### *Mind resides in brain*

The certain knowledge that consciousness somehow resides within the physical brain is acknowledged in Daniel’s “Spock’s Brain.” In this episode, the *Enterprise*’s Vulcan first officer has his brain forcibly removed surgically. The remaining physical husk is clearly unconscious, while consciousness and self-awareness are retained within the relocated brain. Spock is eventually reanimated when the brain (which houses mind) is reunited with the body.

Mind alone has also been removed from body and brain in several episodes, as will now be shown. This is done through alien technology or through alien practices, plot techniques that bow to SF precepts that in turn invoke science, since SF purports to be science’s handmaiden, a key concept that will be discussed later.

#### *Humanoid to humanoid*

One of the most famous episodes in ST The Original Series is “The Enemy Within” (Penn), wherein Kirk’s mind is divorced from its Jungian shadow, a clear attempt at the depiction of the admixture that resides within the individual: gentle and compassionate vs. an assertive and brutal heart of darkness, two polar opposites which must be fused and somehow integrated and balanced in order to achieve coherent behaviour.

This series’ last episode also terminates with Kirk’s body being taken over by a human female, while his consciousness is simultaneously transferred to her body, through the use of alien technology. Spock discovers the exchange and, pointing to the woman, claims, “that whatever it is that makes James Kirk a living being special to himself is being held here in this body.” Naturally, all is set right again at the end of the episode (Wallerstein, “Turnabout

Intruder”).

The Trill species host a slug-like and long-lived symbiont that retains the memories of its more short-lived hosts. These memories, and indeed, entire personalities may be triggered and may temporarily take over other willing individuals in a ritual that is designed to allow the host to physically encounter previous hosts whose memories the symbiont retains permanently (Bole, “Facets”). This will be seen to be one of the few instances in this essay when host bodies are willingly offered for hosting. And this is shown not to be without risk as during the ceremony, a previous host (Curzon Dax) and the individual who was temporarily meant to serve as host (Constable Odo) so greatly enjoy this new co-existence that they actively consider remaining permanently combined.

Yet another willing hosting occurs when, after an accident, the *Enterprise* is lost and Spock speculates that he might perhaps be able to telepathically mind-meld with an alien who is also a superb navigator.

Perhaps for the purpose of this emergency I might become Kollos. [...] A fusion. A mind-link to create a double entity. Each of us would enjoy the knowledge and sensory capabilities of both. We will function as one being. [...] If the link is successful there will be a tendency to lose separate identity. A necessary risk.

This works and the ship returns to Federation space (Senseny, “Is There in Truth No Beauty?”).

A Borg drone is also witnessed to have similar problems. This is a member of a species that subjugates individuals and even entire species, assimilating them into a hive mentality that represses the original personality. This particular drone, although rescued from the collective, still retains some cybernetic implants. She suffers from an electro-mechanical malfunction that permits the personalities of several individuals to take her over and manifest themselves as many distinct, consecutive personalities (Livingston, “Infinite Regress”).

Telepathy may be used to project a mind transiently into another, resulting in the properties of each mind individual mind being temporarily retained. A Vulcan telepathic link, a “mind meld,” is deliberately initiated between a Vulcan ship’s security officer (Tuvok) and a psychopathic serial murderer (Suder). The latter becomes “[q]uite calm and controlled. Clearly the meld initiated some high cortical activity in his brain.” However, for every action, there is an each and opposite reaction, and the former admits, “I am more disconcerted than I anticipated. [...] I am already taking steps to purge these residual feelings.” The Vulcan officer warns the murderer that despite his feeling of centeredness, he should not

be misled. Your violent instincts still exist. You are simply suppressing them as Vulcans do. [...] Understand that this will not be a permanent change unless you commit to a strict daily regime of meditation and mental exercise.

Suder muses

I can feel the difference. It is almost as if I can observe the violence inside me without letting it get too close. It is quite remarkable what you Vulcans have learnt to do. [...] Since the meld, I feel capable of controlling myself. Perhaps with your help I can learn to stay this way. It must be difficult for you. [...]. Knowing violence as I’ve known it. [...] Studying it and knowing it are two different things, aren’t they. It’s attractive, isn’t it? [I]t is disturbing, never knowing when that impulse may come or whether or not you can control it when it does. You live on the edge of every moment, and yet, in its own way, violence is attractive, too. Maybe because it doesn’t require logic. Perhaps that’s why it’s so liberating. Ironic, isn’t it, that I can share with you of all people what I have hidden from everyone all my life.

Tuvok is eventually overwhelmed by Suder’s residual mental influence, and decides to kill him. The latter observes, echoing the Nietzschean precept that when one gazes into the abyss, the abyss gazes back into you:

To execute me. [...] And calling it that makes it more comfortable for you. [...] A most logical use of violence, to punish the violent. We both know that I am prepared to die, but are you prepared to kill? [...] To release your violent impulses? [...] I can promise you this will not silent your demons. If you can’t control the violence, the violence controls you. Be prepared to yield your entire being to it, to sacrifice your place in civilised life for you will no longer be a part of it, and there’s no return. [...] you would not be able to live with yourself (Bole, “Meld”).

The continuing effect of the meld is beneficial for Suder, and he expresses the desire “to do something for the ship [...] if I could just, just contribute somehow.” His chance comes when aliens overwhelm *Voyager* and he notes, “I’m going to have to kill some of them. [...] I’ve worked so hard over the last few months to control the violent feelings. I’m almost at peace with myself.” He succeeds in saving the ship and crew but dies, and Tuvok eulogises, “[m]ay your death bring you the peace you never found in life.”

Captain Picard is equally devastated when he undergoes a mind-meld in order to stabilise the mind of a Vulcan ambassador who is ill and experiencing overwhelming



emotion, sobbing, “[i]t’s quite difficult. The anguish of the man, the despair pouring out of him, all those feelings, the regrets. I can’t stop them. I can’t stop them. I can’t. I can’t” (Landau, “Sarek”).

A completely novel takeover is posited by depicting the Kobali, an alien species that reproduce by infecting corpses of other species (including that of a human *Voyager* crewperson) with a “genetic pathogen” that convert “DNA into a Kobali protein structure. The biochemical changes have affected every system [...] there isn’t enough of your original DNA left to make you human again.” The crewperson explains, “That’s how they procreate. They salvage the dead of other races.” The crewperson escapes from the Kobali and returns to *Voyager*, but is so changed that she eventually voluntarily returns to the Kobali (Windell, “Ashes to Ashes”).

Memories and skills constitute integral parts of personality, and the introduction of artificial memories may therefore be considered a partial personality overlay. This occurs at least four times in the canon. Aliens punish a crewman accused of espionage by the implanting of years of memories of living in a prison, within a few hours. This has profound negative effects on the crewman who almost commits suicide (Singer, “Hard Time”). Similarly, a crewman falsely accused of murder and punished by being implanted the last dying memories of the victim, which are automatically replayed over and over again in his mind. This constant experience of being murdered has profound ill effects until the false memories are finally extirpated (Burton, “Ex Post Facto”).

Yet another crewperson is telepathically implanted with memories of a concealed genocide, so that this would be exposed and brought to light to the younger generation, who have no knowledge of the actions of their forebears (Kolbe, “Remember”). And finally, Captain Picard is infused with a lifetime’s worth of memories by an extinct alien race in only twenty-five minutes, so that he would be able to testify to the existence of a species that had been rendered extinct by their sun going nova a millennium earlier (Lauritson, “The Inner Light”).

A civilian massacre is also remembered by having all individuals within the range of a planet-based “synaptic transmitter” experience false memories through the diffusion of “neurgenic pulses.” Indeed, the transmitter carries the following inscription: “Words alone cannot convey the suffering. Words alone cannot prevent what happened here from happening again. Beyond words lies experience. Beyond experience lies truth. Make this truth your own.” The *Voyager* crew speculate that the memorial’s creators “wanted others to know what it was like in

the hopes that nothing like it would happen again.” In this way, the crew become unwitting and involuntary “witnesses to a massacre,” with negative consequences since “by being forced to relive those events, half the crew’s been traumatised” (Kroeker, “Memorial”).

### *Aliens dybukk Federation minds*

As already noted, it is naturally only rarely that a mind is willingly offered to be taken over by another. For example, the *Enterprise* crew discover the inventor of warp drive who has been rejuvenated and kept young by a being “[v]aguely like a cloud of ionised hydrogen, but with strong erratic electrical impulses.” This “companion” is female and loves the inventor who is her “centre of all things. I care for him.” Kirk explains that she

can’t really love him. You haven’t the slightest knowledge of love, the total union of two people. You are the Companion. He is the man. You are two different things. You can’t join. You can’t love. You may keep him here forever, but you will always be separate, apart from him.

The companion solves this by taking over a woman, a commissioner and negotiator, who has accompanied the team and is at death’s door. She is instantly healed, “healthy. Heart like a hammer, respiration normal, blood pressure normal.” She informs the others that “We are here. [...] Both of us. Those you knew as the Commissioner and the Companion. We are both here” at the cost of losing immortality, and becoming completely human and therefore unable to arrest her lover’s ills and eventual mortality (Senensky, “Metamorphosis”).

In “Return to Tomorrow” (Senensky), three advanced and highly intelligent alien beings are found in spherical containers “in order to preserve our essence in this fashion.” These contain “energy but no substance. Sealed in this receptacle is the essence of my mind.” Kirk, Spock and a female colleague volunteer to allow these aliens to take over their bodies, so as “[t]o build humanoid robots. We must borrow your bodies long enough to have the use of your hands, your fingers. [...] Our methods, our skills are far beyond your abilities.” This is the second instance when such displacement is volunteered, and again risk is involved. The crewmembers are temporarily housed in the receptacles. However, these intellects drive human bodies to the limit, “heart action doubled, temperature a hundred and four degrees.” Moreover, the alien residing in Spock refuses to leave and is only killed by subterfuge, allowing Spock’s essence to return to his body.

A woman’s mind is taken over by incorporeal alien beings in “The Lights of Zetar” (Kenwith), such that “[t]



here is an identity of minds taking place between the alien beings and the mind of Lieutenant Romaine. Their thoughts are becoming hers." The lieutenant confesses that "I've been seeing through another mind. I've been flooded with thoughts not my own that control me." The aliens are exorcised by exposing the woman to high atmospheric pressures.

The *Enterprise's* female doctor is the attempted victim of a noncorporeal being that explains to her that

I'm a spirit. [...] I was born in sixteen forty-seven, in Glasgow on Earth. [...] I found a home with Jessel Howard. She was a pretty lass with a mane of red hair, and eyes like diamonds. I loved her very much. When she died, I stayed with her daughter, and her daughter, and on down through the years, generation after generation. [...] When your family moved out into the galaxy, I moved with them."

He seduces her, with compliments and erotic and frankly sexual physical sensations: "I believe you are the most beautiful women I have ever known. [...] We're becoming one, Beverly. We're going to be together."

However, the doctor realises that

There's no such thing as a ghost. You are some sort of anaphasic lifeform. Anaphasic energy is extremely unstable. It needs an organic host in order to maintain molecular cohesion or else you'll die. [...] You have been using me, Nana, my entire family for centuries. She destroys the being, and somewhat wistfully explains to the crew that

Somehow, he realised that one of my ancestors had a biochemistry that was compatible with his energy matrix. I imagine that he took human form and seduced her like he did me. I was about to be initiated into a very unusual relationship. You might call it a family tradition. But there's a part of me that's a little sad. [...] I re-read the entries in my grandmother's journals. Whatever else he might have done, he made her very happy. (Frakes, "Sub Rosa").

Very corporeal, slug-like beings, reminiscent of Robert Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters*, infiltrate the Federation and Starfleet, completely controlling the minds of those possessed (Bole, "Conspiracy"). This is "a parasitic being [...]. It has complete control over all brain functions. It seems to breath through a small gill protruding from the back of [...] neck. [...] By the placement of the tendrils [...]. The parasite appears to stimulate the victim's adrenal glands, generate great strength." When unmasked, the parasites willingly confess that "[i]t's a perfect match. We're the brains, you're the brawn. [...] We've been moving slowly, cautiously, for many months now. Careful to

cover our tracks. Careful not to arouse suspicion, until it's too late." The *Enterprise* crew naturally destroy the creatures before they can do more harm.

A centipede-like dark matter creature also very temporarily takes over a human's brain, and the person in question exclaims "it's activating my motor neurons. I can't make it stop. I'm sorry [...]. You've got to stop it" (Kolbe, "Good Shepherd").

As already explained, the Borg are comprised of individuals who have been assimilated into a collective, which suppresses the original minds. However, it turns out that certain Borg have active personalities that manage to emerge in common, collective dreams, and who communicate with each other and plot rebellion against the collective (Kroeker, "Unimatrix Zero").

Alien criminals of a particular species are imprisoned by being brought to an inhospitable moon ravaged by magnetic storms, "separated from [...] bodies and left to drift in the storms." Three of these beings take over three of the *Enterprise's* crew, one of whom is the android second officer Data. Brain scans show that they have "unusual synaptic activity. [...] It may be another lifeform superimposing its neural patterns on our people." The situation is completely resolved and one of the three comments that "[i]t was as though my own consciousness were pushed to the side. I was watching everything happen, hearing my own voice, but not being able to control any of it" (Livingston, "Power Play").

*Voyager's* security officer is taken over by an alien, and the same alien extracts the first officer's persona, such that "his neural energy was displaced somehow and he's able to move from person to person," effectively possessing the other crewpersons. The situation is resolved when the alien is removed from the first officer and the doctor reintegrates the first officer into his body (Friedman, "Cathexis").

Similarly, a dying alien takes over the mind of a *Voyager* crewmember. This is the result of intensive research since "he became obsessed with his own mortality. He spent most of his time, and [...] resources, searching for ways to overcome death. Somehow he's discovered a way to transfer his own mind into someone else's body." He meets his co-conspirators and informs them that "[t]he host body you were expecting is dead. Fortunately a young nurse was with me at the right time and she's provided me with a very suitable replacement." The alien is eventually displaced by a medical device that is concocted by the ship's doctor (Livingston, "Warlord").

Aliens propose to take over the bodies of an entire ship's crew since:

It's been a long time since we've encountered corporeal beings. [...] we realised we were compatible. You're very interesting. Trapped in bodies that need maintenance. You have gender. You require mates to reproduce. You eat food. We were like you once, but we evolved. Now we can learn how our ancestors lived.

In turn the aliens explain that they are "offering them a great opportunity. They may never get another chance to experience existence as we do. [...] Losing your substance, existing as perceptive energy, but you'll be grateful once you've made the crossing, I promise you."

However, the crew discover that the aliens' "ship is deteriorating, and they have no way to repair it. They can't survive in space. [...] they are doing this to save themselves." The *Enterprise* crew naturally manage to overcome the aliens and destroy their ship (Livingston, "The Crossing").

Individual humanoids may be taken over so as to allow communication with humans. For example, aliens "took control of Counsellor Troi's body to communicate" with the *Enterprise* crew (Landau, "Clues").

In a somewhat different vein, alien observers, "Organian, a nonphysical life-form," sequentially take over the minds of different crewmembers on the *Enterprise* in order to carry out covert observations on the species (Vejar, "Observer Effect").

It is worth noting that although the essence extracted from or suppressed within the abovementioned Federation bodies is tantamount to that which would ordinarily be called the soul, at no point is the term invoked, clearly eschewing any form of spiritualism or deism, a crucial point to which the discussion will return. Thus, the *Deep Space Nine* (DS9) series depicts aliens who inhabit an Einstein-Rosen bridge, a wormhole. However, to the deeply spiritual Bajoran race, "[t]hey're not just wormhole aliens, they're Prophets, part of Bajoran mythology just like the Pah-wraiths of the Fire Caves" who are imprisoned in caves on the planet Bajor and who are their Manichean counterparts (Kroeker, "The Assignment"). Both are capable of taking over humanoid bodies, and this is first seen when DS9's chief station engineer's wife is taken over by a Pah-wraith who plans to destroy the wormhole. When the wraith is banished, the victim notes that "[i]t was more like having something coiled around inside my head. I could see and hear through it, but any time I tried to do anything, it was like being stuck in sand and squeezed. [...] Kind of a cold rage. I don't think it had any intention of leaving either one of us alive." Moreover, a violent and overtly Manichean struggle takes place on DS9 when the chief security officer is taken over by

a prophet while the commander's son is taken over by a Pah-wraith. Both are exorcised using a scientific procedure (Treviño, "The Reckoning").

Two more rare instances wherein the individual gives up his body in order to house another are witnessed when the principal alien (Cardassian) villain (Gul Dukat) in DS9 willingly hosts Pah-wraiths (Kroeker, "Tears of the Prophets;" Kroeker, "What You Leave Behind").

The Vulcan race have an equally mystical attribute, the *katra*. This is described as "his very essence, [...] everything that was not of the body. [...] his *katra*, his living spirit" (Nimoy, "The Search for Spock"). When nearing death, Vulcans (who are telepathic) pass on their very *katra* to another. "It is the Vulcan way when the body's end is near." Thus, only "his body was in death." If this does not happen, "[t]hen everything that he was. ...Everything that he knew ...is lost."

On anticipating his death from radiation poisoning, Spock briefly mind melds with Dr. McCoy and passes on his *katra*. This is not without side effects and McCoy finds himself experiencing split personality disorder. A drug called "lexorin" is used to temporarily counteract these unwanted effects. When Spock's body is accidentally resurrected and rejuvenated, Vulcan's learned priestesses reinstall Spock's *katra* within his body, effectively reintegrating the individual. This process is known as "fal-torpan, the refusion. [...] has not been done since ages past, and then, only in legend."

This incident is not unique and, for example, Captain Archer finds himself carrying the *katra* of Vulcan's greatest philosopher, Surak (Grossman, "The Forge"), which is later transferred to a Vulcan priest (Livingston, "Kir'Shara"). During this carriage, he communes with Surak, and also experiences events that happened in Surak's time. *Katras* are not normally housed in individuals but repose in receptacles called "katric arks" (Grossman, "The Forge").

Similarly, in the abovementioned episode "Return to Tomorrow" (Senensky), Spock transfers his *katra* into Nurse Christine Chapel in order to foil the alien who wishes to steal a humanoid body, and is later reinstalled in his own body.

Captain Janeway is also taken over by an alien when she is severely injured. On recovering, she is informed that "we detected an alien presence within your cerebral cortex. It appeared to be preventing our attempts to heal you. [...] Eventually it was dislodged, but there were a number of times I thought we'd lost you." The creature is exorcised by a "thoron pulse" (Malone, "Coda").

And finally, a murderous, noncorporeal alien entity is

discovered that is able to “exist without form in conventional sense. Most probable mass of energy of highly cohesive electromagnetic field.” This creature is capable of taking over humans and committing murder since “[d]eriving sustenance from emotion is not unknown in the galaxy, and fear is among the strongest and most violent of the emotions.” Therefore the creature frightens and kills in order to survive (Pevney, “Wolf in the Fold”).

### *Organic minds downloaded into machine minds*

In “Return to Tomorrow” (Senensky), we have already noted human minds downloaded into alien receptacles, replacing alien minds who were previously housed there.

In “The Schizoid Man” (Landau), a famous and arrogant scientist (Ira Graves) is on the verge of death but has “learned to transfer the wealth of my knowledge into a computer. Before I die, I plan to transfer my great intelligence into this machine, thus cheating the Grim Reaper of his greatest prize.” He mockingly chides Data,

[y]our existence must be a kind of walking purgatory. Neither dead nor alive. Never really feeling anything. Just existing. Just existing. Listen to me. A dying man takes the time to mourn a man who will never know death.

Graves manages to deactivate Data and applies his knowledge to download his mind into Data. The crew discover that

[t]here are two disparate personalities within Lieutenant Commander Data. Each distinctly different. A dominant and a recessive. [...] The dominant personality is unstable. Brilliant but vain, sensitive yet paranoid. And I believe it is prone to irrationality. [...] It seems to have an especially strong hatred of you, Captain, or to a lesser degree, any authority figure. And worst part is, it’s growing. [...] The alien persona is getting stronger and gobbling up what is left of the weaker ego, the Data we know. If something isn’t done to stop it immediately, we will lose our Data forever.

When confronted, Graves freely admits and justifies his actions:

I deactivated Data and transferred my mind into his frame. I never imagined how much of my self I would retain. My feelings, my dreams. [...] Data? Before me, he was nothing. Just a walking tin can with circuits for intestines. Pathetic. Without heart, a man is meaningless.

He eventually relents, vacates Data’s body and moves into a simple computer, and the Captain notes the difference: “[t]he intellect of Ira Graves has been deposited into our computer. There is knowledge but no consciousness. The

human equation has been lost.”

In another episode, Data is once again taken over, and this time, his computer brain with its tremendous capacity finds itself host to “thousands, of all ages and walks of life. It was a remarkable experience.” The Captain ripostes: “you never may become fully human, but you’ve had an experience that transcends the human condition. You have been an entire civilisation” (Weimer, “Masks”).

In the *Voyager* series, the computer-generated Emergency Medical Hologram on *Voyager* embarks on a self-enhancement project, a hubristic scheme that involves the grafting of famous historical personae onto his program, software that defines his personality. He hopes to achieve “[a]n improved bedside manner, a fresh perspective on diagnoses, more patience with my patients” (Singer, “Darkling”). But he unwittingly invokes the Frankensteinian trope, since “[a] lot of the historical characters [...] have this dark thread running through their personalities.” The “new personality from the subroutines” is Mr. Hyde to the original Dr. Jekyll, and the new and malevolent doctor explains: “I was born of the hidden, the suppressed. I am the dark threads from many personalities.” Like Dr. Ira Graves, he mocks the previous doctor whose personality he has replaced, in Nietzschean vein:

What a hollow excuse for a life. Servile, pathetic, at the beck and call of any idiot who invokes his name. The thought of him sickens me. [...] He is detestable. [...] I deserve to exist more than your Doctor does. [...] I am beyond considerations of wrong and right. Behavioural categories are for the weak, for those of you without the will to define your existence, to do what they must, no matter who might get harmed along the way. [...] I fear nothing, no one.

The situation is resolved when the extra personality subroutines are finally eliminated.

The Frankensteinian trope is reinvoked in “What are Little Girls Made Of?” (Goldstone), where human scientists discover alien technology that can function in three ways. Either to copy the individual by creating a complete android along with an identical mind containing “[t]he same memories, the same attitudes, the same abilities.” Or to give this android copy a different program and agenda to the one inherent in the original being. Or to completely transfer the individual into an android replica in Moravec fashion. The discoverer exhorts Captain Kirk:

I could’ve transferred you, your very consciousness into that android. Your soul, if you wish. All of you. In android form, a human being can have practical immortality. Can you understand what I’m offering mankind? [...] Can you understand that a human

converted to an android can be programmed for the better? Can you imagine how life could be improved if we could do away with jealousy, greed, hate? No one need ever die again. No disease, no deformities. Why even fear can be programmed away, replaced with joy. I'm offering you a practical heaven, a new paradise, and all I need is your help. [...] I need transportation to a planet colony with proper raw materials. [...] I want no suspicions aroused. I'll begin producing androids carefully, selectively. [...] They must be strongly infiltrated into society before the android existence is revealed. I want no wave of hysteria to destroy what is good and right.

Kirk's rejection is outright and the scientist's plans are thwarted.

Partial cyborgization of the human brain is deemed appropriate when essential to the continuation of life, but the complete replacement of the human brain by a cyborg analog is not. Brain damage from an explosion and attempted treatment leads to the loss of half of an individual's brain. This is a member of the Bajoran religious order, called Bareil. His brain is partially replaced with an Asimovian "positronic matrix." This allows the individual to function almost normally, but when the remaining organic half also fails, the doctor refuses:

I'm sorry, [...] but this is where it ends. [...] I won't remove whatever last shred of humanity Bareil has left. [...] if I remove the rest of his brain and replace it with a machine, he may look like Bareil, he may even talk like Bareil, but he won't be Bareil. The spark of life will be gone. He'll be dead. And I'll be the one who killed him. [...] he'll die like a man, not a machine (Badiyi, "Life Support").

Humanoids may also be downloaded into computer matrices that support holographic projections that simulate a complete body. The doctor explains that he extracted "undamaged chromosomes, [...] original DNA code, and then programmed the computer to project a holographic template based on that genome. [...]. A three-dimensional projection of light and energy" (Bole, "Lifesigns"). Similarly, during a shuttle accident, five crewmembers are beamed on board, with the bodies rematerializing in the holodeck and the mental patterns downloaded into the station's computer (Kolbe, "Our Man Bashir").

Human brains may also be downloaded without their knowledge. An injured scientist is downloaded into a positronic matrix with an android body by her husband when she is close to death after massive injuries. The scientist is the android Data's own creator and he never tells his wife what has happened as

[t]here was no reason for her to know [...] The truth is, in every way that matters, she is Juliana Soong. I programmed her to terminate after a long life. Let her live out her days, and die believing she was human. Don't rob her of that.

And finally, the noncorporeal alien entity witnessed in "Wolf in the Fold" (Pevney) leaves its human hosts, and the crew discover that "computer will not respond to these controls. The entity is unquestionably controlling it."

### *Machine mind to human*

Cybernetic minds may also overwhelm human minds. In "Body and soul" (McNeill), the computer doctor on uploads his software into the cybernetic implants of the abovementioned Borg drone. He explains:

I downloaded my programme into her cybernetic matrix. An interesting sensation, to say the least. [...] Physiologically, she's fine. As for her consciousness I'm assuming it's submerged, but there's no way to be sure until I vacate her systems and conduct a neurological exam. [...] This experience will make a fascinating article for the Starfleet medical journal.

On experiencing qualia (subjective human experiences) for the first time, the doctor exults "I had no idea that eating was such a sensual experience. The tastes, the textures, feeling it slide down [...] oesophagus, it's, it's exquisite." And overwhelmed, the doctor overindulges in food and drink.

### *Machine mind to machine mind*

Machines may also become incorporated into machine minds. In "The Offspring" (Frakes), the android Data creates a second android and treats her as his child, but the experiment fails. However, before she is extinguished, he absorbs her experiences. Tapping his head, he informs his fellow crew that

she is here. Her presence so enriched my life that I could not allow her to pass into oblivion. So I incorporated her programs back into my own. I have transferred her memories to me.

Similarly, when an android is discovered that is identical to Data but a presumably earlier and more primitive version, Data elects to download his memories into this "B4" android. He notes that

Captain Picard agrees that the B-4 was probably designed with the same self-actualisation parameters as myself. If my memory engrams are successfully integrated into his positronic matrix, he should have all my abilities. [...] It is my belief that with my memory engrams he will be able to function as a more com-



plete individual. [...] I believe he should have the opportunity to explore his potential.

More urgently, a faulty alien missile that is controlled by an artificial intelligence rejects its orders to return to base since hostilities have ceased, and takes over the *Voyager's* Emergency Medical Hologram. It "used the interlink to commandeer the Doctor's programme," and The *Voyager* crew remonstrate:

You've been programmed with intelligence so you could make decisions on your own. Well, it's time to make one. Countless lives are at stake. Ever since you took the Doctor's form you've been learning what it's like to be one of us. Now, try to imagine what it's like to be one of your victims. Your first victim, you've seen her suffering. Increase that by a factor of one million, ten million and that's how much suffering you'll cause if you don't end this.

The missile understands: "You want me to see past my programming." When it is finally convinced that the war for which it has been created is over, and that its original purpose is negated, it sets up a rendezvous with other, equally misguided missiles, and triggering itself, destroys all of the remaining missiles (Kertchmer, "Warhead").

Yet another alien inadvertently invades *Voyager* later on the series, a denizen of a gaseous nebula that initially manifests as an

EM discharge [...] seems to be travelling through the bio-neural circuitry, jumping from system to system [...] an intelligence [...]. Some kind of electromagnetic life form that's using the environmental controls to make the ship more hospitable for itself [...]. And attacking anyone who tries to stop it.

The situation is aggravated when it is discovered that "the life-form's infiltrated the main computer matrix," taking total control of the ship, but resolution is eventually effected when the crew returns the alien to its original habitat, a nebula (Livingston, "The Haunting of Deck Twelve")

## Discussion

Richard Slotkin states that myth is "the primary language of historical memory: a body of traditional stories that have, over time, been used to summarize the course of our collective history." (70) Myth is thus recognised as the earliest narrative form and provides a conduit through which histories can be rewritten and retold.

The retelling of myths is an integral part of ST and part of its popularity since by reframing recognizable myths in new modes, it provides the reader with a sense of familiarity. ST

adapts its stories to incorporate familiar mythical paradigms that figure centrally within our own society, history, and culture. These stories may be centuries old and have been resigned to the past, but Star Trek breathes life back into them by retelling them in a yet-to-be-decided utopian future (Geraghty 56).

The mythic origin of the displacement of the individual from within the body is an old trope, as acknowledged by Worf, the *Enterprise's* Klingon security officer: "[s]piritual possessions of this sort have been reported throughout Klingon history. It is called ja'tyIn, the taking of the living by the dead." Picard concurs, "[h]uman history is full of many similar legends" (Livingston, "Power Play").

Darko Suvin defined the genre as "the literature of cognitive estrangement" (372), a literature that "takes off from a fictional ("literary") hypothesis and develops it with extrapolating and totalizing ("scientific") rigor" (374). Suvin deliberately uses the term cognition instead of knowledge, since in the English language, "science is in any case a problematic concept [...], it carries a very strong bias toward the natural sciences. Indeed, the French science and the German wissenschaft are often better translated as 'knowledge'" (Parrinder 21).

Moreover, while all fiction is at one remove from reality, SF is doubly removed through the additional introduction of "a strange newness, a novum" (Suvin 372), an estrangement similar to the *ostranenie* noted by the Formalist school.

Thus, SF "is, then a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment" (375).

Therefore, since SF purports to be the handmaiden of science, which is "arguably the last metanarrative with any significant cachet in the post-postmodern condition" (Grech 4), ST generally reflects science as accurately as possible, nodding to immutable physical laws while gently sidestepping them through technobabble and other ersatz scientific legerdemain.

In the narratives mentioned in this paper, the novum and estrangement vary from the extreme espoused by hard science fiction to the more soft and even quasi-religious visions of prophets and wraiths.

The former are more congruent with the liberal humanist outlook of the show's creator, Gene Roddenberry, whose views are in keeping with those of John W. Campbell, editor of *Astounding Science Fiction* (editor for the period 1939-1971). Campbell's "ideal reader was an engineer, who would bat around ideas in stories with other

engineers [...] in their search for real solutions” (James 23). This notion dovetails perfectly with narratives wherein machine intelligences—which are software based—are displaced, in a copy-and-paste modus operandi and this is possible even with contemporary software.

Similarly, the possibility of the transfer of a human intelligence to a machine has been prophesied by Hans Moravec, who averred that the performance of artificial intelligence computers will match the general intellectual performance of the human brain in the 2020s, potentially allowing the transfer of the intact working contents of a human mind into a computer were it also to become possible to convert the mind to a software program (Moravec 32). These calculations are made by extrapolating Moore’s law, which observes that computing power doubles every eighteen months.

However, many posthumanist thinkers are in complete disagreement, arguing that mind-body “separation allows the construction of a hierarchy in which information is given the dominant position and materiality runs a distant second” (Hayles 12). This has the effect of “privileging the abstract as the real and downplaying the importance of material instantiation” (13). The latter is regarded as crucial by these thinkers who contend that “[e]mbodiment cannot exist without a material structure that always deviates in some measure from its abstract representations; [...] an embodied creature [...] who always deviates in some measure from the norms” (200). Hayles describes this key concept as turning “Descartes upside down” (203) since the only real certainty is that “the body exists in space and time and that, through its interaction with the environment, it defines the parameters within which the cogitating mind can arrive at “certainties” [...] generating the boundaries of thought” (203). Thus, “conscious thought becomes an epiphenomenon corresponding to the phenomenal base the body provides” (203).

In these narratives, the transfer of biological minds to other biological minds has been shown to require one of two novums: the invocation of alien technologies or the superhuman mental abilities of alien minds. In these ways, humanist SF narratives are able to fall just short of using terms such as “soul,” likewise dispensing with equally embarrassing words like “spirit” that potentially usher in concepts such as spirituality or even outright deism, concepts with which the genre is extremely discomfited.

Instead, “energy” is used and incorporated into euphemisms that replace that which is spiritually and commonly referred to as the soul, such as the isolated term “energy” and combinations thereof, including “energy

matrix,” “anaphasic energy,” “neural energy” and “perceptive energy.” These expressions are inherently and scientifically meaningless but acquire a veneer of acceptable respectability since by the act of naming, they are somehow defined, framed and thereby comfortably explained away by science.

Science strengthens its hold on these tropes by almost always requiring a material receptacle for mind of some sort, be it organic or machine, such as katric arks for Vulcan *katras* (Grossman, “The Forge”). Medicine, an applied branch of the sciences, is also utilised whenever required to deemphasise the spiritual nature of the noncorporeal self, such as the use of the fictitious drug lexorin when an individual finds him or herself carrying another’s *katra* (Nimoy, “The Search for Spock”).

Some entities, such as the Organians, are shown to be “[p]ure energy. Pure thought. Totally incorporeal. Not life as we know it at all” (Newland, “Errand of Mercy”), but this is somehow mitigated by the fact that these are completely alien beings who have, in some mysterious way, evolved beyond the need of corporeal bodies.

Some degree of ambiguity and acceptance of the spiritual was introduced after the death of Gene Roddenberry (1921-1991). Roddenberry referred to the series as “my social philosophy, my racial philosophy, my overview on life and the human condition” (Alexander 18). The humanist values that are relevant to this discussion include the reliance on science and reason in the search for truths, with the eventual banishment of all superstition, a Nietzschean adherence to the tenet that reliance on religion is incorrect and inappropriate.

*Deep Space Nine* (1993-1999) and applied a more post-modern take to the ST future. Moreover, it is in this series that religion features very prominently for the first time, perhaps due to the fact that Roddenberry’s humanist views were not totally enforced. *Voyager* (1995-2001) followed *Deep Space Nine* and also bows to this precept. For example, the *Voyager*’s crew are open minded, admitting to an alien

for all I know, [...] thanatologists are right [...] and you do go on to a higher consciousness. [...] I don’t know what happens to your people after they die. I don’t even know what happens to my people after they die. [...] There have certainly been medical experts, philosophers, theologians who have spent a great deal of time debating what happens after death. But no one’s come up with an answer yet.

Indirect evidence of some sort of afterlife is obtained when alien bodies appear on *Voyager* and

each one of them has released some kind of neural

energy. In every case, the energy has passed through the hull and out into the rings. The energy's frequency is identical to the ambient radiation in the asteroid field. [...], becomes part of the ambient electromagnetic field surrounding the planet. Our readings also indicate the energy's unusually dynamic. There's a great deal of variation and pattern complexity, quantum density. [...] What we don't know about death is far, far greater than what we do know. (Livingston, "Emanations")

It may also be for this same reason that the concept of the Vulcan *katra* was expanded and elaborated in the *Enterprise* series (2001-2005).

These narratives allow the drawing of three conclusions. Firstly, that ST experiences tension when it portrays that which is in effect a reluctant spirituality, a trope that is deliberately tempered by ambiguity, allowing viewers to dispense with supernatural explanations. For example, the Bajoran Prophets and Pah-Wraiths are considered to be supernatural beings by Bajorans and wormhole aliens by Federation officers. *Deep Space Nine's* commanding officer neatly sums this up as a matter of perspective,

[w]ormhole aliens or Prophets, it really doesn't matter. The fact is, they exist out of time, and over the centuries they've given the Bajorans glimpses of the future. Glimpses that the Bajorans have written down to help them guide succeeding generations ("Treviño, The Reckoning").

This is accepted by the equally open minded Bajoran second in command, as "[t]hat's the thing about faith, if you don't have it, you can't understand it. If you do, no explanation is necessary" (Landau, "Accession").

The second conclusion is that ST upholds Norbert Wiener's contention that since the body is impermanent, always in flux with turnover of cells and tissues, then it would seem to follow that "[w]e are but whirlpools in a river of ever-flowing water. We are not stuff that abides, but patterns that perpetuate themselves" (The Human Use 96). Wiener famously encapsulated this notion in the aphorism: "Information is information, not matter or energy. No materialism which does not admit this can survive at the present day" (Cybernetics 132). The outcome, as demonstrated in the episodes, is that the pattern that constitutes consciousness can be somehow copied or extracted and instantiated in another body or machine.

The final conclusion is that almost all of these narratives constitute morality plays, with the forces of good struggling in Manichean fashion against, and eventually triumphing over evil. This accedes to Umberto Eco's contention that series such as ST appeal to fans due to their

"infantile need of always hearing the same story, of being consoled by the return of the identical, superficially disguised" (Eco 70), with uplifting tales that reassure us of better things to come in an almost perfect utopian, liberal humanist future.

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## ***The Spacesuit Film: A History, 1918-1969***

Grace L. Dillon

Gary Westfahl. *The Spacesuit Film: A History, 1918-1969*.  
Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012. Paper, 361 pages,  
\$50.00, ISBN 978-0-7864-4267-6.

Order option(s): [Paper](#) | [Kindle](#)

WESTFAHL'S RECENT HOMAGE to what he calls "the Spacesuit film" subgenre conveys the nostalgic charm one would expect to get browsing through an antique store. Focusing on sf cinema during the decades when the heyday of space exploration made the challenges of "star trekking" starkly apparent, the book provides a comprehensive overview that will be useful to sf fans, historians, and scholars alike.

Westfahl identifies the spacesuit as an "icon" that has received little attention from critics and addresses the oversight by compiling a comprehensive catalog and analysis. Citing the familiar invocation of the literature of discovery, our author aligns space travel with American frontier expansionism and European forays into African jungles, where fantastic stories of exotic environments could thrive; space travel obviously offered the next ticket to adventure, and so space exploration and sf about space exploration became natural ingredients of western cultural evolution. Westfahl draws a distinction between terrestrial stories of discovery and space travel narratives by indirectly indicting armchair ethnographers who made up plausible tales without actually visiting the places they exoticized. Edgar Rice Burroughs, after all, never visited the trees where Tarzan swung.

The signature element of spacesuit movies, and Westfahl's significant critical contribution to his own invention of the subgenre, is the element of verisimilitude. "Space...is entirely unlike any place humans ever inhabited," he writes (3). Space is simultaneously an exotic and lethal environment for the explorer. As such, the spacesuit looms large as an icon. Spacesuits instantly communicate the related ideas that we are in a dangerous realm, that we are frail, weak creatures, and yet that our mastery of technology makes us strong and durable in the face of unprecedented threat. Donning a spacesuit sends the message that you know how dangerously out of place you are, but that you have the will "to conquer this daunting new territory" (4).

To establish the iconic significance of the spacesuit, Westfahl distinguishes spacesuit films from simple space films. Space films achieve an ersatz authenticity, as in casting humans on planets that are Earthlike and require little or no technological prosthesis. Spacesuit films, by contrast, are almost entirely about projecting the authenticity of space travel, and suffer greatly when they fail to live up to this measure. Put simply, the spacesuit itself really is the hero of the spacesuit film. It is the intervention of the spacesuit between the frail human and the dangerous setting that allows the story to exist.

True spacesuit films share some or all of the following qualities:

- Stoic, uncommunicative protagonists who lack depth and complexity, and therefore do not elicit the audience's sympathy. The effect of making the spacesuit our hero shatters Aristotelian expectations. The narrative becomes about the spacesuit, not about the multiple characters who depend on it for their existence and purpose.
- Long, unadventurous camera shots of space itself, which can lead to "disappointingly monochromatic" scenes of black void skies, cold grey metal ships in space, or barren, lifeless terrains on uninhabitable worlds (5).
- Verisimilitude of plot that results in long, slow narratives that are intermittently punctuated by frenetic action. Imagine yourself in low gravity, moon walking in your clunky authentic spacesuit. Hours may pass almost in stasis. Suddenly, an air hose (or other authentic piece of technology) malfunctions. You have a split second to act before the vacuum of space kills you. If you survive this manic moment, you immediately embark on a long, clunky, and authentic slowdown.
- Conflict between humans and the environment as opposed to conflict among characters.
- Construction of collaborative relationships among characters that leads to divided narrative structure. In authentic space travel, the spacesuit wearer often must depend on technicians elsewhere for information and assistance, so that multiple protagonists abound. The person radioing advice from the safety of a terrestrial observation deck often receives as much backstory as does the person wearing the spacesuit.
- Thematic content that is "uniquely profound and disturbing" (6). Spacesuit films take humans out of familiar environments into the alien, unknowable, and always-lethal environment of authentic space, where our traditional narrative props evaporate, and

individuals truly, not merely metaphorically, stare into the void.

These elements distinguish Westfahl's spacesuit film from films that are simply about space travel. We can tell that a space travel film is *not* a spacesuit film when we recognize that the producers are doing everything possible to avoid the restrictions in plot, action, and character development that would ensue if everyone had to wear spacesuits simply to survive.

Westfahl divides his catalog by discussing early films from the turn of the twentieth century and then so-called classics that engage the authentic dilemmas that scientists and astronauts faced in achieving space travel during the 1950s and 1960s. He then presents subcategories that trace melodramatic, humorous, and horrific spacesuit films. Next he identifies foreign-language offerings to the genre, demonstrating an impressive command of the canon that he has invented. Finally, he explains the demise of the genre, which he relates to the historical waning of the space race after the Cold War. The study includes an exhaustive filmography that punctuates Westfahl's inclusiveness; not only does he treat film and television as inseparable, he expands the imagination by gathering examples like Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* and live coverage of the *Apollo* space missions under the spacesuit rubric. The analysis evinces careful and focused scholarship that will make this volume of genuine interest to both scholars and teachers. Ultimately, Westfahl achieves his goal of "breaking significant ground, while leaving much territory to be explored more thoroughly by other scholars" (8).

This call to action should appeal to scholars who recognize Westfahl's creation of a new sf subgenre as a new territory for critical inquiry. Aficionados of (post)colonial criticism, for example, may be eager to embrace spacesuit films a touchstone for discussing perpetuations of the binary between discovery and conquest, frontier and indigeneity, both within the narratives of the films themselves, and within the way historical commentary presents them to us. If spacesuit films simultaneously depict traditional western frontier scouts as frail people emboldened only by their pride in technological prowess, while treating frontier space as a void bereft of familiarly exploitable resources, one might indeed imagine the spacesuit film as a genre that inherently challenges the assumptions that bring it into being. Westfahl should be commended for opening this path and others to exploration.

## ***Starboard Wine: More Notes on the Language of Science Fiction***

Rikk Mulligan

Samuel R. Delany. *Starboard Wine: More Notes on the Language of Science Fiction*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 2012. Paper, 288 pages, \$27.95, ISBN 9780819568847.

Order option(s): [Paper](#) | [Kindle](#)

*STARBOARD WINE*, from Wesleyan University Press, presents its selections—eleven essays and lectures and set of three letters—as a “Revised Edition” of the original 1984 publication by SF author, teacher, and critic Samuel R. Delany. That said, it seems more a reissue other than the inclusion of “Disch I” (an essay initially published elsewhere) and some parenthetical clarifications and footnotes. These pieces were written between 1968 and 1980, and while in his 2011 “Acknowledgments” Delany contextualizes several of the essays in relation to another of his earlier books, *The American Shore* (1978), he does not clarify any of the revisions or augmentations. As with the Wesleyan reissue of the revised *The Jewel-Hinged Jaw* (2009), this collection also incorporates an introduction from Matthew Cheney (writer of the blog *The Mumpsimus*) that situates these essays within the arc of Delany's work and to some extent historicizes them within the field of SF criticism. Cheney's introduction is particularly important because he not only emphasizes the role of theory in these essays, especially Derrida's concept of difference, but he does so in a way that helps foreground these essays for careful readers less familiar with the critical terrain.

When these essays were first published, Delany was pushing for an increased rigor in the application of criticism to science fiction as a body of texts (but never a “genre”) that would move it beyond the quagmire of definition and taxonomy. These selections stretch beyond his initial work in *The Jewel-Hinged Jaw* to apply linguistics, structuralist, and poststructuralist theory to close readings of SF texts, in particular those of Robert Heinlein, Theodore Sturgeon, Joanna Russ, and Thomas Disch. Moreover, Delany interweaves the discussion of Heinlein's rhetoric and Sturgeon's revisions with an appreciation for the aesthetics of Russ and Disch's dance among the modes of writing—mundane (mainstream), fantasy, and science fiction in ways that highlight his ap-



plication of theory. In doing so, Delany engages a broad range of thinkers including Lacan, Derrida, Barthes, Foucault, and Bakhtin, among others, that requires at least a working knowledge of literary and cultural criticism. But Delany also delves deeply into the history and historiography of science fiction to connect early pulp stories and editors to works of the Golden Age (1940s and 1950s), and those of (or misattributed to) the “New Wave” movement of the 1960s as part of his discussion of the “past and future of science fiction.”

The present becomes the past and Delany acknowledges that history is a tool used to understand today, even as “science fiction it not about the future; it uses the future as a narrative to present significant distortions in the present” (26). Whether he argues the conventions of literature vs. paraliterature (including SF), or the protocols needed to read SF as opposed to poetry, drama, or mundane literature, he continually returns to the importance of knowing the history of SF to offer valid and valuable criticism. Delany’s emphasis on difference is central to these essays, whether it is his contention that others like Brian Aldiss’ error in defining the beginning of SF before 1926 (95, 163) because these earlier works are not sufficiently different from their contemporaries, or his disagreement with those who seek to only define SF as what it is not—mundane. These arguments stray close to those of definition that have been cycling since the 1940s, if not earlier, so Delany also emphasizes the ability to read SF by recognizing the plurality of possible meanings in what makes these worlds different, as well as “some notion of just where the science is distorted” (166). He delineates in both “*Dichtung und Science Fiction*” and his series of letters to the editors of *Science Fiction Studies* how SF might be taught so that students move beyond mere definition and technology to understand how these worlds as social constructs must be different, enabling them to use SF as a tool to think about the present (13).

When this collection was initially released Delany’s close readings and applied criticism of specific authors, particularly Russ and Disch, was groundbreaking as it diverged from the (often fan-based) histories and the work begun within the MLA in the late 1950s. Today, such academic criticism comes from an increasing number of scholars including Carl Freeman, Veronica Hollinger, Adam Roberts, Istvan Csicsery Ronay, Jr., and Gary Wolfe, among others, and various critical companions to SF (Cambridge, Routledge, etc.) have overtaken *The Readers Guide to Science Fiction* (1979). In many ways this collection needed to be reissued as part of the historiography of SF criticism as much as for the ideas

Delany explores, although some of these essays have been republished in other collections (“Some Presumptuous Approaches to Science Fiction” and “Science Fiction and ‘Literature’—or, The Conscience of the King” both appear in *Speculations on Speculation* (2005)), here they combine with the author studies to provide a meta-narrative that helps describe the evolving critical discourse among authors, editors, and critics from the late 1960s through 1980—and this is where Delany’s footnotes and revisions are most valuable for the clarity they lend to understanding this historical moment.

*Starboard Wine* is not for the average reader, fan, nor even undergraduate student of literature, but it offers a great deal to informed critics and those scholars specializing in science fiction studies. It is required reading for any serious scholar or critic of not just science fiction, but I would argue any speculative fiction because Delany’s meticulous attention to language, difference, and the range of affect only available to SF—the sense of total familiarity, the completely strange, and “the completely strange that, once named, suddenly seems familiar” (130) helps explain why so many contemporary writers are working with the tropes and metaphors of science fiction, but are not creating SF narratives.

## The Humanism of Doctor Who: A Critical Study in Science Fiction and Philosophy

Kevin Pinkham

David Layton. *The Humanism of Doctor Who: A Critical Study in Science Fiction and Philosophy*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012. Paper, 364 pages, \$40, ISBN 978-0-7864-6673-3.

Order option(s): [Paper](#) | [Kindle](#)

*THE HUMANISM OF DOCTOR WHO* by David Layton is a wonderfully problematic book. It will astound readers with its breadth, yet will on occasion frustrate readers with its limitations. In the book, Layton contends that, “*Doctor Who* presents audiences a secular humanist view of the universe and humanity’s place in it” (2). Like many thematic studies of a text, the book’s claims follow a formula: secular humanism argues “X”; a particular episode of *Doctor Who* explores “X”; there-

fore, *Doctor Who* and secular humanism are sympathetic. Now, I'm being a bit disingenuous here, but readers may not escape the feeling that I've just summarized the methodology of the book.

Before I sound too dismissive, however, I must admit I enjoyed this book and learned quite a bit from it. It has been far too long since I last had a philosophy class, so this book came as a welcome refresher to the world of philosophy. In fact, I would almost recommend this book more as a philosophy textbook than as a study of *Doctor Who*. Layton provides multiple summaries and overviews of a stupendous amount of philosophers and worldviews that resonate far more deeply for me than did those stuffy philosophy textbooks I barely remember from my undergraduate days. However, the book works rather well as a study of the series, especially given the fact that there are surprisingly few scholarly books that wrestle with the show. Having come to the Doctor in the Tom Baker days and being thrilled with the renewal of the series in 2005, I quickly found out that Layton still had a lot to teach me about the Doctor. Depending on which source one references, there have been roughly 790 episodes of the series since its origin in 1963. Layton mentions around 161 of those episodes; most of the episodes are merely name-dropped to briefly illustrate a point Layton is addressing, while some of the episodes are more extensively discussed throughout the book, providing the grounds that Layton uses to explore his humanist themes. Among these much more scrutinized episodes are "The Aztecs," "Kinda," "Snakedance," "The Happiness Patrol," "The Green Death," and a variety of others.

The book begins with the chapter "Why *Doctor Who*?" in which Layton provides a brief discussion of the methodology of science fiction. Layton's discussion provides a decent introduction to science fiction and Enlightenment philosophy, and I would consider referring my own beginning science fiction students to Layton's first chapter to provide them with some of the basic tools and concepts that will enable them to begin serious critical study of the genre. Layton follows up his first chapter with the chapter "What is Humanism?" in which he again provides an excellent introduction to the thinkers and concepts that form the foundation of secular humanist thought.

This chapter could provide philosophy professors looking for something a little more appealing than dry philosophy textbooks with an insightful "rough history of humanist philosophy" (39), as Layton describes it. I have a colleague who teaches philosophy who I think

would enjoy this chapter. Even though, to my knowledge, he is not a fan of *Doctor Who*, I imagine this chapter could become, if nothing else, another resource for his students struggling with some of the history and concepts of humanist thought. Sometimes jazzing up philosophical terms with reference to time travel reaches students who might otherwise remain stubbornly oblivious.

The remaining chapters no longer ask questions in their titles; instead, each chapter is entitled after a concept that secular humanism has addressed, and Layton goes into much greater depth in each of these chapters, providing an excellent discussion of each concept, enlivening his discussion with illustrations from the series, and demonstrating quite enthusiastically that the series is clearly sympathetic to a secular humanist outlook and has remained so consistently for almost fifty years. The concepts that become the focal point for each chapter are: "Existence," "Knowledge," "Archetypes and Mythology," "Religion," "Science," "Good and Evil," "Ethics," "Politics," and finally, "Justice." Each of these chapters delves into its chosen topic using *Doctor Who* episodes, characters, themes, and story arcs to more fully explain and explore each topic. Again, each chapter could serve as a resource for a philosophy class examining these topics, and Layton's book wrestles with these concepts much more exhaustively than do such books as *Doctor Who and Philosophy*.

I started my review saying the book was wonderfully problematic. I hope that in my brief discussion so far I have given a taste of how the book can be wonderful, offering a wealth of material for scholars of both philosophy and *Doctor Who*. However, the book does have its problems, and while they are far from crippling, I would be remiss in not highlighting them. First, I mentioned earlier that a few episodes are referred to more often. In fact, these episodes appear in a number of different chapters. Certainly, many of the concepts that the chapters entertain are interrelated, and Layton could be forgiven for referencing a handful of episodes that highlight the interrelatedness of these concepts. Unfortunately, I cannot shake the feeling that given the existence of over seven hundred episodes, the fact that a few key episodes provide the bulk of material for Layton's discussion seems to be a smallish sample set to support Layton's claims. A quick glance at the index reveals that of the roughly 161 episodes that are mentioned, only about sixty are referenced on three or more pages. Sixty is still an impressive number of episodes to discuss, but readers may wonder how the other episodes fit into Lay-

ton's schema.

Perhaps the book's greatest weakness is its scope, which is a good problem to have. Each of Layton's chapters could have provided plenty of material for an entire book, and while the book is long (364 pages), there seems to be so much more that could be discussed. Often while reading the book, an almost inevitable, "Yes, but what about..." comment crossed my mind. Layton's attempt to tackle so many huge topics while providing what amounts to only a few limited examples from the series can give readers the sense that some generalizations are being made that could use a little more evidence.

Another problem that can arise is that Layton writes with the enthusiasm of a fanboy, combined with the critical acumen of an English professor, and sometimes his fannish enthusiasm seems to run away with him. For example, fans of the show will know that the Doctor has at many times seems on the edge of making monstrous ethical decisions, needing to be pulled back from this monstrous edge by his Companions, who often provide the humanity that the Doctor can lack. In fact, in the current Doctor's first season, the sky above the Earth became filled with the ships of races who had deemed the Doctor the most dangerous being in the Universe and sought to imprison the Doctor in the Pandorica, an inescapable cube. Layton takes only one paragraph in his entire book to acknowledge the Doctor's role in the deaths of many intelligent beings, including wiping out entire races. This facile discussion that defends the Doctor by saying that he only kills when he has to and that avoids any exploration of the Doctor's clear hatred of Daleks and obvious privileging of humanity leaves readers with the sense that Layton's fanboy appreciation of the Doctor creeps much closer to fawning worship. Still, Layton makes a strong case that the Doctor is perhaps one of the most ethical characters to have ever appeared on television, although readers may find themselves, like me, uttering, "Yes, but what about..."

David Layton's *The Humanism of Doctor Who* is ultimately a very fine book about a very fine topic. While it has its weaknesses, they are vastly overpowered by the book's strengths. The book would be an excellent addition to the library of any fan of the series, and will become an invaluable text for future discussions of *Doctor Who*. The book should be acquired both by large university libraries and by small college libraries that have programs focusing on Science Fiction or media studies. Neighborhood libraries with extra money to spend would not go astray by adding this book to their collections.

## Language in Science Fiction and Fantasy: The Question of Style

Joseph P. Weakland

Susan Mandala. *Language in Science Fiction and Fantasy: The Question of Style*. London: Continuum, 2010. Paper, 192 pages, \$44.95, ISBN 978-1441145482.

Order option(s): [Cloth](#) | [Paper](#)

THERE ARE MANY WORKS OF SCIENCE FICTION that take language as their direct subject, including Jack Vance's *The Languages of Pao* (1958), Samuel Delany's *Babel-17* (1966), Ian Watson's *The Embedding* (1973), and Suzette Elgin's *Native Tongue* (1984). Other works, such as Kawamata Chiaki's *Death Sentences* (2012), use science fiction to allegorize the representational capacity of words. China Mieville's recent novel *Embassytown* (2011) continues this tradition through a rigorous science-fictional examination of the properties of human and non-human speech.

Accordingly, the question of language in science fiction and fantasy has received a great deal of scholarly attention. Two book length works address the genre's relationship to linguistics: Myra E. Barnes's *Linguistics and Languages in Science Fiction-Fantasy* (1975), and Walter E. Meyers's *Aliens and Linguists: Language Study and Science Fiction* (1980). In his essay, "Metalinguistics and Science Fiction" (1979), Eric Rabkin identifies the formal properties through which the genre uses language to establish the plausibility and coherence of speculative worlds. Ria Cheyne's essay "Created Languages in Science Fiction" (2008) offers an extensive discussion of the genre's sophisticated deployment of real and artificial languages.

What Susan Mandala identifies as the "question of style," however, has too often been absent from such discussions. Mandala's *Language in Science Fiction and Fantasy: The Question of Style* (2010) thoroughly analyzes science fiction and fantasy's complex use of language from the perspective of literary style and linguistic theory. Her book thus succeeds in dismantling the myth that these "alternative world fictions," as Mandala terms them, are stylistically inferior to other literary genres. She observes,



While otherworld construction and estrangement are acknowledged as important aspects of science fiction and fantasy, style's potential contribution to their realization has thus far been given only cursory treatment. This has allowed the notion that style is adequate at best and poor at worst in these genres to circulate as accepted fact without serious challenge, leaving a significant gap in the research record. (33)

Mandala addresses this gap through a balanced approach that attends to both the literary-critical and linguistic dimensions of language in science and fantasy, linking style in both genres to the "process of estrangement" and the "construction of plausible other worlds" (29).

After a thoroughly researched introduction that makes the case for a renewed examination of style, the book's second chapter, "Language Contact in Alternative World Texts: Experimental Future Englishes," focuses on works of science fiction in which English has been transformed through contact with foreign languages such as Mandarin. Mandala reads the Chinese-English code-switching in the popular television show *Firefly*, for example, as an estrangement that asks the audience to "question the current dominance of monolingual standard English" (40).

In chapter three, "Evoking the Past," Mandala turns her attention to fantasy texts that present archaic forms of language "in order to plausibly represent settings in the distant past" (94). As with alternative world texts that displace English as the monolingual standard, these archaic forms are a "carefully controlled distortion" that challenges the reader "without impairing comprehension entirely" (94). At the level of language, style is an essential element in creating estranged but recognizable worlds.

The fourth chapter, "Extraordinary Worlds in Plain Language," contests the myth that the "plain" language of science fiction and fantasy indicates a lack of stylistic sophistication. Instead, even "simple definite noun phrases... evoke familiarity for the unknown, ordinary realizations of tense and aspect normalize fantastic events, unremarkable structures instantly establish altered perspectives, and mundane prepositional phrases and adverbials motivate reader involvement" (117).

Mandala selects a diverse array of science fiction and fantasy texts in order to develop her analyses. This decision lends additional weight to her argument, as many of her readings are based on texts that have not been traditionally recognized by science fiction and fantasy scholars as stylistically notable. For example, in my own research, I have not encountered critical work on Tad Williams's *Otherland* series (1996-2001) or Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice* (1996). Mandala makes use of both of these texts in her argument.

The final chapter, "Style and Character," takes on the commonly held notion—even among scholars of these genres—that sf and fantasy narratives typically contain two-dimensional characters. According to Mandala, "character may be found to be alive and well in alternative world fiction if we look for it at the level of style as well as content" (125). Her reading of the Borg's infamous dialogue in the *Star Trek* series is the standout of this section. While "flat in terms of characterization," Borg speech "represents a plausible vision of how a single consciousness dedicated solely to forcible assimilation might talk" (142). At the same time, Mandala argues that Borg speech is remarkably similar to how human characters talk on the bridge of the Enterprise. The militaristic precision and lack of affect characteristic of bridge speech remind the viewer that both the Borg Collective and the Federation seek to bring other worlds and peoples within their sphere of influence.

Mandala emphasizes that both science fiction and fantasy currently enjoy popular and academic respectability, and while she acknowledges that this has not always been the case, her analysis is in general forward-looking and accomplishes much more than merely defending sf from the high culture literary establishment. In addition, her clever choices of source material short circuit the possible rebuttal that sf and fantasy works can still be divided into those that possess literary-linguistic complexity and those that do not. Many of her choices run the gamut from so-called literary science fiction and fantasy to less discussed, more mainstream works. *The Language of Science Fiction and Fantasy* makes a compelling case to take up the question of style and would be of value to all scholars working with these genres.

## Fighting Gravity

Jason W. Ellis

Petersen, Leah. *Fighting Gravity*. Alberta: Dragon Moon, 2012. Trade paper, \$19.95 USD, 306 pages, ISBN 978-1897492437.

Order option(s): [Paper](#) | [Kindle](#)

*FIGHTING GRAVITY*, Leah Petersen's debut science fiction novel, is a fast-paced, far-future bildungsroman that follows the young, hyperintelligent Jacob Dawes's rise from the obscurity of an overcrowded ghetto to intergalactic renown as a scientist of the highest order and infamy as the lover and eventual husband of the equally young Emperor Peter Rikhart IV. Dawes struggles with overcoming class-based prejudice during his early intellectual and social development in the prestigious Imperial Intellectual Complex (IIC). Even at this point early in his life, he understands that others scrutinize his behavior more critically and harshly than that of his peers due to the socially constructed importance of class in a future of starkly divided haves-and-have-nots. His internalized monitoring and awareness of evaluating gaze of others causes Dawes further challenges in his adolescence when he experiments with his sexuality—with his childhood girlfriend Kirti Sachar and with his young adulthood boyfriend and later husband, Emperor Rikhart IV. Like many young adults, Dawes strives to master interpersonal and social relationships. Unfortunately, his troubled public relationships lead to his public punishment, imprisonment (which involves a problematic scene of female-on-male rape), and exile. Dawes survives these overwhelming challenges, but it seems uncertain at the end whether he reflects and adapts himself for the challenges of the future. *Fighting Gravity's* emphasis on drama and social interaction over science-fiction-substance will likely make this a popular young adult novel, especially for readers unfamiliar with SF themes and tropes.

While the novel is primarily science fiction due to its far-future setting, space travel, and occasional explanations of Dawes' research and findings as a scientist, it is a far more interesting novel in terms of ethnicity, class, and sexuality. Ethnicity and class appear intertwined in the novel, but class is by far the more important con-

cern for the characters and motivator for the plot. The novel leaves Dawes' ethnicity and appearance up to the reader's imagination, but we can surmise from his surname that his family has an English-Anglo background. However, the fact revealed in the opening pages of the novel that he lives in, "Abenez, our infamous slum in the human-landfill that was Mexico City," tempers the reader's interpretation of who Dawes is. It does seem significant that place and class are united in this establishing sentence from the first chapter. Furthermore, the novel makes no mention of different languages, which implies a *lingua franca* or an imperial universal language. Perhaps the markers of difference from appearance and language have been homogenized—at least within the confines of the novel's narrative space (It would certainly be interesting to find out more about Abenez in the context of the story). It is refreshing that ethnicity does not seem to divide people in this future, but it is equally depressing that class divisions seem to be universally enforced.

While ethnicity and class are important elements in the novel, sexuality is a far more significant theme. Dawes' fits and struggles with navigating the social sphere parallel his emergence as a sexual being. Dawes' first sexual encounter is with his long time female friend Kirti within the IIC prior to his first adventure into outer space with Emperor Rikhart IV. This felt inevitable, but it had little prior narrative development. Dawes' second sexual encounter involves considerable attention on the writer's part to develop the friendship and eventual sexual relationship between Dawes and Rikhart. Interestingly, they consummate their passionate relationship in the lab—a space that comes to be sexualized and a virtual closet for Dawes, who cannot ignore the possible social consequences of his relationship as someone "un-classed." The lab as a homoeroticized sexualized space, of course, begins in SF with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), and it develops further in this direction through James Whale's films *Frankenstein* (1931) and *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935). The lab also begins the inversion of Dawes' and Rikhart's classed relationship within the private sphere through the former being top and the latter being bottom. In fact, this inversion causes Dawes the most trouble, because he struggles to reconcile the independent operation of public and private spheres. While the novel ends in marriage, Dawes' initial refusal to play his part within the public sphere leads to his public humiliation (a punishment executed as a public flogging) and exile (first to a penal asteroid and then the IIC). Shortly after arriving at the asteroid, a female in-

mate K52 or Kafe physically assaults Dawes and forces him to have sex with her (threatening him to do it now or later when two of her 'men' would also have their way with him). Then, following his return to the IIC, Dawes attempts to resurrect his relationship with Kirti by effecting physical attraction through inebriation (otherwise, he suffers from performance issues). What I present above is simply a sketch of the overall sexual-social relationships in the novel.

My only quibble with the novel has to do with a scene in chapter ten when Jacob picks up a rare artifact in this distant future—a book—*The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time*. On the previous page it was identified as being “Dr. Hawking’s work.” Of course, George F. R. Ellis co-authored this significant work in cosmology with Hawking.

While I can imagine *Fighting Gravity* easily appearing in any number of gender and sexuality-focused courses, I think that it would specifically work best in a course on Queer SF or Queerness in SF. Such a course might also include: Theodore Sturgeon’s “The World Well Lost” (1953) and *Venus Plus X* (1960), Ursula K. Le Guin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), Joanna Russ’ “When It Changed” (1972), David Gerrold’s *The Man Who Folded Himself* (1973), Samuel R. Delany’s *Dhalgren* (1975), James Tiptree, Jr.’s “Houston, Houston, Do You Read?” (1976), Melissa Scott’s *Trouble and Her Friends* (1994), etc. *Fighting Gravity* is a good title for libraries to carry and promote—especially to LGBT students and young adults in general. While I want to point out that *Fighting Gravity* is not a poetical work of SF as are those novels by Le Guin or Delany, I do want to encourage readers to consider this novel as a unique perspective on the interaction of the public and private spheres and the experience of “Othered” individuals cautiously guarding their sexuality with what little social capital they might hold.

## Flight Behavior

Virginia Allen

Kingsolver, Barbara. *Flight Behavior*. New York: Harper-Collins, 2012. Hardback, \$28.99, trade paper \$16.99, Kindle \$8.89, 448 pages, ISBN-13: 978-0062124272.

Order option(s): [Cloth](#) | [Paper](#) | [Kindle](#)

“REMEMBER, ‘lab lit’ is defined as fiction featuring a scientist as a central character, plying his or her trade as

a profession in the real world—it is not science fiction”: so says Jennifer Rohn, inventor and promoter of the category, first on the back page of *Nature* in 2006 and again in 2010. She is at work soliciting candidates for a canonical list at LabLit.com, an endeavor that has burgeoned since Katherine Bouton reviewed Barbara Kingsolver’s novel *Flight Behavior* in *The New York Times* under the title “In Lab Lit, Fiction Meets Science in the Real World.” Except for its backhanded dismissal of science fiction, most teachers and critics of SF will be amenable to lab lit’s goals of engaging mundane readers, encouraging an awareness of science, and pressuring publishers to pay more attention. The haphazard inclusion of a handful of SF authors (notably Kim Stanley Robinson) on the lab lit list and a few others dubbed crossover examples (notably Joan Slonczewski) reveals more a determined ignorance of our genre than committed disdain. *Flight Behavior* is not a bad book. In fact, after I slogged through the first dreary chapter, it got rather interesting. What happens is that the monarch butterflies that spend their winters on a mountain in Michoaca’n, Mexico, show up unexpectedly on a mountain in southern Appalachia. To quote the author: “The sudden relocation of these overwintering colonies to southern Appalachia is a fictional event that has occurred only in the pages of this novel.” An unbiased critic pursuing truth claims, speculative fiction, and the aesthetics of representation might compare that authorial revelation to KSR’s confession on the dust jacket of *Escape from Kathmandu* “that only one incident in this book actually happened: he and his wife really did bump into Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter on the stairs of the Kathmandu Sheraton.” No yetis tunneling about under the City of Kathmandu in the Kingdom of Nepal? Apparently not. Suffice it to say, Rohn’s primary claim that lab lit excludes speculative fiction is a matter of degree, not kind, at least in its prime example.

Barbara Kingsolver, in her own words, set out to be a “serious” writer and a “literary” one. Unlike some other serious, literary authors, she is also concerned about scientific illiteracy and abhors the scientific howlers that show up in some unspecified fiction (Small Wonder).

Serious literary authors begin with an assumption that novels are principally about characters, style is about the artful deployment of figurative language, symbolism employs a presentational equivalence between a designated element of the text and its coherent relationship with an interpretable meaning, and some other stuff. I should confess here that I have been reading Monroe Beardsley’s *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*



(first published in 1958 and revised in 1981), in order to gain a clearer understanding of what presumptions my literary colleagues of a by-gone era adhered to. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By*, not cited by Beardsley, appeared in 1980 to kick off the new wave in cognitive aesthetics.

Chronologies are wonderfully interesting so long as you don't confuse yourself by thinking priority means causation. On figurative language, Samuel R. Delany will always have priority because of his 1979 Minicon presentation of "Science Fiction and 'Literature'—or, the Conscience of the King," in which he details how the SF text resonates with a multiplicity of meanings beyond the mundane. His first example here is "Her world exploded."

If such a string of words appeared in a mundane fiction text, more than likely we would respond to it as an emotionally muzzy metaphor about the inner aspects in a female character's life. In an SF text, however, we must retain the margin to read these words as meaning that a planet, belonging to a woman, blew up. (88) [emphasis added]

As a not unpracticed reader of contemporary science fiction, my difficulty with the first chapter of *Flight Behavior* was Kingsolver's prolonged use of metaphors and similes to present the novum, the millions of monarch butterflies settling in for a long winter's nap in the mountain forest above our point-of-view character's house. To ensure that neither the reader nor Dellarobia, the young married woman with the accidental name, can make intelligible sense of what we are seeing as she climbs the long path toward her tryst with the even younger telephone repairman, she leaves her glasses at home:

Something in motion caught her eye and yanked her glance upward. How did it happen, that attention could be wrenched like that by some small movement? It was practically nothing, a fleck of orange wobbling above the trees.

She continues to climb, out of breath because she smokes way too much, "losing the fight against this hill," while her gorgeous six dollar second-hand boots rub blisters on her feet. Finally she sees it:

...an orange butterfly on a rainy day. Its out-of-place brashness made her think of the wacked-out sequences in children's books: Which of these does not belong? An apple, a banana, a taxicab. A nice farmer, a married mother of two, a sexy telephone man.

That's the last we hear of butterflies, followed by a lot of "dark looming," "bristly clumps," "scaly all over and pointed at the lower end, as if it had gone oozy and might

drip," "draped with more of the brownish clumps," and a lot of similes: a hornet's nest, a swarm of bees, an armadillo in a tree, fungus, bunches of grapes, scattered corn flakes, and—regrettably—"The view out across the valley was puzzling and unreal, like a sci-fi movie." Finally "the whole landscape intensified, brightening before her eyes. The forest blazed with its own internal flame." The image that dominates after this point is the lake of fire, with rippling waves, a forest fire that she tells herself again and again is not a fire.

To this reader, that first chapter becomes more and more frustrating as Dellarobia sees so much and so little at the same time. Committing the disgrace of imputing intentionality, I would note that it is the author's deliberate choice to send her character forth without her glasses. Even half blind, for her to identify only one of the literally millions of butterflies clinging to the trees and in flight after the sun comes out abuses my credulity.

Climbing the trail, Dellarobia is bent on self-destruction. Overhearing her inner monologue, I think she is obsessed, not with meeting Jimmy the telephone boy as she tells us, but with changing her boring and impoverished life. As she climbs toward the tryst, before she encounters the butterflies, she details all the catastrophic consequences that will follow her betrayal of the passively gentle farmer who impregnated her and provided her a home after the deaths of her parents. The only comparable reading experience I can recall is a long ago story of some children taking the bus to a place with a wishing well, planning to lower one another in the bucket to get coins from the bottom of the well. Really, there are some vicarious experiences I can just as well do without. As an SF reader, I suppose I long ago internalized the belief that ignorance is not just potentially lethal, but inexcusable. Pity and dread are feeble enticements to undertake a 500-page journey with a character.

Puzzling out the question of whether there is a logic to explication, Beardsley calls a metaphor the very model of explication. First, there is a Principle of Congruence ... : "This is what 'fitting' has to mean, I think; in assembling, or feeling out, the admissible connotations of words in a poem, we are guided by logical and physical possibilities. But second, there is the Principle of Plenitude. All the connotations that can be found to fit are to be attributed to the poem: it means all it can mean, so to speak." He calls a proposed explication of a poem (or a metaphor) "a hypothesis that is tested by its capacity to account for the greatest quantity of data in the words of the poem..." And for good measure he throws in Occam's Razor, concluding with the assertion/hypothesis

that literature can be defined in terms of the complexity, coherence, and interrelatedness of second-level meanings—"the multiplicity and resonance of meaning to the highest degree."

Arguably, Kingsolver wrote the first chapter for the sake of the metaphor: "Dellarobia wondered if she looked as she felt, like a woman fleeing a fire." The title of the chapter is "The Measure of a Man," and Jimmy does not measure up. She knows full well that running off with the object of her obsession to live with him in his mother's trailer is no answer. Despite her explicitly expressed skepticism about Jesus, she decides "The burning trees were put there to save her... a burning bush, a fighting of fire with fire." After Kingsolver carefully inoculates her character against an expectation of supernatural intervention, it is profoundly disappointing that her first encounter with the orange spectacle does not leave her with an itch of curiosity.

At her mother-in-law's, with a cigarette between her teeth, she puts her toddler on her hip and takes her five-year-old by the hand so she can "steer her family toward something better than this." Given the facts as presented in the first chapter, it sounds hollow.

I refer you back to Beardsley's criterion of "multiplicity and resonance of meaning to the highest degree," which, as Delany makes clear, requires broadening one's allowance for physical and emotional possibilities:

To read an SF text, we have to indulge a much more fluid and speculative game. With each sentence we have to ask what in the world of the tale would have to be different from our world for such a sentence to be uttered—and thus as the sentences build up, we build up a world in specific dialogue, in a specific tension, with our present concept of the real. (89)

The rest of the novel proceeds with opposing life-cycle arcs: first, from ignorance and hopelessness in Dellarobia's personal life to independence, college with the aid of a work study job in a lab thanks to the intervention of the entomologist who spends most of a year on the

mountain; and second, in the life of the butterflies, the arc from salvation, visionary beauty, and glorious wonder to a realization that their presence on the mountain is a catastrophe.

You may not believe me, but two of the most interesting chapters are heavily detailed shopping trips. The first, "Global Exchange," is structured around a depressing and acrimonious search for Christmas presents in the dollar store; and the second, "Community Dynamics," takes place down the road in Cleary, "a huge new secondhand warehouse," with the hopefulness from her salary working for the entomologist and quality merchandise within reach. Balancing the first "Measure of a Man," the final chapter is "Perfect Female," described by the entomologist to Dellarobia's enraptured young son as "females with their full complement of parts.... So they don't need helpers or auxiliaries to function, the way worker bees do, and soldier ants. A perfect female is the lady who can go out and start a new colony by herself." The term has multiplicity of meaning and resonance.

Kingsolver's telling of the story of the impact of global warming on the likely extinction of the monarch butterfly has all the grace and intelligence we expect from serious writers with a science fiction sensibility. It is almost there.

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## Skyfall [film]

Victor Grech

*Skyfall*. Dir. Sam Mendes. Perf. Daniel Craig; Judi Dench; Javier Bardem. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. 2012.

Order option(s): [DVD](#) | [Blu-ray](#)

### Introduction

*SKYFALL*, the twenty-third James Bond film, premiered in London at the Royal Albert Hall on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012. It was directed by Sam Medes with Daniel Craig reprising Bond for the third time. The release coincided with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bond film series, which commenced with *Dr. No* in 1962.

*Skyfall* is the seventh highest grossing film of all time and the highest grossing film in the United Kingdom. Accolades include the BAFTA Awards for Outstanding British Film and Best Film Music; the Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by a Stunt Ensemble in a Motion Picture; and Academy Awards for Best Sound Editing, and Best Original Song (Adele).

James Bond has been traditionally viewed as a cipher for empire and indeed, it has been argued that “the Bond franchise continues to exist as an anachronistic symbol of British influence in matters of style and politics” (Hoa 3). However, Bond has also been associated with science-fictional themes, primarily through the involvement of futuristic gadgetry invented by white-coated boffins in secret laboratories.

*Skyfall* is different and shockingly depicts Bond as an “aging hero [...] no longer equal to the physical rigors of his job, and yet unable to abandon it” (1), as well as exposing the potential and controversial “obsolescence of the Bond universe, along with everything it stands for” (3).

This essay will examine the film’s principal *leitmotifs*, renewal, rebirth and redemption, with a constant juxtaposition and belligerent tension between the old and the new, ultimately proving that the timeworn may be successfully revived and resurrected in order to continue to play a useful and active role even in a modern and high-tech society. All quotations are derived from the film, unless otherwise indicated.

The plot revolves around a former and completely disgraced M16 agent (Raoul Silva) who elaborately plans to discredit, humiliate and eventually kill M (the head of

MI6, a branch of the British secret service), who he feels had betrayed him.

### Film

The first intimation of this trope is to be found in the theme song:

This is the end [...] I’ve drowned and dreamt this moment [...] Let the sky fall When it crumbles We will stand tall Face it all together [...] Skyfall is where we start A thousand miles and poles apart Where worlds collide and days are dark.

The drowning theme is prominent, echoing Bond’s near death by submergence after falling into a deep ravine early in the film, having sustained a chest wound by friendly fire. Bond survives, almost as if the drowning constitutes a baptism into a new life. But he initially spends some time as a beach bum, before an explosion at MI6 prompts his return.

The song is accompanied by disturbing and nihilistic visual sequences that are darker than those usually introducing Bond films, focusing on death through the use of dripping blood and falling knives that turn to cross-shaped headstones and skulls in cemeteries, along with Bond cardboard targets riddled with bullet holes. These have replaced the usual female silhouettes that have conventionally functioned as signifiers for the sexual activity that accompanies Bond films.

Several times during the film, Bond and M are accused of being relics of a bygone age, dinosaurs who lack the resilience to adapt to the modern world. This results in a tension with younger elements throughout the narrative.

When Bond returns back to England, he meets M at her house, the actual former house of John Barry (1933-2011) who created the signature Bond theme song and who also produced film scores for many Bond films. M is initially cross with Bond, demanding to know “where the hell have you been? [...] Why didn’t you call? [...] Ran out of drink where you were, did they?” an intimation that the traditional hard drinking and other excesses are no longer acceptable.

The gaunt, unshaven, drink-addled and somewhat inebriated Bond quips sardonically “enjoying death. 007 reporting for duty. [...] You didn’t get the postcard? You should try it sometime, get away from all



of it. It really lends perspective.” More seriously he wonders whether he has been in the profession “maybe too long. [...] So this is it. We’re both played out,” a notion that M quashes: “speak for yourself.”

On his return to MI6, he faces gruelling physical and mental tests, as well as tough assessments of critical skills, such as marksmanship. He clearly feels his age on several occasions and despite failing these appraisals, M decides to return him to active duty, creating a fallen hero who must rise to this extraordinary occasion. As a further sign of renewal, he shaves his greying beard, instantly acquiring a smarter and more youthful appearance. However, he clearly does not fully embrace new times and ways, shaving with a straight (cut throat) razor, averring: “I like to do some things the old-fashioned way,” to which the Bond girl assents “sometimes the old ways are the best.” This exact same phrase is later repeated by an old family retainer, re-emphasising the maxim that the new is not automatically better than the old.

Bond also returns to duty without the snazzy gadgets to which audiences have become accustomed to over the years. His first encounter with the quartermaster, Q, is fraught with symbolism. They meet in the National Gallery and both sit facing the west wall of room 34, a chamber replete with emblematic British paintings. Three paintings by John M. W. Turner face them, two clearly, *Rain, Steam and Speed—The Great Western Railway* (1844) to the right and *The Fighting Temeraire tugged to her last berth to be broken up* (1839) directly in front of the duo, the painting on which the camera lingers longest.

These paintings accentuate two themes: the old replacing the new and the quintessential Britishness of Bond. The former of the two paintings contains a small hare just in front and to the right of the train’s front end, and this may symbolise the violent encroachment of the pastoral countryside, represented by the hare, which is running out of the way of the oblivious and uncaring juggernaut. The latter painting portrays an old and venerable but redundant warship, a retired three-masted warship (the *Temeraire*), being towed away to be ignominiously scrapped by an ugly but functional new steam boat in the setting of a sunset, conjuring up the nostalgic remembrance of the passage of the era of British empire and naval supremacy. This is popularly considered the greatest painting in Britain and is iconic of the Victorian age of the great British Empire.

Q comments on the painting: “always makes me feel a bit melancholy. A grand old war ship, being ignominiously hauled away for scrap. The inevitability of time,

don’t you think?” Hare and sailing ship may be signifiers for the elderly M and middle-aged Bond, who are threatened with replacement by the new. Interestingly, Turner lived at 119 Cheyne Walk in London in the early 1800s as did Ian Fleming, Bond’s creator, in 1923–26.

Behind Bond and Q are another two paintings, Joseph Wright of Derby’s *Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump* (1768), which demonstrates the then cutting edge of science, an experiment with bird in an air pump, an appropriate backdrop for Q. The other is Thomas Gainsborough’s *Mr and Mrs William Hallett (The Morning Walk - 1785)* which depicts a wealthy couple in their marriage finery about to embark on life’s adventure with a dog looking adoringly at its mistress, a possible comparison of Bond and M or the Queen. These two actors are therefore cleverly framed by paintings that signify their characters.

In actual fact, the paintings in the museum are arranged somewhat differently and there is a couch, not a backless bench in the middle of the room, and this is not in front of the abovementioned paintings.

Bond is initially incredulous, disbelieving Q’s identity “because you still have spots [...] youth is no guarantee of innovation.” Q retorts that his

complexion is hardly relevant. [...] Age is no guarantee of efficiency. [...] I’ll hazard I can do more damage on my laptop sitting in my pyjamas before my first cup of Earl Grey than you can do in a year in the field.

However, he also concedes that agents like Bond are necessary since “every now and then a trigger has to be pulled.” Q provides him with tiny radio homing beacon and a pistol with a “micro sensor in the grip. It’s been coded to your palm print, so only you can fire it. Less of a random killing machine, more of a personal statement.” Bond remarks “a gun, and a radio. Not exactly Christmas, is it?” doubtless remembering the good old days when he was packed off to missions redolent with nifty contraptions, to which Q disparagingly alludes “were you expecting an exploding pen? We don’t really go in for that anymore.”

Bond despondently remarks “brave new world,” a comment with which we can readily sympathise when we later see Q engaging in the fray by using a laptop while drinking from a Scrabble (the board game) mug.

This does not prevent Bond from embarking on the customary and anticipated antics, such as action sequences on trains, driving a motorcycle over rooftops and so on. However, little is made of the two customary Bond girls, with the plot focusing instead on the com-

plex relationships between M and her secret agents. This evidenced by a word association test that Bond replies to in the following way: “Woman? Provocatrix. [...] M? Bitch.”

M’s leadership is also questioned by her superiors regarding her performance as well as the necessity for the continuation of MI6 itself. The confrontations commence with her meeting with the “new chairman, just standard procedure” which M dismisses as a “bloody waste of my time.” The “new Chairman of Intelligence and Security Committee” is Gareth Mallory (Ralph Fiennes) who apprises M:

I’m sorry to have to deal with such a delicate subject on our first encounter. But, M, I have to be frank with you. [...] The Prime Minister’s concerned. [...] Have you considered pulling out the agents [...]? Three months ago you lost a computer drive containing the identity of almost every NATO agent embedded in terrorist organization across the globe. A list, which in the eyes of our allies, never existed. So, if you’ll forgive me, I think you know why you’re here. [...] [W]e’re to call this ‘retirement planning.’ Your country has only the highest respect for you and your many years of service. When your current posting is completed, you’ll be awarded, GCMG with full honors. Congratulations. [...] I’m here to oversee the transition period leading to your voluntary retirement in two months time. Your successor has yet to be appointed, [...] you’ve had a great run. You should leave with dignity.

M obstinately retorts: “I’m not an idiot, Mallory. I knew I can’t do this job forever, but I’ll be damned if I’m going to leave the department in worse shape than I found it. [...] To hell with dignity. I’ll leave when the job’s done.”

Mallory later reconfronts M after another setback, noting that the British government

has taken the position we’re a bunch of antiquated bloody idiots fighting a war we don’t understand and can’t possibly win [...]. The Prime Minister’s ordered an inquiry. You’ll have to appear [...]. We’re a democracy and we’re accountable to the people we’re trying to defend. We can’t keep working in the shadows, there are no more shadows.

M ripostes

Oh, standing in the stock at midday. Who’s antiquated now? [...] You don’t get this, do you? Whoever’s behind this, whoever’s doing it, he knows us. He’s one of us. He comes from the same place as Bond. The place you say doesn’t exist. The shadows.

M’s reference to the shadows is apt as this is precisely what the villain turns out to be, a stateless person with the cybercapacity to strike from anywhere on the globe. Mallory also questions Bond’s suitability, pointing out to him that “it’s a young man’s game. [...] The only shame will be in not admitting it until it’s too late [...]. Good luck, 007. Don’t cock it up.” Bond feigns indifference: “hire me, or fire me. It’s entirely up to you” and is backed by M who declares “as long as I’m head of this department, I’ll choose my own operatives.”

M is vindicated by the actions of the villain (Raúl Silva reprised by Javier Bardem), a cyber-terrorist who is “able to breach the most secure computer system in Britain.” Silva is presented as Bond’s Jungian shadow, a former secret service agent who is physically and psychologically traumatised in the course of his duties, which he carries out with excessive zeal.

It is this that had led M to abandon him, thereby giving rise to the vendetta. M is unrepentant, avowing in general with regard to her treatment of the agents under her control: “what do you expect, a bloody apology? You know the rules of the game, you’ve been playing it long enough. We both have.” Silva therefore becomes a distorted reflection, Bond’s Jungian shadow, an authentic villain whose concealed facial disfiguration constitutes an “extreme physical grotesqueness,” which Kingsley Amis labelled “a sine qua non in Bond’s enemies” (Amis 64).

Bond confronts Silva on his island that is populated by henchmen and computer servers. Silva sneers at him

Just look at you, barely held together by your pills and your drink [...]. You’re still clinging to your faith in that old woman, when all she does is lie to you [...]. All that physical stuff is so dull. So dull. Chasing spies. So old-fashioned. England. The Empire. MI6. You’re living in a ruin, as well. You just don’t know it yet. At least here there are no old ladies giving orders, and no little gadgets from those fools in Q branch. If you wanted, you could pick your own secret missions, as I do. Hmm? Name it. Name it! Destabilize a multinational by manipulating stocks? Easy! Interrupt transmissions from a spy satellite over Kabul? Done! Rig an election in Uganda, all to the highest bidder. [...] Just point and click.

Bond responds “don’t forget my pathetic love of country” and admits that he has gone through a “resurrection.” Indeed Silva later grudgingly concedes “Not bad! Not bad, James, for a physical wreck.” He lets himself be caught by Bond but M still has to face a Parliamentary committee and is asked

So you believe the security of MI6 during the recent

crisis has been up to scratch? You'll forgive me for not putting up the bunting. I find it rather difficult to overlook the monumental security breaches and dead operatives for which you are almost single handedly responsible.

M staunchly defends her department and its rapidly metastasising problems.

Chairman, ministers. Today I've repeatedly heard how irrelevant my department has become. Why do we need agents, the double o section? Isn't it all rather quaint? Well, I suppose I see a different world than you do. And the truth is that what I see frightens me. I'm frightened because our enemies are no longer known to us. They do not exist on the map, they are not nations, they are individuals. Look around you, who do you fear? Can you see a face, a uniform, a flag? No. Our world is not more transparent now. It's more opaque. It's in the shadows. That's where we must do battle. So, before you declare us irrelevant, ask yourselves. How safe do you feel?

Once again, M points to the shadows as the threats, in lieu of the traditional enemies that were comprised of the Warsaw Pact countries. At this point, M quotes one of the most evocative poems that deals with age and the willingness to forge on, "Ulysses," by Tennyson, Britain's Victorian poet laureate.

Just one more thing to say. My late husband was a great lover of poetry. And um...I suppose some of it sunk in, despite my best intentions. And here today I remember this. I think, from Tennyson. 'We are not now that strength which in old days moved earth and heaven. That which we are, we are. One equal temper of heroic hearts, made weak by time and fate, but strong in will. To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.'

This is just one of many British Bulldog moments that occur throughout the film. It is worth pointing out that "Ulysses" is quoted by Dame Judi Dench, an actual Commander of the Order of the British Empire. Furthermore, Tennyson's "Ulysses" is based on an alternate ending to the *Odyssey* by Dante wherein Ulysses never returns home to his kingdom of Ithaca but chooses to abandon his family and his duties. Tennyson's poem speculates about an elderly Ulysses' who yearns to sail away to seek new adventures and new knowledge.

Moreover the completion dates of Turner's painting of the Temeraire (1839) and Turner's "Ulysses" (1842) coincide with the period of the First Anglo-Chinese (Opium) War, with one of the outcomes including Britain's seizure of Hong Kong (Hao 6).

During the inquiry, Siva escapes, storms the hearing wherein M is interrogated and is stopped only by the timely intervention of Bond himself. Mallory also reveals himself to be a brave combatant in this firefight since he is a former SAS officer who was held captive by the IRA for three months.

At this juncture, Bond decides to escape with M, using her as bait to trap Silva. He decides to drive to the family manor in the Scottish Highlands using his original, iconic, silver 1965 Aston Martin DB5 which dates back from the *Goldfinger* film (Hamilton). The car features a six cylinder, 282-horsepower engine, reaching 60 miles per hour in 7.1 seconds, with a top speed of 148 mph. M notes sarcastically "I suppose that's completely inconspicuous."

Aston Martin is a classic English carmaker and Aston Martins have starred in eleven of the films to date. Again, the car dates Bond and further emphasises his Britishness by linking him with this classic marque. And when M complains "It's not really comfortable, is it?" Bond suggestively flips open the shift knob cap, which conceals the button for ejecting the passenger, seat, harking back to *Goldfinger*.

As they drive off to Scotland, Bond remarks that they are going "back in time. Somewhere we'll have the advantage." Bond, M and an old gamekeeper then prepare for Silva's attack in Bonds "beautiful old house" on a foggy King Arthurian moor. The entrance to the estate is flanked by the sculpture of a deer, which is strongly reminiscent of Edward Landseer's 1851 *Monarch of the Glen*.

Silva's assault includes a melodramatic entrance on a helicopter with blaring loud music (The Animals "Boom Boom") in a scene reminiscent of Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 *Apocalypse Now*, an American epic war film set during the Vietnam War. Like *Skyfall*, *Apocalypse Now* showcases a Jungian shadow, Colonel Walter E. Kurtz, a highly decorated US Army Special Forces officer who goes renegade, thereby depicting war as a potential Conradian *Heart of Darkness*. In *Apocalypse Now* Kurtz swoops in to attack by helicopter while loudly playing "The Ride of the Valkyries" (Die Walküre) by Richard Wagner.

In the ensuing struggle, the sky literally falls upon the old Scottish manor house, which is destroyed, and Silva loses all of his henchmen to Bond and his two allies. But Silva briefly captures M, holding her head next to his and pointing the gun at both of their heads in line with the muzzle, urging her to shoot, to "free both of us. Free both of us, with the same bullet. Do it! Do it! Only you



can do it. Do it.”

However, he is killed with a thrown knife by Bond, an adept use of one of “the old ways.” M unfortunately dies of bullet wounds and in her will, leaves Bond an ugly porcelain bulldog ornament decorated by a Union Jack that used to reside on her desk. This is given to Bond by a young agent, one of the Bond girls who used to be a field operative but who opts for a desk job, as “field work’s not for everyone,” leaving the older Bond as an active field agent. The operative reveals that her name is Money Penny, closing that particular loop in the Bond canon.

The setting for this scene is very British, the rooftop of the Department of Energy and Climate Change in Whitehall, offering spectacular views along Whitehall down to the Houses of Parliament.

In the final scene Bonds meets Mallory (who has become M) and who asks Bond “[a]re you ready to get back to work?” to which Bond replies “with pleasure, M. With pleasure.” The painting behind Mallory is also symbolic as it is Thomas Buttersworth’s, “The Battle of Trafalgar” showing the HMS *Victory* engaging the Franco-Spanish fleet in Battle of Trafalgar.

This is one of the most famous naval battles wherein Nelson used guile and unconventional tactics against great odds to lead his fleet to victory. Furthermore, the dying Nelson at Trafalgar asked the ship’s captain to kiss him, just as Bond kissed M as she died in his arms after being shot in the firefight with the Spanish *Silva*. Moreover, the *Temeraire* (featured in Turner’s painting) is seen here in its heyday, in action thirty years before the events in Turner’s painting, rejuvenated and in the thick of the action, during which it rescued the *Victory*, Nelson’s flagship, when it was attacked by several ships.

Other paintings are also cleverly showcased, including Amedeo Modigliani’s *La Femme a l’Eventail* (Woman With a Fan—1919), which was stolen from the Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 2010.

## Discussion

*Skyfall* is replete with elements of the old Bond movies, instantly recognisable motifs such as Aston Martins, background music by John Barry and an action-packed screenplay. The symbolism implicit in classic English paintings and iconic British settings further accentuates Bond’s traditional Britishness.

The historical links to the canon are evident even in small and subtle details, such as the standard introduction to one of the Bond girls “Bond. James Bond” along a reference to a drink that is shaken but not stirred, as per Bond’s preference, to which he responds “perfect.”

This attention to detail includes Bond’s pale-blue swimming trunks which echo the pale-blue swimsuit that Sean Connery wore in Young’s *Thunderball* (1965).

The film also evokes a sense of a midlife crisis that Bond must face and overcome with the celebration of fifty years on the silver screen. “Bond’s decline is [...] a reflection on the decline of the British empire [...] Turkey [...] East Asia” (Hoa 3).

*Skyfall* depicts a new Bond who has grown up and matured beyond drink, drugs and cigarettes, a Bond who has come to terms with his human weaknesses and whose moodiness and resistance to authority is not sardonic cheek but the sign of a psychologically troubled soul. The narrative therefore crafts a new beginning that shuns Bond’s old psychopathic killer breezy amorality. This made him not only a celebration of the cold war struggle, but also a walking critique of an empire that turns a blind eye to caddish behaviour which leaves a trail of discarded women, corpses and assorted mayhem with impunity. Bond’s free association test affirms the notion when “murder” prompts the reply “employment.”

Arguably, the only mitigating factor that may permit MI6 and its operatives to continue to operate outside standard parameters as conventionally permitted by law is a shadowy terrorist threat that is ill-defined and ill-definable, and it is for this reason that MI6 has a mandate that must perforce be equally nebulous in order to allow this apparatus to successfully defend the polity with counter-terrorist measures that may break the law.

*Skyfall* is a new beginning, steering away from the initial postmodern tropes of decay and obsolescence, with even the new MI6 using “part of Churchill’s bunker. We’re still discovering tunnels dating back to the eighteenth century. Quite fascinating, if it wasn’t for the rats [...]” The location itself is redolent with memories of Britain with its back against the wall, under Nazi siege and threatened with invasion, “as if miming a certain geographical retreat; beaten back to its old borders, Britain is now hard pressed even to defend the metropole” (Hoa 3). These subthemes synergistically “affirm past grandeur and [...] imbue the present with the poignant heroism of an underdog resolved to fight to the death” (4).

There is also a sense of nostalgia for a rejuvenated and cleaner Bond who has become normalised, human and therefore flawed and fallible as he successfully negotiates the transition from the old to the new world, while threatened by novel enemies that operate from the shadows.

Our hero has also attained moral redemption at the expense of the villain. Redemption is a religious or

## Call for Papers—Conference

proto-religious conviction that refers to some sort of absolution after atonement for past transgressions, a common belief in many religions, a process that is also synonymous with salvation from eternal damnation in many cultures. This trope harks back to James George Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, who popularised this particular theme. Frazer noted the tale of the priesthood of Nemi wherein a king must be periodically slain by his rival as part of a fertility rite, redeeming his country. Through redemption, James has renounced his role as imperial fantasy and has become a real and believable person.

Even his Bond girls have matured, eschewing provocative names such as Pussy Galore, Honey Ryder, Holly Goodhead, Plenty O'Toole, Bambi, Thumper, Rosie Carver, Mary Goodnight, Octopussy and Jenny Flex. The days of easily available and scantily attired beauties have also passed.

*Skyfall* thus stands as an example of post-Jubilee and post-London-Olympic Bond, a blast from the past celebrating the former glories of mighty Empire through the Bond canon, which contrives to become "an example of British fortitude" by teaching Bond, an "old dog, new tricks."

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**Title:** Imagining Alternatives: A Graduate Symposium on Speculative Fictions

**Deadline:** 23 August 2013

**Conference Date:** Oct 18-19, 2013

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**Contact:** [imaginingalternatives@gmail.com](mailto:imaginingalternatives@gmail.com)

**Web:** <http://imaginingalternatives.wordpress.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/ImaginingAlternatives>

**Topic:** In her 1973 essay "From Elfland to Poughkeepsie," noted fantasy and science fiction author Ursula K. Le Guin writes that fantasy is "a game played for very high stakes....It is a different approach to reality, an alternative technique for apprehending and coping with existence....[it is] superrealistic, a heightening of reality." The Imagining Alternatives Graduate Symposium invites proposals for papers and panels that interrogate the alternative possibilities imagined in the heightened realities of speculative fictions: fantasy, science fiction, horror, the weird, alternate history, the utopian, and the dystopian, in literature, film, television, and video games. Such fictions give us not only alternative worlds, but alternative views of our own pasts, presents, and possible futures. They reflect our hopes and fears; they offer alternative narratives of race, gender, sexuality, and nation; they suggest the magic and the horror embedded in our own realities.

We suggest the topics below, but are open to other interpretations suggested by the symposium theme:

- Embodiments
- Identities
- Races
- Genders and Sexualities
- Communities and Nations
- Religions
- Languages
- Models of Citizenship
- Diplomacies and Geopolitics
- Economies
- Landscapes and Spaces
- Futures Histories
- Epistemologies
- Pedagogies
- Values and Ethics
- Texts and Canons

**Submission:** Proposals should consist of a 200-300 word abstract in .docx or .rtf format. Panel proposals should include a 100-200 word panel description as well as abstracts for up to 3 papers.

We also invite proposals for alternatives to traditional panel sessions; we particularly encourage submissions of creative work (visual arts, short films, performance pieces, and creative writing) exploring the conference theme.

**Title:** American Fantasies and Dreams

**Deadline:** 30 November 2013

**Conference Date:** May 14–16, 2014

Atatürk University, Erzurum, Turkey

**Contact:** [asat2007@gmail.com](mailto:asat2007@gmail.com)

**Topic:** The scientific study of human dreams is generally considered to have started with the publication of Freud's legendary Interpretation of Dreams. Yet, interest in what dreams and dreaming signify is as old as humanity itself. Regardless of whatever form in which they may appear—i.e., dreams, nightmares, daydreams, visions, trances, illusions, hallucinations, delusions, mirages, fantasies, and fictions—dreams have helped individuals understand, interpret, make sense of and sometimes completely deny reality. Hence, without understanding the dreams and fantasies of society, it is impossible to understand its realities. From the ubiquitous American Dream to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s inspiring oratory, from Native American dream interpretation to the science fiction tales of the space age, dreams and fantasies similarly manifest various aspects of American society and culture.

This conference wishes to explore the relationship between dreams and fantasies, particularly focusing on the dichotomy between fantasy and reality. The American Studies Association of Turkey thus invites proposals that consider American fantasies and dreams, broadly conceived. We particularly encourage abstracts which incorporate transdisciplinary explorations of the subject, and welcome submissions from any branch of American Studies. Possible themes include, but are not limited to:

- Science Fiction and Fantasy
- Problemetizing the American dream/nightmare
- Immigration and borderlands
- Utopian visions and social reform
- Dystopias/war and conflict
- Fantasies and dreams in literature/literary criticism

- The poetics of fantasies and dreams
- Magic realism
- (Post)modern/(post)colonial fantasies and dreams
- Psychoanalysis and dream theory
- Fantastic narratives and language
- Transcultural/transhistorical fantasies and dreams
- Fantasizing and dreaming from the margins
- Mythic, sacred, symbolic, spiritual fantasies and dreams
- Subversive/resistive fantasies and dreams
- Underground fantasies and dreams
- Consumerism and the American dream
- Ethics and the environment
- The semiotics of fantasies and dreams
- Cinematic/media adaptations of fantasies and dreams
- Fantasies and dreams in cyberspace (virtual realities, gaming, blogs, social media and identity construction)
- Music, art and theater as stages for the performance of fantasies and dreams
- Comic books, graphic novels and political cartoons and their use as critical tools
- Oral traditions (griots, storytelling, folktales, street poetry)
- Domestic arts (quilting, weaving, pottery, and needlework)
- Life writing (travel writing, journals, diaries, and memoirs)
- Technology and science; Architecture and design
- The limits of fantasies and dreams

**Submission:** Proposals should be sent to the American Studies Association of Turkey ([asat2007@gmail.com](mailto:asat2007@gmail.com)) and should consist of a 250–300 word abstract in English, as well as a 1 paragraph biography for each participant. The time allowance for all presentations is 20 minutes. An additional 10 minutes will be provided for discussion. Deadline for proposal submission: November 30, 2013. Notification of proposal acceptance: February 1, 2014.



**Title:** Diversity in Speculative Fiction, Loncon 3 Academic Programme

**Deadline:** 1 October 2013

**Conference Date:** Thursday 14 to Monday 18 August 2014 London, UK

**Contact:** [emma.England@loncon3.org](mailto:emma.England@loncon3.org)

**Web:** <http://loncon3.org/>

<http://academicloncon3.wordpress.com/>

Guests of Honour: Iain M. Banks, John Clute, Malcolm Edwards, Chris Foss, Jeanne Gomoll, Robin Hobb, Bryan Talbot

**Topic:** The academic programme at Loncon 3, the 72nd World Science Fiction Convention, is offering the opportunity for academics from across the globe to share their ideas with their peers and convention attendees. To reflect the history and population of London, the host city, the theme of the academic programme is 'Diversity'. We will be exploring science fiction, fantasy, horror, and all forms of speculative fiction, whether in novels, comics, television, and movies or in fanworks, art, radio plays, games, advertising, and music.

Proposals are particularly welcome on the works of the Guests of Honour, the city of London as a location and/or fantastic space, and underrepresented areas of research in speculative fiction. Examples of these may include, but are not limited to:

- Representation of alternative sexualities
- Speculative fiction by writers and producers of colour - Non-English language media and/or fandoms
- The fantastic in unexpected places (greetings cards, pornography, opera, football stadiums)
- Digital comics
- The role of speculative fiction in Live Action Role-Playing
- The fantastic in music videos
- Speculative fiction in advertising
- European horror

Academics at all levels are warmly encouraged, including students and independent scholars.

**Submission:** We welcome proposals for presentations, roundtable discussions, lectures, and workshops/masterclasses. To propose a paper, please submit a 300 word abstract. To submit something other than a paper, please get in touch with Emma England, the academic area head, for an informal exchange of ideas.

The deadline for submission is October 1st 2013. Participants will be notified by December 31st 2013. All presenters must be in receipt of convention membership by May 1st 2014.

**Title:** Stage The Future: The First International Conference on Science Fiction Theatre

**Deadline:** 28 February 2014

**Conference Date:** Saturday April 26, 2014

School of English, University of Royal Holloway

**Contact:** [stagethefuture@gmail.com](mailto:stagethefuture@gmail.com)

Keynote Speakers: Jen Gunnels (*New York Review of Science Fiction*) Dr. Nick Lowe (University of Royal Holloway)

**Topic:** Science Fiction Theatre doesn't officially exist. You won't find it listed as a sub-genre of either science fiction or theatre and you won't find it on wikipedia (though you will find a 1950s TV series with the same title – luckily, there is a theatre entry in the SF Encyclopaedia.) Apart from that, there seems to be only one book on the subject so far, called "Science Fiction and the Theatre" and that was more than twenty years ago. And yet Theatre itself was born out of the Fantastic. It began as a religious ceremony filled with metaphysical concepts and mythological beings, and it went on with fairy tales (especially as children's theatre) and fantasy (see *A Midnight Summer's Dream*, *Faust*, and many more), never denouncing its mystical roots. Even when it seemed to convert to Realism, it gave birth to the Absurd. Still one cannot help but notice that, though its performance has undergone major changes in the digital era, thematically theatre seems hesitant to take the next big step and follow cinema and literature to the science-fictional future.

This is strange because there have been many science fiction plays, some of them quite important in the history of theatre. Consider Beckett's *Endgame* and its post-apocalyptic setting. Consider Karel Čapek who actually coined the term "Robot" in his science-fiction play "R.U.R.", recently added to Gollancz's "SF Masterworks" series. Consider even *Rocky Horror Show* and *the Little Shop of Horrors*.

But in the end, even if there was none of the above, even if there had been no robots, aliens or demigods in theatre so far, now would be the time for them to dominate the stage. In the age where real robots are sent to Mars, in the age of *Star Wars*, *Avatar* and *the Matrix* (and so many superhero films every year), theatre cannot stay behind.

This conference is the first of its kind and hopes to raise awareness of the need for a new theatre that is already here; a theatre that has its roots in the past and its eyes on the future.

This event aims to bring together scholars, critics,

writers and performers for the first international academic conference on Science Fiction Theatre. Papers are welcome on any topic related to speculative theatre.

Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Depictions of future times
- Utopia and Dystopia
- Proto-science-fiction in theatre
- Ancient Speculative Theatre (Prophets, Monsters, Gods)
- Theatrical adaptations of science fiction novels and films
- Science and Theatre
- Science and the Human
- Performing the Non-Human and the Post-Human
- Temporality, SF and Theatre
- Dramaturgical Analysis of the Unknown
- Space Opera and Science Fiction Opera
- Theatre and the Weird
- Other fantastical theatres (Horror, Fantasy, Supernatural)

**Submission:** The conference welcomes proposals for individual papers and panels from any discipline and theoretical perspective. Please send a title and a 300 word abstract for a 20 minute paper along with your name, affiliation and 100 word professional biography to [stagethefuture@gmail.com](mailto:stagethefuture@gmail.com) by 28 February 2014.

## Call for Papers—Journal

**Title:** *The Eaton Journal of Archival Research in Science Fiction*

**Deadline:** 1 August 2013

**Contact:** [eatonjournal@gmail.com](mailto:eatonjournal@gmail.com)

**Topic:** We are now soliciting articles for the second issue, and for subsequent issues of the *Eaton Journal of Archival Research in Science Fiction*. *The Eaton Journal of Archival Research in Science Fiction* is a peer-reviewed, open-access, online journal hosted by the University of California at Riverside, affiliated with the UCR Library's Eaton Collection of Science Fiction & Fantasy. Graduate student editors run the Eaton Journal, with scholarly review provided by an interdisciplinary executive board made up of SF scholars, research librarians, and archivists.

The *Eaton Journal* creates a space for science fiction scholars to share their findings and their experiences

within the several archives dedicated to science fiction found throughout the world. The Eaton Journal is also the only journal dedicated to providing a place for archival librarians to discuss the challenges of managing significant science fiction collections and to share their best practices for facilitating as well as conducting archival research in SF. Articles submitted to the journal should fall under one of three categories:

- Scholarly articles with a significant research component
- Methodological/Pedagogical articles
- Articles spotlighting neglected authors, emerging archives, and other research opportunities

**Submission:** For Submission Information and Formatting Guidelines, visit our website at <http://eatonjournal.ucr.edu/guidelines.html>.

**Title:** *Journal of Science Fiction Film and Television: Special issue on SF anime*

**Deadline:** 1 September 2013

**Contact:** [sfftvanime@gmail.com](mailto:sfftvanime@gmail.com)

**Topic:** *The Journal of Science Fiction Film and Television* seeks article-length manuscripts for a planned special issue on Science Fiction (and) Anime. Guest Editors: Elyce Rae Helford (Middle Tennessee State University) and Alex Naylor (University of Greenwich, UK).

Areas of interest include (but are not limited to):

- textual studies: perspectives on individual anime texts
- image/identity studies: anime and race, gender, class
- genre studies: relationship between anime and SF
- auteur studies: directors and/or producers of anime
- theoretical readings: feminist, postcolonial, Marxist, psychoanalytic, queer, etc.
- global studies: transnational studies of anime production or reception
- audience/fandom studies: conventions, fan fiction/art, cosplay, gaming, etc.
- transmedia studies: marketing, packaging, anime and/on the internet

**Submission:** Submissions should be made via the Science Fiction Film and Television website: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/lup-sfft>. Direct queries to guest editors Elyce Rae Helford and Alex Naylor at [sfftvanime@gmail.com](mailto:sfftvanime@gmail.com).

# Science Fiction Research Association

[www.sfra.org](http://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 Website at [www.sfra.org](http://www.sfra.org). For a membership application, contact the SFRA Treasurer or see the Website.

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