



Bridges to Science Fiction (Alternatives)

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Ten new critical essays written for presentation at the first Eaton Conference on Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature held 24–25 February 1979, at the University of California, Riverside.

While critical discussion of science fiction has become increasingly sophisticated during the past decade, there remains a tendency among some teachers and readers to consider science fiction as an independent phenomenon that exists unconnected to the mainstream of our cultural inheritance. These essays—by Harry Levin, Irving Babbitt Professor of Comparative Literature at Harvard University; Kent T. Kraft, Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Georgia, Athens; Stephen Potts, writer and instructor at San Diego State University; Gregory Benford, writer and Associate Professor of Physics at the University of California, Irvine; Robert Hunt, an editor at Glencoe Publishing; Eric S. Rabkin, Professor of English at the University of Michigan; Patrick Parrinder, instructor at the University of Reading, England; Thomas Keeling, Lecturer in English at the University of California, Los Angeles; Carl D. Malmgren, instructor at the University of Oregon, Eugene; and Thomas Hanzo, Professor of English and Chairman of the department at the University of California, Davis—suggest the connections that exist between science fiction and other aspects of Western cultural tradition.

Ranging in interest from the specifically philosophical to the specifically literary, the essays relate science fiction to such topics as medieval cosmological discourse, classical empirical philosophy, fairy tale, epic, and Gothic fiction. Emerging from the volume as a whole are both a coherent view of science fiction as a genre and a heightened sense of its complex relation to our cultural heritage.

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