

# Introduction Gendering Science Fiction: The Inclusive Bodies of Tomorrow

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“Why is there no sex in science fiction? Why are there no women in science fiction?”, asked Mary Brizzi in the Launch Pad of the Spring 1982 *Extrapolation* special issue on “Women in Science Fiction”. Nearly forty years later, Anglo- American science fiction has undergone a radical turn especially in the new millennium.

Stepping backwards, although women’s SF has a long history, as Carlo Pagetti points out in his essay, the 1960s were crucial in the definition of a new cultural and literary sensibility enhancing and reassessing the contribution of women to what until then had been contemplated as an enclosed male generic domain. Undeniably, a few events form a timeline in the process of the growth and achievement of science fiction written by women. The 1960s were characterized by the emergence of a new consciousness in the debate on gender and the role of women both in the family and in society at large. The consequences in the SF community were farranging, also because the very same conceptual structure of science fiction as a well-defined genre was overtly challenged. For instance, in 1963, Judith Merril, an avowed proto-feminist and the editor of *The Year’s Best S-F. Science Fiction and Fantasy*, after extensively quoting Frederick Pohl (her former husband) on the subject, writes about the short stories collected in her anthology:

I do not care whether you, or he, or the editor in that corner, or the reviewer in the other, call them “science fiction” or not. They are – like all the material considered for inclusion in this *Annual* – examples of the broad field of S (for speculative) F (for fantasy, fiction, or fact), SF: the literature of the disciplined imagination (Merril).....

1963: 375).