

Discussion Questions – Diversity in Science Fiction

1. When you read the chapter in *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction* by Joyce Saricks were you surprised to hear about the number of different subgenres and variety of writing that falls under the term “science fiction”? How did she seem to you to do with mentioning authors from diverse backgrounds? (See Key Authors on p. 250, for example.)

2. Joyce Saricks says “Knowing something about Science Fiction, even if we have only read one or two books, makes us more comfortable talking to fans and makes them more comfortable relating to us. They see that we understand what it is that they love in this genre.” What are some of the main appeal factors we should remember?

3. Under Characteristics of Science Fiction, Joyce says “Setting is crucial and invokes otherness of time, place, and/or reality. Both the physical setting of the story and the inherent technical and scientific detail create this essential frame.” Did you find this to be true of your second title choice or of other science fiction you have read before? (With romance, setting was not as important.)

4. Diversity in science fiction is a somewhat hot topic among fans of the genre, as we know from the mention of the controversial Hugo awards in 2015 in one of the *Library Journal* readings. Why isn't it enough to have diverse characters in science fiction? Why do we need authors from diverse backgrounds, too?

5. Does any of Joyce's advice on providing RA service to S/F readers seem particularly helpful (especially for anyone who is not a science fiction reader)? Do those who are S/F readers, did her characterizations of S/F fans seem accurate?

6. Maintaining a decent-sized science fiction collection can be hard, as Joyce Saricks points out, because there are so many long-running series. In my own experience, this genre's readers also want their books in a separate section, even more than mystery and romance readers do. Any ideas on this, or interesting book display ideas, or booklist themes to share to alert readers to S/F possibilities they may not find without a separate section?