

Fantasy and Science Fiction

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I. Scope

This Collections Policy Statement deals with fantasy and science fiction and is intended to complement the existing Collections Policy Statement for Literature and Language. While the latter statement addresses the need for the Library to acquire works by authors "whose writings are generally regarded as having literary merit [or] as representing important trends in serious creative writing," genre designations such as fantasy, science fiction, science fantasy, and horror often eliminate works of cultural and artistic merit from serious consideration by the literary mainstream. Although often overlooked, the genre of fantasy and its sub-genre, science fiction, both express and embody with increasing significance important elements of the popular culture of the United States, as well many other nations; hence, they are accorded separate treatment in the present statement.

This statement is addressed in particular to works specifically marketed by publishers as either fantasy or fiction, rather than to works of speculative fiction that have already achieved mainstream literary recognition, e.g., the fantasy and science fiction of George Orwell, Margaret Atwood, Aldous Huxley, Doris Lessing, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., Anne Rice, et al., and are therefore covered by Literature. This statement also applies to non-book materials which share the same characteristics as print literature in these genres, especially moving image and recorded sound materials.

Throughout this statement particular attention is given to science fiction (although it is, in fact, a sub-genre of fantasy) because it dominates the genre of fantasy in terms of the total number of titles published. It will be the general rule, therefore, throughout this statement to speak of "fantasy and science fiction" together and on equal terms. Unless otherwise specified, however, the fantasy provisions below apply equally to all of the other sub-genres of fantasy.

1. Fantasy

Fantasy includes the sub-genres of science fiction, horror and adaptations of traditional myths. The distinguished writer, Arthur C. Clarke, has stated that "any sufficiently advanced technology is undistinguishable from magic." (Omni, April 1980, p. 87.). This view is borne out by the fact that the distinctions between science fiction and the various other sub-genres of fantasy are indeed blurred at times and usually artificial. In fact, many authors in the genre frequently cross these artificial barriers

in mid-work or in mid-career. Publishers, furthermore, often confuse these sub-genre identifications even further by failing to differentiate among them. Publishers do, however, frequently identify books in these various sub-genres with tags which usually appear on the spine or cover of the individual books stating that they are specifically fantasy, horror, science fiction, etc. These tags may be very useful in identifying materials whose precise classification is doubtful or subject to various interpretations. Although difficult to define with precision, fantasy usually requires a willing suspension of disbelief. Works in its various sub-genres often 1) adapt, rework, or provide an alternate telling of a myth or folktale; 2) involve an alternate reality or alternate universe; 3) rely on a displacement of time or space; or 4) make use of elements of the horrific, supernatural, paranormal, or the occult.

2. Science fiction

In addition to sharing any or all of the general characteristics listed above for fantasy, science fiction usually 1) is speculative in nature; 2) assumes change as a given; 3) projects a story-line into the future or into an alternative reality or history; 4) explores a problem in technology, culture, philosophy, etc. beyond its current state; and 5) presents an atmosphere of scientific credibility regardless of the reality. Not all science fiction 1) takes place in the future; 2) involves space travel; 3) describes technology beyond current reality; or 4) deals with alien cultures. However, these elements are common in this sub-genre and uncommon outside it.

II. Research Strengths

The Rare Book and Special Collections Division maintains a list of notable U.S. and British authors whose first editions it collects. Fantasy and science fiction authors on this list are indicated by an asterisk (*) in Appendix E of this Collection Policy Statement. Also listed in Appendix E are authors who have won multiple awards in the genre or otherwise gained distinction in the field and whose works the Library attempts to collect.

In addition, the following Collection Overviews should be consulted for their application to fantasy and science fiction:

- American Literature
- American Popular Culture
- Anglophone/Commonwealth Literature

III. Collecting Policy

The Copyright Best Edition statement provides guidance for selecting materials for the fantasy and science fiction collections.

1. Print media: General

The genre of fantasy and science fiction is international in scope. The United States, however, is the world's most active publisher of fantasy and science fiction in terms both of periodicals and books. There are numerous serial titles devoted solely to this genre (e.g., Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction and Science Fiction Studies) and many more that publish only an occasional piece related to the genre (e.g., Omni). Fantasy and science fiction books typically fall into the categories of novels, short story collections by single authors, or anthologies. Anthologies may either reprint shorter fiction which has previously appeared in periodicals or are made up entirely of original fiction, usually with a particular

unifying theme (See Appendix B).

Outside the United States, the most active writers are from the United Kingdom and Canada. As these three countries for the most part share a common language and close cultural links, material published in one country is readily available and distributed in the others. Today, a North American writer's first edition is as likely to appear in the United Kingdom as a British writer's first edition is to be published in North America.

Since the genre of fantasy and science fiction is dominated by works published or distributed within the United States, the Library will acquire all important books and serials which document this important trend in the writing and publishing culture of the United States. In addition to literature within the field, the Library will attempt to acquire all important published reference works related to the field as well as any appropriate works of criticism.

The Library will endeavor to acquire a fully representative sampling of works by foreign authors, worldwide, who write in the genre, both in English and in other languages. Particular attention will be paid to those authors and works which have won national and international awards. Non-U.S. publications in the genre are primarily issued at the present time in such nations as France, Italy, Germany, Russia, and Japan, but collecting efforts will be aimed at acquiring all significant original fantasy and science fiction, wherever published and in whatever language.

2. Periodical publications

All serial publications within the genre of fantasy and science fiction are subject to the provisions of the Collections Policy Statement for Periodicals of General Content. U.S. imprints will be acquired by Copyright deposit whenever possible, and only by purchase if unavailable through Copyright deposit and if judged to be of sufficient importance to warrant expenditure of funds. The Library will also acquire a representative sampling of non-U.S. serial titles in the genre, on a worldwide basis.

A large number of periodicals within the genre are ephemeral in nature. Fantasy and science fiction fan magazines (fanzines) often take the form of newsletters on some particular topic within the field published by a few individuals or a small association. (Serial publications related to science fiction are frequently referred to as being "magazines," serials published by a major fantasy and science fiction publishing house with contributions from professionals in the field; "fanzines," serials published by non-professional fans but not through a major publisher in the field; or, "semi-prozines," serials published by fans who have become professionals, but also not through a major publisher.)

Other ephemeral publications include the program guides for major conventions which often contain short fiction and articles of interest or value in the field. Acquisition of this material is subject to provisions of the Collections Policy Statements for Societies and Associations and Ephemera. A brief listing of the most essential titles appears in Appendix C.

A growing number of ephemeral publications related to fantasy and science fiction is beginning to be available only through electronic media such as the Internet. Such publications create special problems of acquisition, long-term storage, and retrieval which are addressed in the Collections Policy Statement: Electronic Resources, Selection Guidelines.

3. Other print media

While most fantasy and science fiction is published in traditional serial or book formats (i.e., hardcover, trade paperbacks, or mass market), a substantial number of the works in the genre appear in other

related book formats (e.g., children's books, comic books, and graphic novels). Rather than receiving separate treatment, however, the acquisition of materials in these formats is considered to be subject to the provisions of the Collections Policy Statements for Children's Literature and Comics and Cartoons.

4. Non-print media

Fantasy and science fiction are not limited to the print medium. Although the mass-market paperback is the traditional vehicle for works of fantasy and science fiction, it is only one of several. Other popular formats include electronic media, motion pictures, video, and sound recordings. All materials collected in these formats will be subject to the guidelines established in the Collections Policy Statements Moving Image Materials and Sound Recordings and Radio.

IV. Acquisitions Sources: Current and Future

1. Print media: General

U. S. imprints will be acquired through Copyright deposit and the Cataloging-in-Publication (CIP) program and by purchase only if necessary and judged to be of sufficient importance. Non-U. S. original fantasy and science fiction will be acquired through exchange, gift, and purchase.

2. Periodical publications

Serial publications within the genre of fantasy and science fiction are subject to the provisions of the Collections Policy Statement for Periodicals of General Content. U.S. imprints will be acquired by Copyright deposit whenever possible and only by purchase if unavailable through Copyright deposit and judged to be of sufficient importance to warrant expenditure of funds. The Library will also acquire a representative, worldwide sampling of non-U.S. serial titles in the genre.

Acquisition of ephemeral fantasy and science fiction serial publications (discussed above under Collecting Policy) is subject to provisions of the Collections Policy Statements for Societies and Associations and Ephemera.

Acquisition of ephemeral, fantasy and science fiction serial publications issued only in electronic formats is addressed in the Collections Policy Statement: Electronic Resources, Selection Guidelines.

3. Other Print Media

Acquisition of science fiction and fantasy in other book formats is subject to provisions in the Collections Policy Statements for Children's Literature and Comics and Cartoons.

4. Non-print media

Although the mass-market paperback is the traditional publication vehicle for works of fantasy and science fiction, other popular formats include electronic media, motion pictures, video, and sound recordings. Acquisition of materials in these formats is subject to guidelines established in the statements for Moving Images and Sound Recordings.

V. Collecting Levels

Collecting intensity levels (0 through 5) to be followed in acquiring fantasy and science fiction materials are those set forth in the Collection Policy Statement for Literature and Language.

VI. Appendices

The purpose of the following appendices is to help identify which fantasy and science fiction materials should be collected by the Library. These appendices identify awards, anthologies, and related publications in the field, and they should be used as guidelines for acquisitions. The appendices should be reviewed every three years.

APPENDIX A: Awards (updated 7/08)

The Library attempts to collect all works of fantasy and science fiction that have won or been nominated for the following major awards:

Hugo (awarded by the World Science Fiction Convention)
Nebula (awarded by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America)
World Fantasy or Howard (awarded by the World Fantasy Convention)
John W. Campbell, Jr. (awarded by a panel of science fiction writers)
Philip K. Dick (awarded by the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society)
Bram Stoker Awards (Horror Writers Association)
James Tiptree, Jr. (awarded by the Wisconsin Science Fiction Convention)

Mythopoeic Awards (Mythopoeic Society)

The Library should attempt to collect all the works of those authors writing within the genre who have won one or more of the above-mentioned awards on three or more occasions (see Appendix E).

APPENDIX B: Anthologies (updated 7/08)

The Library collects the following anthologies of fantasy and science fiction which normally appear as annual publications:

The Year's Best Science Fiction
The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror
Nebula Awards
The Year's Best Horror Stories
Isaac Asimov Presents the Great SF Stories
The Hugo Winners
Universe
Full Spectrum

While the above-listed anthologies usually reprint previously published stories, the Library should also collect irregular and one-time anthologies of original (previously unpublished) stories of fantasy and science fiction.

APPENDIX C: Related Publications (updated 7/08)

The Library collects the following related publications (fanzines, program guides, etc.) which are essential to documenting important elements of the genre of fantasy and science fiction:

WorldCon Program Guide (souvenir book)
ReaderCon Program Guide (souvenir book)
World Fantasy Program Guide (souvenir book)
Mimosa (fanzine)

World Horror Convention (souvenir book)

Traditional periodical publications in the genre (as well as the so-called "semi-prozines" such as Locus) will be subject to the guidelines established in Collections Policy Statement for Periodicals of General Content. Other related publications in the genre will be subject to the guidelines established in Collections Policy Statements for Ephemera and Societies and Associations.

APPENDIX D: Moving image and sound recording media (updated 7/08)

The Library collects representative works in the moving image and sound recording media marketed as fantasy and science fiction. These materials should be collected in accordance with the provisions established in Collections Policy Statements for Moving Images and Sound Recordings. When and where possible, an attempt should also be made to collect related shooting scripts, press packets, and souvenir books. The types of materials which should be collected include:

Motion pictures

All U.S.-produced films in the genre

A representative sampling of foreign films in the genre

Television

Star Trek

Star Trek: The Next Generation

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

Star Trek: Voyager

Dr. Who (BBC)

Blake's 7 (BBC)

Babylon 5

Hercules

X-Files

Radio

Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (BBC)

Star Wars

Sound Recordings

A depository collection of the Science Fiction Oral History Association

APPENDIX E: Authors list (updated 7/08)

The Library attempts to collect all the works by the following authors who have won multiple awards within the genre or have otherwise achieved distinction in the field: Authors whose names are preceded by an asterisk (*) are also listed in the "First Editions Authors List" prepared by the Rare Book and Special Collections Division, February 1995.

Aldiss, Brian

Anderson, Poul

*Asimov, Isaac

Ballard, J.G.

Bear, Greg

Bester, Alfred

Bishop, Michael

Bisson, Terry
Blish, James
*Bradbury, Ray
Bradley, Marion Zimmer
Brin, David
Brown, Fredric
Brunner, John
Bryant, Edward
Budrys, Algis
Bujold, Lois McMaster
Burroughs, Edgar Rice
*Butler, Octavia
Cadigan, Pat
*Card, Orson Scott
Charnas, Suzy McKee
*Cherryh, C.J.
Clarke, Arthur C.
Clement, Hal
*Crowley, John
Dann, Jack
Davidson, Avram
de Camp, L. Sprague
del Rey, Lester
*Delany, Samuel R.
Dick, Philip K.
Dickson, Gordon R. Disch, Thomas
Dozois, Gardner
Effinger, George Alec
Ellison, Harlan
*Farmer, Philip Jose
Gerrold, David
*Gibson, William
Haldeman, Joe
*Heinlein, Robert A.
Herbert, Frank
Jordan, Robert
*King, Stephen
Knight, Damon
Koontz, Dean R.
Kornbluth, C.M.
Kress, Nancy
Lafferty, R.A.
*Le Guin, Ursula K.
Leiber, Fritz
Leinster, Murray
Lem, Stanislaw
Lovecraft, H.P.
Martin, George R.R.
May, Julian

McCaffrey, Anne
*MacAvoy, R.A.
McIntyre, Vonda
Miller, Walter, Jr.
Morrow, James
Murphy, Pat
*Niven, Larry
Norton, Andre Pohl, Frederik
Pournelle, Jerry
Powers, Tim
Resnick, Mike Rice, Anne
Robinson, Kim Stanley
Russ, Joanna
Sheckley, Robert
Sheffield, Charles
Shepard, Lucius
Silverberg, Robert
Simak, Clifford
Simmons, Dan
Smith, Cordwainer
Spinrad, Norman
Sterling, Bruce
Stephenson, Neal
Strugatsky, Arkady and Boris
Sturgeon, Theodore
Swanwick, Michael
Tepper, Sherri
Tiptree, James, Jr.
Tolkien, J.R.R.
Turtledove, Harry
Van Vogt, A.E.
Varley, John
Vinge, Joan
Vinge, Vernor
Waldrop, Howard
Wilhelm, Kate
Willis, Connie
Wolfe, Gene
*Zelazny, Roger

Revised by the Humanities and Social Sciences Division, November 2008.