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George Edgar Slusser (1939-2015)

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July 2015

George Edgar Slusser (1939-2015)

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NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

George Edgar Slusser (1939-2014). An American sf scholar who was both prolific and highly influential in the field, George Slusser died on 4 November 2014. Professor of comparative literature (PhD, Harvard) at the University of California, Riverside, he was co-founder and long-time curator of the J. Lloyd Eaton Collection, the largest publicly accessible collection of science fiction, fantasy, horror, and utopian literature in the world. For many years, George also organized the annual Eaton Conference at UCR. The papers from this conference appeared in more than twenty critical anthologies—coedited by George, along with Eric S. Rabkin, Gary Westfahl, and others—which ranged from *Bridges to Science Fiction* (1980) to *Visions of Mars: Essays on the Red Planet in Fiction and Science* (2011) and included such titles as *Shadows of the Magic Lamp: Fantasy and Science Fiction in Film* (1985), *Fights of Fancy: Armed Conflict in Science Fiction and Fantasy* (1993), and *No Cure for the Future: Disease and Medicine in Science Fiction and Fantasy* (2002), to name but a few. He also produced several non-Eaton critical anthologies on a variety of sf-related topics: the transformation of utopias, the fantastic, Ursula K. Le Guin, H.G. Wells, and the fantasy genre. George's monographs on individual sf writers included studies of Robert A. Heinlein, Le Guin, Ray Bradbury, Samuel R. Delany, Harlan Ellison, Arthur C. Clarke, and most recently Gregory Benford. He received the Pilgrim Award in 1986 for lifetime contributions to sf scholarship. Lastly, George was fluent in French and, with his wife Danièle Chatelain (a literature professor and scholar in her own right), published translations of Honoré de Balzac's fantastic novel *The Centenarian* (2005) and of *Three Science Fiction Novellas* by J.-H. Rosny aîné (2012) in Wesleyan UP's "Early Classics of Science Fiction" book series.

I first came to know George in the fall of 1987 when we worked together on a special issue of *SFS* devoted to "Science Fiction in France" (published in March 1988). I found his understanding of early French sf to be impressive and his humanist approach to the genre refreshing. In the years since that time—and especially during the Eaton Conference of May 2009 whose theme was "Jules Verne and Science Fiction"—George again and again proved himself to be a rarity among academic scholars: one whose sf interests were both deep and wide-ranging and whose expertise extended well beyond the Anglo-American. George's greatest legacy will no doubt continue to be UCR's wonderful Eaton Collection that he spent much of his life building. But I will always remember him as the incomparable "Renaissance Man" of sf scholarship.—**Arthur B. Evans, *SFS***