2003

Wandering the Web -- Selected Annotated Web Bibliography of Science Fiction and Fantasy Sites

Roxanne Myers Spencer
Western Kentucky University

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Spencer, Roxanne Myers (2003) "Wandering the Web -- Selected Annotated Web Bibliography of Science Fiction and Fantasy Sites," Against the Grain: Vol. 15: Iss. 5, Article 36.
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4184

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
Random Sites for Sci-Fi Fans


Authors, aliens, movies, games, and genres—these are a few of the almost 6,000 links provided by this science fiction-fantasy megaguide. This site helpfully annotates the categories of links, such as designing genres by the link “If you like this then you'll like that,” which features books by category, and, as it is referred to by the editor, “sub-genre category.” Helpful hints include regurgitating writers’ memories by book cover design. More than twenty columns of fiction are listed, which should make even the most persnickety librarian or English teacher happy. This Website is an excellent resource for the genre, although a drawback, common to many such megasites, is that site updates are infrequent and quickly out-of-date.

2) Famous Science Fiction/Fantasy Authors — http://www.adherent.com/adh sf.html

This is an interesting Website devoted to listing famous and influential science fiction/fantasy writers, with brief mentions of their most popular works. The authors of the Website are clever in stating that literary merit is a secondary consideration after fame and influence. An interesting conceit of the list is that the author's religious affiliations are noted in the annotated tables. The parent site, http://www.adherent.com, claims to be “an Internet initiative and is not affiliated with any religious, political, educational, or commercial organization.” Adherent.com is the second most frequently visited general religion site on the Internet.” A color code clue the viewer into titles that have won prestigious book awards for the genre, such as the Hugo, Nebula, Locus, or World Fantasy Awards. A link to science fiction/fantasy titles with religious references makes for interesting book club discussions, particularly for church youth groups seeking innovative topics to lure teen readers. This Website presents a unique approach with a well-researched list of popular science fiction-fantasy authors and their best-known titles.

3) Science Fiction and Fantasy World — http://www.sfworld.com/

Searching this site could become a secondary occupation: Science Fiction and Fantasy World boasts “more than 10,000 pages of SF and Fantasy related content.” In addition to the usual discussions, author profiles, and book reviews of the genre, the site features books synopses, related poetry, interviews, and an art gallery. Visitors can vote on their favorite titles, and a monthly fantasy e-zine is available by email subscription to site members. The Website editors keep up with science fiction-fantasy genre news and a comprehensive backfile of news items should keep die-hard fans in the know on their favorite authors. The art gallery is a plus for many fans, and includes very brief descriptions of the works on display. An About/Staff page provides brief bios of the international editors of this comprehensive site. Minimal descriptions of each section’s contents may make navigation of this site a little frustrating for newcomers to these pages.

4) Baen Books — http://www.baen.com

To meet the needs of a highly cyber-literate audience, Baen Books, publisher of such well-known science fiction/fantasy writers as Lois McMaster Bujold and Piers Anthony, has created a Website with “added value” (which so many organizations scrambled to provide in the early days of commercial Websites). The WebBoard offers viewers a chance to discuss dozens of topics from manuscript postings for consideration to a forum for “Blazers: Where we put hot heads to thrash out their differences,” to more traditional discussions of favorite authors, plots, and characters. The publisher, Jim Baen, weighs in on the WebBoard, too. A sure draw is the Baen Free Library, which provides, free, “with no strings attached” full titles for download in a variety of formats. And these titles are not straight out of the slush pile, either. Consider Mercedes Lackey’s狄dier Paï恐 or Larry Niven’s Fallen Angels. All in all, science fiction-fantasy fans will find this a useful and entertaining site.

5) SFF Net — http://www.sff.net

SFF Net has the distinction of being the official home of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, the Horror Writers Association, and the World Fantasy Convention. Adroit fans will appreciate the thousands of author pages and several membership levels to the site for fans, professionals, and commercial vendors. The Personal Domain membership includes the use of virtual domains and unlimited email aliases among the discussion topics are writing, writing workshops, self-publication, and suggested books for continued on page 101
Wandering the Web
from page 100
writers. The links include literary agents, professional organizations, and a list of genre publishers. Overall, a well-designed, easily navigated site with much to offer the fan of these genres.

Since July 1997, the SF Site editors have posted book reviews, editorials, interviews, excerpts, reading lists, updated twice monthly. Links to fan tribute sites, genre conventions, related media events, and print and online publications, are among the other easily navigated offerings on this well-designed site. Author photos and interviews with thumbnail reviews make picking and what to read first a delightful chore. Home to such notable author Websites as Charles De Lint, Harlan Ellison, and Stephen King, newcomers to the site will know they are truly in the fantastic kingdom, where all inhabitants hold forth in the royal court of the science fiction/fantasy genre.

The Website for the cable TV station the SciFi Channel is more than a sophisticated cyber program guide. The Science Fiction Weekly newsletter, geared toward young adults, offers reviews of new releases and classics; it boasts a genre-related site of the week, games, and other "cool stuff," which feature reviews of the latest electronic toy. SciFi Wire reports the latest goings-on in the media and the bulletin board (BBBoard) offers topics of discussion from movies to books to authors to "Left Field" topics such as "Gender and SciFi," "Science and Culture," "SciFi," "Oh, and if you aren't hip to the latest Stargate technology or Firefly escapades, let the complete series' episode guides and introductions keep you on the cutting edge.

Selected Science Fiction/Fantasy Bibliography Sites
8) The Science Fiction and Fantasy Book List Site — http://www.sffbooklist.co.uk/
This is a simply designed but large bibliography of more than 4,000 science fiction and fantasy authors and titles. The database has links to existing official and fan sites for favorite authors and is updated monthly. Simple alphabetic link arrangement makes the site easy to use.

9) Fantastic Fiction — http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/
The database lists more than 3,000 science fiction, fantasy, and horror authors and titles. Search functions are slightly more sophisticated than the Science Fiction and Fantasy Book List Site above. Users can search titles or authors alphabetically or by search box. Price comparisons, cover art, texts, and brief author bios make this site worthwhile.

10) Science Fiction and Fantasy for Children: An Annotated Bibliography for Educators — http://dblit.lib.uoguelph.ca/SFFbib/index.htm
Created by Linda Day at the University of Guelph, Canada, this is a useful, if somewhat limited, tool for educators and young readers of the genres. The Search function is sophisticated in that the Help function provides users with good search tools. The flaw in this well-annotated collection is that there is no way to view the contents of the database other than using the Search function—a not uncommon flaw in some Internet search technology.

Selected Children's Science Fiction and Fantasy Authors Websites
This deliciously illustrated Website contains an encyclopedia of Redwall, crossword puzzles, an online gift shop, interviews with the author, and a gallery of sumptuous illustrations from novels. The excellent navigation will make this site a quick Favorites link for fans and newcomers alike.

Renowned and beloved, Jane Yolen is to fantasy literature for children what A. A. Milne is to honey pots and bears. Yolen's site is a treasure trove of information for teachers, would be writers, and fans of her many books. After twenty-five years of classroom visits, Yolen has retired from her role as visiting author, but she is still doing the convention and lecture circuit in the U.S. and abroad. Popular titles include Sword in the White Fang, King of the Ways, and the Tartan Magic Book series.

The author of the ever-popular futuristic novels The Giver, and Gathering Blue, is also known for the zany Anastasia series, starring Anastasia Krupnik, whom we meet at the tender age of ten (and who, in the inevitable way of fiction, has, since 1979, only aged three years!), and Caroline and J.P. Tate, siblings who bicker their way from New York City to Iowa and right into readers' hearts.

WEBWORTHY

Column Editor: Pamela M. Rose, M.L.S. (Web Services & Library Promotion Coordinator, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo) <pmrose@buffalo.edu> wings.buffalo.edu/~pmrose

Webworthy has reviewed 300 Websites to date! Websites selected for broad appeal, depth of information, functionality and ease of access. Sites are organized by broad subject area and are visited just prior to publication. Please let the editor know of sites that are not accessible. Comments and suggestions welcome to Pamela M. Rose, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo, 3435 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14214-2002; 716-829-3900 x129; <pmrose@buffalo.edu>. Unless otherwise noted in square brackets following the description, Internet addresses were published in Science's NetWatch column.

History of Medicine

"As it is no easy matter to root out prejudices...it became requisite to exhibit a full and impartial view of what had hitherto been published..." So notes James Lind in his 1753 work Treatise of the Scurvy. Although Lind is best noted for establishing lemons and oranges as remedies for scurvy, his acute recognition of the need for fair tests that weigh all pertinent evidence and account for chance and bias are celebrated on The James Lind Library created by the Library and Information Services Department of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. In addition to images of each page of Lind's landmark treatise, readers can explore the history of fair tests through book excerpts, papers, biographies, and expert commentary. — http://www.jameslindlibrary.org/

Reference

Everything you always wanted to know (and then some!) about everything—or so it may appear! Wikipedia is an ambitious "people's encyclopedia" project with content in over forty languages, developed by everyone for everyone. Anyone can contribute an article on any topic to the Website, and anyone else can edit any page. Talk about peer review—easily bruised egos need not apply! With over 100,000 articles already available, the site is growing by more than 300 articles per day with no signs of slowing down. There is no formal executive committee overseeing the project, just a server, someone who pays the bills, and a structure in place for the world to contribute their own individual knowledge to the site in their own language, expert or not. Much of the strength of this resource comes from the open structure, but alas so does much of its weakness. A number of features were disabled because use slowed the server down to a crawl. Caveat emptor! It is a fascinating browse, nonetheless, and has great potential. — http://www.wikipedia.com

<http://www.against-the-grain.com> 101

Against the Grain / November 2003