

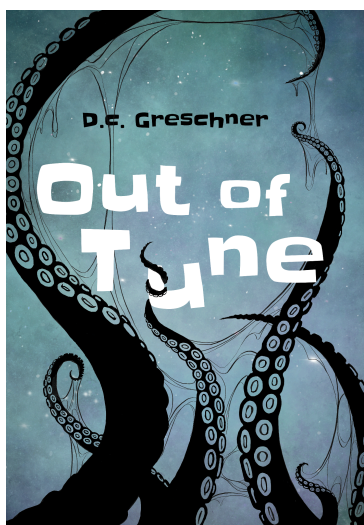
PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Victoria Author's New Sci-Fi Novel Satirizes Climate Politics & Corporate Greed in Wake of Trump's Inauguration

D.C. Greschner's debut sci-fi novel provides a quirky, yet thought-provoking commentary on current environmental, social, and political issues



[VICTORIA, BC, January 21st, 2025—] Science teacher and performing artist Danielle (D.C.) Greschner launched her self-published debut novel *Out of Tune* on November 22nd, 2024. Greschner has drawn on her education in both science and music to create a humorous yet thought-provoking commentary on issues that arise in an overly capitalistic society.

Set in an era of space travel and regular alien contact, *Out of Tune* follows absentminded senior citizen, Linda Pumpnickel, as she leaves behind her lackluster life on Earth to join a secret society of environmentalists on their mission to save the universe from going out of tune. Scientists have discovered that large-scale interplanetary imports and exports are disrupting the delicate balance of soundwave frequencies throughout the universe, and it is only a matter of time until this will result in a cosmic climate catastrophe.

The story features several unique alien characters with bizarre biologies and quirky character traits.

Linda is accompanied by Larv, a larva of the cochlean species known for their ultra-sensitive hearing and complex life cycle (diagram included!). Along the way, they meet the Mabitu, an elusive, genderless creature who lives in constant peril due to its potent pheromones that render it irresistible to most sentient beings. The villain, Groodle Schmoowler, is a seven-tentacled cult leader and wealthy CEO of the Intergalactic Trade and Travel Corporation who will stop at nothing to silence scientists and spread misinformation in order to protect his extremely profitable business. It is up to Linda and her ragtag group of alien allies to shed light on the dangers of universal detuning and prevent its progression before it's too late.

D.C. Greschner has degrees in biology, music, and education. She has a plethora of work experience, including ecotoxicology lab biologist, vocal coach, as well as a stint teaching English in China, where she began writing *Out of Tune* as a way to cope with culture shock and feeling like an alien herself. Currently, she is a high school science teacher and a film, television, and musical theater performer. Greschner has always been creative and involved in storytelling, from her days as a child clacking out stories on her mother's old-school typewriter to composing a musical about werewolves. *Out of Tune* is her first novel. She lives in Victoria, BC with her partner and their cats.

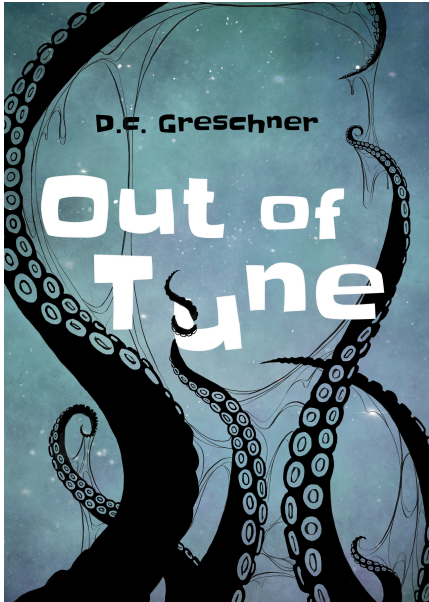


For more information please visit <http://dcgreschner.com>

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D.C. Greschner



"A tremendously high level of quirkiness, along with a highly incisive, targeted sense of humor. It's always to the point, efficient in wrenching laughs out of me, but also, always hitting home to underline so many of the absurdities in our present-time existence."

-Nicolas Lemieux, Sci-fi Author

About the Book

In an era of space travel and regular alien contact, Earthling Linda Pumpnickel has just celebrated her sixty-fifth birthday. Bumbling through her routines and losing herself in exceedingly odd daydreams, Linda wonders if there's more to life after retirement . . . when an alien called a larvalux crashes through her door and tells Linda her old pitch pipe is the secret to saving the universe from going out of tune and causing a cosmic climate catastrophe. Bizarre aliens, peculiar planets, and intergalactic corporate greed await Linda on a journey through space, time, and late-stage capitalism.

Perfect for fans of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, D.C. Greschner's debut novel effortlessly blends quirky humour, innovative sci-fi, and thought-provoking environmental satire into a thoroughly entertaining adventure.

Specifications

Fiction | Sci-fi | Humorous
252 Pages | B & W | 6 x 9 inches

Paperback

\$19.99 USD | 978-1-03-831194-8

Hardcover

\$35.99 USD | 978-1-03-831195-5

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FriesenPress

Wholesale available through
Ingram

Consignment available through
author

About the Author

D.C. Greschner has degrees in biology, music, and education. Her plethora of work experience includes ecotoxicology lab biologist, vocal coach, as well as a stint teaching English in China. Currently, she is a high school science teacher and a film, television, and theater performer. She lives in Victoria, BC with her partner and their cats.

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Out of Tune

D.C. Greschner

Where to Find *Out of Tune*:

Online:

- Friesen Press Bookstore - paperback, hardcover, and ebook
- Amazon - paperback, hardcover, and ebook
- Barnes & Noble Nook - paperback, hardcover, and ebook
- Amazon Kindle - ebook
- Kobo - ebook
- Google Books - ebook
- Apple Books - ebook

Brick & Mortar Bookstores:

Out of Tune can currently be found at:

- Munro Books
- Russell Books

It is currently under review at Bolen Books. Here is a list of more businesses D.C. Greschner is contacting:

- Tanner's Books
- Chapters Indigo
- Coles Bookstore
- Books and Shenanigans
- The Smart Bookshop
- Sorenson Books
- Bastion Books
- Ivy's Bookshop
- Fan Tan Home & Style
- Inwards Market
- BC Ferries Gift Shop
- Canadian Tire
- Walmart
- Superstore

Libraries:

D.C. Greschner is in the process of approaching both public libraries and secondary school libraries about carrying *Out of Tune*. It is currently available in the following libraries:

- Mount Douglas Secondary School Learning Commons, Saanich
- Edward Milne Community School Learning Commons, Sooke

Events and Markets

D.C. Greschner is applying for various markets and events in the Greater Victoria area for 2025. She has been accepted as a vendor at the following events:

- Island Fancon, City Centre Park, Langford, March 28-30
- Sidney Street Market, every Thursday evening in July and August

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Sample Interview Questions

Q: What inspired you to become (a singer, a performer, and) a writer in the first place?

A: I grew up in the small town of Kamloops, British Columbia, during a magical time when smart phones and social media didn't exist (yes, I'm *that* old). My family didn't even have a computer, let alone internet, until I was 10 years old. As such, I spent a lot of time playing outside, inventing games, and nurturing my imagination. I think my affinity for creative endeavors, whether it be singing, acting, or writing, can be attributed to this upbringing. I've also managed to maintain a child-like sense of wonder for the small things, like seeing a cool plant or animal. I live next to a forest and see deer, squirrels, rabbits, eagles, hummingbirds etc. all the time, but I still get excited every time I see them!

Q: What led you to write *Out of Tune*?

A: I began writing it when I was teaching English in China as a form of therapy. I was living in a rural, non-touristy area of China where none of the locals spoke English and I didn't speak enough Mandarin to have a real conversation. The only people I could talk to were my then partner and two other English teachers. Furthermore, most of the locals had never even seen a blonde-haired, blue-eyed person before, so I was constantly stared at and filmed and waved at wherever I went. They were very friendly, and I never felt unsafe or anything like that. At first, the performer in me loved feeling like a celebrity. However, after my partner and I broke up, the isolation really started to set in. I was alone in a foreign country where I couldn't really communicate with anyone. Add that to all of the public attention, and I felt like I was an alien visiting another planet. So I began writing as a way to cope with the isolation and culture shock I was experiencing.

Q: Please give us an insight into your main character, Linda Pumpnickel. What does she do? What makes her special?

A: Linda is an aloof but lovable 65-year-old woman. A retired English teacher who never married or had children, she spends her days watching soap operas, drinking tea, and sewing costumes for her show choir. Tuesday night rehearsals are all that Linda looks forward to each week, but she's starting to suspect that even her choir friends are growing frustrated with her. She has been getting more forgetful lately, it takes her longer than most to learn new songs and choreo, and she has been spending more and more time in Linda Land—her vivid imaginary world. Although she had a fulfilling career teaching English abroad to alien citizens on foreign planets, she has been lacking a sense of

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purpose since retirement. However, this all changes when Linda finds herself in a position to join a clandestine environmental organization on a mission to prevent a cosmic climate meltdown. As the story unfolds, Linda may surprise readers with her resilience and ability to find a new purpose post-retirement. I think what makes Linda special is her resilience despite her aging body and mind, as well as several other external obstacles. Linda's demographic is not often represented in the sci-fi genre, and I think she can teach readers that life doesn't end after retirement, and that they should never underestimate a senior!

Q: Without spoiling too much, can you give us an idea of who and what the villain (Groodle Schmoodler) is, what he does, and what he believes in?

A: Groodle Schmoodler is a member of the oodlean species and, as such, he exhibits 7-fold radial symmetry. His body plan consists of 7 tentacle-like appendages radiating from a central point. The center of his body houses his 7 eyes, which encircle his large, circular mouth, and can see in all directions simultaneously. These organs are located on the top side of his body, meaning that his mouth faces directly upwards (this is the opposite of a sea star, whose oral side is facing downwards). One of my favourite things to write about was Schmoodler's grotesque issue with over-productive mucus glands, which cause him to constantly cough up phlegm.

Personality-wise, Groodle Schmoodler represents everything that is wrong with late-stage capitalism. He is the wealthiest being in the universe, and the CEO of the highest grossing company in existence. His company, ITCo, is responsible for the large-scale, intergalactic transport of goods, which in turn is responsible for universal detuning — a climate catastrophe that is projected to destroy all life in the cosmos. On top of that, he is a literal cult leader and self-appointed reverend of a religion that he invented just to see if he could. He is a character that I think readers will love to hate.

Q: Linda Pumpernickel is helped along the way by some pretty special alien sidekicks. For instance, she meets Larv, the Cochlean larvalux, and the bizarre, irresistible Mabitu... In your creative process, can you tell me a little on how these creatures came to be?

A: I once saw an interview with Neil deGrasse Tyson where he talks about how aliens are always represented as very anthropomorphic in Hollywood (i.e., the little green men), and how this is very unrealistic, not to mention egocentric. What are the chances that life in far away galaxies would happen to evolve exactly like it did here on Earth? So I decided I wanted to make Neil deGrasse Tyson proud by creating aliens that are so different from humans that they are difficult to put into words. Confession: some of my alien characters are decidedly anthropomorphic, like the saganites. Others were influenced by my biology background, as they share characteristics of animals I have

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studied, but with a twist. For example, Larv is very similar to an insect that undergoes metamorphosis, although the particular stages of his life cycle are completely made up. And then there are some aliens that are very different from anything that exists on Earth, such as the mistoform species that exist in a gaseous state, and the Mabitu that is the only member of its species and emits extremely potent cross-species pheromones. Those are ideas that emerged from some dark recess of my imagination, and I can only hope that Neil would approve.

Q: Are any aspects of the book autobiographical?

A: Yes, there are quite a few similarities between Linda and I. Linda is a retired teacher who taught English on other planets. Like Linda, I am currently a teacher who has taught English overseas. Unlike Linda, I have yet to travel to another planet and retirement feels like a pipe dream. Linda lives on Baffin Island in northern Canada. I, too, live on a Canadian island, but I much prefer the temperate climate of Vancouver Island to the cold up north (although, in Linda's time, climate change has caused Baffin Island to be even warmer than present-day Vancouver Island). Like Linda, I love to sing and have been in several different choirs. Linda's show choir, The Baffin Babes, is based on the Sweet Adelines Barbershop Choruses I used to sing with. Like Linda, I love tea and have a vivid imagination. Is Linda perhaps a prophecy of what I'll be like in thirty years? Only time will tell, but it is entirely possible that I'm already well on my way.

Q: What are you most proud of in your writing journey so far?

A: Finishing the dang thing! I think a lot of people *think* about writing a book, or even start writing a book, but actually following it through to its completion is another story (pun intended). I have countless files on my computer of uncompleted projects that maybe I'll revisit one day, maybe I won't. But *Out of Tune* is one that I can officially say is done and out there for all the world to read. It was definitely a marathon, not a sprint. It took me 8 years, and it was very on and off. During those 8 years, I moved, went back to university and got my teaching diploma, became a teacher, performed in 5 musicals and 2 plays, and worked myself into burnout numerous times. I think most new authors/ those who don't (yet) make a living writing know the struggle of balancing writing with a full-time job and other responsibilities. Long story short, I'm most proud of sticking with it and seeing it through.

Q: How did you come to define your writing style?

A: While writing *Out of Tune*, I didn't put too much thought into my writing style, I just let it come out naturally. In everyday life, I am the type of person who tends not to take things too seriously and I *maybe* even overuse humor as a defense mechanism, and this is exactly what the book is. The

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thematic content of the book is actually quite dark, as it deals with big issues like climate change and corporate greed, and the battle between environment and economy in our current political landscape (at least in North America). However, the writing style is very light-hearted and comedic, and full of strange descriptions and odd comparisons. So I suppose I've inadvertently created a strange juxtaposition between the seriousness of the main themes and the humor in the writing.

Q: What did you read when growing up, what do you read now, and what book or books have influenced your writing?

A: I've always been a huge fan of horror, the supernatural, and sci-fi, and any combination thereof. I especially love a good monster story. As a kid ordering from the Scholastic catalogue, *Goosebumps* was my go-to. I have since graduated to Michael Crichton—*Jurassic Park* is my all-time favorite book and movie. I think the reason I'm so drawn to monster stories is that the real conflict is usually something to do with human nature, and not the actual monster. Stephen King does this a lot, for example, in his books *It* and *The Mist*.

I love classic sci-fi, such as Ray Bradbury, Arthur C. Clarke, and H.G. Wells. I recently discovered a short story called *Grandpa*, by James H. Schmitz, which I highly recommend if you enjoy reading about other planets and innovative alien biology. I also enjoy dystopian fiction, like *A Brave New World* and *1984*, and the social commentary of these types of stories certainly had an influence on my book. I would be remiss not to mention Douglas Adams, as my book was obviously influenced by the *Hitchhikers* series. I read these as a teenager and was not consciously aware of the influence it had while I was writing *Out of Tune*. It was only after I was at least halfway through writing it that I re-read *Hitchhikers* and noticed the similarities. I am now trying to make a point of reading more current sci-fi. I just finished *The Other Valley* by Scott Alexander Howard and have started *The Leap Year Gene* by Shelley Wood (shout out to these two awesome Canadian authors!).

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Reviews & Testimonials

"*Out of Tune* mixes a slew of themes that are dear to my heart. Environmentalism, alien species and cultures, diversity in its most extreme forms, rampant capitalism, corporate short-sightedness, aging, and yes, of course... music and singing. I loved the idea at first contact! Greschner's writing is packed with something I particularly enjoy. A tremendously high level of quirkiness, along with a highly incisive, targeted sense of humor. It's always to the point, efficient in wrenching laughs out of me, but also, always hitting home to underline so many of the absurdities in our present-time existence. I have no qualms saying this would have Douglas Adams and Terry Pratchett cracking a huge, approving grin."

-Nicolas Lemieux, Sci-fi Writer, Montreal, QC

Full interview with Nicolas Lemieux can be found on his website:

<https://www.nicolaslemieux.com/post/douglas-adams-cracks-a-huge-approving-grin>

"*Out of Tune* is a highly entertaining read filled to the brim with fun, quirky, and loveable characters. While it does deal with the dire effects of climate change and corporate greed, it still manages to feel light and accessible. Bursting with imaginative creatures and a variety of colourful landscapes, it still is grounded enough to be relatable. I read it all in a couple of sittings. Would recommend for a humourous read that's full of heart."

-Lexi Redman, Victoria, BC

"It is a very funny sci-fi adventure novel, and I loved the short chapters! I loved the sneaky nerdy music references and the scientific details throughout! This is the first book I've completed in honestly two years (shout out to D.C. Greschner for writing such a good story), and I have my tentacles crossed in hopes of another book in the wormline!"

-Emily Krell, Victoria, BC

"Enjoyable page-turner. Compelling characters with depth, motivation that really help shape the book's narrative. Love the sci-fi relation to issues we face, such as climate change and corporate greed. Enjoyed the heroine being a woman in her 60s - both unique and refreshing."

-Amanda Lunny, Victoria, BC

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"A zany, imaginative and hilarious lesson on the cosmos, its flora, fauna, cultures, and on 'musical theory.'"

-Andrew James, 108 Mile House, BC

"A very fun read by a new author. Writing is reminiscent of Terry Pratchett, in my opinion. Definitely recommend if you like sci-fi comedy tackling environmentalism and rampant capitalism, with a fun cast of characters."

-Michael J. Greschner, Victoria, BC

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Promotional Images

