

SFRA Review
Fiction Review Guidelines

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These are the guidelines for fiction reviews for *SFRA Review*, current as of August 2019. Past issues of the *Review* are available at <https://sfra.wildapricot.org/SFRA-Review>.

The *Review* regularly solicits reviews through the SFRA mailing list and through SFRA's social media platforms. Please do not submit unsolicited reviews. Any requests or suggestions of fiction for review should be made directly to the fiction review editor above. If you think you'd be a good reviewer for a particular text, send an email stating your interest as well as why you'd be the best choice to review it, and we'll send you the book for review along with a deadline.

All commissioned reviews should follow basic MLA Guidelines including: 1-inch margins, double-spaced text, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, and appropriate referencing.

In addition, all commissioned reviews should contain the following information at the top of the first page:

- Review text's title in bold (centered)
- Reviewer's name as it should appear in print (centered)
- Complete citation of the review text as per MLA guidelines (left justified)
 - Per examples below, please include the following, each separated by a period:
Format (Hardcover, Paperback, Ebook), page count, price, ISBN.

Examples:

The Best of R.A. Lafferty

Jane Doe

R.A. Lafferty. *The Best of R.A. Lafferty*. Introduction by Neil Gaiman, Gollancz, 2019. SF Masterworks. Paperback. 464 pg. \$16.99. ISBN 9781473213449.

The Stone Sky

Janine Doe

N.K. Jemisin. *The Stone Sky*. Orbit, 2017. Broken Earth Trilogy 3. Paperback. 464 pg. \$16.99. ISBN 9780316229241.

Content

The *Review*'s guidelines for fiction review writers are an extension of the SFRA's mission, which is to encourage scholarship and further excellence in education. Therefore, reviewers should construct their reviews along these lines. The *Review* is not seeking reviews that focus on aesthetics, popularity, or mass appeal—except insofar as they are important to analysis. Reviews should demonstrate the ways that the text is grounded in the history of science fiction, is related to

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the history of science fiction as a genre, contributes to the intellectual and philosophical concerns of science fiction, and offers an educational opportunity.

Basic Review Structure

1. **Description:** Provide a brief description of the text. Note, however, that although the review should provide this brief synopsis, its focus should be the larger intellectual questions and concerns raised.
2. **Contextualization:** Provide brief context for the text. Some questions that might be pertinent to are: How does the text fit into the history of the genre? In what ways does it advance or alter the genre? How does it fit into generic SF classifications, if at all? What SF traditions, themes, and tropes does it draw on? In what ways does it extend or alter them?
3. **Assessment:** Provide an assessment of the text's scholarly or academic potential. Consider the following questions: What issues does the text raise in terms of content and form? In what ways might the text be used in a classroom? In conjunction with what other texts? What kinds of scholarly, academic, or pedagogical approaches might be useful? What kinds of classroom activities or exercises might be useful?

Length

There are three possible lengths for reviews:

1. *Short Review* – This type of review should be between 750 and 1,000 words and should give a scholarly overview of the reviewed item. It should aim to briefly explain plot and characters and how they relate to science/speculative fiction concerns, and propose possible topics, themes, or other points of interest (see above questions).
2. *Review Essay* – This type of review should be between 1,500 and 2,000 words long and should give a more detailed and in-depth analysis of the reviewed item. Time should not be spent summarizing the plot or describing the characters in minute detail, except when it is in service of the analysis being conducted. This format favors joint reviews (between two reviewers) and comparative/contrastive reviews (between two or more items) and should aim to open discussion on a more specific topic than merely offer a cursory overview.
3. *Other* – Longer reviews, round table discussions, and other alternative formats are welcome but should be discussed with the editor before submission.