

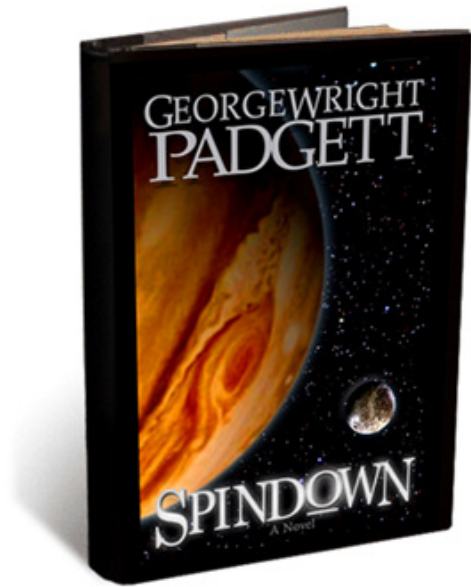
Spindown, a sci-fi story that's out of this world

By Andrew Ortiz | Posted: April 23rd, 2013

George Wright Padgett, George Wright Padgett's writing style is out of this world and he wants to take you on a space exploration (and exploitation) adventure with his first published novel, "SPINDOWN."

Ortiz: Your bio states that you've always had a passion for storytelling. What do you attribute this to?

Padgett: My father told me how he went to the Buck Rogers matinee every Saturday when he was a boy. Though serial movies were long gone by the time he starting taking me to the theater, we routinely went to see the latest sci-fi wonder. This, plus my disposable income spent only on comic books at the time, solidified my love for tales of the fantastic.



George & Daughter, Faith

Jump ahead a few decades: When my daughter Faith was four, we would make up bedtime stories. I noticed that the tall tales we made up were better than those from the bookstore were. I decided to try my hand at a children's story and, in 2006, won the Joan Lowery Nixon award for my story, 'Don't Wake Esmeralda.' After my kids outgrew children's picture book stories, I found my voice in the sci-fi, mystery and horror genres.

Ortiz: Speaking of science fiction, how competitive is the Sci-Fi literary market?

Padgett: Like all publishing, it's fiercely competitive, but it's also an exciting time to be a writer of speculative fiction (that's the buzzword for what we used to call sci-fi).

I'm very optimistic about the first novel market. Despite the increasingly competitive nature of publishing, agents and editors are always on the lookout for the next big voice, hot topic, or amazing story. Big 6 and small houses publish more titles each year. Sci-fi / Fantasy is big business at the moment in publishing and film. To see the trend just go to the local movie cinema; The major movie companies are backing big budget sci-fi fantasy like Hunger Games, Harry Potter, The Hobbit; Tom Cruise and Matt Damon each have post-apocalyptic films due out within the next couple of months.

Ortiz: So how do you channel your inner Bradbury, Clark or Asimov?

Padgett: I've read a lot from those classic authors. One thing that I've always appreciated about those writers is the level of authenticity in their stories. I spent many months building and rebuilding on paper the vast mining compound on Ganymede. When it came time to write, all that I had to do was to trigger the characters to run and follow them as if I were an imbedded reporter.

Ortiz: Sci-Fi? So are you a Star Wars Fan or Trekkie?

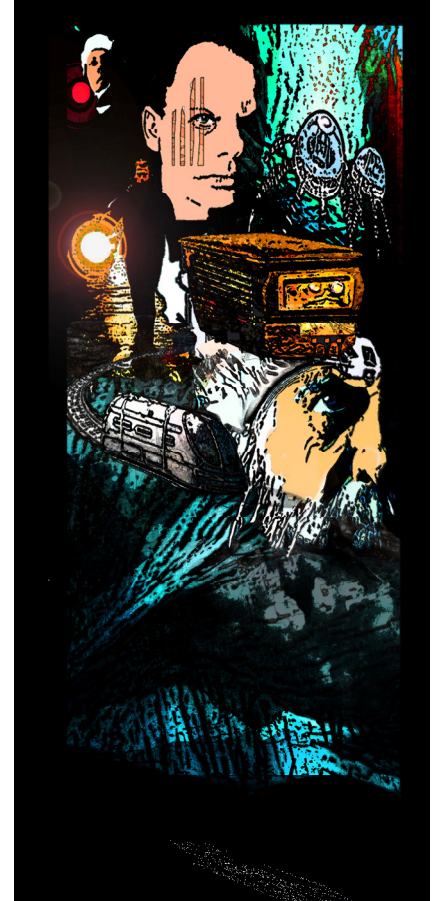
Padgett: I love that question. I'm a card carrying member of both, I also listen to Beatles and The Rolling

Stones' music equally. I'm aware that there's a peculiar rivalry between these two camps. Rodenberry's Star Trek was always grounded more in hard science while Star Wars winks at going faster than light and things that are impossible to science. As long as both the Star Wars universe and Star Trek universe 'play by the rules' that their writers have created I'm fine with it.

It's like the movie Babe, about the little pig. Early on we're shown that all of the farm animals can speak in a common tongue to each other. Okay, I'll suspend my disbelief for an hour or whatever, but if at the end Babe the pig somehow started flying a helicopter or driving a truck, I'd be disappointed because the story's rules didn't include that he or the duck could do anything like that. It's important to be true to the rules of the story that you establish otherwise you may end up frustrating your reader.

Ortiz: What do you think of programs like Coast 2 Coast and The Big Bang Theory?

Padgett: George Noory makes me smile. I used to listen to him on long drives back from Brenhem or somewhere late at night. He was always talking about UFOs or something while I was the only car on the road at 2:00 AM. I'd been watching out the windshield looking at the sky. As far as Big Bang Theory, I think that it's great that to be a geek or nerd no longer has the stigma attached to it that it once did. Now if you're nerdy, while people may give you a wide berth, there's sort of this odd inverted acceptance. One of my favorite things about being a writer of stories that geeks and nerd culture are attracted to is that I get to go to a lot of conventions where this demographic hangs out. There's such a wonderful social acceptance there, where you see the steampunk girl talking to a guy in a Pikachu costume in line behind a stormtrooper. It's like there's this unspoken credo of "Oh, you're into Aquaman stuff, that's cool, check out my hand painted figures of World of Warcraft or whatever.



George signing books at a convention

Ortiz: Many authors use fantasy and symbolism for social commentary. Without giving away the story, could we see parallels between your novel and the world we live in?

Padgett: When I started writing SPINDOWN I wanted to explore the age-old topic of nature vs. nurture - Are we born who we are to become or are we only the by-products of our experiences?

My writing style is that I tend to reverse engineer my stories. I start with the question and then work my way backwards filling in the holes until there's a logic for why things are as they are. For example, in the case of SPINDOWN, I decided to start with characters that were 'blank canvases' that I could expose to extreme situations and watch how they reacted to each other and solve problems.

For it to work I had to answer to myself why would these people would not have any emotional experiences and yet be full grown adults? The solution was make them have lives that were severely isolated, keeping them from each other as much as possible, and when they were forced to interact with each other they would be drugged into a stupor. Then the question arises how or who would do this. So by reverse engineering I realized that it must be an ore corporation behind it and to save money from sending people to Ju-

-iter to mine, they use harvested clones to do the labor.

Ortiz: In your novel, your characters discover this answer, but for you, what does it mean to you to be “human”?

Padgett: In *SPINDOWN*, the characters race to gain their freedom only to discover that freedom without purpose is a mockery of that gift. I believe that each of us have been put on the planet to serve each other in some capacity. While some have giftings that may be more visible than other people, we all have something that we can give to improve life for those in our sphere of influence.

Meet George and get an autographed copy of “SPINDOWN,” 11 A.M. -3 P.M, Saturday, April 20, at the Houston Indie Book Festival at the Menil Collection.

Spindown is available at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), [Barnesandnoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com) and [greygeckopress.com](https://www.greygeckopress.com)