

Three Phases of the Digital in SF / Three Faces of SF in DH

Lisa Swanstrom | University of Utah

DHU3 | February 24, 2018

“I can distinguish control modules,” the computer said, “but I can't tell which—” It paused as its eye roved about on the fone screen. “I distinguish a roll of punched tape mounted above your heart mechanism. Do you see it?”

—Philip K. Dick, “The Electric Ant”
(1969)

“Dinner with Aileen again...A sweet girl, always has something to say, not like those women in the scuttle who let their handbag computers carry all the conversation. Today at the Lost and Found I saw three of the things quietly chatting in a corner, until they got into an argument.”

—Stanislaw Lem, *The Futurological Congress* (1971)

“With his hands in the pockets of his jacket, he stared through the glass at a flat lozenge of vat grown flesh that lay on a carved pedestal of imitation jade. The color of its skin reminded him of Zone’s whores; it was tattooed with a luminous digital display wired to a subcutaneous chip.”

—William Gibson, *Neuromancer* (1984)

“The Stuff of Science Fiction: An Experiment in Literary History”

by Stefania Forlini, Uta Hinrichs, and
Bridget Moynihan

DHQ 2016.10.1

The authors mine the “Bob Gibson anthologies of speculative fiction – unique, hand-crafted and fan-curated anthologies of SF’s ‘great unread’ [in order to] contribute to scholarly assessments of the evolution of SF, and to develop information visualizations that enable researchers, students, fans, and the general public to explore the collection from different perspectives, promoting fluid movement between close and distant reading.”

—Forlini, Hindricks, and Moynihan

The Corpus

Science Fiction Studies

1973-present

ISSN No. 0091-7729

Science Fiction Studies
 Published three times a year (March, July, November)
 by SF-TH Inc. at DePaul University
 #88 = Volume 29, Part 3 = November 2002 • \$10.00
 Copyright © 2002 by SF-TH Inc.

JAPANESE SCIENCE FICTION
 Edited by TATSUMI Takayuki, Christopher Bolton, and
 Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, Jr.

Christopher Bolton. Editorial Introduction. The Borders of
 Japanese Science Fiction 321

Susan Napier, TATSUMI Takayuki, KOYANI Mari, and OROSH Junko.
 An Interview with KOMATSU Sakyô 323

ABE Kôbô. Two Essays on Science Fiction 340

SEIRANO Takumi. "Collective Reason": A Proposal 351

MIRI NAKAMURA. Horror and Machines in Prewar Japan: The
 Mechanical Uncanny in YUSUZO Kiyôzaki's *Dogura magara* 364

Thomas Schnellbächer. Has the Empire Sunk Yet?—The Pacific
 in Japanese Science Fiction 382

KOYANI Mari. Space, Body, and Aliens in Japanese Women's
 Science Fiction 397

Susan J. Napier. When the Machines Stop: Fantasy, Reality, and
 Terminal Identity in *Neon Genesis Evangelion* and *Serial
 Experiments Lain* 418

Shaaralyn Orbaugh. Sex and the Single Cyborg: Japanese Popular
 Culture Experiments in Subjectivity 436

Christopher Bolton. The Mecha's Blind Spot: *Patlabor 2* and the
 Phenomenology of Anime 453

TATSUMI Takayuki. Editorial Afterword. A Soft Time Machine:
 From Translation to Transfiguration 475

REVIEW-ESSAYS

William O. Gardner. Attack of the Phallic Girls: Sarrô Tamaki's
Sentô Nishijô no senjûshi bunsetsu (Fighting Beauties: A
 Psychoanalysis) 485

Carl Silvio. Anime, Both Global and Local: Susan J. Napier's
Anime from AIZUKA to PRINCESS MONONOKE 489

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Clarke's *British Future Fiction, 1700-1914* (Paul Allan) 492

Boon's *New Essays on the Work of Kurt Vonnegut* (Scott Ash) 496

McKeena's *Chaplin: A Pragmatist and Feminist Perspective* (DG) 499

Hollinger/Gordon's *Edging into the Future: Science Fiction and
 Contemporary Cultural Transformation* (N. Katherine Hayles) 500


Makinen's *Feminist Popular Fiction* (Nancy St. Clair) 503

Mead's *Encyclopedia of Jack Vance* (Tom Shippey) 506

Patterson/Thornton's *Critical Perspectives on Robert A. Heinlein's
 STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND* (CM) 507

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Science Fiction Studies



Science Fiction Studies is published three times a year (March, July, November) by SF-TH Inc. at [DePaul University](#). The Science Fiction Studies Website publishes abstracts of all articles, as well as the full texts of all reviews, historical documents, and selected essays appearing in the journal since its founding in 1973 by R.D. Mullen. We maintain a three-year blackout before reviews published in the journal appear on the website. Full texts of articles are posted only after an issue has been sold out and after the three-year blackout period has expired.



[Masthead](#) (Editorial and publication information)



[Search Engine](#) (Full site search by keywords)



[Recent Issues](#) (Contents pages of the most recent issues of SFS, with links to article abstracts; reviews subject to one-year blackout)



[Past Issues](#) (Abstracts, Articles, and Reviews from Past issues. Full Texts of Sold Out Past Issues)



[Special Issues/Sections](#) (Links to special issue topics, author interviews, and author-specific articles, with links to contents pages)



[Masthead](#) (Editorial and publication information)



[Search Engine](#) (Full site search by keywords)



[Recent Issues](#) (Contents pages of the most recent issues of SFS, with links to article abstracts; reviews subject to one-year blackout)



[Past Issues](#) (Abstracts, Articles, and Reviews from Past issues. Full Texts of Sold Out Past Issues)



[Special Issues/Sections](#) (Links to special issue topics, author interviews, and author-specific articles, with links to contents pages)

Search *Science Fiction Studies*



Google Custom



Request Permission
To Reuse Content





Search JSTOR

All Content

[Science Fiction Studies](#) / Vol. 44, No. 3, November 2017

Science Fiction Studies



Vol. 44, No. 3, November 2017

Published by: [SF-TH Inc](#)

Stable URL:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5621/sciefictstud.44.issue-3>

[Submission Guidelines](#)

[Journal Home Page](#)

[Subscription Information](#)

Table of Contents

The Process

1. Conversion to txt
2. Concatenation
3. NLTK

The Process

1. Conversion to txt
2. Concatenation
3. NLTK



Free online file converter

Convert media files online from one format into another. Please select the target format below:



Audio converter

Select target format...



Video converter

Select target format...



Image converter

Select target format...



Document converter

Select target format...



Ebook converter

Select target format...



Archive converter

Select target format...








Adobe Acrobat Pro DC

File Edit View Window Help







Home **Tools** Username

Search Tools...





Create & Edit

 Create PDF Open	 Combine Files Add	 Organize Pages Open	 Edit PDF Open	 Export PDF Open	 Enhance Scans Open	 Rich Media Add
---	---	---	---	---	--	--

Review & Approve

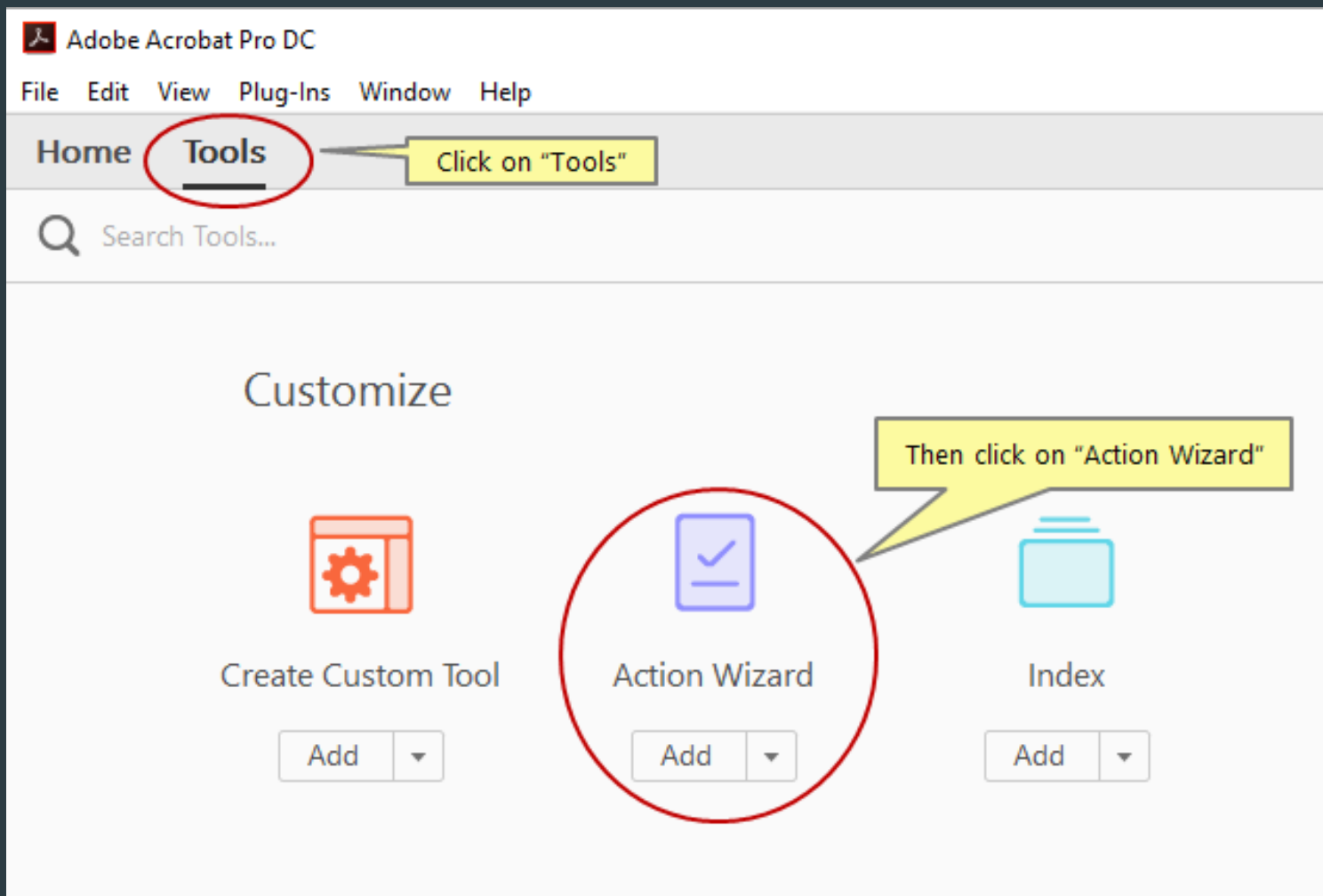
 Comment Open	 Send for Comments Add	 Stamp Add	 Send & Track Open	 Compare Documents Add	 Measure Add
--	---	---	---	---	---

Forms & Signatures

 Fill & Sign Add	 Prepare Form Open	 Send for Signature Open	 Certificates Add
--	--	--	---

- Create PDF
- Edit PDF
- Export PDF
- Comment
- Organize Pages
- Enhance Scans
- Protect
- Prepare Form
- Send for Signature
- Send & Track

Adobe's "Action Wizard"





My Collaborator
Maria Alberto

Doctoral Student in English at the U of U

The Process

1. Conversion to txt
2. Concatenation
3. NLTK


```
$ cd desktop/1970s  
$ cat * > seventies.txt  
$ cd ../1980s  
$ cat * > eighties.txt
```

The Process

1. Conversion to txt
2. Concatenation
3. NLTK

```
$ python
```

```
>>>import nltk
```

```
>>>from nltk.book import *
```

```
>>> a=open("textfile.txt", "rU")
```

```
>>> text=a.read()
```

```
>>> text1=text.split()
```

```
>>> nameoftextfile=nltk.Text(text1)
```

```
>>> import sys
```

```
>>> reload(sys)
```

```
>>> sys.setdefaultencoding('utf-8')
```

Findings

The background features a dark blue-grey field on the left and a vibrant green field on the right. The green field is composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, creating a layered, abstract effect. A thin, dark line runs diagonally across the bottom right corner, separating the two main color areas.

```
>>> seventies.concordance("digital")  
No matches
```


1970s

Digital=0

Computer=58

```
>>> seventies.concordance("computer")
```

```
Displaying 25 of 58 matches:
```

```
ructs of modern SF (e.g., HAL, the computer in 2001) may be equated with human  
time machine, the first electronic computer functioning within a human head, t  
ranny to this machine. The Central Computer of Diaspar is much less totalitari  
"Well-Doer" in Zamiatin's We. The computer never obstructs Alvin; when he lea  
r's machine stops, but the Central Computer of Diaspar seems truly eternal. So  
lizes transcendence too. 9Hal, the computer for the Jupiter probe in 2001', mi  
uld have, nor does the intelligent computer though he is similar, say, to the  
leness. This trick would require a computer at least as good and probably some  
s of primitives, but in those of a computer scientist, in "Izzard and the Memb  
s as "neutral entities." Whether computers are a pre.requisite of a succes
```

```
>>> eighties.concordance("digital")
```

```
Displaying 5 of 5 matches:
```

```
the camera cutting frequently to a digital clock. reminding us that we are in  
ed from perception and converted to digital form. It is an argument that will m
```

In the 1980s, things start to change:

Digital=5

Computer=86

```
>>> eighties.concordance("computer")
```

```
Displaying 25 of 86 matches:
```

```
module directed by a Lunar Battle Computer buried under the Moon's Mount Tych  
e US) in case of nuclear conflict. Computer analysis shows the potentiality fo  
as the consciousness of our linked computer s—he is only one of three redundan  
tween Farmer. Ped erse n. and two computer special ists. and a brief article
```

```
>>> nineties.concordance("digital")
```

```
Displaying 25 of 61 matches:
```

```
McCoy Paul y, the Dixie Flatline, a digital firmware construct of a dead man. H  
h the saturation of technologies of digital replication we have the feeling tha  
at Baudrillard, our first master of digital criticism, and Ballard, who along w  
ith Burroughs is our fust master of digital narrative, both achieve is finally  
at Baudrillard, our first master of digital criticism, and Ballard, who along w  
ith Burroughs is our fust master of digital narrative, both achieve is finally  
the joints in the hand, converting digital movement into synthetic sound by wa
```

In the 1990s:
Digital=61
Computer=315

```
>>> nineties.concordance("computer")
```

```
Displaying 25 of 315 matches:
```

```
e of bein g slaves to the central computer which rules over them. With its de  
med prostitutes; humans as sex-toy computer peripheral s-t he epitome of Gibso  
Registry. Alan Turing , a British computer theorist, was arrested in 1952 for  
uman , with particular emphasis on computer soft.ware and the human body, and  
e female characters and the female computer in Triad are coterminous with the  
tuation as perceived by the binary computer mentality , and neither the either  
tie s such as future forecasting , computer simul ation s and modelling, etc.  
ontains a model of system-A. Or: a computer (called system-B) phones up on a m  
B) phones up on a modem to another computer (named system-A) and asks for a di  
lable in system-A. But already the computer version has alerted us to things a  
ar transfer to take place. But the computer version also raises another proble  
's reasonable to suggest that "the computer hegemony" states articulately and
```



```
>>> two_thousands.concordance("computer")
Displaying 25 of 287 matches:
meone hacking into Japan's defense computer to create a phantom attack sequenc
nce Japan's budget for the defense computer was cut, it was necessary to borro
agmented English, scrolling across computer monitors; it is the code program t
, the hacker protagonist becomes a computer virus that zooms around the CPU, b
```

In the 2000s:
Digital=287
Computer=338

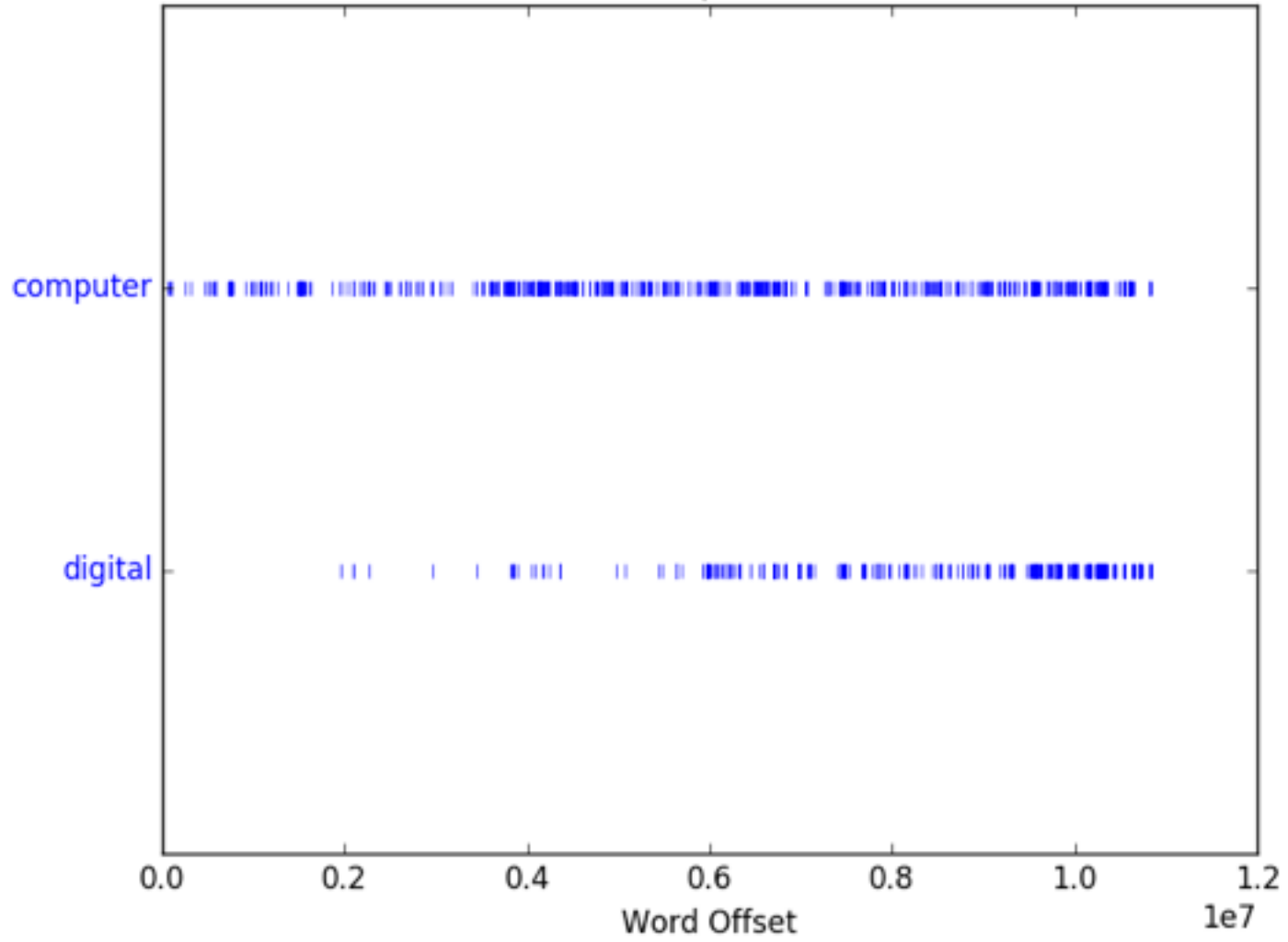
```
>>> two_thousands.concordance("digital")
Displaying 25 of 338 matches:
elaborate interrelation of multiple digital topologies and cosmologies, providi
rnetics' two competing paradigms of digital " life" -the "symbolic" AI hypothes
ith the subjective fragmentation of digital topologies and the object/subject "
nship between bodies, subjects, and digital topologies, various evolutionary mo
xist in alternative forms, that is, digital Copies and clones of Copies "runnin
s the subjective "experiences" of a digital Copy to illustrate the hypothesis t
s debate, especially in relation to digital permutations of putative immortalit
us. A strong humanist resistance to digital life in silica seeks to rebuff any
ually contentious for proponents of digital "being." Both the top-down "symboli
s" cybernetic environments with the digital equivalent ofDNA (cellular automata
Life's swarm-type, non-hierarchical digital "vivisystems" are largely uncontrol
rification of the "human" into some digital AI form remains little more than an
Permutation City: Immortal copies, digital ontologies. Permutation City is ess
```

In the 2010s:
Digital=295
Computer=582

```
>>> two_ten.concordance("computer")  
Displaying 25 of 295 matches:
```

```
>>> two_ten.concordance("digital")  
Displaying 25 of 582 matches:
```


Lexical Dispersion Plot



Next steps:

1. searches for bodies, virtual, material, cybernetics, information theory
2. searches for authors: Vinge, Gibson, Cadigan, etc.
3. searches for all of the above in other sf journals: *Extrapolation*, *Foundation*
4. searches for all of the above in DHQ, Wired, etc.

Thank you!

Lisa Swanstrom

swanstro@gmail.com

<http://swanstream.org>