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Bruce Sterling

Michael Bruce Sterling (born April 14, 1954) is an American science-fiction author known for his novels and short fiction and editorship of the *Mirrorshades* anthology. In particular, he is linked to the cyberpunk subgenre.

Sterling's first science-fiction story, *Man-Made Self*, was sold in 1976. He is the author of science-fiction novels including *Schismatrix* (1985), *Islands in the Net* (1988), and *Heavy Weather* (1994). In 1992, he published his first non-fiction book, *The Hacker Crackdown: Law and Disorder on the Electronic Frontier*.^[1]

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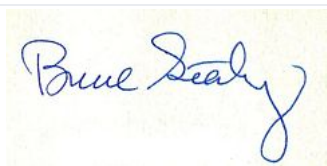
Writings

Sterling is one of the founders of the cyberpunk movement in science fiction, along with William Gibson, Rudy Rucker, John Shirley, Lewis Shiner, and Pat Cadigan. In addition, he is one of the subgenre's chief ideological promulgators. This has earned him the nickname "Chairman Bruce".^[2] He was also one of the first organizers of the Turkey City Writer's Workshop, and is a frequent attendee at the Sycamore Hill Writer's Workshop. He won Hugo Awards for his novelettes *Bicycle Repairman* (1996) and *Taklamakan* (1998). His first novel, *Involution Ocean*, published in 1977, features the world Nullaqua where all the atmosphere is contained in a single, miles-deep crater. The story concerns a ship sailing on the ocean of dust at the bottom and hunting creatures called dustwhales. It is partially a science-fictional pastiche of *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville.

In the early 1980s, Sterling wrote a series of stories set in the Shaper/Mechanist universe: the Solar System is colonized, with two major warring factions. The Mechanists use a great deal of

Bruce Sterling



Born	April 14, 1954 <div>Brownsville, Texas</div>
Pen name	Vincent Omniaveritas (in fanzine <i>Cheap Truth</i>)
Occupation	Writer · speaker · <u>futurist</u> · design instructor
Nationality	American
Alma mater	<u>University of Texas at Austin</u> (B.A., Journalism, 1976)
Period	1970s–present
Genre	Science fiction
Subject	<u>Cyberpunk</u>
Literary movement	Cyberpunk/postcyberpunk
Signature	
Website	<u>well.com/conf/mirrorshades</u> (<u>http://well.com/conf/mirrorshades</u>)

computer-based mechanical technologies; the Shapers do genetic engineering on a massive scale. The situation is complicated by the eventual contact with alien civilizations; humanity eventually splits into many subspecies, with the implication that some of these vanish from the galaxy, reminiscent of the singularity in the works of Vernor Vinge. The Shaper/Mechanist stories can be found in the collection *Crystal Express* and the collection *Schismatrix Plus*, which contains the novel *Schismatrix* and all of the stories set in the Shaper/Mechanist universe. Alastair Reynolds identified *Schismatrix* and the other Shaper/Mechanist stories as one of the greatest influences on his own work.^[3]

In the 1980s, Sterling edited the science fiction critical fanzine *Cheap Truth* under the alias of Vincent Omniaveritas. He wrote a column called *Catscan* for the now-defunct science fiction critical magazine *SF Eye*.

He contributed a chapter to *Sound Unbound: Sampling Digital Music and Culture* (The MIT Press, 2008) edited by Paul D. Miller a.k.a. DJ Spooky.

From April 2009 through May 2009, he was an editor at Cool Tools.^[4]

Since October 2003^[5] Sterling has blogged at "Beyond the Beyond" (<http://blog.wired.com/sterling/>), which is hosted by *Wired* along with contributions to other print and online platforms like the Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction.^[6]

His most recent novel (as of 2013) is *Love Is Strange* (December 2012), a Paranormal Romance (40k).

Projects

He has been the instigator of three projects which can be found on the Web -

- The Dead Media Project - A collection of "research notes" on dead media technologies, from Incan quipus, through Victorian phenakistoscopes, to the departed video game and home computers of the 1980s. The Project's homepage, including Sterling's original *Dead Media Manifesto* can be found at <http://www.deadmedia.org>
- The Viridian Design Movement - his attempt to create a "green" design movement focused on high-tech, stylish, and ecologically sound design.^[7] The Viridian Design home page, including Sterling's *Viridian Manifesto* and all of his *Viridian Notes*, is managed by Jon Lebkowsky at <http://www.viridiandesign.org>. The Viridian Movement helped to spawn the popular "bright green" environmental weblog Worldchanging. WorldChanging contributors include many of the original members of the Viridian "curia".
- Embrace the Decay - a web-only art piece commissioned by the LA Museum of Contemporary Art in 2003.^[8] Incorporating contributions solicited through The Viridian Design 'movement', Embrace the Decay was the most visited piece/page at LA MOCA's Digital Gallery, and included contributions from Jared Tarbell of [levitated.net](http://www.levitated.net/) (<http://www.levitated.net/>) and co-author of several books on advanced Flash programming, and Monty Zukowski, creator of the winning 'decay algorithm' sponsored by Bruce.

Neologisms

Sterling has coined various neologisms to describe things that he believes will be common in the



Bruce Sterling at the 2010 Augmented Reality Event

future, especially items which already exist in limited numbers.

- In the December 2005 issue of *Wired* magazine, Sterling coined the term *buckyjunk* to refer to future, difficult-to-recycle consumer waste made of carbon nanotubes (a.k.a. buckytubes, based on buckyballs or *buckminsterfullerene*).
- In his 2005 book *Shaping Things*,^[9] he coined the term *design fiction* which refers to a type of speculative design which focuses on *world building*.
- In July 1989, in *SF Eye #5*, he was the first to use the word "slipstream" to refer to a type of speculative fiction between traditional science fiction and fantasy and mainstream literature.
- In December 1999 he coined the term "Wexelblat disaster", for a disaster caused when a natural disaster triggers a secondary, and more damaging, failure of human technology.^[10]
- In August 2004, he suggested a type of technological device (he called it "*spime*") that, through pervasive *RFID* and *GPS* tracking, can track its history of use and interact with the world.^[11]
- He discussed and expanded on *Sophia Al Maria's* neologism "Gulf Futurism" in his column for *Wired* magazine, "Beyond The Beyond" ^[12]

Personal

In the beginning of his childhood he lived in Galveston, Texas until his family moved to India. Sterling spent several years in India and has a fondness for Bollywood films.^[13] In 1976, he graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in journalism.^[14] In 1978, he was a *Dungeon Master* for a *Dungeons & Dragons* game whose players included *Warren Spector*, who cited Sterling's game as a major inspiration for the game design of *Deus Ex*.^[15] In 2003 he was appointed Professor at the *European Graduate School* where he is teaching summer intensive courses on media and design.^[14] In 2005, he became "visionary in residence" at *Art Center College of Design* in Pasadena, California. He lived in Belgrade with Serbian author and film-maker *Jasmina Tešanović*^[16] for several years, and married her in 2005. In September 2007 he moved to *Turin, Italy*.^[17] He also travels the world extensively giving speeches and attending conferences. Both Sterling and artist and musician *Florian-Ayala Fauna* are *sponsors* for *V. Vale's RE/Search* newsletter.^{[18][19][20][21][22][23]}



Sterling at *Robofest '94*

Awards

- 2000 *Clarke Award* winner for the novel *Distraction*^[24]
- 1999 *Hayakawa Award* for Best Foreign Short Story winner for the novelette *Taklamakan*
- 1999 *Hugo Award* winner for the novelette *Taklamakan*
- 1997 *Hugo Award* winner for the novelette *Bicycle Repairman*
- 1989 *Campbell Award* winner for the novel *Islands in the Net*^[25]

Interviews

Sterling has been interviewed for documentaries like *Freedom Downtime*, *TechnoCalyps* and *Traceroute*.

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External links

- [Wired Blog : Beyond the beyond](https://www.wired.com/category/beyond_the_beyond) (https://www.wired.com/category/beyond_the_beyond)
 - [Wolf in Living Room](https://wolfliving.tumblr.com) (<https://wolfliving.tumblr.com>) - blog about domestic ubiquitous computing
 - [Works by Bruce Sterling](https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/66) (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/66>) at Project Gutenberg
 - [Casa Jasmina](https://web.archive.org/web/20141227171409/http://casajasmina.arduino.cc/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20141227171409/http://casajasmina.arduino.cc/>) at the Wayback Machine (archived December 27, 2014) - the Open Source connected apartment.
 - [Bruce Sterling](http://www.isfdb.org/cgi-bin/ea.cgi?280) (<http://www.isfdb.org/cgi-bin/ea.cgi?280>) at the [Internet Speculative Fiction Database](#)
 - [Bruce Sterling](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1790731/) (<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1790731/>) at [IMDb](#)
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