

W0268

Crystallography in Fiction. Frank R. Fronczek, Dept. of Chemistry, Louisiana State Univ., Baton Rouge, LA, 70803.

Crystallography and crystallographers are rarely mentioned in works of fiction, but some examples exist, mostly in the genre of science fiction. The best known are probably Michael Crichton's *The Andromeda Strain* (1969), in which the infectious agent is crystalline, and rapid structure determination is foreseen, and also Kurt Vonnegut Jr.'s *Cat's Cradle* (1963), in which the end of the world occurs by crystallization of ice nine, a polymorph of water with $MP=114.4^{\circ}$ F. That novel also contains a nice description of disappearing polymorphs. The main character of C. P. Snow's *The Search* (1934) is a promising young British crystallographer. The first unfortunate victim of the young hooligans in Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) is carrying three crystallography books: *Elementary Crystallography*, *The Miracle of the Snowflake*, and *The Rhombohedral System*. In a scene from one of Vonnegut's short stories, *A Deer in the Works* (1955), the protagonist is mistaken for a crystallographer by an instrument vendor at a meeting of crystallographers (no, not an ACA meeting). The poster will give relevant excerpts from these works. Mention of crystallography dates back at least to the writing of Jules Verne. Other, more recent examples likely exist, and I would be grateful to hear about them.