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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

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The Science Fiction Academy

Doug Davis

THE SFRA is a unique professional organization because its diverse membership includes not only academics who study the work of creative professionals but also creative professionals—writers, artists, filmmakers and craftspeople—who produce the work those very same academics study. The organization welcomes serious admirers of the genre into our organization (and onto our email lists) as well. The *SFRA Review* regularly features reviews of creative works by academics alongside reviews of academic work by creative writers. Indeed, many of our members (including many contributors to this present issue) inhabit both the academic and creative-professional worlds simultaneously. And I suspect that many of us academics (although here I speak for myself) think of science fiction as the smartest, the most analytical, the most critical—dare I say, the most academic—popular art form our global culture has to offer.

In this 305th issue of the *SFRA Review*, alongside our regular assortment of news and reviews, we shine a spotlight on the academic side of the SFRA in two pieces in our business section. Chris Pak has written a comprehensive summary of the recent academic conference, “Swords, Sorcery, Sandals and Space: The Fantastika and the Classical World,” held at the University of Liverpool. Jason Ellis has compiled an impressive jobs column for this issue as well. Jason tapped leading scholars in the field to report on the state of science fiction studies at their academic institutions. In this issue’s jobs column, Lisa Yaszek of the Georgia Institute of Technology, Rob Latham and Sherryl Vint of the University of California at Riverside, and Christopher McKitterick of the University of Kansas each discuss such topics as their institutions’ science fiction programs, SF-related degree programs, student advisement and job placement. Together with Mark Young’s excellent Feature 101 piece on sound studies and our slate of fine reviews, Chris’s and Jason’s respective columns really encapsulate what science fiction in academia is all about. If anyone were to ask me what science fiction professors do, I would send them a link to this issue of the *SFRA Review*. I hope these two features are helpful for students and recent graduates who are considering a career in science fiction academia, and I want to thank Professors Yaszek, Latham, Vint and McKitterick for taking the time to write such detailed and informative pieces for the *Review*.

Meanwhile, at the EC HQ . . .

Pawel Freluk

IT IS THE MIDDLE OF SUMMER in Southern California as I’m writing this, but sadly there is not much time for sunbathing or things that everyone else seems to be doing at this time of the year. Like many of you, I am trying to catch up with writing and reviewing, a seemingly universal plight of those with heavy teaching loads during the academic year. Then again, salt mines come in much worse forms than that.

There are not too many points to report, but those that I have are exciting. First of all, I would like to welcome in our midst the new Public Relations officer. Emily Connelly is a graduate student at Portland State University and has extensive experience in the PR work outside academic organizations. Her email is emily.connelly@pdx.edu—if you have any ideas concerning spreading the SFRA message, feel free to contact her. Welcome Emily and thank you for agreeing to take the job!

On a related note, I would like to thank Benedict Jones and Artem Zubov, who have responded to my call for volunteers on our listserv to enter the bibliographic data from *SFRA Review* into the Internet Speculative Fiction Database, the process initiated by Ritch Calvin some time ago. The listings should contribute to the increased visibility of the *Review* and the organization, but also enhance this great research resource.

We are also in the process of redrafting and formalizing a number of internal documents, which should be posted on the website towards the end of the summer. Jenni Halpin has done a magnificent job preparing detailed guidelines for applicants in all three categories of grants that the SFRA awards. The members of the Student Paper Award committee should also have the new call for submissions ready soon.

Finally, by the time you are reading this, I will have announced a public survey asking the members’ opinion about the 2015 SFRA conference—Alfredo Suppia has generously offered to host it in Brazil, which would definitely fit our commitment to internationalize SFRA. We do realize, however, that this is a long haul for many members and a trip that requires more logistic preparation than domestic conferences. So, when you see the announcement, do go to the SurveyMonkey form and do let us know what you think.

In the meantime, have a great autumn. Over and out.

Keeping SFRA Socially Mediated

Amy J. Ransom

SFRA WOULD LIKE TO INCREASE its presence on the social media and we need your help!

See a great movie? Read a great book or article? Want to share a call for papers? Post your thoughts via Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Science-Fiction-Research-Association-SFRA/102724198663> or Twitter: <https://twitter.com/sfranews>

If you have photos from the Riverside Conference or ideas to share about the upcoming 2013 joint SFRA/WisCon Conference, we'd like to share those, too!

In keeping with the last conference theme of sf media, I have an sf film from Quebec to plug. *Mars et avril* (2012; Mars and April) is getting a good bit of buzz thanks to California's *Technology, Entertainment, Design* center and its website (www.ted.com), a site of interest for those in sf media studies. Directed by Martin Villeneuve, a young filmmaker whose brother recently made the Oscar nominated *Incendies* (Denis Villeneuve Canada 2011), this is the first full-length, non-comedy sf film from Quebec. The film is a cerebral engagement on love, the nature of reality, and the first manned Mars mission set in Montreal with very effective design and visual effects. The DVD can be purchased on-line at amazon.ca [note the Canadian site; it doesn't appear on the US site]. Villeneuve's shoestring budget and creativity resulted in his being invited to give a *TED Talk*, available in English, on-line at: http://www.ted.com/talks/martin_villeneuve_how_i_made_an_impossible_film.html.

Promoting SFRA

Emily Connelly

IT IS AN HONOR to introduce myself as the SFRA's new PR person. I come to the position with a short professional background in Internet promotions for Japanese punk bands but with over a decade of activity evangelizing in fan communities of all stripes. Some of course were more successful than others (so far I have found only four former online handles cited in academic fan studies—many were obviously forgettable). I owe an incredible debt, as many can perhaps relate, to the presence of such communities in my life, be them punk or science fiction. To this end my graduate work at Portland State University has a purposeful bend toward subcultures and the disparity between “commonly understood” readerly interpretations of texts and sub-cultural ones dependent of course as they are on the meta-textual references that exist within them. The work I have presented at our conference and others feature Japanese texts important to the communities I lived in Japan prior to seeking my degree and attempt to contextualize the work in terms of those groups. While our plan for next year's PR initiatives has not yet been confirmed, my experiences have given me a philosophy that an effective opening strategy is putting in the work (and putting it in early) and to always strive to improve the community at large with whatever we do. To that end I will always look to new ways that the SFRA can provide an Internet presence where we can extend new friendships and meet new needs in our community. My inbox is always open at emily.connelly@pdx.edu.

Free Access to *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*

Chris Pak

GREEN LETTERS: STUDIES IN ECOCRITICISM explores the relationship between literary, artistic and popular culture and the various conceptions of the environment articulated by scientific ecology, philosophy, sociology and literary and cultural theory. We publish academic articles that seek to illuminate divergences and convergences among representations and rhetorics of nature—understood as potentially including wild, rural, urban and virtual spaces—within the context of global environmental crisis.

Explore *Green Letters* with free online access for 7 days by visiting www.tandfonline.com/r/greenletters and sign in or register to read all articles published from the very first issue right up to 2012 online for free! Online access is available for 7 days from activation. The voucher can only be activated once and is valid until 12/31/2014.

The Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment-UK and Ireland (ASLE-UKI) and Routledge

Chris Pak

GREEN LETTERS is the institutional journal of the *Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment-UK and Ireland (ASLE-UKI)*. A total of eighteen issues since 2000 have been released (although three per year are now planned), and publication of the journal has recently been taken up by *Routledge*. As part of their drive to strengthen their links with affiliate organizations (of which the *SFRA* is one), *ASLE-UKI* and *Routledge* have extended the above offer to all *SFRA* members. As a member of and liaison between both organizations, I have been working to build bridges between the *SFRA* and *ASLE-UKI*. Many fellow *SFRA* members would greatly benefit from taking advantage of this free access to *Green Letters*, which offers another perspective on the relationship between environmentalism, literary study

and science fiction; a complementary voice to that of its US based counterpart and another affiliate of the *SFRA*, *ASLE*.

Many members of *ASLE-UKI* are sympathetic to and engage with science fiction; last year I organized a well-received science fiction at *ASLE-UKI*'s bi-annual conference, which I reported on in issue 302 of the *SFRA Review*. I published the article "The Dialogic Science Fiction Megatext: Vivisection in H.G. Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* and Genetic Engineering in Gene Wolfe's "The Woman Who Loved the Centaur Pholus" in the "Representing Animals" special issue (12.1, 2010) and have an article under preparation on Kim Stanley Robinson's *Mars* trilogy, evidence of growing interest on *ASLE-UKI*'s part of the potential for developing research between science fiction and environmental thought. Other special issues include "Questioning the Pastoral" (4.1, 2003), "Science and Literature" (5.1, 2004), "Audio Visual Culture" (6.1, 2006), "Ecocriticism" (7.1, 2006), "Ecophenomenology and Practices of the Sacred" (13.1, 2010), "Victorian Ecology" (14.1, 2011), "Eco-Musicology" (15.1, 2011), "Global and Postcolonial Ecologies" (16.1, 2012) and "Twentieth-Century Nature Writing in Britain and Ireland" (17.1, 2013).

I would encourage members to browse the contents pages of each of the issues as the range of subjects covered over the thirteen years of the journal's publication means that there will be many items of interest to scholars that are not necessarily linked to the study of science fiction: for instance, John Parham's article 'A Concrete Sense of Place: Alienation and the City in British Punk and New Wave 1977-1980' and James Edwards' "Silence By My Noise": An Ecocritical Aesthetic of Noise in Japanese Traditional Sound Culture and the Sound Art of Akita Masami, both in the "Eco-Musicology" special issue, make fascinating reading and illustrate the ways in which environmental thought is broadening its boundaries to include other media.

Of immediate interest to science fiction scholars are the issues "Science and Literature," which includes articles such as 'Representing the World's Earliest Man: A Story of Paleontology in East Africa' by Amy Staniforth, 'The Biologisation of Ecofeminism? On Science and Power in Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time*' by Martin Delveaux and 'Why Did John Muir Not Become a Professional Scientist? Muir's Multiple Discourses' by Terry Gifford. Volume 6 offers an article on anime: 'Environmentalism Without Guarantees: the Spectral and Scatological Politics of Displacement in Miyazaki's Hayao's *Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi*' [*Spirited Away*]

(2005). The “Victorian Ecology” special issue contains articles on ‘The Contrary Natures of Christina Rossetti’s Goblin Fruits’ by Kelly Sultzbach, ‘The Machine in the Wheatfield: Steam Power in the Victorian Countryside’ by Roger Ebbatson and ‘Uexküll’s Ecology: Biosemiotics and the Musical Imaginary’ by Matthew Clements. The special issue on “Global and Postcolonial Ecologies” features an article on “Greening” The Zombie: Caribbean Gothic, World-Ecology, and Socio-Ecological Degradation’ by Kerstin Oloff. As this summary implies, there are many points of intersection between *ASLE-UKI* and the *SFRA* that are already being explored within the pages of *Green Letters*, and I would highly recommend perusing its various issues in more detail.

**Swords, Sorcery, Sandals and Space:
The Fantastika and the Classical
World
A Science Fiction Foundation
Conference
29th June - 1st July 2013,
University of Liverpool**

Chris Pak

THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL, home to one of the largest archives of science fiction in Europe (the *Science Fiction Foundation* collection), hosted the *Foundation* conference *Swords, Sorcery, Sandals and Space: The Fantastika and the Classical World* on the 29th June—1st July. This interdisciplinary conference brought together classicists, historians and science fiction (sf) and fantasy scholars to consider the contribution that the classics have made to various modes of the fantastic. The exploration of the feedback between reception of the classics and the ways in which these receptions influence further re-conceptualization of the classics and their place in contemporary Anglo-American culture were important questions that were addressed from a variety of perspectives. Over eighty delegates attended the three days of the conference, throughout which over sixty-five papers were presented over three parallel panels. Plenary speakers included classicist Professor Edith Hall (King’s College London), Reader in Classics and award winning ‘Mutant Popcorn’ columnist Dr. Nick Lowe (Royal Holloway) and Sophia McDougall, bestselling author of the

Romanitas trilogy. This conference was organized by Dr. Tony Keen (Associate Lecturer at The Open University) on behalf of the *Science Fiction Foundation*.

Professor Douglas Baird, Head of the School of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology at the University of Liverpool, focused much attention on the links between the classics and sf during his opening remarks for the conference. Although he was not able to attend, independent scholar and musicologist Leon Crickmore’s introductory talk “In the Beginning...” was delivered by Keen. One of the academics peripherally involved in the institution of *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction*, Crickmore recounted the interdisciplinary context from which this institutional journal first arose in 1972 and, in doing so, provided a historical basis for *Foundation*’s interest in sf as interdisciplinary. In the following plenary paper entitled “Dreams of Rome,” McDougall explored her rationale for her use of Rome as an ambiguous mirror on contemporary culture in her *Romanitas* trilogy, in which a pre-Christian Rome is imagined to have survived to achieve dominance of Europe up till the years 2000, the first decade of which this trilogy is set. The juncture point for the *Romanitas* trilogy is the failed assassination of Publius Helvius Pertinax, a device which allows McDougall to explore the persistence of Roman culture in the contemporary, Anglo-American context.

Lowe delivered the second of the plenary papers, “Fantasizing about Antiquity,” on the second day of the conference. This paper brought together many of the themes that were addressed in a variety of papers presented during the first and second days of the conference. Lowe began his survey of classical receptions in fantasy and sf with the anachronisms of *Gadget City: A Story of Ancient Alexandria* (1944) by I.O. Evans, in which a Briton is sold into slavery in Alexandria and witnesses the invention of such marvels as steam ships—a reframing of classical history in terms of the gadget story. Lowe also discussed the way in which *Xena: Warrior Princess* (1995) writes a hidden history in which women play a leading role, and outlines a provisional taxonomy of works incorporating classes such as Gibbonics, represented by L. Sprague de Camp’s *Lest Darkness Fall* (1939), Toga Narratives, works of thinning such as Thomas Burnett Swann’s *Where is the Bird of Fire?* (1962), Euhemerism (Rex Stout, *The Great Legend*, 1997) and Gravesianism (S.P. Somtow, *The Shattered Horse*, 1986). Lowe’s own suggestion for greatest work of contemporary classical fiction was Gene Wolfe’s *Soldier* series, *Soldier of The Mist* (1986), *Soldier of Arete* (1989)

and *Soldier of Sidon* (2006). The device of a narrator suffering from both retrograde and anterograde amnesia allows Wolfe, in Lowe's estimation, to write fiction set during the classical period while retaining the sense of estrangement created by an antiquity utterly strange and unfamiliarized by the centuries of cultural receptions of the classical period.

Hall's plenary, "The Sea! The Interplanetary Sea! Xenophon's *Anabasis* in Outer Space," considered the patterning of sf and fantasy narratives against the March of the Ten Thousand recounted in Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Hall argued that Xenophon is the most important figure for Western prose writing and that his *Anabasis* is a profound work of political theory delivered in the form of a work of political experience. The ambivalence toward the idea of returning home after Cyrus the Younger's failed expedition to overthrow Artaxerxes II led to the social experimentation of this marching republic as they returned from deep within enemy territory. The iconic image of the army's first view of the coastline of the Black Sea at Trabzon and their crying out "Thálatta, thálatta," or "the sea, the sea!", furnishes contemporary writers with a model and a crowning image for their receptions of the *Anabasis*. This famous line is cited in English translations of Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (first English trans. 1873), but not, as one delegate pointed out, the original French version (1870). Hall surveys works such as W.S. Van Dyke's *Trader Horn* (1931) and John Peters and John Nichol's *Tornado Down* (1999), both of which illustrate the embedding of this archetypal narrative into the Western cultural consciousness. Proclaiming her unfamiliarity with sf and fantasy, Hall favorably compared Andre Norton's *Star Guard* (1955) to David Weber and John Ringo's *March Upcountry* (2001) and Paul Kearney's *The Ten Thousand* (2008), exploring how these texts variously re-work the model of the narrative of the March of the Ten Thousand.

The conference panels reflected the variety of topics implied by the congress of academics from closely related disciplines, ranging from papers organized by form ("Literature and Poetry," "Epic," "Television SF," "Screen and Media"), Classical themes ("Homer," "Greek Authors," "Greeks," "Philosophy and Rhetoric"), Sf and Fantasy ("Masters of Science Fiction," "The New Wave and After," "Young Adult Fantasy," "My Little Pony," "Alternate Histories and Present-Day Politics"), individual work or franchise ("*The Hunger Games*," "The Whedonverse," "Warhammer 40K"), location ("Britain") and reception ("Divine Updates—Myths of the Classical

World in Popular Culture," "Reusing Mythical Figures"). Many of these panels, like the "Creatures" panel, illustrated the shared themes central to both the classics and sf and fantasy.

The first four-paper "Literature and Poetry" panel featured presentations on texts that echo classical themes or model classical structures in their construction of fantastic worlds. Lowe chaired this panel and mentioned the first two papers in his plenary talk. Rosamund E. Williams' (Independent Scholar) paper, "War Worse Than Civil": Echoes of Lucan's *Bellum Civile* in George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, explored how Martin's representation of a war torn Westeros capitalized on characteristics of the inverted epic *Bellum Civile* (deception, reversals, the supernatural and marvelous) and game theoretical motifs. Williams noted during her Q&A session that the War of the Roses does figure as a more prominent model for *Game of Thrones* (1996-), but points out that Lucan's *Bellum Civile* influenced literary treatments of the War of the Roses, which would in turn influence modern epic fantasy. Mariano Martín Rodríguez (Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania) argued in his paper 'From Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* to Stapledon's *Star Maker*: The Visionary Cosmic Voyage as a Genre' that Stapledon's essays in myth creation took as a model Cicero's dream narrative *Somnium Scipionis*, a work that should be considered a taproot for the imaginary cosmic voyage that was so influential to scientific romance. Melanie Bost-Fievet (EPHE, Paris) explored the figure of the nymph or dryad in her paper, "The Lady in the Tree: A Bridge between Worlds, from Latin Poetry to Holdstock and Burnett Swann." Considering the construction of the nymph in the bucolics of Virgil and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Bost-Fievet draws attention to the hybrid nature of the nymph, its ability to elude desire and its position at the boundary of the human and fantastic realms. Bost-Fievet suggests that the figure of the nymph in works such as Robert Holdstock's *Mythago Wood* (1984) and Burnett Swann's *Minotaur* (1966-1977) and *Latium* (1972-1977) trilogies give to the natural world a voice grounded in the multiplicity and sensuousness of nature. Cleuci de Oliveira's (Independent Scholar) "The Cruel Hands of Time: The Horae, Mortality and Resentment in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*" examined the three frame poems bracketing both *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1871). De Oliveira recounts Carroll's friendship with Alfred Lord Tennyson and the influence of Lord Tennyson's poem 'Tithonus' on Carroll's own frame poems, arguing that Carroll's poems

narrate an imagined origin story for the *Alice in Wonderland* works that is based upon a parallel between the three Liddell sisters and the Greek Horae.

The following two-paper “Creatures” panel was organized around a theme that illustrates the close connection between classical and fantastic domains. Otta Wenskus’s (Universität Innsbruck) excellent survey and examination of the debate surrounding the centaur in the classical writing of Pliny, Aristotle, Lucretius and Galen in “If Humans were Centaurs: Galen on the Limits of Genetic Engineering” explored the scientific arguments against the possibility of their existence. Noting the anthropomorphism that such rationalization was based on, Wenskus hints that the anthropomorphism of Galen’s own arguments could perhaps be read as a travesty of the idea of the centaur. Christina Poulos (Royal Holloway, University of London) considers the puppets of “Jim Henson: Greek Mythology in *Labyrinth* and *The Storyteller*,” in which she examines Henson’s use and retelling of Greek themes and myth.

Classicist Stephen Trzaskoma (University of New Hampshire) began the second day of parallel panels with his paper “The First Alternate History Novel: Chariton’s *Callirhoe* and History that Never Happened.” Trzaskoma’s impressively argued piece on Chariton’s *Callirhoe* illustrates how Chariton’s audience of the first century AD would have noted the discrepancies between the history recounted in this narrative and that recounted by Thucydides, Herodotus, Xenophon and Diodorus Siculus. Identifying *Callirhoe*’s jonbar point as the Athenian success at the Battle of the Great Harbour, Trzaskoma argues that unlike Thucydides, Chariton attempted to account for the role of eros in affecting history. Brett M. Rogers (University of Puget Sound), whose review article outlining a program for the interdisciplinary study of the classics and sf, delivered a paper on classical narratives as models in the *Harry Potter* series: “Orestes & the Half-Blood Prince: ‘Ghosts’ of Aeschylus in the Harry Potter Series.” Like Rogers, Robert Cape (Austin College), in his paper “Silverberg’s Sophoclean Science Fiction in *Man in the Maze*,” identifies another writer whose works have been greatly influenced by familiarity with the classics, and explores several of Silverberg’s significant forays into sf modeled against classical narratives.

The panel “Alternate Histories and Present-Day Politics” provided an excellent counterpart to Trzaskoma’s analysis of the first work of alternative history in the Western tradition. Katherine Buse (University of Cambridge), in “Frightened animals snarling over water

rights’: Narrating History at the Edge of Nature/Culture,” opened her exploration of history with the future ecological documentary *After the Warming* (1989) to consider how different ideas of the future prompt a revision of the history. Buse moves on to discuss Morgan Llywelyn’s *The Elementals* (1993), a fantasy of four interlocking time periods, the second of which is set on Minoan in the second millennium BC. Narrating the past in *The Elementals* involves constructing a context that functions in various ways as a commentary on the present. Richard Howard (Trinity College Dublin) in “Rome as the Underground Self of the Irish Free State in Joseph O’Neill’s *Land Under England*” situates this work in the context of Irish national politics to show how O’Neill used a variation of the Hollow Earth narrative to explore the problems associated with appealing to the ancient past for validation of Gaelic cultural nationalism. Jim Clarke, also from Trinity College Dublin, considered the ways in which Robert Charles Wilson’s *Julian Comstock: A Story of 22nd Century America* (2009) uses the figure of Julian the Apostate as a model for the eponymous character of his novel. Clarke, in “Remembering Imperfectly: *Julian Comstock*, Dystopic Christianity and the Roman Empire,” examines ideas of regression and argues that the motif of DNA in the novel functions as an analogy for the narrative itself.

The panel on “Epic” spanned a range of uses of the epic form in contemporary literature and film franchises. Ralph Covino’s (University of Tennessee at Chattanooga) paper, “And then what happened?—Expanding a Universe: From the Trojan War to *Star Wars*,” explored a range of *Star Wars* franchise literature to highlight its debt to and reworking of classical epic form. My own paper, “‘Their acts, Mortal and Cast Away, / Are Crystallized in the Melt of History’: Frederick Turner’s *Genesis: An Epic Poem* (1988),” examined the sophisticated use of epic themes and structure in the 10,000 line epic poem of terraforming *Genesis*. Beverley Scott (University of Liverpool), in “The Argo in Space and Time: Science Fiction Reception of the Argonautic Myth,” considered the patterning of stories of air and space travel, especially in Wells’ short fiction. Charul Patel’s (Lancaster University) “The Shape of a Hero’s Soul: A Roman Conception of Fate in the Development of the Epic Fantasy Formula (as seen in *The Curse of Chalion*)” examines Lois McMaster Bujold’s 2001 *The Curse of Chalion* and the confrontation between linear and cyclical conceptions of time and fate in this work.

A two-paper panel on “Young Adult Fantasy” began the third and final day of the conference, with Leimar

Garcia-Siino (University of Liverpool) exploring the use of classical narrative patterns based upon the trope of the young hero's discovery of their divine origin in "Resurgence of Mythology in Young Adult Fantasy." Garcia-Siino examined several works of young adult fantasy that make extensive use of classical themes, such as Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series. Lisa Maurice's (Bar-Ilan University) paper, "From Chiron to Foaly: the Centaur in Classical Mythology and Fantasy Literature," would have been a fitting companion to Otta Wenskus' paper on Galen's discussion of the centaur in the "Creatures" panel, examining as it did the reception of the figure of the classical centaur in contemporary fantasy, and in the *Harry Potter* series in particular.

The last two panels of the day continued to trace the explicit re-use of classical motifs, in panels on "Reusing Mythical Figures" and "Screen and Media." Elke Steinmeyer's (University of KwaZulu-Natal) paper, "The Reception of the Figure of Cassandra in Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Novel *The Firebrand* (1987)" and Pascal Lemaire's (Independent Scholar) "Arthur in Atlantis, a Vessel for the Myths" explored prophecy and the fusion of the King Arthur and Atlantis myths respectively. The impressively comprehensive paper by Jessica Yates (Independent Scholar), "The Fate of Astyanax," traced the use of the conclusion of Euripides' *The Woman of Troy* as a model for such modern fantasy as *The Fall of Gondolin*. In one of the last of the parallel panels, Jarrod K. Looney (Royal Holloway, University of London) delivered via Skype a similarly searching examination of the reception of the Prometheus figure in contemporary sf in "There is Both the God in Man, which Reaches for Fire and Stars, and that Black Dark Streak which Steals the Fire to Make Chains': The Dual Identity of Prometheus in Modern Media Culture." Daniel Goad (Royal Holloway, University of London) compares, in "A Tale of Two Empires: Ancient Rome as a Model for Two Fantasy Empires," the reception of perspectives on Roman civilization in the figure of the Romulan in *Star Trek* and in the PlayStation game *Dragon Age* (2009) and its associated franchise.

The variety of papers from scholars of sf and fanta-

sy, ancient history and the classics testifies to the richness of the classical tradition in contemporary culture and points to an ideal intersection for interdisciplinary transaction. Nick Lowe drew attention to the potential for further work in a domain that this conference amply demonstrates is a thriving field for creative reception of the Greco-Roman world. Contemporary media of all kinds, from literature, film and TV, computer and table top games, and franchises of all kinds, continue to find new uses for the fund of ideas and structures offered by the fund of antiquity. Along with Tony Keen's blog article "The 'T' stands for Tiberius: Models and Methodologies of Classical Reception in Science Fiction" (<http://tonykeen.blogspot.co.uk/2006/04/t-stands-for-tiberius-models-and.html>), Lowe pointed to Brett M. Rogers and Benjamin Stevens' review essay 'Classical Receptions in Science Fiction' as an important work that suggests possible ways forward for the continuing study of the classics in contemporary culture. This paper attempts to provide the first systematization (without suggesting completeness) of possible approaches to studying classical reception and considers various digital tools, such as online encyclopedias, that might be developed to aid in inspiring and supporting further research that would draw together scholars from a variety of disciplines. This *Science Fiction Foundation* conference has laid the groundwork for coordinated research into a domain that, as the range of papers and discussions between practitioners of a variety of disciplines has demonstrated, remains a popular source of creativity in contemporary culture.

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Student-Centric SF Studies Program Opportunities at Three Research Institutions

Jason W. Ellis

IN THIS INSTALLMENT of the *SFRA Review* jobs column, Lisa Yaszek of the Georgia Institute of Technology, Rob Latham and Sherryl Vint of the University of California at Riverside, and Christopher McKitterick of the University of Kansas share information about their respective university's science fiction studies programs and SF-related opportunities. For the SF-related degree programs, they also address issues of student advisement and job placement.

Each of these distinguished universities' SF studies programs integrate into widely deployed networks on and off campus and they combine theory and praxis in different ways to accomplish a variety of outcomes. For example, Georgia Tech's offerings are part of strong undergraduate, interdisciplinary, and community commitments of the institution, and SF at Georgia Tech continues to grow—something that I have witnessed firsthand as a former student and now as a postdoctoral teaching fellow. UC, Riverside has leveraged a number of high profile hires to grow their Science Fiction and Technoculture Studies (SFTS) Ph.D. program and eventually expand it to the undergraduate level. KU clusters a diverse array of courses (undergraduate and graduate), workshops, and events around the Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction. Each university's library supports an impressive SF collection. Together, they support a wide range of students: undergraduate, graduate, educators, and creative writers.

We can share this snapshot of SF studies at three research institutions with our SF-focused students. It can serve as a guide to these three programs, and it can highlight important student-centric issues, including research opportunities, outreach opportunities, and job placement.

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Lisa Yaszek

History

The Georgia Institute of Technology—more commonly known as Georgia Tech—has a longstanding tradition of commitment to science fiction studies. Indeed, Georgia Tech literature professor Irving “Bud” Foote taught one of the first accredited college-level classes on this subject in 1971. Throughout his career, Foote published widely on the meaning and value of science fiction in the modern world, and he developed the Institute's reputation as a place committed to the serious study of speculative literature by bringing to campus majors authors including Fred Pohl, Ursula K. Le Guin and Kim Stanley Robinson. Since 2000, Professor Lisa Yaszek has taken point on Georgia Tech's science fiction initiatives. Yaszek teaches science fiction classes, runs a research lab where students contribute to the ongoing development of an online science fiction dictionary and serves as faculty mentor for the Sci Fi Lab on WREK, Georgia Tech's student run radio station. Working with other interested faculty members, Yaszek also organizes annual symposia featuring the work of student artists alongside that of professionals such as Kathleen Ann Goonan, Paul di Filippo and Minister Faust, and she serves as faculty liaison for visiting science fiction artists and scholars.

People and Resources

Georgia Tech is home to a number of scholars who research, teach and create science fiction. Most work in the School of Literature, Media and Communication (LMC), a unit dedicated to generating “humanistic perspectives on a technological world.” The three core faculty members associated with science fiction studies are Prof. Yaszek, a past president of the Science Fiction Research Association who studies science fiction as a global phenomenon crossing centuries, continents and cultures; Prof. Jay. P. Telotte, editor of the journal *Postscript* and a pioneering scholar in both science fiction film and science fiction television studies; and Prof. Kathleen Ann Goonan, a critically-acclaimed, award-winning science fiction author who, in her capacity as a member of the Sigma Group, consults with governments and NGOs around the world. Other LMC faculty members offer classes in science fiction-related topics including utopia, the gothic, steampunk, and video game design. Most of these classes

are offered to upper-level undergraduate and graduate students, but LMC's postdoctoral teaching fellows offer incoming freshmen a number of composition classes organized around the theme of "communicating scientific and technological issues through science fiction." Taken together, these faculty members show how science fiction functions as the premiere narrative of technoscientific modernity.

Faculty working in science fiction studies often anchor their classes in the Georgia Tech Science Fiction Collection, one of the institute's most unique resources for research and education. In 1998, Prof. Foote laid the foundation for the science fiction collection by donating his personal book and magazine collection to Georgia Tech Archives, which currently holds over 10,000 science fiction and fantasy novels, anthologies, and more than 1,000 periodical issues. American science fiction printed between 1950 and 1990 is the collection's strongest coverage area. Other special features include rare first edition works by H.G. Wells, Jules Verne, and Edgar Rice Burroughs, first editions of award-winning contemporary writer David Brin's major works (both in English and in translation) and a complete run of the Ballantine Fantasy Series. Major contributors to collection since its inception in 1998 include Brin, science fiction scholar Richard Ehrlich, the Atlanta Science Fiction Society, and Dr. Thomas Patrick Malone, father of Georgia Tech alumni Thomas Patrick Malone II. The Collection is the largest of its kind of the Southeastern U.S. and was included in *Science Fiction Studies* list of the top twenty science fiction collections.

Current Projects and Future Plans

In collaboration with the Georgia Tech Library and other interested parties across the Institute, LMC faculty are working on several initiatives to grow the unit's reputation as a center for science fiction studies. Prof. Yaszek is currently working with the Atlanta-based State of Black Science Fiction Collective to produce a full-length steam-funk film staffed primarily by Georgia Tech faculty and students. Profs. Yaszek, Telotte and Goonan are also putting together a proposal for a month-long summer institute on science fiction studies at Tech. Other plans include the creation of a science fiction studies minor based on classes already offered by LMC faculty members and the development of a masters program that combines courses in science fiction studies, science and technology studies and archival research methods with lab-based research experiences. Science fiction studies programs are increasingly popular in both the United States and abroad, but

most are housed within traditional English departments. Georgia Tech's extant science fiction resources, along with LMC's commitment to interdisciplinary humanistic inquiry and the unit's history of working productively with other colleges across campus, suggests that the Institute can make a unique contribution to this growing field of study.

Students and Career Paths

The students who pursue science fiction studies at Georgia Tech come from all six of the Institute's colleges (ranging from engineering to architecture to the liberal arts) and may be either graduate or undergraduate students. At the end of each semester, students who show appropriate interest and aptitude are invited to join specific faculty-led science fiction initiatives. The students anchoring these initiatives often come from one or more of LMC's three degree programs: Science, Technology and Culture, Computational Media and Digital Media. These students work both independently and in tandem with one another to produce knowledge and create artifacts that enhance our understanding of science fiction as a global phenomenon crossing continents, centuries and cultures.

Georgia Tech prides itself on producing both thinkers and makers, so it is no surprise that a small but significant number of the students who participate in Tech's science fiction initiatives explore careers as science fiction scholars and artists. For example, two of the founding members of Prof. Yaszek's Science Fiction Laboratory have recently completed graduate work in science fiction studies while a third member of that group publishes original science fiction and is in the process of establishing her own science fiction-oriented press. Other students have created award-winning science fiction stories and films for student competitions including the Dell Undergraduate Writing Awards and Campus Movie Fest.

Most students join Georgia Tech's science fiction initiatives simply because they love the genre and want to learn more about it. However, these students also report that such work adds great value to their major studies. Sometimes this added value is obvious, as in the case of Science, Technology and Culture and Computational Media students who go on to work in television, film, or the video game industry, all of which are strongly indebted to science fiction themes and imagery. For others it is more indirect but equally useful, as in the case science and engineering majors who use their experience with science fiction studies at Tech to demonstrate that they are well-rounded college graduates able to learn new disciplines and research methods quickly. Indeed, the research (and,

to a lesser extent, production) skills that students acquire by participating in Georgia Tech's science fiction initiatives has been a powerful selling point for graduates who have gone on to pursue studies in diverse fields including literature, medicine, information security, and law. As such, science fiction studies at Georgia Tech contributes to the Institute's mission of creating both technologically- and culturally-savvy global citizens.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT RIVERSIDE

Rob Latham and Sherryl Vint

History

The Science Fiction and Technoculture Studies (SFTS) program at UC Riverside began in 2007, when Dean Steven Cullenberg decided that the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) should have an academic unit to complement the strength of the Eaton Science Fiction Collection in the UCR library. Three faculty hires were initiated starting in 2008 with an SFTS literary scholar (Rob Latham, English Department), continuing in 2010 with an SFTS creative writer (Nalo Hopkinson, Creative Writing Department), and culminating in 2012 with an SFTS media studies specialist (Sherryl Vint, English Department). This cluster of faculty complemented already existing SFTS strengths among CHASS faculty in a range of departments.

Interdisciplinary Focus

The SFTS program explores the intersections linking science fiction studies, science and technology studies (STS), and technoculture studies. Consistent with other STS programs around the country and internationally, this program examines the histories and cultures of science, technology, and medicine to understand the role that culture has always played in the production of science and the reciprocal way that changes in science and technology have shaped culture. The program also uniquely emphasizes the role of popular culture and the genre of science fiction in particular in mediating public understandings of science, serving as an imaginative testing ground for technological innovation, and articulating hopes and anxieties regarding technocultural change. Drawing on faculty from across CHASS, the SFTS program enables students to develop a critical understanding of the cultures of science and their dialectical exchanges with contemporary popular culture.

The SFTS program currently offers a Designated Emphasis (DE) at the PhD level, and we hope to be able to

offer an undergraduate Minor soon. Our curriculum encompasses courses in the social study of science and medicine, in the history of technology, in creative expression addressing relevant themes, in cultural analysis of print and media texts dealing with science and technology, and in the cultural differences in technology, including non-western scientific practices. The DE and eventual Minor offer a rich interdisciplinary study of cultural ways of responding to changes in science and technology, and complements program majors in departments such as Anthropology, Comparative Literature, Creative Writing, English, Ethnic Studies, History, Media and Cultural Studies, Philosophy, Theatre, and Women's Studies.

Students, Advising, and Placement

Many of the students pursuing the DE are our own PhD advisees in the English Department. Currently, we have a very active group who have, among other accomplishments, secured ongoing Mellon Foundation funding to support events and workshops and founded a refereed online journal, *The Eaton Journal of Archival Studies in Science Fiction*, to promote archival research in the field. They regularly attend the major SF scholarly conferences, but most also pursue interdisciplinary interests in the history and philosophy of science, art history, sociology, etc.

In terms of advising our students, we encourage them to professionalize themselves broadly, not simply as scholars of science fiction. Most of our students are 20th Century Americanists, though some are Victorianists working on early SF and technoculture. Given the paucity of jobs listing SF specifically as a primary specialization, we feel it is crucial to establish expertise—through the PhD examination process, as well as via conferencing and publication—in other areas of literary and cultural study. While it is possible to write a dissertation with a focus on science fiction, it is not possible, in the current job market, to present oneself as a scholar and teacher of SF exclusively. A number of the students working with us study SF in relation to scholarly perspectives important to the study of contemporary literature more generally: postmodernism, postcolonialism, ecocriticism, critical race studies, queer theory, disability studies, and so on. Being able to use these broad perspectives to position SF as a major cultural discourse is one significant way to intervene into debates recognizable to scholars from other areas who may know nothing about SF. We thus tend to discourage a “genre studies” focus in favor of a more eclectic, bridge-building program of interdisciplinary conversation, in which SF circulates alongside other technocultural discourses.

This emphasis on broad contextual knowledge and interdisciplinary conversation prepares our students to demonstrate expertise in literary cultures beyond science fiction, and thus they are well positioned to respond to a job market looking for scholars trained in particular kinds of theoretical approaches, in ethnic studies (we have students working on Latino or African American speculative texts), and in specific national or period literatures. Science fiction scholarship has a long history of engaging with questions that have only recently become the focus of humanities scholarship more generally, such as posthuman subjectivity or globalization (articulated in SF through cyberpunk and New Space Opera, for example). We strive to prepare our students to understand this history and be able to articulate the unique contributions SF makes to these discussions, while at the same time being able meaningfully to engage with scholars investigating these issues from other traditions.

Recent critical discussions of genre evaporation or dissolution point to the fact that SF techniques and themes are widely disseminated in contemporary culture, evident in works such as Junot Díaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* or Charles Yu's *How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe*, while at the same time writers who can clearly trace their origins to genre SF have achieved widespread critical acclaim, such as Ursula K. Le Guin, Samuel R. Delany, China Miéville, and Shelley Jackson. Thus, while it is important for our students to be prepared to enter the job market as experts in cultural and literary studies broadly defined—and not narrowly as scholars of science fiction—at the same time the particular critical skills and expertise of SF scholars has never been more relevant to contemporary humanities scholarship. UCR's SFTS program prepares students to enter the job market as experts in a variety of cultural conversations and representative media, and at the same time to demonstrate the distinctive value of science fiction expertise to contemporary scholarship.

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

Christopher McKitterick

The Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction at the University of Kansas offers a diversity of SF literature and writing courses, plus a number of associated educational programs.

The following science-fiction programs are available for students and scholars at KU.

Speculative Fiction Writing Workshop

Learn how to write SF that sells. Using the short-story form, we help you master the elements that create great spec-fic. Available for professionalization or for KU creative-writing graduate credit as English 757; may be repeated for credit. Since 1985.

An intensive, two-week summer workshop in writing speculative fiction, including genres such as slipstream, magical realism, fantasy, horror, and science fiction. Attendees usually includes a few published authors, some writers just beginning to publish, and several who need that final bit of insight or skill to publish. We work with all brands of speculative fiction, including horror, fantasy, magical realism, slipstream, speculative philosophy, hard SF, and so on. This workshop attracts writers from around the globe, most of whom have gone on to sell stories and novels.

The Workshop offers a three-hour session of manuscript critiquing each afternoon. SF author and scholar Christopher McKitterick leads with form, technique, and style discussions, and attendees offer round-robin critiques. Over the weekend, attendees have a new assignment that we examine the second week. During the second week, a special guest author—Bradley Denton, Andy Duncan, and Professor Emeritus James Gunn have served—joins the workshop and leads discussions. We usually have the opportunity to work with the Sturgeon and Campbell award-winning authors and SF editors during the last day or two of the Workshop.

Grand Master James Gunn established the Workshop and led it on his own (with guest appearances from Sturgeon and Campbell Award-winning authors) until 1996, when McKitterick began co-teaching; Kij Johnson also co-taught from 1996-2002, before branching off her own SF&F Novel Writing Workshop, offered during the same two-week period. Gunn stepped back his participation in 2010, but drops in from time to time. Simultaneous scheduling and adjacent meeting spaces provide valuable opportunities for attendees of the two workshops to intermingle and discuss writing from different perspectives outside regular meeting times.

The rest of the day is free for writing, study, consultation, and recreation. Participants often exchange more manuscripts during or after the Workshop and stay in touch via various “Young Gunns” social-networking groups.

Membership is limited to 8-10 applicants who submit, well in advance of enrollment, a manuscript demonstrating special ability in the genres.

Speculative Fiction Novel Writing Workshop

Multiple award-winning author Kij Johnson helps you transform your book idea into a successful project. Professionalization only. Since 2004.

The goals of this two-week summer workshop are to generate the best possible chapters and an outline for a writer's submission packet; to learn what is necessary to complete or revise the novel with an eye toward publication; and to have fun in one of the prettiest and most likable towns in the Midwest while building bonds with other writers.

This workshop is targeted at the new novelist with a novel begun but not completed. The minimum coming in is a solid working outline or synopsis (probably 5-10 pages or more) and the first 15-30 pages. It seems to work best for people who have somewhat more than the minimum but less than half of the work they want to workshop.

The Workshop typically runs three hours each day, and the rest of your time is free for writing, study, consultation, and recreation. The Workshop is in two segments. We workshop the novel chapters or segment in traditional round-robin workshop style, with the emphasis on writing and characterization. We also do what Johnson calls, for want of a better term and in the tradition of kit-bashing, novel-bashing: Starting with an outline, synopsis, or scene breakdown, we deconstruct and reconstruct the plot, looking for holes or flaws and for ways to deepen the novel's structure and storyline. Then, taking these notes, workshopers revise either the outline or the chapters and resubmit the material to the workshop for further discussion.

We also select a published SF/F novel, read it before the workshop, and analyze it for insights into successful novel plotting.

Workshop enrollment is between 8-11 attendees. Johnson is interested in putting together a group of writers who are talented and (she hopes) will mesh productively and positively.

"Repeat Offenders" Workshops

Return to the scene of the crime to reinforce the lessons from your last workshop, and reconnect with other alums. Professionalization only. Since 2010.

Johnson offers an informal one- or two-week follow-up summer workshop for people who have attended one of her novel workshops. Repeat Offenders is basically a chance to work with similarly trained writers on whatever project is underway. Johnson leads a few discussions and work with attendees on what she calls "fishbowling"

and development as needed.

McKitterick plans to offer a Short Story Repeat Offenders summer workshop beginning in 2014, structured similarly to Johnson's follow-up workshop.

Intensive Institute on the Teaching of Science Fiction

Become fluent in SF by becoming familiar with some of the most-influential works that shaped the genre. Can be taken for professionalization or for credit as English 506 (undergraduate) or English 790 (graduate); may be repeated for credit. Since 1975.

This annual two-week intensive summer course taught by McKitterick alternates between the SF short story and the SF novel. In the short-story version, attendees read and discuss most of the stories and essays in Volumes 1-4 of James Gunn's definitive *Road to Science Fiction* anthology; in the novel version, students read and discuss 25 novels.

The purpose of the course is to provide teachers and serious scholars with an understanding of contemporary and future science fiction through studying the history of the genre and many of its seminal works. After reading a diversity of SF pieces, we discuss how the genre got to be what it is today by comparing stories and their place in the evolution of SF, from the earliest prototypical examples through more recent work. Students demonstrate their understanding of the genre by leading class discussions, writing daily reading responses, and creating a substantial final project, either scholarly, creative, or teaching-related.

Science Fiction Literature: The Short Story/The Novel

Full-length, fall-semester version of the Intensive Institute, also taught by McKitterick, with a focus on the literature, itself, rather than the teaching of the material. Can be taken for professionalization or for credit as English 506 (undergraduate) or English 690 (graduate). Since 2012.

In addition to the regular Institute projects, SF Literature students also produce and perform a live or filmed presentation, movie, or other group performance that demonstrates their understanding of SF.

Science, Technology, and Society: Examining the Future Through a Science-Fiction Lens

Full-length, spring-semester course in the ideas of SF. Taught by McKitterick and physics professor Philip Baringer. Can be taken for professionalization or for credit as English 507 (undergraduate) or English 690 (graduate). Since 2006.

Science and technology offer countless benefits to individuals and to societies, yet they also present new challenges. The only thing certain about our future is that it will be different than today, so students read nonfiction works and science fiction literature to explore the past, present, and possible future effects of science and technology on society and humankind as a species.

Classes are a mix of presentation and discussion, with two or more students leading each discussion. Discussants also bring outside readings and observations to share with the class. Each week, students write a one-page paper that examines that week's readings and includes questions to pose to the class as well as points to stimulate discussion.

Readings are mostly short works of fiction and non-fiction, though we also read a few longer works. Other projects include a mid-term paper, a final research or creative project, and a live or filmed presentation, movie, or other group performance that demonstrates their understanding of the complex interplay between science, technology, society, and our literary or other cultural response.

Other Speculative-Fiction Courses at KU

Kij Johnson also offers occasional fantasy-literature courses (such as "Animal Narratives" and "Fantasy Literature"), and welcomes speculative-fiction writers into her regular-semester fiction-writing courses.

Gunn, Johnson, and McKitterick also serve on SF literature and creative-writing thesis committees, and other professors in the Department have specializations in related fields. The Center is currently developing an affiliate network across the University to further expand the Center's offerings.

CSSF Scholarly Research Resources

Science-fiction research opportunities are abundant at KU:

The main campus' Watson Library houses thousands of SF works, available to borrow for anyone with a university ID.

The Center's physical office also houses a lending library of about 30,000 volumes of SF novels, collections, scholarly works, and magazines spanning the full history of the genre, plus multimedia materials including talks by visiting luminaries—most of which has yet to be edited, produced, and shared.

The University of Kansas Spencer Research Library houses a very large collection of books, magazines, manuscripts, fan publications, films, and other materials available for SF scholars. The collection is also the North American repository for World SF, the Science Fiction Research Association (SFRA), the Science Fiction Writ-

ers of America (SFWA), and the Science Fiction Oral History Association. Highlights include all of Sturgeon's manuscripts and papers, plus those of Cordwainer Smith, Lloyd Biggle, Van Vogt, Donald A. Wollheim, and others.

Campbell Conference and Awards

Connect with SF authors, scholars, editors, and fans while celebrating the best SF of the year. In an intimate setting, discuss topics relevant to science fiction and the world. One of the genre's best-kept secrets! Since 1979.

The Campbell Conference is the core of the Center's annual summer program and features intelligent and informed discussion as well as readings, signings, and talks by a variety of important SF authors, editors, and scholars. It is the venue for presenting the John W. Campbell Memorial Award for the best science-fiction novel of the year, the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award for the best short science fiction of the year, and the new Lifeboat to the Stars Award for SF that promotes long-term human survival as a galactic species.

Other SF Activities at KU

The Center offers many other opportunities to get involved in SF in Kansas: AboutSF educational-outreach program (since 2002; employs 1-2 students); Awards for student creative writing in SF (since 2005); Richard W. Gunn Lecture Series (since the 1990s; brings to KU such speakers as Michael Dirda; Cory Doctorow, Frederic Jameson, China Miéville, Noel Sturgeon, and others); *James Gunn's Ad Astra* SF journal (since 2012); John W. Campbell Memorial Award for best SF novel (since 1973); Scholarship in Science Fiction Studies (since 2009; quite a substantial cash award to help with studies in literature or creative writing, for graduate or undergraduate students); Science Fiction Club (off and on since the 1970s); Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award for best SF short story (since 1987); and much more! Visit the Center online for details: <http://www.sfcenter.ku.edu>.

I would like to thank Sherryl Vint for the email conversation that led to the focus of this Jobs Column.

I invite others to share what your college or university is doing in SF studies and how your program equips students for future success in graduate school and the job market. The next job search season is nearly upon us, so I also invite short essays from job seekers or hiring committee members to share their experiences, observations, and tips for fellow SF scholars. Please contact me at jason.ellis@lmc.gatech.edu.

Sound Studies 101

Mark Young

What is Sound Studies?

At the junction point of cultural studies, musicology, popular music studies, ethnography, anthropology, philosophy, film studies, and media studies, a hybrid node of scholarship has been coalescing in the last ten years around the catch-all moniker of Sound Studies. Many credit film and music scholar Rick Altman's essay "Sound Studies: A Field Whose Time has Come" (*Iris*, 1999) as the tipping point of contemporary Sound Studies research, and since its appearance a growing and varied base of scholars have been directing their attention to sound, music, and aural technocultural concerns in order to cultivate new perspectives on their respective fields of inquiry. Core research questions of the field include: How have new musical technologies shaped the conceptions of modernity, postmodernity, public space, embodiment, temporality, and conceptions of the human?; What cultural associations, gender distinctions, and racial dynamics get tethered to sonic semiotics, and by what processes?; In what ways does the filmic audio stream impact cinema production, mediation, and reception?; What sounds signify as other, alien, or threatening, and why?; How does commerciality impact local and global listening practices?; What are the musical politics of authenticity versus artificiality?; In what ways can sonic art act as a progressive force—or a regressive one?; and As sonic weapons like the Long-range Acoustical Device (LRAD) become increasingly ubiquitous, what reassessments of sovereign power should take place?

The genealogy of academic thought about the impacts of sound, music, and aural technoculture branches backward much further than the last decade, of course, and more than one contemporary scholar has grown supercilious at the prospect of yet another *du jour* subspecialization within academe, presumably grown, by parthenogenesis, from the heads of parvenus as grappling hooks for the Ivory Tower. But if the recent interest in the field across the humanities and social sciences is any indication, we may be on the corner of what could be called, without exaggeration, the Sonic Turn.

Academic journals, for one, have been dedicating recent issues to the field of Sound Studies: *American*

Quarterly (September 2011) took the theme "Sound Clash: Listening to American Studies"; *differences* (22:2 2011) pondered "The Sense of Sound"; *Science Fiction Film and Television* (Autumn 2010) explored "Science Fiction and Music"; *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* (Autumn 2008) contemplated "The Future of Sound Studies"; and *Social Studies of Science* (October 2004) weighed "Sound Studies: New Technologies and Music." Major publishing houses, too, have been investing in the field, with [Bloomsbury](#) devoting dozens of titles to Sound Studies, [Routledge](#) continuing its multiple music and media series (over 90 books strong), [Equinox](#) launching four sound-related series, including "Genre, Music and Sound," the [UT Press](#) growing a catalogue of pop and roots music titles, and the [Duke UP](#) joining the crowd, with its recent "Sign, Storage, Transmission" series just gaining momentum. These, I should note, are just a sampling. In such a publication environment, the emergence of *The Sound Studies Reader* (Routledge, 2012) and *The Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies* (Oxford UP, 2011) seems an inevitable concomitant to earlier efforts like *The Auditory Culture Reader* (Bloomsbury, 2003) that attempted to give greater shape to this "newly emerging" discipline.

I'd like this essay to function as a roadmap through this surfeit of sonic thruways—a sonar ping of the Sound Studies terrain that both neophytes and experts will find revealing and expedient. This essay will not attempt to provide an exhaustive catalogue of sound and music-related themes in SF, as there is neither space here for more than a superficial treatment nor expertise enough, on my part, to deliver on the over 100 years of SF and media history necessary. (Heroic efforts to crowd source and curate this knowledge do exist, however, and can be explored at the *SF Encyclopedia* [here](#) and [here](#).) Ultimately, my aim is to sketch the most prominent theoretical and critical voices within the major subdivisions of the field in order to foster a more robust presence of Sound Studies within science fiction and fantastic research. [My own scholarly efforts](#) have been directed toward this goal for some time, and by sharing sources and insights, I hope to contribute to the interest in and growth of the SF and Sound Studies community.

A caveat: what follows should be approached as a loose heuristic, rather than a strict taxonomy.

Foundational Voices

A fitting place to begin any foray into Sound Studies is with an historical overview of Western music, like Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin's *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents* (2nd edition, 2007), which starts from the Pythagorean theory of *musica universalis*—the concept of a fundamental “music of the spheres” governing the natural world. This essential and teleological—as opposed to culturally-conditioned—understanding of harmonic resonance would profoundly influence Plato's *Republic*, a work whose Book III not only demarcates effeminate and bellicose musical modes but also articulates which musical practices posed existential threats to the state. The Pythagorean/Platonic characterization of music was on display most notably during the Victorian era, with the aesthete Walter Pater rhapsodizing in his famous “The School of Giorgione” essay that “All art constantly aspires to the condition of music”—that music, in other words, cuts to the quick of human experience by tapping into its natural, formal, and harmonic essence (106).

Frankfurt School theorist Theodore Adorno also deserves attention as a foundational voice within Sound Studies. Trained as a composer and steeped in the social and economic thought of Marx, Adorno brought a musical ear and insurrectionary wit to his criticism of sonic modernity. Indeed, his devastating appraisals of early jazz, popular music, and film scoring practices still resound with insight today. A common entry point into Adorno's oeuvre is the essay “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception” from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947), written with Max Horkheimer, though *Composing for the Films* (with Max Eisler, 1947) and *The Philosophy of New Music* (1946) more clearly showcase the specific avant-garde aesthetic (à la Arnold Schoenberg, whom he admired) that he wrote into [his own musical compositions](#) and believed could provide some aural shock therapy to awaken—if only provisionally—the sleeping masses.

The early Birmingham School scholars—like Stuart Hall, Dick Hebdige, Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie—act as productively counterbalancing voices to that of Adorno, whose model of sound culture is less dynamic in its consideration of audience reception. Hall and Tony Jefferson's edited collection *Resistance through Rituals, Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain* (1976) showcases all of these important thinkers and acts as an entrée into their respective works. This volume also effectively launched subcultural studies into the wider academic consciousness, and its analyses of the inter-

actions between mainstream pop culture merchants and the folk-centered stylistic interventions attending them (including the social-sonic, racial, and gendered dynamics of Hipsters, Rudies, Teddy Boys, and Punks, among others) are absolutely foundational.

Around the same time that Hall and company were writing, the widely influential and conceptually generative composer R. Murray Schafer released *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (originally titled *The Tuning of the World*, 1977), a meditation that should be on any Sound Studies bookshelf. Schaefer's concept of the “soundscape,” a term he coins to describe differences in acoustic environments, drummed up critical interest in the sonic character of specific experiences, geographies, and time periods, as is evidenced below by the many soundscape-themed titles in Sound Studies paying homage to Schaefer's influence: John Picker's excellent *Victorian Soundscapes* (2003) and Emily Thompson's equally essential *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933* (2002), to name a few. Another foundational text in Sound Studies is Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), whose keynote is Sylvano Bussoti's chaotic composition, “Piano Piece for David Tudor #4,” an impossible-to-play scribble over musical staves that opens the “Introduction: Rhizome” chapter. Considerable attention is paid throughout the volume to the crossovers between music and philosophy, in effect patterning a mode of being and becoming after the unpredictability of avant garde composition: “musical form, right down to its ruptures and proliferations, is comparable to a weed, a rhizome.” Though the its style of argumentation can be as desultory and random as Bussoti's piece, the depths of Deleuze and Guattari's contribution to contemporary Sound Studies should continue to receive a full sounding.

To close out this list of foundational texts, Jacques Attali's *Noise: The Political Economy of Music* (1985) contributes to the cultural studies strain of music analysis by not only reasserting that superstructure-base dynamics are interactive and processual but also theorizing that major shifts in sound culture are annunciatory or prophetic—anticipating the future political and economic order to come. It's a bold and controversial thesis, and one that has made its way into the bibliographies of countless academic titles since its translation into English.

Ethnic Studies of Sound and Media

Influenced by the Frankfurt and Birmingham schools, but in the tradition, too, of Langston Hughes' "Jazz as Communication", Ralph Ellison's music reviews, Amiri Baraka's jazz criticism (all of whom should be read, in my humble opinion, with Larry Crouch's contemporary thought on jazz and rap as a provocative adjunct), a growing number of Ethnic Studies scholars are turning to Sound Studies as a way to think through the complex interactions of race, performance, historiography, and media culture.

Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic: Modernity as Double Consciousness* (1993) represents the most sophisticated and influential of this strain of Sound Studies scholarship. It charts the dissemination of black vernacular forms throughout the global diaspora and concludes that black musics, among other arts, defy critical efforts to locate or assert originary essences. Gilroy instead embraces a more open model of global cultural "mutation, hybridity, and intermixture en route to better theories of racism," which retains a clear-sighted understanding of the epistemological limits of history, while gesturing toward a productive cultural rapprochement in the future through a shared multiracial consciousness of the present-day Global South. Notable acolytes of Gilroy (as well as Attali and Schafer) can be found extrapolating from his insight in many recent Sound Studies titles, including Alexander Weheliye's *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afromodernity* (2005) and Josh Kun's *Audiotopia: Music, Race, and America* (2005).

Of particular interest to SF scholars, Mark Dery's "Black to the Future" essay from *Flame Wars: The Discourse of Cyberculture* (1994) features interviews with Samuel R. Delany, Greg Tate, and Tricia Rose, and helped describe and popularize the aesthetics of Afrofuturism, including its literary and musical manifestations. This groundbreaking work was followed by Kodwo Eshun's equally incisive and provocative *More Brilliant than the Sun: Adventures in Sonic Fiction* (1998), which features, among other vivid avant garde pop and Afrofuturist musical observations, the claim that contemporary sound technoculture is driving a posthuman revolution in anti-essential hyper-embodiment.

Sonic Media Histories

Scholars of Sound Studies will want to devote some time to learning the media histories and accounts of the social impacts of sound transmission, storage, and playback technologies, especially those of the gramophone and its many also-rans and remediations over the years,

though histories of architectural acoustic technologies, wired and wireless telegraphy, radio, and telephony, among many others, prove to be equally rewarding and instructive.

A significant trio of device histories appears in Friedrich Kittler's *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (1999), a work that playfully explores what political quiddity the technologies themselves may be imbued with but devotes most of its attention to the various, unstable, transnational discourse networks through which meaning gets invested in the devices.

Because of its devotion to failed or unpopular devices alongside its histories of dominant technoculture, Lisa Gitelman's *Scripts, Grooves, and Writing Machines: Representing Technology in the Edison Era* (1999) makes an excellent pairing with Kittler's study. Gitelman is much more wary of Great Man theories of technological change and the strain of Media Studies that veers toward technological determinism: "I want to question and elaborate the parameters of novelty that recent accounts... seem to posit as the foundations of a new democratic future. Keenly felt should be the gleeful claims originally made on behalf of shorthand, phonographs, films, radios, and televisions, each supposed to harbor democratization in its own way" (222).

Jonathan Stern's *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Production* (2003) attempts to further track the social and cultural practices of aurality that fed into the conception, production, and initial usage of various sound devices. In effect, Stern attempts a large-scale synthesis of the many threads of theory and criticism that comprise Sound Studies, and though he fails to deliver on such a monumental task in some aspects of his study, his readings of many of the field's great thinkers are thought-provoking throughout. His ambitious call for a reassessment of post-Enlightenment reason as an "Ensoniment"—a social and philosophical history of reason from an aural, rather than a visual, perspective—has only recently been answered by the likes of Veit Erlmann, whose *Reason and Resonance: A History of Modern Aurality* (2010) reinterprets Descartes to emphasize a history of Western thought that privileges sound and vibration.

Stern's recent *MP3: The Meaning of a Format* (2012) builds upon his earlier work and the above device histories and, in a sense, amalgamates them into an origin story of the evolutionary technology of the MP3 format. Along the way, Stern's authoritative coverage of the research and cultural ripple-effects delves deep into the shifting cultural constructions of sound, music, noise,

silence—and the growing legal clamor to further codify and regulate them.

Film and Televisual Music Studies

In *The Seven Beauties of Science Fiction* (2008), SF scholar Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, Jr. suggests that “the most orphaned of sf media is music. Little has appeared in print discussing the relationship between music and sf, a connection that is much richer than may at first appear” (11). The small, but growing, archive of Sound Studies criticism in SF circles currently appears under the aegis of film and television scholarship and concerns itself with questions of musical tambour, film scoring, sound effects, and listening practices, among many other issues.

Despite its cartoonish cover art, Philip Hayward’s edited collection *Off the Planet: Music, Sound, and Science Fiction Cinema* (2004) provides a seriously innovative set of essays about the impact of sound, music, and aural technology upon the SF film genre—with pieces covering *Gojira*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *The Matrix*, and many others. In addition to Hayward’s book, I recommend William Whittington’s *Sound Design and Science Fiction* (2007), which traces the history, technologies and practices of “sound design,” the creation of novel sonic signifiers to help imbue a diegetic film element—say, a ray gun, for example—with uniqueness or a vaguely otherworldly character. Whittington’s history of George Lucas’ pioneering efforts in the field of sound-effect creation and film “sound montage” offers an ear-opening account of the extent to which contemporary films rely upon sound for their primary force.

For those primarily interested in this area of study, there are other worthy sound and SF essay compilations, as well, including Mathew Bartkowiak’s *Sounds of the Future: Essays on Music in Science Fiction Film* (2010) and K.J. Donnelly and Philip Hayward’s *Music in Science Fiction Television: Tuned to the Future* (2012). But for more traditional, medium-specific film and sound theory, I highly recommend Rick Altman’s *Sound Theory/Sound Practice* (1992) and Tomlinson Holman’s *Sound for Film and Television* (2002).

Conclusion

As I have argued [elsewhere](#), whole new vistas of SF research await (re)exploration through the lenses of Sound Studies theories. For the absolute newcomer and the old hand alike, Jonathan Stern’s aforementioned *The Sound Studies Reader* (Routledge, 2012) functions as both a quick-start guide and a refresher course for many of the

most important ideas in aural theory and criticism. For those inclined to brave the learning curve of this new field of study, I guarantee the sonic equivalent of a perspectival shift—one incommensurate with a shortcut to enlightenment, perhaps, but one that delivers a healthy dose of “ensoniment.”

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Science Fiction

Jason W. Ellis

Mark Bould. *Science Fiction*. New York: Routledge, 2012. Paper, 239 pages, \$27.95 USD, ISBN 978-0-415-45811-5.

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

MARK BOULD'S *SCIENCE FICTION*, a new addition to the Routledge Film Guidebooks series, is a masterful contribution to international SF film studies. In this enjoyably enlightening volume, Bould demonstrates a vast knowledge of SF film from around the world and an extensive understanding of theory. He weaves together close readings of major and minor SF films from *Le voyage dans la lune* (1902) to *Source Code* (2011) and *Avatar* (2009) to *Zardoz* (1974) with rigorous interrogations of critical theory ranging from that by Carl Freedman to Gary Westfahl and Mikhail Bakhtin to Slavoj Žižek. He elaborates on the connections between films and theory to such an extent that it illuminates constellations of relationships that might otherwise be overlooked. On the one hand, it reads like a groundbreaking survey of SF film that considers by my count over 600 films, and on the other hand it reads like an examination of SF and film criticism spanning multiple ideological and theoretical standpoints. What I really like the most about Bould's book is that it does both of these things effortlessly and seamlessly.

Science Fiction is divided into three theoretically oriented chapters with each of these further subdivided into short sections with a specific focus. The first, "The Science in Science Fiction," explores science, its practitioners, and its subjects as seen in SF film. This chapter explores the importance of scientific accuracy and verisimilitude in SF, the role of the mad scientist, the role of women as scientists and subjects, and the politics of science. The second, "SF, Spectacle, and Self-Reflexivity," focuses on types of images, relationships between cognition and affect, and the self-reflexive obsession of film on film technologies. It discusses tropes such as the spectacle, the sublime, the grotesque, and camp in this chapter. Finally, the third, "SF, Colonialism, and Globalisation," interrogates networks of power and systems of control embedded in or in dialog with SF film. In particular, postcolonial issues are juxtaposed against deindustrialization, neoliberal economics, and the effects of global currents of capital.

The book also contains extensive endnotes, a bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and a useful index.

This volume is solidly built on a foundation of exhaustive readings of films, elaborations of their intertextual relationships, and studies of tropes and themes across any number of films across national boundaries and through time. However, this book's engagement of critical discourse is what sets it apart from many other SF film surveys. For example, Bould deploys two pages to take Gary Westfahl to task over the critic's ideas that science is central to SF discourse over any other analysis that favors sociohistorical contexts. He argues persuasively that:

Westfahl's escalation of a methodological disagreement treats science as if it is a neutral, objective practice, and then claims its authority effect for his own critical approach. This maneuver conflates the white male critic with rationality, while denying reason and rationality to women, peoples of colour and others who are marginalized by contemporary power relations. It also poses the white, middle-class, male critic as a self-denying, self-sacrificing, guileless, unappreciated and victimized hero. (19)

Bould similarly refuses to pull his punches when he demonstrates the limitations of Susan Sontag's model of camp in a mental exercise of extolling *Flash Gordon's* (1980) greatness over *Blade Runner* (1980). Bould asserts:

The purpose of such an exercise in transvaluation is not to persuade anyone of *Flash Gordon's* superiority to *Blade Runner*, but to illustrate the political limitations of Sontag's treatment of camp as a kind of consumer skill, which overlooks questions of production and erases the queer subjects responsible for much camp cultural production. (107)

These examples illustrate Bould's work to extend and push critical discourse. This is further established in his conclusion where he writes,

These three chapters—these three tours through the streets of the sf city—can only offer partial views of the genre. Taken together, they can only offer a prismatic view of aspects of the genre. There are many more chapters to be written, streets to be wandered, sights to be seen, pasts to be unearthed, alternative traditions to be encountered and futures to unfold. (195)

His work is an invitation to the reader to continue this unending process of conversation and discovery. This is perhaps the best lesson for readers to take away from this book—to engage and include.

Bould's *Science Fiction* provides a wide audience of readers with an extensive introduction to SF film, theory, and criticism. Libraries should certainly carry this book in their SF or film theory sections, and SF film and media professors—especially of upper-division undergraduate and graduate classes—should consider assigning this book as required or recommended reading for those students who want to not only get a taste of all of the different kinds of SF films out there but also to experience the operation of critical discourse as an ongoing conversation. Also, the book's sections might serve classes with a more focused approach to SF film (e.g., postcolonialism: section 3, utopia/dystopia: section 3, technologies of representation: sections 1 and 2, etc.). For those of us interested in SF film and media, I highly recommend this work on the basis of Bould's theoretical tenacity and broad knowledge of film. This book is an important contribution to the field, and I look forward to reading and taking part in the conversations that extend from it.

Philosophy & The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

Bruce Lindsley Rockwood

Nicholas Joll, ed. *Philosophy & The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Paper, xvi + 308 pages, \$21.00 USD, ISBN: 978-0-230-29112-6.

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NICHOLAS JOLL IS THE EDITOR of this collection of nine excellent essays on the philosophical implications of the work of the late Douglas Adams, focusing primarily on the universe of the works grouped under the heading of the first novel (and radio play) in the series, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Joll has taught philosophy at the University of Hertfordshire and the Open University, and his multinational contributors to this volume are mostly philosophers, all of them well versed in the subjects of their essays. Joll has written a well-structured introduction to the volume designed to reassure a reader who is familiar with Adams' work but less familiar with academic philosophy, while at the same time laying out a clear explication of the serious philosophical and ethical underpinnings of the texts under discussion.

The structure of the book includes recommendations for further reading at the end of each essay, coupled with detailed endnotes, and a well-designed glossary and set of indexes that make the volume a valuable reference for anyone doing research on either the work of Douglas Adams, or the philosophical issues addressed in the various essays. Citations to the books written by Adams are by chapter, since they exist in a wide variety of editions with variable pagination.

Joll himself wrote one of the essays, co-authored another and clearly exercised overall editorial responsibility for the volume, so that the essays cross-reference each other without undue repetition (he has a web site for those interested in following up on his work: www.nickjoll.co.uk). The book is clearly a team effort by writers engaged both with their particular subjects and the Adams opus, and who appear to be familiar with each other's work, so that a careful reader will find an overall thesis evolving from the interplay of their contributions: that Adams' work incorporates important philosophical ideas while exploring and sometimes satirizing their implications. Life may be absurd, but it is nonetheless worth living, and not merely as a struggle.

The book is divided into four main parts: Part I "Ethics" includes Ben Saunders and Elo se Harding's thoughtful essay on "Vegetarianism and Consenting Animals," which builds on Arthur Dent's refusal to eat meat when offered to him by a "bovine creature that apparently wants to be eaten in Milliways," from *The Restaurant at the End of the Universe*, Chapter 17 (27). Joll then writes on the ethics of entertainment, with a focus on whether it is appropriate to find entertainment in "purely fictional violence" (53). He uses Random's wrist TV broadcast of space battles to the locals in *Mostly Harmless*, Chapter 15 (50) and the death of ten billion in shooting a planet into a black hole in a game of "intergalactic bar billiards" in *Restaurant*, Chapter 17 (51) to introduce the issue and then systematically analyses it: What is entertainment? What violence is at issue? What is acceptable? (53-56). He focuses on fictional violence that has (1) people as its targets; (2) is moderate or severe in degree; (3) contains quite a lot of such violence; and (4) presents it in fairly explicit ways (55). He reviews the main objections to violent entertainment and points out problems with the corruption objection to violence: that it turns on debates about empirical evidence, and undercuts the idea that treating violence as entertainment is simply a "category mistake" (62). He rounds out the essay with a discussion of how the ethics of violent (and all) entertainment is linked to social conditions, and the role of

entertainment in pacifying consumers, or providing an outlet for frustrations that the political system does not address. Without taking a final position on the issue, he concludes that “If there is something wrong with some violent entertainment...then its producers are culpable, or part of the problem.... I conclude that the ethics(/ politics) of entertainment is a big topic. Really big” (67).

In light of films and books like the Japanese *Battle Royale* and *The Hunger Games*, coupled with the Newtown, Connecticut mass shootings of children and teachers, and the campus knife attack in Texas wounding 14 college students as I write this review, I would have to agree. The degree to which the gun lobby controls the U.S. Congress in the name of the 2nd Amendment, while the entertainment industry asserts the inviolability of creative expression under the 1st Amendment, shows that in the United States, at least, violence and entertainment go together like a horse and carriage (or hearse). Coming up with a solution is problematic given our dysfunctional political system, and lack of anything like a cultural consensus on how to address this issue. Claims that films or video games provoke violence are disputed, making an empirical resolution impossible. But we are surrounded by imagery and rhetoric of violence as solution to all problems, and a thoughtful exploration of the ethics of this is something to be welcomed.

Part II “The Meaning of Life” explores the argument of whether life is absurd in an essay by Amy Kind, and the question of what makes life meaningful (and whether an immortal life could ever be meaningful) using the case of Wowbagger the Infinitely Prolonged (*Life, the Universe and Everything*, Chapter 1) in an essay by Timothy Chappell. Part III “Metaphysics and Artificial Intelligence” finds Jerry Goodenough writing on Marvin the depressed robot and what it means to speak of Artificial Intelligence, arguing that “If Hume is right – and I think that here he is right – then the picture drawn by a long tradition of Western philosophy . . . is wrong. We need feelings as well as reason: in fact, reason itself won’t work properly *without* feelings....” (137).

Barry Dainton then focuses on the portrayal of the Earth as merely a computer commissioned by the White Mice to solve the problem of the ultimate question of life, the universe and everything, created by an earlier computer called Deep Thought (154). From there he explores the question of whether the earth could be a computer, perhaps a “universal classical computer” or “universal Turing machine” (156), whether universes themselves could be computers (158) and the idea that “information itself is the most basic ingredient of

the physical world, more basic than matter or energy” (161). He explores what it means to speak of multiple or parallel universes, and the implications of the computational theory of mind (CTM), suggesting, “If we think it likely that humankind will have a long and successful future, then we should also believe it quite probable that we ourselves are living in a simulation” (174).

Part IV of *Philosophy and the Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* is “Logic, Method and Satire,” and includes a sophisticated assessment of the arguments for the existence or non-existence of God (or gods) by Michèle Friend, “The Judo Principle, Philosophical Method and the Logic of Jokes” by Andrew Aberdein, and a thorough examination of the Hitchhiker’s books as philosophical satire co-authored by Alexander Powlak and Nicholas Joll. Their essay includes an assessment of the books as a satire of the quest for the/an “ultimate truth” with a useful diagram at p. 256.

This is a book that can be read straight through with interest by any fan of the *Hitchhiker’s* novels, but which will bear re-reading and careful study by anyone interested in the philosophical, ethical and political implications raised by the various contributors. It belongs in any academic library, and most public libraries and collections of fans as well.

The Theology of Battlestar Galactica: American Christianity in the 2004-2009 Television Series

Philip E. Kaveny

Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr. *The Theology of Battlestar Galactica: American Christianity in the 2004-2009 Television Series*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2012. Paper, 219 pages, \$40.00 USD, ISBN: 978-0786465507.

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AS I SIT AT MY LAPTOP working on this review at my dining room table linked by my home wireless network to the now almost archaic sounding World Wide Web and “The Cloud,” with the first episode of the *Battlestar Galactica* mini-series running in the background, it is time for a little reflection on the technological enhanced changes which are tectonic in scale yet morphing into invisibility. One is forced to reflect that in

a sense this is the world of the commoditization and instant delivery of mass cultural products that Walter Benjamin first discussed in the mid-1930 in his *Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Yes, that essay is available full and free in a number of online sources, and links our present with a historical context past memory's reach.

This must be said. We were well into the second decade of the 21st century and only four years from 2017, the year that Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* is set. Kevin Wetmore's book is nothing less a paradigmatic signifier of a seismic shift in scholarly production in which he breaks out of the typographic cell in the prison house of language. Myriad aspects of the setting of *Blade Runner* are realized in our world as we study *Battlestar Galactica*. For example, I learned a few days ago in a PBS Nova special on combat drones that more armed forces personal are being trained to drive drones sitting with X-Box controls seven thousand miles remote from the combat centers. Incidentally, though drone drivers are still called pilots, actual pilot are not taken into the drone program, according to Nova, because the cost of training combat skills away is twice that of training a novice with no flight experience. Earlier I stated we are well into the word of *Blade Runner*; upon reflection in many ways we have exceeded it. How far is it for example to go from combat drones with discretionary targeting capabilities to the rebellion of the Cylons?

Even a cursory search shows that there are at least sixty books on the *Battlestar Galactica* series and literally hundreds of citations in academic data bases; I suppose the question we must ask is why we need yet another book on the topic. The answer is this is one of the best books on the topic, both academic and interesting to a more general readership. Wetmore's book is similar in its high quality to *Battlestar Galactica: Investigating Flesh Spirit and Steel* edited by Roz Kaveney and Joy Stoy, though it differs from this collection by examining the series on an ideological basis. Kaveney and Stoy investigate the series, asking among other questions, to what extent does it support patriarchal hegemonic multinational capitalism, and to what extent does it critiques those institutions. Wetmore's book is more similar to, and makes a great companion to the other best scholarly book on this topic, *Battlestar Galactica and Philosophy*, also an essay collection edited by Jason T. Erdel. What I like about all three books is that all keep the subject text, which is the series itself, in sharp focus using critical methodologies that explicate rather than obscure.

Wetmore, who is a professional actor and director and also an associate professor of theater at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California, brings something special to his project in that in his chapters as he argues convincingly that *Battlestar Galactica* is, in and of itself, a theological text. Over the course of 87 episodes and two television movies, the series' narrative arc explores the meanings of salvation, prophecy, exile, apocalypse, resurrection, and messianic, and clearly demonstrates the working of a divine will in a material world. Upon engaging with his text I think he is acutely discerning, because work in theater as an artist actor and director of the great dramatic force which is embedded in the very structure of the series.

Wetmore's assertion that media are serving a religious function in contemporary American society is an open question. I am more than a bit skeptical about America being the most religious of Western industrial societies but that may be because of my blue state sensibilities. Yet he may be right in the sense that media is a kind of public space where groups trapped in their ideological silos of the liked minded can dialogue, as around reproductive choice in the series.

Perhaps in an almost ironic way *The Theology of Battlestar Galactica* dialogues with David Hartwell's 1980 book about the science fiction community *Age of Wonders*, in which he introduced a couple of memorable concepts. The first is "the church of science fiction," which is a way of life from which no one gets excommunicated. The second is the role of the really big idea in science fiction. This is a time in which all the really big and powerful ideas have been banished or made heretical from western academic philosophy, as I learned recently when I took a course in the meta-ethical. I became entrapped in the enchanted forest of infinite semiotic replication, where we could speak only about theories that spoke about theories that spoke about speaking about theories, if we could speak about anything, if any referent existed past a web of self-reverential language.

It is wonderful to have found big ideas taking refuge and made accessible and interesting with *The Theology of Battlestar Galactica*. The book is valuable for any high school, college or academic library, because we all love the really big ideas once we agree to be both philosophically charitable and in a phenomenological bracketing of our preconceptions, essentially opening our minds and suspending our disbelief as we remind ourselves that the text of Kevin Wetmore's study is a point to the performed theology of the series.

Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy and Of Bread, Blood, and The Hunger Games

Carol Franko

Tom Henthorne. *Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy: a Literary and Cultural Analysis*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2012. Paper, 206 pages, \$40.00 USD, ISBN 978-0-7864-6864-5.

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

Mary F. Pharr and Leisa A. Clark, Eds. *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2012. Paper, 247 pages, \$40.00 USD, ISBN 978-0786470198.

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TWO RECENT BOOKS from McFarland study Suzanne Collins' *Hunger Games* Trilogy (*The Hunger Games* [2008], *Catching Fire* [2009], and *Mocking Jay* [2010]). Both display an excitement that Collins' best-selling phenomenon is not only a thoughtful and engaging YA series appealing to a wide demographic but also that studying the trilogy allows reflection on post 9/11 America and our wars, security policies, consumerism, gender construction, and reality TV shows. *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy* edited by Mary F. Pharr and Leisa A. Clark and *Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy: A Literary and Cultural Analysis* by Tom Henthorne contrast strikingly with Laura Miller's suggestion (made before the publication of *Mocking Jay*) that *The Hunger Games* exemplifies that YA dystopian novels do not make social statements or issue warnings about possible futures but instead depict allegories of the hell that is high school (*The New Yorker* 86.17 [Jun 14-Jun 21, 2010]: 132). As a veteran TV writer who sees her novels as three-act plays (Henthorne 27), Collins would agree that her stories are not formally "social criticism" (Miller). However, Katniss' story came to Collins when she tiredly confused two TV shows—one of young people competing in a "reality" show and another of young people involved in an actual war (Henthorne 95). Col-

lins has stated "I don't write about adolescence.... I write about war. For adolescents" (qtd. in Henthorne 63), and has shared her desire to help adolescent readers "differentiate between 'what is real and what is not real'" (Henthorne 107). After giving an overview and highlights of *Approaching* and *Of Bread...*, I'll comment on how the books address science fiction through their discussion of dystopian fiction.

In *Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy*, Tom Henthorne delivers a readable, substantive, and provocative analysis. A useful biography discusses Collins' acknowledgment of the influence of her father, a Vietnam veteran and military historian, for her thinking about war and history and also summarizes her writing before the *HGs*: children's TV and the five *Overland Chronicles* novels for children. The eight chapters explore the trilogy in relation to literary production; gender and identity; war; "intelligent practice"; reality television; the dystopian genre; the survivor story; and digital textuality. End material includes three appendices (Glossary of Terms; Glossary of Characters; Questions for Further Study); a bibliography of Collins' fiction, and a bibliography of secondary texts indicating the careful, wide ranging nature of Henthorne's literary and cultural analysis.

Highlights include Henthorne's provocative critique of patriarchal behaviors by male leads Gale and Peeta; analysis of Collins' depiction of war in *The Underland Chronicles*; and a section detailing intertextuality in the trilogy (151-153). Other sections of high interest include the trilogy as more immersive, character- and plot-driven dystopian fiction (ch. 6) and chapter 4, "Isn't It Pragmatic? Intelligent Practice, Ethics and Law," which analyzes Katniss as a pragmatic actor beginning with her receiving the burnt bread from Peeta and finding the dandelion: "She becomes a pragmatist, utilizing the information at hand to act even though that information may be incomplete or unreliable so as to put herself in a position to acquire better information, and, as a result, attain more satisfactory outcomes." (80-81). Henthorne also argues that the trilogy is "a pragmatist text in the sense that it suggests that morality is neither absolute nor relative but instead contingent upon outcomes and how they are achieved" (87). Analysis of Katniss can seem absurdly limited by the pragmatic lens, as when Henthorne describes her taking Prim's place in the *Hunger Games* as uncharacteristically "impulsive" (89). His tracing of her alliance with Finnick is nuanced. Her killing of President Coin, preventing the reinstatement of the "games" in the new government,

shows Katniss extending her intelligent practice into social responsibility (81, 94).

This chapter would be useful in the classroom: Henthorne's focus on Katniss' thought process challenging non-reflective assumptions that she acts only instinctively, whether from survival or protective instincts. Gaps in the pragmatic analysis invite other views. Two good possibilities in the Pharr and Clark collection are Sarah Outterson Murphy's "The Child Soldier and the Self in *Ender's Game* and *The Hunger Games* (ch. 19)" and Ellyn Lem and Holly Hassel's "'Killer' Katniss and 'Lover Boy' Peeta: Suzanne Collins's Defiance of Gender-Genred Reading" (ch. 11). Murphy translates complaints about violence in the trilogy into questions about the ethics of the hero myth as a model for maturation and discusses Collins' trilogy with Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* (1985), considering John Kessel's criticism of intentional ethics in Card's novel, drawing on accounts of actual child soldiers, and arguing that both novels subvert myths of violence. Lem and Hassel argue that through Katniss' cross-gendered characterization and by blending genres of war story and romance, Collins complicates the male/female binary of the children's publishing industry. By putting relationships "center stage," as in the sibling one that leads Katniss to put herself in the hunger games, Collins "critiques and challenges" war (125).

These two are among the highlights in *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games*, edited by Mary F. Pharr and Leisa A. Clark. It is a strong collection that, with Henthorne, initiates academic work on Collins' series, while leaving room for more study, including the depiction of race in the trilogy. Its twenty-one chapters display various perspectives and goals from cultural critique to literary analysis. Here are several more highlights.

Tina L. Hanlon ("Coal Dust and Ballads: Appalachia and District 12," ch. 5) effectively illuminates Appalachian historical and literary contexts for Collins' depiction of District 12, Katniss's home. Max Despaigne superbly analyses how Collins uses "food as a metaphor for cultural, social, political, and personal longing" (67; Ch. 6; "The 'Fine Reality of Hunger Satisfied': Food as Cultural Metaphor in Panem").

Two chapters that usefully explore the dystopian structures of Panem are Kelley Wezner's grim Foucaultian analysis "'Perhaps I am Watching You Now': Panem's Panopticons," (ch. 14) and Helen Day's Baudrillardian "Simulacra, Sacrifice and Survival in *The Hunger Games, Battle Royale* [Koushun Takami, 1999], and *The Running Man* [Stephen King as Richard Bachman,

1982]" (ch. 16). Of special interest is Day's comparison of King's passive positioning of readers to Takami's and Collins' strategies for switching readers between roles of player and viewer.

Several pieces effectively examine gender, as in "Of Queer Necessity: Panem's Hunger Games as Gender Games," wherein Jennifer Mitchell uses queer theory to analyze Katniss as a character for whom an "undefined and unstable gender is, in fact, natural and intrinsic," but also one who learns to perform "girl." Amy L. Montz focuses on gender, fashion, and spectacle, drawing on past and current feminist organized spectacles to argue that Katniss is both used by the Resistance as their visual symbol and takes back agency in the finale ("Costuming the Resistance: The Female Spectacle of Rebellion," ch. 13). While Montz integrates analysis of the trilogy and of contemporary Slutwalk protests, Anthony Pavlik's "Absolute Power Games" (ch. 2) is less successful in illuminating both literary text and cultural event. Pavlik's claim that the trilogy is implicated in the Ur-Fascism which Katniss opposes is provocative, as is his overlay of American colonial history onto Panem's Capitol and thirteen districts (37), but his unexplained example of the recent Arab Spring as a model of the peaceful change missing from the trilogy, coupled with his suggestion that the trilogy witnesses to the no-duty-to-retreat interpretation of American history (36-37) does not make a case concerning the novels or contemporary events.

Yet Collins' Panem setting asks to be read as a critical mirror of the U.S.: Pavlik sees colonial America, while Valerie Estelle Frankel sees America's obsession with reality TV ("Reflection in a Plastic Mirror," ch. 4). In the first chapter, Bill Clemente moves from a useful unpacking of Collins' Roman references to his focus: "Panem in America: Crisis Economics and a Call for Political Engagement." He reads the trilogy as "progressive or radical fiction for young readers that involves collective action on a large social scale" (31). He compares the economic set up of the Capitol, its surrounding districts, and the annual games to "a corporate takeover that turns the twelve districts into production centers" (25).

Henthorne and the Pharr/Clark collection emphasize the hybridity of the *Hunger Games* and its participation in dystopian literature. Their discussion of SF as genre is sparse. In their useful introduction sketching a history of modern YA fiction from morality tales and dime novels to twenty-first century "postmodern" works of SF and dystopia, Pharr and Clark treat SF's influence on

post-9/11 YA dystopias as crucial, for SF themes of distrusting technology, but also for “core” characteristics of SF: “at its core...[SF] is about conjecture. As imaginative as it is scientific, SF ponders our reality by speculating about possible other worlds.... At its best, it demands plausibility” because its depictions conceivably could happen (7). Thus Pharr and Clark imply that SF’s emphasis on imaginative, plausible conjecture has encouraged the development of strong speculative YA fiction. Their useful overview of over a dozen YA dystopias in the Introduction is complemented by Clark’s “Dystopian and Postapocalyptic Fiction and Criticism: A Core Bibliography, with Emphasis on Young Adult Works” (229-233).

In another showcasing of YA dystopia in Pharr and Clark, Clemente argues that the HGs are better understood as “progressive or radical fiction for young readers” (21) rather than the YA dystopia described by Laura Miller (a genre preoccupied by the adolescent psyche) or by Kay Sambell—always ending in hopeful equivocation (Clemente 20-21). Clemente usefully highlights the trilogy’s emphasis on hope embedded in suffering, but his depiction of Sambell’s position is incomplete. In “Presenting the Case for Social Change: The Creative Dilemma of Dystopian Writing for Children” Sambell also discusses “ambiguous, open structures” that suggest authors are developing “a new, more fluid style of didacticism in dystopian writing for children” (in *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults*, Eds. Carrie Hintz and Elaine Ostry, Routledge, 2003, p. 173).

Henthorne defines SF as a genre that features speculative technology but that also is about the importance of technology, science, and “scientific ethics” to human life (32-33). He suggests that in contrast, the HG’s “force fields, hoverplanes, and mutations [serve] primarily as a means of marking...the text as an alternative space for rethinking social institutions and relationships” (32), citing Paul Ricoeur’s *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* for the phrase about textual space. Although his official take on SF emphasizes content, he later uses two SF texts to illustrate estrangement of readers, contrasting “narratives such as Philip K. Dick’s *A Scanner Darkly* and Joanna Russ’s *The Female Man*...that, by design, continually disorient and confuse readers, keeping them at a distance” (150) with Collins’ technique of “participatory” world building that includes many familiar elements, helping readers enter the story (150, 154). Henthorne also varies his emphasis when discussing the dystopian genre: when he is explaining how Collins’ texts differ from traditional twentieth-century dystopias, he cites Frederic Jameson’s classifying of dystopian fiction as relentlessly didactic (108). When he highlights the trilogy’s participation in dystopia as a genre that yields cognitive space for critical reimagining of social life, he quotes or paraphrases Ricoeur, as he does when discussing Collins’ trilogy as a digital text (148), or he quotes comparable material on heuristic textual space from Sambell (34).

The Hunger Games can be viewed through many lenses for different purposes, but SF and dystopia remain foundational to its appeal.

Shadows of the New Sun

Joan Gordon

Sun: Stories in Honor of Gene Wolfe. New York: TOR, 2013. Hardback, \$25.99 USD, 336 pages, ISBN 978-1-4805-1596-3.

Order option(s): [Cloth](#) | [Paper](#) | [Kindle](#) | [MP3](#)

WHAT A GREAT IDEA FOR AN ANTHOLOGY—stories to honor a master of the enigmatic short story and novella, Gene Wolfe. And what a daunting idea as well. Wolfe's stories are not only intimidatingly well crafted, but they are sui generis. If I had been clever enough to think of this, I would have gone to all the best writers of short stories and novellas inside and outside science fiction and asked them to devise original stories that somehow evoked Wolfe's style or themes, and I would have asked each of them to write a paragraph about how they had addressed the task. I wonder how much success I would have had. I am not a famous writer and I don't travel in the circles of famous writers so I might very well have met with rejection, but that's what I would have done. I might have sought stories from Ursula Le Guin, who has called Wolfe our Melville, Jonathan Letham, Stephen King, George Saunders, Kij Johnson, Jeffrey Ford, Karen Russell, Geoff Ryman, Kathleen Ann Goonan, Maureen McHugh, China Miéville—well, lots of people. And I would have asked Gene Wolfe for some suggestions, too. I certainly would have asked Joe Haldeman, Neil Gaiman, and Michael Swanwick, as these editors did. I might not have thought of all the famous writers Mooney and Fawcett thought of and I certainly wouldn't have thought of the less famous writers who seem to be friends of theirs or of Wolfe's.

The actual collection at hand does have some fine stories, especially those by Haldeman, Gaiman, and Swanwick, and the stories by Nancy Kress, Jack Dann, Jody Lynn Nye, and David Brin are strong as well. There are two good stories by Gene Wolfe that bookend the volume, a light one at the beginning and a more serious one at the end. The rest of the nineteen stories are less successful, sometimes struggling to mimic Wolfe's style or allude to his stories and themes, sometimes seemingly unrelated to his work in any obvious way. This reflects a problem that arises from the very social nature of science fiction: when we ask friends to contribute to a proj-

ect, our judgment may be clouded. Some of the stories about which I will not speak seemed to be written with more sincerity than skill, others seemed to come from piles of unpublished manuscripts that the authors hoped might fill the bill. The "Foreword" by J.E. Mooney and the comments before the stories by the authors emphasize the social aspect of their collection: in most cases, how, or if, they know Wolfe personally. The comments after the stories, about the authors, reveal the wide variety of kinds of writing and levels of experience the authors represent. Generally speaking, the farther from mainstream science fiction and the less experience, the less successful the writers were in evoking Gene Wolfe. So this volume is not a rousing success in every way; it is not as good as I want it to be. But it does have some fine moments, and I will talk about those.

Neil Gaiman's story responds to Wolfe's Borgesian "A Solar Labyrinth" (1983) with his own Wolfish "A Lunar Labyrinth." And it is wolfish since it is a werewolf story. But it is also successfully Wolfish as well: Gaiman gets the rhythm of Wolfe's prose, uses first person, explores memory, and has rosemary. Wolfe's wife is named Rosemary and her herb often scents his prose. Most importantly, it is a powerful and evocative story with a great last line.

Joe Haldeman's "The Island of the Death Doctor" also has an obvious source in Wolfe's trilogy of similarly named stories, "The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories," "The Death of Doctor Island," and "The Doctor of Death Island" (all collected in *The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories and Other Stories* (1980)). We already know that Haldeman is a master of the pastiche, given the sophisticated turns he takes on Hemingway's style in *The Hemingway Hoax* (1991). Here he proves it once again in a meta-fictional and circular story about characters from Wolfe's stories, and Wolfe himself makes an appearance. Haldeman's own tendency to spareness in writing keeps him from saying too much, and his frequent use of dialogue means that his respectful mimicry of Wolfe's style includes the dense use of dialogue to advance the story. For me, this was the most successful of the homages, brilliant in its references to Wolfe and brilliant also in its own right.

The third of my favorites is Michael Swanwick's "The She-Wolf's Hidden Grin," which revisits the steamy and corrupt Sainte Croix of *The Fifth Head of Cerberus* (1972). Swanwick's sensibilities are probably the closest to Wolfe's of any of the contributors; his take on the cycle of novellas is suitably haunting. This time the cloned twins are daughters and the story begins with a dream of

a benigna lupa, alluding to the kind she-wolf who suckled those famous Roman twins Romulus and Remus. Like Wolfe's stories, this one suggests multiple levels of consciousness and multiple kinds of identity.

Nancy Kress contributes a moving story about child abuse that doesn't try to use Wolfe's voice but refers to the neglected and lonely Tackie of "The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories" while exploring the power of story to offer escape and salvation. Jack Dann also takes on neglected children and "The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories" in his angry, second person story about a child who escapes, with limited success, to Mars with John Carter. Judy Lynn Nye's "The Dreams of the Sea" provides an addendum to *The Book of the New Sun* in which a woman confronts the undines, beautifully evoked here, once the New Sun has caused Urth to be inundated. Nye uses the arcane vocabulary of *The Book*, references the Matachin Tower, the Citadel, and Urth in general in this sensuous quest story. Her hand is a little less sure so there are some florid moments but the story is gripping nevertheless. David Brin's *The Log* is not a particularly Wolfish story even though it uses an unreliable narrator as Brin's opening commentary points out. Nevertheless, it has interesting speculations about uplifted animals, politics, and punishment in a lively contribution to the volume.

I have saved Gene Wolfe's own contributions for last. Their presence is simultaneously an important reason for buying this book and an indication of why many of the contributions seem weak by comparison. The first story, "Frostfree," is about a sentient refrigerator that releases people from curses and arrives to fix the protagonist up with a girlfriend. It's funny and provocative and, as one would expect, more complex than it at first appears. The last story is called "The Sea of Memory." It is simply beautiful. It seems at first to be a survival tale about five people stranded on a deserted island, morphs into a science fiction story with space ships, strange technology, and space travel, and finally becomes a meditation on memory and the afterlife. I'd like to say more about it but the unfolding is part of the magic of the story. Both stories demonstrate Wolfe's ability to say no more than is absolutely needed, less than we may at first think necessary, and the right amount so that each time we read it we see and understand more. Other writers are less patient with this process, unable to resist the lure of the expository lump, feeding us just a little more than we absolutely need, wanting to ease our experience.

Buy this book first of all because of Wolfe's contributions, second because a number of the other stories

are worth reading as well, third because it honors Gene Wolfe, and fourth because it teaches one how to write by example and by comparison.

It isn't what Wolfe might call the book of gold but it contains gold, and silver, and other more humble but still valuable nuggets.

Nebula Awards Showcase 2013

Wendy Bousfield

Asaro, Catherine, ed. *Nebula Awards Showcase 2013*. Amherst, NY: Pyr, 2013. Trade paper, \$18 USD, 428 pages, ISBN 978-1-61614-783-9.

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

THE GOOD NEWS about the latest *Nebula Awards Showcase* is that the fiction selections are superb and that a high percentage of the 2011 Nebula nominees are new writers. Because they have published only a handful of short stories, honorees/nominees Kathleen Sparrow, Ken Liu, Nancy Fulda, Brad R. Torgersen, E. Lily Yu, Ferrett Steinmetz, and David W. Goldman may be unknown to readers of speculative fiction. The bad news, however, is that Catherine Asaro does not live up to the very high standard set by previous *Showcase* editors.

The first Nebula awards were given in 1966 for fiction published the previous year. Working writers (members of Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America) nominate outstanding short stories, novelettes, novellas, and novels for Nebulas. In contrast, fans (members of the World Science Fiction Society) give the Hugo award, also represented by an annual volume. While the Nebula and Hugo Award winners often overlap, the *Nebula Showcases* have been unique because—until the current edition—they have included not only fiction, but also introductions, and often essays, discussing trends in speculative fiction. The editors of the *Nebula Awards Showcase 2012* quote Andy Duncan: "The primary purpose of an award is not to celebrate individuals, but to celebrate the field the individuals work in."

In contrast, Asaro's self-serving introduction to *Showcase 2012* focuses on her own career as dancer and physicist and provides only superficial, impressionistic remarks on the volume's selections. Asaro's failure to consider science fiction and fantasy during the second decade of the 21st century, or to provide any context for individual fictions, is especially disappointing because

many of the featured writers have left only a brief paper/online trail. While earlier *Showcases* provided headnotes and afterwords, establishing a context for nominees and their stories, Asaro includes neither biographies nor comparative discussions. Without Googling, for example, the reader would have no way of knowing that Ken Liu's "Paper Menagerie" won not only the 2011 Nebula, but the Hugo (2012) and World Fantasy Award (2012)—the only work of fiction ever to sweep all three awards. Asaro does not explain that Connie Willis's story, "Ado," is not a current nomination, but a 1988 work from the recipient of the 2011 Damon Knight Grand Master Award. Furthermore, Asaro fails to note that the extraordinarily versatile Kij Johnson (whose "The Man Who Bridged the Mist," was the 2011 Novella winner) has been a Nebula winner for three years running. The *Showcase* ends with a shocking misprint. The list of 2012 NEBULA AWARDS WINNERS, NOMINEES, AND HONOREES—from which the showcased selections are drawn—is really the 2011 list. Asaro apparently fails to realize that *Showcase* volumes have a two-year time lag!

Though speculative fiction is often characterized as having exciting ideas but cardboard characters, *Showcase 2013* features heartbreakingly sympathetic characters in richly imagined worlds. In Kathleen Sparrow's "The Migratory Patterns of Dancers," for example, an aging man, genetically enhanced with the DNA of extinct birds, struggles to support his family in an ecologically collapsed world by enacting bird migrations and dances. Carolyn Ives Gilman's "Ice Owl" is also set in a world impoverished by extinctions, not only of birds and butterflies, but of peoples that the Nazi-like Gmintas had systematically targeted for "Holocide." David W. Goldman's "Axiom of Choice," a moving metafiction, consists of numbered blocks of plot: the reader is offered the false choice of going to numbered sections that either do not exist or that send the reader back to the starting point. The protagonist, a musician who descends into drugs and vagrancy, repeatedly rejects opportunities for redemption. Set in a Nigerian village, Geoff Ryman's "What We Found" is told from the point of view of a

man who helplessly observes first his father and then his beloved brother fall prey to mental illness. Patrick's fear that his own children will inherit the same degenerative illness spurs him to become a biochemical researcher.

Two of the finest selections are coming of age stories: Jo Walton's *Among Others* and Ken Liu's "Paper Menagerie." *Showcase 2012* includes the opening chapters of *Among Others*, winner of the Nebula for Best Novel (2011), as well as Hugo Best Novel (2012). A provocative, riveting combination of fantasy and autobiography, *Among Others* consists of diary entries by Morwenna, a Welsh child. Mor's inner life is shaped by reading science fiction and by a home in which magic is an everyday reality. Fleeing a witch mother, who caused the death of her twin, Mor can talk with fairies. *Among Others* has a powerful ecological subtext: fairies seek to protect places blighted by human technology.

"Paper Menagerie" is told from the point of view of Jack, son of an American man and his Chinese mail-order wife. When Jack was a small child, his mother comforted him by folding magically living origami animals as playmates. Seeking acceptance from schoolmates, Jack relegates the animals to the attic. He becomes so embarrassed by his mother's poor English that he stops speaking with her. Years later, after his mother's death, Jack rediscovers the animals. The little tiger Laohu comes back to life, unfolds, and reveals a letter from his dead mother. Jack's belated understanding of his mother's priceless, magical gift reduced me to tears.

I recommend *Nebula Awards Showcase 2013* to general readers and scholars. Despite the fact that bookstores no longer stock such print magazines as *Asimov's* and *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, *Showcase 2013* demonstrates that short fiction is vibrantly alive. For readers like me who favor separately published books, *Showcase 2013* celebrates fine writers who may otherwise be overlooked. The fiction in this collection is uniformly moving, elegantly written, and insightfully prophetic. The reader, however, should skip the introduction and consult the Internet for the writers' biographies and other publications.

XCOM: Enemy Unknown [game]

Lars Schmeink

XCOM: Enemy Unknown. Dev. Firaxis Games. Pub. 2K Games. Windows, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360: 2012 / Mac OSX, iOS: 2013.

Order option(s): [PC](#) | [Mac](#) | [PS3](#) | [Xbox 360](#)

“It was the beginning of the rout of civilization, the massacre of humanity.”

—*The War of the Worlds*, 1953, Dir. Byron Haskin

EVER SINCE H.G. WELL’S NOVEL *The War of the Worlds* (1898) the alien invasion has been a staple of science fiction. Thriving in the Cold War climate of the 1950s, many a Hollywood tale was spun around what Neil Badmington calls a “set of simple binary oppositions—above all, human versus inhuman, us versus them, and real versus fake” (3). At the opposite end of us humans feature the abominable aliens: “at once an enemy to be feared, hated, and destroyed” (ibid.). Witness the proto-typical invasion narrative: aliens come and want to conquer Earth, they seem to succeed, until in the end, humanity unites and some trait of ours brings the invaders to their knees, be it our sheer will to live, our emotions like love and kindness or simply a bacterium that the invaders could not survive.

In his book *Alien Chic*, Badmington points to the late 1970s with films like *Close Encounter of the Third Kind* (Dir. Steven Spielberg, 1977) and *E.T.: The Extra-terrestrial* (Dir. Steven Spielberg, 1982) for a shift that began to replace our hatred for the alien with love. But, Badmington says, behind both alien hatred and alien love lies essentially the same dichotomy of “us” versus “them” and a reactionary impulse to ensure our humanist view and “reinscribe the border between the human and the extraterrestrial” (89). In 1993 then, when *The X-Files* first appeared on Fox television, Moulder’s love/hate-relation with the aliens seemed to capture the Zeitgeist of the 1990s with all the uncertainty of boundaries and identities. In this climate, the original video game series XCOM returned the invasion narrative with an obvious nod towards the 1950s and its simple dichotomies, the black and white hatred for all things alien. Originally named *UFO: Enemy Unknown*, the first game in the se-

ries in 1994 already established the thematic parameters that were kept alive throughout most of its installments and that can also be found in its latest, 2012/13 installment that loosely functions as a reboot of the series after more than ten years break since 2001¹: a group of hostile and extremely violent aliens attack Earth. Earth’s leaders gather in a secret meeting and establish the Extraterrestrial Combat-unit called X-COM in order to fight back. At first in secret, later in an all-out planetary war, the player needs to direct his troops in a turn-based tactical game against alien invaders while at the same time formulating a long-time strategy to enhance human technology, hinder enemy movement and gather intelligence on the aliens and their ultimate goal.

The 2012 installment, *XCOM: Enemy Unknown* is a reboot, “recreat[ing] X-COM with our unique creative vision...true to the elements that made X-COM such a revered game while delivering an entirely new story,” as Steve Martin, president of developer Firaxis Games said in an interview with Game Informer (cit. in Biessener). What is remarkable in terms of science fiction studies is that the 2012 version blatantly returns to the tried and true elements of the 1994 versions’ dichotomies of “Us” versus “Them,” celebrating humanism as the ultimate boon against the aliens, which is very reminiscent of 1950s Hollywood narratives. As Badmington argues for the 1953 film *The War of the Worlds* (and other such alien invasions), “humans come together in order to fight for their future.... More precisely, the sudden invasion of the other brings human beings together, and this unity, this creation of an “Us” to resist the terrible “Them” is played out even at the level of filmic composition” (18). Of course, with a turn-based strategy game, we might need to adapt filmic composition and replace it with game mechanics, but the sentiment remains. One of the persistent goals of the game is to keep Earth’s population calm and controlled, reducing panic levels in all participating countries. The XCOM council and your troops, which are provided by this council, are multinational, comprised of sixteen nation states from all five continents. Should the level of panic in a given country

¹ After the original game (*UFO: Enemy Unknown*), all follow-ups were named X-COM with an added subtitle, such as *Apocalypse*, *Interceptor* or *Enforcer*. In total, the game spawned five sequels, with two more being cancelled in 2001 due to changing corporate ownership. The 2012 game was re-christened XCOM (without the hyphen) in order to emphasize the re-imagining and reboot of the series.

be too high at the end of a review period that country will leave the XCOM council. Should you lose half your council members, you become incapable of action and forfeit the war: the aliens win. Behind this is an obvious message embedded in the mechanics of the game simulation: “We” must stand united; otherwise, “They” will win. This is further reflected in the make-up of your team (uniting soldiers, technicians and scientists from all the council nations) and certain “terror-missions,” in which you need to rescue as many civilians as possible in countries with the most wide-spread panic. If you do not balance out resources and missions over all 16 nations you will not be able to succeed.

More interesting than the “tried and true” elements of old is the “entirely new story” that Martin promised gamers. First let me say, it is not so new, as most of the basic premises of an alien invasion and an anti-alien war council remain in place from 1994 to 2012. What is new is the motivation behind the invasion and the resolution of the game. Be forewarned, the next part of this review will spoil the ending for you. Whereas in the 1994 version, motivation was spotty at best and the aliens attacked from a base on Mars, directed by an alien “brain,” in the 2012 version the guiding force of the invasion—the alien race named Ethereals—actually provides a motivation not only for the several very different alien species encountered in the game but also for the invasion and its defeat by the XCOM team. During the missions it becomes clear that the invading force is very diverse, from the typical “Greys” of Roswell fame (here called Sectoids) to robotic and cyborg creations of all sorts. What unites them seems to be that they are directed via psionic powers wielded by the Ethereals. As a counter-measure, human scientists reverse engineer the alien technology and thus uncover more and more of their plot. The aliens abduct humans to experiment on them, especially trying to unlock some psychic ability. In the end, scientists succeed in creating a laboratory with an alien psi-field in order to “discover and develop the latent psionic abilities of our soldiers” as the game text claims. When an especially powerful psionic soldier (called the Volunteer) unlocks an Ethereal device, the “temple ship” (the headquarters of the invasion fleet) can be boarded and the final enemy confronted. At this moment in the game, the Volunteer remains in contact with the “Uber Ethereal” (the leader of the aliens), who then acknowledges that the motivation for the invasion lay with the creation of a powerful race of enslaved soldiers: “Long have we watched...and waited. So many promising subjects so many failed efforts. And now af-

ter untold trials, the New One emerges to face the rigors of our collective.... An enduring physical form paired with an equally adept mental capacity—the rarest of traits finally within our grasp.” All the other alien races are failed attempts at creating this race that according to the “Uber Ethereal” is needed to “bring about our redemption, and usher in our future.” In the end, though, the aliens did not succeed in “uplifting” the human race; rather, it came down to sheer human will paired with reverse engineered alien technology to unlock a potential that was part of human evolution all along.

The category of the posthuman, ideally positioned as a hybrid between “Us” and “Them,” which on the surface would have allowed for destabilizing the dichotomy of human versus inhuman, is reeled in by the game and appropriated for the humanist cause. Otherness is denied and the posthuman abilities are absorbed as human, a potential that naturally comes from within. The Volunteer leads the assault on the aliens, saving Earth in the most clichéd heroism possible by sacrificing himself for the greater good and the rescue of millions of lives. In this, the game once more returns to the dichotomies, appointing the alien as the ultimate Other that threatens humanity.

In a sense, then, the game caters to a longing for a simpler time. Its references are towards the Cold War, Roswell and the 1950s, and the clear-cut lines between good and evil and any complication of these concepts is diffused. It remains to be seen if this longing is just temporary nostalgia due to the current uncertainty of the status quo or if video games are to a certain degree displaying a reactionary trend, harking back to a fundamentally humanist dialectic. For what it is worth, a new XCOM title is due out at the end of this year and we will need to see how it deals with Otherness.

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Contact: shanes1@kent.edu

Guest of Honor: Nnedi Okorofor

Guest of Honor: Ian McDonald

Guest Scholar: Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, Jr.

Special Guest Emeritus: Brian Aldiss

Topic: The ICFA welcomes papers on any aspect of the fantastic, broadly defined, in Literature, Art, Drama, Film, and Popular Media. This year, we are particularly interested in topics related to our theme, Fantastic Empires. From space operas to medieval tales to seminal works of fantasy, imaginative fiction abounds in fabulous empires. ICFA 35 will investigate the widest range of topics relating to empire, including discussions of particular texts, analyses of the hegemonic and counterhegemonic forces of empire, evaluations of individual resistances to imperialism (and of empires striking back), and essays into various other aspects of the theme. We welcome proposals for scholarly papers and panels that seek to examine, interrogate, and expand any research related to empire and the fantastic.

In addition to essays examining our honored Guests' work, conference papers might consider specific fantastic empires, imaginative imperial fantasies, the semiotics of empire, fantastic diasporas and migrations, margins and liminal space(s), media empires, technologies of empire, speculative post-nationalism, fantastic Others, myth and empire, geographical/ideological mapping, transnational trauma, the construction/constriction of identity, or the multiple metaphors of empire. Panels might discuss various theories of empire, postcolonialism and the fantastic, language and imperialism, cosmopolitanism in the actual cosmos, Orientalism in classic texts, horrific hordes in film, dystopian empires, or postmodern theory and empire.

Submission: For more information on the IAFA and its conference, the ICFA, see <http://iafa.highpoint.edu>. To submit a proposal, go to <http://iafa.highpoint.edu/icfa-submissions/>.

Title: American Fantasies and Dreams

Deadline: 30 November 2013

Conference Date: May 14–16, 2014
Atatürk University, Erzurum, Turkey

Contact: 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) 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: Fantastic Games: Ludic imaginary spaces and their socio-cultural impact: Fifth annual conference of the Gesellschaft für Fantastikforschung e.V. [Association for Research in the Fantastic]

Deadline: 31 December, 2013

Conference Date: September 11 – 14, 2014
Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt, Austria

Contact: gff2014@aau.at

Topic: In *Homo Ludens* (1938), his essential and seminal study that is frequently seen as the beginning of Game Studies as we understand them today, Johan Huizinga claimed an ontological connection between culture, as *the* quintessentially human endeavour, and play. Refuting the constantly raised accusations that play is a futile and escapist activity, Huizinga in contrast attributed it a *significant* function, both in its metaphorical (i.e. “it is

important”), as well as its literal (i.e. “it signifies”) meaning (1971: 1). By its very nature, play opens up spaces and worlds beyond primary, everyday reality, new frameworks of meaning that are, however, not devoid of meaningful interactions with it. Culture, Huizinga argues, needs the free space of play to come into existence in the first place, to change and to adapt.

This intricate and complex web of interconnections between ludic otherworlds and the everyday life of individuals and groups is the core interest of the fifth annual conference of the Gesellschaft für Fantastikforschung e.V. [Association for Research in the Fantastic]. We have deliberately chosen the very open and inclusive phrasing “ludic imaginary spaces” for the objects of the papers, so that the range of media fitting the description is as wide as it can be: hypertext and other ludic forms of text, board- and card games, pen&paper role-playing games, live-action role-playing games (LARPs), video and computer games, alternate reality games, and gamified activities of all kinds are possible, but this list must in no way be seen as exhaustive. No matter the medium chosen, what is essential is that there is this “free space of movement within a more rigid structure” that exists “because of and also despite the more rigid structures of a system” that Eric Zimmerman has identified as essential to any definition of play (2004: 159). The organisers of this conference also would like to send a strong message that the conflicts over interpretive authority between Ludologists and Narratologists in playable media that have hindered Game Studies since the late 1990s are a thing of the past, so papers suggesting ways to bridge this gap will be especially welcome.

As the second focus of the conference, according to its title, is on the social and cultural exchanges between the secondary, or even tertiary realities created and the primary reality in which *they* are in turn created, played, and observed, possible approaches to these media reach from the implicit and explicit social and cultural politics of games and playable media on both the content and the structural level, to the regimes of representation and configuration present, the psycho-social phenomena surrounding the experiences created, to the political and social regulation of playful behaviour, and beyond. Game Studies are necessarily “a multidisciplinary field of study and learning with games and related phenomena as its subject matter” according to Frans Mäyrä (2010: 6), so theoretical perspectives from the whole range of academic disciplines and contributions from those working practically in the design and creation of ludic spaces would ideally come together to provide this

fifth annual conference of the GFF with a kaleidoscopic overview of the full range of possibilities, problems, and the future potential of games and playable media in negotiating between the realms of the fantastic and everyday life.

As usual for GFF conferences, there will be an additional Open Track for all papers not directly related to the conference topic to safeguard a pluralism of perspectives in our research in the Fantastic. We thus invite papers of all aspects of the fantastic for this open track. In the same vein, the GFF is happy to announce the availability of two student grants of €250 each as support of travel arrangements to the conference for the two most interesting student projects handed in. Apply for the student grant with abstract and bionote at the address below.

Submission: If you would like to contribute your voice to such a discussion of ludic imaginary spaces, we cordially invite you to send us a 350-word abstract to gff2014@aau.at detailing your projected 20-min paper in either German or English. Please do not forget to include your contact details, as well as a short bionote. The deadline for abstracts is December 31st, 2013.

Contact:

René Schalleger
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Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt
Universitätsstraße 65 - 67
9020 Klagenfurt am Wörthersee / Austria

References:

- Huizinga, Johan. 1971. [1938] *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*. Boston/MA: The Beacon Press.
- Mäyrä, Frans. 2010. [2008] *An Introduction to Game Studies: Games in Culture*. Los Angeles/CA, London et al.: Sage.
- Zimmerman, Eric. 2004. "Narrative, Interactivity, Play, and Games". In: Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Pat Harrigan [Eds.]. 2004. *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game*. Cambridge/MA and London: MIT Press. 154 – 164.

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

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 by 28 February 2014.

Title: Star Trek Symposium

Deadline: 31 March 2014

Conference Date: July 10-11, 2014

University of Malta, Msaid, Malta

Contact: info@startreksymposium.com

Topic: The Star Trek Symposium will be held in Malta at the Atlantis Room at the Dolmen Hotel on 10-11 July 2014 (Thursday and Friday). This event will be held under the aegis of HUMS at the University of Malta (<http://www.um.edu.mt/nocentries/opportunities/startreksymposium10-14jul14>). This is an *academic* symposium on Star Trek. Abstracts of proposed oral presentations must contain a scholarly message, preferably dealing with the interface of medicine or science and the humanities.

Submission: If you are interested in submitting an abstract in order to present a paper at this meeting, then please follow the instructions on the event's website. The organisers reserve the right to extend the meeting to the 12 July (Saturday) if sufficient abstracts of the required quality are received. The deadline to submit an abstract is Monday 31 March 2014. All abstracts must be submitted online via the website abstract submission page. Any proposals received by email will be deleted and not sent for review. Please see FAQs on the website: www.startreksymposium.com.

Science Fiction Research Association

www.sfra.org

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

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Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts

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

Femspec

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

