

# PLUTO

VIA THE INTER-PLANET TRANSIT COMMISSION

# **Sol Rising**

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Sol Rising is a bi-annual newszine published by the Friends of the Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation & Fantasy, c/o The Merril Collection, Toronto Public Library.

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# The Friends of the Merril Collection is a

volunteer organization to support and promote the Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation, and Fantasy, a public access collection consisting of SF, fantasy, gaming materials, graphic novels, and other related items.

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# **Artwork**

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### **Events**

#### Saturday morning's 11:30-12:00pm Curator's Choice (ongoing)

Join the staff of the Merril Collection as they present different treasures from the stacks every Saturday morning, including art and rare books, and discuss themes of interest in science fiction and fantasy

# On now - April 24th -Special Collections: A-Z exhibit (Toronto Reference library)

The exhibit showcases an alphabet of curiosities from the five Special Collections - from "Arctic Exploration" to "Zero Gravity."

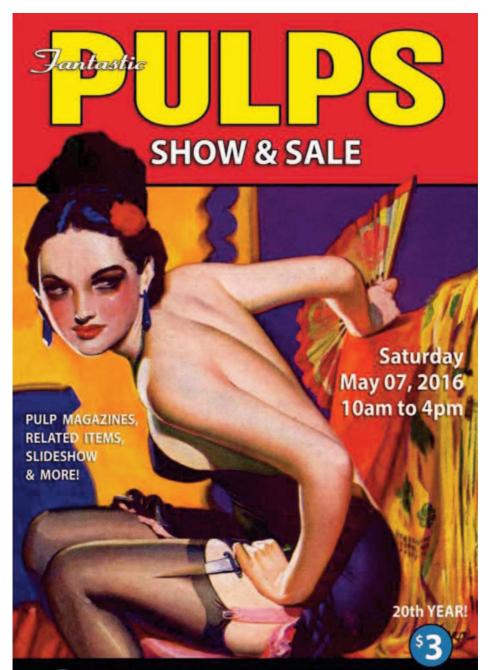
April 28th at 7pm- Canadian fantasy author K.V. Johansen & Toronto author Allan Weiss will be with us to discuss their latest works.

# May 7th from 10am-4pm -20th Annual Fantastic Pulp Show!

A terrific show featuring a variety of pulp related items. 25 dealer tables crammed with vintage pulp, pulp reprints, vintage paperbacks & posters. Only \$3! Tickets available at the door, kids under 10 admitted free with adult.

# June 11th, 2016 -Ryan North's Romeo And/Or Juliet book launch

More details TBA soon, check our Facebook, Twitter, or website pages for updated information.



LIBRARY

Lillian H. Smith Branch, 239 College St., Toronto, ON

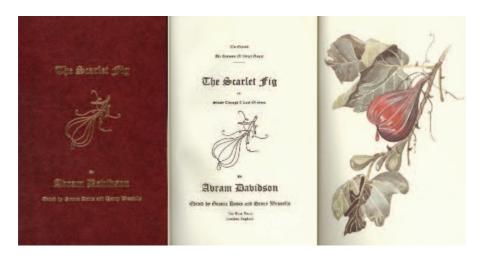
Presented in association with The Friends of the Merril Collection For information call: 905.820.7572 or email: info@girasolcollectables.com



#### The Collection

The ever-growing Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation & Fantasy resides on the third floor of the Lillian H. Smith library and boasts over 82,000 items, most of which are stored on compact stacks that allow for the Collection's continued expansion. The staff at the Merril dedicate considerable effort to seeking out and implementing methods to preserve old and/or rare books and other materials that might otherwise succumb to the slow decay of paper (a.k.a. "the death of the book," as Lorna once put it), storing them in the best possible conditions in terms of heat, humidity and light.

#### >>>>Avram Davidson Highlights by Lorna Toolis



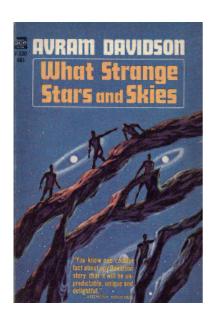
#### Davidson, Avram

The scarlet fig, or, Slowly through a land of stone

London : Rose Press, c2005 Cover art: Susanna Rose

No. 195 of 550 numbered copies. Signed by author.

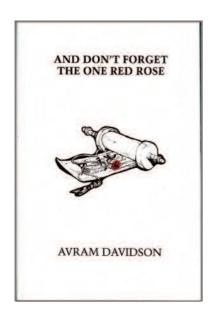
This extremely rare book is the final volume in Avram Davidson's saga of the wandering wizard, Vergil Magus, in a magical alternate history of ancient Rome. Included in the above images is the title page and frontispiece illustration



#### Davidson, Avram What strange stars and skies

New York : Ace, c1965 Cover art: Jack Gaughan

A collection of Davidson's delightful short stories put out by Ace Books, one of the most successful publishers of science fiction paperbacks of the 1950's and 1960's. The cover art is by Jack Gaughan, an important and influential science fiction artist of the 1960's and 1970's,

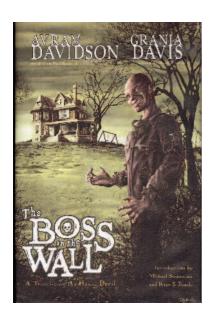


# Davidson, Avram And don't forget the one red rose

Seattle: Dryad Press, c1986, c1975 Released in conjunction with Norescon 9, March 20-23, 1986 in Seattle Washington Cover art: Gail Butle

Limited edition of 185 copies

In this hilarious, evocative work, a vendor of the rarest of books displays his wares to his neighbor, and describes the eccentric prices, such as: "The price of this one is one mummified simurgh enwrapped in six bolts of pale brocade, an hundred measures of finest musk in boxes of granulated goldwork ..."



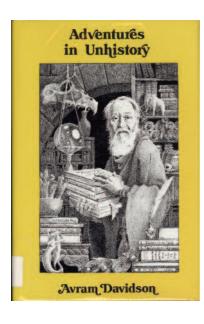
#### Davidson, Avram with Grania Davis The boss in the wall: A Treatise on the House Devil

San Francisco: Tachyon Publications,

c1998

Cover art: Michael Dashow

Published posthumously, an unusually horrific short novel in which dead vagrants live on in vacant and abandoned houses as rustling people constructed of paper. They have been known to deliver nasty bites to the living.



# Davidson, Avram Adventures in Unhistory: Conjectures on the Factual Foundations of Several Ancient Legends

Philadelphia: Owlswick Press, c1993. Illustrated by George Barr.

Fabulist and fantasist Davidson examines common themes and tropes in myths, folktales and fantasy fiction. He explores the natural history of dragons, Prester John, and other odd by-ways of history in this collection of charming essays.

#### >>>> Recommended Series Reading Order

Staff at the Merril Collection are often asked in which order the books of a series should be read. Accordingly, the Merril Collection series list covers pretty much all of space and time.

This issue, in anticipation of season 6 of the Game of Thrones television series airing next month, we're listing the recommended reading order for George R.R. Martin's A Song of Ice & Fire series and the related graphic novel adaptations.

#### **Prequel Novellas:**

The Princess and the Queen	.2013
The Rogue Prince, or, a King's Brother	.2014
A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms	.2015

#### A Song of Ice & Fire (by publication date):

1. A Game of Thrones	.1996
2. A Clash of Kings	.1999
3. A Storm of Swords	2000
4. A Feast for Crows	2005
5. A Dance with Dragons	.2011*
6. The Winds of Winter (forthcoming)	

<sup>7.</sup> A Dream of Spring (forthcoming)

Graphic novel adaptations of the novellas & ASOIAF novel series:

Games of Thrones V. 1 - 4

A Game of Thrones: Comic Book, Issue 1-23

The Hedge Knight V.1

The Hedge Knight V.2: Sword Sword

<sup>\*</sup>A Dance with Dragons was published as paperback in UK, Part 1. Dreams and Dust and Part 2: After the feast.

Another series reading order we thought we'd share which also involved George R.R. Martin is Wild Cards, a SF and superhero anthology series all written within a shared universe by multiple authors. They tend to revolve around a central theme with some strorylines making multiple appearances throughout the various issues. In some cases, Martin edited volumes to include a complete novel done by a single author.

#### Wild Cards

1. Wild Cards	1986
Expanded edition	2010
2. Aces High	1987
3. Joker's Wild	
4. Aces Abroad	1988
5. Down and Dirty	1988
6. Ace in the Hole	1989
7. Dead Man's Hand	1990
8. One-Eyed Jacks	1991
9. Jokertown Shuffle	
10. Double Solitaire -by Melinda Snodgrass	1992
11. Dealer's Choice	1992
12. Turn of the Cards - by Victor Milán	1993
13. Card Sharks	1993
14. Marked Cards	1994
15. Black Trump	1995
16. Deuces Down	2003
17. Death Draws Five (by John J. Miller)	2006
18. Inside Straight	2008
19. Busted Flush	2008
20. Suicide Kings	2009
21. Fort Freak	
22. Lowball	2014

# >>>>5 Questions with Merril Collection Librarians & Curators Kim Hull and Annette Mocek by Alicia Freeborn

AF: I understand that the ownership of the Merril Collection display is rotated among the librarians on a quarterly basis. Can you tell me when your slotted exhibit is for 2016 and it's theme?

**KH:** The current exhibit is mine; January to beginning of April. "All you can read: fantastic fiction about food". My next one will probably be the first one for January 2017.

AM: My next exhibit is scheduled to be on display from October through December of 2016. The working title of it is "THREADS" and I plan to explore the textile arts as they appear in genre fiction. I'm quite looking forward to it, since I am a "maker" and have been sewing since I was five, making clothing, evening wear and beading costumes for my daughter's skating competitions, and have also knitted, crocheted, and experimented with most kinds of needlework. My mother used to teach embroidery classes to children, so we all had our little embroidery samplers when we were children. My mom gave us squares of burlap to practice on.

**AF:** Annette your "THREADS" theme sounds fun, two books I recommend off the top of my head that fit the criteria is *Wool* by Hugh Howey and Clive Barker's *Weaveworld* (a magic world woven and therefore preserved in a rug)



AF: How do you get inspired for a display? Feel free to talk about ideas you'd like to try in the future / past exhibits.

**KH:** The inspiration process for me is usually fairly straight forward; I start to realize that we have lots of books on "X" topic, and it would make a good exhibit. Or, there may be an event that we want to celebrate, or we might be told that there may be a larger theme that the system would like us to support, Black History Month, for example, which I did last year. We are seeing a trend in SF/Fantasy Westerns, and I'm considering that for my next exhibit.

**AM:** Topics of our displays in the past have often been chosen to coincide with important genre events or guest speakers. We first did a major exhibit the year that the Fantastic Pulps Show began, and we created giant cutouts of pulp characters which we mounted on foamcore, and large colourful lettering which spanned the entire metal wall of the library. TPL had offered the staff the opportunity to have a copy of Corel Draw (software), which I found very helpful for these giant designs. More recently, the library replaced that software with Photoshop, which I have been teaching myself to use.

Another notable exhibit was prepared to correspond with the arrival of a guest lecturer, Dr. Elizabeth Miller, who is an expert on Bram Stoker's Dracula. We had recently acquired a first edition of Dracula, and designed the exhibit around it, complete with Gothic arches, bats, fake garlic and wooden stakes. This was a joint exhibit curated by Kim and myself.

Some of the topics I've chosen have been themes which I'm passionate about, like Music, or ideas which I find intriguing, like Time Travel or Mirrors. Some are related to TPL programs, such as Keep Toronto Reading's 2013 celebration of Ray Bradbury and Fahrenheit 451, or the 200th anniversary of World War I. Some are themes which I find interesting or timely, such as Ecology (saving the planet) or Steampunk. When a collector of Cemetary Dance magazine donated 400 rare issues to the Merril collection, I mounted a display of the choicest items (it was rather eye-opening, since as a rule I don't read horror fiction)! We also did an exhibit of Jack Vance to commemorate the publication of the Vance Integral Edition.

It can be fun to feature a part of the collection that the public generally doesn't know about, such as SF Poetry, or to celebrate certain formats as we often do with the pulp magazines (which we've focused on a number of times

over the years). Popular culture heroes like Tarzan or The Shadow, Flash Gordon, and the ever-present green monsters from space which people always love to see.

If I can't think of a familiar topic, I like to choose something I don't know too much about, and familiarize myself with the genre and related items in the collection. Sometimes this works especially well. A few years ago, the BBC program Doctor Who celebrated its 50th anniversary, and I knew that there would be a lot happening in the SF community to celebrate it, so I created a Doctor Who display. Not having watched it, this meant that I spent quite a lot of evenings in the preceding months watching episodes of the old series and catching up with the new one. It was a lot of fun, and it gave me an excuse to build a scale model of the TARDIS out of foamcore, (with lights and all) which was hung in the atrium to advertise the display. The rest of my family joined in the Dr Who fandom, and we topped the month off by attending the Dr. Who "Reversed Polarity" convention.



# AF: What type of research is involved in the process and generally how long do they take to come together?

**KH:** Research will vary depending on topic; my Black History Month exhibit was a visual essay, talking about the history of SF/Fantasy written by Black authors, so I researched the history of the genre in various regions, and looked at biographies of the authors where possible, and did a certain amount of synthesis of the information. The current exhibit is more light hearted, and is really more of a survey of books about food, subdivided into more discrete topics, like books about chefs, or cannibalism, with no further analysis.

Then the books have to be subdivided into categories to fit 7-8 cases. Sources of information can include *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* and *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* edited by John Clute, and other sources available in the collection.

Often the visuals pop at the same time, so I'll have an idea for the poster at almost the same time as the topic presents itself. Sometimes, however, it can take some thought about the image; in the case of the current signage, I was having some trouble coming up with something that would integrate the smaller themes of the cases as well as the larger theme. Menus? Place settings? Mary Cannings suggested retro diner signs, and a google search of images confirmed that this would be a fun image to go with. In the past, we have physically constructed the posters, but more recently we have started to purchase appropriate images, which we modify and add text to, and we take a great deal of care to thematically integrate images and fonts on the signage and case notes. Annette has the photoshop skills and will assist with poster design and production.

Length of time for preparation will vary with the complexity of the topic, so that's very difficult to nail down.

**AM:** Research can take a while. The subject catalogue and in-house bibliographies are a good place to start, but once I start collecting the material, I then need to become familiar with each book, in order to summarize the plot and also to be able to group items in a way that tells a story. Of course, we can't read everything. I think of it as writing an essay. I try to organize the items into subtopics and then arrange them in a way that makes sense.

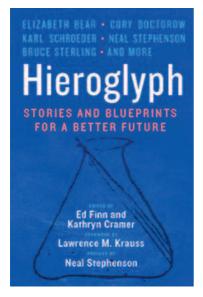
I also try to make each case visuallly appealing. This is not always easy, as "important" books are not always attractive, and attractive items are not always important. I also try to create a visual theme for the exhibit, and make sure that the lettering (fonts), colours and graphic design complements the materials. It's surprisingly difficult to come up with titles, sometimes - words that sound good look awkward when the letters are blown up and arranged on a sign, and sometimes the design can morph in unexpected directions. It's difficult to quantify the time it takes for the creative process.

I've spent a considerable amount of time gaining facility with Photoshop and other design software, so I am the "techie" for all four exhibits each year, and collaborate with the other curators to produce the signage, posters and other lettering as required. Sometimes it's not advisable to display original material in the cases because it is too fragile to withstand so much exposure to light, etc, so we often scan items and prepare facsimiles or mount images on foamcore to display instead. I do this part of the job, and also help with mounting books on book cradles if they are to be displayed open. If necessary I build the book supports, too. As you might suspect, I truly enjoy the creative, hands-on part of the job. Creating exhibits are definitely one of the perks of working here at Merril!



#### >>>>The Merril Vote by Oliver Brackenbury

In each issue of Sol Rising, one Merril staff member or Friends of Merril member will recommend a book, or several, depending on what they're reading and think people might enjoy.



#### **Better Living Through Science Fiction**

It's not the observation of the century to say that there have been quite a few Dystopian tales in prose, film, and television over the last few decades – with a definite uptick in more recent years. What's noteworthy is Neal Stephenson's reaction to the trend, which he saw even within his own work, and how it isn't trying to push the pendulum over to the other extreme, Utopian fiction, or to retreat into science fantasy. Instead, frustrated by what he sees as modern

society's inability to execute projects both innovative and grand in scale, he sought to "create a rich feedback loop between science and storytelling."

To this end, Neal Stephenson founded Project Hieroglyph, an ongoing collaboration and information exchange between authors, scientists, and engineers. Their first short fiction anthology, Hieroglyph, features stories with "No magic wands, hyperspace drives, or galaxies far, far, away – just big ideas about how the world could be very different with a few small adjustments.", written by a deep bench of talented authors such as Bruce Sterling, Cory Doctorow, and Stephenson himself.

These Tales To Inspire are not just the large scale engineering projects you'd expect. My favourite story was one of social engineering, "Degrees of Freedom" by Karl Schroeder, which explores exciting new methods for large groups to make important decisions for addressing crises, while "Girl in Wave: Wave in Girl" by Kathleen Ann Goonan uses neuroscience to interrogate how we educate ourselves, and Brenda Cooper's "Elephant Angels" tackles the issue of the black economy in endangered animal parts. This all being said, those who delight in space elevators, self-replicating 3D printers, or robots will not be disappointed!

At the end of each story you'll find notes from the author on their subject and writing process, as well as links to forum discussions and further reading on the Hieroglyph website. After reading countless tales that only seem to suggest armed revolution or nihilistic hopelessness, it's beyond refreshing to take in tales which not only try to inspire creative problem-solving, they invite you to become part of the solution.

Why "Hieroglyph"? As they say on their website: The name of Project Hieroglyph comes from the notion that certain iconic inventions in science fiction stories serve as modern "hieroglyphs" — Arthur Clarke's communications satellite, Robert Heinlein's rocket ship that lands on its fins, Issac Asimov robots, and so on. Jim Karkanias of Microsoft Research described hieroglyphs as simple, recognizable symbols on whose significance everyone agrees.

#### Further Reading:

Neal Stephenson on Innovation Starvation Project Hieroglyph

# The The Inter-Planet Transit Commission Collection by Jackie Lee

"The Inter-Planet Transit Commission was inspired by a couple things. First, just an honest dream of being able to travel to various locations in outer space. Who doesn't dream of getting brunch on Mars? Secondly, and a little more directly, the series was inspired by a comic anthology called Child of Tomorrow which is a collection of comics and stories by Al Feldstein. I was just massively inspired by his creativity and limitless imagination when it came to designing and creating believable worlds in space. The style in which I completed the series was also heavily inspired by travel poster designs from the 30's to play on the contrast between something that looks distinctly vintage but depicting something super futuristic.



I was all over the place when I was designing this series. Some of them started off as thumbnail sketches that were reworked and redrawn numerous times before I brought them into photoshop to do the final finishes. Sometimes I went straight to photoshop with my drawing tablet and just banged it out without any sort of plan. There were also a couple of designs like Pluto and Mercury where I had specific vintage travel posters in mind that I wanted to play off of. I designed the posters specifically to be screen printed. I tried using a distinct and interesting combination of colours in each poster that reflected what I imagined the vibe of the planet would be. Since every colour is printed separately, it limits the number of colours I use and it gives the illustrations a very graphic and blocky look. As an artist as well, the process of printing the posters by hand gives the finished work a very tactile and rich look. This also pays homage to the spirit of the vintage travel posters they were inspired by."



Jackie also has put together a collection of prints of our solar system moons that are rather beautiful, displaying each individual character through surface detail & shape.

For more information on Jackie Lee's work, please visit her website at www.jackieleeart.ca and facebook page at www.facebook.com /jackiedrinkscoffee.

EARTH IS WAITING

All images used in this profile are ©Jackie Lee Art, and may not be used without their express permission.

# Tantastic J L PS

**SHOW & SALE** 

20th YEAR!

Saturday May 07, 2016 10am to 4pm

PULP MAGAZINES, RELATED ITEMS, SLIDESHOW & MORE!



Lillian H. Smith Branch, 239 College St., Toronto, ON

Presented in association with The Friends of the Merril Collection For information call: 905.820,7572 or email: info@girasolcollectables.com



#### **Sol Rising Throwback**

Sol Rising, formerly known as SOL Rising, has been a free volunteer publication since the late 80's. Now in its 28th year, it has seen many Friends of Spaced Out Library/Merril Collection members, formats, and guest writers and authors come and go during its lifetime. To commemorate them, we have dedicate a column to spotlight a past contribution that is still interesting to read to this day.

# >>>> Hidden Treasures by Lorna Toolis SOL Rising Issue #25, September 2001

"Pedro fell ill. There wasn't a vet in all of Chicago who dealt with parrots. Besides, it was too cold to risk taking him outside. The zoo vet said it sounded like pneumonia. Keep him warm and give him stimulants."

"A cruel fate caused the boiler to quit during Pedro's crisis. Everybody moved into the kitchen to keep warm. My father stayed home from work to nurse him. I remember coming home from school upon this scene: Pedro was wrapped in a dishtowel. To immobilize him, my father had made a sort of cradle out of one of those black enamel oval roasting pans. He had Pedro resting on the open oven door, and was in the act of pouring Ballantine's scotch down Pedro's beak out of a shot glass." - Daniel Pinkwater, from "Polly Wants a Broad Spectrum Antibiotic" in Fishwhistle (1989).

Hidden deep in the Merril stacks are some of the works of one of the greatest American fantasy writers of our time. I refer to Daniel Pinkwater, author of (among others) Author's Day (1993), Borgel (1990), The Snarkout Boys and the Avocado of Death (1982), The Moosepire (1986), Lizard Music (1976), Alan Mendolsohn, The Boy from Mars, Fat Men From Space (1977), and The Worms of Kukumlima (1981).

As the Merril Collection was designed to help adults, and most of the adults we serve are notably unencumbered with children, you may have managed to miss Pinkwater's amazing books. Daniel Manus Pinkwater has written over seventy books, mostly for kids, these being people who are neither young children nor adults. He is a commentator for National Public Radio in the U.S., and two collections of his columns, FishWhistle (1989) and Chicago Days, Hoboken Nights (1991) have been published. Briefly, he had a column in the New York Review of Science Fiction (issues 1-4), so those of you who are sf purists, wondering why I am writing about this man, can dig out your back issues and take a look.

I am telling you about Pinkwater because I think that he is a genius, whose writings are easy to miss, because they are filed in the YA (young adult) ghetto. It is difficult to explain the charm of a Pinkwater novel; charm does not lend itself to analysis. As the old expression has it, it is like trying to fluoroscope a ghost. However, I can write of the moments of recognition, intense emotional spikes echoed in his readers' lives. We all look for reflections of our own experience of life in fiction, and in Pinkwater's books, complete with aliens, talking animals and weird relatives, almost everyone finds it.

In The Snarkout books, Walter Galt, disgusted student at Genghis Khan High School, snarks out, ie. sneaks out of his parents house after dark, in order to attend late night showings of classic movies. While doing this, he also discovers food - real food, not the tasteless mush his mother has been serving all of his life. (You have to love someone who creates the Garden of Earthly Delights Drive-in and Pizzeria).

Reading Pinkwater reminded me of one of the major experiences of my life. This occurred in Doncaster, England, while I was taking care of my two cousins, aged five and three. Doncaster was an industrial English city; it looked pretty much like I thought that Mordor would, on a bad day. All of the buildings were gray or brown or black, the plants looked as if Lovecraft's Colour Out of Space had sucked the life from them, and if any birds flew overhead in the gray sky, you instinctively expected them to plummet to earth, dying.

My aunt announced that we were going out for Chinese food. Chinese food, in my family, came in cans. My mother, always supportive, knew that Chinese food was supposed to be a treat, and once or twice a year, felt obliged to inflict it upon us. Canned vegetables, accompanied by gray mystery meat, in a sauce which mostly tasted like the tin it came in.

In any case, they made the announcement, and I went into hunted animal mode. I am sure that my eyes shone with that red light that all photographs of trapped animals show. I was reluctantly shepherded into the vehicle, still trying to think of a reason for not eating food tonight. An hour later, I reluctantly spooned something called curried duck with cashews onto my plate and took a mouthful. My life has never been the same since. I have talked to several other people, admirers of the Snarkout books, who shared that moment of recognition the books engender, remembering when food stopped being a regrettable necessity and became amazing."

(Anyone further interested in this topic should go to www.pinkwater.com and read the article on Chicago sausage)."



# **Submission Queries**

We are always willing to consider work from members, fans, professionals, and all other interested individuals for inclusion in Sol Rising!

If you are interested in submitting articles or other projects for consideration, please get in touch with us first to make sure that your proposal fits our mandate.

Sol Rising also offers ad space for purchase. For a breakdown of our advertising guidelines and fees, please use the contact information listed below

Please address queries to: Alicia Freeborn, at solrising.editor@gmail.com

# **Copies of Sol Rising**

The Friends of the Merril are currently partnered with several stores in the GTA (listed below) in an effort to make it easier for people to get physical copies of Sol Rising:

Bakka Phoenix Books 84 Harbord St., (416)-963-9993 www.bakkaphoenixbooks.com

The Beguiling, 601 Markham St. (416)-533-9168, www.beguiling.com

The Hairy Tarantula, 354 Yonge St., 2nd Floor, 416-596-8002 www.hairyt.com

# Volunteer with the Friends

# Event Setup, Notifications, & Staffing the tables

The Friends of Merril put on some events each year that may require furniture setup, contacting local weeklies, or helping staff the Merril promotional tables.

#### **Sol Rising**

Write articles for our semi-annual newszine, or help with proofreading, ad sales, graphic design etc.

#### Marketing/Promotion

Help spread the word by promoting Merril events via Facebook, Twitter, and in-store listings.

#### **Fundraising**

An *ad hoc* fundraising committee looks at ideas to raise money to support the Friends and the Collection.

The Merril Collection, which was originally called the Spaced Out Library and later renamed for its founder, the late Judith Merril, is one of the world's foremost open-access collections of Speculative, SF, and Fantasy Fiction & pop-culture, all made available to the greater public.

The Collection houses an astonishing 75,000 items, and is always growing. In the stacks you will find century-old and modern-day fiction; first and rare editions, original artworks, TPB graphic works and comic collections; 1930s pulps and this month's magazines; fanzines; authors' correspondence; critical essays, reference works and compendia—and original manuscripts donated by authors such as Phyllis Gottlieb & Cory Doctorow.

# The Friends of the Merril Collection is a volunteer organization providing support to the Collection through paid memberships, donations, sponsorship of relation events such as readings,





Collection Head Lorna Toolis and librarian Annette Mocek standing beside the D for Dracula display at the Special Collections: A-Z exhibit on now at the Toronto Reference library.

book launches & signings, panel discussions, and the publication of Sol Rising.

Memberships & donations to the FotM underwrite events and help the Collection acquire materials it otherwise could not afford. We invite you to support the Merril Collection by joining or by making a donation on our website: friendsofmerril.org/donate