

Biography:

Todd Fiorentino is an MFA student at City College of NY in Harlem. He will graduate in December of 2026 with a degree from the Creative Writing Program. He holds a bachelor's degree in English and Philosophy with a focus in Professional Writing from UMASS, Boston. Todd writes Young Adult, Fantasy, Sci-Fi and Speculative.

As a child, his imagination was sparked when his mother read *Lord of the Rings* to him and his brother. A few years later, he would delve into Ursula Le Guin and begin playing Dungeons & Dragons with his cousins. That became the basis of his interest in Fantasy.

Life progressed and a technological wave crested then crashed. While everyone waited for robots and AI to do our cooking, cleaning and yard work, the ruling class had other plans. Who has access to these technologies? Who is benefiting from them? These questions made their way into Todd's writing.

Noir films like *Blade Runner* and fun inventive sci-fi like *Mandalorian* have been highly influential. Todd's work can be quirky and fast-paced; there is humor and levity and absurdity. One hallmark of his stories is the avoidance of the "soggy middle." The middle of Todd's books tends to be action filled.

Todd has written the following three unpublished books: *Keys to the Spaceship, A Short Story Collection*; *Messiah of GoGoBah* and *The Computer Company*, two novellas; and, *Kyri*, a fantasy novel.

Personal Statement:

You might be asking, well, why fantasy... why sci-fi... why speculative? The answer is that these genres have the necessary tools. Subtlety is important. Incorporating "messages" into fiction can be problematic. But still, you want the work to have meaning. So, how do you balance this? Sometimes the situation itself is the message. By layering in meaning, I find that I can get to a happy middleground on this question.

My life experience is mixed up with these stories. It's imagination, dreams, the subconscious—all thrown in a blender. Writing is fun because you learn what you've been thinking; you chisel away, examine, interrogate, consider origins.

Often, things are affecting you and you may not even realize it. So, I try to make people think, but also, to laugh about the human condition and our incredible situation (spinning on a blob of water and earth in space among an infinity of galaxies). Despite our big egos, we're kind of a blip on the evolutionary scale. Still, we're doing some real ecological damage, which I would never downplay; sci-fi is a way to talk about that.

Our characters process these issues; they problem-solve and sometimes they get snagged. Through these situations, they get stronger and more creative; they learn to chart a new and better course. This may be in contrast to other vehicles that focus too much on the negative. For instance, my daughter and I used to watch a lot of nature programs. But after watching one where a bird coughed up a battery on the beach, we both kind of realized it was making us sad. We still watch them, but less so now.

There is a way to navigate moral terrains without being in-your-face or relying on shock value. The offbeat characters and twisty plotlines of fiction allow us to do this. Social commentary, entertainment, psychology (consider books like *The Jungle*)... many works of fiction have these things at their core. We can improve the world; we can face our own spiritual crisis; we can learn to live with each other no matter how different. But we must use our talents to bring ecology and peace forward. We have to avoid silence and complicity. Together, as artists, as writers, we can return magic to the world, save species and learn to use science to elevate all. Because it may be our imaginations that save us in the end.

www.toddfiorentino.net