

Development of Australian SF and fantasy

19th century scientific romances

- influenced by early explorations of Australia and disappearance of famous explores such as Ludwig Leichhardt in 1848; written by local residents who returned to England
- theme of lost civilization: "Oo-a-deen" (1847), anon;
- Carlton Dawe, *The Golden Lake* (1891)
- Fergus Hume, *The Mystery of a Handsom Cab* (1886): international bestseller
- G. Firth Scott, *The Last Lemurian: A Westralian Romance* (1898)
- Robert Potter, *The Germ Growers* (1892); the first story of alien invasion
- theme of utopia: Joseph Fraser, *Melbourne and Mars: My Mysterious Life on Two Planets* (1889)
- novels of racial invasion mostly triggered by White Australia Policy

Between the wars

- very few documented Aus. contribution between the 1920s and 30s; the 1940 import embargo; mainstream magazines such as the *Bulletin* and the *Australasian* publish SF works

Post-war years

- M Barnard Edlershaw (Marjorie Barnard and Flora Eldershaw) *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* (1947): 1st example of Commonwealth censorship (restored ed. in 1983)
- appearance of specialized SF (men's) magazine
- A Bertram Chandler (the Golden Age of SF): 44 novels and over 200 short stories; the Rimworld series; Neville Shute, *On the Beach* (1957) =the peak of Australian SF in the 1950s
- 1960s; New Wave (modernism and SF); fandom and fanzines propel the genre; Ditmar Awards 1969;
- first Aus. SF anthologies: John Baxter, *Pacific Books of Australian Science Fiction*, 1968 and 1971

Aussiecon 1 (33rd World SF Convention), 1975

- outcomes: famous int. SF writers organized SF workshops all over Australia; appearance of SF uni clubs; SF magazines; establishment of The Science Fiction

Foundation (1976); propelling careers of two important authors: George Turner (trilogy *Beloved Sun*, 1978; *Vaneglory*, 1981; *Yesterday's Men*, 1983; and critically acclaimed *The Sea and Summer*, 1987) and Damien Broderick (*The Dreaming Dragons*, 1980; *The White Abacus*, 1997; theoretical works on postmodern SF), opening of SF and fantasy bookshops (Melbourne 1971, Sydney 1975)

Aussiecon 2 (43rd World SF Convention), 1985

- outcome: boom in Aus. commercial genre publishing in the 1990s, propelling the career of Greg Egan (*Quarantine*, 1992, *Permutation city* 1994) in the so called hard SF (quantum mechanics and posthuman condition)

Recognition of the genre and international fame

- Aurealis Awards, 1995
- Australian SF writers winning international awards such as the Nebula Award and the Hugo Awards
- continuous publication of SF anthologies: *The Year's Best Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy*, and *Dreaming Down Under*
- first structured and comprehensive studies of Australian SF and fantasy history: *The MUP Encyclopaedia of Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Paul Collins, ed., 1998), *Strange Constellations: A History of Australian Science Fiction* (Russel Blackford, Van Ikin and Sean McMullen, 1999) and *Notes on Australian Science Fiction* (Graham Stone, 2001)
- Aussiecon 3 (Melbourne, 1999) and Aussiecon 4 (Melbourne, 2010)