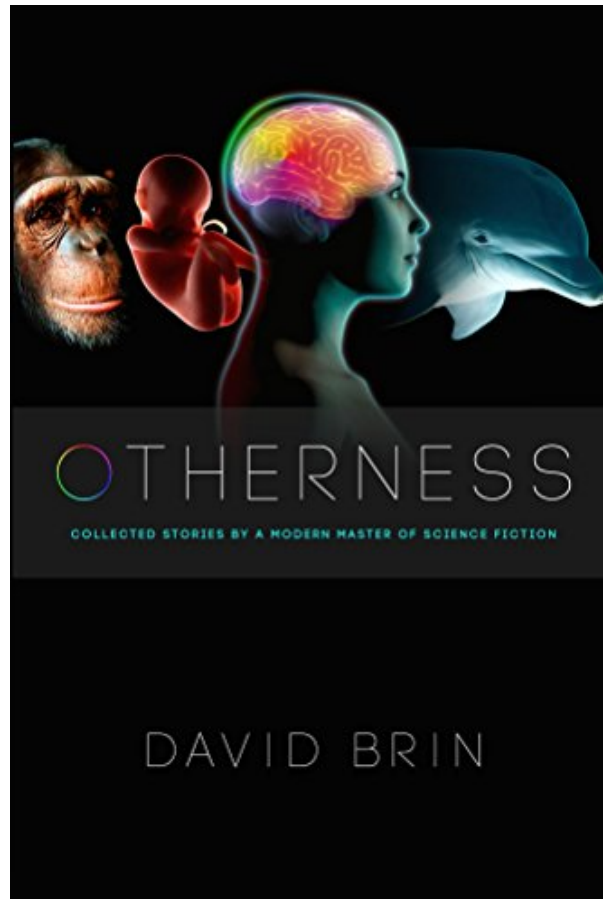
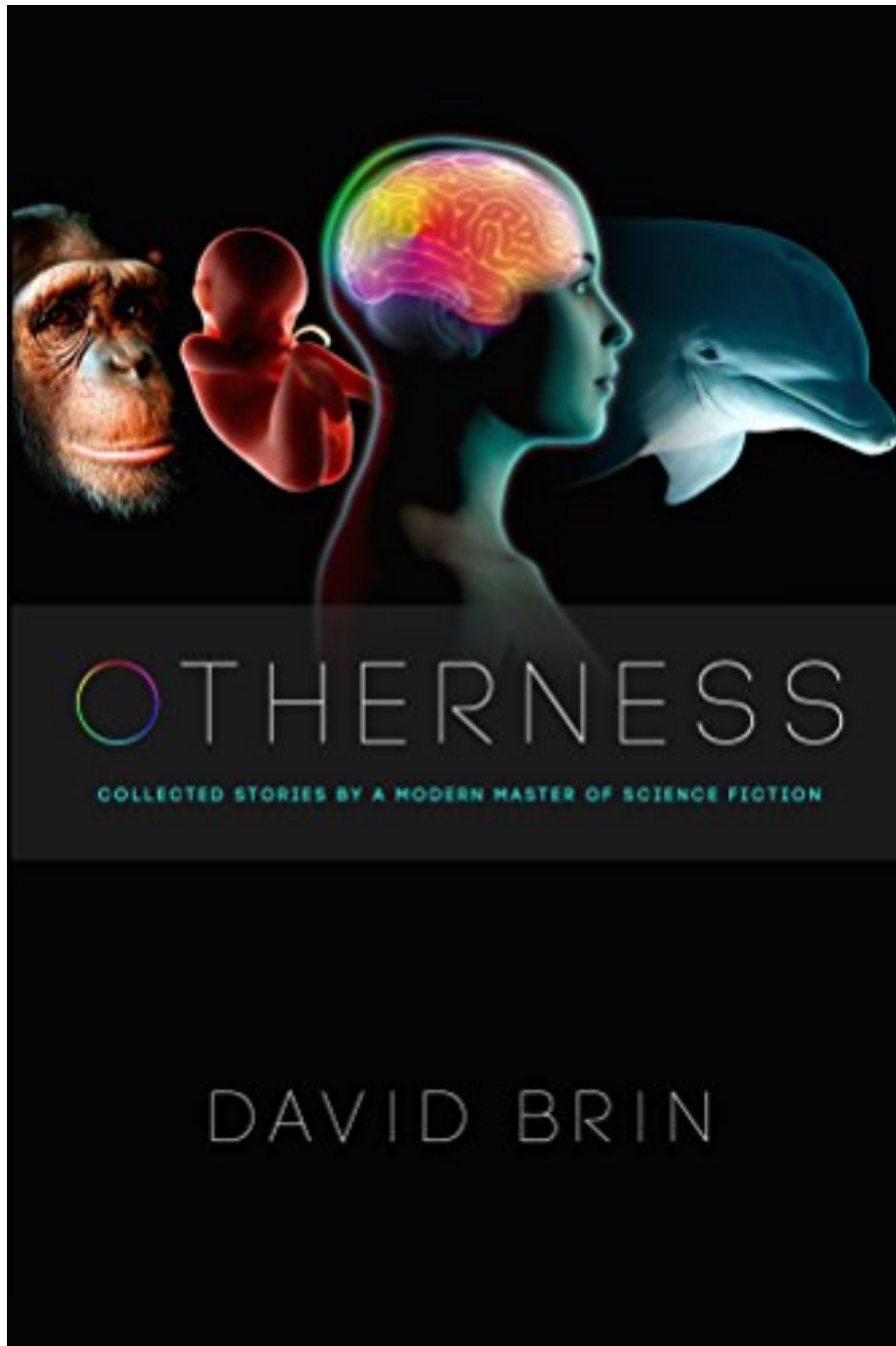


# OTHERNESS BY DAVID BRIN



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In his latest collection of short fiction, essays, and insightful commentaries on both, Brin defines the term otherness as the currently popular relativistic dogma that other points of view are just as important as our own. Using this conception as a loosely organizing theme, Brin assembles some of his finest recent work, from "Shhh," a wryly original tale about alien first contact in which humans may hold a secret edge on their otherwise overwhelmingly superior visitors, to a skeptical critique of reports of extraterrestrial abductions. In "Bubbles," otherness is explored through the electronic awareness of a sentient spacecraft that discovers a doorway to another universe. In perhaps his most penetrating nonfiction piece concerning otherness, "The New Meme," Brin explores the limits to human interpretations of reality. Although, falling short on plot and character, the stories here often read as thinly disguised thought-experiments, they succeed as entertaining hard sf. A treat for Brin fans and connoisseurs of first-rate speculative science. Carl Hays

### Review

'Brin is a fervently iconoclastic writer who loves to pick up a really neat new ideal and take it all the way to the logical limit.' INTERZONE 'OTHERNESS is a multi-faceted book with a surplus of ideas. Intelligent and impassioned SF constructed with a quality control to rival that of NASA.' STARBURST

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# OTHERNESS BY DAVID BRIN PDF

From Hugo and Nebula winning author David Brin comes this extraordinary collection of tales and essays about the near and distant future, as humans and other intelligences encounter the secrets of the cosmos – and of their own existence.

In *The Giving Plague*, a virus, transmitted by blood donation, begins to change humanity. In *Dr. Pak's Preschool*, a woman discovers that her baby has been called to work while still in the womb. In *Natulife*, a married couple finds their relationship threatened by the wonders of virtual reality. In *Sshhh...* the arrival of benevolent aliens on Earth leads to frenzied madness as humans rush to conceal their secret 'talent.' In *Bubbles*, a sentient starcraft reaches the limits of the universe – and dares to go beyond. What happens when an urban archaeologist discovers a terrible secret under the landfills of Los Angeles? Will there still be a purpose for "biologicals" when cybernetic humans become mighty and smart? Come explore these and another dozen startling and provocative tomorrows with a modern master of science fiction.

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#### Most helpful customer reviews

18 of 18 people found the following review helpful.

Nice, not great.

By Armando L. Franco Carrillo

Overall, I give the book four stars. Here's a brief summary of its contents, with each story/essay independently rated. From \* "I did not like it at all" to \*\*\*\*\* "I loved it". I was expecting something like Kiln People.

The Giving Plague: A scientist tries to avoid catching a plague in which discovery he took part. \*\*\*

Myth Number 21: A super short story. To say more would spoil it. \*

Dr. Pak's Preschool: Early stimulation on babies is taken to the extreme. \*\*\*\*

Detritus Affected: Some archaeologists in the near future make grim discoveries at a site. \*\*\*

The Dogma of Otherness: An essay about the newness of caring for other. \*\*

Sshhh...: Humanity looks for its secret unique talent in the Universe. \*\*\*\*\*

Those Eyes: A radio talk show profoundly affect a UFO crew. \*\*\*\*

What to Say to a UFO: An essay about how the story came to be. \*\*\*

Bonding to Genji: Introduction to the world of Genji. \*\*\*\*\*

The Warm Space: In the future, natural humans will be left out of the space race from robo humans, so a man makes a choice to be remembered. \*\*\*\*\* The best of the book.

Whose Millennium? An essay on Y2K and its relative irrelevance from a millennial standpoint. It was a

good one before y2k. \*\*

NatuLife: A city dweller and his ancient virtual world. \*\*\*

Piecework: Using natural resources for production. \*\*\*\*\*

Science versus Magic: An essay comparing Science and Magic. \*\*

Bubbles: One stranded spaceship makes an astounding discovery. \*\*\*\*

Ambiguity: An scholar discovers he's done more than he thought he would. \*\*

What Continues... and What Fails... Evolution on a universal scale. \*\*\*\*\*

The Commonwealth of Wonder: An essay talking about ideas that spread and other topics. \*\*

13 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

Hot and Cold

By K. Wade

David Brin is certainly a talented author, but there are far too many preachy spots in this book for my taste. That he is a disciple of Richard Dawkins was evident from a line in "The Giving Plague" taken directly from the title of Dawkins' book, "The Selfish Gene". He makes it obvious by the final essay.

He also appears to like the surprise twist at the end of the story as several of these short stories have them. The end of "Dr. Pak's Preschool" seemed to me to be a bit contrived, as did the end of the (much better) "The Warm Space", but "Piecework" was such a fabulous, delightful story that I read it several times over even before I went on to finish the book. "NatuLife" was also a fabulous story with many layers of meaning and significance. A fascinating premise that first appears in "Ambiguity" takes a decidedly preachy turn in "What Continues...and What Fails...", a story that crystalizes the author's (and Dawkins') views on evolution.

When it comes to the essays, "The Dogma of Otherness" is both clever and interesting. Brin's sense of humor comes through quite well. Starting with "Whose Millenium" the essays get preachy though, and the mask came off in the final one which was both predictable and boring for anyone who has taken part in internet debates on evolution or religion.

I own this book, having picked it up when the local library discarded it to make room for others. Most of the stories are definitely worth reading, but it isn't likely to find a permanent spot on my shelves either.

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Good, provocative and unexpected

By Amazon Customer

I've tried to read David Brin books before and found them either too subtle for me, or just plain boring. Though, I have read the blurbs on many of his books, and always thought he had some surprising ideas -- as if he'd been practicing those lateral-thinking puzzles for years. I was quite surprised to find a great collection of very provocative ideas that kept me interested all the way through. From a Japanese culture where the ultimate work-ethic means babies are tutored within the womb and are hooked up to computers at their birth, to "organic humans" discovering themselves useful again after years of uselessness in a culture and society of ultimate "cryo-mechanical humans": I was impressed. He even touches on theories of the existence of the entire universe(s) in a highly entertaining way. My recommendation is forget his longer (and long-winded) novels and devour his short-fiction. The ideas/stories in this collection are crystalised and involving. This

one may actually cause me to look more closely at his other novels...

See all 21 customer reviews...

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