

# PHOENIX RISING

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## GUESTS OF HONOR

Phoenix Rising has an impressive slate of experts and scholars scheduled to present in New Orleans next May. Check our web site at [www.thephoenixrises.org](http://www.thephoenixrises.org) for updates on our Guests of Honor.

**Susan Aikens:** Susan Aikens began her career in small chain and independent bookstores as a bookseller and manager with special interest in the kids' section of her stores. Susan joined Borders, Inc. in 1995 as the company's first publisher liaison hired from outside the company. Between 1996 and 2001, Susan worked as both a co-op marketing manager and as the National Events Group's event book buyer and co-op administrator (during which time Susan married another Borders employee, which is, to this day, a great carpool opportunity). Susan joined the Kids Group in early 2001 as an Assistant Buyer for the Independent Reader category, where she was involved in working on the paperback edition of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, the cloth edition of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, and marketing of the films. In 2004, Susan was promoted to Independent Reader buyer and then had the thrill of buying *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* for Borders in 2005. She is eagerly awaiting the final book in the series and is convinced she has the best job in the world!

**Anne Hiebert Alton:** Dr. Anne Hiebert Alton, a Professor of English at Central Michigan University, earned her Master of Arts in Children's Literature from the University of Calgary and her Doctor of Philosophy, with a specialization in Victorian Literature, from the University of Toronto. Her research and publication interests include children's literature, Victorian literature, fantasy, and the novel; and Dickens, the Brontës, Robert Louis Stevenson, Diane Duane, Jean Little, L. M. Montgomery, Anthony Browne, Maurice Sendak, P. L. Travers, E. L. Konigsburg, John Marsden, and J. R. R. Tolkien. Dr. Alton has also written "Generic Fusion and the Mosaic of *Harry Potter*" (in *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives*) and presented "Here's ... Harry!: The Popular Genres of *Harry Potter*."

**Melissa Anelli:** Melissa Anelli has been reporting on *Harry Potter* and the fandom for nearly six years. She runs *The Leaky Cauldron*, which she has seen grow from a one-page news blog to a top *Harry Potter* destination that J. K. Rowling has called a "mine of accurate information" and "my favorite fan site." She also hosts *The Leaky Cauldron's* podcast, *PotterCast*, and has been involved in many different elements of the fandom as well. Ms. Anelli has also interviewed countless *Harry Potter* notables, including J. K. Rowling, Dan Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint, and the American editor of the books, Arthur A. Levine. In her "real life", Ms. Anelli is a daily newspaper journalist who exists mostly on coffee.

**Danny Bilson:** As writer, producer and director, Mr. Bilson's credits include: the creation of *The Flash*; *The Human Target*; *Viper* and *The Sentinel* television series; *The Rocketeer* feature film, and the *Trancers* movie series. In addition, as Vice President of Intellectual Property Development for Electronic Arts, Mr. Bilson provided creative direction for some of the most successful video games in the history of the industry including: *The Sims* (as co-producer), *Medal of Honor*, *James Bond*, and the *Harry Potter* franchises, among others. Mr. Bilson teaches as part of the Interactive Media program in the University of Southern California's School of Cinema-Television, and is currently developing new intellectual properties designed to cross from games to films and back again.

**Simon Branford:** Simon Branford has been in the *Harry Potter* fandom for many years and was one of the founders of FictionAlley, which has grown in the last five years from a new archive to the largest and most prominent archive of *Harry Potter* fanfiction and fanart. He was involved in incorporating FAWC, the 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that operates FictionAlley, and has served the company as a Director, Vice President and Secretary. In his real life, he spends his time researching an obscure area of mathematical computation.

**Jon Burlingame:** Jon Burlingame is one of the nation's leading writers on music for motion pictures and television. A journalist since 1973, Mr. Burlingame writes regularly about film and TV music for *Variety*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Premiere* and *Emmy* magazines, *The Washington Post* and *New York Newsday*. His first book, *TV's Biggest Hits: The Story of Television Themes from Dragnet to Friends*, is the first-ever history of American television scoring. His second book, *Sound and Vision: Sixty Years of Motion Picture Soundtracks*, is a history of the commercial use of movie music containing an extensive series of biographies of composers and a discussion of their best works available on compact disc. Mr. Burlingame also mounted the country's first museum exhibit on film music at the Hollywood Bowl Museum. Mr. Burlingame also teaches in the Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television department at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music.

**Vicky Dann:** Vicky Dann is a full-time faculty member at New York University's prestigious Tisch School of the Arts Department of Film and Television. She has published over fourteen books in numerous languages all over the world, and is a winner of a Writers Guild of America Award. She loves anything to do with *Harry Potter*, Barbie and Pez. Coming off her role as the Head of Hufflepuff House at *The Witching Hour*, and the triumphant winning of the House Cup by her esteemed House, Ms. Dann will be serving as the Headmistress of *L'Université des Arts Magiques* at Phoenix Rising.

**Henry Jenkins:** Henry Jenkins, head of the Comparative Media Studies program at MIT, is the author of author of *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, *What Made Pistachio Nuts?: Early Sound Comedy and the Vaudeville Aesthete*, and *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, to be released in 2006, which will contain a chapter on the *Harry Potter* fandom. Dr. Jenkins' work recent work focuses on the concept of "media convergence" as well as how the digital media consumers interact with, understand, and transform a creator's vision.

**Jennie A. Levine:** Jennie A. Levine, also known as Zsenya, has been a member of the *Harry Potter* fan community since 2000. In January 2001, she co-founded *The Sugar Quill*, a *Harry Potter* fan site dedicated to the improvement of creative writing using *Harry Potter* fanfiction as a jumping off point. *The Sugar Quill* also hosts discussion forums, and has grown from a small site with five volunteers to a site hosting over 900 fanfiction authors, over 50 volunteers, and over 8,000 registered members. Ms. Levine holds a master's degree in Library Science and works as an archivist. She would love to have a talk with Madam Pince about her customer service skills, although she thinks Madam Pince is justified in banning food from the library.



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