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Science fiction as desirable feminist scenarios

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Synopsis

Science fiction books are interpreted as one form of scenario writing which, although at present overwhelmingly sexist, nevertheless holds the promise of developing non-sexist scenarios for the future. Five feminist science fiction scenarios are identified and discussed. Although the fictional societies are maximally different in terms of size, level of technological development, and organizational complexity, they all exhibit a radical equalitarianism. It is suggested that sex equality is only thinkable in a context of overall equalitarianism. This, in turn, suggests that the most fruitful strategy for improving the condition of women consists in a general effort to level social differences rather than in particularistic strategies addressed only at women. It suggests further that there should be a potential (although at present not actual) natural alliance between the feminist movement, civil liberties movements, and the ecological movement (which can be interpreted as equalitarianism in assessing present vs future needs).

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This paper has profited from suggestions for stylistic changes made by Carol Zavitz.

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Science fiction as desirable feminist scenarios, the presumption is degenerate.

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