



Writing Science Fiction & Fantasy (Writing Series)

Crawford Kilian

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Whether you are new to the genre or looking for inspiration, this book provides the tools you need to succeed.

Develop believable fantasy worlds

Challenge your readers' imaginations

Practical techniques you can apply today

Written by a successful author of SF and fantasy novels

Master the craft of magical worlds

Are you struggling to get started on your science fiction or fantasy novel? Stuck at chapter two or need a fresh approach? Find new direction and inspiration with this unique guide to creating original and convincing stories. Written by a successful author of more than ten science fiction and fantasy novels, *Writing Science and Fantasy* takes an in-depth look at these two best-selling genres. Kilian delves into the origins and conventions of science fiction and fantasy and goes over the many subgenres, including nanotechnology, space opera, and sword and sorcery. He forces you to ask yourself crucial questions about your own novel, and also offers practical advice on how to prepare and market your manuscript to publishers, editors, and agents. With this book as a guide, both novice and experienced writers can learn how to make their work both a literary and financial success. Learn about:

Constructing a scene

Showing versus telling

Avoiding clichés

Developing good writing and research habits

Creating plausible fantasy worlds

Using symbolism and imagery effectively

Highlights of the CD:

Ten steps for pre-editing

Exercises on character and dialogue

Scores of links to relevant websites

Writing Science Fiction & Fantasy (Writing Series) Details

Date : Published February 1st 2007 by Self-Counsel Press (first published December 3rd 2005)

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From Reader Review Writing Science Fiction & Fantasy (Writing Series) for online ebook

Riversue says

I was surprised at how much I enjoyed this. Full of useful information and weblinks. Some of the info may be a bit dated.

Sam says

This was a decent how-to book for writing Science Fiction and Fantasy books, but I feel like it was just a bit too basic. I guess at this point, being that I have grown up as a fan of genre books, I need something a bit more in-depth, particularly in regards to world building and such. This book is divided into three parts: Knowing Your Genre, The Craft of Writing SF&F, and Getting Published. A lot of what is said in each of the parts is stuff I have read from the how-to books, blogs, etc. of other writers and members of the writing/publishing industry. A disc is included with a wide number of links, posts, and templates to assist in the writing and publishing process. I do like the character resume template, though I have never used many of those details when writing about my own characters. So, a good how-to writing book, but it could have had more depth about the genres and the craft of writing in the genres.

Louis says

Having just come off reading another “how to” on “Writing Science Fiction & Fantasy” this is the better of the two. While this covered many of the similar topics as the other, Crawford Kilian covered the subject better taking the ideas a step or two farther out into deeper waters.

When they next come up on my stack of “to-read” books, I’ll be nicely primed to start the two I have on “Plot & Structure” and “Beginnings, Middles and Ends” to add to my understanding.

I’m finding that as I read my current novel I’m a bit more aware now of what the author is doing in laying out his story; the little trials for the characters and the leisurely “laying down” of the elements that will make up the larger task that they will be set on.

I feel as if I’ve gone from enjoying a painting to now starting to peer in closer to see the individual brush strokes. Amazed at the talent that one must have to take all those small bits and combine them “just so” that one is left with a creative work.

Catherine Fitzsimmons says

This was a very fast read; I wouldn’t be surprised if it was 40,000 words or less. Not a lot of time to explain, and not necessarily a lot explained, either. The book didn’t even seem to address all the topics mentioned on

the cover of the book, particularly, "Learn how to get the science and the magic right," which was addressed without offering any solutions or even hints for accomplishing it. There were also sections that didn't quite fit the topic - especially given how little information there was on the title subject - such as grammar and information on getting published through a trade publisher. As well, there was a bit of something that bugs me with how-to books or instruction in general, numerous discussions of what the author did in his own work that doesn't really instruct a reader in a way that's useful for their own purpose.

That all said, the length of this book was its advantage, as I didn't feel cheated or begrudged the book for its shortcomings because it was such a quick read. And there were a few helpful tips that are helpful reminders for aspiring authors. It isn't something I'd buy, nor is it necessarily something worth tracking down, but it wasn't time poorly spent.

Nathan says

there's a lot of useful stuff here, so much that it makes the thought of writing intimidating. I read that Robert B. Parker wrote 10 pages a day and never knew where the story was going until he was finished. this book is the total opposite, it wants you to put all your scenes on cue cards and order them by importance to the story. My head is very full.

D. Rae says

I really enjoyed this. It is a concise and helpful guide to writing spec fiction without a lot of filler and nonsense thrown in to pad it.

I would really like to see an updated edition that would include a chapter on self-publishing.

I highly recommend this book for anyone beginning, or even considering, a spec fiction writing career.

Marlee says

Good for someone who hasn't read hundreds of novels and followed many authors on Twitter, Facebook, etc.

Pioden says

I got several good things from this, ideas to help make writing a less painful process. A realistic view of creating believable science fiction, full of 'how to's', w/out stifling the creativity.

James says

Decent but not a standout; it's about two thirds basic writing (both the mechanics and the process of dealing with publishers and agents) and a third about SF&F specifically. If you've already gone through other books on writing in these fields, you've probably seen the same points made more than once. With that said, this book is clear and well structured, flows nicely, and is a quick, encouraging read.

Rebecca says

This really focused more on general writing skills than issues specific to the genres.

B.B. Morgan says

Alright, but very surface level at the writing part. It's among those writing book that advertise that if a writer does these magic steps, instant bestseller! I've read better.

Joseph says

This book has some strengths and would be useful as a starting point. I disagree with some parts, especially regarding some of the discussion of genre. There are some useful sections, but there are better choices for books that convey the same material. As far as more advanced techniques, I would seek that information elsewhere.

Tee Jay says

I mentioned this briefly in one of my notes during my reading of this book, and I'll mention it again: Kudos to the author for mentioning Northrop Frye, not only in the introduction, but also repeatedly throughout the text. I am a big Northrop Frye fan, a fan of his ideas and his contribution to literary theory and criticism. When Crawford Killian mentions Frye's theory that posits there is an underlying mythology in all literature and then puts this theory in the context of writing science fiction and fantasy, well that gives the topic of science fiction and fantasy writing (and by extension his book) on a whole new level authority.

It is obvious that Crawford Killian takes the topic of writing science fiction and fantasy very seriously, as evidenced by this advanced and well thought out book. Topics as diverse as "Creating Worlds" to "Plotting" to "Selling Your Manuscript," and all points in between, will guide the novice science fiction writer from initial story inklings to completed manuscript.

What is also great about *Writing Science Fiction & Fantasy* is how it is laid out clearly and concisely. It will be easy for any reader of this book to make detailed notes, and even detailed spreadsheets, using this book as a foundation to keep track of thoughts and ideas. There is even a CD-Rom included with this book that includes numerous documents, the most notable being a "Character Resume" that writers can use to literally flesh out all the characters they will need for a story. There are also two separate dialogue exercise documents, also helpful to writers to master the art of writing fitting dialogue for any scene. The most selling feature of *Writing Science Fiction & Fantasy*, however, is its re-readability: there is a wealth of useful

information that just can't be absorbed in one reading. Thus, for any aspiring science fiction and/or fantasy out there, this is a worthwhile addition to the reference book shelf.

Kevin Greenlee says

I didn't find this book very enlightening. It wasn't bad, but everything it was doing, Orson Scott Card's book does better. I'm not going to rate this book, however, because I didn't finish it.

Joyce Hertzoff says

Good text for the course I took. The lessons in the book tended to be basic ones needed by anyone who writes science fiction and fantasy, as I do. They led to good discussions in the online classroom. They also gave me some ideas of how to improve at least one of the stories I'm working on. This is a book that should be updated/revised every few years because the trends in writing, publishing and marketing are changing at a rapid rate. I had the second edition, and some of the material was already out of date.
