

# Wis[s]e Words

Ceci N'est pas Un Blog

## Other people's new year's resolutions

January 23rd, 2011

Like me, another science fiction reader/blogger called Martin (Lewis in his case) found out he read shockingly little science fiction by women and decided to do something about it:

Over Christmas I decided to do something about this: I would read and review one SF novel by a women every month in 2011. I appreciate this sounds pathetically modest but in the context of my current reading I'm afraid it isn't. There were several SF novels by women already languishing on my shelves, bought but unread and in this state for some time. I rescued these and then topped them up from Amazon. This in itself was an eye-opener; almost all the books I searched for – even those which had only recently been published – were out of print.

He's not the only one to set himself this challenge: so did Ian Sales:

Torque Control's Women in SF Week has inspired me to read twelve science fiction novels by women writers during 2011 as my reading challenge. I've tentatively identified the dozen novels I'm going to read. I didn't want to pick only those published since 2001, although many are from the last decade. Nor would I limit myself to books published in the UK. But I did want my list to be comprise only authors I've not read before (bar one or two slight cheats).

And, neatly satisfying the law of threes, over at *Torque Control*, *Vector*'s new editor Shana Worthen will be holding a monthly bookgroup reading through the winners of last year's poll of best sf novels by women published from 2001-2010.

For myself I had already decided last year I needed to read more female science fiction, spending the last months of year reading and rereading some writers I had neglected for too, like Lois McMaster Bujold, C. J. Cherryh and Mary Gentle. But perhaps I should try and set myself the same sort of goal as Ian and Martin as well, even if what I read is so depend on my mood and interests on any given day. So let's pick a list of twelve books I can and should read this year, either science fiction or fantasy, all written by women:

- January: *The Left Hand of Darkness* — Ursula LeGuin (start with a classic, especially when it's a short one...)
- February: *Bold as Love* — Gwyneth Jones
- March: *The Female Man* — Joanna Russ
- April: *China Mountain Zhang* — Maureen McHugh
- May: *Foreigner* — C. J. Cherryh
- June: *The Halfling and Other Stories* — Leigh Brackett
- July: *A Point of Honor* — Dorothy J. Heydt
- August: *Golden Witchbreed* — Mary Gentle
- September: *10,000 Light Years from Home* — James Tiptree, Jr
- October: *Trouble and Her Friends* — Melissa Scott
- November: *No Present Like Time* — Steph Swainston
- December: *The King's Peace* — Jo Walton

These are on my shelves right now, all save three not read before and selected to have a relatively wide selection of science fiction/fantasy. These (hopefully) won't be the only female written sf/fantasy books I read this year, but these are the

ones I will read.

## **1 Comment**

1. *The Left Hand of Darkness* – Ursula K. LeGuin | *Martin's Booklog* January 30th, 2011

[...] example of several fellow science fiction bloggers, I decided to approach this more systemically, by pledging to read at least one science fiction or fantasy book by a female writer each month. *The Left Hand of Darkness* is the first and I choose it because it was a well respected classic [...]

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