

Science Fiction from Latin America: The (Re)invention of a Genre

San Juan, Puerto Rico, 10-11 September 2015

Call for Papers

Although Latin American science fiction has often registered the influence of U.S. and European models, it is far from an imported genre. Rachel Haywood Ferreira's pioneering work on early SF in Latin America (*The Emergence of Latin American Science Fiction*, 2011) uncovers a wealth of examples prior to 1920 across many countries, even stretching back to eighteenth-century precursors. Over the last century, Latin American SF has often engaged critically with the dominant modes of the genre, challenging science fiction's associations with colonial discourse or the North American technological imaginary, and reworking its narrative topoi and stylistic hallmarks from a distinctively postcolonial and Latin American perspective.

This symposium will explore Latin American contributions to the global SF genre, seeking to expand and challenge existing views of its origins and evolution. **We invite proposals for 20-minute papers, in English or (preferably) in Spanish**, which focus on one or more of the following questions, or others related to the symposium theme:

- What might early (proto-)science fiction from Latin America reveal about the development of the genre both in Latin America and beyond? How do competing discourses and practices eventually converge into a recognizable genre? How might the study of forgotten or abandoned lines of pursuit nuance or enrich our current understanding of the SF genre?
- How has the SF genre been recast and reinterpreted in Latin America? What might these differences reveal about how the genre has evolved, about specific experiences and discourses of modernity and science in Latin America, or about the dynamics of exchange that characterize global genres?
- How can we situate Latin American SF in relation to prevailing discourses of globalization and neoliberalism? What modes of contestation or negotiation does it explore?
- What relations are imagined or performed between technoscientific imaginaries and the materiality of the text, or the socioeconomic context of its production, that might be considered distinctively "Latin American," or provide alternative models?

Abstracts should be 250-300 words in length. Please email your submissions, together with a C.V., to Catriona McAllister, Research Network Coordinator (cjm200@cam.ac.uk) by **1 February 2015**. Participants will be asked to submit their papers a month in advance of the symposium.

A number of invited speakers have already confirmed their participation:

- **Alex Rivera**, director of the award-winning *Sleep Dealer* (US/Mexico, 2008)
- **Pedro Cabiya**, the acclaimed Puerto Rican novelist, poet, dramatist, and scriptwriter of graphic novels, currently Director of the Centro de Lenguas y Culturas Modernas de la Universidad Iberoamericana (Santo Domingo)
- **Rafael Acevedo** (University of Puerto Rico), Professor of Hispanic Literature and author of the prize-winning *Exquisito cadáver* (2001), among other novels
- **J. Andrew Brown** (Washington University), author of *Test Tube Envy: Science and Power in Argentine Narrative* (2005) and *Cyborgs in Latin America* (2010), and co-editor of *Latin American Science Fiction: Theory and Practice* (2012)
- **Rachel Haywood Ferreira** (Iowa State University), author of *The Emergence of Latin American Science Fiction* (2011)
- **Soledad Quereilhac** (CONICET/University of Buenos Aires), author of the forthcoming *La imaginación científica. Ciencias ocultas y literatura fantástica en el Buenos Aires de entresiglos (1875-1910)*
- **Ed King** (University of Cambridge), author of *Science Fiction and Digital Technologies in Argentine and Brazilian Culture* (2013)
- **Emily Maguire** (Northwestern University), who has published on Caribbean science fiction and cyberpunk

Two travel bursaries of £650 each will be awarded, on a competitive basis, to a participant who is resident in Europe and who is either currently studying for a doctorate or within three years of having received their doctorate (by the date of the conference).

"Science Fiction from Latin America: The (Re)invention of a Genre" is the second of four international symposia that comprise the AHRC-funded research network on *Science in Text and Culture in Latin America*, which is running from 2014 to 2016. For more information on the network's schedule of events, please visit our website (<http://www.latin-american.cam.ac.uk/science-text-culture>), join our [Facebook group](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#) (@LAM_SciCulture).

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