



# Fafnir – Nordic Journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy Research

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## And So It Begun. The First Year of *Fafnir*

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The first year of *Fafnir* the journal has passed, and now it is time for a short yearly report recounting the key events and figures of 2014.

*Fafnir* was founded hand in hand with the FINFAR, The Finnish Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy Research in the autumn of 2013. In short, *Fafnir* is a product of a long tradition of close but unofficial networking of Nordic science fiction and fantasy researchers.

At first *Fafnir* had only its subtitle, *Nordic Journal for Science Fiction and Fantasy Research*, which accurately illustrates its focus and scope. It was decided, however, that the new journal needed a catchier first name. From October to November 2013, a name contest was held, and it produced seven excellent suggestions. The winner was voted by the advisory board and FINFAR society board. It is likely that one of the decisive factors was the fact that “Fafnir” is, as may be obvious, an anagram of FINFAR.

*Fafnir* has been piloted by three Finnish editors-in-chief from the beginning: Jyrki Korpua from University of Oulu, Hanna-Riikka Roine from University of Tampere and Päivi Väättänen from University of Helsinki. All three of them are actively engaged in the field of science fiction and fantasy research and are currently working on their PhD dissertations (or, in Jyrki’s case, putting the finishing touches to the project). All three continue at their posts until the end of 2015 in order to ensure the continuity of the young journal.

In addition to the editors, the sub-editor Juri Timonen has done invaluable work for the journal in setting up the website and publishing the issues online. The advisory board with its fifteen members and the chair Merja Polvinen has also provided indispensable support for the journal.

In its first year, *Fafnir* was issued four times: in March, June, September and December. The publication of the fourth issue was delayed until January 2015, however, due to an attack on the journal’s website, which meant that the site had to be closed down and cleaned up. Only the first issue had a specific theme, while the rest of the issues were open to all kinds of topics. It was assumed that this way, *Fafnir* would receive more submissions and provide for a wider audience with different research interests.

*Fafnir* published ten research articles in total during 2014. All in all, *Fafnir* received fifteen submissions for research articles, and twelve of these were sent for double-blind peer review. This means that 67 per cent of the submitted manuscripts were published – most of the manuscripts were, however, greatly revised according to the advice given by the expert referees.

Along with the articles, *Fafnir*’s issues included five overviews or essays, three reports and three academic book reviews. The topics of overviews and essays ranged from a history of FINFAR seminars to discussions on generic interpretations, while the reports covered two conferences and experiences of planning and teaching a course on science fiction.

The main language of *Fafnir* is English, but it is in the journal's policy to publish texts also in Finnish or in the Scandinavian languages. All but one texts published in 2014 were written in English: the only exception was a book review in Finnish.

*Fafnir*'s sole theme issue 1/2014 introduced the proceedings of the FINFAR seminar held for the 14th time in July 2013. FINFAR seminars are working seminars in which mostly master's degree students and doctoral students present papers that are either a part of a future doctoral dissertation, a master's thesis, or a conference paper.

From the beginning, it was decided that *Fafnir*'s first issue of each year would be dedicated to the proceedings of the seminar, and this year, this very young tradition continues. In 2016, the first issue will be devoted to the proceedings of the Academic Track in Archipelacon, the Nordic Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention, which will surely prove interesting.

Even though the other issues of 2014 had no predetermined themes, it was possible to draw some loose themes for them. The second issue celebrated the multiversum of speculative fiction which gathers various genres under its umbrella, while the third issue postulated on questions of fantasy literature, fantastic milieus and the imaginative. The texts of the last issue were closely connected with genuine problems of our world and contextual fields of experience.

One of the objectives of *Fafnir* is to rejuvenate and join up the Nordic field of science fiction and fantasy research. In the present year, this theme is going to be addressed in the issue 3/2015 which will concentrate on the history of science fiction and fantasy research in the Nordic countries.

*Fafnir* received Media Fellows -grant from Finnish Association of Science Editors and Journalists (Suomen tiedetoimittajain liitto ry) for developing and furthering the journal in its first year. We are thankful for the support: it was mostly spent on building up this platform for *Fafnir*.

All in all, the first year of *Fafnir* has been a thrill! There is still much work to do, many articles to be published, but as Terry Pratchett writes in *Hogfather*: "Everything starts somewhere, although many physicists disagree."