

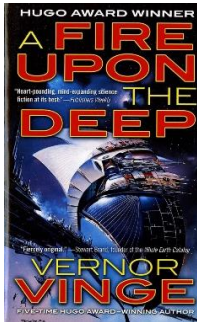
DYSTOPIAN/SCI-FI BOOK GROUP 2023-2024

Led by librarian Elise Katz, we meet monthly throughout the year via Zoom. We mainly read current literature, but also revisit classics. Our selections include a wide range of science fiction, from artificial intelligence, climate fiction, robotics, space opera, hard-science fiction, and dystopian fiction, to humor! Currently, titles for this book group are being decided month-to-month. Book suggestions are welcome.

No prior experience with science fiction is required! We welcome novices as well as serious readers of the genre.

For additional information and to receive the Zoom link, please contact ekatz@minlib.net.

September 2023



A Fire Upon the Deep by Vernor Vinge

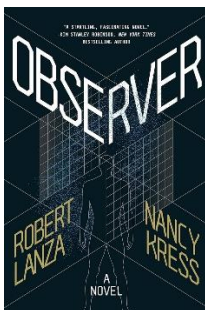
Thousands of years in the future, humanity is no longer alone in a universe where a mind's potential is determined by its location in space, from superintelligent entities in the Transcend, to the limited minds of the Unthinking Depths, where only simple creatures, and technology, can function. Nobody knows what strange force partitioned space into these "regions of thought," but when the warring Straumli realm use an ancient Transcendent artifact as a weapon, they unwittingly unleash an awesome power that destroys thousands of worlds and enslaves all natural and artificial intelligence.



October 2023

Finder by Suzanne Palmer

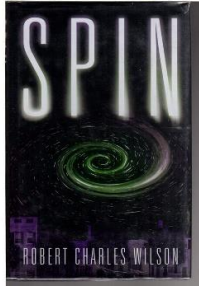
A breakneck-paced and action-packed science-fiction adventure featuring an endearing con artist whose current mission to retrieve a stolen spaceship ignites a war.



November 2023

Observer by Robert Lanza and Nancy Kress

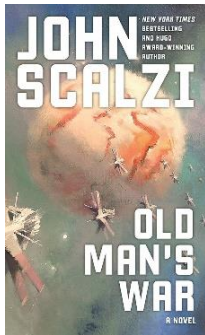
Caro Soames-Watkins, a talented neurosurgeon whose career has been upended by controversy, is jobless, broke, and the sole supporter of her sister, a single mother with a severely disabled child. When she receives a strange job offer from Nobel Prize-winning scientist Sam Watkins, a great uncle she barely knows, desperation forces her to take it in spite of serious suspicions.



December 2023

Spin by Robert Charles Wilson

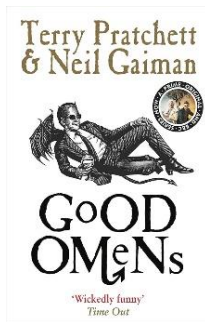
One night in October when he was ten years old, Tyler Dupree stood in his back yard and watched the stars go out. They all flared into brilliance at once, then disappeared, replaced by a flat, empty black barrier. He and his best friends, Jason and Diane Lawton, had seen what became known as the Big Blackout. It would shape their lives.



January 2024

Old Man's War by Scazi

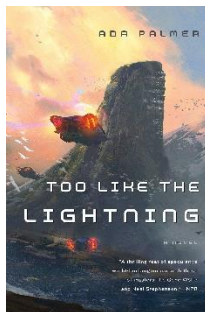
John Perry did two things on his 75th birthday. First he visited his wife's grave. Then he joined the army. The good news is that humanity finally made it into interstellar space. The bad news is that planets fit to live on are scarce-- and alien races willing to fight us for them are common. So: we fight. To defend Earth, and to stake our own claim to planetary real estate. Far from Earth, the war has been going on for decades: brutal, bloody, unyielding.



February 2024

Good Omens by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett

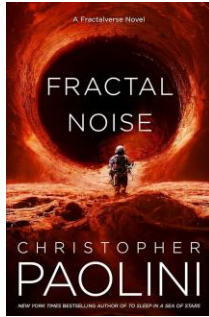
According to the Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter - the world's only totally reliable guide to the future - the world will end on a Saturday. Next Saturday, in fact. Just after tea...



March 2024

Too Like the Lightning by Ada Palmer

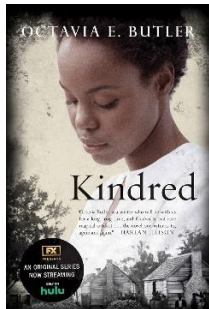
Mycroft Canner is a convict. For his crimes he is required, as is the custom of the 25th century, to wander the world being as useful as he can to all he meets. Carlyle Foster is a sensayer--a spiritual counselor in a world that has outlawed the public practice of religion, but which also knows that the inner lives of humans cannot be wished away. And in this world, Mycroft and Carlyle have stumbled on the wild card that may destabilize the system: the boy Bridger, who can effortlessly make his wishes come true. Who can, it would seem, bring inanimate objects to life...



April 2024

Fractal Noise by Christopher Paolini

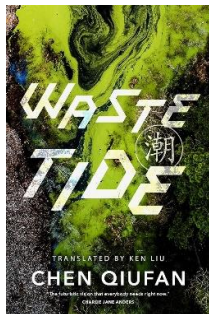
July 25th, 2234: The crew of the *Adamura* discovers the Anomaly. On the seemingly uninhabited planet Talos VII: a circular pit, 50 kilometers wide. Its curve not of nature, but design. Now, a small team must land and journey on foot across the surface to learn who built the hole and why.



May 2024

Kindred by Octavia Butler

Dana, a modern Black woman, is celebrating her 26th birthday with her new husband when she is snatched abruptly from her home in California and transported to the antebellum South. Rufus, the white son of a plantation owner, is drowning, and Dana has been summoned to save him. Dana is drawn back repeatedly through time to the slave quarters, and each time the stay grows longer, more arduous, and more dangerous until it is uncertain whether or not Dana's life will end, long before it has a chance to begin.

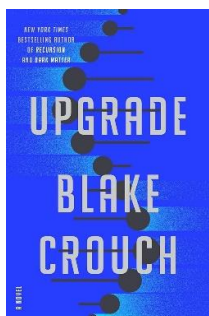


June 2024

Waste Tide by Chen Qiufan

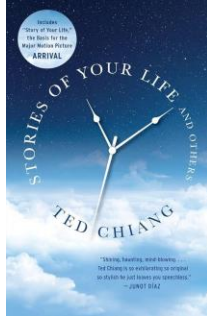
Located off China's southeastern coast, Silicon Isle is the global capital for electronic waste recycling, where thousands like Mimi toil day and night, hoping one day they too will enjoy the wealth they've created for their employers, the three clans who have ruled the isle for generations.

July/August 2024 Summer Read



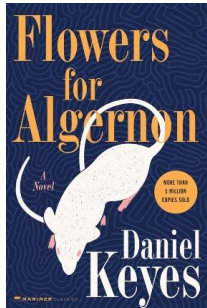
Upgrade by Blake Crouch

You are the next step in human evolution. At first, Logan Ramsay isn't sure if anything's different. He just feels a little . . . sharper. Better able to concentrate. Better at multitasking. Reading a bit faster, memorizing better, needing less sleep. But before long, he can't deny it: Something's happening to his brain. To his body. He's starting to see the world, and those around him—even those he loves most—in whole new ways.



Understand in the short story collection: *Stories of Your Life and Others* by Ted Chiang

What if men built a tower from Earth to Heaven-and broke through to Heaven's other side? What if we discovered that the fundamentals of mathematics were arbitrary and inconsistent? What if there were a science of naming things that calls life into being from inanimate matter? What if exposure to an alien language forever changed our perception of time? What if all the beliefs of fundamentalist Christianity were literally true, and the sight of sinners being swallowed into fiery pits were a routine event on city streets? These are the kinds of outrageous questions posed by the stories of Ted Chiang. Stories of your life . . . and others.



***Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes**

Charlie Gordon is about to embark upon an unprecedented journey. Born with an unusually low IQ, he has been chosen as the perfect subject for an experimental surgery that researchers hope will increase his intelligence – a procedure that has already been highly successful when tested on a lab mouse named Algernon. As the treatment takes effect, Charlie's intelligence expands until it surpasses that of the doctors who engineered his metamorphosis. The experiment appears to be a scientific breakthrough of paramount importance, until Algernon suddenly deteriorates. Will the same happen to Charlie?