Australian Science Fiction: As Showcased by Anthologies of Australian SF Short Stories

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An apparently convenient way of looking at Australian science fiction is to study the contents of those anthologies which explicitly state in their titles, subtitles or editor's introductions that they are collections of 'Australian sf.' Indeed, in all good logic, these should offer ready-made corpuses gathering texts which are both 'Australian' and of 'science fiction.' Things however, are never quite so simple.

The first problem involves the sheer scope of what is available. Analysing Australian science fiction in this way implies analysing 38 anthologies and covering roughly 50 years of creative writing. This represents, on average, one anthology for every 18 months over a period of half a century. Anyone who thought that Australian science fiction was only a 'marginal' genre within Australian literature as a whole would quickly find how mistaken they were.

The second problem concerns the acronym 'sf' and the adjective 'Australian' in the titles, subtitles or editor's introductions of these anthologies, which are not so much the common denominator of all of these texts as what distinguishes them from one another. For some anthologies, the letters sf, for example, do stand for 'science fiction.' In others, they are used to signify the more coverall term of 'speculative fiction.' At other moments still, the acronym is used to suggest 'science fantasy.' This means that 'sf,' in Australia at least, can cover just about everything from poetry about science to tales of sword and sorcery.[1] The term 'Australian,' as it is used in these same titles, subtitles and editor's introductions, is just as confusing. For some editors, 'Australian sf' means sf written by people born in Australia whether they live in Australia or not. Sometimes it signifies written by people having spent at least a few years in Australia regardless of where they are now living or where they were born. For some, stretching the term Australian to its limits, 'Australian sf' means sf written by people born abroad, living abroad but having chosen to publish their stories first in Australia rather than in the UK or US.

In short, the terms 'Australian' and 'sf', in Australia, encompass a large and somewhat confusing assortment of tales of non-mimetic fiction written by people from all over the world. This paper will nonetheless try to unravel the meandering course of the development of the concept of 'Australian sf' through an analysis of all of these sometimes very different collections. This should enable a better understanding of how Australian science fiction was created, how it was nurtured and how it has developed with time.

1. 'Australian sf': a genre first defined in the late 1960s

According to Van Ikin (1979), the birth of Australian science fiction can be pinpointed to two early anthologies published by the Sydney-based editors Angus and Robertson. These were *The Pacific Book of Australian Science Fiction* (1968) and *The Second Pacific Book of Science Fiction* (1971). 'Here were truly "Australian" sf writers' wrote Ikin. The late George Turner too, during his address at the 1981 HRC Conference, considered that not only was *The Pacific Book of Australian Science Fiction* the first anthology of its kind in Australia it was, above all, 'the first halfway decent anthology of Australian science fiction' (1983).

Indeed, both these early anthologies were edited and introduced by the Australian journalist and science fiction writer John Baxter. For Baxter, what defined his collections of 'Australian science fiction' was the fact that though some stories could be tagged as 'fantasy' and that 'some people would not even accept some of the stories to be 'sf of any sort at all'[2], all the stories published were: 'written by Australians' (Baxter *The Pacific Book*…, Introduction). For Baxter, because Australian sf (loosely defined) was written by Australian nationals it was clearly different from British or American sf. Because of this particular point of view, in his introduction to *The Second Pacific Book*, Baxter wrote: 'The sf in this anthology stands on its own two feet, ingenious and energetic stuff that can compete with any other country's. These fine stories are equal to anything done in the world today; equal – but different. And it's the difference that makes them worth collecting as Australian science fiction' (Baxter, *The Second Pacific Book*, Introduction). This 'difference' is unfortunately never explicitly stated but does seem to grind down to the singular ability of Australian sf to name as 'Australian sf' just about any non-mimetic text written by Australians. In exactly the same way, in *The Zeitgeist Machine* (1977), the third anthology published by the same publishers six years later with science fiction writer and critic Damien Broderick as editor, the only obvious, specifically common trait is again the wilful blurring of any divide between science fiction and fantasy and the consolidation of a solid divide between texts written by Australians and texts written by non-Australians. So for Broderick too, Australian sf could be defined as: 'stories of fantasy and science fiction by Australians' (Broderick, *The Zeitgeist Machine* 13), making the sole nationality of its authors the heart of the genre.

Beyond Tomorrow, *An anthology of Modern Science Fiction* (1976), edited by another Australian science fiction author and reviewer Lee Harding, was the first anthology to begin to see things in a less chauvinistic light. Unlike the Angus and Robertson anthologies, Harding's collections did not strive to isolate those texts written by Australians from texts written by authors from other countries but, on the contrary, published in equal proportions Australian authors alongside US and British names. The idea behind this editorial choice was that the creativity of Australian authors could, in this way, be made clearly apparent. This was a radically different vision of what Australian science fiction was all about and one that was to be taken up again by Harding in 1978 in his second anthology: *Rooms of Paradise* (1978). Again, in *Rooms of Paradise*, six of the twelve authors were Australians; the others were from the US, the UK or from Japan. As a result, both of Harding's efforts attempted to further Australian sf *not* by severing Australian authors from global sf production – but by setting Australian texts in competition with the rest of the world on what he saw as a global science fiction arena.

2. Nurturing the genre: State aid

Australian sf, however, has always been, at best, 'a shoestring affair' (Turner, 'Australian SF, 1950-1980' 8). This is because of the unfortunate circumstances (from an editorial point of view) of Australia's modest population: Australian sf just cannot compete against British or American science fiction without some sort of external help. As one editor clearly wrote: 'for an Australian sf book to be sold at the same price as a US or UK sf book it had to be supported by the government or be part of a print run of at least 40,000. [… In Australia] only roughly 4,000 books or so could be sold of a single title' (Collins, *Alien Worlds* 5). It was thus to sustain the very existence of Australian sf that the Australian federal government quickly stepped in and began to play an essential role in the genre's development. This it did in three simultaneous directions: it stimulated authorial activity through the subsidising of science fiction workshops, it supported editorial activity and it encouraged editorial plurality in the field.

Indeed, in 1975, the recently formed Australia Council financed two new anthologies of Australian sf. These were: *The Altered 1* in 1976 and *View from the Edge* in 1977. *The Altered 1*, subtitled *an sf anthology,* was also edited by Lee Harding and was the recording of a writer's workshop initiated by the North American sf author Ursula K. LeGuin. As Harding wrote, the major purpose of the workshop was explicitly: 'to demonstrate how creativity can be encouraged and fostered under special conditions' (Harding, *The Altered*, editor's note). In 1977, another sf workshop at Monash University was similarly financed. The short stories produced on this occasion were edited by science fiction writer and critic George Turner. In his editor's note, Turner wrote: 'The Literature Board's backing of conventions, publishers, and writers has been vital to the emergence of a viable Australian science fiction' (Turner, *The View from the Edge* 9). As a result, the Australian government, by financially supporting sf workshops in Australia, was actively stimulating sf activity. What is striking, however, is that the collections of Australian sf produced by both these government-supported workshops avowedly lack a marked Australian denominator. Perhaps this is due to Ursula K. LeGuin's particularly international outlook or to the fact that Turner, as he explains in the foreword of *View from the Edge*, was not looking for 'an Australian-oriented style, but a personally oriented style' (7). Either way, judging by these two further productions of 'Australian sf' there is again no obvious essential Australianity, practically no sense of place at all in Australian sf production but, just as in all science fiction, a liberation from the referential world of their day and age into the more exotic worlds of dream and desire (Kraitsowits 2007).

Regardless of these ambiguous results, the political will to stimulate the production of science fiction literature in Australia was nonetheless maintained and gave birth to a series of joint ventures in the field of sf where public funds were used to support a budding editorial activity. The person to make the most of this was Paul Collins, a young and ambitious editor of seven Australian sf anthologies to this day. As proves the government seal apposed on their first pages, Collins' first five anthologies: *Envisaged Worlds* (1975), *Other Worlds* (1978), *Alien Worlds* (1979), *Distant Worlds* (1981) and *Frontier Worlds* (1983) were supported by the federal government of Australia. As written in the editorial introduction of *Envisaged Worlds*, Collins wanted to nurture Australian sf activity by publishing exclusively 'new' Australian texts (Collins, Introduction) and perhaps to prove that now that Australian sf was born, it was healthily sprouting new shoots … under the sheltering arm of the Arts Council. The result of this new effort still did not, however, reveal any distinctive trait of Australian sf but, on the contrary, continued to confuse any clear-cut definition of 'sf' and also brought about new

confusion as to what the word 'Australian' could mean. According to George Turner, though the stories within the first of Collins' Worlds series were 'original' in the sense that they had never been published before, they were only 'mostly' Australian-authored (Turner, 'Australian SF, 1950-1980' 8). Perhaps realising this himself, in the afterword of *Other Worlds* (1978) the second of Collins' anthologies, Collins admitted that in his second anthology of 'Australian Science Fiction' five overseas authors were in fact included.[3] By *Alien Worlds* (1979), the third of Collins' series, Collins was ready to admit in his very editorial introduction that: 'I have also published foreign authors ...who have sent their work here rather than to the conventional markets in their own countries' (Collins, Introduction). It thus seems, that according to Collins, the birth place, place of residence or nationality of the published authors, or the trace of a particular 'Australianity' about the texts published was of no real consequence when it came to Australian sf. All that really mattered was that the material gathered – a material that was perhaps all too scarce – had never been published before in a US or UK publication and that by accepting to be first published in Australia the authors were willing to uphold the still very obscure banner of 'Australian sf.' This original (and government-supported) editorial outlook did not, however, question the single, indisputable common trait of Australian sf so far: its fusion or confusion of science fiction and fantasy. For what all of Collins' anthologies do have in common with all the earlier anthologies showcasing Australian sf is that by using the label 'Australian sf,' known Australian fantasy writers,[4] could be placed alongside known science fiction writers. When Collins published his fourth anthology, *Distant Worlds* in 1981, he even openly presented his latest collection as: 'More original science fiction *and* fantasy.' In *Frontier Worlds* (1983), his fifth anthology, Bertram Chandler, who wrote the introduction, went as far as to claim that: 'no Science Fantasy (sic) anthology these days would be complete without at least one sword and sorcery story' (Collins 3), explicitly transforming the acronym sf into signifying the hybrid genre of 'science fantasy.'

Yet the Collins' anthologies were not the only Australian science fiction collections supported by the Australian Literature Board. Like Collins' anthologies, Rob Gerrand's *Transmutations, An Anthology of Australian Science Fiction Stories* (1979) also depended on federal support. In the editorial of the seventh issue of *Science Fiction, A Review of Speculative Fiction,* Van Ikin quotes a letter from George Turner who wrote:

> They [the Literature Board of the Australia Council] backed the publications of Paul Collins from the start, including the two novels he has recently published, also Rob Gerrand's anthology *Transmutations* [...] Norstrilia Press received funding [...] My last novel, *Vanglory,* was written on a Literature Board Grant. All the major sf workshops have been supported [...] All the overseas convention guests, from Ursula LeGuin onwards, have had their invitations made possible by Lit.Board money. (Van Ikin, editorial)

Indeed, after Rob Gerrand's *Transmutations* (1979)*, Dreamworks* (1981) by David King, *Urban Fantasies* (1985) by King & Russell Blackford and Damien Broderick's two further anthologies, *Strange Attractors: original Australian Speculative Fiction* (1985) and *Matilda at the Speed of Light* (1988), were also given federal financial aid. Consequently, except for the first three Angus and Robertson anthologies cited earlier, all the early collections of Australian sf practically owed their existence to the Arts Council.

3. Nurturing the genre: The role of academia

What is also interesting to note is that – beyond government support – in nearly all of the anthologies quoted so far, practically all the stories were written by writers holding other stakes in the field of Australian sf. *Dreamworks* by David King, *Urban Fantasies* by King & Russell Blackford, Damien Broderick's *Strange Attractors* and his *Matilda at the Speed of Light* are examples of anthologies that brought together all of Australia's small forces promoting science fiction literature. All four were 'assisted by the Literature Board of the Australia Council, the Federal Government's arts funding and advisory body' and nearly all the stories they included were 'coming from those writers who [were] critics themselves' (King, *Dreamworks* viii). Indeed, most of the authors, such as George Turner, Damien Broderick, Bruce Gillespie, Russell Blackford, Andrew Whitmore or Van Ikin (to name just a few) were writing sf criticism or non-SF articles in literary journals (or both) or were writing newspaper and fanzine reviews. As an author himself, King also added: 'It is my belief that such a critical ability is essential for the production of good writing' (viii). According to later anthologists, as of the 1970s, Australian science fiction writing was in fact 'essentially dominated by critics and academics' (Straham and Byrne, Vol. 1 xii). For the US sf writer George Hartwell: 'writer/critic or writer/editor/critic was the identifier for perhaps a majority of Australian sf writers until the 1990s' (Broderick, *Centaurus* 23-24).[5]

David King, George Turner, Damien Broderick, Russell Blackford, Paul Collins, Van Ikin and just about all the major authors of the day were thus not only writing sf, they were also editing anthologies themselves or publishing critical reviews of one another's works. Still today, in the latest anthology to date, five of the published authors are themselves editors of previous anthologies. Accordingly, it appears that in Australia there has always been an intimate link between creative writing and critical activity and that it is largely a self-pollinating milieu where Australian writers are edited and criticised by Australian critics who are Australian writers and editors themselves.

But the major role academia was to play in the establishment of Australian sf became quite clear in 1982 with Van Ikin's first historical anthology known as the *Portable Australian Science Fiction* (1982) published by the University of Queensland Press. This was a book-length overview of the development of Australian sf, comprising extracts from novels and short stories written between 1845 and 1979 and accompanied by a long introduction written by Van Ikin called 'The History of Australian Science Fiction.' What Ikin's anthology did was to give Australian science fiction a new depth. It gave Australian sf a history and not just a budding activity. For Ikin: 'Australian sf has mirrored the nation's apprehensive fascination with its own unexplored emptiness, and its fear of forfeiting its never too clear racial identity. If the nation's early sf reveals Australians to have been racist, sexist, and materialistic, it also reveals their more altruistic utopian aspirations, and the more recent offerings of Australian sf show that ignoble attitudes are receding' (Ikin, *Portable Australian Science Fiction* xxxvii). Concerning the acronym sf, however, Ikin felt it necessary to explain that he too had a 'relaxed approach to definition' (xi). According to Damien Broderick, Ikin's approach was so 'relaxed' that his anthology resembled 'a swag of futuristic, Lemurian, satirical and utopian tales from 1845 to 1947 [….] side by side with a selection of recent generic sf and fringe surreal fiction' (Broderick, *Centaurus* 10).

Nonetheless, Australian science fiction had reached, by the turn of the millennium, what was felt by Australian academia to be a form of maturity. A second historical anthology called *Strange Constellations: A History of Australian Science Fiction* (1999) was subsequently

edited by Van Ikin in collaboration with Russell Blackford and Sean McCullen in time for Australia's World Science Fiction Convention of 1999. As in Ikin's 1982 historical survey, it again segmented Australian sf into four main phases: 'The rise of traditional sf (1925-1959),' 'International recognition and the New Wave (1960-74),' 'Small presses and growing reputations (1975-1984),' and 'Serious recognition (1985-98).'

Beyond and in parallel to his purely historical overviews, Ikin continued to actively take part in the fabrication of Australian science fiction when he edited, with the University of Western Australia, two collections republishing texts of Australian sf having found prior success abroad. These 'best ofs' of the early 1990s were *Glass Reptile Breakout* (1990) and, (with co-editor and fellow writer and academic Terry Dowling), *Mortal Fire* (1993). Like the three seminal Angus and Robertson anthologies these collections isolated texts written by Australian authors and republished the best of them rather than simply privileging the mass production of 'new' material as had been done since. Indeed, too much production without the necessary quality control was considered by Ikin to be the 'menace from within' of Australian sf.[6] According to him, below average texts were being published simply because they had benefited from positive discrimination simply because they were 'Australian.' Consequently, *Glass Reptile Breakout* and *Mortal Fire* were both 'Best of Australian sf' collections: republications of selected texts and not just the publication of new texts for the sake of novelty. As usual, however, and as Ikin put it himself: 'Most of the stories are science fiction, some science fantasy, and one or two are (strictly speaking) fantasy; others blend elements of science fiction, science fantasy, or fantasy. The designation "sf", or the term "speculative fiction", is used to mask or elide these sub-divisions' (Ikin, *Glass Reptile Breakout* 5). Thus Ikin's anthologies renewed that early trend in Australian sf anthologies which was to seek out and compile quality non-mimetic texts written by Australians even if these had already been published abroad or were only vaguely science fictional.

4. Editorial conversion and recent trends

Surfing the wave of this renewed anthological trend came Collins' next two Worlds anthologies: *Metaworlds* (94) and *Fantastic Worlds* (98), which also converted to Ikin's point of view and dropped the usual editorial line of only publishing original texts. Indeed, after Ikin's invitation to weed the garden of Australian sf and to showcase only its best production, the number of 'best ofs' literally exploded. *Alien Shores, An Anthology of Australian Science Fiction* (1994) is typical of this period and editorial conversion: it was assisted by the Australia Council, it was edited by a UST lecturer and the stories are republished texts, previously printed in Australian or US magazines. Similarly converted was *Dreaming Down Under, Thirty-One Stories From the Wild Side of Australian Speculative Fiction* (1998), a 554-page anthology by Jack Dann and Janeen Webb which, according to Hartwell was: 'the biggest and most impressive collection of fantasy, sf, and horror yet done in Australia' (Broderick, *Centaurus* 25). More recently, its sequel, *Dreaming Again* (2008) has been published. Both these anthologies offer selections of reprints of science fiction, fantasy and horror referred to as 'speculative fiction,' 'wild-side fiction' or of 'dreaming,' in reference to those oldest of non-mimetic stories native to Australia. In 1999, Damien Broderick also produced *Centaurus,* subtitled *The Best of Australian SF*. What makes this anthology particularly 'Australian,' however, still remains obscure since in its introduction, David G. Hartwell, the New York sf writer, notes: 'As an outside observer, does there seem to me to be anything essentially Australian about Australian science fiction, any special aesthetic that separates it from literary production in other geographic locations? Basically, no...' (Broderick, *Centaurus* 5). In 2004, Rob Gerrand edited the thickest 'best of' anthology of

them all *The Best Australian Science Fiction Writing: a Fifty Year Collection*. Here again, as in all the earlier anthologies all the way to the most recent, the only Australian essence is in the title rather than in the book and the anthology's hard science fiction is diluted in a magma of 'what ifs?,' fantasy and horror, sociological or anthropological stories, which include completely imagined other worlds or cultures, as well as allegories and magic realism. Moreover, as Gerrand himself writes in the introduction to his compilation: 'Science fiction is a global literature: it is usually irrelevant where the writer hails from.'

Yet the explosion of so-called 'Australian sf' was such that by the turn of the century the 'best ofs' were now attempting to go yearly. With the numerous and sometimes mammoth collections of previously published material came three 'best of the year' anthologies. These were *The Year's Best Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy vol 1* (1997) and *The Year's Best Australian SF and Fantasy vol 2 (1998)* by Jonathan Strahan and Jeremy G. Byrne, and Bill Congreve and Michelle Marquardt's *The Year's Best Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy* (2005). In these anthologies the words 'science fiction' of the title are systematically accompanied by that of 'fantasy' and the vaguer term of 'Australian speculative fiction' is clearly preferred in the editors' introductions as this is understood to cover science fiction, horror, fantasy, literatures of ideas and any kind of 'slipstream' literature as opposed to 'mainstream' mimetic literature written by Australian residents (Congreve 12-13).

This has today brought about a new, perhaps still tentative tendency within the 'small pond' (Strahan and Byrne, Vol. 2 xi) of Australian science fiction: that of the break-up and redefinition of what has become a somewhat monolithic patchwork of non-mimetic texts written by people living or having lived in Australia or even having been written by overseas writers who have accepted to publish their texts in Australia first rather than in the US or the UK. Editors of Australian sf today no longer seem forced to publish just any story that more or less meets the grade for lack of quality material. On the contrary, it has now become possible for them to refine their choices: to separate the sheep from the goats and to attempt to define Australian sf from within.

The first to have discreetly launched a formal partition within the genre was again Van Ikin, with his anthology *Glass Reptile Breakout.* Indeed, *Glass Reptile Breakout* was already more than just Australian sf; it was the first anthology of 'Western Australian sf.' It clearly advertised, on its back cover that the stories within, more than just 'Australian' were largely written by 'Western Australians.' In much the same way, *Encounters, An Anthology of Australian Speculative Fiction* (2004) by Maxine McArthur and Donna Maree Hanson was not an instance of national science fiction but science fiction supported by an ACT grant. Besides this discreet reinforcing of a supposed whole through the presentation of smaller regional segments, other parts of the broader picture of Australian science fiction were also being promoted separately. In 1995 Lucy Sussex and Judith Buckrich edited an anthology named *She's Fantastical: The First Anthology of Australian Women's Speculative Fiction, Magic Realism and Fantasy.*[7] In 1999, Ion Newcome – the editor of an Australian based webzine – edited an anthology of '*short* short' Australian sf called *Antipodean SF 1*. It offered a selection of science fiction stories which excluded any text over 500 words. An effort was also made to refine the coverall term of 'sf' with anthologies such as Cat Sparks' *Agog!*, which in 2004, collected 'new Australian speculative fiction' in one anthology, reserving others for texts more specifically catalogued as 'fantasy' or 'horror.' Like *Agog!*, other anthologies were now drawing new borders within Australian sf by publishing themed anthologies such as *Not of Human* (2001), an anthology gathering texts depicting 'Fantastic Creatures'; *Machinations* (2002), an anthology of stories based on 'Ingenious Designs', and

Elsewhere (2004), an anthology of 'Incredible Places.' All, by the way, were supported by an Arts ACT grant rather than an Arts Australia grant.

This segmentation of Australian sf has today created divides from within. Divides based on regional differences: Canberran as opposed to Western Australian sf; differences in length: more, or less, than 500 words; differences in theme: hard science as opposed to fantasy or horror; and – of course – gender differences, thus complexifing Australian sf and building its outlines from within.

Conclusion

Observed from afar, what distinguishes Australian science fiction from American or British science fiction are not the anecdotal textual traces of Australianity such as references to Uluru, surfing, to Australian idiomatic expressions or to kangaroos. What in other genres can be called 'a sense of place' is usually what has been conscientiously erased from science fiction to make room for exoticism and a sense of wonder. Of course, as in literature as a whole (Jauss 47) Australian science fiction is necessarily the product of its time so there are necessarily traces of Australia's changing values but, unlike mimetic literature, the very aim of sf and other non-mimetic texts is to explore alternative and marginal rationales and not just to blindly echo those dominating their day and age (Suvin 12).

Basically, it can be said that all the Australian science fiction anthologies published so far, rather than reflecting an essential Australian character, have been built on a sales gimmick developed to encourage patriotic or curious readers to pay for the extra cost of 'Australian sf.' What is also largely true is that science fiction in Australia is dependent on the political desire to stimulate this cultural activity in Australia: sf only really came to fruition with the help of Whitlam's Arts Council and the genre is still largely dependent today on state government monies. Finally, Australia's critical activity in matters of science fiction is what has also greatly contributed to the fabrication of an 'Australian sf.'

In consequence, seen through the lens of Australia's own archives of short stories, Australian sf appears, in fact, to be just a small segment of a literature born in Europe, crystallized in the 1920 US pulps and today gone global.

NOTES

[1] For a general definition of science fiction (aka sf) that explains critical disagreement as to what the genre is and is not and that considers the changes having modified the genre over time read Kraitsowits 2008.

[2] Though Baxter openly admits that: 'Some people would not agree that "Vale, Pollini!" is sf or that Douglas Stewart's [poem called] "Rutherford" should be included' (Baxter, 1971, introduction), he publishes both these texts in his compilation, probably for lack of less polemical material.

[3] To take just a few examples: C. C. Clingan was not Australian but an active British author and editor and Kendall Evans was born and worked in the USA. Terence Green, an author born, bred and living in Canada was also readily published in Collins' anthology of 'Australian Science Fiction'.

[4] Such as Darrell Schweitzer, to take just one notable example

[5] It must be remembered that Australian sf criticism was also thriving at this time. As early as 1966 John Bangsund, John Foyster and Lee Harding were publishing the critical fanzine *ASFR*, aimed at literate readers of sf everywhere in the world. In 1969, Bruce Gillespie founded *SF Commentary* to continue the flow of critical

science fiction from Australia after the demise of *ASFR*. In that same year was also founded the *Ditmar award for SF criticism* and soon after the *William Atheling Award for Criticism*. It was also the Tasmanian scholar Don Tuck who first assembled between 1974 and 1983, in three volumes, the first major encyclopaedia of sf ever and Australian Peter Nicholls who wrote the very influential and often updated *Encyclopaedia of Science Fiction* in 1979.

[6] In his editorial 'The Coming Destruction of Science Fiction' (1985), Van Ikin wrote that though Australian sf was exposed to an 'external threat' (a lack of government funding) there was also an 'internal threat' (the policy of publishing only 'original' Australian Science Fiction. Damien Broderick also wrote in Science Fiction n°22 pp 4-5 that: 'Anthologists or cheapo magazine editors like Paul Collins have done Australian sf a lot of harm, because, unschooled in either literature or sf, they have rewarded rubbish as even-handedly as competent work'.
[7] A collection of feminist sf criticism somewhat reinforcing this particular tendency within Australian sf has also been recently published. Cf. Helen Merrick and Tess Williams' *Women of Other Worlds: Excursions Through Science Fiction and Feminism*.

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