

A

A Woman on the Edge of Time (Piercy), 47
acquiring editor, 171
age of character, 72–73
agents, 151–152, 164–169
 editorial style, 167
 finding an agent, 166–167
 relationship with, 167–169
 why to use, 164–165
agents and publishers, 164–174
 agents, 164–169
 editors, 169–174
altering character to not resemble its creator, 78–81, 96–97
alternative words, 61–63
Amber series (Zelazny), 138–139
Anderson, Poul, 20, 68–69, 97
Arneson, Eleanor, 69
Asimov, Isaac, 108, 110
aspiring writer, being an, 145–163
 acceptance, 149
 agents, 151–152
 contracts, 149
 copy editing process, 150–151
 criticism, 159–162
 dos and don'ts, 153–158
 editor and agent follow-up, 155–156
 finishing work, 147, 154–155
 formal study of writing, 145–147
 professional behavior, 152–159
 publication process, 149–151
 query and cover letters, 154
 reader's fees, 154
 rejection, 148–149, 158–162
 sales, 147–149, 152–163
 science courses, 146
 science fiction conventions, 153–154
 selling a novel, 147–149
 short fiction vs. novels, 145
 submission guidelines, 154
 submission process, 147–148
Atwood, Margaret, 9

B

Baen, Jim, 33
basic character biography, 71–75
Beinhart, Larry, 5
beliefs and fiction, 140–141
Bladerunner, 67–68
Blish, James, 34
Blue Tyson (Dowling), 55

Bradley, Marion Zimmer, 138
Brin, David, 100
Bujold, Lois McMaster, 138
Burning Bright (Scott), 13, 74–75, 94, 96–97
Burroughs, Edgar Rice, 39
Busby, F. M., 8

C

calendar, 34–35
Carver, Jeff, 138
Catron, Louis, 141
character attributes, 70–71
characters, 65–84, 70–81
 age, 72–73
 altering character to not resemble its creator, 78–81, 96–97
 attributes, 70–71
 avoiding Mary Sue characters, 78–81
 basic biography, 71–75
 character's objective, 65–66
 connections to other people, 76–78
 emotional core, 78–81
 exercises, 81–84
 family, 76–78
 fleshing out the characters, 70–81
 gender, 71–72
 occupation, 45, 74–75
 physical appearance, 74
 primary character and what-if, 69–70
 primary character as lens to secondary character, 68–69
 size of their world, 30–31
 unearned ending, 66–68
 what you owe readers, 5
Charnas, Suzy McKee, 79
China Mountain Zhang (McHugh), 111
Cities in Flight (Blish), 34
Citizen of the Galaxy (Heinlein), 47, 109, 111
Clarke, Arthur C., 6, 110
clean manuscript copy, 155
Clement, Hal, 6, 110
climate, 35–36
clocks, 34–35
connections to other people, 76–78
contracts, 149
Cook, Robin, 6
copy editing process, 150–151
copy editor, 171
cover art, 172–173
craft, honing of, 98–99
criticism, 159–162
cultivating serendipity, 14–16

reading widely, 14–15
science programs, 15–16
using research to flesh out what-if, 87–88
current events, 85–87
cutting file, 115–116
Cyberworld, 47

D

Daley, Brian, 100
Darkover novels (Bradley), 138
Delany, Samuel, 114
Deryni series (Kurtz), 52
dialogue
 expository, 111–115
 high-context vs. low-context, 112–113
Dick, Philip K., 67
Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? (Dick), 67
dos and don'ts, 153–158
 clean manuscript copy, 155
 editor and agent follow-up, 155–156
 finishing work, 154–155
 market research, 153–154
 query and cover letters, 154
 reader's fees, 154
 submission guidelines, 154
Dowling, Terry, 55
Dreaming Metal (Scott), 31, 108
Dreamships (Scott), 31, 48, 108
Dune (Herbert), 8, 31, 34, 45, 47, 108, 110

E

economy
 basis of, 45–46
 size of population, 45
editor and agent follow-up, 155–156
editorial style, 167, 170–171
editors, 169–174
 acquiring editor, 171
 copy editor, 171
 cover art, 172–173
 editorial style, 170–171
 quality of writing accepted, 169
 relationship with, 173–174
 selling on proposal, 169–170
emotional core, 78–81
emotions behind the facts, 90–91, 94–97
Engh, M. J., 50, 109
exercises
 character creation, 81–84
 cultivating serendipity, 22–24
 language and setting, 63–64
 social world building, 49–50

starting writing, 116–120
title creation, 25–26
expanding on your experiences, 94–97
expert amateurs, 89–90
experts, 88–89
exposition, 107–115
expository dialogue, 111–115
extrapolation, 5–8

F

family, 76–78
Fantastic Voyage, 30
fantasy novels, 6
faster-than-light travel, 8, 37–38
Fausto-Sterling, Anne, 136
financial system, 46–47
finding an agent, 166–167
finding the right word, 115
finishing work, 147, 154–155
Fire From Heaven (Renault), 84
Five-Twelfths of Heaven (Scott), 7, 57, 113–114, 137
food chain, 36–37
formal study of writing, 145–147
Forrester, C. S., 10
Foundation trilogy (Asimov), 108
Friesner, Esther, 95
FTL travel, 8, 37–38

G

gender, 71–72
Gerrold, David, 97
getting started writing. *see* starting writing
Gibson, William, 7, 90–91
Glory Season (Brin), 100
Gould, Stephen J., 136
government, forms of, 40–41
Gun, With Occasional Music (Lethem), 105

H

Hammett, Dashiell, 66–68
Heinlein, Robert, 47, 97, 109
Herbert, Frank, 45
high-context vs. low-context dialogue, 112–113
Horatio Hornblower series (Forrester), 10
How to Write a Mystery, 5
human-computer direct interface, 8

I

ideas, 13–24
 bizarre, 21–22
 cultivating serendipity, 14–16

exercises, 22–24
originality of, 20–21
originality of idea, 20–21
quality of, 16
quality of idea, 16
tracking, 121–123
turning into what-if, 20
imitation, 133
improving your craft, 130–141
 beliefs and fiction, 140–141
 imitation, 133
 learning from bad writing, 133
 pulling it all together, 133–134
 pushing yourself, 134–135
 reading, 130–132
 research, continuing, 135–136
 science, 135–136
 series vs. stand-alone books, 137–139
 subtext, 132–133
 unbounded series, 139–140
 writing in more than one universe, 136–137
Infinite Sea stories (Carver), 138
inspiration from other novels, 97–99
invented terms, 62–63

K

Keating, H. R. F., 4
Kurtz, Katherine, 52
Kushner, Ellen, 35

L

language and setting, 51–64
 alternative words, 61–63
 exercises, 63–64
 extrapolation, 61
 invented terms, 51–52, 62–63
 names, 56–60
 tropes, 60
 word choice, 52–56
languages, 45–46
Le Guin, Ursula K., 7, 8, 13, 22
learning from bad writing, 133
learning the ropes, 175–176
Lethem, Jonathan, 105
librarians and libraries, 86–87

M

Maass, Donald, 149, 166
making connections, 119–120
manuscript formatting, 127–129, 155
market research, 153–154

Mary Sue characters, avoiding, 78–81, 96–97
Masque World (Panshin), 30, 53
McCaffrey, Anne, 7
McHugh, Maureen, 111
Metropolitan (Williams), 7
Mission of Gravity (Clement), 6–7, 110
monolithic planetary society, 43
Motherlines (Charnas), 79
Myths of Gender (Fausto-Sterling), 136

N

NAFAL travel, 8
names, 56–60
nearly-as-fast-as-light travel, 8
Neuromancer (Gibson), 7, 34, 90–91
Night Sky Mine (Scott), 44, 113
Niven, Larry, 52
Norton, Andre, 20

O

occupation, 74–75
occupation of characters, 45
On Writing Crime Fiction, 4
online resources, 91–94
originality, 99–101
outlining, 102–104

P

packaged deals, 176–179
Panshin, Alexei, 30–31, 53
Pern series (McCaffrey), 7
personal identity as source of societal subgroups, 43–44
physical appearance, 74
physical features, 31–34
physical laws, 29
picaresque novels, 111
Piercy, Marge, 47
Pirates of Penzance, 34
plants and animals, 36
plot, 102–104
Point of Hopes (Scott), 115
point of view, 104–105
Pollack, Rachel, 54
Pournelle, Jerry, 52
power
 economic, 40–41
 hierarchy of, 41–42
 official vs actual source of, 42–43
 political, 40–41
professional behavior, 152–159

- clean manuscript copy, 155
 - editor and agent follow-up, 155–156
 - finishing work, 154–155
 - market research, 153–154
 - query and cover letters, 154
 - reader's fees, 154
 - submission guidelines, 154
 - professional writer, being a, 175–188
 - learning the ropes, 175–176
 - packaged deals, 176–179
 - publicity, 179–184
 - readings and signings, 179–181
 - science fiction conventions, 184–188
 - work-for-hire, 176–179
 - Proper Names in the Lyrics of the Troubadours*, 58
 - publication process, 149–151
 - publicity, 179–184
 - pulling it all together, 133–134
 - pushing yourself, 134–135
- Q**
- quality of writing accepted, 169
 - query and cover letters, 154
- R**
- Rainbow Man* (Engh), 50, 109, 111
 - reader's fees, 154
 - reading, 130–132
 - readings and signings, 179–181
 - rejection, 148–149, 158–162
 - relationships
 - with agent, 167–169
 - with editors, 173–174
 - relationships of societal subgroups, 43–44
 - Renault, Mary, 84
 - Rendezvous with Rama* (Clarke), 6, 110
 - research, 85–101
 - altering character to not resemble its creator, 96–97
 - avoiding Mary Sue characters, 96–97
 - cultivating serendipity, 87–88
 - current events, 85–87
 - emotions behind the facts, 90–91, 94–97
 - expanding on your experiences, 94–97
 - expert amateurs, 89–90
 - experts, 88–89
 - honing your craft, 98–99
 - inspiration from other novels, 97–99
 - librarians and, 86–87
 - online, 91–94
 - originality, 99–101
 - scavenging, 95
 - research, continuing, 135–136
 - Ring of Swords* (Arneson), 69
 - robots, sentient, 8
 - Roddenberry, Gene, 10
 - Rosenblum, Mary, 20
 - Ryman, Geoff, 74
 - Rynosseros* (Dowling), 55
- S**
- sales, 149, 152–163
 - scavenging, 95
 - science, 135–136
 - science courses, 146
 - science fact novels, 6
 - science fantasy novels, 7
 - science fiction conventions, 153–154, 184–188
 - science fiction novels, 6
 - selling a novel, 147–149
 - selling on proposal, 169–170
 - series
 - vs. stand-alone books, 137–139
 - unbounded, 139–140
 - setting, 4–5, 28–29
 - Shadow Man* (Scott), 35, 109
 - Sherlock Holmes stories, 68–69
 - short fiction vs. novels, 145
 - signings and readings, 179–181
 - Silence in Solitude* (Scott), 7
 - Silence Leigh trilogy (Scott), 7, 100, 137–138
 - Silverberg, Robert, 8
 - size of world, 29–30
 - sketches, 104–105
 - society, 39–50
 - basic rules of, 44–45
 - basic unit of, 47–49
 - and forms of work, 45
 - monolithic planetary, 43
 - personal identity as source of societal subgroups, 43–44
 - and what-if, 39–40
 - Solar Queen* (Norton), 20
 - Star Trek*, 97
 - Star Well* (Panshin), 30, 53, 56
 - Stars in My Pockets Like Grains of Sand* (Delany), 114
 - starting writing, 102–118
 - cutting file, 115–116
 - exercises, 116–120
 - exposition, 107–115
 - expository dialogue, 111–115
 - high-context vs. low-context dialogue, 112–113
 - outlining, 102–104
 - picaresque novels, 111
 - plot, 102–104

Sample Index for *Conceiving the Heavens* by Melissa Scott

This index did not appear in the published work it is related to.

point of view, 104–105
sketches, 104–105
strangeness budget, 106–107
stylistic conventions, 106
subgenres, 106
tropes, 106
voice, 104
word choice, 115
status, hierarchy of, 41–42
strangeness budget, 35, 106–107
stylistic conventions, 106
subgenres, 106
submissions
 guidelines, 154
 process, 147–148
subtext, 132–133
Sweet, Jeffrey, 111

T

Tales of the White Ship Avatar (Daley), 100
Tavris, Carol, 83, 136
technical basics, 3–12
 characters, 5
 extrapolation, 5–8
 fantasy novels, 6
 plot, 4
 science fact novels, 6
 science fantasy novels, 7
 science fiction novels, 6
 setting, 4–5
 tropes, 8
 what-if, 9–10
 world building, 11–12
 writing skills, 3–4
Temporary Agency (Pollack), 54–55
The Armor of Light (Scott), 115
The Boat, 30
The Career Novelist (Maass), 149, 166
The Child Garden (Ryman), 74
The Dramatist's Toolkit (Sweet), 111
The Empress of Earth (Scott), 7, 138
The Great Gatsby (Fitzgerald), 44
The Handmaid's Tale (Atwood), 9
The Kindly Ones (Scott), 23, 33, 108–109
The Left Hand of Darkness (Le Guin), 7, 22
The Making of Star Trek (Roddenberry), 10
The Maltese Falcon (Hammett), 66–68
The Man Who Counts (Anderson), 20
The Mask of Apollo (Renault), 84
The Mismeasure of Man (Gould), 136
The Mismeasure of Women (Tavris), 83, 136
The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress (Heinlein), 97

The Mote in God's Eye (Niven and Pournelle), 52–53, 54
The Naked Sun (Asimov), 110
"The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" (Le Guin), 13
The Outcasts of Heaven Belt (Vinge), 34
The Stone Garden (Rosenblum), 20
The Thurb Revolution (Panshin), 30, 53
The Trouble Twisters (Anderson), 97
time, 34–35
title creation, 25–26
Tolkien, J. R. R., 51
tools of the trade, 121–129
 hand-writing, 123–124
 idea tracking, 121–123
 manuscript formatting, 127–129
 typewriting, 124
 word processing, 124–127
transportation, 37–38
tropes, 8, 60, 106
Trouble and Her Friends (Scott), 13
turning idea into what-if, 20
Twilight Beach (Dowling), 55
typewriting, 124

V

Vinge, Joan, 34
voice, 104
Vorkosigan series (Bujold), 138

W

what-if, 9–10
 primary character and, 69–70
 and setting, 28
 and society, 39–40
 turning idea into, 20
 using research to flesh out, 87–88
When Harlie Was One (Gerrold), 97
Williams, Walter Jon, 7
word processing, 124–127
work-for-hire, 176–179
world building, 27–50
 basic societal rules, 44–45
 basic unit of society, 47–49
 basis of economy, 45–46
 calendar, 34–35
 climate, 35–36
 clocks, 34–35
 economic power, 40–41
 exercises, 49–50
 financial system, 46–47
 food chain, 36–37

- government, forms of, 40–41
- hierarchy of power, 41–42
- hierarchy of status, 41–42
- languages, 45–46
- and the monolithic planetary society, 43
- official vs actual source of power, 42–43
- physical features, 31–34
- physical laws, 29
- plants and animals, 36
- political power, 40–41
- relationships of subgroups, 43–44
- size of characters' world, 30–31
- size of world, 29–30
- society and what-if, 39–40
- strangeness budget, 35
- time, 34–35
- transportation, 37–38
- what-if and setting, 28
- Writing, Producing, and Selling Your Play* (Catron),
141
- writing by hand, 123–124
- writing in more than one universe, 136–137
- writing science fiction novels
 - agents and publishers, 164–174
 - aspiring writer, being an, 145–163
 - character creation, 65–84
 - idea generation, 13–24
 - improving your craft, 130–141
 - language and setting, 51–64
 - making connections, 119–120
 - professional writer, being a, 175–188
 - research, 85–101
 - starting writing, 102–118
 - technical basics, 3–12
 - title creation, 25–26
 - tools of the trade, 121–129
 - world building, 27–50

Z

- Zelazny, Roger, 138–139