FROM THE EDITORS

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Ian Campbell

The heat wave that struck Western Europe and killed a couple of thousand people was different from other heat waves, not because of its lethality, and certainly not because of its singularity: heat waves will continue and only grow in intensity. What made this latest heat wave unusual was that it was the first heat wave to be given a name: Zoe. Just like hurricanes/typhoons, heat waves are now such a common part of our lived experience that we have engaged in the oddly human habit of naming them. Easier than overthrowing the oil companies, I suppose. The lived experience of an unevenly-distributed (and unevenly-dystopian) science fictional future/present is something inherently science-fictional, in that our reality is always already estranged by technological distortions, not least among them the algorithmic social media feeds that distort the thoughts of even people well aware of how these algorithms work and why.

In this issue, we have three primary perspectives on SF, in addition to the usual run of reviews of non-fiction, fiction and media. We have a group of short papers on various topics in our Features section. We have a group of papers derived from a conference addressing the medical humanities in the fantastic: perspectives on disability, trauma, autism and multiple embodiments. We also have our frequent contributor Adam McLain’s curated collection of papers on sexual violence in SF. Needless to say, readers of this last collection should be forewarned that some of the papers are likely to trigger or otherwise disturb by virtue of their topic and content, though of course none of them is intended to cause anxiety or suffering.

Please also investigate our call for papers on conservative/right-wing SF. We look forward to reading your perspectives on this all too influential discourse, as the continuing resurgence of right-wing values is one of the most puzzling (and least welcome) aspects of the science-fictionality of our contemporary world. And stay away from Zoe.